



PRESIDENT'S LISTENING AND LEARNING PLAN SEPTEMBER 2014 – DECEMBER 2014

José M. Torres, Ph.D.
Submitted September 17, 2014 to the
IMSA Board of Trustees

VALUES AND BELIEFS:

- Legislative Charge #1: *“To offer a uniquely challenging education for students talented in the areas of mathematics and science”*
- Legislative Charge #2: *“To stimulate further excellence for all Illinois schools in mathematics and science”*
- IMSA Mission
- IMSA Beliefs
- Can’t have excellence without equity
- Can’t have equity without excellence

KEYS TO CONTINUED SUCCESS AT IMSA:

- Questions drive our inquiry and improvements
- Partnerships expand opportunities
- Powerful teaching and learning practices are foundational to meet our legislative charges
- Leadership and risk taking are at every level of the organization
- Every member of our communities shares the responsibility for success

IN 5-7 YEARS...

I would like our communities to feel even more proud of what our faculty, students, alumni, and staff have accomplished:

- International recognition as the premier STEM academy in the world
- State accolades for promoting innovative STEM education for over 80% of all students in Illinois
- Wide-spread acknowledgement for equity and excellence

IMPORTANCE OF THIS PLAN:

- To approach the entry into IMSA in a systematic manner
- To enable staff already on board to help with the listening and learning plan
- To quickly assess the culture, climate, and existing issues in the institution
- To enable faculty and staff to know what is coming in order to be helpful
- To offer the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff a way to team with me and examine IMSA with fresh eyes, and to review existing practices

GOALS FOR THE FIRST 90 DAYS:

- Get to know the people and programs at IMSA as fully as possible
- Examine critical issues in the organization, determine how such issues are handled, and identify the norms that will affect how the organization may function in the future
- Identify tasks that need to be accomplished, rank them in order of priority, and establish how and who should accomplish these tasks
- Take immediate action on priority tasks, for example, align all IMSA programs under our legislative charges; be responsive to our stakeholders, and establish urgency around our Chief Academic Officer/Principal selection

GOALS FOR THE FIRST 90 DAYS (CONT):

- Ensure effective institutional governance through positive partnerships between Trustees and President
- Maintain and build public trust and confidence through open, honest communication, and positive relationships among internal and external leaders (e.g., Parents' Association Council, student councils, government and elected officials, IMSA Fund Directors, superintendents, business and community leaders, faculty, staff, alumni, university presidents, etc.)
- Understand and establish (as necessary) a clear and definitive strategy to address issues related to safety, security, and climate for IMSA

KEY ELEMENTS OF THIS PLAN:

- **Listening**—This is a people business!
- **Gathering**—Good information is essential for good decisions! Facts rule!
- **Analyzing and Reporting**—Triangulation or multiple measures (demographics, perceptions, performance) provide a powerful picture of IMSA's impact!
- **Following Through**—Execution: The discipline of getting things done!

LISTENING:

- Engage in 1:1 conversations with (for example):
 - Board of Trustees members
 - Executive staff, other staff, Principal and faculty leaders
 - IMSA Fund Directors and major donors
 - Faculty, staff, and student focus groups
 - Parent, alumni, community, and civic leaders
 - Government and elected officials
 - Business and state leaders, including ISBE, IBHE, Golden Apple, IL Science & Tech Coalition, 1871
- Conduct classroom and program visits to get a “feel” for actual activities related to instruction and the role that programs play in supporting our legislative charges
- Engage groups through community and public forums
- Establish regular meetings and attend advisory meetings to discuss common interests and needs
 - Faculty and elected officials
 - Parents’ Association Council and other advisories, including Student Council

GATHERING (SAMPLE DOCUMENTS AND DATA):

Legislative Charge # 1	Legislative Charge # 2	Fiscal Responsibility	Leadership	Public Trust & Support
IMSA Plans, STEM Report & National Performance	Results & Effect of Professional Development Delivered	Financial Reports and Audits-last 3 years	Org Charts, Position Descriptions & Control	MoU with Key Partners (e.g., Field Services, ISTC, Public Schools, Universities, etc.)
Major Program Descriptions- Audits (e.g. Admissions)	Evidence of promotion of STEM in the State	Recent Budgets, including Proposed Budget	Board Policies, Responsibilities, Roles & Diversity Plan	PR materials, internal / external
Reports of Recruitment & Retention Efforts	Effectiveness of IMSA Programs (e.g., Logic Models)	IMSA Fund Strategy & Plans	List of New Staff (2 years), Faculty Recruitment, Retention, Career Plans	Parent & Alumni Engagement & Support
AdvancedED, Alumni Follow Through & Graduation Requirements	"State of the State" Regarding STEM Educational Excellence	Employee Compensation-- Fiscal Impacts	Principal, Faculty & Staff Evaluation System & Incentives	Employee Climate Survey & Other Satisfaction Surveys

ANALYZING AND REPORTING:

- **Analyze** interviews and documents to identify patterns, connections, priorities, and common interests and concerns
- **Report** impressions and findings, along with specific strengths and concerns to Board of Trustees

FOLLOWING THROUGH:

- After implementing this Listening and Learning Plan (90 days), results will become basis for an administrative retreat
- Retreat will be used to recalibrate IMSA's goals and objectives and for President's performance evaluation, pending Trustee's approval

CLOSING THOUGHTS:

- This plan of action must be distributed widely
- Goals and actions are not in any order of priority or planned implementation
- “The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.” The main thing is STEM teaching and learning

Should you have any thoughts regarding IMSA that you think might be helpful to me as I begin this role, please contact me.

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President

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***Thank you for
your trust and
commitment!***