



# **WCCUSD Virtual Academy Information Session #2**

LaResha Martin, Chief Academic Officer  
Edith Jordan-McCormick, Principal

July 22, 2021

# AGENDA

- Welcome
- Understanding Independent Study
  - Changes in State Law
  - Understanding Independent Study Legislation
- WCCUSD Independent Study Options
  - Short-Term
  - Vista High School
  - Vista K-12 Virtual Academy
- Questions

# INTRODUCTIONS



Edith Jordan-McCormick,  
Principal



LaResha Martin,  
Chief Academic Officer

# THE GOAL OF INDEPENDENT STUDY

**Increase academic rigor during the Independent Studies process**

Rigor is determined by the intellectual challenge





# **An Overview of Independent Study**

LaResha Martin, Chief Academic Officer

# INDEPENDENT STUDY OVERVIEW

- The purpose of independent study is to provide an alternative education program and setting for students. Independent study programs are voluntary and use alternative instructional strategies that respond to individual student needs and learning styles.
- The flexibility of independent study programs makes it possible to serve a wide variety of students, enabling some students who otherwise might not graduate to stay in school.
- Students who enroll in independent study include a variety of students and serve a variety of needs.
- Additionally, independent study serves students who desire to accelerate or move more slowly through a course, or to make up a subject that they have missed in a traditional classroom.
- Independent study is available to students from kindergarten through high school, as well as to students in adult school who are taking courses to meet the requirements for a high school diploma.



# **INDEPENDENT STUDY LEARNING OPTIONS**

# INDEPENDENT STUDY OPTION

Recently, the state issued guidance to schools and districts about expectations for the coming school year. The expectation for all schools and districts is that we offer full-time, in-person instruction to all of our students for the coming school year, and that is what we as a district are prepared to offer our families. We are looking forward to seeing our students and staff back on our school campuses this fall beginning on Monday, August 16, as we focus on relationships and rigor.



# WCCUSD'S INDEPENDENT STUDY OPTIONS

- Short-term (15 days independent study for family emergencies)
- Vista Independent Study (Choice schooling for grades 7-12)
- Vista Virtual Academy (K-12 virtual schooling)
- Location(s)
- Vista High School 2625 Barnard Ave. Richmond, CA 94530
- Vista K-12 Virtual Academy (Old Portola Campus)

# INDEPENDENT STUDY OPTION

For families who wish to choose Independent Study for personal or medical reasons, here is information about what you can expect:

- There are two Independent Study options:
  - Short term - maximum 15 days, stay enrolled at your school (limited)
  - Long term - apply to Independent Study (Vista)
    - Vista
    - Vista Virtual Academy
- Families will enroll in Vista Independent Study to participate for the 2021-22 school year.
- Independent Study will involve both synchronous and asynchronous portions of the school day.
- Dual language programming will not be available in our independent study.
- An individual with **exceptional needs shall not participate** in independent study, unless the pupil's individualized education plan specifically provides for that participation. [Ed. Code 51745.5\(c\)](#)

# INDEPENDENT STUDY OPTION

- A statement in the written agreement 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, pupils in **foster care** or experiencing **homelessness**, and pupils requiring mental health supports. [Ed. Code 51747.7](#)
- Students can switch back into In-Person Learning - *where space is available at a school at their grade level* - at any point during the semester. Requests need to be submitted to the Transfer Department.
- For highschool students, we will pause on transfers during the last 3 weeks of the semester to ensure that credit acquisition is not interrupted.

# INDEPENDENT STUDY OPTION

The Independent Study program occupies three classrooms located at the old Portola campus in El Cerrito. Students who participate in independent study will experience daily interaction and synchronous learning.

## GRADES TK-3:

Daily synchronous instruction for all students

## GRADES 4-8:

Both daily live interaction & weekly synchronous instruction

## GRADES 9-12:

Weekly synchronous instruction

# DAILY INTERACTION & SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

Term	Definition	New Ed. Code
Live Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction between the pupil and <b>classified or certificated staff</b> and may include peers</li> <li>• Provided for the purpose of maintaining school connectedness, including, but not limited to, wellness checks, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction.</li> <li>• This interaction may take place in person, or in the form of internet or telephonic communication</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Ed. Code 51745.5(a)</a>
Synchronous Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom-style instruction or designated small group or one-on-one instruction</li> <li>• Delivered in person, or in the form of internet or telephonic communications, and involving live two-way communication between the <b>teacher and pupil</b></li> <li>• Provided by the <b>teacher of record</b></li> </ul>	<a href="#">Ed. Code 51745.5(d)</a>

# INSTRUCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Requirement	Details	New Ed. Code
<p><b>Live interaction and synchronous instruction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Grades TK-3:</b> Daily synchronous instruction for all students</li> <li>● <b>Grades 4-8:</b> Both daily live interaction &amp; weekly synchronous instruction</li> <li>● <b>Grades 9-12:</b> Weekly synchronous instruction</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Ed. Code 51747(e)</a></p>
<p><b>Course access provisions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Content must be aligned</b> to grade level standards</li> <li>● Instruction must be provided at a level of quality and intellectual challenge <b>substantially equivalent</b> to in-person instruction</li> <li>● <b>High Schools:</b> Must include access to all courses offered by the LEA for graduation and approved A-G courses</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Ed. Code 51747(c)</a></p>



