

## NAVIGATOR INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

Navigator School (“Navigator” or “Charter School”) may offer independent study to meet the short or long-term educational needs of students enrolled in the Charter School as follows Independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate and is designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. The Charter School shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable students to complete their independent study successfully. The following written policies have been adopted by the Navigator Board of Directors for implementation at the Charter School:

1. The Board authorizes students with short term independent study, defined as absences with a minimum of one (1) school day and no more than fifteen (15) consecutive school days. The Board authorizes students with long term independent study, defined as absences with a minimum of fifteen (15) or more consecutive school days in one (1) school year. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one (1) school year. The Charter School will consult with the student’s parent or guardian to determine the appropriate length of time, and request, but not require, a commitment to participate in independent study that is aligned with the Charter School’s grading term or other length of time deemed to be in the best academic interest of the student. For all Charter School, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the due date by which the student must complete the assignment shall be ten (10) school days.
2. For pupils in all grade levels and programs offered by the Charter School, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work shall be 3 school days.
3. Long term independent study may be offered at the discretion of the Site Leader (“SL”) of a Charter School. The SL’s considerations may include, but are not limited to, budgetary, staffing, and other operational considerations for their school.
  - a. When any student fails to complete three (3) independent study assignments during any period of ten (10) school days or misses two (2) consecutive appointments with the supervising teacher without valid excuse.
  - b. In the event a pupil’s educational progress falls below satisfactory levels as determined by Navigator multi-tiered system of support which considers all of the following indicators:
    - i. The student’s achievement and engagement in the independent study

program, as indicated by the student's performance on applicable student level measures of student achievement and student engagement set forth in Education Code Section 52060(d) paragraphs (4) and (5);

- ii. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the student is working on assignments;
- iii. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher; and,
- iv. Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim student record. The record shall be maintained for a period of three (3) years from the date of the evaluation and, if the student transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

- 4. The Charter School shall provide content aligned to grade level standards that is substantially equivalent to in-person instruction.
- 5. The Charter School have adopted tiered reengagement strategies for all students who are not generating attendance for more than three (3) school days or sixty percent (60%) of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of the written agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(g). These procedures are as follows:
  - a. All students who are not generating attendance for more than 10 percent of required minimum instructional time over four continuous weeks of the Charter School's approved instructional calendar;
  - b. Students found not participatory in synchronous instructional offerings pursuant to Education Code Section 51747.5 for more than 50 percent of the scheduled times of synchronous instruction in a school month as applicable by grade span; or
  - c. Students who are in violation of the written agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(g).

These procedures shall include local programs intended to address chronic absenteeism, as applicable, with at least all of the following:

- a. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled student;
- b. Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one (1) school day of the recording of a nonattendance day or lack of participation;
- c. A plan for outreach from the school to determine student needs, including connection with health and social services as necessary; and

- d. A clear standard for requiring a student-parent-educator conference to review a student's written agreement, and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the student's achievement and well-being, consistent with the policies adopted pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (g) of Education Code Section 51747.
6. For independent study, teachers will send standardized materials to the parent/guardian for student completion. For long term independent study, the following plan shall be in place in accordance with Education Code Section 51747(e) for synchronous instruction and live interaction:
  - a. For pupils in transitional kindergarten through grade 3, inclusive, the Charter School shall provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's teacher or teachers of record.
  - b. For pupils in grades 4-8, inclusive, the Charter School shall provide opportunities for daily live interaction between the pupil and a certificated or non-certificated employee of the Charter School and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's teacher or teachers of record.
7. The Charter School shall assist families to transition students whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, and, in no case, later than five (5) instructional days, back to in-person instruction.
8. A current written agreement shall be maintained on file for each independent study student, including but not limited to, all of the following:
  - a. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a student's assignments, for reporting the student's academic progress, and for communicating with a student's parent or guardian regarding a student's academic progress;
  - b. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work;
  - c. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the student. These resources shall include confirming or providing access to all students to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work;
  - d. A statement of the policies adopted pursuant to Education Code Section 51747 subdivisions (a) and (b) regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a student's assigned work, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether or not the student should be allowed to continue in independent study;
  - e. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in independent study under the

agreement. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one school year;

