



GREAT VALLEY ACADEMY

SHORT-TERM INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

Policy No: 2021.059

Great Valley Academy, which operates Great Valley Academy Modesto and Great Valley Academy Salida (collectively, “GVA” or “Charter School”) may offer independent study to meet the short-term educational needs of pupils enrolled in the Charter School. Independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate and is designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. The Charter School 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 GVA Board of Trustees for implementation at Charter School:

1. Short-term independent study is available for students enrolled in GVA’s classroom-based program who will be absent for a period of a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of fourteen (14) school days. The purpose of short-term independent study is to accommodate travel plans, extended illness, or other extenuating circumstances that prohibit the student from accessing on-campus instruction. 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. Written requests for independent study must be submitted by parents to student’s teacher at least five (5) school days before the anticipated start date of the short-term independent study, and must be pre-approved by teacher. Independent Study request forms are available in the main office.
2. For pupils in all grade levels who participate in short-term independent study pursuant to this Policy, 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 **ten (10) school days**.
3. The Chief Executive Officer 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 any pupil fails to complete **30% of 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 student evaluation process 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 written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. The 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.

4. 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.
5. A current written agreement shall be maintained on file for each independent study pupil, including but not limited to, all of the following:
 - a. 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.
 - b. The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
 - c. 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.
 - d. 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 before an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
 - e. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the 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. Pursuant to this policy, no student may participate in independent study beyond 14 school days in a 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 pupil upon completion.

- g. 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.
 - h. 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 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.
 - i. 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 all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil. 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.
6. The Charter School shall comply with the Education Code sections 51745 through 51749.3 and the provisions of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and the State Board of Education regulations adopted there under.
7. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.

Student Name:

**Supplemental Short-Term Independent Study Agreement
Beginning 2021/22 School Year
Great Valley Academy**

We understand 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 as follows: In-person, Virtually, E-mail, Telephone

All Independent Study will be provided to parent's in-person as paper/worksheet packets for students to complete. All completed packets are to be returned to the teacher of record at the conclusion of the Independent Study period. Student academic progress will be reported through grading of Independent Study work packet. Parent's will receive trimester report cards as communication to address student progress as well as two parent-teacher conferences, one in the Fall and one in the Spring.

Manner of reporting: All short-term Independent Study is reported through grading of completed work in person.

Frequency: All short-term Independent Study grading is done at the conclusion of the Independent Study period.

Place: All short-term Independent Study communications are conducted at Great Valley Academy.

Time: All short-term Independent Study communications with parents occur M-Th between 3:30pm-4:00pm or Fridays between 12:30pm – 3:00pm.

We understand the **methods of study:** Each student on Short-Term Independent Study will receive worksheets for each subject that are grade and learning level specific for each Independent Study period as designated on page one of the Independent Study Agreement.

We understand the **methods of evaluation:** We understand that the students are required to participate in all assessments required by the school, including, not limited to: benchmark assessments, NWEA, and state assessments. Acceptable methods of evaluation include but are not limited to: Teacher created tests, Student Conferences, Progress/Report Cards, Curricular Tests, Work Samples, Observations, Portfolios, State Standards Testing, NWEA testing, Presentations.

We understand the **resources available:** Great Valley Academy will provide appropriate instructional materials and personnel to enable the student to complete the assigned work. Resources will include those reasonably necessary to the achievement of the objectives and must include resources that are normally available to all students on the same terms as the terms on which they are available to all. The school will confirm or provide access to all pupils to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work, if necessary. Short-Term Independent Study does not require the need for connectivity.

Board Policies Pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(a) and (b):

1. For pupils in all grade levels who participate in short-term independent study pursuant to this Policy, 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 **ten (10) school days**.
2. The Chief Executive Officer 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 any pupil fails to complete **30% of assignments** during any period of 10 **(ten) school days**.
 - b. In the event Student's educational progress **falls below satisfactory levels** as determined by the Charter School's student evaluation process 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.

Statement of Academic and Other Supports for Special Populations: GVA shall utilize ongoing student assessments and evaluation to address the needs of pupils who are not performing at grade level, or who need support in other areas, such as English Learners, pupils in foster care or pupils who are experiencing homelessness, and/or pupils requiring mental health support. The Charter School complies with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and is committed to meeting the needs of individuals with exceptional needs in order to be consistent with the pupil's individualized education program ("IEP"). Policies, procedures, and guidelines are in place to ensure that pupils are identified, assessed, and provided a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The school complies with Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794) and is committed to providing equivalent access to and providing a free appropriate public education to all students with disabilities.

Voluntary Statement: It is understood 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, instruction may be provided to the pupil through independent study only if the pupil is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.