

**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING  
OF THE 1998-99 IMSA PARENTS ASSOCIATION  
NOVEMBER 14, 1998**

**I. President David Dean called the meeting to order.**

**II. ATTENDANCE**

Attendance was taken and a quorum was present.

**III. REPORT BY DR. SINNER - \*STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY\***

1. Clarification of the **\*Zero Tolerance Policy\*** at IMSA: this policy should not be interpreted as being that all first offenses would result in automatic dismissal. Instead, it should be interpreted that IMSA WILL NOT tolerate substance abuse under any circumstances and disciplinary action will be taken towards any student in violation.

2. The substance abuse policy, and as sometimes referred to as the **\*chemical abuse policy\*** comes under the umbrella of the **\*Student Discipline Policy\*** and parents can refer to the Student Handbook for the precise language.

3. Dr. Sinner reiterated that the administration is committed to trust among students and parents, and with trust, it is hopeful that the IMSA community can work together, build together, and as a result, build a stronger environment.

**IV. REPORT BY MR. JACK McEachern**

1. A report was given regarding the actions taken by the Board of Trustees on November 5 concerning discipline violations involving six IMSA students. Due to federal and state privacy laws involving minors, specific details regarding the incident remain confidential.

2. Discussion was held among parents and Mr. McEachern and numerous comments and questions were given. The discussion focused on the following statement issued by Mr. McEachern on November 5, 1998:

**\*In accordance with IMSA\*s Student Discipline Policy, Dr. Sinner recently dismissed six students from the Academy for multiple serious violations of Academy expectations. These students had been recommended for dismissal by Mr. McIntosh following a comprehensive investigation. \***

**\*Five of the students appealed the dismissal decision by Dr. Sinner to the IMSA Board of Trustees. In accordance with Policy, Board Appeal Committees heard these appeals on Tuesday, November 3.\***

**\*The members of the Board Appeal Committees viewed the students\* infractions to be very serious and view Mr. McIntosh\*s and Dr. Sinner\*s decisions to be entirely appropriate under CURRENT Policy. However, in reviewing the appeals, we identified and discussed concerns we have about some portions of our policy. For example, we**

**believe that our policy should have more explicitly afforded to Mr. McIntosh and Dr. Sinner greater leeway to consider a broader range of possible consequences beyond the specified suspension and dismissal options and should have more explicitly advised students and parents that dismissal is not only a very real possibility, in some cases it is the most appropriate and most likely consequence even for first offense infractions by students who otherwise have good academic and residential records.\***

**\*Some of our concerns in this case were significant enough to lead the Board Appeal Committees to make a decision to offer to the students, in lieu of dismissal, the opportunity for them to remain students at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy if they and their parents agree to accept all of the terms and conditions included in a Continued Enrollment Contract prepared by the Administration at the Board\*s direction. The terms and conditions are highly restrictive and non-negotiable. If the students and parents do not agree to the Contract, they will be dismissed or may voluntarily withdraw. The families have been informed of the Board Appeal Committee\*s decision and have several days to consider it and respond. The Board and Administration have begun the process of reviewing the Student Discipline Policy, and this will be amended as needed and appropriate.\***

**3. A request was made to Mr. McEachern for clarification of the \*privacy act\* and that there be better communications between parents and the Board. Many rumors have circulated regarding this incident, and better communications would be beneficial.**

**4. The Board realized their decisions would be unpopular , and were opposed by the Administration.**

**5. Additional questions for Mr. McEachern were taken from the floor.**

#### **V. MOTION PRESENTED:**

**As a result of this recent situation, a motion was made by Lorelei Riddle and seconded by Sharen Gerlich that**

**\*The Parents Association appoint a committee consisting of the Co- Chairs of Student Life, President, and a Sophomore parent to be involved with the IMSA Board of Trustees and Administration for the purpose of revising the current Student Discipline Policy.\***

**Discussion was held.**

**An amendment to the motion was made by Linda Mellis and seconded by Sandy Ohler to \* delete Co-Chairs of Student Life to Co-Chair and add one of the Co-Chairs of the Academic Committee to the committee.**

**Discussion was held on the amendment.**

The amendment passed; one vote recorded as a nay.

The original motion passed as amended with one vote abstaining.

The Sophomore parents caucused and selected Mr. Dave Hachmeister to be the sophomore representative on the Committee to revise the \*Student Discipline Policy\*.

