ADVENTIST EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA: HOW DO WE MEASURE UP ACADEMICALLY?

THE QUEST FOR INTEGRITY
Facing the Key Challenge of Postmodernism

EDUCATING FOR CITIZENSHIP: SOCIAL STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

A COMMENTARY ON PURPOSE, PRINCIPLE, AND CHANGE IN ADVENTIST EDUCATION, Part II

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Where Have They Gone?
Another Changing of the Guard

The General Conference Education Department has been blessed over many decades with the service of committed professional staff members. In recent years, people such as Drs. Reo Ganson, Donald Sahly, Humberto Rasi, Enrique Becerra, John Fowler, Luis Schulz, Andrea Luxton, and Mrs. Beverly Rumble have helped us continue the departmental trend of committed service to the church’s education program. Currently serving in the department are Luis Schulz (who one year ago left the presidency of River Plate Adventist University [Universidad de la Plata] in Argentina to join the department), John Fowler, myself, and Beverly Rumble (editor of the Journal of Adventist Education).

Over time, some of the above-named individuals have moved into other areas of endeavor. Upon leaving the department, Reo Ganson became president of Canadian University College in Canada. Donald Sahly left to become president of Southwestern Adventist University in Texas, but has more recently become the president of Griggs University and International Academy, located at the General Conference headquarters. Humberto Rasi retired to California, but continues to work with the department’s Dialogue magazine and also serves as a special projects assistant to the department director. Enrique Becerra, though retired, still prepares the international editions of the Journal of Adventist Education.

In June 2006, Dr. Andrea Luxton, associate director and executive secretary of the Adventist Accrediting Association, left a large hole in the department by accepting the position of president of Canadian University College in Alberta, Canada. Anticipating Dr. Luxton’s departure, an intensive search was initiated, and under what we believe to be the Lord’s direction, we are pleased to introduce the newest member of the General Conference education team—Dr. Lisa M. Beardsley.

Lisa Beardsley was born in England and completed two years of theology at Newbold College, England, before graduating with a Bachelor of Theology from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Far East (now Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies) in the Philippines. Her studies continued with an M.P.H. from Loma Linda University, a Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and an M.B.A. from the Peter F. Drucker School of Management, Claremont Graduate University, California.

Dr. Beardsley has served as an educator since 1980, teaching at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. She has served on the faculty of the University of Hawaii at Manoa; the University of Illinois; Andrews University (AU) in Berrien Springs, Michigan; and Loma Linda University (LLU) in Loma Linda, California. Her administrative posts include department chair of health education at Finland Junior College, Piikkiö, Finland; assistant dean for medical education and evaluation, University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria; dean of graduate studies and research and associate vice president for academic affairs at AU; and vice chancellor for academic affairs at LLU.

Dr. Beardsley has served as commissioner for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities and is a Trustee for the C. S. Lewis Foundation. Her research, publications, and presentations are in clinical performance assessment, culture, and health, as well as faith and learning.

Continued on page 46
In the first installment of this two-part series (Summer 2006 issue), we reflected on the topic of change in Seventh-day Adventist higher education. This second and final article will focus on some underlying principles of Adventist education and how change relates to them.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that their global network of schools and its purposes were the product of divine inspiration. From its 19th-century beginning in Battle Creek, Michigan, denominational education has always had a double-pronged *raison d’etre*: to keep young people in the church through redemptive education and to prepare employees for the church. Over time, especially in developing countries, two other purposes evolved. The first
was to use education as an evangelistic tool; second, to participate in social uplift by providing education as a public service, just as the church provides hospitals and clinics that contribute to the physical well-being of their local communities.

**Adventist Education and Reform**

Seventh-day Adventists entered the marketplace of education with the conviction that they had an obligation to change things. “We are reformers,” Ellen White wrote in 1872 when she published her essay, “Proper Education,” which one could call the Magna Carta of Adventist education.1

Change was already in the air. Even as Ellen White wrote, thoughtful people were scrutinizing many aspects of education. Her vision for schooling also diverged from the norm because, above all else, it was to point students to the Cross by providing them with a better understanding of Heaven’s plan to restore fallen human beings to their original Edenic state and inspire them to accept God’s saving grace. Making education redemptive provided a spiritual rationale for the changes that Adventists sought to implement and, given their belief in the soon return of Jesus, it supplied an urgency for reform. This philosophical and theological emphasis made Adventist education distinctive in the reform milieu of the 19th century.

Adventists did not immediately develop a systematic view of education. However, from the outset, the driving force in denominational schools derived from the original purposes of Adventist education: to provide redemptive education and to prepare church workers. As Adventism spread around the world, many church leaders were convinced that by implementing the two original purposes of denominational education, they could make their schools an invaluable evangelistic resource. This would, in effect, both help to perpetuate the church and enable it to accomplish its mission. Thus, the purposes evolved into something akin to a theology of education and constituted a measuring device.

From its 19th-century beginning in Battle Creek, Michigan, denominational education has always had a double-pronged *raison d’être*: to keep young people in the church through redemptive education and to prepare employees for the church.

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1. W. W. Prescott, biblical scholar and first secretary of the General Conference Education Department, was a great promoter of the Bible-centered curriculum.
Seventh-day Adventists entered the marketplace of education with the conviction that they had an obligation to change things.

to determine whether through the years the changes occurring in the schools were consistent with denominational expectations. Seen against this background, there is small wonder that modifications in the church’s education program have always aroused debate.

Adventist education has always had its critics. If we are to believe the present generation of naysayers, Adventist schools no longer fulfill the original intentions of their founders. The critics allege that under the rubric of progress, Adventist educators have blurred or ignored the “blueprint” by capitulating to “worldly pressure” flowing from modernization and secularism. From the vantage point of the critics, denominational schools have lost their purpose and become merely another option—and an expensive one—for Adventist families.

Such sweeping indictments require us to examine more closely some of the changes that have spawned criticism. For the most part, critics are not lamenting the inevitable trends of modernization such as automobiles replacing horses and buggies, or computers supplanting typewriters—instead, they are concerned about changes in the substance of Adventist education.

While the reform that Adventists sought to incorporate into their first schools had a theological flavor, it does not follow that everything the church’s early teachers did represented an eternal principle. It would be more accurate to say that Adventist educators have endlessly experimented to find feasible applications of the original principles of church-sponsored schools as they understood them. Sometimes they have hit the target, sometimes not.

The Ideal of a Bible-Centered Curriculum

The most pertinent example was the dictum that the Bible was to be central. More than any other characteristic, this curricular principle was intended to be the foundational and universal mark of Adventist education. Tracing the evolution of this idea in church-sponsored education reveals much about how Adventists have debated their way through disparate issues, among them (1) establishing education in illiterate or even uncivilized societies, (2) coping with changes in global demography and the transformation from rural to urban life, (3) designing a program of education to meet the dominant role of professionalism in contemporary life, (4) staying abreast of the complexities and needs of a world church, and (5) relating to external regulation of education.

In the beginning, no one knew what a biblically central curriculum looked like, so it is not surprising that Adventist teachers and educational administrators immediately raised questions and disagreed among themselves about how to implement this foundational principle. The following list illustrates some of the approaches they took:

1. The Bible is to be the only textbook in Adventist schools.
2. The Bible does not have to be the only textbook, but every subject must contain some content taken from the Bible.
3. The curriculum will be biblical if it derives from Seventh-day Adventist experience. For example, problems in elementary arithmetic are to incorporate facts such as information from colporteurs’ sales reports and data about offerings in local churches.
4. The curriculum will be biblical if teachers use denominationally produced materials.
5. The Bible does not need to be the sole textbook, but it should be the inspirational source for all teaching materials.
6. The curricula in public schools will become biblically centered and acceptable for church schools if teachers add Bible study to them.
7. The Bible will be at the center if teachers demonstrate biblical principles in their teaching techniques and personal relationships with students.

Teachers struggled with all seven of these ideas and more. In some cases, several of the approaches were combined in the same classroom. If those early educators were still alive, they would probably find consolation in knowing that today’s teachers still grapple with the same issue. The experience of 130 years teaches us that although a Bible-centered curriculum may be the single most identifying mark of Adventist schools, it has defied ultimate definition. In a world that changes at breakneck speed, experience has also taught us that if we expect teachers to improve their understanding and
practice of this foundational principle, change itself must become a corollary principle.

One of the major developments in the long process of establishing a Bible-centered curriculum has been to devote less space to doctrinal study in religion textbooks for elementary and secondary grades, while allotting more time to the application of biblical principles to life situations.2

One reason for this trend has been a progressively stronger conviction that a Christian experience—the cliche that describes what Bible classes are supposed to produce—is not an automatic outcome of being well versed in church doctrines and able to quote proof texts prolifically. Understanding the basis for doctrinal positions and memorizing supporting Bible texts are no less important to Adventist life than formerly, but curriculum designers have also begun to emphasize the social relevancy of Scripture. Teaching students to apply scriptural principles and to develop a biblically based set of ethics pertinent to human relationships and Christian life in a modern, high-tech society has become a more significant classroom objective as well as a means to develop student interest in and knowledge about Scripture.

The format of the Bible itself suggests this approach. Scripture was not written like a catechism but more like an anthology of different styles of literature, much of it stories describing how people lived and related to one another. Much of what Christians believe is extrapolated from these narratives. The most notable examples are the accounts of the ancient patriarchs and the four Gospel records of Christ’s ministry. It is a natural question to ask: Since the Bible was written that way, should we not teach it that way as well? This approach has not eliminated doctrinal study, but it does change the classroom approach to biblical understanding.

Not everyone agrees that this change is good. Critics have charged that Bible study in Adventist schools is no longer central because traditional denominational beliefs have declined in importance; and as a consequence, students turn out to be scriptural illiterates.

Another issue is how to adapt a biblically central curriculum to all levels of instruction and to diverse students. At both elementary and secondary levels, students typically

Adventists did not immediately develop a systematic view of education.

Since their inception, Adventist schools have offered a variety of courses that attempt to integrate faith and academics. Shown above is an 1890 health and temperance class at Battle Creek College.
take one Bible class a year. School administrators usually see to it that Bible classes and religious activities play a prominent role in the school schedule.

At the postsecondary level, Bible classes often become one of many curricular components, which allows students to select an appealing class that fits into their schedules. To illustrate, most Adventist colleges in the United States require students to take fractionally less than a tenth of their total coursework in Bible, irrespective of their degree. Typically, these courses are included in the basic requirements of general education. In simple terms, this means students take about one Bible class per year, but because classes last for only a semester or a quarter, it also means that students may spend about half their time in college without enrolling in a Bible class. However light this emphasis on Bible courses may appear, the Bible component is usually the largest single block of classes students take outside their major and minor concentrations.

The sizable influx of non-Adventist students in many of our colleges also presents a curricular challenge—how to design Bible classes that enroll students who are lifelong Adventists along with those who are from non-Adventist or even non-Christian backgrounds. To maintain an ambiance that supports a biblically central curriculum at the postsecondary level also poses unique problems. Increasingly, colleges and universities, both public and sectarian, must cater to a diverse student body that includes working adults with families, those taking part or all of their classes online, and traditional students (18-24 years of age) who are enrolled only part time. Students in graduate schools, who may appear on campus only for evening classes or special appointments, are also part of this mix. Because all of these students must fit their education into an already busy life, they shop around for a school that will accommodate their schedules. These challenges make it difficult or next to impossible for Adventist schools to schedule worship services and chapels for all students.

