

## Secular Study Proves Notable Benefits of Private Christian Education

By Alan J. Hodak

In the wake of the situation we find ourselves in, I have wrestled with the COVID guidelines, masking, and all the rest of the protocols we have had to put in place here in Minnesota. Our staff has spent many hours planning in case we are forced to go on-line. We have set up Zoom cameras in the majority of our classrooms to prepare for kids having to go in and out of our live in-person classes due to COVID exposure. Information from outside sources has been inconsistent and guidelines extreme in how to manage daily school operations. As best we can, we have attempted to come up with a solid plan covering each scenario we can think of. But we realize that it is only by God's grace and mercy that we are able to continue to operate "in-person," and we are grateful to be able to be in school. Each day is truly a gift and we need to thank the Lord and recognize it as such.

The stress of cleaning schedules, managing home games and guest fans, communicating to our families and staff, and attempting to keep our students on track has been challenging. I have found myself more tired than usual and more easily discouraged. This is not due to a lack of support in any way from our church, families or students. It is simply the reality of the struggle as we attempt to run our school in the face of all of the demands before us.

The Lord sent something my way, however, that encouraged me greatly and I want to share it with you. It was a study. A study, you say? How could a study possibly encourage you in the midst of... well, all of this?

Before you read on... I would like to say a word

to any of our parents who are divorced or had a child out of wedlock. Please know that this article is in no way an indictment against you. My own family has recently experienced the disappointment of divorce first-hand. But our goal, as a Christian school, is to strengthen and help establish two-parent families and healthy marriages in every way possible because we know that an intact marriage with a father and a mother breeds stability for the children. This study helps to reinforce the very things which are established in the Word of God that we are striving to teach our children throughout their educational years.



The study took findings from data taken from the Understanding America Study (UAS) compiled from a survey panel administered by the Center for Economic and Social Research at the University of Southern California (USC) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1997. The study was completed by four individuals from the Institute for Family Studies and is entitled, "The Protestant Family Ethic: What Do Protestant, Catholic, Private, and Public Schooling Have to Do with Marriage, Divorce, and Non-marital Childbearing?" Protestant schools, for the

purpose of this article, would include our type of Christian school. The study took statistics from the aforementioned findings to come up with some definitive conclusions. The study was based on a representative sample of about 5,000 respondents, taken from real population statistics of adults in their middle to late 30's (Millennials), and represented real population percentages.

There were three family outcomes used as measurements. They were:

- An intact marriage – Individuals currently in their first marriage who had never been divorced,
- Ever been divorced – individuals who had been divorced in the past. Separation counted as divorce, and
- Ever had a child out of wedlock – Individuals who had children but were never married.

The point of the study was “to examine how enrollment in American Catholic, Protestant, and public schools is associated with different family outcomes later in life, and to explore the links between adults’ prior schooling and their odds of marrying, divorcing, and having a child outside of marriage” (Cheng, 4). The study took into consideration the impact of schooling and family formation, the power of peers, the long-run influence of a school’s moral norms, school attendance and family outcomes among Millennials, and how financial stability or instability, family structure and race affects the three stated outcomes of intact marriages, divorce, and children out of wedlock.

Two-parent families generate the most stability in our children’s learning and maturing. When mom and dad are committed and stable, the child’s world is secure and the child reaches the heights of learning and potential.

- However, the rate of intact marriages (children who grew up with two parents in the home) is about the same between public and Catholic school attendees (50%), while



the rate of intact marriages among attendees of Protestant schools was about 10 percentage points higher (60%).

- Divorce rates of two-parent families showed a huge discrepancy. Among public school attendees, divorce rates were at 42%, Catholic schools at 38%, and Protestant school attendees were at 21%.
- 22% of public school attendees who grew up with both parents had a non-marital birth; Catholic and Protestant attendees were at 13%.

***“Religious schooling, and particularly Protestant schooling, is associated with higher rates of stable marriage ...”***

What surprised me about this study is that I would have thought that if a two-parent family was financially stable, we would see lower divorce rates, but the opposite was true. For individuals who grew up in financially unstable homes with a two-parent family, the results were as follows: 40% who attended a public school were

still in their first marriages; 53% who attended a Catholic school were still in their first marriages; and 72% who attended a Protestant school were still in their first marriages. Maybe having to trust the Lord, work harder, and utilize only what you have been given helped them later in life.

