

**From the WDC Policy Manual**  
**Section IV. Ministerial Leadership Policies – April 2026**

B. Education Expectations for Ministers

1. Premise:

Ministers called to ministry in Western District Conference are urged to embrace lifelong learning as a professional goal and spiritual discipline. The Master of Divinity degree is the normative educational preparation for full-time, credentialed ministers in the Western District Conference. In cases where this is not appropriate or feasible, ministers are encouraged to pursue alternative educational paths. (See “Educational Qualifications,” pp 28-29 in *A Shared Understanding of Ministerial Leadership: Polity Manual for Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA, 2017*)

2. Education Requirements for credentialing:

Credentialed ministers are required to obtain minimum educational requirements for credentialing corresponding to the Six Core Competencies for ministerial credentialing in Mennonite Church USA: Biblical Story; Anabaptist/Mennonite Story, Theology, and Practice; Christian Spirituality/Discipleship; Self-awareness and Emotional Health, and Pastoral Care; Contextual Awareness/Missional Engagement; Leadership.

3. Commitment of WDC:

- a. Work collaboratively with Mennonite Church USA-related colleges, seminaries and educational programs, and other MC USA area conferences to develop courses, options, and procedures regarding minimum educational expectations.
- b. Provide experienced Mennonite mentors for ministers in their first two years of ministry.
- c. Offer continuing education events and resources for ministers and lay leaders, and continuing education grants for credentialed ministers.
- d. Inform MC USA of our policies; participate in the formation of guidelines for all of MC USA and adapt WDC policies to denominational expectations.

4. Credentialing and educational expectations (see separate documentation for credentialing process)

- a. For ministers new to WDC and already holding an ordination credential in MC USA, transfer of credential will be requested by WDC, and an orientation to WDC will be provided by the Ministerial Leadership Commission and Conference Minister. In some

cases, continuing education will be required or recommended for the minister to fulfill minimum education requirements.

Continuing education is the expected standard of practice for all ministers. Ministers are required to receive healthy boundaries training according to MC USA protocol and should submit an annual accountability plan including a description of continuing education.