

RIVER MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL

Independent Study Program & Policy

Program Description:

Independent study is an alternative to classroom instruction consistent with the River Montessori Charter School course of study, and is not an alternative curriculum. Independent Study provides an individual student with a teacher-directed options to acquire the values, skills, and knowledge all students present in the classroom environment gain, and are verified in a written agreement between the parent, teacher and school administration. Independent study can be part of, be separate from, or be in addition to a regular classroom program.

Independent study is an instructional strategy (not a categorical program) that responds to individual student needs and styles of learning. A contractual agreement is drawn among the certificated teacher as the general instructional supervisor, the student, her or his parent/guardian, and any other persons who may be directly involved in the student's learning program. The written agreement sets educational objectives and addresses activities and personnel to be involved, resources to be used, and a method for tracking the study.

The agreement must adhere to school board policy and legal requirements. Independent study is an optional educational alternative, available to RMCS students meant to respond to the specific educational needs, interests, aptitudes, and abilities of the student within the confines of school board policy. As a recognized alternative to regular classroom study, the independent study option is expected to be equal or superior in quality to classroom instruction.

Policy:

These policies apply to all pupils participating in independent study at River Montessori Charter School (RMCS).

Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of an assigned certificated RMCS employee or employees.

Unless agreed upon prior to a specific Independent Study period, for students in all programs of independent study, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work is one week.

When special or extenuating circumstances justify a longer time for individual students, the Executive Director or designee may approve a longer period of time between the date an assignment is made and when it is due, up to the termination date of the agreement.

Missed or Incomplete Assignments: A teacher will evaluate any missed or incomplete assignments, and arrange make-up, corrections, or added assignments to fulfill the Independent Study. A written record of the Independent Study Request, and teacher findings shall be maintained in as part of the student's permanent record. The record shall be maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation.

Agreement: (5 C.C.R § 11702) A current written agreement for each independent study pupil shall be maintained on file for each participating student. Each agreement shall be signed, dated and

in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance (ADA) pursuant to that agreement. The independent study agreement for a student will require and cover a study plan that represents the same amount of study that would be required of a student in the classroom and be consistent with RMCS curriculum and course of study of students participating in the regular classroom setting.

Agreement Content: Each independent study written agreement shall contain all of the following provisions:

- The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil's assignments and for reporting her/his 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.
- A statement of the policies adopted regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a pupil's assigned work, 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, recognizing that no independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one semester, or one-half year for when considering pupils on a year-round calendar.
- Completed, turned-in work will be determined to be "met" or "not met" by the teacher.
- The inclusion of a statement in each independent study agreement that independent study is an optional education alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate.

Written agreements may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts and assignment and work records.

Students with Exceptional Needs

No individual with exceptional needs may participate in independent study unless specified in the student's independent education program (IEP).

Adopted: September 1, 2009

Amended: June 26, 2018