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Evaluating Change in the Bible-Centered Curriculum

In considering these issues, we must remind ourselves that, trite as it may seem, we are mixing facts and opinions and must distinguish between them. It is a fact that from the outset, the founders of Adventist education regarded abiblically central curriculum as the foundational principle of Adventist education, but it is a perception and a judgment to categorize a given approach to the principle as either adequate or inadequate.

Therefore, because we are dealing with opinions, expecting to achieve unanimity about how to implement a principle is unrealistic. Due to the variety of perceptions about any given topic, Adventist educators have followed Solomon’s advice in Proverbs 15:22—“Without counsel purposes are disappointed; but in the multitude of counselors they are established” (KJV)—and prayerfully sought consensus before choosing a course of action rather than presuming that everything they did was based on undeniable policies. Curriculum thus undergoes constant review in order to update applications of principles and generate new approaches that will maintain the key identifying marks of Adventist education.

Both clients and practitioners of Adventist education must always keep in mind that the principles of education, which Adventists believe to be divinely inspired, never specified a certain ratio of Bible classes to other courses. The principle is that Bible study is to be central, but Ellen White and other early leaders left the details for educators and administrators to develop.

As we seek to assess whether Bible study is accomplishing its purpose and is still central, it is important to ask several basic questions: First, do Bible classes open the way for the convicting influence of the Holy Spirit? Also, do these classes teach students to test their opinions and spiritual beliefs with Scripture in order to reach biblically based conclusions? Finally, does Adventist education encourage students to cultivate a maturing sense of personal responsibility for their convictions and actions that will continue with them after they leave the classroom?

In an effort to maintain the centrality of biblical studies, integrate faith and learning, and create a philosophical worldview compatible with Scripture, some colleges have
experienced with interdisciplinary classes. Examples include studies in religion and science, and courses in comparative religions, archeology, and literature. Rather than a theologian, the instructor may be a scientist trained in geology, biology, or physics, or someone from the field of literature or philosophy. A religion teacher may team teach a course with a professor from another academic discipline. These classes are not exclusively “Bible” in the same sense as those focusing on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation or the life and teachings of Jesus, but they demonstrate how biblical beliefs infuse other areas of learning. They are invaluable tools to introduce students to the breadth of Christianity and can contribute as much to biblical understanding as the study of eschatology or the Gospels. Students may opt for credit in either religion or the field of the department offering the class.

Curriculum frameworks that require Bible study at all levels of instruction are only administrative tools to help educators maintain the principle of centrality. Their success rests on several factors. Experience has shown that a Bible-centered curriculum is as much, if not more, an attitude than a defined amount of time spent in a class. How well curriculum planners and school administrators fulfill the principle depends more on their own personal commitment and their spiritual breadth and sensitivities than on curricular arithmetic.

The training, life, and personality of the teacher is also a major factor. Academically prepared teachers, dedicated to
Christ, are a powerful witness and model for students. By their very presence, they can transform courses that are not inherently religious, such as a class in differential calculus, into a part of the spiritual journey that Adventist education intends for its students.

It is also worth remembering that the original pronouncements about Adventist education called for Bible study to be central, not exclusive. The two are not the same. Early teachers who wished to make the Bible the sole textbook in Adventist schools discovered that truth after extensive and discouraging sweat and toil. The original principles of Adventist education never dictated that teachers should ignore what were then known as the “branches of learning.” As originally conceived, Adventist schools were to teach as many skills and dispense as much knowledge as secular schools. But they were to do all of this in an environment where the Bible was central and where the aim of education was redemptive.

**International Influences**

It is also important to bear in mind that Adventist education originated in the United States, where it became a paradigm of sorts for the world church. Adventist educators in other countries often faced questions peculiar to their societies, which required them to adapt precedents established in the United States.

For example, in the United States, curriculum has always been more or less open-ended, so American educators have had greater liberty to experiment with class content than their counterparts in other countries. Although American students face evaluative testing at all levels, they do not have to enroll in a government-prescribed course of study that prepares them for specific examinations.

Such is not the case in many parts of the world. Adventist education has faced major problems in countries where external examinations determine a student’s future. In these locations, curriculum is deliberately designed to prepare students for examinations that mark the end of specific phases of their education. For obvious reasons, teachers tend to teach to the tests, which leaves little time for them to introduce additional material. It becomes problematical even to incorporate a biblical component, never mind make it central, since the area will not appear on the government-mandated exams, and hence is not critical to the students’ future employment.

Because Adventist educators believe that a Bible-centered curriculum is critical to students’ spiritual life and future, they have been forced to decide whether to (1) regard external examinations as irrelevant and focus on preparing church employees for whom testing is unnecessary, or (2) also serve students who will be employed outside the denomination but still want the blessings of a preparatory education in an Adventist setting. This problem had no counterpart in the American paradigm, but Adventist educators found ways to include Bible study in their curricula without sacrificing scholarship and thus upheld the denominational principle of a Bible-centered curriculum.

The issue of external examinations underscores the fact that Adventist education has not evolved in a vacuum. Social and political climates have always had an influence on Adventist schools. Denominational climates have always recognized the right of governments to regulate the nature and content of education for both children and professionals and to require schools to produce what their advertisements claim. Adventist leaders have sought to operate institutions of learning at all levels within parameters established by local governments. The first of this two-part series revealed that conformity by Adventist education to both governmental and voluntary regulation has helped to ensure credibility in the preparation of professionals.

However, public policy sometimes threatens the identity of Adventist schools by requiring unacceptable compromises. Governments in developing countries have often viewed Adventist education as only a humanitarian enterprise. Many times, public officials who were unacquainted with the redemptive purpose of Adventist education offered financial support to denominational schools as part of their
A plan for social uplift and modernization. Inadvertently, denominational education became part of the nation-building process.

This condition posed new challenges relating to the propriety of government aid to sectarian education and how to preserve an Adventist identity while accepting financial help. Inevitably, the church’s educators have had to adapt the original principles of Adventist education in order to achieve their ultimate purpose in this socio-political climate. Controversial relationships have sometimes evolved between denominational schools and governments, some of which persist to the present, especially in younger nations where nation-building issues are paramount.

Other examples of how Adventist education has related to regulation occurred in radical socialist countries during the Cold War. In order to exist, Adventist schools adopted administrative methods and institutional structure that differed from those in democratic countries.

Regulation and differing social conditions rule out the possibility that all Adventist schools can be clones of the American model. Differences in social conditions also help to explain why Adventist graduates from such schools as Solusi (in Zimbabwe) for years entered denominational employ after completing an elementary-level program, but their counterparts from schools in the United States and Europe needed a bachelor’s degree. Local conference school systems have adopted the identifying mark of “K-12,” signifying that kindergartens are an integrated part of denominational education, a trend that critics regard as further evidence of decline.

As early as 1888, however, Ellen White advocated a kindergarten for Adventist children in Oakland, California. Later, the author of the “free as lambs” metaphor encouraged 7- and 8-year-old children to attend an Adventist church school, surprisingly adding that some students were ready for school at age 5.

These apparent contradictions did not open the door for willy-nilly change, but they did offer an opportunity to explore situations when the earlier advice might need to be modified. Early on, Ellen White advocated that children should not enter school until they were 8 or 10 years old. Parents should be the first teachers of their children, who should run as “free as lambs,” she said. This advice was embraced by Adventists, and in a manner similar to other statements of reform, exerted nearly as much force as a biblical injunction. Sarah Peck, a former secretary for Ellen White and a prominent figure in the preparation of denominational elementary textbooks, told Adventist educators in 1923 that failure to follow this instruction was a departure from the faith.

Strong convictions about this issue have continued, prompting critics to allege that spiritual lapses abound in Adventist education. Church schools enroll students at age 6, and even 5, and some institutions offer preschool training for youngsters as young as age 2 or 3. Local conference school systems have adopted the identifying mark of “K-12,” signifying that kindergartens are an integrated part of denominational education, a trend that critics regard as further evidence of decline.

Legitimizing Change

When and how to implement change has never been easy. Educators can gain valuable insight about this question by reviewing the Adventist debate over the appropriate age for students to begin formal education, an issue that has reared its head repeatedly.

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These apparent contradictions did not open the door for willy-nilly change, but they did offer an opportunity to explore situations when the earlier advice might need to be modified. Some parents were letting their children run in the streets, distorting the advice to allow them to be free as lambs to mean undisciplined freedom. Overlooked was Ellen White’s advice that parents should be the first teachers of their children, which pointedly implied that these “little lambs” needed discipline and instruction, even if they were not in school. The advice to enroll students under 8 to 10 years of age was a recognition that they would be better off in school than in a situation where parents had abdicated their responsibility to be the first teachers of their children.

The admission that some chil-
Children were ready for school at age 5 suggests that Ellen White recognized that youngsters developed at different rates and that parents and teachers must take individuality into account when making judgments about their education. It also suggests that external influences have played a major role in the changing advice for Adventist educators.

Kindergartens were an outcome of the growing belief, bolstered by scientific study, that children were individuals in their own right with special age-related needs. This movement strengthened as the 19th century unfolded; it burgeoned in the 20th. In keeping with this mood, Ellen White had taken notice of educational trends as early as 1888 when she advocated a kindergarten for Adventist children. By the mid- to late 20th century, kindergartens had become a recognized phase of early childhood education, and governments were requiring school entry at ever-earlier ages.

When Ellen White encouraged parents to enroll young children in school, which seemed to contradict her previous advice, she was enunciating a major principle undergirding Adventist education from Battle Creek to the present. Ideals are ideals, and they remain so regardless of how promiscuously people violate them. But social conditions sometimes prevent educators from achieving the ideal, forcing them to settle for something less. Adventist educators have had to do the best that they could within the constraints of socio-economic and political conditions. This has been true of every change in Adventist education.

The principle of legitimizing change, based on social conditions, is biblical, as the case of Moses’ law of divorce illustrates. When issuing his ordinance, Moses acted under divine inspiration, but Jesus later changed it by adding restrictions. He explained that Moses’ law was the best that could be expected at the time because of prevailing moral laxity, a social condition He described as “the hardness of your hearts.” Jesus made it clear that neither Moses’ provision nor His modification destroyed the original ideal.

**Change and Continuity**

Adventist education is an imperfect creation with lofty ideals. Its form has undeniably altered since its 19th-century inception. Trial and error accompanied the early years of Adventist schools as teachers sought to implement the principles provided by divine inspiration. Of course, trial and error remain. But today, we have the advantage of historical perspective, which early educators lacked, enabling us to evaluate more effectively whether the changed form of Ad-
Adventist education conforms to its raisson d’etre.

