



## **French Gulch-Whiskeytown School**

### **PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER: Long Term Independent Study Program**

**Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):**

The FGWS Governing Board authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible students whose needs may be best met through study outside of the regular classroom setting. The goal of our Independent Study program is to provide an alternative to in-person instruction to students whose health may be put at risk by attending class face-to-face or other family circumstances which make in person instruction a logistical hurdle. As such, Independent Study is an educational program that provides instruction based on the state-adopted content standards by certificated teachers. There are specific requirements for instructional time that may include both synchronous and asynchronous work. These expectations will also be outlined in the student's written Master Learning Agreement, which must be reviewed and signed prior to enrollment.

State and federal laws require us to inform you of your option to enroll your student in an Independent Study program instead of in-person instruction. From these options, you may choose the one that best suits your child and your family. This letter also explains:

- Your right to request a parent-teacher conference prior to enrollment to inform your decision.
- The process and your students' rights regarding procedures for enrolling, disenrolling, and re-enrolling in independent study.
- The asynchronous and synchronous instructional time that your student will have access to as part of independent study.

#### **Requesting a Parent-Teacher Conference**

It is your right to request a parent-teacher conference prior to enrolling your student in Independent Study in order to inform your decision and ensure that it is appropriate

for your student. Please reach out to your student's teacher: Linda Swayne grades TK-4 [lswayne @ frenchgulchschoo.com](mailto:lswayne@frenchgulchschoo.com) or

Renay Hill grades 5-8 [rhill@frenchgulchschoo.com](mailto:rhill@frenchgulchschoo.com) to set up an optional parent/teacher conference.

### **Enrolling, Disenrolling & Re-Enrolling**

Once you have determined that you would like to pursue Independent Study, you may begin the enrollment process.

- Download/Fill out the Independent Study Written Learning Master Agreement (located on our district's website: [frenchgulchschoo.com](http://frenchgulchschoo.com) or pick one up in the school office
- Email your completed form to Kristin George [kgeorge@frenchgulchschoo.com](mailto:kgeorge@frenchgulchschoo.com), FGWS Office Manager or drop it off at the FGWS School Office
- FGWS certificated staff will email/call parent to confirm placement in the Independent Studies program

If you are enrolled in Independent Study and would like to return to in-person instruction, you must follow the procedure for disenrolling:

- Email, call or text your child's teacher or FGWS office manager to disenroll from the Independent Study Program.

Once disenrolled, should you need to return to Independent Study you are required to adhere to the re-enrollment process.

### **Instructional Time**

There are specific requirements for instructional time that may include both synchronous and asynchronous work. These expectations will also be outlined in the students' written Learning Agreement, which must be signed prior to enrollment.

Instructional Time	Description	Length and Frequency
Synchronous Instructional Time	Classroom-style instruction or designated small group or one-on-one instruction delivered in person, or in the form of internet or telephonic	30 - 60 minutes daily for TK – 3rd grade

	communications and involving live, two-way communication between the teacher and student. Synchronous instruction shall be provided by the teacher(s) of record for that student.	Weekly basis for 4th – 8th grade
Live Interaction	Interaction between the student and certificated staff, and may include peers, provided for the purpose of maintaining school connectedness including but not limited to: wellness checks, progress monitoring, provision of services and instruction. This interaction may take place in person or in the form of internet or telephonic communication.	30 - 60 minutes daily for TK - 3rd grade;  Weekly basis for 4th - 8th grade
Asynchronous Instructional Time	Forms of instruction that do not occur in the same place or at the same time. The term is most commonly applied to various forms of digital and online learning in which students learn from instruction such as prerecorded video lessons or game-based learning tasks which students complete on their own. These instructional settings are not being delivered in person or in real time.  Asynchronous learning may also encompass a wide variety of instructional interactions, including email exchanges between teachers and students, online discussion boards, and course management systems that organize instructional materials and correspondence, among many other possible variations.	The majority of the day will be spent in asynchronous instruction  Minimum Requirements (includes synchronous, live interaction and asynchronous minutes)  <b>TK-K 180 minutes</b>  <b>1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade 240 minutes</b>

At the time of enrollment in the Independent Study program, the parents and teacher will develop a plan that specifies the terms of the agreement which will include frequency of review of student work including completion of assignments at a level of proficiency, daily contact (check in).

It is recognized that the community of French Gulch is located in an area that can be described as a digital divide. Consistent and reliable internet connectivity is not available in all locations within the community.

The school's internet connectivity has greatly improved over the last few years. With that improvement, FGWS has allowed community access to its WiFi. A connection can usually be made from the school parking lot. The signal is not powerful enough to extend much beyond that area. In fact, signal strength can vary from day to day within the parking lot but with perseverance can usually be received.

The independent study teacher will work families that may experience internet connectivity issues to provide alternative means of achieving synchronous and live interaction contact.

*\*Content adapted from Santa Cruz County Office of Education and Berryessa Union School District*