



2019-2022 STRATEGIC PLANNING FEEDBACK

In 2019, the Center for Irish Music created a strategic plan and adopted a set of organizational values to help guide our work of handing down the tradition over the next three years. Part of the planning process included soliciting feedback from parents, students, instructors and community partners.

STUDENTS, PARENTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS OVERWHELMINGLY AGREED:

- The Center for Irish Music has excellent instructors who care about their students and have extensive knowledge of their subject area.
- The Center for Irish Music is an inclusive, welcoming and supportive community.
- Our location and facilities at the Celtic Junction are great assets.

PARENT FEEDBACK

On recitals, performances and the fleadh...

- 92% of parents told us that **recitals** are valuable learning opportunities for their child.
- 72% of parents said that **public performances** are valuable learning opportunities.
- More than half of parents think that the **fleadh experience** has been valuable for their child's musical development. We heard some trepidation about mixing competition with music, and also lots of interest from parents who hope to participate in the future.

On administration, organization and communication:

- 92% of parents would recommend the CIM to a friend and 88% plan on re-enrolling their children.
- 80% recommend children to take part in the Minnesota Irish Music Weekend.
- Generally, parents are satisfied with the registration and payment process and communications.
- Some parents requested learning about summer camps earlier.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

- 100% of students say their teachers are knowledgeable about Irish music and make lessons fun. 92% said that their instructors give helpful feedback.
- Students' favorite aspects of taking lessons are learning new tunes and the stories behind them, playing with others, and spending time with their teacher.
- Students are inspired by improvement, reaching musical goals, and playing with friends.
- Students are least excited about lesson scheduling.
- A few students expressed that Irish music sometimes comes across as an exclusive group.

Students recommended that CIM consider:

- Broadening the appeal of the organization, continually search for new ideas and offerings and, as finances permit, continue to professionalize CIM's programming.
- Reaching out to local schools with performances and programming.

COMMUNITY PARTNER FEEDBACK

- All community partner respondents feel that CIM is fulfilling its mission and said they'd like to collaborate with CIM more, or the same amount.
- Community partners see CIM demonstrating the following values: integrity, respect, civic-mindedness, love for the tradition, creation of a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment.
- The CIM's strengths include our teachers, good reputation, community involvement, successful outcomes and strong, dedicated leadership.
- Many community partners recommended looking at ways to raise CIM's profile outside our building, and to increase collaboration with dance schools.
- Some community partners suggested increasing engagement with communities outside of the Irish base, such as other ethnic organizations and music schools.

GENERAL STRENGTHS

The strength mentioned most often by our parents, students, and community partners is our knowledgeable, dedicated teaching artists. In partnership with the CIM staff, our expert instructors work hard to create the supportive, inclusive atmosphere that pushes students to learn and practice Irish traditional music at a high level of engagement and artistry. Our ensemble program and outreach performance opportunities were also identified as strengths by survey respondents. Finally, a strength that was identified time and again is the community gathered around the Center for Irish Music. It's through the commitment, time, and efforts of our whole multigenerational community that we are able to share and promote the joy of Irish music with such success.

GENERAL AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

The CIM community has identified a few main areas of improvement for the organization. Some folks mentioned the shabbiness of our lobby, and how our rooms can look untidy when also used as storage for our event supplies. We're happy to say we are working on these concerns by improving our lobby with a grant from the Metro Regional Arts Council, and we've also rented additional storage to start containing the clutter in our classrooms.

Other community members are asking that CIM be more present in the greater Twin Cities area. We hope to address this with Strategy 3 of our strategic plan, "Raise the profile of Center for Irish Music." The staff and teachers of CIM are hoping to find a way capitalize on the outreach we already do, as well as finding new methods, events, or performances that would have a greater impact.

Last, we heard from both teachers and students that more discussion between teachers about classes, lessons, and pedagogy in general would benefit the school. This aligns with our 4th strategy: Deliver Inspirational Programming, and we are excited to see what will come from this shared interest!

