Minutes of Imboden Area Charter School

The regular June Meeting was held Thursday June 29, 2023, at 6:00 PM, at Imboden Area Charter School, 605 West Third Street, Imboden, Arkansas.

Board members present were President George Morris, Vice President Blake Clements, Johnny Sykes, Mike McLeod, and Scott Rorex. Director Matthew Wells was also present.

President George Morris Presiding:

Director Matthew Wells’ report:

* Current enrollment figures are at 61. We have had numerous calls and visits, making it appear that we will have continued growth.
* Mr. Wells presented the Board with the proposed lease agreement put together by the City of Black Rock. This agreement would see IACS move facilities and assume the old Black Rock High School building and a few other adjoining buildings. While the lease is exciting and something Mr. Wells and the Board are very interested in, the lease that has been proposed includes an area where our rent is going to increase if we have more than 65 students. At this time, the proposed lease is unacceptable and will not be agreed to. Mr. Wells has spoken with Mayor Wilson regarding this matter, and an amended lease agreement should be coming shortly. It is Mr. Wells’ and the Board’s hope that an agreement can be worked out and the move takes place.
* Mr. Wells’ report continued with details regarding summer cleaning projects. Currently the building in Imboden is coming along well and only a few projects remain. The cleaning crew has also been turned into a moving crew as all materials and belongings are being packed and ready for transport to the new facility as soon as everything is worked out.
* Next, Mr. Wells proposed a sign on bonus for Mrs. Samantha Vickers to the Board. Mrs. Vickers’ contract with her previous school is expiring and she will be without income throughout the months of July and August. IACS has considerable funds available as part of Title IIA for the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers. These funds could be used for a sign- on bonus for Mrs. Vickers. Motion made by Mike McLeod and seconded by Scott Rorex to approve a $2000.00 sign-on bonus for Mrs. Vickers. Motion passed 5 to 0.
* Mr. Wells reported that numerous policy updates had been advised by ASBA. Policy updates include the following:
* Policy Guidance
* Everything that is new in the policies is underlined in red.
* The portions that are to be removed from the policies are ~~struck through~~ and are in blue.
* Policies Changed or added
* **1.9—POLICY FORMULATION** - The policy was updated to incorporate the changes to the process for policy changes intended to become effective during the current contract year from Acts 781 and 782 of 2023 and the repeal of A.C.A. § 6-13-635 from Act 418 of 2023. The Cross References and Legal References were updated to include new policies and statutes related to policy adoptions.
* **1.14—MEETING AGENDA** - The policy was updated to include the requirement for a presentation or report on student academics be included at each regular meeting from Act 425 of 2023. In addition, the Legal References were updated to add 6-17-2305 for classified PPC and to remove pinpoint citations.
* **1.17—NEPOTISM** - The policy was updated to remove references to automatic contract renewals due to the repeal of the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and the Public School Fair Hearing Act from Act 237 of 2023.
* **1.21—DATE OF ANNUAL SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION** - The policy was updated to include the additional day for filing for districts using a Spring election timeline from Act 462 of 2023.
* **1.22—RECORDING OF BOARD MEETINGS** - The policy was updated to repeal references to closed employee termination and non-renewal hearings due to the repeal of the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and the Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act by Act 237 of 2023.
* **1.23—VISITS TO SCHOOL PROPERTY BY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS** - This is a new optional policy to address multiple phone calls we’ve received regarding substantial interruptions during the school day due to unannounced board member visits and to reduce the potential for FOI violations by several board members showing up to visit classrooms together unannounced.
* **1.24—BOARD REPRESENTATIVE ON EDUCATION SERVICE COOPERATIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS** - This is a new policy to include the appointment process for the district representative on the board of directors of the education service cooperative that the district is a member of from Act 802 of 2023.
* **3.0—LICENSED PERSONNEL POLICY COMMITTEE** - This is a new policy governing the personnel policy committee as required by Act 781 of 2023.
* **3.1—LICENSED PERSONNEL SALARY SCHEDULE** - This policy was updated by amending the notes sections dealing with the new salary schedule requirements from Act 237 and the repeal of A.C.A. § 6-13-635 from Act 418 of 2023.
* **3.4—LICENSED PERSONNEL REDUCTION IN FORCE** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes in the RIF process from Acts 237 and 780 of 2023.
