



## BOARD POLICY ON INDEPENDENT STUDY

John Adams Academy-Roseville, John Adams Academy-El Dorado Hills, John Adams Academy-Lincoln, and any other John Adams Academy charter school (hereinafter, "Charter School") may offer independent study to meet the educational needs of scholars enrolled in the Charter School. Independent study is an alternative education designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. The Principal or designee retains discretion to approve independent study for scholars. Charter School will provide appropriate services, supports, technology and resources to enable scholars to complete their independent study program successfully. These independent study policies have been established by Charter School in alignment with Education Code ("EC") § 51744 et seq. and adopted pursuant to EC § 51747 and 5 C.C.R. § 11701:

1. For each scholar in independent study, Charter School will assign a certificated employee to coordinate, evaluate, and provide general supervision of the scholar's independent study instruction.
2. For scholars in all grade levels offered by Charter School, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the scholar must complete the assigned work shall be twenty (20) schooldays. For independent study terms lasting less than twenty (20) schooldays, assigned work must be completed during the independent study term and turned in to Charter School upon return of the scholar to the regular program.
3. When any scholar fails to complete 50% of assignments during period of twenty (20) schooldays (e.g., missing 50% of schooldays in a calendar month for attendance purposes) or fails to make satisfactory educational progress (defined below in Section 4), the Charter School will conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interests of the scholar to remain in independent study, or whether the scholar should return to or otherwise be placed in a regular in-person school program. An evaluation may consist of reviewing the scholar's performance on state mandated assessments (e.g., CAASPP), performance on internal assessments, attendance, grades, coursework, hard and soft skills, and other relevant indicators of success in an independent study program, as well as feedback from the supervising teacher and other staff. The evaluation may also consist of a meeting between Charter School staff, the scholar, and the scholar's

parent/guardian if the scholar is less than 18 years of age to discuss the scholar's ability to succeed in an independent study environment.

- a. As a result of the evaluation, if the Charter School in its sole discretion determines that the scholar may remain in independent study, the Charter School may restrict the scholar's privileges to participate in nonacademic activities, including socials, dances, athletics, walking at graduation, eligibility to run for scholar government, etc., as applicable to the scholar. The Principal or his or her designee retains discretion to apply the consequences in a manner to protect and support the scholar, as the Charter School strives towards ensuring all scholars are successful.
- b. As a result of the evaluation, if the Charter School in its sole discretion determines that the scholar should return to or otherwise be placed in a regular in-person school program, the scholar may be subject to disenrollment. The parent/guardian will be provided with written notice of intent to disenroll the scholar at least five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action. The notice will inform the parent/guardian of their right to request a hearing by a neutral Charter School official.

A written record of the findings of any evaluation will be maintained in the scholar's permanent record. This record will be maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation and if the scholar transfers to another California public school, the record will be forwarded to that school.

4. A scholar is deemed to be making satisfactory educational progress if the scholar is on track to enter the next grade level at the completion of the current school year and/or progressing toward their goals pursuant to their individualized education program ("IEP"). The Principal or designee is responsible for making this determination based on all of the following indicators:
  - a. The scholar's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the scholar's performance on scholar-level measures of scholar achievement and scholar engagement set forth in EC § 52060(d)(4)-(5).
  - b. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that show the scholar is working on assignments.
  - c. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.
  - d. Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

5. Charter School will provide content to scholars aligned to grade level standards that is substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high school scholars, this includes access to all courses offered by the Charter School for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A-G admissions criteria.
6. For scholars who participate in independent study at Charter School for at least sixteen (16) schooldays per year:

6.1 If a scholar does not generate attendance for more than 10 percent of required minimum instructional time over four continuous weeks of Charter School's approved instructional calendar, scholars found not participatory in synchronous instruction pursuant to Section 51747.5 for more than 50 percent of the scheduled times of synchronous instruction in a school month as applicable by grade span, or scholars who are in violation of their independent study written agreement, Charter School shall engage in procedures including:

- a. Verify scholar's current contact information;
- b. Notify parents or guardians of lack of participation within one schoolday of the recording of a non-attendance day or lack of participation (e.g., via email, message, text, telephone, letter, etc.);
- c. Reach out to the scholar directly and/or parents or guardians, as well as health and social services as necessary, to determine scholar's needs for reengagement;
- d. If the scholar has failed to complete 50% of assignments during period of twenty (20) schooldays (e.g., missing 50% of schooldays in a calendar month for attendance purposes) or is failing to make satisfactory educational progress as defined in Section 4 herein, Charter School will schedule a scholar-parent-educator conference (a meeting involving all individuals who signed the scholar's written agreement) to review the scholar's written agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the scholar's achievement and well-being; and
- e. Implement any Charter School programs intended to address chronic absenteeism, as applicable

6.2 Based on each scholar's grade level, they will be offered opportunities for synchronous instruction and daily live interaction at least as frequently as set forth in subsections a-c below.

“Live interaction” means interaction between the scholar and Charter School staff, and may include peers, to maintain school connectedness. Examples of live interaction include check-ins, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction, and live interaction can be in-person or in the form of internet or telephonic communication.

“Synchronous instruction” means classroom-style instruction, designated small-group instruction, or one-on-one instruction delivered in person or in the form of internet or telephonic communication by the scholar’s teacher(s) of record, and involving live two-way communication.

