



NAME: 08.07 TEACHER QUALIFICATION	VERSION NO.: 2
ADOPTED: MARCH 10, 2014 AMENDED: APRIL 25, 2022	REVIEW: 2025-2026

REVIEW EVERY 4 YEARS

1. **Purpose**

Independent Christian schools in BC have a unique mission driven purpose to nurture and educate students in a pervasively Christian manner. Christian schools need qualified teacher professionals who can educate students through the lens of a distinctly Christian worldview and within a Biblical framework. Teachers who seek employment at an independent Christian school must be grounded in their faith, capable of teaching from a Christian perspective and committed to continuing to advance their own Biblical understanding and teaching skills throughout their career.

2. **Persons/Area Affected**

All teachers employed by Richmond Christian School.

3. **Policy**

The policy of Richmond Christian School is to ensure that qualified, certified teachers serve in our school. This means that our teachers not only meet BC Teacher Regulation Branch requirements, but also provide evidence of courses of study, work experience and university graduation programs that intentionally equip a teacher to teach from a Christian perspective and model Christian values. This additional requirement plays an important role in identifying, hiring and compensating teachers in the SCSBC family of schools.

4. **Definitions**

- a. **BC Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB):** the branch of the Ministry of Education that defines the minimal qualifications required for employment of teachers in BC schools.
- b. **Certificates of Qualification:** Certificates currently issued by the Teacher Regulation Branch:
 - i. Professional Certificate
 - ii. Basic Certificate
 - iii. Conditional Certificate: certified to teach, with the expectation that within a given time frame, courses need to be successfully completed to meet certification requirements
 - iv. Developmental Standard Term Certificate
 - v. First Nations Language Teacher Certificate

- c. **Independent School Teaching Certificates:** The Teacher Regulation Branch also issues the following:
 - i. System Restricted Certificate (SYC)
 - ii. Subject Restricted Certificate (SR)
 - iii. School Subject Restricted Certificate (SSR)
- d. **Letters of Permission:** Temporary permission to teach authorized by the Teacher Regulation Branch.

5. Responsibilities

- a. The principal is responsible for oversight of teachers. The principal will request, confirm, and file certification documents prior to the issuance of a contract. (These documents are available to Ministry Inspection teams.)
- b. In the case of a Conditional Certificate, it is the responsibility of the teacher and the principal to ensure compliance with the specified conditions.
- c. It is the teacher's responsibility to meet the qualifications and requirements either prior to employment, or within the time frame specified by the school administrator.
- d. It is the teacher's responsibility to maintain valid certification while employed by Richmond Christian School.

6. Procedures

- a. Teacher Regulation Branch of the Ministry of Education Requirements
 - i. Funded independent schools (group 1 or 2) in British Columbia are required by *the Independent School Act* (Schedule section 3d) to hire only certified teachers under the *Teachers Act*. The BC Ministry of Education's Teacher Certification Branch defines the qualifications required for certification and eligibility to teach in BC classrooms. Applicants are assessed on their academic record and teacher education training, relevant teaching experience, and suitability for working with children.
 - ii. Administrators are responsible for hiring certified teachers and for validating appropriate teacher certification prior to issuance of a contract.
 - iii. Different certificate types are issued to applicants based on their qualifications and teacher education training. For example, the TCB may grant a qualified teacher a Certificate of Qualification or an Independent School Teaching Certificate (ISTC) or a First Nations Language Teaching Certificate. An ISTC may be granted to a qualifying educator with certain restrictions:
 - 1) System Restricted Certificate to Montessori or Waldorf School (SYR): A non-expiring certificate that restricts to teaching within a B.C. independent Montessori or Waldorf school. The certificate can also be restricted to Kindergarten, depending on the teaching program completed.
 - 2) A Subject Restricted Certificate (SR): This certificate restricts educators to teach subjects in at least one valid teachable area defined by the Independent School Teaching Certificate Standards Committee that are

directly related to their post-secondary studies. This certificate is initially valid for up to 60 months and can be upgraded to a non-expiring certificate if the teacher demonstrates successful teaching experience for at least 1.5 years full time (or equivalent part time). Teacher-on-call experience is not accepted. These certificates are not issued to elementary specialists.