- f. A statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the agreement, to be earned by the student upon completion;
- g. A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of students who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas, such as English learners, individuals with exceptional needs in order to be consistent with the student's individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), students in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and students requiring mental health supports;
- h. The inclusion of a statement in each independent study agreement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. In the case of a student who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Section 48915 or 48917, the agreement also shall include the statement that instruction may be provided to the student through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction; and,
- i. For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for more than 15 school days, each written agreement shall be signed, before the commencement of independent study, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable. For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for 15 schooldays or fewer, each written agreement shall be signed, during the school year in which the independent study program takes place, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable. The written agreement may be signed at any time during the school year, but it is the intent of the Legislature that parents or guardians of pupils be provided the agreement at or before the beginning of the school year. For purposes of this paragraph "caregiver" means a person who has met the requirements of Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 6550) of Division 11 of the Family Code.
- j. Written agreements may be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the California Department of Education, that may be a marking that is either computer generated or produced by

electronic means and is intended by the signatory to have the same effect as a handwritten signature. The use of an electronic signature shall have the same force and effect as the use of a manual signature if the requirements for digital signatures and their acceptable technology, as provided in Section 16.5 of the Government Code and in Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 22000) of Division 7 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, are satisfied.

9. Limitations:

- a. A student participating in independent study must fulfill course requirements that are consistent with those for students enrolled in the regular school program;
- b. The Charter School function as “classroom-based instruction” as defined in Education Code section 47612.5 (e)(1) and will meet the following conditions:
  - i. The Charter School’ students are engaged in educational activities required of those students, and the students are under the immediate supervision and control of an employee of the Charter School;
  - ii. At least 80 percent of the instructional time offered at the Charter School is at the school site;
  - iii. Each of the Charter School’ school sites are facilities that are used principally for classroom instruction; and,
  - iv. Each of the Charter School require students to be in attendance at the school site at least 80 percent of the minimum instructional time; and
- c. Each student’s master agreement shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the supervision of a certificated employee.

10. Independent study is available to all students currently enrolled in the Charter School whose health would be put at risk by in-person instruction, as determined by a medical professional or the parent or guardian of the student. A limited number of independent study spaces will be available and therefore priority of available spaces will be determined by the criteria listed below:

- a. Medical condition of a student that would put them at a health risk by participating in in-person instruction, as verified by a doctor;
- b. Medical condition of a student that would put them at a health risk by participating in in-person instruction, as attested to by parent or guardian;
- c. Health concern of parent or guardian that cannot be remedied/addressed by the school; and
- d. Access for extraordinary academic and educational opportunities including but not limited to advanced curricula.

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11. While independent study requires a commitment from both parent/guardian and student at all grade levels, as a student gets older, the student assumes a greater portion of the responsibility involved. For each independent study request, the SL or designee shall determine that the prospective independent study student is prepared to meet the Charter School' requirements for independent study. The SL or designee has the right to deny requests should it be determined that independent study is not in the best academic interest of the student. The SL's considerations may include, but are not limited to, the student's current academic standing, the student's grade level, the timing during the grading period, the purpose of the absence for which independent study is requested, previous participation in independent study, and input from teachers, MTSS team, or IEP team, as applicable. The SL shall not deny a request for independent study on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, gender, mental or physical disability, or on the basis of any other protected characteristic, either actual or perceived.
  12. The Charter School shall comply with the Education Code sections 51745 through 51749.3 and the provisions of the Charter School Act of 1992 and the State Board of Education regulations adopted there under.
  13. The Chief Executive Officer & Superintendent (or designee) may establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.