

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

José M. Torres, PhD

July 15, 2020

Leadership Matters

This report provides the Board of Trustees with information regarding Academy activities and the progress that we are making toward achieving our IMSA Impact and Outcomes Statement and Priority Outcomes. I organize the Report of the President, where appropriate, around the IMSA Impact and Outcomes document:

Three pillars:

1. STEM Teaching and Learning
2. Operational Capacity
3. Stakeholder Engagement

One Strategy—Strengthen Employee Engagement

Priorities for Academic Year 2020-2021

To be determined at the July 27-28, 2020 Cabinet Retreat

I provide information, updates and general observations with IMSA stakeholders, including IMSA employees, students, and parents via my Personal Reflections throughout the year.

SPECIAL NOTICE: Due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Pritzker's Executive Orders, IMSA staff and students left the IMSA Campus on March 13, 2020, and continue to work, teach, and learn remotely. All employees, whether or not they were able to work remotely, were paid their regular salaries and benefits through June 30, 2020.

STEM Teaching and Learning

Results of the National German Exam

The results of the National German Exam administered this past school year are in and the success of our students is worth noting as evidence that quality learning continued at IMSA even with a distance learning modality. IMSA students earned 25 gold medals (90% and above), 30 silver and seven bronze. Read more about the students in the Good News section of the agenda. Herzlichen Glückwunsch an Frau Agnieszka Michalak! (Congratulations to Frau Agnieszka Michalak!)

IMSA Students Win Second Place in National Power-Pitch Competition

IMSA students Emily Shao, Eva Tuecke, Krisha Patel won second place at The Diamond Challenge, a high-profile national pitch competition, for their Fision Lens idea. The finals were supposed to be in person at the University of Delaware in April, but became virtual due to COVID. According to the web site, 2nd place is awarded \$9000 plus an in-kind semifinalist prize package and \$11,000 to fund the team's venture or higher education. Fision Lens is a thin, film-like plastic that is applied directly on top of the original glasses lens in order to change the

prescription. Traditionally, updating a glasses prescription can cost consumers hundreds of dollars, but Fision uses an additive process to update the prescription for a fraction of the cost.

Professional Development for IMSA Faculty

Beginning at the end of May, Dr. Akwaji-Anderson coordinated and provided professional development for all faculty members, including work sessions within and across disciplinary teams, and joint meetings with staff from Student Life. Topics included [Designing Distance Learning through an Equity and Excellence lens](#) and [Equity and Learner Engagement in a Virtual Environment: Formative Assessment and Unit Design](#) with Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs of [Curriculum 21](#).

CANVAS Selected as IMSA's Learning Management System

During the spring semester while we were engaged in remote teaching, it became apparent for the need of a robust learning management system (LMS). In reviewing the available LMS systems contracted with the State of Illinois Higher Education Cooperative, CANVAS is the only viable LMS allowing us the ability to immediately engage Instructure (owners of CANVAS) without a lengthy solicitation process. Even with this expedited process, implementing CANVAS requires a 6-week process before we are able to provide training for IMSA.

Dr. Robinson shared the following information in an email to all IMSA staff on June 25, 2020.

There are several phases to the Canvas adoption and roll out process. We are currently in the planning and implementation phases where work with Instructure, the makers of Canvas. The work includes training IMSA Canvas Transition Success Committee members and implementing peripheral software such as Power School and Salesforce with a single sign on process, so that Canvas can act seamlessly with our current IMSA login credentials. We are currently working with Instructure to schedule the implementation phase of the Canvas platform and subsequently schedule professional development dates with them. We will communicate the final dates for various formats of professional development (synchronous and asynchronous) for all stakeholders (administration, staff, faculty, students, and parents) as the next phase of the initiative commences.

The goal is to have the entire Academy use Canvas as soon as possible. Faculty will be expected to use Canvas starting with fall classes. This process will begin with faculty professional development tentatively scheduled to begin after July 13. A plan is currently being developed that will support the faculty use of Canvas and this will be communicated as soon as possible while accommodating summer scheduling. It will include both synchronous and asynchronous sessions.

Like faculty, staff will begin with professional development for Canvas tentatively scheduled to occur after July 13. For those staff members who have been using Moodle, a plan to migrate to Canvas is being developed and will be communicated as soon as it is feasible. Any new experiences will be created in Canvas as soon we start the

implementation process. At the present time, although situations and events may change, the plan is tentatively to discontinue the use of Moodle entirely by December 2020 and use Canvas exclusively thereafter.

Dr. Storm Robinson III has proactively created an IMSA Canvas Transition Success Committee composed of representatives from several departments across campus:

- Dr. Storm Robinson III, Project Lead
- Dr. Comfort Akwaji-Anderson Co-Project Lead
- Dr. Richard Shultz, LMS Administrator
- Fred Yankowski, IT Administrator
- Jocelyn Quiles, Committee Note Taker
- Dr. Adrienne Coleman, HR Representative
- Cassandra Armstrong, Center for Teaching and Learning
- Patrick Davis, Faculty Representative
- Terry Michels, Business Office Representative
- Betty Hart, Center for Innovation and Inquiry Representative
- Terry Jones, IT Representative
- Christine Moskalik, Center for Teaching and Learning Representative
- Katelyn Lancaster, OPA Representative
- Jerami Johnson, Student Life Representative
- Bill McGrail ITMC Representative

IMSA strives to transition from an emergency remote learning environment to a well-designed online learning format that provides equity and academic rigor for IMSA students. As included within our charge, IMSA will be proactive in building the needed infrastructure to accommodate virtual learning that will be consistent with the excellence that IMSA has provided to its students in the past and we look forward to working with the entire IMSA community toward that end.

