

The Care and Nurturing of Certified Christian Educators in Your Presbytery

APCE Advocacy Ministry Team

The Advocacy Ministry Team of the Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators is given the task of providing ways for presbyteries and synods to provide for the nurture, care and support of those people called to the ministry of education. We have compiled suggestions for this task and offer the following as a guideline to evaluate your presbytery policies as they relate to the role of Certified Christian Educator in your presbytery.

- Certified Christian Educators should be included in all compensation standards equal to that of an Associate Pastor.
- Encourage sessions to notify COM when Sessions are considering dissolving the relationship with Certified Christian Educators, notifying COM before any action takes place on such dissolution
- A Presbytery's Committee on Ministry should have policies for the care of the educator in the event of a separation from the congregation they have been serving, including a standard for compensation packages equal to that of an Associate Pastor.
- Presbyteries should recognize educators who are taking new positions and should be recognized and welcomed at a Presbytery meeting.
- Certified Christian Educators should be granted the right of voice and vote at all presbytery meetings.
- Certified Christian Educators should be recognized at their retirement and thanked for their service to the Church of Jesus Christ at a stated presbytery meeting.
- Presbyteries should provide guidance, support and assistance for churches seeking to hire a staff person dealing with children, youth, adult, or as a generalist within the field of Christian Education.
- Presbyteries should provide all churches with information on the requirements that Certified Christian Educators have met to receive their certification and support the hiring of those who are fully trained in our reformed tradition and Presbyterian polity. The Committee on Ministry should work with churches to help discern if the job description they are seeking is best filled by an Associate Pastor or a Christian Educator.
- Certified Christian Educators who have been certified and in a position at a church for seven years should be granted a sabbatical period of three months following the seventh year.
- Presbyteries should look at the possibility of unemployed or retired Christian Educators filling the role of Commissioned Pastors in churches. Certification requirements meet the standards for CPs in most presbyteries.
- Churches and presbyteries should consider supporting the work of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators through encouraging attendance at its annual conference and becoming members. APCE not only supports those serving as educators (certified and non-certified), but the all programs and curriculum for churches.
- Presbyteries should encourage people who demonstrate the gifts of education to seek out the education and requirements for certification through available programs.
- Certified Christian Educators retain these connections, support systems, and rights regardless of the title of the job or the place of service to the church (parish, camp, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly) just as those ordained to the Word and Sacrament retain their status as "the Reverend."
- Encourage congregations to ordain their Certified Christian Educators as Ruling Elders to help them in their service to the church at large (i.e. allowing them to complete an unexpired term).
- An excellent resource for presbytery, COM, and congregations is the 2018 Compensation Handbook for Church Staff by Richard R. Hammar, published by Church Law & Tax.