# SUMMARY AND CLOSURE

The Visiting Team wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the entire Immaculate Heart Central school community for the warm welcome, hospitality, openness, and cooperation extended throughout our accreditation visit. The Team recognizes the tremendous amount of work involved in completing the self-study and preparing the Plan for Growth and Improvement, particularly so soon after the consolidation of the two schools. The thoughtful and thorough nature of this process reflects the dedication of the school's leadership, faculty, staff, families, and governing bodies to the continued success of IHC.

## Outstanding Strengths

The Visiting Team identified the following five outstanding strengths:

1. Dedicated and Committed Faculty and Staff

IHC is blessed with a knowledgeable, loyal, and dedicated faculty and staff who demonstrate a genuine commitment to their students and to the craft of teaching. It is evident that students feel safe, seen, valued, and supported. The Team also recognizes the exceptional pride demonstrated by the maintenance staff, who consistently go above and beyond to provide a clean, safe, and welcoming school environment.

2. Strong Catholic Identity and Commitment to Service

Catholic identity is deeply woven into every aspect of school life. Through prayer, faith formation, and meaningful service-learning opportunities, students are encouraged to live their faith through action. The school's well-established commitment to community service brings its mission, vision, and core values to life while fostering compassion, leadership, and social responsibility. The Visiting Team commends IHC for truly embodying the belief that Christianity is not a spectator sport.

3. Successful Consolidation and Strong School Leadership

The successful consolidation of the two schools is a significant accomplishment and reflects the commitment and cooperation of stakeholders at every level. The Visiting Team commends the Board of Governors, Education Council, administration, and school community for creating a positive, unified school culture. The Board of Governors deserves particular recognition for its leadership, financial support, and continued guidance throughout this transition.

4. Supportive Families and Positive School Community

IHC benefits from a highly involved and supportive parent and family community. Students are welcoming, respectful, faith-filled, and proud of their school. The strong relationships among students, families, faculty, staff, and leadership contribute to a positive school culture and a genuine sense of belonging.

5. Thoughtful Strategic Planning and Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The Visiting Team commends the school for its thorough and thoughtful review and revision of its foundational documents. The objectives identified in the Plan for Growth and Improvement are grounded in evidence gathered through the self-study process and reflect a sincere commitment to the school's future. The Team recognizes the ambitious nature of these goals and the school's willingness to undertake meaningful work to achieve them.

## Areas Most in Need of Improvement

The Visiting Team identified the following four priority areas for continued growth and improvement:

1. Enrollment Growth, Student Retention, and Recruitment

The school should continue to prioritize student retention and sustainable enrollment growth. The Team recommends establishing phased annual enrollment targets based on historical trends and recruitment capacity. Once hired, the Director of Marketing and Development (DMD) should prioritize the action steps that will lead to the greatest gains for student retention and recruitment.

2. Curriculum Alignment and Faculty Collaboration

The Team recommends providing faculty with the time, resources, and support necessary to accomplish Objective #2 of the Plan for Growth and Improvement, which addresses vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment across PreK–12. Designated collaboration time during the school day, including opportunities for grade-level and content-area teams to work together. This will be essential to the successful implementation of this objective.

3. Marketing, Development, and Alumni Engagement

The Team recommends establishing a marketing committee that includes key faculty and other stakeholders to support the Director of Marketing and Development in reviewing, prioritizing, and implementing the action plan. The school should also establish baseline data regarding current alumni philanthropic engagement and develop focused strategies to strengthen alumni relationships, community outreach, and long-term financial sustainability.

4. Student Leadership, Positive Behavior, and Graduate Formation

The Team recommends continued efforts to strengthen student leadership opportunities and positive school culture. These efforts could include expanding a program similar to Lunch Bunch to students in grades 7 and 8; establishing a mentorship program between junior high and elementary students; and implementing a daily social emotional program, such as PBIS to recognize students for demonstrating the 3 C's of a Cavalier. Additionally, the Profile of a Graduate should become an intentional and visible goal for students beginning in the earliest grade levels.

## Additional Comments and Commendations

The Visiting Team wishes to offer special recognition to Msgr. Aucoin for his exceptional guidance, leadership, and commitment throughout the self-study process. His contributions have been instrumental in helping the school navigate this important undertaking.

The Team also commends the Board of Governors and school leadership for their continued commitment to the successful consolidation of the school and for fostering a culture in which stakeholders feel welcomed, supported, and optimistic about IHC's future.

The Visiting Team recognizes that the objectives and action steps outlined in the Plan for Growth and Improvement are ambitious. However, with continued support from school leadership and governing bodies, dedicated collaboration time, appropriate resources, and the appointment of a qualified Director of Marketing and Development, these goals are both meaningful and attainable.

More importantly, the Team encourages the school community to remember that continuous school improvement is a marathon, not a sprint. Completing a comprehensive self-study and accreditation process so soon after a major school consolidation represents an extraordinary undertaking. The school community should take pride in what has already been accomplished while allowing itself the time, patience, and grace necessary to achieve its long-term goals.

## Closing Remarks

The Visiting Team leaves IHC with a deep appreciation for the school's strong Catholic identity, dedicated educators, supportive families, committed leadership, and welcoming students. The pride, faith, and sense of community evident throughout the visit are among the school's greatest assets.

The school's foundational strengths provide a solid basis for continued growth. By focusing on sustainable enrollment, curriculum alignment, strategic planning, community engagement, and student development, IHC is well positioned to build upon its accomplishments and continue fulfilling its mission. Therefore, the Visiting Team recommends that IHC receives MSA Accreditation. This visit and our recommendation is only one step in the Accreditation journey. Your Self-Study and our Recommendation report will now move to the next stage in the accreditation process. By the time you receive your final MSA determination, the entirety of this report will have gone through several additional levels of review.

Once again, the Visiting Team congratulates the entire IHC community on the significant progress already made. All of us on the team want to thank you for welcoming us into the heart of Immaculate Heart Central School.