



Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy®

igniting and nurturing creative, ethical, scientific minds that advance the human condition

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

José M. Torres, Ph.D.

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LEADERSHIP MATTERS

This report provides the Board of Trustees with information regarding Academy activities and the progress that we are making toward achieving our IMSA Impact and Outcomes Statement and Priority Outcomes. I organize the Report of the President, where appropriate, around the IMSA Impact and Outcomes document:

Three pillars:

1. STEM Teaching and Learning
2. Operational Capacity
3. Stakeholder Engagement

One Strategy—Strengthen Employee Engagement

and IMSA's **four priorities for Academic Year 2018-2019:**

- ❖ Guide the integration of UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals
- ❖ Advance equity and excellence
- ❖ Develop our international strategy
- ❖ Work on phase 1 of the innovation campus

I provide information, updates and general observations with IMSA stakeholders, including IMSA employees, students, and parents via my Personal Reflections throughout the year.

STEM Teaching and Learning

2019 Illinois State Scholars

IMSA is pleased to announce that 160 IMSA students from the Class of 2019 have been named Illinois State Scholars for outstanding academic achievement. The Class of 2019 currently has 198 students yet to graduate. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) coordinates this program on an annual basis. Among the most important criterion is that the student performs in the top one-half of their high school class at the end of their third semester (junior standing) and or score at or above the 95th percentile on the ACT or SAT. According to ISAC, meeting these requirements qualifies the student to be considered for this program, but does not guarantee State Scholar designation. Each year, a specific formula is established to select State Scholars. Given IMSA's numbers, I believe that our students identified as Illinois State Scholars are scoring at or above the 95th percentile on the ACT. In 2018, IMSA had 159 (from a Class of 192) identified as Illinois State Scholars and in 2017 IMSA had 183 (from a Class of 213) Illinois State Scholars. In 2016, we had 180 (from a Class of 205) and in 2015, we had 161 (from a Class of 194) Illinois State Scholars.

2019 Intersession

Intersession 2019 was held January 7th – 11th. Intersession is a week-long learning opportunity offered between first and second semester. Sessions are offered by faculty, staff, students, alumni and outside guests. Intersession allows students to explore areas of interest outside the curriculum through a variety of offerings including special math and science topics, cultural studies, and off-campus education trips.

Operational Capacity

Cabinet Retreat

My Cabinet and I met for a two-day retreat January 10th and 11th in Utica, IL. Over the two days we assessed our progress and focused on our key priorities for the year—employee engagement, international strategy, UN Sustainable Development Goals and Equity and Excellence plan development.

Scholarship and Innovation Committee

Dr. Kelly Page, Chief Innovation Officer and I have been holding regular meetings of the IMSA Research and Innovation Committee. In addition to Kelly and I, committee members include: Amber Pareja, Jean Bigger, Nadia Miskowiec, Richard Palmer, Lindsey Herlehy, and Richard Schultz.

Senior Leadership Development

The Senior Leadership team has expanded with the participation of the Curriculum and Assessment Leaders. During this year's first meeting the team focused on the development of the Equity and Excellence plan. The team is also continuing the work of incorporating the Franklin Covey 4 Disciplines of Execution principles to projects identified to improve employee engagement.

Stakeholder Engagement

Take Your Legislator to IMSA Day

On December 4th we held our annual Take Your Legislator to IMSA Day. Representative Stephanie Kifowit, Representative Grant Wehrli, Representative Linda Chapa LaVia and Senator Don DeWitte. They toured the academic building as well as the residence halls in addition to observing classes and enjoying lunch with IMSA students from their home district.

P-20 Council

I represented IMSA at the quarterly P-20 council meeting in Normal, IL on December 10, 2018.

Aurora Education Commission

I continue to be an active participant in the Mayor's Education Commission and attended the December 17th meeting.

President's Student Advisory and Faculty Advisory Councils

I continue to meet with my Student Advisory and Faculty Advisory Councils. These meetings provide me opportunities to learn of issues and concerns from students and faculty. They also allow me to provide updates to Advisory Council members on IMSA priorities from my perspective.

Honoring Dr. Peter Clancy

I am sad to report that one of our science faculty, Dr. Peter Clancy, lost his battle with cancer. Peter had been a member of the IMSA faculty for 10 years. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I offered our condolences to his family at Peter's Memorial on November 20th. To honor his memory we held a memorial ceremony on Thursday, November 29th at IMSA.

IMSA Fund Board

At the last IMSA Fund Board of Directors' meeting on December 7th, I provided an update to the Fund on our IMSA priorities.

Strengthen Employee Engagement

Gallup Employee Engagement Poll

In November, we conducted the fall Gallup Employee Engagement poll. The final percent of engaged employees from the fall 2019 Gallup survey is 25%. This is a very slight increase from fall 2018 of 24%. Results for each question and each functional area (i.e., Academic, Operations, President's Office, Student Life, and verbatim results) are included in the BoardDocs Appendix. You will also find a memorandum providing a high level summary of the Gallup Employee Engagement Poll Fall 2019 administration in the Appendix.

