

DAILEY ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Morris E. Dailey Elementary School (“Charter School”) Governing Board, Fresno Innovative Charter Schools, Inc. (“FICS”) hereby adopts the following policy governing independent study.

Independent Study is an option for any student who will be absent for a period of a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of fourteen (14) school days. A student may not participate in short-term independent study pursuant to this policy for more than fourteen (14) cumulative school days in a school year. Further absences will be addressed in accordance with the Charter School’s attendance policy and may be considered unexcused and/or lead to truancy prevention measures, depending on the nature of the absence.

Independent Study requires approval from the Executive Director or designee in writing. To the extent possible, requests for independent study should be submitted at least five (5) days before a planned absence. The Executive Director’s considerations may include, but are not limited to, the student’s current academic standing, the student’s grade level, the timing during the grading period, the purpose of the absence for which independent study is requested, previous participation in independent study, and input from teachers, MTSS team or IEP team as applicable. The Executive Director shall not deny a request for independent study on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, gender, mental or physical disability or on the basis of any other protected characteristic, either actual or perceived.

Independent Study is conducted solely for the educational benefit of the students attending Dailey Elementary Charter School as a means to encourage daily engagement in schoolwork even during times of extended absence. No student is required to request or participate in an Independent Study program during an extended absence. Parents are to give **at least five (5) school days’ notice** of a request for Independent Study. In an extenuating circumstance (i.e., serious illness, injury, or family emergency), with prior approval from the Executive Director or designee, the student’s teacher will work with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to implement an Independent Study program in an expedited manner with less than five (5) school days’ notice. To the extent possible during a student’s extended absence, the Charter School shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable each student to complete his/her Independent Study successfully.

The FICS Board has adopted the following written policies for implementation at the Charter School:

- (a) For all students in all grades at Dailey Elementary Charter School in the Independent Study program, the maximum amount of time that may elapse from the time an assignment is made until the date by which a student must complete and return an assignment to his/her teacher via an in-person meeting, facsimile, mail, or other credible method of meeting and review, shall be ten (10) school days.

- (b) The Executive Director 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 a student fails to complete three (3) or more Independent Study assignments during any period of ten (10) school days
 - b) In the event Student's educational progress falls below satisfactory levels as determined by the Charter School's Charter Petition 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 committee made up of the student's teacher(s) and the Executive Director or designee, shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to continue in the Independent Study program at Charter School. A written record of the findings of such an evaluation conducted pursuant to this Policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record and placed in the student's permanent record. This record shall be maintained for a period of three (3) years from the date of the evaluation. If the student transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

- (c) The Charter School shall provide content aligned to grade level standards that is provided at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction.
- (d) A current written Independent Study master agreement for each student shall be maintained on file. Each agreement shall be signed and dated and in effect prior to the start of reporting average daily attendance (ADA) pursuant to that agreement. Each student's Independent Study master agreement shall be renewed each semester, if necessary, and shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
- 1. The manner, time, frequency and place for submitting a student's assignments and for reporting his or her progress, and for communicating with a pupil's parent or guardian regarding a pupil's academic progress.
 - 2. The objectives and methods of study for the student'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 student. 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.

4. A statement of the policies adopted pursuant to Education Code Section 51747, subdivisions (a) and (b) regarding the maximum length of time allotted between the assignment and the completion of a student's assigned work, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments prior to an evaluation of whether or not the student should be allowed to continue in Independent Study.
5. The duration of the Independent Study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in Independent Study under the agreement. No Independent Study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than fourteen (14) cumulative days in a school year.
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 student upon completion.
7. 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.
8. The inclusion of a statement that Independent Study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. In the case of a pupil who is referred or assigned to any school, class or program pursuant to Education Code Section 48915 (expulsion) or 48917 (suspended expulsion), 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.
9. Each written agreement shall be signed, prior to the commencement of Independent Study, by the student, the student's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the student 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 other persons who have direct responsibility for providing instructional assistance to the student. 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.

(d) Attendance Accounting:

Charter School recognizes that families may not evenly distribute student's work assignments over weekdays. However, due to strict State law requirements for charter school attendance, Charter School expects each student to be engaged in an educational activity required of them in the assignment on each weekday that Charter School is in session, and asks that this "daily engagement" be documented on a daily basis in the student log by the parent/guardian. Students may be required to submit to or complete work in a digital assignment tracking system. This should not be read to prohibit schoolwork on weekends and should not be read to dictate the manner in which a family distributes the assignments over the Independent Study period.

Charter School asks that a student's parent/guardian refrain from documenting any "daily engagement" on a day where the student did not engage in any educational activity required of them by the assignment. Work done on weekends or other days when school is not in session cannot be used to "make-up" weekdays where no "daily engagement" occurred.

- (e) Charter School shall comply with the Education Code Sections 51745 through 51749.3 and the provisions of the Charter School's Act and the State Board of Education regulations adopted there under.
- (f) The Executive Director may establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.