## VI. MINUTES

Corrections to the Minutes of October 17, 1998 are as follows:

- a. Under the Technology Report the word \*purchased\* should be deleted and should read \*selected but not purchased\*.
- b. Under the Treasurer\*s Report, 3rd paragraph a typo in the word \*parents.\*
- c. A motion was made by Moses Harris, Sr. and seconded by Stuart Cohen to accept the minutes as amended. Motion passed.

## VII. PRESIDENT\*S REPORT:

1. THE IMSA FORUM is available on Delphi, <http://www.delphi.com/imsa>. It is free but anyone who is interested is required to register. Go to the IMSA\*s official web site ( <http://www.imsa.edu/> ) which is where you should go for official information.

### 2. President's Report

This past month has been a busy and traumatic one both personally and for the school. As we have heard earlier in this meeting the disciplinary situation at the school has taken a lot of time and energy for the IMSA staff. I have tried to keep in touch with the Administration on the situation.

I also participated in the IMSA Board of Trustees meeting. The topic this month was the non-academic life for students. Students spoke about the wellness program, student activities and the student council presented a video of students responding to a variety of questions. Then the board toured a residence hall. There I spoke about a parent's perspective on resident life and the importance of the RC as the chief contact of many parents with IMSA.

I was able to attend two of the nights of the phon-a-thon and want to publicly thank Stu Cohen and Britta McKenna for all of the hard work they did to make this year's fund raiser a success. A big thanks goes out as well to all of those who were able to participate and call on the three nights.

We now have some filing space and moved three boxes out of my house. Our stationery is also stored in our cabinet. If you need stationery, please see Carol Berger. I also spoke with the IMSA Librarian and we can give to the IMSA archives older record, pictures, notes etc. There is a section for the Parents' Association. If you have older records, please bring them here. We can either store them ourselves or give them to the IMSA archives.

There has been no further discussion on the Student Records' Implementation procedures. Gregg was so involved with the disciplinary situation. I hope we will be able to complete the formation before our January meeting.

**VIII. PRINCIPAL\*S REPORT:**

1. A busy month for Dr. Sinner due to the controversy of the \*Student Discipline Policy\*.
2. Dr. Sinner reported on the TV program Chicago Tonight where he attended along with other IMSA administrators, faculty and students. He stated that he is very glad he is at IMSA after listening to other members from the other schools represented on the program.

**IX. STUDENT COUNCIL**

1. Katie Adams reported that the \*Helliscope\* is \$5.00 and anyone wanting to purchase a copy may do so.
2. The Student Council was invited to attend the Academic Committee.

**X. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. Academic Committee - Ev Prested

Linda Torp was the guest speaker and presented information on problem based learning curriculum - the affects on students. Teacher accountability for class instructional time was also discussed as a problem, and the administration is looking into this matter. Also, a survey is being developed among students regarding their attitude towards math.
2. Committee for Academic Counseling - John Thompson

The committee is preparing a college guide to present in January which will include personal experiences by parents and aids for dealing with the college selection process. It will be separate from the newsletter.
3. Student Life - Linda Mellis
  - a. Weekend activities - perhaps the PA could assist with funding.
  - b. RC\*s program for student development is going well.
  - c. RC questionnaire will be mailed to parents along with the student\*s residential reports. It was requested that the RC\*s be more frequent with newsletters.
  - d. Monthly phone calls to parents by the RC should be more frequent.
  - e. Counseling is being made available to students dealing with stress and depression. If parents notice an irregularity with their student that they should communicate it to the dorm staff.
  - f. Sophomore parents have tried calling their student at 10:35 when they are supposed to be in their room and many have received no answer. It was noted that perhaps the wing was having a meeting at this particular time.
  - g. Additional shuttles are being made available to the Aurora Transportation Center for students with late classes on Fridays. These seem to be popular shuttles.
  - h. It has been a concern regarding students walking along Sullivan Road since there are no sidewalks available. The Aurora police were notified of this concern, and they seem to believe that the situation is under control. The committee recommends that when possible, students do not walk on Sullivan Road.
  - i. It was noted that all RC\*s should be sensitive to the students that do not celebrate Christmas.
  - j. The Student Life Committee invites all parents to contact Linda Mellis or Sandy Ohler for any concerns they might have.

