**Imboden Area Charter School**

**2023-24**

**Student Attendance Policies**

**ABSENCES**

If any student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student’s IEP or 504 Plan take precedence.

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students’ regular attendance at school, whether in person or digitally, is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction which results in higher student achievement.

**Excused Absences**

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons:

1. The student’s illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. A maximum of five (5) such days are allowed per semester unless the condition(s) causing such absences is of a chronic or recurring nature, is medically documented, and approved by the Director.
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family;
3. Observance of recognized holidays observed by the student’s faith;
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency;
5. Attendance at a medical appointment;
6. Pariticpation in an FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
7. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the Director;
8. Participation in the election poll workers program for high school students;
9. Absences granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the Director.
10. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizatons are not up to date.
11. Absences due to conditions related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:

* Labor, delivery, and recovery;
* Prenatal and postnatal medical appointments and other medically necessary, pregnancy- related absences;
* The illness or medical appointment of a child belonging to a parent who is enrolled at the school;
* A legal appointment related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:
* Adoption;
* Custody; and
* Visitation;
* A reasonable amount of time to accommodate a lactating student’s need to expresss breast milk or to breastfeed the student’s child on the School campus; and
* At least ten (10) school days of absences for both a parenting mother and a parenting father after the birth of a child.

Up to one (1) time during each scheduled election, a student shall not be considered absent from school for the time the student accompanies the student’s parent when the parent is exercising the parent’s right to vote in a scheduled election.

In order for the absence to be considered excused, the student must:

1. Bring a written statement to the Director upon the student’s return to school from the student’s parent, legal guardian, or treating physician stating the reason for the student’s absence;
2. If the student is attending School courses digitally, upload a written statement from the student’s parent, legal guardian, or treating physician stating the reason for the student’s absence through the School’s digital course management platform for review by the Director; or
3. Provide documentation as proof of a student’s participation in an activity or program scheduled and approved by the 4-H program that is provided by a 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program.

A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

Imboden Area Charter School will allow a maximum of three (3) notes from parents per semester as excused absences.

**Unexcused Absences**

Absences that are not defined above; do not have an accompanying note from the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, person standing in loco parentis, the student’s treating physician, or a 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program; or have an accompanying note that is not presented or uploaded within the timeline required by this policy shall be consider as unexcused absences. Students with ten (10) unexcused absences in a course in a semester may not receive credit for that course. At the discretion of the Director after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the unexcused absences, the student may be denied promotion or graduation. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

When a student has 5 absences in a semester, his/her parents, guardians, or persons in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be by telephone by the end of the school day in which such absence occurred or by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day.

Whenever a student exceeds 10 absences in a semester, the School shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, guardian, or persons in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly’s intention that students having excessive absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Therefore, at any time prior to when a student exceeds the number of absences permitted by this policy, the student, or his/her parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis may petition the Director for special arrangements to address the student’s absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement’s requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student, the student’s parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis, and the Director.

Days missed due to out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be considered absences.

A student is not considered absent when the student was on official school business.

If the illness of a student is of a serious or recurring nature and is medically documented, the absences may be approved by the Director on a case by case basis.

Students with 20 absences may be denied promotion or graduation. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

The School shall notify the Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school. The Department of Finance and Administration is required to suspend the former student’s operator’s license unless he/she meets certain requirements specified in the statute.

Applicants for an instruction permit or for a driver's license by persons less than eighteen (18) years old on October 1 of any year are required to provide proof of a high school diploma or enrollment and regular attendance in an adult education program or a public, private, or parochial school prior to receiving an instruction permit. To be issued a driver's license, a student enrolled in school shall present proof of a “C” average for the previous semester or similar equivalent grading period for which grades are reported as part of the student’s permanent record.

If any student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student’s IEP or 504 Plan take precedence.