



## **Curriculum and Instruction Independent Study Policy**

Board Approval: June 24, 2020

### **Purpose and Scope**

For Santa Clarita Valley International School (“SCVi”) to provide a procedure and a framework for eligible students to enroll in the SCVi Hybrid Charter (“school”) Independent Study programs.

### **General**

1. Independent Study students must be enrolled in SCVi Hybrid Charter.
2. All Independent Study students must sign a new Independent Study Master Agreement (“MA”) every year.
3. Independent Study Teacher of Record – A certificated teacher of SCVi school must supervise, coordinate, and evaluate the work of each student engaged in Independent Study.
4. The Independent Study Teacher of Record may grant no more than one day of apportionment credit (ADA) for each day that the school is in session, and only to the extent of the time value of pupil or student work products as personally judged by Teacher of Record per learning period.
5. In a charter school, for the purposes of, the ratio of average daily attendance for independent study pupils to full time equivalent FTE certificated employees responsible for independent study shall not exceed a pupil-teacher ratio of 25:1 or the ratio of pupils to full-time equivalent certificated for all other educational programs operated by the largest unified school district, as measured by average daily attendance, as reported at the second principal apportionment in the prior year, in the county or counties in which the charter school operates.
6. No individual with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code Section 56026 may participate in independent study unless his or her individualized education program (IEP) specifically provides for that participation.
7. The school shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable students to complete their independent study successfully
8. The school director shall report to the board the number of students in independent study by typical categories of study and duration; the ADA generated; a description of

the students' performance on those indicators of quality which the board may specify; and the number and proportion of students, by typical categories, who graduate or successfully complete their studies.

### **Master Agreements**

The superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district executes a written independent study agreement with each participating student as prescribed by law. Individual independent study agreements and any subordinate contracts and assignments must be consistent with the district's adopted course of study.

A written independent study agreement shall be executed for each participating student. Each agreement shall be signed and in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance (ADA) pursuant to that agreement. The independent study agreement for a student must require and cover a study plan that represents no less than the equivalent of a minimum school day for the student's grade level for every school day covered by the agreement. Written agreements may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts.

### **Written Learning Agreements shall include**

1. A schedule of manner, frequency, date, time, and place for submitting a student's evidence of work completion and for reporting his or her progress.
2. The learning objectives and expectations for each course, including, but not limited to, a description of how satisfactory educational progress is measured and when a pupil evaluation is required to determine whether the pupil should remain in the course or be referred to an alternative program, which may include, but is not limited to, a regular school program.
3. The specific resources, including materials and staff, which will be made available to the student.
4. The duration of the enrolled course or courses, the duration of the learning agreement, and the number of course credits for each enrolled course consistent with the certifications adopted by the governing board or body of the school district, charter school, or county office of education pursuant to Section 51749.5. The duration of a learning agreement shall not exceed a school year or span multiple school years.
5. 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.
6. A statement of the policies 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 before an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
7. A statement that the pupil is not required to enroll in courses authorized pursuant to Section 51749.5.

8. A summary of the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board or body of the school district, charter school, or county office of education pursuant to Section 51749.5, as applicable.
9. The learning agreement shall be signed by the pupil and, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the pupil's parent or legal guardian, and all certificated employees providing instruction before instruction may commence. The signed learning agreement constitutes permission from a pupil's parent or legal guardian, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, for the pupil to receive instruction through independent study.
10. A physical or electronic copy of the signed learning agreement shall be retained by the school district, county office of education, or charter school for at least three years and as appropriate for auditing purposes.
11. For purposes of this section, an electronic copy includes a computer or electronic stored image of an original document, including, but not limited to, portable document format, JPEG, or other digital image file type, that may be sent via fax machine, email, or other electronic means.

**Participation may be limited:**

1. No individual with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, may participate in independent study unless his/her individualized education program specifically provides for such participation. (Education Code 51745) (cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)
2. Students enrolling in independent study must be residents of the local county or an adjacent county. (Education Code 51747.3)

**Maximum Length of Time to show evidence of work completion**

For pupils in all grade levels offered by iCC1 charters, the maximum length of time that may elapse to show evidence of work completion shall be twenty (20) school days.

**Guidelines for Missing Evidence of Work Completion** If any student is missing evidence of work completion due to inadequate progress in any learning period of 20 school days, the school may conduct an evaluation to support the needs of the student, which may result in a determination that this independent study program is not an appropriate fit for the student. Inadequate Progress, established by Board policy, occurs when the student fails to attend one learning period meeting, fails to complete at least 75% of work assigned for one learning period, and/or accumulates 20 absences due to insufficient work completion and/or engagement as evaluated by the facilitator. This is referred to as "Inadequate Progress." Students making Inadequate Progress are considered to be truant.

A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. This record shall be maintained for a period of three (3) 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.

**Methods of evaluating evidence of work completion**

State mandated assessments (mandatory), portfolio, parent and Independent Study Facilitator's observations, assigned work, work samples, student conferences, and any other testing as required by school, including, but not limited to, pre and post assessments.

**Resources Available to Independent Home Study Students**

This student is entitled to school services including, but not limited to, school personnel, a credentialed teacher, textbooks, computers and software, supplementary materials, educational activities, and community services.

**Short Term Independent Study**

A short-term Independent Study contract is a voluntary alternative to a regular classroom program of instruction when a learner is absent from school for not less than three (3) and not more than ten (10) consecutive school days and not more than twenty (20) school days a year.

Schools are not obligated to provide students with an Independent Study contract. The availability of an Independent Study contract must be agreed upon by mutual consent of the director, facilitator, parent/guardian, and learner. Learners should only be placed on Independent Study if the learner can successfully accomplish their academics. (EC 51745(a) and 51747 (c)(7))

Requests for Independent Study contracts must be given to the director, or designee, at least 3 school days prior to the first day of the absence (in the event of an emergency, contact the director.)

A written Independent Study contract must be completed, signed and dated for each participating learner prior to the starting date of the Independent Study. The contract must contain all the components prescribed by law.

Each learner's Independent Study contract shall be coordinated, evaluated and carried out under the general supervision of a certificated facilitator.

All assigned work is due on the day upon which the learner is scheduled to return to the classroom and shall be graded by appropriately credentialed facilitators.

Santa Clarita Valley International School (SCVi) shall establish regulations to implement this policy in accordance with law.