APPENDIX K

ACCOUNTABLE MINISTRY SITE

A. Required of Congregations

1. **Commitment as a Teaching Congregation** - Support the student throughout the student's program (**see guidelines for becoming a Teaching Congregation_____[website]**) .

2. **In-Care Expectations** – Meet the in-care expectations of the student's denomination (for students who are in a connectional denominational polity)

3. **Send Timothy & Priscilla Away** - Whenever possible, it is wise for someone who grew up in the congregation to gain experience in another congregation. Home congregations sometimes (often) show more patience than would another congregation; sometimes (often) students assume patterns of relationship in their home congregation that are based on childhood practices. For these reasons (and others), it is crucial that such a student gain experience in a different congregation. If, for some reason, a student must remain in his/her home congregation, then it is important for the student and the congregational leadership to

B. Strongly Advised for Congregations

On the one hand, Lexington Theological Seminary does not require that a congregation expect that its clergy and staff people gain the following processes. On the other hand, the well-being of congregational members and children as well as the readiness for ministry of a minister will be, in our judgment, best served by attending to these learning opportunities.

1. **National Background Check** for all clergy, staff and those who work with children and youth. A national background check will identify issues that would be missed by a state background check. The Seminary uses intellicorp.net (and offers no endorsement and receives no compensation for listing this resource here).

2. **Boundary Workshop** - most judicatories (Regions, Conferences, Presbyteries) require such training within the first year of the start of a ministry. This workshop focuses on such issues as maintaining appropriate relational boundaries, practicing self-care and acknowledging such psychological dynamics as transference. Congregations are well-served to build this training into their expectations of clergy.

3. **Anti-Racism /Pro-Reconciliation Training** - most judicatories (Regions, Conferences, Presbyteries) require such training as part of an ordination process. Congregations are well-served to learn from this process as well.

4. **Policies for Protecting Children and Youth from Abuse** - Maintaining a safe place for children (birth to 12) and youth (13 to 18) is utterly essential to congregational life. Judicatories and some congregations have developed policies and procedures that can be adapted for your use. These practices include such things as requiring an annual background check for all adults who work with children and youth, expecting that no child or youth will be alone with an adult unless the two are in plain sight of another adult.

Sample and model policies are available through your judicatory. This website includes several denominational policies and procedures: **How can my congregation develop a sexual misconduct policy?**.

See also this website: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/PreventingChildSexualAbuse.pdf#page=9

Consult your denomination's website and judicatory youth ministry coordinator for particular guidelines. Here are two such examples:

Child Protection Policy and Procedure (Christian Church (Disciples of Christ):
http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/familyandchildren/preventchildabuse.htm

Making Our Churches Safe (United Church of Christ): http://www.ucc.org/ministers/safe/

5. **A Conflict Mediation Process** - How do you handle concerns about a particular minister or staff person and how does she/he handle concerns about his/her position? The size of your congregation will shape your response to this question. It is important to be clear about how the process works and who has responsibility for implementing it.

According to Rev. Michael Davison (Christian Church (Disciples of Christ))

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Policies vary from congregation to congregation based upon their governing rules as well as:

1) A functioning Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC);

2) A functioning Personnel Committee;

3) Adequate to strong Pastoral and Lay Leader (board or council chair).

Few congregational polities have anything written down unless it is part of their by-laws.

The best examples, and possibilities of finding something written, are larger congregations within your denomination.

My best advice for a model is based on the style of a congregation.

1. **Family size congregations** - relationships

2. **Small to Medium** - relationships, PRC, then order (board/by-laws)

3. **Large** - accountability based on board organization, needs of YM professional and volunteers, PRC, and YAC (youth advisory committee/cabinet/council).

Typically, the YAC is the program support, human resource, and leaders/sponsors arm of a congregation's YM that work with the youth minister rather than provide oversight. If those persons have issues that cannot be addressed through the relationships then that would be taken to the PRC (a good mediator in a congregational structure) before a personnel comm.

You might try the Youth Ministry Architects for help.