* **3.5—LICENSED PERSONNEL CONTRACT RETURN** - The policy was updated to address changes from the repeal of the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act by Act 237 of 2023.
* **3.6—LICENSED PERSONNEL EMPLOYEE TRAINING** - This policy was updated to incorporate additional mental health training requirements from Act 237 of 2023. Language on training for signs and symptoms of seizures was added from Act 286 of 2023. The PD timeline was amended to incorporate changes from Act 548 of 2023. Language on the prohibition on requiring implicit bias training from Act 511 of 2023 was added.
* **3.17—LICENSED PERSONNEL CODE OF CONDUCT** - The Legal References were updated to remove the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act due to its repeal by Act 237 of 2023. This change does not require PPC or board action.
* **3.19—LICENSED PERSONNEL EMPLOYMENT** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes from Acts 100 and 237 of 2023 to note that a diploma that results from a high school equivalency exam shall be treated the same as a standard high school diploma for employment and that teacher input must be received from the school where a principal would be hired or placed. Language was added to prevent the superintendent from making a recommendation for employment of an employee the superintendent has found by probable cause to have engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor From Act 792 of 2023.
* **3.25—LICENSED PERSONNEL GRIEVANCES** - The policy was updated to include the option to consolidate identical individual grievances into a group grievance from Act 745 of 2023.
* **3.32—LICENSED PERSONNEL FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE** - The policy was updated to incorporate optional language dealing with paid parental leave from Act 237 of 2023. While Act 237 uses “maternity leave”, we have opted for “parental leave” to prevent sex discrimination challenges.
* **3.36—LICENSED PERSONNEL ~~DISMISSAL AND NON-RENEWAL~~ RENEWAL AND TERMINATION** - This policy is being completely revised to incorporate the repeal of the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and the new termination hearing requirement language from Act 237 of 2023. Language was added to prevent the superintendent from recommending the renewal of an employee if the superintendent had probable cause to know that the employee had engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor from Act 792 of 2023.
* **3.40—LICENSED PERSONNEL DUTIES AS MANDATED REPORTERS** - The policy was updated to remove the ability for anonymous reporting and the ability to make reports through fax was replaced with making online reports due to Act 727 of 2023.
* **3.54—TEACHING DURING PLANNING PERIOD AND/OR OF MORE THAN THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER DAY** - This policy is being amended to remove references to the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act due to Act 237 of 2023. In addition, the example per student calculation in the Notes section was updated to recognize the increase in the minimum teacher salary.
* **IACS has a waiver from this policy**.
* **3.54F—TEACHING INSTEAD OF PREPARATORY PERIOD AND/OR EXTRA DAILY STUDENTS CONTRACT ADDENDUM** - The model addendum is being amended to remove reference to the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act from Act 237 of 2023. In addition, the example per student calculation in the Notes section was updated to recognize the increase in the minimum teacher salary.
* **IACS has a waiver from this policy**.
* **3.56—LICENSED PERSONNEL PARENTAL LEAVE** - This is a new optional policy on parental leave due to the option from Act 237 of 2023. While Act 237 uses “maternity leave”, we have opted for “parental leave” to prevent sex discrimination challenges.
* **IACS does not qualify for FMLA because we have fewer than 50 employees.**
* **3.57—LICENSED PERSONNEL NAME, TITLE, OR PRONOUN** - This is a new policy to incorporate the requirements from Act 542 of 2023.
* **4.1—RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes from Acts 43 and 189 of 2023 allowing individuals whose primary residence or land is divided by a district boundary line to choose the district the students will attend and for students who move from one district into another district to be able to continue attending the district the students left.
* **This policy does not apply to IACS being an open enrollment charter.**
* **4.2—ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS** - This policy was updated to include the new requirement on international exchange students from Act 426 of 2023. In addition, the definition of an active duty service member was updated to include changes from Act 638 of 2023.
* **4.4—STUDENT TRANSFERS** - The policy was updated to incorporate the requirements from Act 731 of 2023.
* **4.5—SCHOOL CHOICE** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Acts 129 and 237 dealing with the three percent (3%) cap and Acts 649 and 790 for school choice of uniformed service member dependents.
* **This policy does not apply to IACS being an open enrollment charter. All subsequent forms related to this policy are unnecessary as well.**
