

Archdiocesan Board of Education: Significant Policies

Policy Numbers and titles are in **Bold**, followed by a short description of the policy. The complete policies can be found in the Archdiocesan Board of Education Policy Book, also available on-line at <http://www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us/ABE/ABEmanual.html>.

2511 Internet

It is the policy of educational programs governed by the Archdiocesan Board of Education to require the ethical use of the Internet and related technologies by all employees, volunteers, and students as set forth below in the Terms, Conditions, and Regulations for the use of Internet and related technologies.

2515.1 Sexual Harassment

All educational programs governed by the Archdiocese of Dubuque shall maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment.

2515.11 Harassment

All educational programs governed by the Archdiocese of Dubuque shall maintain a learning and working environment free from any type of harassment. No employee, volunteer or student associated with these programs shall be subjected to harassment.

4111.4d Standards of Conduct

Personnel of educational programs governed by the Archdiocesan Board of Education uphold Christian values and conduct.

4116.30a Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Any certified or licensed employee must report suspected child abuse to the Department of Human Services within 24 hours. The school will provide training for mandatory reporters within six months of initial employment and every five years thereafter.

5111 Open Enrollment

Schools and educational programs are to admit students regardless of race, color, national and ethnic origin, disability, gender, or creed according to subsequent provisions of this policy.

5117.1 Home Schooling—Religious Education

Parents/guardians and children are expected to participate in the parish-sponsored catechetical programs approved by the Office of Catechetical Services.

5131.7b Guns/Weapons in Parish/Regional/Diocesan Programs

Weapons or dangerous objects will be confiscated from catechetical program students and reported to law enforcement officials. The participant will be subject to disciplinary action.

5133 Gangs

Youth gangs and gang related activities are prohibited. Involvement and jurisdiction of school program authorities in gang related incidents occurring outside the school or off school/parish property will be determined.

5141.3 Bloodborne Pathogens

All educational programs governed by the Archdiocese of Dubuque shall strive to eliminate occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens in schools and catechetical programs.

5144 Discipline Guidelines

Schools and catechetical programs establish rules and regulations in keeping with Catholic principles and values. Corporal punishment is not used.

5144.1 Probation, Suspension and/or Expulsion

The administrator has the authority to place a student on probation or to suspend a student temporarily. A Discipline Committee appointed by the administrator shall have the authority to expel a student.

5145.2 Search and Seizure

A school official may conduct search if there is reasonable suspicion of criminal offense, or school rule violated, or the belief that a search will provide evidence.

6141.11 Education in Human Sexuality

Catholic schools and catechetical programs will provide education in human sexuality. It moves beyond the biological and scientific information into the fields of values and moral formation. Parents are included in the education process.

6150 Catechetical Program Standards

Parishes provide catechetical programs for students attending public school. Boards need to evaluate annually the program, the number of students per class and the integration of persons with disabilities. Approved textbooks are used.

6150.2 Parental Involvement

Parents are the primary educators of children. Parents/guardians are to be involved in the parish catechetical program.

6150.4 Sacramental Catechesis

In parishes with a Catholic school and a catechetical program, the program for parents/guardians, sponsors, and parish involvement is to be conducted jointly in the preparation for sacraments.

Education in Human Sexuality

Policy adopted: October 9, 1982

Revised: December 3, 1988; July 1, 2003

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Education in human sexuality is mandated in Catholic schools and in catechetical programs and is understood within the context of the dimensions below.

Local boards of education have a responsibility to appoint a resource committee to study comprehensive programs for education in human sexuality. These programs are to be in accord with the guidelines of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Catholic School curriculum must also comply with the Code of Iowa §279.50.

That is, education in human sexuality:

- is developed and applied in the individual's environments—home, church, school and community;
- meets the changing needs of the growing, developing person from early childhood to advanced age;
- embraces the entire person— moral, spiritual, psychological, emotional and physical;
- includes all the important biological and scientific information regarding human sexuality, and moves beyond that into the fields of values and moral formation;
- includes parents/guardians in the education process;
- present a positive view of human sexuality which builds upon mutual respect, and provides youth with an understanding of the elements of a safe environment which foists respect.

