

# OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

Series 6000

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AR 6158(a)

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## K-12 Independent Study Program

### Criteria for Participation

The Board of Education recognizes the value of supervised Home Independent Study for students in situations where their special interest, abilities, or individual needs are better served in an alternative, non-traditional instructional program. These students must have the willingness and ability to successfully complete the educational requirements of Home Independent Study.

General guidelines include:

- C Average or 2.0 GPA
- STAR score of Basic or above in math and language arts
- Pass score on CAHSEE for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade applicants
- Other evidence of skill and ability to student and learn independently

Students who may be considered for enrollment in Home Independent Study include, but are not limited to, students who:

1. Have an understanding of and a commitment to Home Independent Study.
2. Exhibit the ability and willingness to work independently with limited supervision by the certificated Home Independent Study Teacher and is able to complete the work necessary to advance or graduate.
3. Have learning styles that can best be met through Home Independent Study.
4. Are exceptional or gifted and need in-depth opportunities, which may include concurrent enrollment in post secondary educational programs, or participation in the arts, athletics, etc.
5. Request Home Independent Study because they will be absent from school for five (5) or more consecutive school days per month.
6. Have an acceptable reason for requesting Home Independent Study such as: extended illness, contagious disease, religious purpose, safety issue, extended travel.
7. Have medical and/or psychological problems and choose Home Independent Study in place of Home/Hospital instruction.
8. Have received suspended expulsion (or stay of expulsion), rather than full expulsion, and have been offered Home Independent Study with a classroom option (i.e. enrollment at a traditional or alternative school, charter or county program, opportunity class, community day school, or continuation school).
9. Are genuinely needed at home because of an illness in the family.
10. Are pregnant or have children.

To engage in Home Independent Study, a student with special needs who has an Individualized

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Education Plan (IEP) may do so only to the extent his or her IEP specifies Home Independent Study as an appropriate instructional modality.

## Selection Process

A student who has met the criteria for participation may:

1. Complete a full program of courses.
2. Take a full program of courses and continue or take lab classes (i.e. band, chemistry) at the comprehensive school.
3. Complete an extra or special course outside of the regular school day.
4. Complete courses at a post secondary education institution or through on-line or distance learning sources. For credit to be granted, these courses must be approved in advance by the certificated Home Independent Study Counselor and Administrator.

The selection process is accomplished through a standardized district application. The student should:

1. Complete an application for enrollment at the school office or with the Principal of Home Independent Student Program. If a student is new to the district he/she may request Home Independent Study when enrolling in the district.
2. Meet with the Director, Alternative Education, Counselor or the certificated Home Independent Study teacher to determine if the student meets the criteria for participation.
3. Complete all components for the Home Independent Study Agreement with the certificated teacher.

Finishing the above process completes the student's intake process. Depending upon the availability of a certificated Home Independent Study Teacher, a student should be able to start the Home Independent Study option immediately.

## Student Exit From Home Independent Study

The parent/guardian/caregiver of the student may request a classroom option at any time. This request may come from the parent/guardian/caregiver or school administration. As a general rule, students in grades K-12 may transfer to a classroom option only at the beginning of a new trimester (K-5) or semester (6-12). The certificated teacher, counselor or school administrator will make every effort to counsel the student and parent/guardian/caregiver on the most appropriate option.

The school administrator responsible for the Home Independent Student Program may request a

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change because the student is:

1. Not meeting the obligations set out in the Home Independent Study Agreement, such as timely completion of assignments, excessive absences or missed conferences, refusal to complete assigned tasks;
2. The student is no longer meeting the criteria for participation, such as inability or unwillingness to work independently on assigned tasks; or
3. The student is inappropriately placed in that the program is not able to meet the specific needs of the students for curricular or special needs services.

If a student fails to meet the obligations of the Independent Study Agreement, the following may occur:

1. A letter may be sent to the student and/or parent/guardian/caregiver, indicating lack of progress and reminding all concerned of the student's obligation to complete all independent study assignments on time and to meet at the designated time with his/her supervising teacher.
2. A face-to-face or telephone conference may be held to discuss whether it is in the best interest of the student to continue in independent study.
3. A written record of the outcome of this evaluation will be considered a mandatory interim student record and shall be maintained for three years, excluding the current fiscal year.
  - a. All persons who participated in the evaluation meeting will be noted as well as the date of the meeting.
  - b. If the student transfers to another California public school, the record of the evaluation meeting shall be forward to that school.