Despite the wide variety of challenges Adventist education has faced and the changes wrought on denominational campuses, the overarching principle of a biblically central program of education remains. Education is to preserve the faith of the church’s young by nurturing them in a loving relationship with Christ, prepare workers to proclaim the biblical message of salvation, and seek to convert unbelievers. Debate about substantive change pivots on the question of how change will affect these purposes. For example: The church began with the goal of preparing workers, which was later expanded to include educating a competent laity to function in the private sector, both as witnesses for and supporters of the church.

Adventist schools are a statement of Adventism that reaches beyond educating for professional competence, but this function does not require teachers to transform their classes into altar calls. However, it does mean that students should never have reason to doubt that an Adventist campus has a genuine Adventist character. The church’s experience in becoming a world movement has taught us that schools become statements of Adventism most effectively when they are compatible with the times and the cultures in which they function. For this reason, Adventists can expect that Argentina’s River Plate Adventist University with its historical roots in health education will function differently from India’s Spicer Memorial College, and that schools in the 21st century will differ from their 19th-century antecedents.

We can safely say that in part the genius of Adventist education has been to establish schools and develop policies and patterns of instruction that can be adapted to surrounding conditions while continuing to fulfill original purposes. The absence of formulas and other “how to” instruction at the beginning of the movement of Adventist education has forced each successive generation of denominational educators to reinterpret original purposes and principles in order to find applications appropriate to new times and places. This repetitive process has breathed new life into Adventist education. And if the church’s education program is to remain alive and fulfill its mission, the process must continue.

Floyd Greenleaf, Ph.D., retired professor of history at Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tennessee, is the author of The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Latin America and the Caribbean (Andrews University Press, 1992), and co-author of Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (English edition: Pacific Press, 2000; Spanish edition produced by the Inter-American and South American divisions, 2002). Last year, he completed In Passion for the World: A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education (Pacific Press), on which this series is based.

NOTES AND REFERENCES


2. See In Passion for the World, chapters 1 and 2, for discussion about post-elementary curriculum, chapter 4 for elaboration of elementary education curriculum.

3. Without referencing specific pages in In Passion for the World for examples of the question of external examinations, the best illustrations of this issue are found in those passages describing schools in countries that followed British educational traditions.


5. My discussion of this issue appears in In Passion for the World, pp. 84, 99, 100.

6. See Matthew 19:3-9 for the account of this discussion.
Does anyone know if the curriculum and teaching methods employed in Seventh-day Adventist elementary and secondary schools across the North American Division (NAD) produce students with top-notch academic preparation?

NAD educators have long maintained that their students’ Iowa Test of Basic Skills scores, pass rates, and college matriculation percentages consistently outpace most public school and comparable private school systems. At nearly every level, Adventist educational leaders cite annual Council for American Private Education reports indicating that on nationwide standardized tests, private education students routinely outperform public school students.

Are these impressive facts or well-intentioned propaganda? Parents, board members, church administrators, and constituents want to know.

Marketing Adventist education is perceived by some as a predictable “party-line” mantra. Notwithstanding the tireless and sincere efforts of Adventist recruiters, some parents still ask, “Will my child receive a quality education in Adventist schools? If so, can you prove it?”

How do Adventist elementary and secondary schools measure up academically to their private and public school counterparts? Is Adventist curriculum inferior,
comparable, or superior to that of other school systems? Do Adventist teachers possess sufficient pedagogical knowledge to expose young minds to the wonders of Scripture, science, math, and the humanities? And what about the aspects of Adventist education that make our schools distinctive? Do they indicate that our schools are superior to the local public schools or even the parochial/private schools in the same area?

Are such questions legitimate? Absolutely! The problem faced by Adventist educators is not whether such questions should be posed but how to give convincing answers in the absence of broad-based, valid, reliable research. Many parents, upon hearing the mar-

keters of Adventist education, offer a straightforward challenge: “Prove it!”

Valuegenesis I and II assessed the faith and values of Adventist youth. Data from these two studies resulted in system-wide programs to help youth integrate faith and to cultivate lives of service, commitment, and loyalty to the Adventist Church. Now, a new study called CognitiveGenesis, spearheaded by Elissa Kido, Ed.D., former dean of education, and Robert J. Cruise, Ph.D., research director, both researchers in the School of Education at La Sierra University in Riverside, California, seeks to answer the question, “What impact does Adventist education have on the academic performance of students?” A definitive answer, based on valid, reli-

able, empirical data, will lead to one of two possible outcomes, either of which will prove beneficial to Adventist education and the church:

1. the validation of Adventist education in terms of students’ measurable academic performance, and/or
2. the identification of areas needing improvement.

CognitiveGenesis, from its inception, quickly gained strong, broad-based support. The North American Division Office of Education partnered with the

How do Adventist elementary and secondary schools measure up academically to their private and public school counterparts?

lead proponents of the project, providing forums in which CognitiveGenesis was introduced to, and ultimately supported by, every union in the NAD. When it was presented to the North American Division Committee at its annual meeting of delegates in October 2005, the project was warmly endorsed.

“As Assessing Adventist Academics,” the motto of the research project, is an apt, brief descriptor of CognitiveGenesis. The project was unveiled at the August 2006 K-12 teachers convention in Nashville, Tennessee. At this time, thousands of Adventist educators learned much more about the project and the role each would play in advancing this vital education initiative.

With the start of this 2006-2007 school year, the three-year window of testing, surveying, and data collection has begun in grades 3-9, and 11. Five sources of data: ITBC/ITED/CogAt tests, and surveys of school administrators, teachers, parents, and students, will allow CognitiveGenesis researchers to measure a select set of variables and reduce bias. The information gathered
from the standardized tests and the surveys will establish a large database to identify which features of Adventist education contribute to academic achievement. Not only will the quality of Adventist education be measured, but comparable studies of other school systems will also be explored to see how Adventist education measures up academically.

Once results are available, we can end the speculation and uncertainty about whether Adventist education successfully promotes intellectual development of its elementary, middle, and high school students. Everyone will know whether Adventist education is truly a Journey to Excellence or if our curriculum and/or teaching methodologies need to be changed.

Based on preliminary findings in one conference, elementary students whose schooling was exclusively Adventist appeared to have higher test scores than those in the same conference whose schooling was not exclusively Adventist. CognitiveGenesis research will, among other things, determine if this is just a regional phenomenon or if it can be generalized across the North American Division.

A CognitiveGenesis Advisory Committee, which is listed at the end of this article and composed of Adventist educational leaders and researchers, has been established to approve appropriate data use. These advisors will exercise exacting diligence, along with sensitivity to individual privacy, to ensure proper diffusion of information.

The Cognitive Genesis Website, http://www.cognitivegenesis.org, will permit educators, parents, students, and other interested parties to read a description of the project and to track developments as they occur. Questions about the project can be posed on the site, with timely responses provided by project assistants.

Drs. Kido and Cruise believe this invaluable research initiative to be “a step toward better understanding where we are as an educational system and where we want to go academically.” Kido and Cruise have traveled across North America describing how Adventist education will benefit from this research. As lead proponents of CognitiveGenesis, they will make themselves accessible to those wanting to know more about the project.

According to Cruise, “CognitiveGenesis will help Adventist educators determine if Seventh-day Adventist schools

Notwithstanding the tireless and sincere efforts of Adventist recruiters, some parents still ask, “Will my child receive a quality education in Adventist schools? If so, can you prove it?”
Now, a new study called CognitiveGenesis . . . seeks to answer the question, “What impact does Adventist education have on the academic performance of students?”

are developing ‘thinkers and not mere reflectors’ of other people’s thoughts.” Isn’t it the calling of Adventist education to develop true thinkers—young people equipped with sound academics to serve God and humanity? CognitiveGenesis could reap a harvest of blessings for the church. The research design now in place will allow Adventist education to (1) objectively address parental questions about how well Adventist schools prepare students academically, (2) provide study findings and conclusions based on valid, reliable data that should enhance the credibility of Adventist education among constituents, (3) identify best curricula practices consistent with the new Journey to Excellence curriculum initiative, and (4) better equip students in Adventist secondary schools to successfully meet the challenges of university academics by crafting advanced teaching methodologies. We must position students to compete in an ever-changing, fast-paced world.

CognitiveGenesis is an important opportunity to find answers to significant questions about academic achievement in Adventist schools, develop teaching strategies, and chart the best course for educating our youth and teachers. Combined with the benefits of Valuegenesis, CognitiveGenesis can help us prepare youth to choose service to God and society as a life calling. When youth and parents see that Adventist education delivers spiritually and academically, there may well be a growing cadre of young people determined to work for the Lord as a life calling.

The CognitiveGenesis Advisory Committee

Larry Blackmer, M.A., Associate Director of Education, North American Division
Kelly Bock, Ed.D., Director of Education, Pacific Union Conference
Kathy Bollinger, M.Ed., Associate Professor of Education, Union College
Ian Bothwell, Ed.D., Professor of Education, Atlantic Union College
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José Vincente Rojas, M.A., Director, Volunteer/Young Adult Ministries, General Conference
Ella Smith Simmons, Ph.D., Vice President, General Conference
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Hamlet Canosa is Vice President of Education for the Columbia Union Conference in Columbia, Maryland, and the Associate Project Director for the multiyear Cognitive-Genesis study. He was assisted in the preparation of this article by Elissa Kido, Project Director; and Robert J. Cruise, Research Director.
THE QUEST FOR INTEGRITY:
FACING THE KEY CHALLENGE OF POSTMODERNISM

Although we must always maintain that faith has rational content, truth also has another dimension, which is at least as important.

BY REINDER BRUINSMA

It is no secret that the Adventist educational system is confronted with numerous challenges. How to build a qualified, committed corpus of Adventist teachers remains a major concern. Many Adventist schools, particularly in the Western world, have difficulty in recruiting enough students and are spending a considerable amount of money collectively chasing mostly the same students. Funding remains a never-ending nightmare for many administrators. And the greatest challenge of the church’s educational institutions around the world is to maintain a clear Adventist identity in what is being taught and in everyday life on campus.

In the midst of all these challenges, which have faced us quite some time, another, all-encompassing issue calls for our urgent attention. In the past few decades, the world has gradually moved from modernity to postmodernity. This has affected the Seventh-day Adventist Church in general, but probably even more so its educational system. It has changed both teachers and students. Even though there are several ways to describe the increasing diversity of the Adventist Church, I have concluded that the difference between modern and postmodern Adventism is the most basic divide that the church faces today.

This article will not attempt to describe the basic ideas of postmodernity, as most readers are well aware of the main issues. There is sufficient literature for those who want to find a more detailed description of this phenomenon, which has aptly been labeled as a worldview that says no worldview exists!

