

Independent Study **Board Policy**



“Climbing Toward College & Career Readiness”

ACS—K-2 Campus: 6555 Sylmar Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401 - Office: (818) 994-2904 Fax: (818) 994-8096

ACS—2-5 Campus: 13400 Erwin St., Van Nuys, CA 91401 - Office: (818) 994-2904 Fax: (818) 786-3627

Website: www.araratcharterschool.com

Inspiring Collaboration, Innovation, & Empowerment

INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

Ararat Charter School (“Charter School”), may offer independent study to meet the educational needs of pupils enrolled in the Charter 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 purpose of independent study is to accommodate non-vacation travel plans, illness, or other extenuating circumstances that prohibit the student from accessing on-campus instruction. The maximum length of independent study is fifteen (15) cumulative school days. Independent Study request forms are available in the main office. The Charter School shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study successfully. The following written policies have been adopted by the Charter School Board of Directors for implementation at Charter School:

1. For pupils in all grade levels and programs offered by the Charter School, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work shall be **twenty (20) school days**.
2. 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:
 - a. When any pupil fails to complete **three (3)** assignments during any period of **twenty (20) school days**.
 - b. In the event a student’s educational progress falls below satisfactory levels as determined by the Charter School’s Student Study Team (“SST”) procedures, 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 conducted pursuant to this policy 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.

3. The Charter School shall provide content aligned to grade level standards that is substantially equivalent to in-person instruction.
4. A current written agreement shall be maintained on file for each independent study pupil, including but not limited to, all of the following:

- a. 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.
- b. The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- h. 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.
- i. For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for fifteen (15) school days or fewer, each written agreement shall be signed during the year in which the independent study program takes place, 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 the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable. The written agreement may be signed at any time during the school year, but it is the intent of the Legislature that parents or guardians of pupils be provided the agreement at or before the beginning of the school year. 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 be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the California Department of Education, that may be a marking that is either computer generated or produced by electronic means and is intended by the signatory to have the same effect as a handwritten signature. The use of an electronic signature shall have the same force and effect as the use of a manual signature if the requirements for digital signatures and their acceptable technology, as provided in Section 16.5 of the Government Code and in Chapter 10

(commencing with Section 22000) of Division 7 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, are satisfied.

5. An individual with exceptional needs, as defined in Section 56026, may participate in independent study, if the pupil's individualized education program developed pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 56340) of Chapter 4 of Part 30 specifically provides for that participation. If a parent or guardian of an individual with exceptional needs requests independent study pursuant to paragraph (5) of subdivision (a), the pupil's individualized education program team shall make an individualized determination as to whether the pupil can receive a free appropriate public education in an independent study placement. A pupil's inability to work independently, the pupil's need for adult support, or the pupil's need for special education or related services shall not preclude the individualized education program team from determining that the pupil can receive a free appropriate education in an independent study placement.
6. The Charter School may comply with the Education Code sections 51744 through 51749.3, and the provisions of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and the State Board of Education regulations adopted there under.
7. The Principal may establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.