

IMSA PAC MEETING MINUTES
March 4, 2006
(<http://parents.imsa.edu>)

Co-President Gina Zager called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Roll call was taken. There was a quorum. The February minutes were approved as written.

President's Report

Gina presented the proposed the slate of PAC officers for the 2006-07 school year.

Co-Presidents: Barb Kulbida and Kimberly Schmitt
Vice-President: Dd McInerney
Secretary: Vera Koch
Treasurer: Gary and Lucinda Dittmer
Downstate Rep: Noble Redman
Metro-Area Coordinator: Open

Gina informed us that in reviewing the current PAC By-Laws, we are required to present the slate of officers and vote on them at the March meeting. This is contrary to the current practice of presenting the slate of officers in March and voting on the slate at the April meeting. She then requested that there be a vote to suspend the by-laws for the rest of today's meeting.

While the by-laws would be in suspension, Gina also requested that Article 4 be suspended as well. Article 4 states that the PAC must vote to approve any expenditure over \$500. This was in regards to special expenditures that are already in the budget, such as the Senior gifts, that have not gone over budget, but are in excess of \$500. The bills for these budget line item expenses are held up from month to month because of Article 4.

A motion was made by Barb Kulbida and seconded by Jody Bogdan, to suspend the By-laws for the remainder of the meeting. Mitch Roth requested that the amendments be presented and voted on at the next PAC meeting. A vote to suspend the By-laws was then approved.

Co-President Sandy Hamman reported that the downstate meeting would be changed to the University of Illinois at Champaign to coincide with the annual Engineering Open House in March. The September informational meeting will coincide with Parent's Day (September 16) and the official September PAC meeting will coincide with Homecoming on September 30.

Vice-President Barb Kulbida reminded us of the Newsletter article deadline, March 20.
Downstate bus coordination continues to progress.

Treasurer's Report

Varsha Pancholi reported 2 checks had been written since the last meeting. Copies of the financial status were available. The 501C3 application was sent out. The IRS typically takes 6-8 weeks to process these requests. The question was raised from the floor if a request for a temporary or interim approval was made. Varsha will investigate this.

Metro Coordinator

Jody Bogdan requested that anyone interested in taking the position speak to her after the meeting.

Downstate Coordinator

Dean Drake reported that the Bus Coordinator Handbook would be discussed after today's meeting. At this time, Angie Hovermale will coordinate the Springfield route, Don Driscoll will continue with the Peoria/Bloomington route, and Dan Woods might continue with the Effingham route. A "blueprint" of the current bus routes will be looked at to do further coordination or inclusion of additional students who would like to take advantage of the busses.

Noble Redman was introduced as the future Downstate Coordinator.

A question was raised from the floor regarding the duties of the Metro Coordinator. They were outlined as follows: find volunteers for Regional Reps, aid the Presidents, attend the Executive Committee meetings, fill vacancies and promote and assist the Welcome picnics in each of the metro regions.

Multicultural Relations

Felicia Bragg reported that during the recent VIP session she had the opportunity to speak to quite a few parents. She was happy to report that James Valdez introduced her to Josephine to provide continuity to the position for next year.

Following the April 22 meeting, there will be a "brainstorming" session for ideas regarding next year's committee.

Academic Committee

Leslie LeResche reported that the Video of the meeting will be posted to the website as usual. This morning they heard reports from representatives of the Wellness, World language and Fine Arts Departments.

CAC

Gretchen Stauder reminded Senior parents that March will bring the first college decision letters. Juniors have been prepping for College Day. Over 60 colleges are registered at this time. 6 colleges have reported that they will do small group meetings at this time. 24 parents have signed up to help.

Course selections will be in the computer by April and the faculty will begin determining the number of sections of each course that will be needed.

In May, the seniors will get first priority for scheduling followed by the rising juniors. Hopefully, everyone will know their schedules by the end of the school year.

Questions from the floor included: What will happen on College Day (besides college reps available and small group presentations)? The President of Knox College will speak. Students can choose 2 breakout sessions to attend. Last year approximately 130 colleges and universities were represented. The request was made that actual representatives from the college be present, rather than just alumni, so students can get more questions answered directly.

This year, a van was made available for 14 juniors to attend the U of I at Champaign, Engineering Open house. Spaces filled quickly.

Technology

Bob Kapicka is still working on the issue regarding easy access to PAC members phone numbers on the IMSA website. While we want to provide access to parents or parents of prospective students, we also do not want this information available to the casual web surfer.

