

APPROVED



## IMSA Governing Board

### Minutes

#### Board Meeting

Board Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Saturday January 18, 2025 at 10:00 AM

#### Location

7002 Graham Road  
Suite 219  
Indianapolis, IN 46220

IMSA Regional Office  
7002 Graham Road  
Suite 219  
Indianapolis, IN 46220

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#### Directors Present

C. Frazier, D. Pierson, J. Sanders, J. Sparks, N. Coleman, N. Perez, T. Miller (remote)

#### Directors Absent

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A. Ross

**Ex Officio Members Present**

B. Garrett, C. Bultman, E. Kersey, H. Dulgeroglu (remote), J. Brown, M. Arslan, M. Atlihan, Y. AbamislMOV, Z. Paley

**Non Voting Members Present**

B. Garrett, C. Bultman, E. Kersey, H. Dulgeroglu (remote), J. Brown, M. Arslan, M. Atlihan, Y. AbamislMOV, Z. Paley

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**I. Opening Items**

**A. Record Attendance and Guests**

**B. Call the Meeting to Order**

J. Sparks called a meeting of the board of directors of IMSA Governing Board to order on Saturday Jan 18, 2025 at 11:05 AM.

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

*I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*

**D. Adopt the Agenda**

J. Sparks - Presented the agenda and called for discussion on any modifications.

D. Pierson made a motion to approve the agenda.

J. Sanders seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**II. Public Input**

**A. Public Input**

J. Sparks - Inquired about public input and none was given.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**A. Approval of November 16, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes**

C. Frazier made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 11-16-24.

D. Pierson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

J. Sparks - We need to approve the minutes from our November board meeting. That's been provided in the packet that you received. If you need to refresh your memory on that, please go ahead and do that. Otherwise, I'm looking... for modifications or a motion to approve.

#### IV. Finance Committee

##### A. Review and Approval of IMSA North November & December 2024 Financials and Vouchers

H. Dulgeroglu - Provided an overview of IMSA North's financial statement summary as of December 31st. It was reported that approximately 47% of budgeted revenues had been received, with a portion of federal grant reimbursements arriving in December following grant approvals.

On the expenditure side, about 47% of the budgeted items had been spent. There were no major disbursements reported since the last board meeting. One significant payment of \$6,000 was made to a company for licensing purposes.

T. Miller made a motion to approve the IMSA North financials for November & December 2024.

D. Pierson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

##### B. Review and Approval of IMSA West November & December 2024 Financials and Vouchers

H. Dulgeroglu - Presented IMSA West's financial summary. Similar to IMSA North, IMSA West had received approximately 49% of budgeted revenues, with the majority of federal grant reimbursements arriving in December. Expenditures also reached around 49% of the budget.

T. Miller made a motion to approve the IMSA West financials for November & December 2024.

D. Pierson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

##### C. FYI- Staff Retention and Appreciation Bonus (Retroactive)

H. Dulgeroglu - Provided an update on the appreciation bonus payments made to staff members. It was noted that the payments were disbursed on November 15.

For **IMSA West**, the appreciation bonuses were distributed as follows:

- **Teaching Staff and Administration:** \$1,000 per employee
- **Support Staff (e.g., teacher aides and similar positions):** \$500 per employee

- **Total Amount Paid:** \$51,500
- **Total Employees Receiving Bonuses:** 60

For **IMSA North**, the distribution followed the same structure:

- **Total Amount Paid:** \$48,000
- **Total Employees Receiving Bonuses:** 52

H. Dulgeroglu - Confirmed that all retention and appreciation bonuses had been successfully distributed.

T. Miller made a motion to approve the Staff Retention and Appreciation Bonus.

D. Pierson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## **V. Academic Excellence Committee**

### **A. Academic Excellence Committee Report**

J. Sanders - Provided an update from the Academic Excellence Committee, highlighting the discussion on the mid-year ClearSight data and student growth at both IMSA West and IMSA North. At IMSA West, 57% of students showed growth of more than 30 points in ELA, while 56% demonstrated similar growth in math. At IMSA North, 53% of students grew more than 30 points in ELA, and 40% achieved the same growth in math.