There is considerable diversity of opinion as to how and when postmodernity started, where it will yet go, and, in particular, when and where it will end. Some argue that we are currently, with the recent death of postmodern philosopher Jacques Derrida, entering the era of post-postmodernism! Yet, few will deny that there has been a gargantuan change in the way people—and in particular young people—look at the world and at themselves. Most college-age men and women belong
to the ever-growing segment of society that denies the existence of Truth and rejects the great meta-narratives of the past, which offered an all-encompassing explanation for human existence. The words of author Brad Cecil, who has written numerous publications about Christianity and postmodernity, may be more accurate than many want to acknowledge: "Postmodernity is the most significant cultural shift we have seen in the last 500 years. It’s not a generational issue exclusive to Gen-X or Millennials. In fact, it’s fast becoming the adopted epistemology of adults. Everyone in ministry—not just youth and young adult pastors—will have to wrestle with this phenomenon."4

Facing the 21st-Century Student

"There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative."5 These words of Alan Bloom in his bestselling analysis of recent changes in American thinking are even more true today than when they were written almost two decades ago. They undoubtedly also apply to many students in Adventist schools. Absolute Truth has become a plurality of "truths," i.e., personal preferences and opinions. Anti-foundationalism is the common thread woven into the fabric of all postmodern thinking. The conviction that there are some absolute Truths, which can serve as a foundation on which to build an edifice of further truths, has all but disappeared. Many evangelicals (including some Adventists) prefer to think of "truth" as fragile threads, which in themselves offer no indisputable truth, but together form a "web" of justifiable beliefs.6

Like many of their teachers, Adventist students are somewhere along the continuum between modernity and postmodernity, but in many cases they have progressed farther than their professors. Many have accepted the conclusion that the great stories of the past, which provided a solid point of reference for answering questions about the world and about life, have lost their value. Many students, including ones from Adventist homes, have lost their trust in organized religion and in the meta-narrative of Christianity. They come with their doubts and uncertainties, and wonder whether their teachers and fellow students have any answers to the questions they are asking. When my 19-year-old son studied at one of the Adventist colleges in North America, he was required to take certain religion courses. I will never forget his comments: "I must take this class that I am not at all interested in. I want to know whether God really exists. But that is not what they [the teachers] want to talk about!"

Today, many Adventist students—even more so than their parents—live fragmented lives. They tend to be open toward the spiritual dimension of life, but wonder how religion fits into the various aspects of their existence. One thing is clear, however: They are often very suspicious of or-
ganized, institutional religion. Moreover, a great many of them find Christianity’s assertion of exclusivity extremely difficult to swallow, let alone the claim that the Adventist version of Christianity is the one and only true approach to faith in God.

As if this is not enough of a challenge for educators who seek to communicate the Adventist Christian faith, they must also face the tendency of many of their students to seek security in insulation from the dissatisfactions and disappointments of the real world. These students often avoid human contact, chatting online, surfing the Internet; playing computer games, and using iPods and ever smaller and more ingenious mobile phones. They maintain a certain disengagement from life that keeps people and even life at a safe distance.

S
o, are Adventist educators facing an impossible challenge? How can they hope to reach postmodern students without selling out their principles? For sure, their starting point is a lot different from that of their colleagues a generation or so ago. “It is no longer enough for preachers [and teachers] to offer people moral instruction and biblical stories. Now people need to be taught how to think and view the world ‘Christianly.’” While this is not easy, it offers tremendous possibilities. Says Dan Kimball, one of the pastors of the Vintage Faith Church in Santa Cruz, California: “Postmodernity may be the greatest thing that’s ever happened to youth ministry. The youth landscape is becoming much as it was for Paul in Acts 17, and the potential for evangelism is incredible. We have the holy privilege of reintroducing Jesus and the Christian faith to ears and hearts that have never heard the real thing before.”

Those of us who have really tried will testify that it is possible to communicate with postmodern Adventist youth. Of course, you must have something to say, and express it in words they can understand. What you tell them does not carry weight simply because you are older or because you are the teacher. Postmodern young people will first think: Why should I listen to what this person has to say? But there is a good chance they will listen if you do not pretend to have all the answers. However, they will disconnect as soon as they feel they are not being taken seriously. They may be interested in your story if it rings true and honest, and if you are willing to listen to their stories and to reserve judgment even when you do not like what you hear. You have a good chance to earn their respect and get a further hearing if you admit that you yourself do not know all the answers, that there may be gray areas where judgment may have to be suspended. But postmodern young people demand that you be honest about your own struggles and doubts.

Truth Is Relational

Within the confines of this short article, it is impossible to deal at length with all the implications of the almost ubiquitous presence of postmodern thinking on Adventist campuses. I have chosen four areas of concern, which would all merit a more extensive treatment. The brief outline that follows may nonetheless be helpful.

First, there is the problem of truth. Thinking Adventists, and thinking Adventist teachers in particular, will have to struggle with this issue. How do we retain the idea of Truth? There may be less truth than many of us have believed in the past. The presumption that one possesses the final truth often leads to arrogance, intolerance, or worse. (There is, by the way, an immense difference between believing in absolutes and having some absolute belief about everything.) But this does not mean that our faith is devoid of all certainty. It may not be a certainty that can be rationally defended; it may, at least in part, be based in other forms of knowing. Reading a few books about this topic is not only for those who happen to enjoy reading philosophy in their spare time. It is essential for those who sense a calling to communicate the Christian faith in a postmodern context.

A closer look at the postmodern concept of truth reveals that it is not primarily propositional in nature. Although we must always maintain that faith has rational content, truth also has another dimension, which is at least as important. Truth is primarily relational. This postmodern emphasis is a much-needed correction of the traditional Adventist emphasis on doctrinal truth to the detriment of the much more comprehensive biblical notion of Truth. Doctrine is needed as a kind of grammar to help structure the way we talk about faith, but a relationship with God must precede our
theologizing. Leading students into a living and growing relationship with the Lord, therefore, takes priority over methods and programs that seek to indoctrinate them with propositional truth. The “grand story” Adventist teachers want to convey is not the facts of Adventist history and doctrine, but the meta-narrative of Jesus Christ. Everything else must come later—sometimes much later. Jimmy Long, a campus minister with long experience, comments:

“The key question for X’ers today is: ‘Is it real?’, not ‘Is it true?’ Their lives are more likely to be changed through the heart than through the mind. They need to see the incarnation of the gospel in people’s lives more than to hear the proclamation of the gospel through our words. Do we have places where seekers can see the gospel in action? Do we invite them into our community? They need to experience the love of Jesus more than they need to be informed that Jesus is love.”

If we are ready to proceed on this basis, we must be aware of two other important facts. If the teacher insists upon beginning from the authority of God’s Word, rather than from the experience of the listener, many students will not make a meaningful connection. Also, we must remember that postmodern people proceed by a process of picking and choosing. The theologians and administrators of the Adventist Church may have determined that there are 28 “fundamental beliefs,” but even if postmodern young people have accepted the validity of doctrinal statements, they are unlikely to accept the entire list because the church says so, or because a teacher or pastor, credible though he or she may be, happens to insist that all these points are important. These young people will (at least initially) select those items from the list that feel good and seem relevant.

Picture Removed

Generations of Christians have believed that divine truth is found in the Bible. Adventist teachers concur. But the reality is that most of their students, even those coming from solid Adventist homes—and even many freshmen theology students—are biblically illiterate. It is essential to encourage them to read (rather than study!) the Bible for themselves, in a translation that helps to make the Word accessible. It is wrong and counterproductive to organize their Bible reading in such a way that it is primarily aimed at finding proof texts for Adventist doctrines. Let them read the stories of the Bible and allow them to draw their own conclusions, even if their interpretation may at times appear to be flawed. There will, hopefully, come a time for dialogue, once students discover the Bible as a very special book that speaks to them in a way no other book does.

**Most college-age men and women belong to the ever-growing segment of society that denies the existence of Truth and rejects the great meta-narratives of the past, which offered an all-encompassing explanation for human existence.**

**Spirituality, Yes; Church, No**

In Western Europe (where I presently live), talking about religion is no longer taboo. Just a decade or so ago, you did not tell others about your faith. In fact, discussing one’s sex life was more acceptable than discussing one’s religion. Postmodern people—all over the world—are more open to spirituality than the previous generation. But, at the same time, they are deeply suspicious of institutions—including the church. The Seventh-day Adventist Church, alas, does not fare any better in their opinion than other denominations.

Unfortunately, this aversion (or at best, indifference) toward organized religion is understandable. The dark side of Christianity is too obvious to ignore. Too many things in the distant and recent past have been “baptized” as “Christian” despite the fact that they were totally foreign to the nature of its Founder. Too many representatives of the Christian Church have behaved in ways that were repulsive rather than inspiring. And, unfortunately, it is not difficult to find things in any church that belie its beliefs and ideals.

This poses a major dilemma for Adventist educational institutions, for they are part and parcel of the institutional church. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that spiritual activities not be
conceived and presented as duties imposed by the school (as an extension of the church), but as a sincere effort to respond to the expressed needs of the students. Of course, it is extremely difficult to ensure that appropriate rules be maintained and that a reasonable amount of discipline is maintained, without being “institutional.” However, students are perceptive enough to see whether the spiritual side of school life is a piece of baggage that the school staff members routinely carry along through the academic year, or whether there is an intentional and sustained effort to truly respond to the expressed needs of the students. Of course, it is extremely difficult to ensure that appropriate rules be maintained and that a reasonable amount of discipline is maintained, without being “institutional.” However, students are perceptive enough to see whether the spiritual side of school life is a piece of baggage that the school staff members routinely carry along through the academic year, or whether there is an intentional and sustained effort to truly respond to the expressed needs of the students.

*Absolute Truth has become a plurality of “truths,” i.e., personal preferences and opinions.*

listen to the spiritual concerns of the students and to respond in loving and creative ways. Students will also perceive immediately whether the faculty simply impose religious activities on the students, or are also themselves genuinely and enthusiastically involved in the religious life of the school.

T

his is not to say that the institutional church is unimportant. However, true community, where people care for one another, is the essence of “doing church.” The core meaning of the church is not embedded in traditions, doctrines, and policies. These do have their place, but they will follow at some later stage after people have concluded that the church is a community where they belong.

**Stewards**

Postmodern people do not believe in the modern myth of constant progress. They have ample evidence that scientific discoveries do not always improve society or enhance one’s chances for a longer and happier life. The generation approaching adulthood no longer believes, as their parents did, that they will be better off than the previous generation, and that their children will do better than they. On the contrary, they see a world that is increasingly divided between rich and poor, and they cannot fail to notice that a small percentage of the world’s population is recklessly consuming the Earth’s resources. They are worried about the enormous environmental problems they see around the globe and are angry about the way commercial interests tend to prevail over air and water quality, threatening the survival of plants and animals. They want a more equitable distribution of wealth. Postmodern people are sympathetic to the biblical notion of stewardship, but more often than not they are disappointed by the ways in which many Christians model this virtue.

Seventh-day Adventists talk a lot about stewardship. Many young people who have grown up in the church, however, wonder about the deep chasm between what many Adventists say and do in this regard. They find it difficult to comprehend that many organizations and institutions that promote stewardship as one of their “fundamental beliefs” do not recycle waste, devise proactive policies to minimize the use of energy, or install alternative energy sources in their buildings. They regard with disdain the fact that the Adventist concept of stewardship, in practice, tends to be narrowed down to a few dietary practices, abstinence from tobacco and alcohol, and a 10 percent denominational levy on the income of church members.

