Common Sense Tips for Safety

**Cell Phones**
We need everyone’s assistance with ensuring that students are as safe as possible and that communication on all levels is good. Students should carry their cell phone, have it charged, and have it on when possible. If it can’t be turned on in some locations (some hospitals for example) or there is poor reception, students need to check periodically for messages, especially in the winter when bad weather could occur. We verify student cell phone numbers, so it is very important that students provide IMSA with an accurate cell phone number for our PowerSchool database. With nearly 300 students in the program, and about two-thirds of those students off-campus on I-days, students need to help us communicate efficiently in case of emergencies or unusual situations.

**Emergency Contact Information – 630-907-????**
Students should know the SIR office phone numbers (x5899 for Dr. J, x5011 for Ms. Tweedle, x5084 for Ms. Magana, X5975 for Dr. Carlson); x5000 for the main IMSA number; their RC office phone number. Students should know their home phone numbers and how to contact their parent/guardian, and how to find phone numbers through directory assistance.

*This really happened …* A student missed the bus, didn’t have his cell phone because it wasn’t charged, didn’t know any IMSA phone numbers without his cell phone, didn’t know his home phone number because it had recently changed, didn’t know how to call or look-up information to obtain phone numbers, didn’t have any money …

**Extra Money**
It is useful for students to have a little extra money with them on I-days in case of transportation emergencies. If a student misses the bus back to IMSA, they may need to take public transportation to return to IMSA.

**Weather and Dress**
As weather begins to get colder, do students have appropriate dress - hat, gloves, scarf, and so forth? If it rains or rain is predicted, do student have a hat, umbrella, raincoat, proper shoes?

**Bus Rosters and Bus Drivers**
It is everyone’s responsibility to help ensure that all IMSA students are safe when traveling on the SIR buses. Our drivers are very responsible, which includes making sure that all students get on the bus to return to IMSA, sometimes in the middle of busy Chicago traffic. However, the student attendance information provided to the bus drivers each week is never the same - advisors aren’t available because they are attending a conference, a student or advisor’s child is ill, a student may have a college visit, and so forth. And rarely does an SIR week go by in which we don’t have to call several bus drivers to inform them of changes to the bus roster during the middle of the day because of students oversleeping, parents/guardians transporting students without prior notification, and other reasons. This can place students on that bus in jeopardy, as the bus driver could be driving in traffic while we need to get in touch with them. Please do your part to communicate transportation changes by Friday prior to an I-day so that we may provide the bus drivers with accurate written bus rosters in advance.
**Bus Schedules**
Occasionally buses are late because of traffic, weather, or mechanical problem. We have also had buses pick students up early because of bad weather. Students who are even a few minutes late to the bus pick-up location can cause other pick-up times to be compromised.

**The Buddy System**
We encourage students to look out for each other, to use the buddy system, and to help the bus drivers with student attendance. Who else is getting on and off an SIR bus at the same location? Can students walk together to and from a bus stop? Did everyone who got off the bus in the morning get back on the bus in the evening?

**Unusual Situations**
We would appreciate students thinking through how they might handle unusual situations that might occur, which of course are not very predictable. We have had a situation where a university building was placed in lock-down because of an alleged individual with a gun. Occasionally a building is evacuated because of a fire alarm.