A discussion regarding MySpace.com took place. This is a social network site. Jim Gerry compared it to the "Malt Shoppe" of the 21st century. Kids can put a page together about themselves and then it can be accessed very easily by others. Jim made reference to an article from Wired magazine regarding the use of MySpace. He mentioned an email to be sent to parents with four references to learn more about this site.

A question was raised from the floor regarding informational programs for students so they are aware of security issues on these sites. During the sophomore year, there are discussions regarding Internet privacy and security. Parents were encouraged to speak to their students about this issue during Spring Break.

Barb Kulbida asked if the issue regarding emails being kicked back from parents had been improved. The status of using an IMSA address was discussed. There seems to be consensus that creation of an IMSA email account for all parents would be a good idea. It would be the parents' responsibility to monitor this account, or have any email that comes to the IMSA account be automatically forwarded to their other accounts.

Student Life

Kemi Beausoleil informed us that the next Friday Fest would be March 17, St. Patrick's Day. The meal would be Asian Food. They will have a variety authentic Asian food, but requested fruits, vegetables, drink and bottled water.

The April 21 theme was still to be decided.

She is requesting someone to chair Friday Fest for next year as Marsha Carter will take over as Student Life Chairman.

Gina Zager reported that the invitations to the Senior Banquet had been sent out. Reservations are due March 31. If people need extra seats, they will try to accommodate requests if other families do not use up their allotted 6 tickets. Last year's overcrowding was a safety and comfort issue. The photo albums have arrived (wooden cover, engraved). A disposable camera will be included in the gift bag, as well as a copy of the Senior Photo CD that will be shown at the banquet. Parents are reminded to email photos for the Sr. CD to Gina.

Discipline Committee

Mitch Roth and his committee continue to work on the questions for the survey to be sent to parents in May. They hope to have this survey finalized by the next meeting.

Student Council Report

Cody Kuhlmeier and Jen Zhan gave the Student Council report. John Lee was also present.

Upcoming Events: Mr. Titan (the all-school Senior Male Pageant)

Battle of the Bands (April 19) to include several on and off campus bands

Donkey Basketball (with student, staff and faculty teams)

The Student Planner is being reviewed with suggestions for improvement or clarification as needed.

The Student ID serves also as a Meal Ticket. The current ID is very thin and brittle, and because of constant use, is not holding up as well as it has in the past. A redesign for a sturdier card that could also include vending and laundry is being investigated.

Vandalism continues to be a hot topic under discussion. A number of students are working together to come up with viable solutions. One interesting suggestion came following the very successful Wellness Fair open gym. A request was made for increased activities in the winter to decrease boredom and provide a space for exercise and activity when the weather forces everyone indoors during evenings and weekends. The open gym concept was proposed, as students who rarely come to other events were

noticed participating at this event, and many students have responded positively to a survey that was sent out via e-mail.

Other activities were reported on including the Student mixer with the Asian Culture Club, Clash of the Halls (with the new champion hall being 01). IMSA Student Council recently hosted 16 students from other Mathematics and Science Academies as part of the Student Council Consortium. Along with visiting IMSA, the students enjoyed downtown Chicago and discussions to on how to improve our campus as well as appreciate what we do have here. PAC was thanked for sponsoring a reception during the time the visitors were here.

Elections will be coming up soon.

Alumni Association

Carolyn Johnson reported that the Alumni group is continuing to plan the Reunion and Alumni Weekend, June 23, 24 and 25th. All Alumni are invited for a Friday night Mixer and several events will continue on Saturday.

IMSA Administration Comments

Eric McLaren just returned from the Korean Mathematics and Science Academy, at their invitation and expense. IMSA hosted several Korean students at the beginning of the school year and in turn, 6 IMSA students, accompanied by Mr. Trout, will attend the Korean Academy over Spring Break.

Dr. McLaren expanded his observations that through these exchanges, it gives us insight as to what the current practices are in other countries. The report, "Gathering of the Rising Storm," produced by the National Academy of Science, and Tom Friedman's book, The World is Flat, communicates that overall, the United States is not positioned very well to excel in technology, mathematics and science fields. In contrast, IMSA is positioned to do quite well. It is amazing, however, to observe first hand how much money the Korean government puts into this already strong program.

The end of the quarter will be March 14. Midterm grades will be mailed in a timely fashion so that parents can discuss these grades with their students over Spring Break.

The Junior High Math Contest will be held March 8.

Teacher Recognition (Sophomores have the opportunity to recognize a teacher who encouraged them to excel, previous to attending IMSA) will be held, Friday, March 17.