We would do a great injustice to claim that this picture is universally accurate. But there can be little doubt that it is true in far too many cases, and that this is also what many students see in the institutional milieu in which Adventism presents itself to them. If there is an area in which the true ethos of Adventism touches the ideas of postmodernism, it is here. Adventist educators ought to focus on this far more aggressively.

**Integrity**

All of the above are closely related to the key issue of this discussion: Those who want to minister to the postmodern generation must radiate integrity. Postmodern people are instantly turned off by hypocrisy. They do not expect the people who teach them to be faultless, but they want them to be real. They refuse to accept major discrepancies between what their teachers say and demand as representatives of their employing institution, and what they say and do in
their private lives. If a school institutes rigid policies regarding movies that can be shown during social evenings, if it strictly enforces rules about the kind of drinks that can be served in the cafeteria or obtained via the campus coin machines, and other lifestyle issues—these policies must be more than a traditional policy or principle that must be preserved at all costs. They must be also be practiced by the majority of the staff members. If the teachers are not prepared to model the kind of life they demand from the students, there is no justification for expecting it from them. Nothing more thoroughly undermines the respect of students for their teachers and other church members than does a chasm between their words and their deeds.

When I visit the offices of our church in various places, I can find numerous locations in the buildings where I can get a cup of coffee or can of Coca-Cola, while the official rules, of course, allow for no such thing. When I tell my (postmodern) grown-up children about this, they do not laugh. They get angry because they dislike this discrepancy between official theory and actual practice, which they have noticed again and again as we have moved between various countries in the service of the church. Many members of the “older generation” do not appreciate how important it is for postmodern people to deal with the “real thing.”

For the Adventist educator who desires to draw students toward Christ and to guide them closer to the community of His disciples, deeds will always speak louder than words. Ellen G. White, the pioneer of Adventist education par excellence, emphasized this over and over again. “A true, lovable Christian is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favor of Bible truth. Such a man is Christ’s representative. His life is the most convincing evidence that can be borne to the power of divine grace.”13 “No other influence that can surround the human soul has such power as the influence of an unselfish life. The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.”14

It is significant for Seventh-day Adventist educators that Ellen White repeatedly pointed to the need for total integrity. The following citation from Testimonies, volume 3, is just one of a vast range of her statements about integrity: “Energy, moral integrity, and strong purpose for the right are qualities that cannot be supplied with any amount of gold. Men possessing these qualifications will have influence everywhere. Their lives will be more powerful than lofty eloquence. God calls for men of heart, men of mind, men of moral integrity, whom He can make the depositories of His truth, and who will correctly represent its sacred principles in their daily life.”15

In closing, I take the liberty of slightly adapting a powerful statement made by Jimmy Long, whom I quoted earlier: “Our [approach in Adventist education] needs to be relational, expressing genuine concern and love for others; it ought to be [driven by] friendship. . . . We need to become a true counter-culture community that radically lives out the life and teachings of Christ and the apostles in our own. Our [ministry] will be effective in postmodern culture only as we live lives of transparent honesty, integrity, and purity. We must be willing to declare the unchanging, normative story of God’s redemptive work in Christ through our own individual and corporate stories, and demonstrate by our lives the truth of the words we speak.”16

Young postmoderns will grow in their Christian lives more by observing how other Christians live than by listening to what they say. In the end, attracting them to Adventism is all about building meaningful relationships and modeling a life that convives not by its perfection but by its caring service and utter sincerity.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This was highlighted in the recent Report of the Commission on Higher Education, which was presented to the General Conference Annual Council (October 14, 2005). One of its findings was that in 1990 non-Adventist faculty amounted to just 4 percent of the total teaching staff, while by 2000 this had risen to 16 percent, and by 2010 it is expected to be at least 28 percent.


10. Cf. the words of Christ, He did not say: I have the Truth, but said: I am the Truth (John 14:6).


Let’s begin at the beginning. The church’s first attempt at higher education began with Battle Creek College, established in 1874 in Battle Creek, Michigan. Moral education for our educational pioneers was a priority right from the beginning. Consider this quotation from the first college catalogue:

“The founders of Battle Creek College have deemed it necessary for the better protection of our sons and daughters, to establish this school in which moral and religious influences are made of first importance. This is here done by shielding them [the students] from the base influences that undermine the characters in many of our institutions of learning without urging upon any personal special religious views.”

In spite of the high resolve made by those pioneers to do “moral education,” Battle Creek College did not have residence halls. Six years after the college opened its doors, its catalogue continued to state that, “Dormitories are considered unsafe for the healthful growth of students and are, for that reason not provided. But many houses of the citizens are open at a moderate cost to such as desire board and lodging.”

Where did this seemingly cavalier attitude about student housing originate? It should be noted that the history of residence halls in American higher education is filled with stories of antisocial behavior among students, including vandalism and violence against teachers and administrators. By 1850, new construction on U.S. college campuses for male students did not include dormitories. It was during this time that President Henry Tappan, of the University of Michigan, converted the school’s dormitory to classrooms.

In 1861, Vassar College was established for the education of women. At this time, the trend was to provide dormitories for women’s schools but not for those catering to males.

The educational mindset by the mid-19th century, then, revealed a noticeable turning away from stringent rules and moralistic efforts to control student behavior. A German philosophy of education advocating that schools should assume no responsibility for a student beyond the classroom had begun to gain support.

Into this milieu came the Battle Creek College pioneers. They wanted to...
No doubt most people would regard educating young people to be good citizens as a worthy goal. But such attempts often fall under the umbrella of “social studies,” which is where the problem begins. Unfortunately, students often regard the subject as boring and a waste of time. Politically engaged parents and other adults may be suspicious that it consists of either right-wing or left-wing indoctrination. College and university professors disparage social studies as a catch-all field without real substance or definition. Social studies teachers, even if they strongly believe in what they are doing, frequently express frustration at both the lack of student interest and the efforts of outsiders to force specific content and methodological agendas on their classes.

These negative reactions are unfortunate reminders that, although individual teachers may achieve success, social studies itself has yet to achieve general public and academic respect and understanding.

Purposes and Goals

Despite these challenges, spokespeople for social studies consistently and confidently assert lofty goals for their field. Nearly everyone agrees that schools at all levels should prepare children and young people to become informed and effectively engaged citizens. Ronald W. Evans, professor of education at San Diego State University, speaks of “the need to prepare thoughtful, knowledgeable, clear-thinking citizens.” The Michigan State Board of Education in 1987 described the central purpose of social studies education as “the development of citizenship.” In its statement on standards, written in response to the standards debate of the 1990s, the National Council for the Social Studies stated that a major purpose of social studies programs is “the promotion of civic competence—which is the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of students to be able to assume ‘the office of citizen’ (as Thomas Jefferson called it) in our democratic republic.”

According to this view, social studies has a unique role to play in a democracy, for it helps citizens gain an understanding of the foundational values of the society and how to act effectively on those values. From this perspective, it is not enough for students to simply understand and accept such “ideals as equality, equity, freedom and justice,” they must also learn “how to respect others who are different, how to cooperate with one another, and to work together for the common good.” Reflecting John Dewey’s view that schools were to be laboratories of democracy, the field of social studies seeks to prepare students for participation in the political process of decision making. Thus, the goal of social studies is not simply to convey academic knowledge but to help students become effective citizens.
Nearly everyone agrees that schools at all levels should prepare children and young people to become informed and effectively engaged citizens.
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various levels determine whether the

Reconsidering Social Studies
In the U.S., boards of education at various levels determine whether the
social studies curriculum will be organ-
ized around disciplines or social issues,
but individual teachers control the day-
to-day implementation of that curriculum. By keeping the goal of citizenship
education foremost, teachers can avoid
taking sides in the ongoing controversy,
drawing on a variety of elements and
approaches as they “help young people
develop the ability to make informed
and reasoned decisions for the public
good as citizens of a culturally diverse,
democratic society in an interdepend-
ent world.”

Reformers such as Ronald Evans
have frequently described history as a
subject that emphasizes rote memoriza-
tion and encourages traditional rather
than new ways of understanding. How-
ever, these characteristics seem to be
mostly the product of teaching meth-
ods rather than inherent qualities of the
discipline. Whether teaching history
at the elementary, junior high
school, or high school levels, the in-
tructor can use the past to illuminate
the present.

As we are reminded by the Ameri-
can news media nearly every day, ques-
tions of constitutional interpretation se-
verely divide politicians and much of
the public, resulting in bitter contro-
versies over the appointment of judges
to federal appeals courts and to the
Supreme Court. Rather than simply re-
quiring students to memorize the facts
of Marbury v. Madison (1803), Plessy v.
Ferguson (1896), Brown v. Board of Edu-
cation (1954), and Roe v. Wade (1973),
among other important cases that tra-
ditionally show up in American history
courses, the teacher who seeks to edu-
cate discerning citizens will use these
cases to help students understand how
and why constitutional interpretation
has changed over time.

A short time ago, on a Sunday-
morning news interview show, I heard
a U.S. senator say that the right to
abortion was now established law and
therefore could not be changed. Any
student whose teacher had helped him
or her understand the Constitution his-
torically could have corrected the sena-
tor, pointing out that while precedent
is extremely important, it is not ab-
solute. Even when supported by subse-
quent decisions, established law in one
period can become disestablished in
another, as attested to in the history of
segregation. A student who under-
stands such issues can thereby become
an effective participant in the political
process. For both the teacher and the
student, facts should not be ends in
themselves but rather must contribute
to a more comprehensive view of how
society works and has taken its present
form.

“Thoughtful Patriotism”

Another important element of be-
coming an effective citizen is the ability
to think critically and reflectively. In-
deed, a popular phrase in recent years
is “thoughtful patriotism.” For the past
three decades or more, there has been
a push for multicultural education that
incorporates the viewpoints and expe-

The American Social Studies Curriculum*

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<td>2</td>
<td>Neighborhoods</td>
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<td>Civics or world cultures</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>World history</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>United States history</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>American government</td>
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*Wayne Ross, “The Struggle for the Social Studies Curriculum,” in The Social Stu-
dies Curriculum: Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities, rev. ed., E. Wayne Ross, ed. (Al-
Experiences of both men and women, various ethnic groups and social-economic classes, and diverse cultures. By introducing multiple perspectives, the teacher can help students learn how to compare and evaluate. Elizabeth Noll, a 6th-grade teacher, describes how she moved away from “textbook-dominated teaching and teacher-dominated learning to a more learner-centered approach” that incorporates a variety of perspectives. Focusing on the country to which many members of her community trace their ancestry, she and her students developed a list of possible sources of information as varied as interviews, newspaper and magazine articles, and cookbooks. As the students searched for information, the teacher raised questions such as “Were there any contradictions in the information your sources provided?” and “How did the perspectives you found differ?” As she developed this approach throughout the year, later applying it to the study of other countries, Noll found that her students gained a “broader and richer” understanding than could be provided by a textbook. “Through their varied reading experiences, discussions, learning logs, interviews, and final sharing,” she concludes in her account of this experience, “my students constructed knowledge that had personal meaning for them. This knowledge was about more than a country. It was also about themselves as capable learners.” The abilities that these students developed as they compared and evaluated information not only increased their understanding of the world but also introduced them to critical thinking skills. If reinforced in other classes (and this is very important), these habits of mind will enable them to better respond to the myriad views that citizens must sort through when making decisions about public issues.