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1. All Home Independent Study students must be enrolled in Oak Park Independent School.
2. No course required for high school graduation shall be offered exclusively through Home Independent Study. Note: A student may complete an optional alternative study course as a unique elective course through Home Independent Study and not have a classroom equivalent as long as the classroom option is in place for required district electives.
3. For K-12 ADA purposes, Home Independent Study teacher ADA ratio must not exceed the baseline ratio for other instructional programs in the district.
4. Special education students (individuals with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code 57145) must have an IEP that allows Home Independent Study.
5. No funds or other educational materials of value may be provided to Home Independent

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Study students that are not provided to other students in school.

6. A certificated teacher in the school district must supervise, coordinate, and evaluate the student of each student engaged in Home Independent Study. Assistance to the student in Home Independent Study by any other non-certificated individual must be supervised by the designated certificated teacher or coordinated by him or her, even if the other individual is a certificated employee of the district.
7. Students engaged in Home Independent Study program must be residents of Ventura County or who reside in an adjacent county.
8. Apportionment credit for independent study may be claimed only to the extent of the time value of student work products, as judged by a certificated teacher.
9. No temporarily disabled student may use independent study as a means of instruction for Home/Hospital instruction
10. The curriculum specified in the written Home Independent Study Agreement and subsidiary contracts shall be consistent with Board Policies, Administrative Regulations and Procedures for curriculum and instruction.
11. The curriculum shall be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction.
12. Curriculum must meet district and State content standards to ensure that students are prepared to successfully pass the California High School Exit Exam.
13. Home Independent Study may be an appropriate option for a student who is expected to be absent from school for five (5) or more consecutive school days a month.
14. To receive K-12 apportionment, students who are age 19 or 20 must have been continuously enrolled since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Home Independent Study Agreement

A written Home Independent Study Agreement must be executed for each participating student and be maintained on file in the classroom. The Home Independent Study Agreement requires a learning plan that represents not less than the equivalent of a minimum school day for the student's grade level for every school day covered by the agreement.

The Home Independent Study Agreement shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Name of student, address, grade level, school name/program placement and birth date.
2. Student(s) and course value/credits.
3. Objectives included for student's work as stated on Oak Park Unified School District content standards, course syllabi and Independent Study Assignment Sheet.
4. Method(s) of student (activities to reach objectives) found in syllabi and Independent Study Assignment Sheet.
5. Resources including materials and personnel made available.

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6. Method(s) of evaluation as stated on syllabi and Independent Study Assignment Sheet.
7. Manner of reporting (e.g. small groups, one-on-one, e-mail, fax).
8. Time of meetings with the certificated teacher and student, including day of the week.
9. Location/place of meeting.
10. Frequency of the meetings between the certificated teacher and the student based on student need.
11. Duration of enrollment with beginning and ending dates.
12. Maximum length of enrollment that covers one (1) school semester and/or school year.
13. Dated signatures for each of the following: Student (grades 4-12 only), parent/guardian/caregiver (caregiver affidavit must be on file) (not necessary if adult or emancipated minor), Certificated Teacher, other Teachers who have direct responsibility for providing assistance.
14. Subsidiary Contracts: Assignment sheets and high school course contracts and syllabi are part of the Home Independent Study Agreement when appropriate.
15. A statement two (2) missed assignments will lead to an evaluation of whether the student should continue in Home Independent Study or return to the classroom for his/her best interest. A written record of the outcome of any such evaluation must be retained in the student's permanent record.
16. A statement that sets a maximum length of time which may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the student must submit the assigned work. A student in grades K-8 will have two (2) weeks to complete his/her assignments. In grades 9-12 the student will have four (4) weeks to complete his/her assignments. The teacher may extend the maximum length of time that may elapse when an assignment is due when circumstances justify a longer time. This time period is not to exceed eight (8) weeks.
17. A statement that Home Independent Study is a continuously voluntary educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. Instruction may be provided only if the student is offered a classroom option that is always available. A statement that instruction may be provided for a Education Code 48915 (expulsion) or Education Code 48917 (suspension) student through Home Independent Study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.
18. A statement allowing one or more classes to be added/dropped to the I.S. Agreement during the semester. The Agreement is re-signed and re-dated.