Rationale:

“As children and young people advance in years, they should be given positive and prudent sexual education.” Vatican II, *Declaration on Christian Education*, N. 1 (1965)

“We continue to regard this education in human sexuality as an important priority in Christian education, met in part through diocesan-approved Family Life education in Catholic schools and other instructional programs.” U.S. Bishops, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, N. 56 (1971)

“Parents have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring, including matters of sexuality. They are assisted in this task by educators working in schools, parishes, and dioceses. It is vital that educators involve parents in the planning, programming, and implementation of formal human-sexuality education programs. Educators work not only with children but also with other adults, who continue to grow in their understanding of sexuality.” *Human Sexuality, a Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*, USCC, (1991) p.86

“Each school board shall provide instruction in human growth and development including instruction regarding human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management,

interpersonal relationships, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome as required in section 256.11, in grades one through twelve. Each school board shall annually provide to a parent or guardian of any pupil enrolled in the school district, information about the human growth and development curriculum used in the pupil's grade level and the procedure for inspecting the instructional materials prior to their use in the classroom. A pupil shall not be required to take instruction in human growth and development if the pupil's parent or guardian files with the appropriate principal a written request that the pupil be excused from the instruction." *School Laws of Iowa*, §279.50.

Guidelines

Regulation approved: June 4, 1983

Revised: December 3, 1988

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These guidelines are given to provide immediate direction to local boards of education in the implementation of Policy 6141.11 and the State of Iowa Code §279.50.

Guidelines

Establish a parish resource committee made up of representatives of parents/guardians, teachers, school administrators, directors of religious education, students, health care professionals, priests, members of the parish community. Use the Office of Educational Services as a resource when appropriate.

Tasks of the Committee:

1. Study the Archdiocesan Policy 6141.11 and Iowa Code § 279.50.
2. Study pertinent church documents, including the *Policy for Protection of Minors, Archdiocese of Dubuque (2003)*.
3. Develop the parish program in the light of the policies and guidelines.
4. Inform all parents/guardians and parishioners at each step of the program and receive input.
5. Provide for excused students as required in church documents and Iowa Code 12.5(6).
6. Inservice teachers in the teaching of the human sexuality program.
7. Follow ABE 1312 in cases of complaints.

Components of the Program:

8. Objectives of the program;
9. Participants in the program;
10. Manner of involving parish, parents/guardians, school, catechetical program;
11. Materials that will be used;
12. Preparation of instructors and continued inservice;
13. Timeline of implementation.

Exclusion from participation

It is recognized that opinions differ concerning the appropriateness of courses of instruction. Occasionally parent/guardians may find a topic in the Human Growth and Development Curriculum Guide in conflict with their religious/personal views. In these circumstances the student may be excused from participation in the instructional program.

In a catechetical class outside of the school program, a parent/guardian may request a similar exclusion.

In notifying the principal or C/DRE, the parents/guardian, the notice shall be in writing.

General Principles of Human Sexuality

Incorporate these general principles as presented in *Human Sexuality: a Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning* ©1991 in a catechetical/human sexuality program with an age-appropriate approach.

Precious Gift

1. Human sexuality is a divine gift, a blend of spirit and body that shares in God's creative love and life.
2. We approach human sexuality with a deep and abiding sense of appreciation, wonder, and respect.
3. The divine becoming human adds greater dignity to our being embodied, sexual beings. Through Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, and promised return, we can become our best selves, able with God's help to overcome temptation of any kind.

Body

1. The human body is good. We are enfleshed sexual beings, male and female.
2. In our efforts to love, we make real and incarnate God's goodness, love, and vitality.
3. Respect for the human body is reflected in how we care for ourselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Love

1. Created in God's likeness, we are called to a life of loving and being loved. Love is the basic vocation we all share. We begin with love, continue in love, and reach our fulfillment of love through, with, and in God when we die.
2. The desire to be loved and to love, to be united with one another, is a deep-seated and natural yearning.
3. Love involves personal decision characterized by commitment, self-sacrifice and perseverance.
4. Our sexuality, as distinct from sexual activity, is an innate force that can draw us out of ourselves into loving relationships.

Sin

1. While we are called to incarnate the image of God in the way we live and love, the gift of human sexuality also can be abused, sometimes intentionally, sometimes through immaturity or ignorance.
2. Temptations to subvert our human desires, including sexual ones, into purely selfish aims or to manipulate others in human relationships have been experienced in our hearts and in human history.

Forgiveness

1. We are aware of our own frailty and sin as well as God's abiding presence and promise of forgiveness.
2. As members of the Church, we draw strength, comfort, and renewed challenge from the Word of God, the Eucharist, and the healing and strengthening power of the sacrament of reconciliation.

