

MARRIED STUDENTS

The general policy of the Diocese of Harrisburg is that students who attend our diocesan schools should be unmarried.

Any Catholic student who attempts marriage in any manner or form other than in accordance with the laws of the Roman Catholic Church and the Common Policy of the Diocese of Harrisburg will be subject to immediate dismissal from a diocesan school.

According to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, marriage between baptized persons is a sacrament which binds a couple together for life in an intimate and personal union. Consequently, marriage is a serious step that should be entered into by persons who are canonically free, properly prepared, and mature enough to enter into a lifelong relationship. Because of the universally high divorce rate for marriages entered into by persons early in life, the Church discourages young people from marrying until they have achieved the maturity necessary to accept the many responsibilities of married life.

The Code of Canon Law and the Common Policy for Marriage Preparation in the Diocese of Harrisburg regulate marriages for all its subjects. The Common Policy discourages marriages of those under nineteen (19) years of age. When an underage student continues to request marriage, the parish priest, in consultation with the couple, their parents, the Principal, and Catholic Charities, must determine that the couple is truly prepared for a permanent, valid marriage.

Non-Catholics who desire to be married and remain students in a diocesan secondary school must receive from a Church community a time of preparation and marriage instruction comparable to that required of all Catholic students.

In these cases, where it is the opinion of the Pastor, parents, and Principal that a particular couple is mature enough to enter marriage, it is possible that the Principal could allow students to marry and remain students in the Catholic diocesan secondary school.

The Superintendent of Schools must be informed of all circumstances that may lead to married students attending a diocesan secondary school.

Policy

Revised: April 17, 1996

NCD/Bishop of Harrisburg