* **4.5F—SCHOOL CHOICE CAPACITY RESOLUTION** - The form was updated to remove references to the three percent cap due to Act 237 of 2023 and to address changes to the process for Uniformed Service Member dependents from Acts 638 and 790 of 2023. Due to having released an update to this form earlier in the year, we are releasing two different versions of this update. The version of the updating ending in “CR” indicates that the version has had all changes made in January incorporated so that all that is shown are the changes made in this update. The version ending in “RAW” indicates all changes made both during January and this update.
* **4.5F2--SCHOOL CHOICE PROVISIONAL ACCEPTANCE LETTER** - The form was updated to remove references to the three percent cap due to Act 237 of 2023.
* **4.5F3—SCHOOL CHOICE ACCEPTANCE LETTER** - The form was updated to remove references to the three percent cap due to Act 237 of 2023.
* **4.5F4--SCHOOL CHOICE REJECTION LETTER** - The form was updated to remove references to the three percent cap due to Act 237 of 2023.
* **4.7—ABSENCES** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes resulting from Acts 128, 448, and 621of 2023 providing for excused absences due to pregnancy and the birth of the student’s child; clarifying absences for students participating in 4-H events; and allowing students to accompany their parents to vote.
* **4.8—MAKE-UP WORK** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes resulting from Act 128 of 2023 dealing with make-up work options for absences related to a student’s pregnancy or childbirth. In addition, the language on students serving an expulsion was updated to incorporate the changes from Act 724 of 2023.
* **4.13—PRIVACY OF STUDENTS’ RECORDS/ DIRECTORY INFORMATION** - The policy was updated to include language requiring service contracts that provide access to student personally identifiable information to meet the requirements under 6-18-2601 et seq from Act 754 of 2023. In addition, several notes had minor amendments to align with formatting standardization.
* **4.25—STUDENT DRESS AND GROOMING** - The policy was updated to incorporate the protections from Act 514 of 2023.
* **4.31—EXPULSION** - The language addressing the district responsibility for students who are expelled was updated to incorporate the changes from Act 724 of 2023. While we released an update to this policy earlier in the year, we are not releasing two different versions of this update as the legal reference that was amended in the earlier update is being repealed entirely in this update.
* **4.35—STUDENT MEDICATIONS** - The policy was updated to include the requirements surrounding seizure disorders from Act 286 of 2023. In addition, language on opioid overdose rescue kits was added from Act 811 of 2023.
* **4.37—EMERGENCY DRILLS** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 to address technical changes in individuals to be included in drills as well as the three year facility assessment.
* **4.40—HOMELESS STUDENTS** - The policy was updated to include language allowing immediate participation in interscholastic activities from Act 506 of 2023. In addition, the notes section of the policy was updated to include information that additional rights exist for unaccompanied homeless youths under A.C.A. § 9-25-106, which was also added to the Legal References, from Act 506.
* **4.45—SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CLASSES OF ~~2023,~~ 2024~~,~~ AND 2025** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 to address the process for students and parents to be notified of graduation requirements. The policy was also updated to include the language from Act 242 allowing career ed courses that are determined by DESE to be used in the place of a core course to be substituted. The language in footnote #8 regarding the community service learning credit was updated to include the changes from Act 720 of 2023.
* **4.45.1—SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CLASS OF 2026 ~~AND THEREAFTER~~** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 to address the process for students and parents to be notified of graduation requirements. The policy was also updated to include the language from Act 242 allowing career ed courses that are determined by DESE to be used in the place of a core course to be substituted. The language in footnote #8 regarding the community service learning credit was updated to include the changes from Act 720 of 2023. The computer science graduation requirement was updated to include the changes from Act 654 of 2023.
* **4.45.2—SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CLASS OF 2027 AND THEREAFTER** - This is a new policy to incorporate the new community service graduation requirement from Act 237 of 2023. The policy includes the language from Act 242 allowing career ed courses that are determined by DESE to be used in the place of a core course to be substituted. It also includes the change to the computer science graduation requirement from Act 654 of 2023.
