

TO: Religious Education Credentialing Committee
FROM: Credentialed Observer
RE: October 2008 Report

First I would like to thank the committee for inviting me to participate this time. I am truly honored to take part in the process.

Overall, I was very impressed by the depth of discussion and commitment of each member toward the elevation and improvement of religious education in our faith movement. Specifically, I noticed:

- The culture of caring for each individual who applies to the program and who comes before the panel.
- The rapid, insightful response to the need for change in the program that was addressed at this meeting.
- A deep understanding of the professional religious educator and the possibilities and restrictions inherent in the position.
- The lack of ego involved in closely examining some of the parts of the program that so many had worked on for so long.
- The welcoming, inclusive nature of the group made me feel very much at home in the committee.
- The willingness to listen with respect to each other.
- The chair, Gail Forsyth-Vail, adjusted the agenda endlessly and yet still managed to cover all parts of it. Gail was business-like but good natured.
- The co-leadership and collaboration between Gail Forsyth-Vail as chair and Beth Williams as Program Director. They worked together very well.

This particular meeting worked on suggestions heard from a luncheon in which members of LREDA were invited to talk about the highlights and challenges of the credentialing process. Several committee members attended the luncheon and reported back to the committee. Our agenda changed in response to the suggestions and reflections heard by committee members as well as other comments previously discussed. Changes were suggested by the committee for the credentialing process. These suggestions will be examined by other stakeholders in the process.

We interviewed and evaluated one candidate at the credential level. As mentioned, committee members were actively involved in the decision process for this individual. They listened respectfully and made their decision responsibly. They actively engaged the candidate about the process afterward paying attention for ways to improve the process or make changes that would help future candidates. I

heartily recommend the committee add a young adult for language and communication issues and to encourage young adults to go through the process.

One of the objectives of the committee this time was to look at the credential process and format with a 'youth' lens. We understood that to mean, see if the requirements for the various credential levels offered an opportunity for knowledge and scope of needs specifically aimed toward youth (ages 13-20). Were there ways to encourage candidates to show their competence in the reading list as well as demonstrated by their work? The committee made some suggestions to address this objective.

To expand our experiences in A/R, A/O, M/C the committee visited The National Hispanic Cultural Institute for a half day of lecture and multi-media presentations on the history and culture of Hispanics in the New Mexico/Mexico area. We came away with a deeper theological understanding of Day of the Dead as well as an appreciation for the art of Hispanic traditions. It was an interesting experience and opened our eyes to some of the possibilities that religious educators have in their own regions and how to utilize other traditions in their own programs.

This was an incredible experience for me and I appreciated the chance to work with each of the members. Thank you again.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Regan

Credentialed Observer