- a. For scholars in grades TK-3, inclusive, their teacher(s) of record will schedule and offer opportunities for daily synchronous instruction.
- b. For scholars in grades 4-8, inclusive, their teacher(s) of record will offer opportunities for weekly synchronous instruction and the Charter School will offer opportunities for daily live interaction.
- c. For scholars in grades 9-12, inclusive, their teacher(s) of record will offer opportunities for weekly synchronous instruction.

Charter School will document each scholar’s participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction pursuant to Section 51747 on each schoolday, as applicable, in whole or in part, for which live interaction or synchronous instruction is provided as part of the independent study program. (See EC § 51747.5(c).)

6.3 A scholar’s parent or guardian may request their scholar return to in-person instruction from independent study by making a written request to the Principal or his or her designee or their supervising teacher. If there is capacity in Charter School’s in-person program at the scholar’s grade level, Charter School will transition the scholar to the in-person program within five (5) schooldays. If there is not capacity in Charter School’s in-person program at the scholar’s grade level, Charter School will transition the scholar to an in-person program by connecting the parent or guardian to in-person programming offered by their district of residence and offering the scholar an opportunity to join Charter School’s in-person program waitlist within five (5) schooldays.

6.4 Sections 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 of this policy do not apply to scholars who, under the care of appropriately licensed professionals, participate in independent study due to necessary medical treatments or inpatient treatment for mental health care or substance abuse. Charter School shall obtain evidence from appropriately

licensed professionals of the need for scholars to participate in independent study pursuant to this Section 6.4.

7. A written independent study master agreement for each independent study scholar will be maintained on file. Written agreements may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts and assignment and work records. To the extent there is a conflict between a written agreement and this Policy, the Policy will govern. The master agreement will contain the following:
  - a. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a scholar's assignments, for reporting the scholar's academic progress, and for communicating with a scholar's parent or guardian regarding a scholar's academic progress.
  - b. The objectives and methods of study for the scholar's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
  - c. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, which will be made available to the scholar. These resources will include confirming or providing access to all scholars to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.
  - d. A statement of the policies adopted herein regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a scholar's assigned work, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed prior to an evaluation of whether or not the scholar should be allowed to continue in independent study.
  - e. The duration of the independent study agreement, including beginning and ending dates for the scholar's participation in independent study under the agreement. No independent study agreement will 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 scholar upon completion.
  - g. A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of scholars 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 scholar's IEP or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), scholars in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and scholars 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 scholar may be required to participate. In the case of a scholar who is referred or assigned to any school, class or program pursuant to EC § 48915 or 48917, the agreement also will include the statement that instruction may be provided to the scholar through independent study only if the scholar is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.
- i. Charter School will comply with the written independent study agreement signature requirements set forth in EC § 51747(g)(9), including:
- For a scholar participating in independent study that is scheduled for fifteen (15) or fewer schooldays (must obtain signatures during the school year in which the independent study program takes place): Charter School will obtain a signed written agreement from the scholar, the scholar's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the scholar 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 scholar, as applicable, during the school year in which the independent study program takes place. It is the intent of the Board that parents or guardians of scholars will be provided the template agreement at or before the beginning of the school year.
  - For a scholar participating in independent study that is scheduled for sixteen (16) or more schooldays (must obtain signatures before independent study instruction): Each independent study agreement will be signed, prior to the commencement of independent study, by the scholar, the scholar's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the scholar 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 scholar, as applicable. 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.
- j. Before signing a written agreement pursuant to EC § 51747, the parent or guardian of a scholar may request that the Charter School conduct a telephone, videoconference, or in-person scholar-parent-educator

conference or other school meeting during which the scholar, parent or guardian, and, if requested by the scholar or parent, an education advocate, may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the scholar in independent study, before making the decision about enrollment or disenrollment in the various options for learning.

8. Charter School will maintain written or computer-based evidence of scholar engagement that includes, but is not limited to, a grade book or summary document that, for each class, lists all assignments, assessments, and associated grades.
9. Charter School may claim apportionment credit for independent study only to the extent of the time value of scholar work products, as personally judged in each instance by a certificated teacher employed by the Charter School, or the combined time value of scholar work products and scholar participation in synchronous instruction.
  - a. For purposes of this section, “scholar work products” may include the daily time value spent by a scholar engaged in asynchronous instruction, including work completed on an online or computer-based instructional activity, regardless of whether scholar work products are produced, if the computer program documents scholar participation. Charter School shall maintain documentation of each hour or fraction of an hour of both scholar work products (i.e., by assigning a time value to scholar work products) and the time that the scholar engaged in asynchronous instruction (e.g., tracking of time spent in asynchronous instruction).
  - b. For purposes of this section, “scholar participation in synchronous instruction” may include, but is not limited to, scholar work produced or performed, or documentation that the scholar participated in an instructional period either visually or verbally, as verified by a certificated employee and maintained by the Charter School for each hour or fraction thereof of the synchronous instructional offering.
10. Charter School will comply with all applicable law regarding independent study, including ADA-to-certificated teacher ratio requirements and course-based independent study requirements (if applicable). (EC § 51744 et seq.; 5 C.C.R. § 11700 et seq.)