

Independent Study: Information Sheet

Franklin Elementary School

What is Independent Study (IS)

- If a student is going to be absent for 5+ consecutive days, he/she might qualify for IS.
- A student on IS completes the work that he/she would have done at school on the days missed.
- A student is in school for about 6 hours each day. So 5 days X 6 hours daily= 30 hours of classwork to be completed for 5 days of IS.

When Independent Study is Typically Appropriate

- Out-of-state or out-of-country emergency
- Catastrophic family situation
- Legal or government situation
- Severe health issue
- Special circumstances

Things Typically Not Eligible for Independent Study: Should be Scheduled During Breaks

- Extending the length of school holidays- Winter Break, Spring Break, Thanksgiving Break
- Vacation or trips
- Visiting friends or relatives

Rules about Independent Study

- The parent must request IS from the teacher at least 2 weeks before the absences.
- It is completely at the school's discretion as to whether or not to approve an IS request.
- If the teacher/school approves the IS, the parent must pick up an IS Contract/Agreement Form from the office, complete it, and submit it to the teacher at least 1 week before the start of the absences.
- Assigned IS work is due to the teacher by 8:30am the day of the student's return to school. If the work is not turned in at this time, the IS Contract/Agreement will be deemed void, and the absences will be considered "unexcused."
- If the work is not completed in its entirety, then the student will not receive full credit for the days missed. For example, if a student only completed 2 days of work, the rest of the IS days will be considered "unexcused absences."

Why Independent Study Should be Used Sparingly

- Research shows that in the long term, students who attend school are less likely to drop out of school, and are more likely to attend college and earn higher salaries. Consistent attendance also allows students to develop strong relationships with their peers and school staff.
- Students with high rates of absenteeism often have lower grades, miss critical learning experiences that could help them master academic material, struggle in classes and need intervention, and are more likely to drop out of school.
- To get the most out of school and maximize learning time and learning potential children need to be in school every day. Children can make up an assignment but they can't recover what is most valuable: the questions, the activities, the explanations from the teacher and the interaction that brings learning to life.
- Be sure to tell parents at Back to School Night how important attendance is and that you expect parents to schedule vacations during breaks.