The overall findings of the study, as concluded by the authors, stated the following:

“Religious schooling, and particularly Protestant schooling, is associated with higher rates of stable marriage, lower rates of divorce, and lower rates of out of wedlock births, even after controlling for key aspects of the respondents’ backgrounds. Furthermore, adults who grew up in financially insecure households and who also attended Protestant schools seem to experience better marital outcomes. The ideals that students encountered in Protestant schools appear to compensate for a lack of economic resources when it comes to their own marital and child-bearing decisions” (Cheng, 18-19).

In addition to these findings, it would be safe to say, from this study, that private schools serve the public good more by fostering stronger and more stable marriages among American men and women as compared to the public schools. The truth is that the new “Social Justice Curriculum” is failing our children. The lack of morality and increasing self-focus is only



producing young adults who will grow up with increasing divorce and child out-of-wedlock rates. Please remember that the initial study began to evaluate responders from a period from 2014-2017. Some, at least, of the respondents' children are now entering high school years. Those children, in another ten or fifteen years will be having their own children. The importance of what we do in our Protestant Christian schools, from this point forward, and the impact upon our students will be felt for years and even generations to come. The "home—church—school" model of our Christian philosophy of

education is working, and is worth the investment for the future of our children.

After reading this study, I was encouraged to know that the work we are doing here is yielding positive results. The practical impact of a Christian education upon our families is yielding fruit.

Today, my step is a little lighter and my outlook a bit brighter. Praise the Lord!

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Cheng, A., Wolf, P., Wang, W., Wilcox, W. (2020) American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for Family Studies.



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## Minnesota Association of Christian Schools 2020-21 MACS Events Calendar

- **November 16** – First day of Team Practices for Basketball
- **TBD** – MACS Legislative Breakfast at the MN State Capitol
- **February 11** – MACS Speech and Bible Festival at Woodcrest Baptist Academy
- **February 25-27** – MACS Basketball Tournament at Fourth Baptist and Woodcrest Baptist
- **March 5** – MACS JH Fine Arts Festival at First Baptist at Rosemount
- **April 9** – MACS SH Fine Arts Festival at Fourth Baptist & MACS Annual Meeting
- **May 7** – MACS Track Meet at Granite City Baptist in St. Cloud – All MACS Schools are Invited to participate





# 2020 MACS State Soccer & Volleyball Tourney Results

## Boys' Soccer

**Champions:** St. Francis Patriots

**Second Place:** First Baptist, Rosemount Crusaders

**Third Place:** Owatonna Sabres

**Consolation:** Fourth Baptist Warriors



## Girls' Volleyball

**Champions:** First Baptist, Rosemount Crusaders

**Second Place:** Fourth Baptist Warriors

**Third Place:** Woodcrest Warriors

**Consolation:** St. Francis Patriots



## All Tournament Teams

### Boys Soccer All-Tournament Team:

1. Rylan Boldt—St. Francis-MVP
2. McCoy Coons—St. Francis
3. Grant Brower—St. Francis
4. Aaron Swedeen—St. Francis
5. Edwin Terrazas—Rosemount
6. Jaris Johnson—Rosemount
7. Miguel Matos—Rosemount
8. Trey Ogren—Lake Region
9. Jake Borders—Lake Region
10. Cade Sanders—Owatonna
11. Ethan Cowell—Owatonna
12. David Migalyuk—Fourth Baptist
13. Albert Sharkevich—Woodcrest

### Girls Volleyball All-Tournament Team:

1. Callista Weber—Rosemount- MVP
2. Diana Graves—Rosemount
3. Jacque Enriquez—Rosemount
4. Maddie Hodak—Fourth
5. Gabriela Mendoza—Fourth
6. Amber Neubert—Lake Region
7. Sarah Ureke—Woodcrest