The goal of social studies is not simply to convey academic knowledge, but to transform students into active and responsible citizens.

Social Studies in the Adventist School

Within the Adventist school, social studies offers the opportunity to consider what it means to be a Christian citizen. At the lower elementary levels, the teacher must help students understand, for instance, what it means to be a resident of a neighborhood and the responsibilities that this entails. As the child moves into higher grade levels, local and state history become important, in part because they offer a sense of place that is often lacking in mobile societies. Through these educational experiences, students have the opportunity to reflect on how their Christian commitment might affect the way they relate to non-Adventist or non-Christian neighbors. They should come to understand that the local church is part of a web of institutions that hold the community together. Although Americans tend to emphasize the isolated individual, the Christian classroom in particular, through emphasis on the fact that all people are God’s creatures and made in His image, can help students appreciate the ways their lives are intimately connected with those around them.

Secondary-level social studies courses, whether organized around the disciplines or focused on social issues, offer the opportunity to examine issues of significance to Christians, such as how to relate to military service and war, social responsibility for the poor, environmental concerns, and ethnic relations. Although Seventh-day Adventists have long been concerned with

Case studies of people like Desmond Doss, a Seventh-day Adventist conscientious objector who won the Congressional Medal of Honor, can help students explore the tensions between loyalty to one’s country and loyalty to God.
church-state relations, the emergence of such issues as abortion, gay rights, creationism, and moral instruction in the public schools have raised new questions about the role of religion in the public square. Underlying all of these debates is the fundamental question of what constitutes justice, a concept that demands sustained Christian reflection, including from high school-age students. The social studies classroom provides a context within which students can develop their critical thinking skills as they discover that not all Christians agree on various political and cultural issues. Having them read, for example, contrasting articles by James Dobson of Focus on the Family and Jim Wallis of Sojourners on any of a host of issues will help them understand that conservative Christians can reach different conclusions on public matters.

Implicit in the matter of learning to appreciate and understand multiple perspectives within the Christian classroom is the issue of the relationship between loyalty to one’s country and loyalty to God. Students must be taught that obedience to God takes priority over allegiance to one’s nation and submission to legal authorities. At the same time, they must learn that sorting out these priorities and putting them into practice is not always easy. A variety of historical situations can be used as case studies to help students determine an appropriate Adventist Christian response to the tension between patriotism, obedience to law, and religious faith. Teachers might draw on well-documented examples such as the actions of the Adventist Church in Nazi Germany, John Henry Weidner’s efforts to help Jews escape Nazi-occupied France, Desmond Doss’s experience as a “conscientious cooperator” in the United States Army during World War II, and the denomination’s experience with “Project Whitecoat” in the Cold War-era United States. Bringing in the experiences of other Christian traditions, such as the Mennonites, will help deepen the discussion.

Conclusion

Fundamentally, social studies aims to help children and young people understand that human beings flourish within a caring community. Being a good citizen means giving unselfishly of oneself. By understanding the various institutions that make up a community—from the neighborhood level to the international scene—and the historical developments that have produced the world we live in today, students will be prepared to become effective citizens. Society and God’s kingdom depend on it.

Gary Land is Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History and Political Science at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He has recently published Growing Up With Baseball (Nebraska, 2004) and Historical Dictionary of the Seventh-day Adventists.

REFERENCES

1. The term “social studies” is commonly used as both singular and plural. In this article, I will use the singular form.


6. Ibid., p. 177. The foregoing history of social studies has been largely drawn from Evans.


15. See, for example, Perry Bush, Two Kingdoms, Two Loyalties: Mennonite Pacifism in Modern America (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).
Ten-year-old John* has been labeled a “problem child” by his parents. His 5th-grade teacher, Mr. Samuels,* says that John refuses to participate in classroom activities, even though he is academically capable, and appears to be isolating himself from his peers.

Fifteen-year-old Wankel* is repeating the 9th grade.

*Names have been changed to protect the individuals’ privacy.

His teacher, Mrs. Taplan,* complains that he is openly defiant toward her and frequently disrupts class activities. On three occasions within a two-week period, he became so aggressive that he severely damaged classroom property.

Behavioral and Social Characteristics

Children with emotional and behavioral disorders present unique challenges to teachers, parents, and other professionals. Such children are difficult to be around.1 At-
Children with emotional and behavioral disorders present unique challenges to teachers, parents, and other professionals.

tempts to befriend them may result in rejection, verbal abuse, or physical attack. Emotional and behavioral disorders often involve external characteristics, such as violating the basic rights of others; physical aggression, damaging property, ignoring reprimands, and stealing; or internal characteristics, such as painful shyness, depression, excessive worries, and unfounded fears. Without intervention, these students may suffer from social and behavioral problems throughout their lives.

**Identifying the Causes**

Some experts believe that children are born with a biologically determined temperament. Although inherited temperament may not itself cause behavior problems, it may predispose the child to difficulties. Researchers have also explored the effects of various medical and physical conditions (i.e., traumatic brain injury, fetal alcohol syndrome, and autism) on behavior.

The influence of home, peers, and school can also play a significant role in behavioral and emotional problems. Children's relationships with their parents, particularly during the early years, strongly influence how they learn to behave and cope with frustration. Likewise, teachers' interpersonal relationships and interactions with children are important in helping them understand and practice appropriate classroom behavior. Peers also have a strong influence. Although groups do many constructive things together such as playing games and socializing, it is usually in the company of friends that children begin to smoke, drink, and engage in other risky behaviors.

Teachers and administrators must develop the skills to describe and identify problem areas before they can deal with such behaviors. Because most classroom misbehavior is triggered by a few students, teachers need to be able to predict the times and tasks during which inappropriate behavior will occur. Gifted students will more likely act up during transition periods and near the end of instruction. In contrast, low-ability students tend to misbehave in the middle of an instructional session. Heward listed five dimensions that may help teachers identify and describe student behavior:

- **Rate or Frequency:** How often a particular behavior occurs. Children with behavioral disorders misbehave more frequently.
- **Duration:** How long a child engages in a given activity. For example, most young children's temper tantrums last no more than a few minutes, but those of children with behavioral and emotional disorders may continue for more than an hour. Another problem is behaviors of too short a duration. For example, some children with emotional and behavioral disorders cannot persevere at a task for more than a few seconds at a time.
- **Topography:** The form of behavior. Disturbed children behave in ways that are seldom, if ever, seen in typical children (setting fires, self-abuse). These behaviors may be maladaptive, bizarre, or dangerous to the child or others.
- **Latency:** The length of time between a signal to perform and the beginning of the behavior. This may be too long (e.g., several minutes elapse before the child complies with the teacher's request) or too short (e.g., the child reacts by screaming and throwing tantrums at the slightest provocation or frustration, leaving no time for him or her to consider more appropriate alternative behaviors).
- **Magnitude:** The strength or intensity of the behavior. This ranges from too little (talking in a volume so low that he or she cannot be heard) to too much (e.g., slamming the door, screaming).

Keeping a written record of the items listed above will help the teacher to form hypotheses about the behavior. Knowing why a child engages in the disruptive behavior (such as avoiding school work or seeking attention) enables the teacher to suggest ways that the child can meet his or her needs in more appropriate ways. Having a record of the information will also aid in consultations with other professionals and in keeping parents and administrators informed.

**Psychoeducational Interventions**

Before attempting specific interventions, teachers should rule out possible medical or learning problems that may cause the child to act out. Children often react to trauma (such as war/terrorism, parental death/divorce, natural disasters) with short-term behav-
ioral problems. Dealing with these specialized situations may require consultation with professionals. Some serious emotional disorders may require a carefully monitored regimen of medication in conjunction with counseling. However, for teachers dealing with general behavioral difficulties, the following steps can be helpful in determining appropriate behavioral plans and interventions:

**Step 1: Identify the problem.**

Avoid labeling the behavior. Record the specifics of where, when, and why the problem occurred. Children often engage in problematic behavior because they want something (attention, preferred activity) or desire to avoid something (school work, anxiety-producing situations). Understanding the “why” of the behavior can help you develop appropriate interventions. This is often referred to as a Functional Behavioral Assessment. (See Resources at the end of the article for forms that can assist you in this process.)

**Step 2: Brainstorm about what to do.**

You can do this alone or with someone else who has the background knowledge and skill to solve behavioral problems. Parents, school psychologists, teachers, and administrators can act as consultants. Families, schools, and communities must pool their skills and resources to effect change. Since parents are the most significant influence on children's lives, they should be considered equal partners with the school in helping children succeed.

**Step 3: Choose the best intervention, and implement it consistently.**

Keep good records. Your goal should be to support and reinforce appropriate behavior. You may also need to stop reinforcing inappropriate behavior—for example, giving the student attention when he or she misbehaves. Clearly communicate the plan to the student and everyone involved in monitoring or implementing the interventions (other teachers, the school secretary, and/or parents).

**Step 4: Evaluate.**

Collecting data before, during, and after the intervention will help you determine whether the plan is working or needs modification. If you are using positive reinforcement, the reinforcers (consequences of good behavior) may need to be periodically adjusted to maintain their appeal to the child. Likewise, incrementally increasing behavioral demands works well as the child learns new skills and is able to successfully transfer them to other situations. Following the above problem-solving model will help you alleviate specific behavioral problems.

The influence of home, peers, and school can . . . play a significant role in behavioral and emotional problems.

Solving General Behavioral Problems

The following recommendations may be helpful in dealing with general behavioral problems in classrooms:

1. **Classroom Rules.** They are vitally important for encouraging and reinforcing appropriate behavior. Classroom rules should be few, stated positively, and consistently enforced. For younger children, you may need to talk about the meaning of the rule and model it. It is important to recognize and reward students who are behaving appropriately. In this way, students realize that they can get your attention through appropriate, rather than disruptive behavior.8

2. **Social-Skills Training.** All students can benefit from social-skills instruction, but it is especially important for those with emotional and behavioral disorders. It provides them with the tools to respond appropriately to the interpersonal, environmental, and social demands in their lives. Such training should emphasize the acquisition of acceptable behaviors and the reduction of problem behaviors. Students must learn how to use these skills appropriately in varied social settings.9

3. **Teaching for Success.** Academic failure or frustration can exacerbate emotional or behavioral disorder. Teachers can modify assignments and expectations without watering down the curriculum. Rewarding students for what they know or have done correctly will motivate them to do their best. Be sure to also recognize their progress toward the goals. Instruction and curriculum must be matched to the student's academic level and ability.10

4. **Involving Peers.** This can be an especially effective tool for students with low self-esteem or painful shyness. Break-
ing the class into small groups of three to four can provide a sense of belonging, as well as a support system. Peers can also help model good behavior. In addition, a "buddy" tutoring system allows students to get extra clarification and reminders while decreasing the number of interruptions for the teacher.11

5. Behavior Contract. The school can create a written contract in which the student agrees to behave in a certain manner, in exchange for rewards or privileges. The contract should specify the behavioral goals, how the behavior will be measured, and the date on which the contract will be reviewed. The contract should be signed by all parties involved—students, special education teachers, general education teachers, parents, and any other school personnel who may come into direct contact with the student. The teacher can help the student develop a feeling of ownership in regard to the agreement.12

Cultural Considerations

Teachers must recognize the powerful influence of culture on learning behavior. The child learns about appropriate behavior in the home and community, so if the parents’ expectations differ from those of the school, serious problems may result.13 When teachers understand cultural differences, they will be able to respond in a sensitive and respectful manner. Teachers can learn about cultural do’s and don’ts by talking with people familiar with their students’ cultures, such as bilingual educators, parents, community members, or other students.14 Understanding the sociocultural backgrounds of students “is critical for effectively teaching both academic material and the behaviors and expectations of the school.”15

Implications for Christian Teachers

Children with emotional and behavioral disorders especially need what people around them find most difficult to give—care, support, and understanding.16 While public school students with emotional and behavioral disorders are helped by individualized service plans, small church schools often do not have specialized personnel and services to provide this type of assistance. Christian teachers, however, can provide children with the positive emotional and psychological support to help them achieve optimum growth and development. Like the Master Teacher, they can seek to recognize the infinite possibilities in each of their students.

