



### INDEPENDENT STUDY BOARD POLICY

**TEACH Public Schools** (the “School”) may offer independent study to meet the short or long-term educational needs of pupils enrolled in the School. Independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate and is designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. The School shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study successfully. The following policies apply to all pupils participating in independent study at the School:

Each student’s independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of an assigned certificated employee.

*Maximum Length of Assignment:* For students in all programs of independent study, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an independent study assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work shall be as follows:

- For pupils in kindergarten and grades one through three, **15 school days**
- For pupils in grades four through eight, **15 school days**
- For students in grades nine through twelve, **15 school days**

When special or extenuating circumstances justify a longer time for individual students, the Executive Director or their designee may approve a period not to exceed **30 school days**.

*Evaluation to Determine Best Interests:* The Principal or designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interests of the pupil to remain in independent study upon the following triggers:

- When any pupil fails to complete **2 assignments** during any period of **15 school days**.
- In the event pupil’s educational progress falls below satisfactory levels as determined by the School’s MTSS Policy which considers ALL of the following indicators:
  - i. The pupil’s achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the pupil’s performance on applicable pupil-level measures of pupil achievement and pupil 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 pupil is working on assignments.
  - iii. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.
  - 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 made pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record and maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation and, if the pupil transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

*Grade Level Standards:* The School shall provide content aligned to grade level standards that is provided at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high school grade levels this shall include access to all courses offered by the School for graduation and approved by the UC or CSU as credible under the A-G admissions criteria.

*Tiered Re-Engagement Strategies:* The School has adopted tiered reengagement strategies for all pupils who are not generating attendance for more than three (3) school days or 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 follow:

- Verification of current contact information for each enrolled pupil;
- Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation;
- Outreach from the School to determine pupil needs including connection with health and social services as necessary;
- When the evaluation described under paragraph iv. in the “*Missed Assignments*” section above is triggered to consider whether remaining in independent study is in the best interest of the pupil, a pupil-parent-education conference shall be required to review a pupil’s written agreement and reconsider the independent study program’s impact on the pupil’s achievement and well-being. This conference shall be a meeting involving, at a minimum, all parties who signed the pupil’s written independent study agreement.<sup>1</sup>

*Synchronous Instruction and Live Interaction:* The following plan shall be in place in accordance with Education Code Section 51747(e) for synchronous instruction and live interaction:

For pupils in transitional kindergarten through grade 3, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil’s assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:

- All independent study students will receive daily synchronous instruction with teachers from 8:10am - 2:30pm via Zoom. Students will be expected to follow the in person bell schedule while working independently via computer. Teachers will instruct the independent studies students at the same time as the in person students. Students will also have access to teacher PowerPoint, lessons and resources on Schoology.

For pupils in grades 4-8, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for daily live interaction between the pupil and a certificated or non-certificated employee of the School and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil’s assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:

- Daily live interaction will be provided during Advisory via Zoom. The Student is expected to log into their Advisory Zoom class promptly at the beginning of the day for the duration

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<sup>1</sup> The tiered reengagement strategies shall not apply to pupils who participate in an independent study program for fewer than 15 school days in a school year.

of Advisory, 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. The Student is expected to follow the school policies and procedure regarding school uniform, classroom expectations and Zoom protocols and be prepared for academic engagement.

- Weekly synchronous instruction will be provided via Zoom during instructional hours. The Student is expected to adhere to classroom and school policies and procedures as related to school uniform, classroom expectations and Zoom protocols and be prepared for academic engagement. Students are expected to independently follow the appropriate Bell Schedule and arrive to the Zoom session on time. Students will have access to the instructional materials on teachers' Weebly websites and are expected to access and complete the assignment on a daily basis.

For pupils in grades 9-12, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:

- All independent study students will receive daily synchronous instruction with teachers from 8am - 3:30pm via Zoom. Students will be expected to follow the in person bell schedule while working independently via computer. Teachers will instruct the independent studies students at the same time as the in person students. Students will also have access to teacher PowerPoint, lessons and resources on Schoology.

*Plan for Transition:* The following plan shall be utilized to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, and, in no case, later than five instructional days<sup>2</sup>: If at any time a family wants to return to in person instruction they can do so via written request to the school principal. The school principal will arrange for the student to return to in person learning within five instructional days.

*Agreement:* (5 C.C.R. § 11702) A current written agreement for each independent study pupil shall be maintained on file for each participating student. Each agreement shall be signed, dated and in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance (ADA) pursuant to that agreement. The independent study agreement for a student will require and cover a study plan that represents the same amount of study that would be required of a student in the classroom and be consistent with the School curriculum and course of study of students participating in the regular classroom setting.

*Agreement Content:* Each independent study written agreement shall contain all of the following provisions:

- The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil's assignments, for reporting the pupil's academic progress, and for communicating with a pupil's parent or guardian regarding a pupil's academic progress.
- The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
- The specific resources, including materials and personnel that will be made available to the pupil. These resources shall include confirming or providing access to all pupils to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.

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<sup>2</sup> The plan to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction shall not apply to pupils who participate in an independent study program for fewer than 15 school days in a school year.

- 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 pupil's assigned work, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
- The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the pupil's participation in independent study under the agreement. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one school year.
- 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 pupil upon completion.
- A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of pupils 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 pupil's individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), pupils in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and pupils requiring mental health supports.
- The inclusion of a statement in each independent study agreement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate. In the case of a pupil 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 pupil through independent study only if the pupil is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.
- 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 all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil. 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.

Written agreements may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts and assignment and work records.

The School shall comply with the Education Code sections 51745 through 51749.3 and the provisions of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and the State Board of Education regulations adopted thereunder. The Executive Director shall establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.

Adopted: July 24, 2019

Amended: August 6, 2021