



## Personal Reflections

4/30/2018

Dear IMSA Family,

We are now in the home stretch just several weeks before the end of the school year. Final papers and projects, exams, Advanced Placement examinations and college decisions are now the only thing between us and commencement. Of course, we can't forget senior prom, senior banquet, senior recognition and transition day!

Before we wrap up the school year, I wanted to provide you with a brief update on our budget hearings. We just had an amazing week in Springfield!

On Tuesday, April 24, 2018, Tami Armstrong, Katie Berger, Bud Bergie, Mary Collins, Kimberly Corrao, Traci Ellis, Bob Hernandez, students, Thomas Harris and Nyxel Camarena, and I left the IMSA parking lot at 5:00 a.m. to travel to Springfield for a 9:00 a.m. budget hearing before the Senate Appropriations II Committee. Two other agencies, Chicago State University and Southern Illinois University, were also scheduled to testify during this hearing. We were fortunate to be called first. After some introductory remarks, I ceded the microphone to Nyxel and then Thomas. They spoke about their experience at IMSA. I concluded my remarks and stated that we were ready to respond to questions. No questions were asked. After four minutes, we were exiting Room 212 of the Capitol Building. We took Thomas and Nyxel to the Senate and House Galleries for pictures and they boarded the van to return to Aurora.

On Thursday, April 26, 2018, staff members and students, Sona Fokum and Julian Martinez, boarded the van at 4:00 a.m. to leave for Springfield for an 8:00 a.m. budget hearing before the House Higher Education Committee. Again, we were called first, presented our testimony and Julian and Sona spoke. Representatives asked several questions and we left the room about 20 minutes later. We took Julian and Sona to the Senate and House Galleries for pictures and boarded the van to return to Aurora.

It's clear to me, now in my fourth year of testifying before these committees, that legislators on both sides of the aisle recognize and appreciate IMSA's contributions to the State. They love hearing from our students and are supportive of our budget requests.

I am grateful for all of the hard work from IMSA faculty, residential counselors and other staff. Because of them, IMSA is respected and appreciated by our state legislators. Our IMSA staff is fulfilling Carl Sagan's exclamation that "IMSA is a gift from the people of Illinois to the human future."

Parents and students, I encourage you to send a thank you note to IMSA faculty, residential counselors, and other IMSA staff that made a difference for you this year. While they will not be able to take your thank you card to the bank, they will treasure in their hearts your gratefulness to them.



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Best regards,

José M. Torres, PhD  
President