However, Christian teachers should not accept or tolerate behaviors that disrupt classroom learning. Along with caring and support, they must exert a firm sense of authority. Rules and guidelines for classroom behavior, together with consequences for noncompliance, should be consistently enforced. Setting limits is crucial to helping children develop self-direction and self-regulation. It stimulates their mental faculties and develops moral fortitude. All discipline must be done in love and with compassion.

Sometimes student behaviors are so extreme and uncontrollable that the teacher feels unable to intervene effectively. When this occurs, he or she should enlist the help of other school personnel to determine the best course of action. Such extreme behaviors may require the intervention of professionals, who are trained to assess the child and develop appropriate strategies and treatment plans.

Because most classroom misbehavior is triggered by a few students, teachers need to be able to predict the times and tasks during which inappropriate behavior will occur.

Teachers can deal successfully with behaviorally and emotionally disordered students if they use biblical principles of discipline and demonstrate by word and deed that they are wholly dependent on Christ for wisdom. Ellen White wrote that the teacher who has a right understanding of the work of true education will “seek to fasten the attention of the students upon the pattern, Christ Jesus, the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.”17

Elvin Gabriel, Ed.D., is an Associate Professor of Educational and Counseling Psychology at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He assists teachers in recognizing and understanding the needs of exceptional children, and in implementing psychoeducational interventions appropriate to their levels of maturation and growth. At the time this article was written, Sheryl A. Gregory, Ph.D., NCSP, was the School Psychology Program Coordinator at Andrews University.

Resources

For busy teachers and those in isolated or rural settings, finding available resources may be challenging. Contact your conference educational superintendent or local...
Children with emotional and behavioral disorders especially need what people around them find most difficult to give—care, support, and understanding.

Public school officials for information and support. Public school districts often have a list of community resources for parents and teachers. In addition, school psychologists and counselors from local public schools may be able to serve as resource persons on specific issues.

In addition, the Internet has many outstanding, credible Websites that provide information for professionals working with children experiencing behavioral problems. For example, the National Association of School Psychologists (http://www.nasponline.org) offers easily printed materials on many topics including ADHD, childhood depression, lying, autism, conduct disorder, and functional assessments. School psychology resources (http://www.schoolpsychology.net) provides links to sites with a wide range of resources for dealing with child-behavior problems.

Excellent books have been written to specifically help teachers with problem behaviors in the classroom. These books can generally be ordered from any bookstore or purchased on the Internet. The following books are especially recommended for teachers:

- *Special Kids Problem Solver: Ready-to-Use Interventions for Helping All Students With Academic, Behavioral, and Physical Problems* by Kenneth Shore and Susan Kolwicz (Editor).
operate a coeducational institution that emphasized moral development for both genders. In both areas, they were going against the mainstream of American education. It soon became apparent that they could not accomplish their goals without instituting programs that emphasized whole-person development beyond the classroom.

By its second year (1875), Battle Creek College had begun to assume more responsibility for student housing options. After 10 years of operation (1884), all women were housed in South Hall unless they lived with parents. Finally, in 1887, some 13 years after the college opened; both men and women were housed on campus. The women moved into West Hall; the men into the recently vacated South Hall. Perhaps to make a statement about the importance of this step, the first preceptors (deans) were W. W. Prescott and his wife, Daisy. Prescott was also college president.

That’s how residence-life began in the educational ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Future columns will discuss other aspects of residence life and the role of residence-hall deans.

Donald W. Murray spent his entire professional career (42 years) as a residence-hall dean. In June 2006, he retired after serving at Laurelwood Academy, Columbia Adventist Academy, Blue Mountain Academy, Andrews University, and Columbia Union College. He writes from St. Joseph, Michigan.

REFERENCES

6. Perry, pp. 231, 232.
In June 2006, about 200 Adventist educators from 21 countries came together for the latest AVLN online conference. Since the word has so many meanings, it’s important to explain what I mean by conference. Think registration, presenters, keynote speeches, multiple sessions, strands, facilitators, attendees, awards, and rooms. Now put all of that into an online space, and you have the 2006 AVLN Conference. But this was no typical educational conference!

This conference was unique in several very important ways. First, it was international. This flavor was captured by showing the flags of the presenters in the schedule and session descriptions. Flags commonly seen were from Mexico, Canada, the Philippines, Australia, and the United States.

Second, it was a collaboration between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking institutions. Thus, most written materials were presented in both languages. Oral presentations included translation when necessary—and conference coordinators did get better at this part as the conference progressed.

Third, the conference ended with a “megaconference”—connecting eight sites by video-conferencing technologies.

Fourth, people attended as individuals but also as groups. For instance, about 25 people met together at Adventist International Institute for Advanced Studies in the Philippines, about 30 people participated in conference proceedings from Montemorelos University in Mexico, and about 15 were together at the Peruvian Union University. Other sites with groups of people included Helderberg College (South Africa), Canadian University College (Alberta, Canada), Loma Linda University, and Walla Walla College (California and Washington, U.S.A., respectively).

Finally, the conference used multiple technologies—Voxwire for synchronous presentations and audio opportunities, Podcasts to wrap up each day, a wiki for developing collaboration ideas, and the Desire2Learn course management system (D2L) for asynchronous dialogue and organization of all conference materials, video streaming for several presentations from Montemorelos, and multi-point video conferencing for the megaconference.

The conference was organized into three blocks of presentations, given at three different times of day to accommodate the various time zones. For example, the first block catered mostly to those in the Eastern Hemisphere—the Philippines, Thailand, Australia, and South Africa, while the third block of time was more convenient for people in the Western Hemisphere. This presentation plan worked well for those attending, but was not so well for the presenters. More than once, presenters in the Pacific time zone were up at 2 a.m. to present to colleagues who were having a relaxing evening and winding down for the day.

The conference opened with a keynote presentation by Kermit Netteburg, associate pastor of the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church (Takoma Park, Maryland), who asked the question, “What do you teach?” Since he has worked with several virtual organizations and multiple technologies, he was able to challenge us to think more deeply about this question. He helped conference participants focus on students and make it clear that collaboration was necessary to make learning happen.

The conference had four major strands—Collaboration, Faith Integra-
The Faith Integration strand was presented by Don Roy from Australia and Raquel Koriecjczuk, who works at Montemorelos University but gave her presentation from Ghana where she was attending the General Conference-sponsored Christ in the Classroom faith integration conference. Both presenters drew participants toward notions of “wholeness” and “integration,” encouraging members to make their faith pervasive throughout the curriculum, and not simply tacked on here and there.

The Technology Tools strand showcased and provided demonstrations of tools like Breeze, Moodle, Desire2Learn, and others. The focus for all these sessions was how various tech tools can help enhance learning and collaboration.

The Distance and Distributed Education strand focused on assessment of online experiences, characteristics of online students, how to start a distance-education program, motivating your online students, and more!

It is AVLN’s custom to give two awards—one to an individual who has demonstrated a powerful spirit of networking and collaboration in Adventist education. This award was given to Sam Young from La Sierra University (Riverside, California) for his work in making the North American Division common course management system project happen (Desire2Learn). The other award—given to an institution that has demonstrated a strong collaborative spirit—went to Montemorelos University for its collaboration with AVLN since its inception, and specifically for its cooperation in the past year to bring AVLN resources and the online conference to Latin America.

In the spirit of AVLN, the 2006 Online Conference was a huge success because so many people helped. Tech support was available 24 hours a day, and many people helped facilitate sessions and translate. Next year, we hope YOU will participate and become a member of AVLN. The Adventist Virtual Learning Network really is a network, and each connection makes Adventist education stronger. Please check out the AVLN Website: http://www.avln.org for resources to help with your online program.
More than 70 percent of the teachers in a survey by children’s publisher Scholastic reported that they had to miss school because of an illness they caught from their students. Just as many or more children if surveyed probably would have reported that they, too, had caught some type of bug at school. According to one report, students in kindergarten through 12th grade in American public schools “lost more than 164 million school days” to communicable diseases (i.e., viral and bacterial infections).

Colds and flu are the number one reason why children and teachers miss school. Teacher absences can put an extra financial burden on educational institutions, requiring more substitute teacher salaries and more paid sick leave. For students, missing school can result in poor academic performance and behavioral problems.

Teachers and school officials are finding it more and more challenging to keep the school environment and the classroom healthy and clean for students. In the Scholastic survey, 90 percent of teachers reported that many students come to school sick. About 30 percent reported that their school’s custodial staff failed to disinfect the class-

Preventing, Recognizing, and Treating Illness at School

Part I

By R. Patti Herring and Vanessa Jones
rooms on a regular basis, and said that teachers do not have the time or the tools to keep their classrooms germ-free.

There are three main ways that people contract diseases: through (1) person-to-person contact (kissing, touching, shaking hands, being sneezed or coughed on); (2) contact with surfaces that have been contaminated by sick people (drinking fountains; doorknobs; desktops, tables, and chairs; pens and pencils; bathrooms (toilets and faucets); computer keyboards; telephones; toys and playground equipment; books; dirty tissues, etc.; and (3) ingesting contaminated food and water (see Part II of this article).

What can you do to help maintain a healthier school environment and keep your students well inside—and outside—of the classroom? To prevent illness at school, it is also important to prevent illness outside of the classroom. The health habits of every student and every employee have a direct impact on the school. Everyone can create a problem or make a difference.

The purpose of this two-part article is to provide information that can help you achieve and maintain a healthier school environment. Good health habits such as frequent, proper, and consistent hand washing can ensure healthier students and staff and less absenteeism. Part I will explain the basics of proper hand washing as well as alternatives when soap and water are unavailable. It will also address the most common communicable diseases such as colds, flu, and meningitis, which is becoming more and more a problem on college campuses. Part II will deal with infections caused by impure water and foods, and those carried by insects and animals. Finally, the articles will also suggest school policies and procedures to include in your student handbook.

The health habits of every student and every employee have a direct impact on the school. Everyone can create a problem or make a difference.

