



DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Statement Bishop Richard Pates

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Anne Marie Cox, acox@dmdiocese.org
w-515-237-5057, c-515-333-8387

Employment Concern with Dowling Catholic High School

A hiring situation arose recently at Dowling Catholic High School that has raised questions.

Catholic schools are an extension of the church and are committed to following the church's teachings and doctrine in employment matters. Our contracts contain specific language that outline the expected code of conduct in accord with long accepted Church teaching.

Des Moines Catholic schools go through a multi-phased hiring process which includes interviews, a traditional background check and a social media scan. If at any time during that period the candidate or the organization identifies an issue that would preclude support of Church teaching, the school does not extend a written offer.

Recently, an individual applied for a full-time position and, after the entire application process based on the foregoing expectations was completed, a formal written contract wasn't extended owing to a personal situation that was at odds with Church teaching.

It came to the school's attention through the social media scan that the applicant is in a same-sex relationship and is engaged.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls for us to accept those with same-sex tendencies "with respect, compassion and sensitivity." (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2358) Such an approach has guided the school's relationship with the applicant in question. We wish him only well.

While we respect all persons and civil law in regard to civil unions, the Church teaches based on natural law, Scripture and the Church's 2,000-year tradition that marriage is a sacrament between a man and a woman. The Catholic faith is central to our mission as a Catholic school and is an exercise of religious liberty. To deliver on that mission it is our expectation that staff and teachers support our moral beliefs as they are the models of our Catholic faith.