- 4. Technology Committee - Mike Doyle**
- a. Computer Terminals are being made available to students for recreational use.
  - b. Selection is being made for software to be loaned to students.
  - c. The Granger lab has developed video conferencing capability.
  - d. The committee will publish computer buying tips and is requesting from parents any information that might be helpful to others.
- 5. Treasurer\*s Report: Stuart Cohen**
- a. the Phone-a-Thon was held in October and \$34,000 has been received in pledges. Stuart thanked all those parents who participated.
  - b. The PAC reimbursement policy will be discussed at the Treasurers meeting in January held at 9:00 a.m. before the PA meeting.
  - c. The Parents fund as of October 31 has an amount of \$41,832.88. After the authorized expenses are paid of \$13,986.39, the balance will be \$27,846.49.
- Outstanding Expense Authorizations are as follows:
- ACRONYM \$1000.00
  - Athletic Trainer \$2420.00
  - Cell Phone (\*95-97) \$1016.39
  - IMSA Technology \$4800.00
  - IMSA Diversity Training \$2750.00
  - Senior Prom (97-98) \$1000.00
  - Software Purchase \$1000.00

- 6. Food Committee - Carol Berger**
- The Food Committee continues to meet with Mr. Bill Fritz of the Finance Department, Arbor, Lea Alexander, Bob Hernandez, Nancy Todem, and representatives from each dorm. We requested that the menus be posted on the web, but as of yet, no success.

#### **XI. OLD BUSINESS:**

1. David Dean reported that the \*Student Record Policy\* continues to be pending.
2. The downstate meeting will be on February 20 at the University of Illinois in the Student Union. Directions to the Student Union are on U. of I. web site - [www.UIUC.Edu](http://www.UIUC.Edu). Hotel accommodations will be made available at a later time.

#### **XII. NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Stuart Cohen proposed a motion and was seconded by Sharen Gerlich that the following items be funded by the Parents Association: (These are recurring items)

- Admissions & Move-In Day \$ 500.00
- All School Picnic \$ 500.00
- Awards - Music \$1700.00
- College Day \$ 700.00
- Ice Cream Social \$ 850.00
- \*Natural Helpers\* program \$2500.00
- P.A. Administrative Expenses \$1000.00
- P.A. Newsletter Printing & Postage \$ 800.00
- P.A. Printing \$ 600.00
- Principal\*s Discretionary Fund \$1000.00

<b>RC Gift Certificates</b>	<b>\$ 675.00</b>
<b>Resident Hall Recreation Program</b>	<b>\$3500.00</b>
<b>Senior Prom</b>	<b>\$1000.00</b>
<b>Tribune subscriptions</b>	<b>\$1429.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$16554.00</b>

Discussion was held. Motion passed.

2. IMSA informational meetings was given to the parents. Anyone interested should contact the Admissions office. Also, the printing of the 1998-99 applications has been delayed, but should be out shortly. Each regional representative should arrange for at least one or more parents be present at the informational meeting in their region.

3. David Dean presented a policy resolution that reads as follows:

**\*Whereas IMSA is an educational community that stresses cooperative learning and places a high value on respecting the unique gifts and contributions of each member;**

**And Whereas communication and trust is crucial in a residential situation where parents have yielded some parental responsibilities to IMSA,**

**And Whereas, parents are an important component to this community and it is the Parents\* Association\*s stated purpose to \*enhance our children\*s educational experience by working collaboratively with students, faculty, and administration in all aspects of academic and residential life,**

**And Whereas parents are concerned that their views and concerns are not always considered in the formulation and revision of policies, and thus the feeling of trust is diminished and parents feel removed from the cooperative experience of education;**

**Be it resolved that the PAC respectfully request the IMSA Board of Trustees and the IMSA Administration to actively seek parents\* input in the formulation stage of policy and in the revision of student related policy;**

**Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to both the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the President of IMSA.**

A motion to adopt the said policy resolution was made by Marilyn Thompson and seconded by Joan Feltovich.

Discussion was held. It shall be noted that this policy generated from concerns that were developed last year among parents regarding how policy is developed within the IMSA community.

The motion carried with one vote abstaining.

4. The January meeting will be held in the Academic Pit and a microphone will be made available.

XII. The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m. with a motion made by Stuart Cohen and seconded by Linda Mellis. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Y. Berger



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