You did it!  
*Congratulations*



Above: St. Francis Patriots—Soccer Champions

Below: Rosemount Crusaders—2nd place



Left: Rosemount Lady Crusaders—Volleyball Champions

Below: Fourth Baptist Lady Warriors—2nd place



# All-Conference Soccer



## First Team – Soccer

1. Rylan Boldt—St. Francis
2. Landon Brahs—St. Francis
3. McCoy Coons—St. Francis
4. Grant Brower—St. Francis
5. Jaris Johnson—Rosemount
6. Edwin Terrazas—Rosemount
7. Naftal Marara—Rosemount
8. Jake Borders—Lake Region
9. Trey Ogren—Lake Region
10. David Migalyuk—Fourth Baptist
11. Cade Sanders—Owatonna
12. Peter Darling—Woodcrest

## Second Team – Soccer

1. Isaac Tong—St. Francis
2. Matthew Kloeckner—St. Francis
3. Albert Sharkevich—Woodcrest
4. Phil Imdieke—Lake Region
5. Soren Benson—Lake Region
6. Silas Tolosa—Owatonna
7. Travis Poe—Owatonna
8. Miguel Matos—Rosemount
9. Bryan Barrett-Bettcher—Rosemount
10. Landon Broere—Fourth Baptist
11. James Webster—Fourth Baptist
12. Carter Antoine—Chisago

## Honorable Mention – Soccer

1. Trevor Poe—Owatonna
2. Aaron Swedeen—St. Francis
3. Jackson Schoonover—Woodcrest
4. John Paul Fitzpatrick—Lake Region
5. Ben Anderson—Rosemount
6. Micah Horner—St. Francis

# All-Conference Volleyball

## First Team – Volleyball

1. Gabriela Mendoza—Fourth Baptist
2. Callista Weber—Rosemount
3. Amber Neubert—Lake Region
4. Sarah Ureke—Woodcrest
5. Taylor Cooke—Owatonna
6. Jacquelyn Enriquez—Rosemount
7. Lydia Rieschl—Fourth Baptist

## Second Team – Volleyball

1. Katherine Gerdin—St. Francis
2. Maddie Hodak—Fourth Baptist
3. Olivia Braaten—Foundation
4. Tori Plemel—Lake Region
5. Ashlynn Long—Owatonna
6. Julia Ureke—Woodcrest
7. Becca Cave—Chisago

## Honorable Mention – Volleyball

1. Tina Harms—Owatonna
2. Gabrielle Fawcett—Foundation
3. Kayla Stephens—Fourth
4. Kaydence Stephan—Chisago
5. Diana Graves—Rosemount
6. Grace Kargel—Lake Region
7. Maddie Frieze—St. Francis

*All-Conference Awards are voted on by the coaches, and awarded to athletes based on their testimony on and off the field, sportsmanship and skill throughout this entire season.  
Congratulations!*





1st Team All-Conference, L to R: Edwin Terrazas, Jaris Johnson, Rylan Boldt, Grant Brower, McCoy Coons, Landon Brahs, Cade Sanders, Jake Borders, Trey Ogren, Peter Darling, David Muigalyuk



All-Tournament Soccer Team, L to R: Jaris Johnson, Miguel Matos, Edwin Terrazas, Rylan Boldt (MVP), Aaron Swedeen, Grant Brower, McCoy Coons, Ethan Cowell, Cade Sanders, Trey Ogren, Jake Borders, David Migalyuk, Albert Sharkevich



1st Team All-Conference Volleyball: Callista Weber, Jacquelyn Enriquez, Lydia Rieschl, Gabriela Mendoza, Sarah Ureke, Amber Neubert



All-Tournament Volleyball Team:  
Callista Weber, Diana Graves, Jacqueline Enriquez, Madelyn Hodak, Gabriela Mendoza



2nd Team All-Conference Volleyball: Julia Ureke, Tori Plemel, Maddie Hodak



Above: Third Place Soccer: Owatonna Sabres

Below: Fifth Place Soccer: Fourth Baptist Warriors



All Conference Soccer 2nd Team: Bryan Barrett-Bettcher, Miguel Matos, Matthew Kloeckner, Isaac Tong, Silas Tolosa, Travis Poe, Soren Benson, Phil Imdieke, James Webster, Landon Broere, Albert Sharkevich



Third Place Volleyball: Woodcrest Warriors



Fifth Place Volleyball (Consolation): St. Francis Patriots