IMSA Local 604-IFT-AFT

We began our bargaining sessions with the IMSA Council on June 22, 2020. At the first session, the IMSA union proposed the following: Recognition Clause, Employee Rights, Council-Board Relations, Grievance, and CADRE Replacement. We will respond to their proposals and provide a Management Rights proposal. Bargaining sessions are scheduled for July 23 and August 6, 2020. The IMSA Council cancelled the July 2, 2020, bargaining session an hour before the start time in response to our announced personnel reductions. We informed the IMSA Council that we agree to bargain the impact on the bargaining unit of IMSA's decision to reduce in force three positions that are currently in the bargaining unit. One faculty member and two laboratory assistants have been reduced in force. We suggested that this be the agenda at our next scheduled meeting on July 23, 2020.

Operational Capacity

Updates in the Face of the COVID-19 Pandemic

At the Board of Trustees' special meeting on June 26, 2020, Trustees authorized me to make non-personnel and personnel reductions to bridge the deficit gap of \$2.5M, including dipping into IMSA financial reserves. We are leaving 10 positions vacant, notified 25 employees of layoffs, and reduced our budget to meet all but \$900,000 which is what remains of the deficit. We expect that some of this deficit will be filled by the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund. I am attaching a document containing key updates about IMSA in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fall Reopening- Convocation to occur Monday, August 17; classes commence in the afternoon

At today's Board of Trustee meeting, we will provide the Trustees an update on our plans for the fall. The IMSA Transition Task Force composed of 10 staff, including faculty, is representative of each Cabinet member and Academy divisions. The Task Force has been working during the past few months to ensure that students have a rich distance learning experience, and employees have what they need while remote working. Each Task Force member also had their own sub-working group, which includes additional stakeholders. Transition subcommittees include: Operations/Facilities, Student Affairs, Academics, Human Resources, Outreach, and Communications.

Based on the results of needs assessments completed by the Academy and individual departments, we have made some decisions affecting the short term. Additional assessments related to the fall are being reviewed and will be inform our plans for Fall 2020 to be presented at today's Board meeting. The results of the needs assessments as well as the Task Force's guiding principles to include IMSA's mission statement and beliefs, equity and excellence policy, student-centered value, and the health and safety of IMSA employees, students, and the community have guided our Fall 2020 decision. The Task Force organized its work under seven areas, including:

- Health and Safety
- Student Experience
- Academics
- Outreach
- Employee Well-Being
- Operations
- Communications

Finally, the four re-opening scenarios/plans, which we are planning for Fall 2020 are:

- Remote Working and Distance Learning
- Repopulation (phase in employees and then students)
- Containment of the Virus
- Shut Down

We have also added a webpage to [imsa.edu](https://www.imsa.edu/academics/fall-reopening-plan/) regarding fall reopening (<https://www.imsa.edu/academics/fall-reopening-plan/>)

Roofing and Other IMSA Capital Improvements

IMSA's Capital Development Board (CBD) Administrator-Project Management notified IMSA on July 7, 2020, that both of our current projects (Roofing and HVAC) were rejected by the CBD Procurement Office for failure to meet specific bidding requirements, which means that there will not be any work done on these projects this summer. The projects and their status are described below:

Project 805-030-020 Campus Water Infiltration (aka Roofing) Project (re-release date, October 2018) - This project has already been bid twice since its re-release. The most recent bid opening was on May 1, 2020. While this bid came in over budget, the CBD indicated that they were moving forward with an award. However, the successful bidder was disqualified for not meeting Black Enterprise Program (BEP) goals and for not completing CBD standard contract required information correctly.

Project 805-030-023 HVAC Upgrades - This project has also been bid twice. The most recent bid opening was on March 12, 2020. The successful bidders came in within budget but the low bidder and second lowest bidder were both disqualified as their electrical vendor was not CDB certified at the time of bid.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement via Virtual Town Halls

We continue to engage our internal and external communities virtually and via Town Halls. Since the last Board of Trustee meeting, we have held three Town Halls with staff members and one with parents and students (We are planning another Town Hall with parents on Saturday, July 16.). Average attendance at the staff Town Halls has been 160. Attendance at the sophomore and junior Parent Town Hall was 170 and the senior parent Town Hall was 100. The IMSA Cabinet and I have also met with the organizers of the Black@isma Instagram page to explore how to move forward at IMSA based on the many incidents of racism identified, some dating back to 1986 (over 80 incidents documented). See attached report on Black@isma from Traci Ellis.

Invited Keynote Address

On July 6, 2020, I kicked-off the Reunión Nacional de Profesores PrepaTec: Modalidad Virtual. My presentation focused on IMSA's model of excellence and can be found in Digital Commons (<https://bit.ly/3dpe9Ar>). Over 1,600 educators from 37 campuses throughout Mexico participated in the meeting during my Keynote address.

Leadership Update from Select Cabinet Members

Updates from Dr. Comfort Akwaji-Anderson, Katie Berger, and Traci Ellis and are attached.