

Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools
175 South Fairview Lane
Sonora, California
209-536-2000 fax: 209-536-2003

Tuolumne County Community School Independent Study Program

Parent/Student Handbook



Independent Study

The Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools, on behalf of the County Board of Education authorizes the establishment of independent study as an instructional strategy used in its Community School program. Independent Study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate and a classroom option is continuously available. Full time independent study may be available to students who have been expelled but are not on probation.

The primary reasons for using independent study are 1) its potential to serve the large geographic area targeted by Community School, and 2) its flexibility in meeting the variety of needs encountered in a Community School program.

Independent study is not an alternative curriculum so all courses and materials are aligned to state content standards, and textbooks are those most recently adopted by the State Board of Education or, in the case of high school, by the LEA. Supplemental materials may be used to respond to individual student interests and learning styles. Materials that are sectarian in nature are not used pursuant to the California Constitution, Article IX, Section i.

All students, grades 7-12, will work under the general supervision of a credentialed teacher. These teachers will work under the supervision of a Community School administrator.

The independent study instructional strategy for each student will include diagnostic-prescriptive course placement based on 1) student ability level, diagnosed through standard achievement tests, 2) subject area needs per district of residence alignment, and 3) student interest. General goals for each student will be established through an initial orientation/planning conference with student and parent.

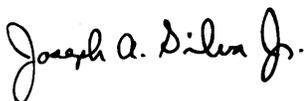
The independent study program will operate from the "Community School Course of Study". This course of study includes 1) program goals, 2) general procedures, 3) a list of courses, and 4) course outlines for each of the listed courses. Each course outline will include 1) objectives, 2) activities, and 3) method of measurement.

To implement the course of study, students and parents will be expected to 1) accept the referral to Community School's independent study program, and 2) approve assigned course work. This acceptance and approval will be accomplished through signatures on 1) the Community School /Independent Study Referral form, and 2) the Course/Contract Agreement form.

Assignments will be made on student assignment sheets. These assignment sheets will include 1) assignment and hour values, 2) completed work and hour value, 3) appointment time, 4) student name, 5) instructor name, and 6) teacher initials.

Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study should contact Lulu Ramirez, Executive Assistant to Deputy Superintendent Marguerite Bulkin, at 536-2012.

Sincerely



Joseph. A. Silva, Jr.
Superintendent

Academic Credit

Students in grades 9-12 will be given credit for work earned at their previous school based on their exit grades. Grades will be calculated by the following formula:

- 2.5 credits for each subject with at least a D- grade at the end of the quarter
- If a student enters the program mid-quarter, the exit grade will be calculated at .28 credits for each week, before or after the semester, that credit was earned at the previous school.
- No credit will be issued for failing grades.

Code of Conduct

It is the goal of the Independent Study Program to provide the best possible education for all of our students. In order to do this it is vital that each student be allowed to learn unencumbered by distractions or unacceptable activities. The need for academic skills is very high, but so is the need for social skills and safety.

A safe orderly environment is important for learning. We emphasize the positive to promote mutual respect among students and staff. Rules and consequences are meant to serve all students who attend here. In many cases, sections of the California State Education Code are listed to show the basis for many of our rules and decisions regarding consequences. Our administration and staff will carry out these rules and consequences in a fair and firm manner in order to insure every student's right to learn. It is our hope that by showing what steps will be taken, discipline problems can be avoided.

Program Goals

Aggressively encourage each student to remain in school and continue his/her educational progress.

Instill in each student a sense of pride, accomplishment and self worth relative to educational accomplishment.

Return students to the regular program with confidence and enthusiasm.

Maximize each student's academic progress through diagnostic/prescriptive instruction tailored to each student's individual needs.

Strengthen each student's understanding of the relationship that exists between rights and responsibilities in our society.

Eligibility

Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study should contact the principal/program administrator or designee. Approval for participation shall be based on the following criteria:

- Evidence that the student will work independently to complete the program
- Availability of experienced certificated staff with adequate time to effectively supervise the student

A student's participation in independent study shall be voluntary. (Education Code (EC) 51747)

Students participating in independent study must be residents of the local county. (EC 51747.3)

A student with disabilities, as defined in EC 56026, shall not participate in independent study unless his/her individualized education program specifically provides for such participation. (EC 51745)

Textbooks

Textbooks will be assigned directly from the classroom and may be taken home on a daily basis if needed for homework. Students are financially responsible for lost or damaged textbooks.

Report cards will not be mailed until text books are paid for.

Dress Policy

The Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools Office expects students to dress appropriately for school. Any clothes or styles of dress that may cause a threat, have a negative effect, or disrupt the educational process, will not be permitted. The following guidelines are intended to define appropriate student attire:

No student may wear clothing that contains words or graphics that are suggestive or have suggestive double meanings of lewdness, obscenity, or vulgarity.

Clothing advertising or promoting the use of alcohol, drug, or tobacco products is prohibited. Clothing may not contain wording that may be offensive to others because of race or religion.

Any apparel, jewelry, bandanna, accessory, notebook, backpack, or manner of grooming, which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute, denotes to the Administration membership in gangs, or advocates drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior is prohibited.

See-through, midriff, and fishnet blouses, low cut, revealing tops, and muscle shirts that are cut low under the arm are prohibited.

All clothing must be appropriate length.

Appropriate undergarments should be worn but not seen, and pants must be worn at the waist.

Wallet chains are prohibited.

Footwear must be worn at all times.

Board Policy

Educational opportunities offered through Independent Study may include, but are not limited to California Education Code 51745 or in Board Policy (BP) 6158 and Administrative Regulation (AR) 6158 (a).