

Independent Study (Administrative Rule)

Code # 343.03AR

The purpose of the independent study program in the Tri-County Area School District shall be to provide meaningful, individual educational experiences for students in which they have optimal involvement in initiating, planning and evaluating the program. Independent study may vary in length of time from study projects of several weeks within a given course, to programs for a semester or year-long duration. These experiences will make available content and/or materials and personnel resources not available or practical in regular classroom study.

Although guidance, contractual procedures, and assessment will be under the leadership of professional personnel at the school, independent study may take the student into the greater school community for experiences under the co-sponsorship of people in other professions, business, government or industry. The range of opportunities for independent study and eligibility shall be established by the students and professional staff, and shall be thoroughly discussed with students to insure their awareness of such programs.

Guidelines:

A. Development of a Program. As staff allocation and other factors permit, independent study programs shall be developed for high school students. The following guidelines shall be implemented when an independent study program is established:

1. The program is established as part of, in lieu of, or in addition to regular courses and may vary in time from several weeks to a semester or a full school year.
2. The program normally will be for credit when completed as part of the work or, in lieu of work, for a credit-bearing course.
3. A faculty sponsor-advisor to whom each participating student reports on a regular basis must be assigned. Members of the community may serve as co-sponsor/advisors with members of the professional staff.
4. The program may permit the student to do all or part of the project outside the school building.

B. Principal's Responsibilities. The principal shall be responsible for developing, in cooperation with the staff and student, procedures for:

1. Screening, approving and evaluating the programs and individual projects.
2. Assuring that the program is available to all qualified and interested students within the order of their requests and within the limits of staffing and funding.
3. Approving/disapproving applications from students interested in participating in the program.
4. Approving/disapproving a request to do all or part of a study project outside the school building. In those instances when approval is granted for a student to participate in a project outside the school building, transportation shall not be provided.
5. Informing all students and staff of the possibility of an independent study program as part of the students' school experience.
6. Securing written authorization from the parent or guardian for the student to participate in independent study activities away from the school. Without parent or guardian approval, the student will be ineligible for participation in an out-of-school program.

The principal shall also be responsible for involving the community, as appropriate, and making use of community resources; developing specific procedures for recording the attendance of students participating in the program to ensure that they are marked "present" for the period of approved independent study; and all other record-keeping procedures.

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