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# Repopulation Cancellation Timeline and Fact Sheet

The following represents a timeline of the FY 21 Academic Year and our collective efforts to navigate these unprecedented times with the health and safety of our students and staff, including faculty, as our highest priority.

## **5/20/20 - IMSA Announces Fall Distance Learning and Criteria for Reopening**

The decision to begin the 2020-2021 Academic Year with distance learning and remote working with the intention of moving to in-person learning and working when IMSA met the criteria for the [Restore Illinois plan](#) and there was a treatment or vaccine for COVID-19 was first announced and widely communicated.

## **5/26/20 - IMSA Appoints Transition Task Force**

Dr. Torres appointed a Transition Task Force to serve as an advisory to himself and his Cabinet. Participants included representatives from across campus, including facilities, faculty, student affairs, information technology, business office, health office, public affairs and outreach. There was also a parent liaison who worked on the Student Affairs sub-working group to provide the parent voice. The Transition Task Force first had to focus on the summer and developed the Fall 2020 Distance Learning Plan.

## **7/6/2020 - IMSA Reduces Force Because of Distance Learning, Retains Most RCs**

Due to the pandemic, IMSA lost student fee revenue due to distance learning, grant funding and outreach program registration fees due to our inability to hold in-person youth programs and educator professional development training statewide causing an expected revenue shortfall for the academic year. Reductions in force were implemented because students were not on campus. All but two RC's were retained with the intention that IMSA would return to in-person learning as soon the criteria was met.

## **9/7/20- Transition Task Force pivoted to focus on Repopulation**

The Task Force worked for the next *six-seven months* on the Titan Pact: Repopulation Plan advised by national, state and regional health officials, sister schools, universities, a student working group, and parent, student and employee surveys to deliver a strategically-driven and science-based repopulation process. Two teachers were on the Transition Task Force at all times (Distance Learning and Repopulation). An Area Coordinator from Residence Life, who

supervises RC's and was a former RC, was appointed to the Task Force as well. There was a parent liaison and a student sub-working group to provide input.

### **11/2/20 - Repopulation Plan Draft shared with the Board of Trustees, Teachers' Union, and Staff Focus Group to solicit feedback**

The Repopulation Plan draft was revised and/or questions answered based on feedback received from these three stakeholder groups. The teachers' union raised a question regarding air quality/filtration. We addressed air quality/filtration in the FAQ. They also requested an air quality specialist. That work is already a part of a larger HVAC project scheduled to begin Summer 2021.

### **11/19/20 - IMSA's Repopulation Plan Released**

IMSA's Titan Pact: Repopulation Plan was officially released, including guidance on how IMSA would bring back students and staff, including faculty, when the criteria was met, including precautions and protocols that ensure the health, safety and well-being of our community was widely announced and communicated. A proposed timeline for repopulation was communicated as well.

### **1/20/21 - The Board of Trustees Authorizes Dr. Torres to Determine Repopulation Date**

On January 20th, the Board authorized Dr. Torres to make the decision to open the IMSA campus if and when it was safe to do so. The criteria for opening the campus continued to be and had *expanded to* (in *italics*):

1. The entire state reaches Phase 4 of Restore IL
2. Existence (*and wide availability*) of treatment and or a vaccine
3. *Wide availability of rapid testing for IMSA students and staff, including faculty*

### **2/11/21 - Repopulation Info Sessions Held for Staff**

IMSA hosted two virtual sessions on February 11th with staff (not a part of the union). The purpose of these sessions was to answer any questions regarding Repopulation, and to obtain feedback. The teachers' union began to address Repopulation in weekly bargaining sessions.

### **2/15/21 - IMSA Makes Vaccine Available to Staff, Including Faculty**

IMSA partnered with a health care provider to make the Moderna vaccine available to IMSA staff, including faculty. Those who elected to be vaccinated received their first shot between 2/15-2/21 and their second dose mid-March.

### **2/19/21 - IMSA Meets Criteria to Open; Repopulation Date Announced**

All of Illinois had reached Phase 4, IMSA employees were provided access to the vaccine and IMSA secured an unlimited supply of rapid tests through partnerships with IDPH and Kane County Health Department. As a result, Dr. Torres announced that the IMSA campus would

open for a low-density, in-person learning experience in a safe and thoughtful manner beginning April 8, 2021. So that all students can be served in a healthy and safe way, a cohort model would be followed. Approximately 74% of students and families opted in to the in-person cohort experience.

### **3/24/21 - Teacher's Union Asks for Safety Mitigations Based on Hired Consultant**

The teachers' union notified IMSA in the form of a letter that a certified industrial hygienist they had hired, Dr. Mills, conducted an air quality assessment based on continued air quality concerns. On site, his assessment consisted of a walkthrough of the academic building and one of the residence halls. During his walkthrough, Dr. Mills took photos of various spaces, took ceiling measurements, looked at our HVAC systems, and conducted one noise level test in the Academic Pit. Based on a March 23, 2021 walkthrough and analysis of IMSA's main building and residence halls by Dr. Mills, the Teacher's Union requested:

1. 10 N95 masks for each faculty member
2. HEPA filtration in residence hall rooms, academic building, small offices, cafeteria, lunch break and staff break rooms and restrooms
3. Monitoring of indoor air quality
4. The establishment of a health and safety committee.

As of the date of this writing, April 12, IMSA has not yet received a copy of Dr. Mills' report. The report was requested on March 25th, March 31, and April 7th.