### Home Independent Study Agreement with Subsidiary Contract

Subsidiary Contracts are not required but may be used to support, define, and clarify specific subjects. If Subsidiary Contracts are used, they should be made a part of the Home Independent Study Agreement by specific reference(s).

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Subsidiary Contracts include:

1. Specific subject objectives
2. Specific subject assignments and activities
3. Specific subject resources including materials and personnel
4. Method(s) of evaluation
5. Signatures of students (grades 4-12), certificated teacher and other persons assisting with instruction
6. Dates when Subsidiary Contracts begin and end

## Student Assignment/Work Records

The Student Assignment/Work Records supplements the Home Independent Study Agreement. It contains detailed components of the Home Independent Study Agreement that include:

1. Course of study/subjects
2. Objectives of the assignments
3. Method of study (activities that the student does to complete the objectives)
4. Resource materials (texts, workbooks, videos, computer activities, projects, etc.) and personnel who may be assisting the student to meet the objectives
5. Methods of evaluation and attendance and academic credit
6. Date each assignment is made and complete and submit work assignments by the due date
7. Deal with incomplete assignments, as the certificated teacher requires
8. Grades and/or academic credits earned after the assignment is completed.
9. Attendance credits
10. Signature of certificated teacher.
11. Signature of participating student (grades 4-12 only).

Home Independent Study Agreement and are subject to dismissal if they are late or absent from scheduled appointments or do not submit assigned work by the due dates.

## Student Responsibilities and Rights

The student's legal rights and responsibilities are identified and included in the Home Independent Study Agreement. The student agrees to:

1. Read and understand the conditions listed on the Home Independent Study Agreement.
2. Voluntarily sign the Home Independent Study Agreement.
3. Abide by all terms of the Home Independent Study Agreement.
4. Complete a Home Independent Study application and go through the selection process.

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5. Notify certificated Home Independent Study Teacher in advance for all missed planned school appointments.
6. Complete and submit work assignments by the due date.
7. Deal with incomplete assignments, as the certificated teacher requires.
8. Contact the certificated teacher when assistance is needed.
9. Attend scheduled meetings with teachers. Understand that accepted practice in Home Independent Study is one meeting per week. Meeting frequency can be adjusted, based on student and/or program needs.
10. Ask for a classroom option whenever a student feels that Home Independent Study is not appropriate.

There are no excused absences in Home Independent Study. Students are in violation of the Home Independent Study Agreement and are subject to dismissal if they are late or absent from scheduled appointments or do not submit assigned work by the due dates.

### Parent Responsibilities and Rights

The parent/guardian/caregiver must agree to:

1. Read and understand the conditions listed on the Home Independent Study Agreement.
2. Abide by the terms of the Home Independent Study Agreement including a commitment to, and the support and guidance of, the student in Home Independent Study.
3. Voluntarily sign the Home Independent Study Agreement. Signatures will include both parties in joint custody cases.
4. Notify the certificated Home Independent Study Teacher in advance when the student will be away from school.
5. Ensure the student completes all assignments by the due date.
6. Ensure the student keeps all appointments.
7. Furnish transportation to a school site, if necessary.
8. Act as a support system for the student in the discipline of completing work independently.
9. Understand they have the right to review the program of instruction and revoke the Home Independent Study Agreement at any time.

### Independent Study Teachers

The Oak Park Unified School District recognizes that one of the most important factors in the success of the student in independent study is the appropriate selection of teachers. An independent study teacher may:

1. Have the human relation and teamwork skills and actions to effectively deal with a wide

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variety of students and students' needs, as well as the parent/guardian/caregiver and other staff members.

2. Incorporate a variety of strategies to ensure student achievement.
3. Assign, coordinate, evaluate and oversee the student's completion of courses that meet grade level and District and State content standards.
4. Complete and accurately maintain required documents for the audit trail.
5. Have the ability to act as teacher, counselor, coach, mentor, and student advocate.
6. Keep the student and parents/guardians/caregivers informed of the student's progress or lack of progress.
7. Participate in curriculum development, materials selection, staff development and professional growth activities.