Call to Holiness

1. There is a universal calling in every human heart to be personally whole and spiritually holy.
2. Dealing creatively with one's own sexuality—gender, sexual feelings, desires—is a fundamental challenge in every person's quest for maturity and holiness.
3. Spirituality, rightly understood, implies a lifelong process of conversion. In both, we look at our lives in the light of God's love, try to live out the death-resurrection-present reign of Jesus in everyday circumstances, and change those things that isolate and alienate us from God, self, and one another.

Formation/Information

1. Blending moral and values-based formation with clear and factual information is the best approach to sexuality education, whether done in the family setting or in more formal programs or in some combination of the two.

Education/Conscience

1. Educators in human sexuality must both teach and listen. They need to be able to convey the Church's teachings with authority, candor, sound reasoning, fidelity, and a sensitivity to the age and maturity level of their audience. They must also take time to listen to questions, concerns and insights; to respect learner's integrity and sincerity; and to facilitate their ongoing conscience formation.
2. Each person has an obligation to form a correct conscience. It is the responsibility of Catholic educators to assist them in the process by articulating church teaching in its entirety and in its integrity.

Moral Decision Making

1. The Church believes there are objectively right and wrong answers to moral dilemmas. The process of moving from absolute values to general norms to specific case judgments requires the virtue of prudence, the ability to exercise sound judgment in practical matters.
2. Discernment of moral choices involves the formation of a correct conscience by a process of using one's reasoning ability, the source of divine revelation (Scripture and tradition), the Church's teaching and guidance, the wise counsel of others, and one's own individual and communal experience of prayer and grace.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents and the family comprise the first and most important context for sharing faith, forming attitudes, fostering values, and sharing information. Children have a right to life, education, bodily integrity, and the means for holistic human development.
2. The role of the Church in human sexuality education is one of both teacher and healer.
3. Professional educators assist parents in fulfilling their educational responsibilities. They represent the wider Church and society. The profession of educating in human sexuality is a call to model and articulate what it means to be a mature sexual person.
4. Education in human sexuality is a cooperative venture among parents, schools, Church, and the wider society.

Personal Responsibility

1. Each of us is entrusted by God with the awesome responsibility to guide and direct our gift of sexuality wisely and lovingly.
2. At best, our sexuality calls us to personal maturity and interpersonal commitments.

Sexuality and Sex

1. Sexuality refers to a fundamental component of personality in and through which we, as male or female, experience our relatedness to self, others, the world, and even God.
2. Sex refers either to the biological aspects of being male or female (i.e., synonym for one's gender) or to the expressions of sexuality, which have physical, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions.

Sexual Beings

1. We are sexual beings from conception to death.

Equality of Male and Female

1. Both man and woman are persons—equal yet distinct.
2. Man and woman share a basic mutuality.

Chastity

1. Every person is a sexual being, called to be chaste, that is, to do what is sexually responsible for one's state in life.
2. Chastity consists in guiding the sexual instinct to the service of love and of integrating it in the development of the person.

Genital Sexual Intimacy

1. The gift of the body in sexual intercourse is a real symbol of the giving of the whole person.
2. The Church's teaching on genital sex is rooted in a profound respect for the dignity and uniqueness of human persons.
3. Genital sexual union has its true meaning and moral integrity only in the context of marriage.
4. Outside the context of marriage, genital sexual intimacy, however well intended, is not an expression of total self-giving. Objectively speaking, it is morally wrong.

Marriage

1. Marriage is both a unitive and procreative community of love, bound by an unbreakable pledge of fidelity, a covenant that is deeper than any civil contract.
2. Christian marriage is a sacrament by which man and woman profess to each other solemn vows of love and fidelity, which serve as the outward sign of an interior reality.
3. Marriage is a lifelong sacrament. The ongoing growth in understanding and living the sacramentality of marriage begins with remote and immediate preparation for marriage and continues with support throughout the years of married life.

Single Life

1. The single way of life represents a wide variety of life-styles in our culture; temporarily or permanently single, divorces, separated, and widowed.
2. Mature single persons, seek a careful balance between a healthy independence, with a reasonable degree of privacy and freedom, and the need for love, including genuine intimacy and community belonging.

Celibacy

1. Celibacy accepted for the sake of the reign of God serves as a complement to the vocation of marriage.
2. Celibates choose not to give their life to any one person and are challenged to share it generously with many people.
3. Sexuality is a dynamic element in the life of ordained, vowed, and promised celibates.