David Gossman was recognized for his ongoing contribution to IMSA students through the Mentorship program. The current Journal of Midwest Woodlands and Prairies features an article regarding IMSA students at the Gossman Farm.

Mitch Roth asked Dr. McLaren to expand on his Korean visit. Many topics were covered including the numbers of students who apply to the Academy (17,000) vs. the number of students admitted each year (144). Only ten percent of the applications come from females.

The Academy assesses and determines admittance without using test scores. Most of the scientific equipment they are using is better than we have at most colleges in the United States. They do this onsite learning, unlike our IMSA students, who access the cutting edge equipment during their Mentorship opportunities. As the Korean students begin to present their research internationally, Dr. McLaren stated it will be interesting to see how their research projects compare to ours. Language learning now begins in the third grade when English is introduced.

As this will be the first opportunity for IMSA students to visit Korea, it is yet to be determined if this will continue in the future. After his return, Dr. McLaren stated he had no doubt that the Academy will do an outstanding job of hosting our students.

The question of the Korean Academy being politically active to request funding was addressed and stated that there does not seem to be a need for the Academy to pursue funding from the government. The government sees this as a very high priority.

17 regional academies are in existence with one national site. A second site will be available in approximately 2 years.

Keith MacIntosh reported that the issues of vandalism and theft continue to be explored. At this time the ball is in the students' court to cork the issue of vandalism. A brief synopsis of current problems was given, including holes kicked into walls in two of the dorms and candy being stolen from the vending machines. If parents have any insight or suggestions regarding ways to address these issues, please forward them to the staff in Student Life. The question was raised as to this problem being seen as a spike. As vandalism has not been tracked, Mr. MacIntosh was not sure. Dr. McLaren responded that this past fall was a large spike in activity and also intentional damage (exterior signs, concrete planters, etc) rather than simple "messing around" causing accidents.

Jim Gerry communicated that the implementation of the wireless test project by 20 IMSA interns was progressing well and he hoped that the wireless system could be available to all students just prior to or following Spring Break. He is currently exploring the use of "tablet" notebook computers as an alternative to a laptop computer. (The tablet PC is similar to a laptop, except the screen can be rotated and data can be input by writing with a stylus on the screen.) During recent observations at other schools, the tablet pc was demonstrated in various classroom settings. In one World Language class the tablet was used by the students for a 2 minute writing drill and then electronically submitted to the teacher's drop box for grading later, allowing the instructor to better utilize available class time.

Later during the Q&A, Jim was asked about the cost of a tablet PC. Jim said a list price for the Toshiba tablet PCs is about \$1600, but a price including a quantity purchase discount, service agreement, warranty terms, bundled software, upgrades, etc. would have to be negotiated with the vendor. The pilot for the laptop/tablet PC is planned for the 2006-2007 school year. The purchase program would be available to parents and alumni to increase the volume, but service/support of the laptop through IMSA may not be practical or possible especially during the summer. Jim and his staff are still working on the details of this initiative.

Jim will continue to explore alternate vendors for Student Reporting and hope to have this in place by the fall. It is difficult to obtain the required features at an affordable cost.

Milton Chen, from Edutopia, will be at IMSA Tuesday, May 16. An invitation was extended for parents to attend.

Students performed well at the ICE conference.

A discussion ensued regarding MySpace and the need for digital ethics training to continue for sophomores was emphasized, especially the implications for putting personal information out on the web. Jim encouraged parents to have conversations with their students. Student council president, Cody Kuhlmeier reminded us that future colleges and employers would have access to anything that students put out on the internet. She also reminded us that other students might post information about students that was not true, or could be damaging.

We were also reminded that IMSA maintains an open Internet policy. There are no blocked sites. It is up to all of us to teach students to be responsible.

The creation of an IMSA parent email account continues in discussion with Bob Hernandez.

Carolyn Johnson from the Advancement Office discussed the annual Giving Campaign. The parent appeal letter will be sent this coming week. Eric and Nancy Jensen (parents of Dana '06) drafted the letter. Carolyn again thanked the PAC for the contribution for the Faculty and Staff appreciation event.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

The proposed slate of officers was mentioned again. PAC meeting dates for next year will be sent out in a future email. Everyone was thanked for his participation today.

Announcements

The next PAC meeting will be following the College Fair on April 22, at approximately 1:00 pm. Sandwiches from Panera will be served to the PAC for lunch.

There was a motion to adjourn from Dean Drake with a second from Noble Redman. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,
Vera Koch