In additional, Independent Study teachers must have:

1. A valid teaching credential issued by the State Board of Education or the Commission for Teacher Preparation.
2. Student teaching.
3. A special fitness to perform.
4. Consented to teach Independent Study
5. Certified as NCLB compliant (Highly Qualified)

## Supervising Teacher

Each independent study student shall have only one supervising teacher whole duties are to:

1. Continually oversee the student's educational plan, allocate resources and evaluate student progress.
2. Generally supervise, coordinate and evaluate the work of each student they are assigned.
3. Personally determine or review a determination made by another certificated teacher of the time value of the student's completed work.
4. Complete, verify, and sign attendance documents.
5. Complete, verify, and submit all records for audit trail.
6. Provide instruction and assignments that are aligned with the Oak Park Unified School District course of study and California Content Standards.
7. Supervise student's study and evaluate coursework completed by the student
8. Assess all student work for attendance credit.
9. Select and save representative samples of student's completed and evaluated assignments.
10. Maintain and keep current any required records and files.
11. Determine and assign grades or other approved measures of the student's achievement when appropriate.
12. Keep parents and administrator informed of the student's progress when appropriate and in



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a timely manner.

13. Counsel and coach for the student's success.
14. Work on Oak Park Unified School District educational and curriculum committees.
15. Continue to grow professionally through a staff development plan, including participation in school-based inservice and study group activities.

## Administration of Home Independent Study

The Director, Alternative Education shall:

1. Ensure the Home Independent Study occurs in accordance with state law and district policy and regulations.
2. Approve the participation of students requesting Home Independent Study.
3. Facilitate and monitor all paperwork and procedures for Home Independent Study.
4. Establish and maintain in a systematic manner all records required by state law and regulations.
5. Approve all academic credits and attendance earned through Home Independent Study.
6. Authorize the selection of all staff members who are assigned to supervise Home Independent Study.
7. Supervise and evaluate staff.
8. Develop and participate in a staff development program for Home Independent Study.
9. Prepare or coordinate the preparation of all necessary records and reports.
10. Develop and manage the budget for Home Independent Study.
11. Provide a smooth transition into and out of the Home Independent Study mode of instruction.
12. Continue to grow professionally through a staff development plan and maintain CCIS membership.

The administrator shall incorporate into the program procedures appropriate use of strategies with the aim of increasing pupil achievement as well as reducing and preventing failures. They include:

1. A letter of concern to the student and parent if appropriate.
2. A specially scheduled appointment.
3. A special meeting with the teacher and/or counselor.
4. A meeting with the administrator, including the parent/guardian/caregiver.
5. Placing the student on a student discipline contract.
6. Referring the student to a Student Study Team (SST).
7. Referring the student to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB).
8. Increasing the amount of time the student meets with a teacher or in an equivalent supervised

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situation.

9. Terminating the Home Independent Study Agreement and recommendation for the student's return to a regular classroom option or other appropriate alternative.

## Work Samples

Representative samples of original work of the student evaluated by a certificated teacher must be on file. Representative samples are defined as examples for each class representing student work product where ADA was reported for attendance. A representative work sample is one per course during a semester.

The work samples should include the identification of the:

1. Certificated teacher signature or initials indicating personal evaluation of the work or has personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teacher
2. Date of assessment evaluation for attendance credit
3. Subject/course
4. Student's name
5. Academic evaluation

## Attendance

Attendance procedures for Home Independent Study must meet the following attendance requirements.

Kindergarten	3 hours per day or 15 hours per week
Grades 1 to 12	4 hours per day or 20 hours per week

Home Independent Study attendance credit is based on the completed work product of the student. ADA is based on the Home Independent Study teacher's judgment of the time value of each work product. Work assignments must be equivalent to the full school day assignments that would have been required of the student if the student were in the classroom option. If the work is completed by the due date, attendance credit may be claimed providing the student's completed work is equivalent to the minimum day for the specified grade level. For K-12, attendance is recorded in days.

Home Independent Study attendance must:

1. Be on a separate state approved attendance register.
2. Be approved by the State Department of Education if a school/program is using an alternative

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and/or computerized attendance report.

3. Match teacher records with attendance reports.
4. Be recorded in whole days for apportionment of at least the applicable minimum day for K-12 with maximum ADA of five (5) days per week.
5. Work will not be accepted after the due date of attendance credit. Student's work may be accepted for academic credit after the due date.
6. Excessive days/hours of work cannot be "banked" and must be reported for some period of time when a student does not turn in work equal to the minimum number of days/hours.
7. Include signature or initials of certificated teacher on attendance records.

