

## **Credentialed Observer Report:**

Linnea Nelson

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### *Overview*

The Religious Education Credentialing Committee is a well-balanced, fair, and dedicated group of individuals who create healthy checks and balances. They take great delight in offering the religious education credentialing to candidates. They are passionate about providing a strong adherence to the ideals of the program and creating a fair and smooth process for each candidate.

### *Leadership*

Tandy Scheffler leads the group with care and purpose. She provided excellent summaries that allowed the group to recognize progress made in decisions they were considering and she remained positive and supportive of the process as well as each RECC member on the team. Pat Kahn provided information, guidance and well-prepared questions and concepts for the group to consider to continue to improve the credentialing process. Each member provided thoughtful and gracious comments about the candidates' written materials that helped the entire group have a holistic picture of the candidate as well as an understanding of specific strengths and areas of growth.

### *Business Meetings*

The RECC members were focused and deliberate in the discussion of changes proposed for the credentialing program. Each change considered was thoroughly discussed with careful consideration of issues that might affect the outcome of any change, however minor. For example, when identifying the core competencies at each level, factors such as the availability of Renaissance Modules, the progression of requirements from the Associate level to the Master level, and the viability of the available graduate classes were all carefully taken into consideration.

Additionally, the resource lists were discussed with an understanding that we might consider priority reads beyond required reading. Also, a process for updating the list beyond adding recommendations from candidates, such as watching the Skinner House new book lists, would help the program stay relevant. Another example was fine-tuning the technology competency lens and creating a rubric that will support the candidate in determining the depth of their work in each competency.

### *Candidate Interviews*

Again, the care with which the RECC members worked through each candidate's materials, prepared the space and energy of the room, created and posed questions of the candidates showed the respect each RECC member had for each candidate in the process. The team was elated to have been able to provide the requested credential to each person this year. The process on interview day was standardized for each candidate to provide the fairest possible experience. Rob Kipp, the always ready RECC assistant, made sure that every candidate had the technology they needed and the support to make sure that it ran smoothly.

### *Suggestions for the RECC*

One suggestion that came from a conversation between the chair and me was the possible addition of an overview statement on the reader's summary that would allow the readers to review the entire summary and create a summary statement of the candidate. This allows the readers to respond holistically after making detailed notes, which might uncover patterns or insights that would be helpful to probe.

I particularly appreciate that the following concepts were discussed and forward movement decided:

- Creating an informative rubric for the self-assessment scoring to support the candidate in self-scoring and determining areas of weakness on their own as they progress through their work,
- updating resource lists and creating a searchable format,
- aligning the levels of credentialing and seeking ways to support the educational opportunities (i.e. more online Renaissance Modules and creating targeted graduate level classes).

It has been an honor to serve on the committee.