The committee also reviewed the various support strategies in place to sustain and improve student performance in the upcoming ILEARN assessment. These strategies include strategic weekly planning meetings, Tier 2 interventions, and small group pullouts at both schools to ensure targeted student support.

J. Sparks - Inquired about how the school's growth compares to other area charter schools, noting that while individual progress data is useful, comparative data would provide additional context.

Z. Paley - Responded that the data from other schools is not publicly available, as interim assessment results are not accessible beyond individual institutions. However, iLearn and iRead results are public through the Department of Education.

J. Sparks - Stated that parents would likely appreciate access to such data. M. Arslan suggested the possibility of benchmarking against other schools through voluntary data-sharing agreements.

Z. Paley - Indicated that some charter schools, such as Paramount, use the same ClearSight platform, and outreach could be made to explore collaboration. It was noted that Paramount takes pride in its scores and may be willing to share. M. Arslan agreed, emphasizing the importance of setting goals based on high-performing schools. The board agreed to explore the possibility of benchmarking with other institutions.

Z. Paley - Presented details on the Early Literacy Achievement Grant, an IDOE initiative prioritizing literacy. A total of \$10 million was allocated for cash stipends to teachers, instructional coaches, and other school staff. These funds were released on Friday, December 13th, and must be distributed by March. The stipends do not apply to administrators or central office staff and require approval from the local governing body.

The proposed distribution is as follows:

- **IMSA North:** \$38,000 to seven teachers, one instructional assistant, and one instructional coach.
- **IMSA West:** \$41,000 to nine teachers, two partial-year teachers, one instructional assistant, two pre-K teachers, one instructional coach, and a reading specialist, totaling 21 staff members.

Z. Paley - Clarified that teachers who do not return do not receive the stipend. Funding is determined by student performance, overall scores, and growth, meaning that funds are split among remaining eligible staff.

M. Arslan - Highlighted the substantial increase in funding from the previous year, noting that IMSA North's stipend allocation grew from \$3,500 to \$38,000, while IMSA West's increased from \$15,000 to \$41,000. This growth was attributed to high student proficiency rates, including 90% proficiency in iRead at IMSA West and 70% proficiency in student growth at IMSA North.

M. Arslan - Emphasized that the 70% growth reflects a 30 percentage point increase from the prior year and commended the instructional team for their efforts.

J. Sparks confirmed that approval was needed and opened the floor for a motion. Z. Paley noted that submitting the stipend distribution report is a requirement for the Department of Education.

## **B. Approval of 2023-24 Early Literacy Achievement Grant Disbursement**

D. Pierson made a motion to approve the Early Literacy Distribution.

J. Sanders seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## **VI. Governance Committee**

### **A.**

## **Governance Committee Report**

D. Pierson reported that the Governance Committee met on Wednesday evening prior to the board meeting. The committee conducted a detailed discussion regarding the charter school application for the Spring 2025 cycle. A letter of intent has been submitted, and efforts are underway to strengthen the application with the assistance of external consultant Porsche Chisley.

Discussions also included identifying a potential school building. A letter of support from the current landlord has been secured, marking significant progress. Additionally, C. Bultman has been collaborating with The Mind Trust to develop community engagement initiatives, with D. Pierson set to participate in select discussions. The board was encouraged to consider ways to support these efforts.

## **Board Recruitment Event**

The committee discussed the annual board recruitment event, scheduled for March 5th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Emma has circulated an email invitation to board members and other charter schools. The committee emphasized the importance of attending the event and ensuring proper preparations, including signage and structured discussions. The board also discussed how to utilize the contacts made during the event to further the organization's goals.

N. Coleman - Someone to support IMSA's philanthropic efforts. This prompted a discussion on the board's role in fundraising and donor engagement.

J. Sparks - Provided an update on the Development Committee's recent efforts, noting that Alonzo, raised \$500 in December. While this amount is small relative to overall funding needs, the committee views it as a step in the right direction. A total of \$530 has been raised since the last board meeting, with social media promotions contributing to the effort. The board acknowledged the need to develop a structured fundraising program, including strategies to engage larger donors.