### Records

Records shall be maintained for each student in Home Independent Study. These records will be maintained by the certificated teacher and housed in the Home Independent Study classroom. Units of credit in Home Independent Study may be applied toward promotion to the next grade or towards graduation.

The following records must be available for an audit and shall include, but not be limited to:

1. A copy of the District Board Policy and Administrative Regulations pertaining to Home Independent Study.
2. A file for each student containing: enrollment documents including Inter- or Intra-District Transfer Permits (if applicable); Home Independent Study Agreement and any Subsidiary Contracts; Student Assignment Records; representative samples of completed work by the student and evaluated by a certificated teacher; record of attendance, credits, grades, and other evaluations of Home Independent Study assignment; student transcripts for high school students (transcript will be from the school of record).
3. A list of all students, by grade level and school, who have participated or are currently participating in Home Independent Study, showing "credits attempted" and "awarded to" each student and a record of the student's attendance.
4. A list of Home Independent Study teachers that includes their teaching assignments.
5. A written record of findings of an evaluation regarding non-producing/non-attending students.
6. A letter of approval for system of accounting (computerized) from California Department of Education.

All records are to be kept for three (3) years and made available for auditors. Student transcripts are kept permanently.

Units earned may be applied toward graduation and therefore shall be coordinated with the

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school involved. The high school shall certify Home Independent Study students for graduation providing they meet all of the requirements. In the event there is a dispute relative to the credits given, the parents and student have the right to appeal.

## Physical Education

The Oak Park Unified School District will allow students to be exempted from regular physical education classes if they are participating in an approved Independent Study Physical Education Program as outlined in these regulations. Students who are competing at an advanced, pre-professional, or professional level of competition may apply for independent study after the off-campus instructor or agency has met district requirements for approval.

## Criteria and Eligibility

1. Independent study Physical Education must develop proficiency, knowledge, and skills that cannot be achieved within an in-school program.
2. The time spent in instruction must equal or exceed a minimum of ten (10) hours per week, not to include competition or performances.
3. Independent study Physical Education may be graded on an A-F grading system.
4. Senior high school students may use the independent study Physical Education exemption to meet some or all of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Physical Education II requirement.
5. Students participating in independent study Physical Education must meet the District criteria for eligibility as well as administrator approved site criteria.
6. An Independent Study Master Agreement must be completed prior to the beginning of independent study Physical Education.

## Independent Study Physical Education Agency Procedures

1. Off-campus schools, institutions, and instructors shall provide evidence of background and experience in a written application to the District requesting authorization to serve students in an Independent Study Physical Education Program.
2. The District requires verification of insurance coverage of both the instructor and the agency by requiring a Certificate of Insurance naming the Oak Park Unified School District as an additional insured, in the minimum amount of \$300,000 combined single limit which includes

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bodily injury and property damage and a hold harmless clause. If the instructor is an independent contractor at the facility where instruction will be provided, both instructor and facility must provide a Certificate of Insurance naming the Oak Park Unified School District as an additional insured and a hold harmless clause. An Endorsement must accompany the Certificate of Insurance.

3. The off campus schools, institutions, and instructors must be willing to cooperate fully with the District in the conduct of the program in regards to the quality of instruction, dates and times of meeting, attendance records, immediate supervision of the student, and evaluation of the student's performance and progress. Failure to satisfy these requirements will result in forfeiture of the right to conduct an Independent Study Physical Education Program with the Oak Park Unified School District.

## Student/Parent Procedures

1. A written request for independent study Physical Education is to be submitted no later than the first week in May for the fall semester and no later than the first week in January for the spring semester.
2. Submit a hold harmless agreement signed by the parent which holds the District harmless from any liability or claims as a result of the independent study.

## Transportation and Other Costs

1. Transportation to and from independent study Physical Education is the responsibility of the student and parent.
2. The District will not be expected to provide any instructional supplies, textbooks, equipment or other materials for the independent study Physical Education program and/or activities.
3. There will be no cost incurred to the District for a student's participation in any program covered by these regulations.

Adopted: 12-4-01

Amended: 9-19-06, 6-08, 2-10, 2-11