* **4.55—STUDENT PROMOTION AND RETENTION** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 dealing with the reading and math plans for students who are below grade level.
* **4.56—EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – SECONDARY SCHOOLS** - The policy was updated to include the eligibility requirements for students experiencing homelessness from Act 748 of 2023. Language was added to include the requirements surrounding transfer students from Act 768SB 400.
* **This policy does not apply to IACS as it deals with secondary schools and extracurricular activities.**
* **4.56.2—EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME SCHOOLED STUDENTS** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes to home schooled student participation in interscholastic activities from Act 630 of 2023.
* **This policy does not apply to IACS**
* **4.61—STUDENT USE OF MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY ROOM** - This is a new policy to include the requirements from Act 317 of 2023.
* **4.62—STUDENT NAME, TITLE, OR PRONOUN** - This is a new policy to incorporate the requirements from Act 542 of 2023.
* **4.63—STUDENT RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION** - This is a new policy to incorporate the requirements regarding student voluntary religious expression from Act 788 of 2023.
* **5.3—CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 to include the restriction on certain topics being included in kindergarten through grade five (k-5) as well as the reporting requirement for districts using a reading curriculum not on the DESE approved list.
* **5.5—SELECTION/INSPECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 to add sexual abuse and human trafficking curriculum to topics open to review and opt out by parents.
* **5.6—CHALLENGE TO INSTRUCTIONAL/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 to add sexual abuse and human trafficking curriculum to topics open to review and opt out by parents.
* **5.7—SELECTION OF LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 372 of 2023 regarding the process to challenge library materials.
* **5.11—DIGITAL LEARNING COURSES** - The policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 dealing with the Arkansas Course Choice Program implementation.
* **5.18—HEALTH SERVICES** - The policy was updated to include the requirement to provide age appropriate training to students on signs and symptoms of seizures from Act 286 of 2023.
* **5.19—ARKANSAS COURSE CHOICE PROGRAM** - This is a new policy governing the Arkansas Course Choice Program from Act 237 of 2023.
* **5.20—DISTRICT WEBSITE** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023 to include the posting of the amount of State funds used for teacher salaries and reading intervention information.
* **5.21—ADVANCED PLACEMENT, INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE, and HONORS COURSES** - The policy was updated to include the process for weighted credit for career and technical education courses moving forward from Act 654 of 2023.
* **5.27—ENGLISH ~~LANGUAGE~~ LEARNERS** The policy was updated to change from “English language learners” to “English learners” from Act 793 of 2023.
* **5.29—WELLNESS POLICY** - This policy was amended to incorporate the changes from Act 128 of 2023 dealing with breastfeeding and child care for students’ children. It was also amended to add the requirement that written information the District provides to students as part of the district’s adoption awareness instruction is provided to the parent of a pregnant student from Act 637. Due to the release of an update to this policy in January, we are releasing two different versions of this update: the version ending in “CR” has all of the changes made in January incorporated and only shows the changes made since January; the version ending in “RAW” combines all changes from January and Act 128 so that it is as if the January update was not released.
* **6.4—VOLUNTEERS** - This policy was updated to incorporate the requirement for superintendents and third party vendors to make certain reports to DESE regarding registered volunteers, registered volunteers to be bound by the Code of Ethics, and that the registered volunteers would receive training on the Code of Ethics from Act 237 of 2023.
* **6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT** - A note was added that the district’s military liaison is required to be involved in the development of the district plan from Act 638 of 2023. This change does not require board action.
* **6.12—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – SCHOOL** - A note was added that the district’s military liaison is required to be involved in the development of the district plan from Act 638 of 2023. This change does not require board action.
* **7.3—MILLAGE RATE** - The policy was updated to add language on the timeline for providing ballot information on the district’s millage from Act 721 of 2023.
* **7.5—PURCHASES AND PROCUREMENT** - Language was added prohibiting public entities from contracting with entities that are boycotting fossil fuel and firearms industries from Act 611 of 2023. The language prohibiting contracts to individuals or entities that provide abortions was updated to include language from Act 653 of 2023.