Integrating UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs)

This past semester, IMSA initiated a collaboration between the Student Inquiry and Research (SIR) program at IMSA and Melissa Lenczewski, a geology professor and leader in the Environmental science program at Northern Illinois University. The primary point of contact at IMSA is Sarah O'Leary-Driscoll. This has several components, the first being to give our students a deeper understanding of hydrogeology, specifically as it pertains to groundwater. This relates to the goal of Clean Water & Sanitation. The students are learning where the water that we use every day for drinking and other uses comes from, as well as what sorts of geological, ecological, and anthropomorphic influences can impact the availability and safety of this resource around the world. The research component of the collaboration has our students installing and making use of wells on our own campus, so that they can learn the types of testing techniques necessary for us to evaluate this water that is so important to life on earth, and which is a necessity that is becoming more and more scarce with time.

This collaborative project is also being treated as a pilot, with the hopes that the work between NIU and IMSA can extend to the creation of curriculum around both the content and the research experience to be used as a model for other schools to use, both in education around water as well as in the examination of other environmental and health related issues as guided by the 17 UNSDGs. The partnership, and how we are working together both in our instruction and guidance of students, as well as how we are collaborating as educators to take the next step with the program, can be used as an example for other similar collaborative partnerships in the future that will take our focus on the UNSDGs beyond our classrooms and our campus.

The Professional Field Services Office is using the UNSDGs as a conceptual framework for the NSF Computer Science for All SPARK grant. The SDGs will provide problem context for the K-5 computational thinking curriculum. This curriculum is designed to give students confidence in content knowledge, such as Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Life Below Water, and Life On Land.

Advance Equity and Excellence

We began to create an accountability plan to implement the Board approved Equity and Excellence policy. Specifically, Traci D. Ellis and Dr. Adrienne Coleman have formed seven project teams that correspond to the seven specific components found in the policy. Each of these seven teams has two co-leaders, both of whom sit on the Senior Leadership Team. Moreover, approximately 3-5 additional team members are members of each team, primarily from the Senior Leadership Team and from the former IMSA Diversity Committee.

These project teams will participate in training from the Midwest Equity and Plains Center ("MAP Center") on January 30th on a specific data collection protocol and tool set. Data collection begins in early February. Those data will then be analyzed by the MAP Center (with support from IMSA's Office of Institutional Research). Insights from the data analysis will inform the team's development of goals, action steps, and success indicators. Our goal is to present to the Board of Trustees a completed equity and excellence plan in May, 2019.

Develop our International Strategy

The Association of Boarding Schools

I joined the Association of Boarding Schools (TABS) and attended the annual meeting in Washington, D.C., November 28 through December 1, 2018. I met with leaders from a number of independent boarding schools and obtained information about their recruiting strategies and tuition structures. I identified the names of potential market research firms to help us with our International Strategy market research work.

Market Research

I have asked the Tami Armstrong to coordinate our market research efforts with support from alumnus Matt Unterman. Additionally, I have included a *draft* White Paper on "Recruiting Non-Illinois Students to IMSA" under the Board Information and Discussion Agenda Item—International Strategies Update. This paper provides background information for the Board's discussion of our international strategy.

Sherman School, Streator, IL

Based on initial contact with representatives from the Sherman Chinese School in Streator, IL during our recent trip to China, IMSA has been asked to submit a proposal to offer teacher training to 20 Chinese teachers that will be in Streator during the months of July and August. Angela Rowley and Mary Collins have met with the representatives from the school and are in the process of finalizing a proposal for the work.

Innovation Campus, Phase 1

We are beginning to explore our options for moving forward with the IMSA Innovation Campus, Phase 1, by engaging in a process to design a New Residential Facility. We will be scheduling a design charrette, to be led by our architects, to gather stakeholder input and to provide a forum for ideas and suggestions to guide us as we move forward. We anticipate including 25-30 participants representing faculty, staff, alumni, parents, students, and IMSA Fund Board of Directors. The results of this charrette will be provided to the Board of Trustees at a future meeting.

I would like to include members of the Board of Trustees willing to participate in this charrette. Please inform Bud Bergie or me if you are interested. Currently, we are planning to conduct this design charrette on the afternoon of February 4 or 5 at a location near the IMSA.

Leadership Update from Cabinet Members

Updates from my Cabinet are attached

Public Affairs Update

Tami Armstrong, Executive Director for Development and Public Affairs, reports that the new logo is in a "soft launch" phase which began January 2, 2019 providing 4-5 weeks for fulfillment before the official launch on Community Day February 15, 2019. Digital and print assets have been rebranded with the new logo and the IMSA community has access to the files needed to order physical collateral and post electronically. The community is being encouraged to use the new logo immediately as fulfillment is completed and items become available.