What to know about distance learning & independent study
2021-22

ACLU of Southern California & National Center for Youth Law
Introductions & Overview

• Introductions
• What to Expect in the 2021-22 School Year
• Statewide Rules
• LAUSD Rules
• Questions & Answers
Challenges for the 2021-22 School Year

- Delta variant and rising COVID-19 in LA County
- Health & safety rules constantly changing and are confusing
- Students are coming into this school year with extra challenges after distance learning last year
- Students and families coping with trauma and mental health problems from past year
- Economic and health hardships in our communities
Overview of New Rules for Public Schools

• In-person school is the default. All schools should provide an in-person option.

• Distance learning rules from last year expired

• Governor and state are encouraging parents to return to school in-person, but are offering independent study as an option for families that do not want their students to return to school yet

• Existing independent study rules adjusted for 2021-2022 school year
Statewide Rules

Generally

• Almost all districts must offer independent study to students with health risks.
• It is the parent or guardian’s option to decide whether to enroll in independent study. The district cannot force you to put your child in distance learning.
• The district must provide your child with access to all technology and materials that will let them access independent study.
• Schools need to enter into a written learning agreement for each student in independent study.
• Your child can transfer back to in-person instruction within 5 school days if they were in independent study for more than 15 days.
Statewide Rules
What Does Instruction Look Like?

• Students may not have access to extracurricular activities
• Students may not interact with other students
• Students should have access to all A-G classes the district offers
• Students should still receive services they are entitled to such as English learner services, services for disabilities, and services for foster youth and houseless students. Make sure those services are included in the IS agreement.
• Teachers do not need to be credentialed in the subject they are teaching except for A-G classes.

• Live (synchronous) instruction:

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<th>GRADE LEVEL</th>
<th>REQUIRED MODES OF INSTRUCTION</th>
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<td>Transitional kindergarten - 3</td>
<td>Daily synchronous instruction and asynchronous learning</td>
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<td>4-8</td>
<td>Daily live interaction, at least weekly synchronous instruction, and asynchronous learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>At least weekly synchronous instruction and asynchronous learning</td>
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Statewide Rules

Safety at School

Vaccines - Not approved for students under 12. Optional for students 12 and older.

Masks - Governor has said all students must wear masks indoors, but may be maskless outdoors. But school districts may decide to do more and may decide how to enforce the rules.

Distancing - No distancing requirements

Testing - School districts decide testing protocols, but students with symptoms should be tested, and they must stay home if they test positive.
LAUSD Rules

Distance Learning

• Default is in-person instruction
• You need to sign up for City of Angels independent study through the Parent Portal or https://www.cityofangelsschool.org/apps/contact/
• Students who choose independent study will retain spot at home school, including magnets and dual language programs
• Students may transfer in and out of City of Angels any time, and their school will help them create a transition plan
• Students with disabilities will meet with IEP team to determine if City of Angels is a good fit, and will plan how to provide IEP services
• City of Angels offers no dual language programs, but should provide English learner services
• Live daily instruction:
  • Elementary - 3 hours daily live instruction with independent work when not learning with teacher
  • Secondary - 3 70 minute periods with independent work when not learning with teacher
• LAUSD offers counselors and a student mental health line
LAUSD Rules

**In-Person Safety**

- All students must have a negative test within 14 days of the first day of school. LAUSD will periodically test all students.
- No temperature checks
- Positive tests: stay home for 10 days and no fever for 24 hours
- LAUSD will offer vaccines at certain sites, but it is not mandatory for students
- LAUSD has ordered all employees to be vaccinated by October 15
- Students must answer daily health check screening questions before coming on campus. After that, they get a QR code for a Daily Pass for their phone. If they have no phone, they answer questions on campus.
- All students and staff must wear masks on campus indoors and outdoors
Tips for the beginning of the school year

Ask for a “pupil-parent-educator conference” and ask a lot of questions to determine if independent study is right for you and your child next year (see the 10 questions list). Ask for an interpreter if you need one.

Make sure the independent study agreement (ISP) is translated so you understand it.

Make sure the ISP will meet your child’s unique learning needs and spells out how those services will be provided remotely (including services for children with disabilities and English learner supports).

Save a copy of the ISP for your files and ask school to make changes as needed.

Monitor your child’s progress closely and talk to the school if they are not making enough progress.

Try not to transfer multiple times between independent study and in-person school. Doing so would be very disruptive to your child’s learning.

You have a right to observe both online and in-person classes. Just make a request to your school administration and they must grant it within a “reasonable period of time.”
Questions & Answers

Resources:

- https://youthlaw.org/case/independent-study-rights/
- https://myschoolmyrights.com

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