* **7.19—SERVICE ANIMALS IN DISTRICT FACILITIES** - The notes section of the policy was updated to include a note about additional information on the distinction of an emotional support animal from a service animal can be found in A.C.A. § 20-14-1001 from Act 268. This change does not require board action.
* **8.0—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL POLICY COMMITTEE** - This is a new policy governing the personnel policy committee as required by Act 782 of 2023.
* **8.1—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL SALARY SCHEDULE** - The notes section of the policy was updated to incorporate the repeal of A.C.A. § 6-13-635 from Act 418 of 2023. This change does not require PPC or board action.
* **8.13—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL EMPLOYMENT** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 100 of 2023 to note that a diploma that results from a high school equivalency exam shall be treated the same as a standard high school diploma for employment. Language was added to prevent the superintendent from making a recommendation for employment of an employee the superintendent has found by probable cause to have engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor From Act 792 of 2023.
* **8.19—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL GRIEVANCES** - The policy was updated to include the option to consolidate identical individual grievances into a group grievance from Act 745 of 2023.
* **8.23—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE** - The policy was updated to incorporate optional language dealing with paid maternity leave from Act 237 of 2023. While Act 237 uses “maternity leave”, we have opted for “parental leave” to prevent sex discrimination challenges.
* **This policy does not apply to IACS as we have fewer than 50 employees thus not qualifying for FMLA.**
* **8.30—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL REDUCTION IN FORCE** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes to the RIF process from Acts 237 and 780 of 2023.
* **8.31—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL RENEWAL AND TERMINATION ~~AND NON-RENEWAL~~** - This policy was updated to incorporate the repeal of the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and the new termination hearing requirement language from Act 237 of 2023. Language was added to prevent the superintendent from recommending the renewal of an employee if the superintendent had probable cause to know that the employee had engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor from Act 792 of 2023.
* **8.34—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL DUTIES AS MANDATED REPORTERS** - The policy was updated to remove the ability for anonymous reporting and the ability to make reports through fax was replaced with making online reports due to Act 727 of 2023.
* **8.44—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL CONTRACT RETURN** - This policy was updated to incorporate changes from Act 237 of 2023.
* **8.45—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL CODE OF CONDUCT** - The Legal References were updated to remove the Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act due to its repeal by Act 237 of 2023. This change does not require PPC or board action.
* **8.46—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL PARENTAL LEAVE** - This is a new optional policy on parental leave due to the option from Act 237 of 2023. While Act 237 uses “maternity leave”, we have opted for “parental leave” to prevent sex discrimination challenges.
* **This policy is part of FMLA which IACS does not qualify for, thus the policy is not adopted.**
* **8.47—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL NAME, TITLE, OR PRONOUN** - This is a new policy to incorporate the requirements from Act 542 of 2023.

* Lastly, Mr. Wells presented to the Board the annual Director’s evaluation. Mr. Wells explained to the Board that this document had to be completed each year before the renewal of contract for the Director. Mr. Wells excused himself from the room and gave the Board time to complete the evaluation. After some time, Mr. Wells was invited back into the conference room to discuss the evaluation. The Board presented Mr. Wells with his evaluation, and Mr. Wells agreed with the results and signed the document agreeing with the Board’s results. Motion was made by Mike McLeod and seconded by Johnny Sykes to renew Mr. Wells’ contract with IACS for the next three years, with negotiations annually to discuss rate of pay. For the initial term of this contract July1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, Mr. Wells will receive a 20% increase of last year’s salary. Thus, making his annual rate $81,120.00. Motion passed 5 to 0.

Consent Agenda:

Motion made by George Morris and seconded by Johnny Sykes to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed 5 to 0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

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Scott Rorex, Secretary Date