Independent Study Board Policy 6158

The Governing Board recognizes its responsibility for the education of all students enrolled in Leadership Public Schools (LPS). The Board authorizes the Superintendent to establish a Short-Term Independent Study Program as an alternative educational process that allows a student to remain continuously enrolled in school when the student cannot attend school on a daily basis. Students enrolling in Independent Study must also meet all enrollment and residency criteria as other students as prescribed by law. Independent Study may be offered on a part-time basis in conjunction with part or full-time classroom study.

No course required for high school graduation shall be offered exclusively through independent study.

No individual with exceptional needs, as defined in Education Code 56026, may participate in Independent Study unless his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifically provides for that participation.

LPS shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable students to complete their independent study successfully and shall ensure the same access to all existing services and resources in the school in which the student is enrolled as is available to all other enrolled students.

Students and parent/guardians requesting Independent Study should recognize that at the secondary level, a major commitment must be made by the student, assisted or supported as necessary by parents/guardians or others who may assist directly with instruction.

Written Agreement and Contracts

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that each participating student has an executed written independent study agreement with LPS as prescribed by law. This agreement shall be maintained on file and include, but not limited to, all of the following:

1. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil’s assignments and for reporting his or her progress.
2. The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods utilized to evaluate that work.
3. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the pupil.
4. A statement of the policies adopted pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (b) regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a pupil's assigned work, and the number of missed assignments allowed prior to an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
5. 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 semester, or onehalf year for a school on a year-round calendar.
(6) 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.

(7) 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.

(8) Each written agreement shall be signed, prior to 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 the Family Code.

Individual independent study agreements and any subordinate student contracts and assignments must
be consistent with LPS’s adopted course of study.

To foster each student’s success in independent study, the Board establishes the following maximum
lengths of time which may elapse before an independent study assignment is made and the date by
which the student must complete the assigned work:

   (1) Two weeks for students in grades 6-8
   (2) Three weeks for students in grades 9-12.

When circumstances justify a longer time, the Superintendent or designee may extend the maximum
length of an assignment to a period not to exceed eight weeks.

The minimum period of time for any independent study option shall be three school days and shall not
exceed eight weeks.

Supervising teachers should carefully set the duration of independent study assignments, within the
limits specified above, and establish an appropriate schedule for student-teacher conferences in order
to help identify students falling behind in their work or in danger of failing or dropping out of school.
Except in unusual circumstances, it is expected that the supervising teacher will meet with each
participating student at least once a week to discuss the student’s progress.

When any student fails to complete three independent study assignments during any period of 15
school days, or misses two appointments consecutively with the supervising teacher without valid
reasons, an evaluation will be conducted to determine whether it is in the student’s best interest to
remain on independent study. A written record of the findings of any evaluation made pursuant to this
subdivision shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. The record shall be 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.
The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board the number of students participating in independent study, the average daily attendance (ADA) generated, for apportionment purposes, the quality of these students' work as measured by standard indicators, and the number and proportion of independent study students who graduate or successfully complete independent study.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish regulations to implement this policy in accordance with law.