

Seventh Message from the President
September 8th, 2021

Colleagues,

I hope you enjoyed your Labor Day weekend to celebrate the “unofficial end” of summer and launch into fall. In my home, we started watching college football and even have a few flags that we put out in the front yard. I know COVID is also on our minds as we watched increased mitigation measures, such as the new state guidelines to wear masks indoors, and vaccination requirements for school employees. Take a look [at this chart](#) to see why September is such a sensitive time for the potential (or lack of) spread of the delta variant, depending on how well we respond. This is why I have asked families to limit their student trips off campus, especially home where we have traced to positive COVID cases. In addition, I need all colleagues to make conscientious efforts in their personal lives in an effort to reduce risks to personal and community health.

For faculty, it would be prudent to think of distance learning and hybrid strategies you might use because anyone can be impacted based on reports of recent breakthrough cases. I appreciate you sharing techniques that have worked so far for the benefit of all. Also, I want to note that anyone who is physically absent, but participating remotely, may be out of the building because they are a direct contact to someone who has tested positive. We should never presume someone has COVID, and should be vigilant to squelch any speculation to respect someone’s private matters.

Our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has been actively reflecting on your Community Day feedback and have developed the following programs and activities to launch in the month of September. There’s a lot more on the horizon, however I wanted to let you know your teammates have been devising intentional plans for the past month to support well-being and engagement on campus.

- Buddies for new colleagues to get acquainted with IMSA's culture and get to know different people
- Colleague wellness awareness days (September 14-15) with resources, activities and cupcakes
- Colleague appreciation notes w/gift cards from different departments
- IMSA United Colleague Poll #2 Communication
- The formation of a racial justice task force with representation across SLT
- Student STEM fun activities for September weekends, led by CTL

Let's all try to chip in and help on these September weekend efforts. I would like to encourage you to offer an idea or lend a helping hand to support our students on the weekend this month. It could be a favorite activity or just having a presence that will mean a lot to our students. Please let me know if you can help, and I'm happy to provide supplies as needed.

In addition, we want to activate YOUR ideas in our laboratory for learning and inquiry through an Innovation Grant, supporting new initiatives that align to the Academy priorities of Equity and Excellence, Impact and/or Well-Being. You can read more in [this proposal solicitation](#) which has a link to an application due October 1. Any colleague, student or team can submit a proposal, recognizing that innovation can come from anyone in our community. Note that student proposals will require a faculty sponsor to mentor the team. On Community Day, many of you proposed a variety of ideas in your exit tickets, and now I hope you feel you can mobilize with a plan backed up by resources. I look forward to hearing about the ideas you have to help us get better in our priority areas.

Not only do I look forward to celebrating your ideas, but there's also [some fun things to celebrate](#) later this month in September. I'm kind of sad "International Talk Like a Pirate Day" is on a weekend, but at least it'll be a fun day with my kids.

Aaaarrrrggghhhh! Hope you arrrrrrrrre healthy!

Titans Together,

Evan

Dr. Evan M. Glazer

President