



ORCUTT Union School District

Where a Dedicated Staff Means Kids Come First

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August 5, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As you may be aware, the California Legislature passed AB 130, which changed the requirements and qualifications for independent study. For the 2021-2022 school year only, the District will offer independent study to include those students whose parents/guardians determine that the student's health is put at risk by in-person instruction. A student with an individualized education program (IEP) may only participate in independent study if their IEP provides for it.

Independent study can be a suitable option for some students, but it may not be right for every student. Some students are better served in an educational setting that is classroom-based and offers a smaller learning environment and more individualization. Generally, independent study requires motivation and a strong commitment on the part of the student and, especially for young students, commitment on the part of the parent/guardian.

Please know that independent study is not the same as distance learning from the past school year. For the most part, a student on independent study will learn independently, without teacher instruction, and parents/guardians will be responsible for overseeing their children. Moreover, there will be significantly less live interaction and synchronous learning in grades K-8; for grades 9-12 there will be little to no live interaction and significantly less synchronous learning. Furthermore, related services provided for in your student's IEP will no longer be provided as they were through distance learning. IEP services will, for the most part, be provided on campus only, whether or not your student is enrolled in independent study. Again, if your child has an IEP, they may only participate in independent study if their IEP provides for it.

You may request a time to meet with the IEP team to discuss if the independent study program is an appropriate placement. At the IEP meeting, you will be able to ask questions about the educational options, including curriculum offerings, what nonacademic supports will be available to your student in independent study, and what services in the IEP will be delivered on campus. The IEP team will review the District's offer of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), compared to the independent study program. If the IEP team determines that the independent study program is not a FAPE, your request to enroll your student in the independent study program will be denied. Please contact Rusty Gordon, Executive Director of Special Education at 805-938-8960 if you would like to request an IEP meeting to discuss possible enrollment of your student in independent study. For more information regarding the independent study program, please go to the District website at <https://www.orcuttschools.net/oais>