

Achieve Charter School Independent Study Policy

Achieve Charter School of Paradise, Inc., which operates Achieve Charter School of Paradise, Achieve Charter High School, and Achieve Charter School of Chico (collectively, “Achieve” or the “Charter School”) may offer independent study to meet the educational needs of pupils enrolled in the Charter School. Independent study is an alternative education designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. Achieve 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 Board for implementation at Achieve:

For pupils in all grade levels offered by Achieve, 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 20 school days.

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:

- When any pupil fails to complete one assignment during any period of 10 school days.
- In the event a student’s educational progress falls below satisfactory levels as determined by the Charter School’s grading policy which considers ALL of the following indicators:
 - 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).
 - The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the pupil is working on assignments.
 - Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.
 - 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. This 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.

The Charter School shall provide content aligned to grade level standards For high school grade levels this shall include access to all courses offered by the Charter School for graduation and approved by the UC or CSU as creditable under the A-G admissions criteria.

For students who participate in independent study for fifteen (15) or more days in one school year, the Charter School has adopted tiered reengagement strategies for the following pupils:

- All pupils who are not generating attendance for more than 10 percent of required minimum instructional time over four continuous weeks of the Charter School's approved instructional calendar;
- Pupils found not participatory pursuant to Education Code Section 51747.5 for more than 50 percent of the scheduled days of synchronous instruction in a school month as applicable by grade span; or
- Pupils who are in violation of the written agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(g).

These procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following legal requirements:

- Verification of current contact information for each enrolled pupil;
- Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one (1) school day of the recording of a non-attendance day or lack of participation;
- A plan for outreach from the Charter School to determine pupil needs including connection with health and social services as necessary;
- A clear standard for requiring a pupil-parent-educator conference to review a pupil's written agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the pupil's achievement and well-being, consistent with the policies adopted pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (g) of Education Code Section 51747.

The Charter School's tiered reengagement procedures additionally shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following:

- All students and families are expected to check in with their teacher or classroom aide daily, through online interaction, work completion, or phone conference.
- Online participation and/or work completion during independent study is the equivalent of taking attendance when a student is on campus.
- Students who do not check in or complete work during independent study will be marked absent.
- Students who are determined to fall under one of the criteria listed in section 4(a)-(c) above shall be supported by our tiered reengagement process.
 - Tier 1
 - The Achieve school office will call or email to confirm the absence of a student, if the absence is not reported that day by a parent/guardian.
 - ACS teachers or other ACS employees will attempt to make contact with the student and parent to verify the contact information and to notify the parent/guardian of the student's absence/non-participation within one (1) day of the recording of non-attendance or non-participation.
 - Tier 2
 - Students will be reported to school administration.

Administration will reach out and determine the cause for the absence. The school administration member will:

- Ensure that communication with the parent is working, phone dialer, emails, and internet access
 - Determine if there is a breakdown in communication and make any corrections
 - Determine if the lack of participation is due to a lack of access to means of communication or connectivity and the Charter School will take the necessary steps to ensure the issue is resolved.
 - Parent/guardian will be informed that continued absences from independent study could lead to further interventions, including:
 - A pupil-parent-educator conference
 - Development of an Attendance Plan through the Student Study Team (SST) process
 - Through the SST process, other forms of support will also be discussed such as additional time needed, emotional or mental health supports, and potential greater academic supports and interventions
 - As a last resort, discussion of repeating the grade level content, either over the summer, or during the following school year
- Tier 3
 - If the reengagement strategies in Tiers 1 & 2 fail to improve independent study attendance, then a follow-up SST will be held. The administrator may develop an attendance plan that includes:
 - Teacher engagement
 - Both reward and consequences for further attendance
 - Review of the family circumstance for outside connection with health and social service
 - Discussion of repeating the grade level content, either over the summer or during the following school year¹

For students who participate in independent study for fifteen (15) or more days in one school year, the following plan shall be in place in accordance with Education Code Section 51747(e) for synchronous instruction and live interaction:

- For pupils in transitional kindergarten through grade 3, inclusive, the plan to

¹ The tiered reengagement strategies shall not apply to independent study offered due to school closure or material decrease in attendance for 15 school days or less for affected pupils under one or more of the circumstances described in Education Code Sections 46392 and 46393 for which the Charter School files an affidavit seeking an allowance of attendance due to emergency conditions.

provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:

- All students and families will check in with their teacher or classroom aide daily, through online interaction, work completion, or phone conference. Students will be provided with links to view the morning assembly and classroom instruction and access to online learning platforms.
- For pupils in grades 4-8, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for daily live interaction between the pupil and a certificated or non-certificated employee of the Charter School and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:
 - All students and families will check in with their teacher or classroom aide daily, through online interaction, work completion, or phone conference. Students will be provided with links to view the morning assembly and classroom instruction and access to online learning platforms.
- For pupils in grades 9-12, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:
 - All students and families will check in with their teacher or classroom aide daily, through online interaction, work completion, or phone conference. Students will be provided with links to view the morning assembly and classroom instruction and access to online learning platforms.²

For students who participate in independent study for fifteen (15) or more days in one school year, the following plan shall be utilized to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, and, in no case, later than five instructional days:

- The student will be included in in-person instruction the following day after the school receives notice from the student's family.³

Pupils enrolled in a comprehensive school for classroom-based instruction 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, are not subject to the

² The plan for synchronous instruction and live interaction shall not apply to independent study offered due to school closure or material decrease in attendance for 15 school days or less for affected pupils under one or more of the circumstances described in Education Code Sections 46392 and 46393 for which the Charter School files an affidavit seeking an allowance of attendance due to emergency conditions.

³ The plan to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction shall not apply to independent study offered due to school closure or material decrease in attendance for 15 school days or less for affected pupils under one or more of the circumstances described in Education Code Sections 46392 and 46393 for which the Charter School files an affidavit seeking an allowance of attendance due to emergency conditions.

tiered reengagement, live interaction, synchronous instruction, nor return to in-person instruction provisions described above. The School shall obtain evidence from appropriately licensed professionals of the need for pupils to participate in independent study pursuant to this subdivision.

A current written agreement shall be maintained on file for each independent study pupil, including but not limited to, all of the following:

- 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.
- The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods utilized to evaluate that work.
- 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.
- 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 prior to an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
- The duration of the independent study agreement, including 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 Education Code 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.

For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for more than 14 school days, each written agreement shall be signed, before the commencement of independent study, 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.

For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for less than 15 school days, each written agreement shall be signed within 10 school days of the commencement of the first day of the pupil's enrollment in independent study, 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.

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.

Before signing a written agreement pursuant to this policy, a parent or guardian may request that the School shall conduct a phone, videoconference, or in-person pupil-parent-educator conference or other school meeting during which the pupil, parent or guardian, and, if requested by the pupil or parent, an education advocate, may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the pupil in independent study, before making the decision about enrollment or disenrollment in the various options for learning.

Achieve shall comply with Education Code Sections 51745 through 51749.3 and the provisions of the Charter Schools Act and the State Board of Education regulations adopted there under.

The Executive Director may establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.

Adopted: 01.17.17

Ammended: 09.19.18, 08.17.21, 11.17.21, 8.24.22