

Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy®

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IMSA Board of Trustees Retreat

January 23, 2010

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Isoye at 8:05 a.m.

Roll Call

Ms. Veal called the roll. A quorum was present.

Members Present: Steven Isoye, Jay Budzik, Samuel Dyson, Mary Kalantzis, Jack McEachern, Jacklyn Naughton, Paula Olszewski-Kubilius, Erin Roche and Marsha Rosner

Members Absent: Sheila Griffin, Luis Núñez, Judy Erwin, Christopher Koch, Geoffrey Obrzut and James Rydland

Closed Session Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee McEachern and seconded by Trustee Roche to approve the minutes (2 sets) of the 9-16-09 closed session meetings. Voting aye were Trustees Isoye, Budzik, Dyson, Kalantzis, McEachern, Naughton, Olszewski-Kubilius, Roche and Rosner. The motion passed by a vote of 9 ayes, 0 nays.

Ms. Veal indicated that the 11-18-09 closed session meeting minutes would be on the agenda for action in March.

Discussion of *Mission: Possible* Report on Models for Potential Additional IMSA Campuses

Chairman Isoye thanked Trustees and staff for the excellent Friday session and said he looked forward to this conversation.

Dr. McGee set the stage with a brief presentation: "Discussion of Expansion Models." This includes slides of desired retreat outcomes, SEED's expansion phased process and factors, populations to be served, Lohman's description of the relationship between talent and potential, potential pool of applicants, documented need, *Achievement Trap* references, Chicago Public Schools data on 11th graders and "college readiness" benchmarks, and the *Mission: Possible* team's work. Ms. Veal provided a copy of the IMSA Law and the Academy's statement on potential additional campuses published in the summer of 2008 after the law was changed to permit the establishment of additional campuses.

Dr. McGee said his desired outcomes of the retreat were for Trustees to:

- have a thorough understanding of the pros and cons, risks and rewards of both models
- generate questions to be answered as we further develop either model or a new one
- reach consensus to move ahead to the feasibility phase and development of a business model *or* develop a new model(s) *or* drop further consideration of one or both models.

Trustees and staff discussed impressions and insights related to the guest speakers' comments on Friday, the *Mission: Possible* report and summary matrix, Dr. McGee's slides, and other expansion questions and issues. Some themes and sample comments:

- *Partnership Opportunities and Needs.* Trustee Rosner: "We don't have to 'replicate IMSA;' we could partner with SEED, KIPP or others." Trustee Naughton said she was interested in partnering with someone to do a 6-9 IMSA affiliate. Trustee Olszewski-Kubilius recommended partnering with institutions that have expertise IMSA does not have but would need for any model(s) the Board and Administration decide to pursue.
- *Context and Climate.* Trustee Kalantzis: "Under what conditions do private and public expansion models succeed?" Also, "the climate has changed, the context is different" for IMSA now than it was when exploration of potential additional campuses began. Several Trustees commented on changes in the State's fiscal and political landscape.
- *Transformational or Selective or Both? Talent or Demonstrated Potential or Both?* Several Trustees asked whether a new campus should/would be *transformational* ("mid-performers with great growth") or *selective* ("success of high achievers") or both? Some expressed doubts in a "hybrid model." Several said that a second residential campus for secondary students should be a "replicate" model serving students talented in mathematics and science in keeping with the institution's brand, history and expertise. There was lengthy but inconclusive discussion surrounding "top talent," "top ½ of 1%," "top 2%" in regards to what the demographics of the population would be, whom IMSA now serves (e.g. "Are Excel students in the "top ½ of 1%?") and what the top x% actually means (top % in SAT scores, admission ratings, etc.). Several Trustees expressed an openness to considering other types of campuses that might serve a broader population of students. Several special challenges and opportunities related to working with high potential minority students were named and discussed.
- *Assessment of Need, Feasibility and Impact.* Several Trustees commented on the need for and importance of gathering and considering more and better data. Trustee Olszewski-Kubilius: "More data is needed to better understand the needs." Trustee Dyson: "There are a lot of needs. We have to decide the needs we're going to address, then assess feasibility." Trustee Rosner: "In the South, who are we missing that are not served that we want to serve? In Chicago, who are we missing in Chicago that are not served that we want to serve?" She said she was not convinced additional IMSA campuses in Chicago were needed. Trustee Budzik recommended an impact assessment with a spreadsheet showing specifics such as location, where people live, what it will cost, potential funding, confidence in our ability to accomplish it, and other results of the feasibility study. Trustee McEachern: "How much time, energy and money will it take to do this? Would it be better to focus on other strategies?"

