



A·P·C·E
THE ASSOCIATION OF
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH EDUCATORS
Serving Educators in the Reformed Family of Churches

Christian Educator's Notebook

Section 1: Care and Certification of Christian Educators

In 1987, six Protestant denominations joined hands to launch a three and one half year research project to evaluate and strengthen congregationally based Christian education. In a report (effective 1990, Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute), prepared for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) it is noted that of the six aspects of congregational life contributing to a person's faith maturity, the effectiveness of Christian education has the greatest potential to increase maturity of faith and loyalty to the congregation and denomination.

The Presbyterian Church has historically advocated and supported education and educational ministry in churches, communities, and our nation. We have not done as good a job in caring for and supporting educators, who in many churches are the people second only to parents in influencing the Christian education in our church. It is the hope of the Task Force on Preparation for Educational Ministry, that presbyteries and sessions will take seriously their responsibilities in caring for and supporting the people who are preparing for or are already working in this vital ministry--**the Christian Educator**.

Book of Order References

The General Assembly, through the Educator Certification Council has established an accrediting process which gives educators the chance to be fully prepared for educational work in the church no matter what their academic background. The Certified Christian Educator is recognized in the *Book of Order*. The full text for this is found in G-14.0700. The Committee on Ministry needs to be fully aware of is G-14.0705 which reads as follows:

The presbytery shall support the certification process by:

- Encouraging educators to seek certification;
- Providing guidance through the Educator Certification Advisor;
- Encouraging sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification.

The presbytery shall provide the following support to the Certified Christian Educator:

- Service of recognition;
- Guidelines for compensation and benefits;



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- Access to the Committee on Ministry.

The presbytery shall grant the privilege of the floor to the Certified Christian Educator at all its meetings with voice.

Other *Book of Order* references supporting the above material, include:

- G-11.0103n
To establish guidelines and benefits for Certified Christian Educators employed by the churches of the presbytery, to provide services of recognition for Certified Christian Educators.
- G-11.0407
The Stated Clerk shall maintain four rolls...one listing all Certified Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery who are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice at all presbytery meetings.
- G-11.0503
The committee shall be open to communication at all times with the ministers, elders who are members of sessions, sessions of the presbytery, and Certified Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery.

In Support of Educators

These particular references in the *Book of Order* speak specifically to the place of the Certified Christian Educator, in the structure of the church. It needs to be noted that there are many educators who are not certified, who also need care and encouragement. The Task Force on Preparation for Educational Ministry suggests the following *possible* ways a presbytery *may* choose to encourage and support those called to educational ministry.

Implement *Book of Order*

- G-14.0705
- Encourage educators to seek certification.
- Provide guidance through the educator certification advisor.
- Encourage sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification.
- To educators seeking certification provide a service of recognition, guidelines for compensation and benefits, and access to the Committee on Ministry.
- Grant the privilege of the floor with voice to the Certified Christian Educators at all its meetings.



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Encourage and support all persons called to serve as educators in the churches within the bounds of presbytery. Determine a structure to provide for the care and nurture of educators.

Provide access to the Committee on Ministry for educators upon entry into employment and for consultation if needed in regard to grievances.

Encourage and support participants in the process of becoming Certified Christian Educators.

Include responsibility for enlistment and care of candidates for certifiable vocations in Committee on Preparation.

Receive and process requests for scholarships for theological education from candidates for both ordained and non-ordained service.

Maintain an on-going relationship with all candidates in theological education including those pursuing calls to educational ministry.

Provide financial aid for continuing education for all educators in the process toward certification and beyond.

Maintain Educator Certification Advisor's Notebook in the presbytery office and have it available for reference.

Designate certification advisor(s) and connect them to the presbytery source in an appropriate way.

Hold service of recognition at each level of certification; Enrolled Educational Assistant, Certified Associate Educator, Certified Christian Educator, during stated presbytery meetings.

Maintain, publish, and distribute a roll of educators residing within the bounds of the presbytery.

Maintain and publicize the Educator Vacancy Consultant Service. (Specialized Referral Services of National Ministries Division, phone [502] 569-5747.)

Encourage use of employment contracts and make contract models available.

Provide and promote educational opportunities that include educators and sponsor colleague groups for educators working toward certification.

Provide a registration process for presbytery meetings that include church educators as an identifiable group.



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Include educators in all mailings and packets in advance of each stated meeting of presbytery.

Receive and disseminate information to educators from and to other governing bodies.

Consider naming an eligible educator to the Committee on Ministry and/or Committee on Preparation.

Visit with Educators in the triennial visits to sessions.

Resources

The following resources are available to help you in your work with educators. Write the Educator Certification Council office at 100 Witherspoon Street, M003, Louisville, KY 40202-1396.

- *Educator Certification Advisors Handbook*, revised 1997. This includes requirements for certification and a page on the Role of Governing Bodies in the certification process.
- "Proposed Compensation Guidelines" and "Advertised Salaries for Christian Educators."
- "Recognition Service for Certified Educators."
- *Educator Certification: Why? How? When? What?* Introductory brochure to Educator Certification. Outline requirements and levels of certification.
- "Models for Care and Support of Educators." Presbyteries have chosen different ways to include educators in their structure. These models may give ideas to other presbyteries that are just beginning this process. If your presbytery has included educators in the structure, the Certification Office would be glad to receive a copy of your model to share.