# **STAFFING REQUIREMENTS**

# DAILY INTERACTION & SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

Requirement	Details	New Ed. Code
Student - Staff Ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Current collective bargaining ratios apply to IS and in-person learning</li><li>• Commencing with the 2021-22 fiscal year Guide for Annual Audits of K-12 Local Education Agencies and State Compliance Reporting, the Controller shall incorporate verification of the ratios included in this section, including fiscal penalties for noncompliance as described in this section</li></ul>	<a href="#">51745.6 (a)</a>





# ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

# RESIDENT SCHOOL vs. VIRTUAL ACADEMY ENROLLMENT

**Families may not “hold” a space at their current in-person school while participating in the Virtual Academy.**

In alignment with our internal enrollment policies and state regulations, students can only be enrolled in one school at a time. Students who are in our Virtual Academy/Independent Study program will be enrolled at Vista K-12 Virtual Academy, **and not enrolled** in any other school in the district at the same time.

# ENROLLING INTO VISTA K-12 VIRTUAL ACADEMY

## GRADES: TK-6

- Elementary Requirements
  - Family attends informational session with staff
  - Decides if schooling options presented are a good fit
  - School will contact transfer office to complete enrollment

# ENROLLING INTO VISTA VIRTUAL ACADEMY

## GRADES: 7-12

- Middle School/High School Requirements
  - Complete Interest Form
  - Attend Orientation meeting
  - Take required assessments
    - First Assignment
    - Reading assessment
    - Math assessment

# Independent Study Process

## Steps



## Students with Individual Education Plans or a 504





# **WCCUSD Virtual Academy**

Edith Jordan-McCormick, Principal

# EDITH JORDAN-MCCORMICK

- Educator for over 25 years
- Two children
- Teacher
  - Attended UC Berkeley Principal Leaders Institute
- Activities Director (Berkeley High)
- Vice Principal / Assistant Principal
- Principal (Pre-k-Alternative Education)
- Going into fourth year at Vista High School
- Founding Principal of the Vista K-12 Virtual Academy

# Independent Studies

- Independent studies is a facilitative side by side approach to learning that allows students the opportunity to “Learn how they learn.”
- Relational based learning the is student centered
- Building school to meet students needs
- Collaborative approach to student learning
- Choice schooling “You choose us and we choose you.”



# Vista High School

- ❖ Safe in-person Independent Studies Option
- ❖ Located in the Vista Hills Complex
- ❖ Quiet Campus
- ❖ [www.wccusd.net/vista](http://www.wccusd.net/vista)

# K-12 VIRTUAL ACADEMY

- Choice Schooling
- An appropriate balance of synchronous and asynchronous instruction
- Focus on social emotional wellness and learning



# Vista K-12 Virtual Academy

Hub Location:

Old Portola Temporary Campus in El Cerrito

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELLNESS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

- 1 Self-Awareness**
- 2 Self-Management**
- 3 Social Awareness**
- 4 Relationship Skills**
- 5 Responsible Decision-Making**

# Vista K-12 Virtual Academy

- Academics will be online
- Students will have the opportunity to for in-person social emotional activities that will be optional and calendared

# Academics All Levels

- Curriculum is A-G certified and meets all state and district requirements
- Standards based curriculum
- Uses all district curriculum plus additional student led supplemental curriculums
- Students are still required to take all required assessments, school wide and district required
- Supplemental curriculum provided in appropriate situations
- Social Emotional Learning curriculum (School Connect)
- Technology based when appropriate

# BEGINNINGS / HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- Virtual schools have been around for over 25 years
- Virtual schools can offer more autonomy and choice
- Balance of academic and social emotional health and wellness
- Appropriate balance of asynchronous and synchronous activities
- Students will be able to attend any of our independent studies programs and remain in sports and or activities at their home schools
- **We believe in this alternative form of education**

# STAFFING

- Office Manager: Roxanna Molina
- Elementary Founding Teacher: Andre Brunetti
- Secondary Founding Teacher: Carol Peters
- RSP Teacher: Kaitlin Marchesi
- School Psychologist: Lyca Sedaka



# Moving Forward

- ❖ Attend Orientation
- ❖ Make decision/choice
- ❖ Approve transfer
- ❖ Enroll in school
- ❖ Assigned supervising teacher
- ❖ Build student's learning program
- ❖ Smile!

**QUESTIONS?**



# THANK YOU

## Contact information:

[edith.jordan-mccormick@wccusd.net](mailto:edith.jordan-mccormick@wccusd.net)

Twitter: [@wccusd](https://twitter.com/wccusd)

[Facebook.com/WestContraCostaSchools](https://www.facebook.com/WestContraCostaSchools)

Instagram: [@wccusd](https://www.instagram.com/wccusd)