3) School & Subject Restricted Certificate (SSR): This certificate restricts educators to teach only the subjects related to their specialized post-secondary training, unique life skills or practical experience (e.g. religious studies or board authority approved courses) for the independent authority seeking to hire them in specific grades, depending on the applicant's credentials, training and experience. The certificate is initially valid for up to 60 months. It can be upgraded to a non-expiring certificate if the teacher demonstrates successful teaching experience for at least 1.5 years full time (or equivalent part time). Teacher-on-call experience (substitute teaching) is not accepted.

iv. In addition, an independent school may recommend a potential candidate to fill a vacant teaching position. A Letter of Permission allows educators who do not hold a teaching certificate to teach in BC's schools for up to one school year when every effort to find a certified teacher to fill the position has been made. Where a teacher certified in BC or in another Canadian jurisdiction has applied for the position and was not hired, the employer must provide a comprehensive rationale for not hiring the certified teacher.

1) The person holding the Letter of Permission is restricted to teaching the specific subject areas and grade levels indicated in the Letter of Permission.

2) Both the candidate and the district need to apply for a letter of permission through the Teacher Certification Branch.

v. Regardless of the certification or permission granted, each individual teacher is responsible for ensuring that they maintain their teacher certificate in good standing with the Ministry of Education.

vi. Each individual teacher is required to adhere to the Professional Standards for BC Educators, including the addition of Standard #9, *Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Metis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of the ways of knowing and believing, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Metis.*

b. Richmond Christian School requires, as recommended by SCSBC that teaching staff meet the Christian Perspectives Courses requirement:

i. A first year contracted teacher who meets the requirements for an offer of employment with an Independent Christian school but has not previously completed a broad base of coursework in teaching from a Christian perspective may be asked to complete additional training as a term of their employment. Any requirement should be a written agreement outlining the timeline, expected

outcomes and include pre-approval of the program or training by the Administration.

- ii. Independent Christian schools are defined by their commitment to provide a Christ-centred education; therefore their employees must be committed to educating in accordance with Christian belief and practice. An ongoing personal commitment to their Christian faith and investing in additional training and experience that further equips teachers with the skills necessary to teach within a pervasively Christian environment.
- iii. To meet the Christian perspectives course requirements teachers must have graduated from a Christian university with an undergraduate and teaching degree or
- iv. Have completed five of the first six courses, listed below. These are offered as upper level university credit courses (third and fourth year). A course that qualifies as part of a graduate program may also be considered.
 - 1) Introduction to Biblical worldview or Biblical narrative: areas of study that focus on understanding what is a worldview and why it matters that we have a Christian worldview.
 - 2) Biblical Literacy – areas of study designed to develop a deepened understanding of the Bible itself.
 - 3) Curriculum Design – areas of study that enhance understanding of lesson, unit and course design which integrates a Christian worldview into learning outcomes.
 - 4) Pedagogy – areas of study or training with a focus on how Christian educators design and assess learning in a manner that respects the variety of learning styles in the classroom.
 - 5) Identity – training designed to help Christian educators understand the importance of identity through Christ and the Biblical understandings of diversity, highlighting the deep truth of God’s love to all and for all.
 - 6) Educational Research and Applications in Christian Education: areas of study that offer a refresher for the experienced teacher to review the latest resources and insights in worldview, Christian studies, student learning and cultural anthropology, such as Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing.
 - 7) Other: areas of study that focus on Biblical hospitality, hope, generosity, belonging, reconciliation, or other relevant themes.
- v. Wherever possible, and that coursework accepted by the school is from a recognized and reputable organization. Any requirement should be a written agreement outlining the timeline, expected outcomes, and include pre-approval of the program or coursework training by the Administration.

c. Additional Course Granting Opportunities for Christian Perspective Courses

Opportunities for Christian Perspective courses may become available to teachers that are not from a degree granting institution, but may qualify through the following process:

- i. Request for CP course equivalency must be made to the Principal and include a rationale, course overview and expectation, time commitment required and explanation of which Christian Perspective Course it fulfills.
- ii. The Principal will review, along with the appropriate Assistant Principal, and inform the teacher if course equivalency will be granted.
- iii. Course equivalency will range from 0.5 to 3 courses depending on the relevance and rigour of the course.
- iv. A maximum of 3 courses from non-degree granting institutions will be approved
- v. Additional courses approved by Richmond Christian School may not be transferable to other SCSBC Christian Schools

d. Christian Perspective Course Costs

As outlined in the Professional Development Policy, the cost of taking a course that will immediately or eventually contribute to a category change will be borne equally by the teacher and the school. Pre-approval by campus principal is required.

e. Additional Qualifications:

There will be a variety of additional qualifications which also play an important role in teacher employment and are defined by the school community. These additional qualifications may relate to compliance with foundational documents such as a constitution and bylaws, statement of faith or community standards policy. Refer to the *RCS Standards of Community Conduct* for details.