J. Sparks - Raised a question regarding board recruitment, suggesting that the philanthropic committee could benefit from an additional board member to support fundraising initiatives. The board agreed that strategically recruiting individuals with expertise in philanthropy would strengthen the organization's financial sustainability.

**J. Sparks** - The board will be completing a survey regarding the recruitment event, which will focus on identifying areas where additional expertise is needed. The first step is for the board to decide whether or not we want to expand the board. A discussion around this is encouraged. One consideration is whether to bring in a new member if a strong candidate with a good fit is found.

**D. Pierson** - Reflecting on previous discussions, Nikki pointed out, that there may also be value in exploring expansion in the development arena. This could provide significant benefit to our efforts.

**J. Sparks - Will** work with Joy to send categories to the board for feedback. Confirmed the maximum number of attendees is four.

**J. Sparks** - Acknowledged and agreed on the need for engaging storytellers.

**T. Miller**- Acknowledged responsibility for potentially missing the full business case regarding the expansion into Haughville. Expressed concern that without a solid business case and sufficient community support, the project may face significant challenges.

- Stressed the importance of having the right talking points and securing genuine community buy-in, particularly from those who are eager for the school's presence.
- Cautioned that moving forward without the community's support could lead to difficulties, highlighting that "no solutions for us without us" is a key principle in Haughville.
- Reiterated the need to ensure the community is actively advocating for the expansion, as the current sentiment suggests the endeavor could face resistance.

**T. Miller** - Shared insights from a recent panel discussion with the IPS superintendent and emphasized the importance of reducing competition between charter and public schools.

- Reaffirmed the necessity of having a clear, community-driven business case to move forward with the expansion.

**T. Miller** - Stated that if a vote were to occur on the Haughville expansion without adequate community buy-in, he would have to vote "no" until those concerns are addressed.

**M. Arslan:**

Confirmed that the decision has been made for Hallville, specifically at the former IPS School 75, as it presents a strong case. Speedway is not currently being considered.

**Speaker 13:**

Expressed interest in discussing the decision further.

**M. Arslan:**

Reiterated that a productive conversation took place during the finance meeting, with Toby providing valuable insights. Emphasized the importance of community outreach and buy-in, which is one of the main focus areas being led by Chris.

**C. Bultman:**

Commended Toby for being cautious in this effort, acknowledging the competitive nature of the Hallville area. Highlighted the findings from a market analysis by the Mind Trust, showing Hallville as a saturated market. However, emphasized that IMSA's success and

strong performance provide a unique opportunity to offer a better educational option for students.

- Mentioned that two letters of support from Hallville members have already been secured, with five more meetings scheduled before the end of the month.
- Reported that community engagement efforts are strong, with meetings scheduled at locations such as Christamore House, Hawthorne Community Center, and International Marketplace.
- Asserted that the IMSA model works and is well-suited for Hallville.

**J. Sparks:**

Noted the importance of continued community engagement and involvement from board members with connections to Haughville.

- Stressed the need for a coordinated effort to build relationships and support within the community.

M. Arslan - Confirmed that meetings are scheduled with key churches, including First Samuel and First Missionary, both of which are already supportive.

**T. Miller** - Emphasized the importance of engaging with key community figures and churches. Noted that a previous meeting in Haughville revealed significant community interest in supporting a school like IMSA, but stressed the need to align with local leaders to avoid resistance. He highlighted individuals such as Laura Ward, Amy Stewart, and Christina Wolfe as crucial figures for building support.

**M. Arslan** - Reiterated the need for board members to assist in reaching out to key community figures. Chris will send an email later today with a list of names and suggested next steps for meetings and outreach.

C. Bultman - Addressed the concern by comparing Haughville to IMSA West, noting that the neighborhood environment in Haughville is more similar to the West than to the North. Reported that IMSA West has seen great success, providing a positive outlook for replicating the model in Haughville.

**T. Miller** - Stressed that transparency will be crucial in the Haughville community to avoid skepticism and mistrust. Shared the need for clear, open communication about IMSA's successes and challenges.