- *State of Illinois-Chicago Public Schools Questions.* Chairman Isoye: “IMSA in Chicago” or “IMSA Chicago Public School”? For Illinois students or Chicago students only? Dr. McGee said this might depend on the funding. Trustee Dyson recommended examination of comparison data between IMSA underrepresented minority students and top-performing underrepresented minority students in CPS. He also wondered whether one of the non-negotiable goals would be to enroll students of color and if so whether a location “near them” would enable IMSA to achieve this goal. Some Trustees speculated that if a residential IMSA in Chicago was for students talented in mathematics and science, it might not attract as diverse a student population as assumed or desired. Dr. McGee noted that this was part of the rationale for the *Mission Possible* feeder day middle school campus. Trustee Dyson said he could get excited about this model if the goals are clear and the Board agrees on them. Trustee McEachern wondered about potential legal challenges if a student can or cannot apply or is or is not admitted to one campus but not the other. Trustee Rosner noted that an IMSA campus in Chicago would be competing with the more successful schools in the City.
- *Expansion of Current Campus.* Several Trustees wondered about expanding the current campus. Dr. McLaren and Ms. Veal pointed out that the original plan was for nine residence halls and but two were dropped for political and fiscal reasons. Dr. McLaren said that if IMSA invites a class of 250 now, staff would build and typically admit a wait list of about 50. Based on the current applicant pool, he said IMSA could enroll another 100 or 150 but the additional students would be primarily more Asian and Caucasian students from the suburbs.
- *Other Expansion Options.* It was pointed out that the *Mission Possible* session focused on models for potential additional IMSA campuses; by design, it did not look at other expansion options, for example, the viability of putting IMSA Excellence 2000+ in every Chicago Public School. Trustees McEachern and Rosner advocated for serving more teachers as the core of an expansion strategy. Dr. McGee agreed and noted that any additional campus(es) could, should and would enable IMSA to serve more teachers.

After extensive discussion, Chairman Isoye said it was time for the Board to focus on what it thought should be considered. Dr. McGee asked if a feasibility study should be done on one or both models. Trustees recommended that four models be considered: a “replication” of the current campus; a feeder middle school which could be coupled, or not, with a another residential secondary campus; STEM Centers; and expansion of the current campus.

Ms. Veal reminded the Board that models for potential additional IMSA campuses were part of Strategy 3 but were not all of it; there are other expansion action plans.

Chairman Isoye asked Trustees to think about whether they would like to meet more frequently and/or “chunk” the work on this. Trustee Olszewski-Kubilius said she did not think “chunking” this work would be helpful because the Board’s job was to understand the big picture before voting on significant proposals such as additional campuses. Chairman Isoye said “it is not about urgency but quality” and said work on this might extend beyond 2012. He noted that Strategy 3 would be discussed further at the March 17 Board meeting.

Chairman Isoye and Dr. McGee said they would discuss next steps on the campus models and feasibility study with the Executive Committee in February. Dr. McGee thanked Trustees for their questions, counsel and support.

Closed Session

At 11:20 a.m., a motion was made by Trustee McEachern and seconded by Trustee Rosner to go into closed session to discuss the FY10 performance and evaluation of Dr. McGee and the employment of the IMSA President FY11+. Voting aye were Trustees Isoye, Budzik, Dyson, Kalantzis, McEachern, Naughton, Olszewski-Kubilius, Roche and Rosner. The motion passed by a vote of 9 ayes, 0 nays.

Reconvene in Open Session and Adjourn

A motion was made by Trustee McEachern and seconded by Trustee Roche to adjourn the meeting. Voting aye were Trustees Isoye, Budzik, Dyson, Kalantzis, McEachern, Naughton, Olszewski-Kubilius, Roche and Rosner. The motion passed by a vote of 9 ayes, 0 nays.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven T. Isoye
Chairman

Catherine C. Veal
Secretary