### **3/29/21- Return to Learning and Working Committee**

The IMSA administration extended an invitation to the teachers' union and the RC union to have representatives on the Return to Learning and Working Committee.

### **3/29/21 - Teacher's Union Communicates Intention to Continue with Remote Work**

The Teacher's Council notified IMSA Administration in the form of a letter on March 29th of their intention to continue working and teaching remotely until their demands for safety mitigations had been met.

### **3/30/21 - IMSA Response to Teacher's Union Request For Safety Mitigations**

IMSA responded to the Teacher's Union requests in detail in the form of a letter on March 30th as follows:

1. N95 Masks - IMSA agreed to provide 10 KN95 masks for each employee.
2. HEPA Filtration Response
  - a. Student rooms - IMSA is already in compliance with CDC guidelines as each individual room has a minimum of two windows that open and the wall units use outside air. Plus, there would only be one student in each room.
  - b. Academic Building – IMSA is already in compliance with CDC guidelines by use of MERV-13 filters which are comparable to HEPA filters. The unions' own expert, Dr. Mills, was extremely complimentary of IMSA and verbally told us that we had

done a great job with the building and it was one of the best school buildings he had evaluated. Additionally, at no point did Dr. Mills recommend that we not repopulate if any of suggestions were not implemented.

- c. Small offices - Again, IMSA is already in compliance with CDC guidelines by use of MERV-13 filters which are comparable to HEPA filters. However, in the spirit of collaboration with the unions, IMSA agreed to purchase HEPA filters for these rooms and advised them that the lead time for this procurement and installation is approximately 20 work days. IMSA requested Dr. Mills' written report as a result of his walkthrough to evaluate the details of his specific requests following his verbal report on March 25. IMSA requested the written report on March 25, March 31 and April 7. To date, Dr. Mills' report has not been received.
  - d. Cafeteria – This space is too large to make HEPA filters effective.
  - e. Staff lunch and break rooms – HEPA filters should not be needed as these rooms will be seldom used.
  - f. Restrooms – CDC guidelines indicate that HVAC exhaust meets the criterion for air quality in restrooms.
3. Monitoring of air quality - Management committed to seeking installation of space sensors, but could not confirm yet how long installation would take, or the cost.
  4. Health and Safety Committee - IMSA agreed to negotiate with the Teachers Union on a joint health and safety committee for the future.

#### **4/1/2021 - Repopulation Plan Continues with Faculty To Teach Remotely**

Based on the March 29th teachers' union letter (noted above) informing IMSA that faculty would continue to teach remotely until their demands for HEPA filters were met, IMSA communicated that in the meantime, the first cohort of students would meet for in-person classes on campus starting April 8, 2021 as planned. However, the instruction delivery would be conducted virtually using Zoom and Canvas and that teachers were welcome to come back on-site for in person learning and instruction at any time.

Our full student-facing staff, which has been enhanced and increased, as well as members of the Principal's Office, Center for Teaching and Learning and IMSA staff from across the Academy would serve as classroom monitors to ensure the safety of the students and promote an environment conducive to learning for all courses offering in-person instruction. Classroom monitors would have a presence in the classroom at the start and conclusion of the class, and at least twice during the mod. All IMSA staff members will have completed health and safety training on or before April 5.

On April 1, the RCs received an email notifying them that their work responsibilities would not change as a result of faculty teaching virtually.

#### **4/1/21- First CDC Walkthrough**

A walkthrough was performed using the CDC Mitigation Toolkit for schools, and the separate CDC walkthrough guide.

#### **4/1/21- First Impact Bargaining Session with the RC Union**

The RC union presented their demands for HEPA filters in the student rooms and their individual apartments. Management informed them that we were moving forward with repopulation without HEPA filters as we are compliant with the CDC and IDPH guidance. We also advised them of their work during repopulation for both virtual and on-campus students. The RC union also advised us that they were concerned about accompanying the students to the cafeteria to eat and requested in writing how they were supposed to do that.

#### **4/2/21- Second CDC Walkthrough**

A walkthrough was performed using the CDC Mitigation Toolkit for schools, and the separate CDC walkthrough guide.

#### **4/2/21 - RC Union Files Unfair Labor Practice Against IMSA**

IMSA was informed on April 2 that the RC Union filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) complaint against IMSA on the basis that IMSA unilaterally decided to “re-populate” the school and to allow students to move back into the residence halls beginning April 8, 2021. (Note that repopulation was actually beginning with move-in on April 5, 2021, not April 8th). The claim further stated that the unilateral decision was made without consulting the RC Council. Further, it stated that re-population of the residence halls where the Resident Counselors live will create congregate settings that are extremely likely to lead to a coronavirus outbreaks among students and IMSA staff. The RC Union sought a court injunction to prohibit IMSA from opening.

Additionally, the IFT union Field Rep for both the teachers and the RCs notified us that the teachers were filing an OSHA complaint against IMSA to allege that we failed to conduct a required OSHA Hazard Assessment.

#### **4/2/2021 - IMSA Announces Cancellation of Repopulation Plan**

After careful consideration, IMSA made the difficult decision to cancel its repopulation plans based on the uncertainty of the outcome of the RC Council’s request to enjoin IMSA from repopulation and because of the RC Council’s vehement opposition to repopulation despite adherence to CDC and IDPH guidelines.