C. Bultman - Suggested that materials such as elevator pitches, one-pagers, and anticipated questions be developed to help board members address concerns from the community and other stakeholders.



## **VII. Board Dashboard Review**

### **A. Monthly Dashboard**

M. Arslan addressed financial and operational matters. The discussion began with enrollment numbers at IMSA West, where the first ADM number was 553. C. Bultman confirmed the current enrollment as 554. M. Arslan acknowledged the consistency in numbers and noted that despite an expected drop after the holiday break, enrollment remained stable.

Dr. Paley has provided an update on academic performance, after which the discussion shifted to culture and attendance. The attendance rate was reported at 94%, with concerns raised about a possible decline. M. Arslan suggested focusing on attendance trends.

B. Garrett - explained that tracking had been inconsistent since the beginning of the year and that international travel among students may have impacted attendance. J. Brown raised concerns about weather conditions affecting student attendance, particularly during cold and snowy days. M. Arslan acknowledged the issue and stated that attendance would be closely monitored.

M. Arslan - Talked out-of-school suspensions. He clarified that suspensions were accumulating, and B. Garrett noted that the goal was to keep the number below 67.

M. Arslan emphasized the importance of establishing a baseline for suspension tracking. M. Atlihan stated that the suspension criteria had remained unchanged. However, a reflection room has been reintroduced to provide an alternative to suspension. Space constraints were noted as a challenge for certain grade levels.

The discussion returned to enrollment at IMSA North, where the first ADM number was reported as 665, with a current enrollment of 663. M. Arslan noted the consistency but acknowledged the need for improvement, particularly given the competitive environment among charter and public schools. Weekly meetings were being held to address enrollment strategies.

## **VIII. School Updates**

### **A. Principal's Corner**

M. Atlihan - Provided an update on school morale, stating that both staff and students were in high spirits after the break. He also shared that, according to U.S. News rankings,

the school was the 5th best elementary and middle school among charter schools in Indiana, while North ranked 6th. G. Garrett noted that the test score data used for these rankings was from the 2022-2023 school year and may not reflect the most updated performance, but acknowledged the rankings as beneficial for marketing and recruitment efforts.

M. Atlihan - highlighted the launch of a student-led cooking club in December, sponsored by two staff members, noting that students enjoyed their first session and planned to continue. Additionally, the science fair was held in the new gym, featuring over 100 judged projects. A video showcasing the event was presented.

He also shared that kindergarten students participated in a project-based learning initiative by creating and selling hot cocoa to staff, promoting entrepreneurship at an early age.

T. Miller - Proposed forming partnerships with local chambers of commerce, including the Black and Latino Chambers, to further support student entrepreneurship. Additionally, as the new president of the Indianapolis chapter of Indiana Black Expo, introduced the idea of integrating the organization's Lost Arts Program with the school's cooking club and involving students in summer celebration events.

C. Bultman - Expressed interest in pursuing partnerships and welcomed introductions.

B. Garrett - provided an update on preschool development, confirming that approval had been received for a program serving three- to five-year-olds. Initially, one room would open, with plans to expand.

Z. Paley also reported on high school achievements, announcing that four students had received full-ride scholarships to Purdue and IU, with one student having offers from both. Plans were discussed to recognize and promote these accomplishments. Additionally, the school received the AP College Board's Female Diversity Award for the high representation of female students in AP Computer Science.

B. Garrett - The K-2 Winter Fest event was highlighted as a successful initiative involving high school volunteers. C. Bultman was asked about marketing metrics for new videos, and he committed to presenting viewership statistics at the next meeting. The finance report noted underspending on advertisements, with an expected increase in future expenditures.

## **IX. Closing Items**

### **A. Attendance Check for the Next Meeting - February 22, 2025**

J Sparks - Reminded the board that the next meeting would be held on February 22nd instead of the usual third Saturday due to Presidents' Day. J. Brown confirmed the scheduling change, but J. Sparks noted that some board members, including Toby, would be unavailable.

J. Brown - Reminded members to sign a thank-you card for Bernice, to go along with a plaque in her honor.

**B. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
J. Brown