Influenza A and B (Flu) are a problem worldwide. Influenza A and B viruses have circulated throughout the world during the past several years. In the Northern Hemisphere, the peak flu season is between December and March. In the Southern Hemisphere, the peak time is between April and September. However, the flu can be contracted year round.

Influenza annually affects approximately 25 to 50 million people in the United States, where it results in about 20,000 deaths per year. The majority of cases are preschool and school-aged
children, with an annual incidence of 15 percent to 42 percent among these groups.

Influenza is caused by a family of viruses known as orthomyxovirus. There are three types of influenza: A, B, and C, of which Types A and B are most often associated with illness in humans. Each year, these viruses undergo changes in their cell makeup. As a result, people who have had the flu one year will still be susceptible to catching it again. Because of the changes in the viruses, every two to three years, there may be local outbreaks, and about every 10 to 20 years, there are likely to be global outbreaks.

Symptoms: Flu strikes hard and fast with fever, headache, cough, body aches, and a runny and stuffy nose. Serious complications can ensue such as dehydration, asthma, sinus problems, ear infections, and bacterial pneumonia. If children, teachers, or other school personnel have the flu, they should stay home from school to prevent further spread of the virus. Once a teacher recognizes the symptoms in a student, the parent or guardian should be called as quickly as possible to escort the child home. In the meantime, the child should be quarantined. The school nurse or other staff should instruct parents not to give their children aspirin if they have flu-like symptoms. They should contact their doctor for further instructions for managing symptoms.

Avian Influenza A (Bird Flu) has gained worldwide attention over the past few years. Recent statistics from the WHO indicate a total of 186 reported cases and 105 deaths. The countries that have been affected thus far include nine Asian nations, in descending order by the number of cases: the Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Colds and Flu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Colds and Flu</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Drink lots of liquids (hot or cold; i.e., one glass of fluid for every waking hour).</td>
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<td>• Keep the mucous membranes (nose and throat) moist.</td>
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<td>• Gargle with warm salt water.</td>
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<td>• Use saline nose drops.</td>
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<td>• REST.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Call the doctor if symptoms persist or are exceptionally severe.</td>
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<td>• Harsher illness than a cold and can lead to dangerous complications</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sudden high fever (101°F/38.3°C or higher) and chills</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Body aches and pains</td>
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<td>• Sore throat</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Persistent cough</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Headache</td>
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<td>• Fatigue (tiredness)</td>
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Treatment

Preventing/Retarding Transmission of Colds and Flu

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<tr>
<td>• Stay at home when sick and encourage students to do so also.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Wash your hands frequently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Avoid close contact with those who are or appear sick.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use disposable tissues rather than handkerchiefs to reduce the spread of the virus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wash your hands frequently throughout the day, particularly after you cough, sneeze, or blow your nose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduce fever with Tylenol or ibuprofen.</td>
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<td>• Drink lots of fluids to prevent dehydration (i.e., one glass of fluid for every waking hour).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• REST.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Call the doctor if symptoms persist for more than a week or become more severe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Call the doctor if flu-like symptoms or a red rash appear four days to three weeks after a tick bite.</td>
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<td>• Stay at home when sick and encourage students to do so also.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wash your hands frequently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avoid close contact with those who are or appear sick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use disposable tissues rather than handkerchiefs to reduce the spread of the virus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wash your hands frequently throughout the day, particularly after you cough, sneeze, or blow your nose.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<th>FLU</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sterilize surfaces touched by sick people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wash for at least 15 seconds, using plenty of soap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Keep your hands away from your nose, eyes, and mouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eat well, drink plenty of water (8-10 glasses a day), and exercise to keep your immune system in fighting condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Get a flu shot each year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thailand, Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Indonesia, China, and Malaysia. Other countries that have reported outbreaks include Iraq, Turkey, Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Romania.9

The WHO has assessed the risk of a global outbreak of avian flu as serious.10 The disease is spread primarily through the saliva, nasal secretions, and feces of infected birds and surfaces they have touched.11 Other means of contracting the disease include ingesting contaminated water and coming into contact with untreated poultry feces used for fertilizer. Person-to-person transmission, thus far, is rare.12

Symptoms: Similar to those of regular flu although the symptoms are more aggressive, and can include fever, cough, sore throat, and muscle aches; with the addition of diarrhea, abdominal pain, bleeding from the nose, pneumonia, acute respiratory distress, and other life-threatening complications like viral pneumonia and multi-organ failure.13

The Common Cold: In the early stages, it is difficult to distinguish between a cold and the flu. But generally speaking, the flu strikes suddenly, producing a high fever and severe body aches, whereas a cold tends to come on gradually. Both cold and flu cause inflammation of the mucous membranes in the nose, mouth, and throat. Cold symptoms usually include runny nose and sneezing.

Preventing colds and flu: People with weakened immune systems are more prone to contract colds, flu, and other diseases. The first line of defense is to keep the immune system healthy and fortified. As part of your health curriculum, teach students how to maintain a healthy immune system. This includes eating a balanced diet, with plenty of fruits and vegetables. A good rule of thumb is Try-for-5 (five fruits and vegetables) a day. All of these will help boost the immune system and ward off disease.

Stress can significantly impair the immune system. Research has shown that individuals who are suffering extreme stress are likely to experience more severe flu symptoms than under normal circumstances.14 Therefore, the curriculum should include stress management techniques (which will also be useful for teachers!). Children can continue these practices at home and share with their parents and other family members what they have learned. Teachers can present stress management seminars and classes at school for their peers, administrators, and parents. Don’t forget to practice what you teach!

Those who are in contact with children on a daily basis (teachers, classroom aides, and childcare workers) should be encouraged to get flu shots. High-risk students with chronic illness like asthma, heart conditions, and other immune deficiencies and their parents should also receive flu shots.15

Meningitis: An inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord. There are two types, viral and bacterial. Both are spread through the secretions of the nose and throat of an infected person.

Viral meningitis, which mostly affects older children and young adults, is milder, and its victims usually recover within seven to 10 days without treatment. Bacterial meningitis is potentially fatal and requires immediate emergency treatment.

Symptoms of viral meningitis re-

Teachers and school officials are finding it more and more challenging to keep the school environment and the classroom healthy and clean for students.
treatment for meningitis depends on the type of infection. For viral meningitis, no formal medical care is usually necessary. Bed rest is recommended. Fever and headache can be relieved with a mild pain reliever like Tylenol or other analgesics. Bacterial meningitis must be treated immediately with intravenous antibiotics.

Other Infectious Diseases That Are Common in the School Setting:

**Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis):** An inflammation of the membrane covering the white of the eye and the inside of the eyelids, caused by a virus or bacteria. While fairly common, it poses no long-term danger to children's eyes or vision. However, pinkeye is highly contagious.

Symptoms include redness, itching, and pain; clear or yellow discharge; and sensitivity to light. The eyelids may become stuck shut.

Treatment: Pinkeye is normally treated with antibiotic eye drops or ointment.

Prevention: People can spread pinkeye from one eye to the other by rubbing their eyes with infected fingers. It can also spread to other persons by infected fingers, or by handling contaminated surfaces (i.e., doorknobs, bathroom sinks, etc.) and then touching the nose, mouth, or eyes. Children should be encouraged to keep their hands away from their eyes, mouth, and nose. Good hand washing is essential in preventing the spread of pinkeye. Infected students should remain at home.

Chickennpox (Varicella): A highly contagious disease that is transmitted by direct person-to-person contact or through the air. The incubation period is 10-21 days. Even among children who have been vaccinated, there have been outbreaks of the disease in several schools in the United States.

Symptoms: Slight fever and skin rash (vesicles), which leave scabs on the body that may cause scarring.

Prevention: The first dose of varicella vaccine is 94 percent effective against the disease; the second dose is 98 percent effective. When an outbreak occurs, students and their younger siblings should receive a booster shot. (However, doses must be spaced: for children 12 months to 12 years of age, three months apart; for older children, four weeks apart.) Infected students should remain at home.

Precautions: Chickenpox is contagious one to two days prior to and four to five days after the rash appears. Children and adults who have been diagnosed with varicella should not attend school until all vesicles are dry. If the child was in school immediately prior to diagnosis, toys and surfaces that could have been contaminated with discharge from lesions should be disinfected.

Mumps: A highly contagious acute viral infection that is spread from person to person by direct contact with moist droplets from the nose and mouth (coughing and sneezing).

In May 2006, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had reports of 2,600 cases of mumps in 11 states, the nation’s largest outbreak in more than 20 years. The same strain has been a problem in United Kingdom since 2004.

Symptoms: fever, muscle aches, headache and facial pain, sore throat, tiredness and loss of appetite; and swelling of the temples and salivary glands under the ears. In rare cases, mumps can affect the central nervous system and the pancreas; in adolescent and adult males, it can cause infertility.

Prevention and treatment: All students should be vaccinated against mumps. The incubation period is 12 to 24 days. There is no treatment for mumps.

Hepatitis: Hepatitis causes liver inflammation. The most common type is Hepatitis B (HBV). The condition can be acute (new and short-term) or chronic (ongoing and long-term). Hepatitis B is considered a blood-borne virus because it is transmitted through exposure to another person’s blood or other body fluids through a break in the skin or mucous membranes (in the mouth, genitals, or rectum). An individual cannot get Hepatitis B through casual contact (shaking hands, hugging, being sneezed or coughed on, eating food, or drinking water). The most common mode of transmission is sexual contact. However, the disease
can also be spread by sharing razors or toothbrushes with an infected person.

**Symptoms:** A person may be unaware that he or she is infected with Hepatitis B because the disease often has no symptoms. Nonetheless, it is highly communicable, and a person may be a carrier throughout his or her lifetime. When there are symptoms, they generally appear within 30 to 180 days of exposure and include fatigue, itching, loss of appetite, abdominal discomfort, nausea and vomiting, joint aches, and a rash. In severe cases, the victim develops a yellowing of the skin, eyes, and mouth known as jaundice.30

**Prevention and treatment:** The chief preventive measure is vaccination. The safe and effective hepatitis series (which provides protection against Hepatitis A and B) is recommended for all children under age 19. Further prevention at school and at home includes discouraging children from sharing personal items with friends or classmates.

Hepatitis B does not usually require medical care and goes away without treatment. But sometimes there may be severe symptoms like vomiting and diarrhea that lead to dehydration. The treatment is rehydration with water and electrolyte-enriched drinks. Those infected with chronic Hepatitis B should be under the care of a physician.

**Measles:** A highly communicable viral disease spread through direct contact with the secretions of the nose and throat of an infected person. It can also be spread indirectly by articles that were recently soiled with these secretions.

**Symptoms:** Fever is common, along with cough and runny eyes and nose. Patches of dark-red elevated rashes appear on the skin. Serious complications can ensue.

**Intervention:** The disease can be spread from person to person from before the onset of symptoms until up to four days after the rash appears. Therefore, students must remain out of school until at least four days after the rash appears. Immunization should be required of all students.31

**Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV):** The cause of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).32 The virus is transmitted by sexual contact and sharing of dirty needles by intravenous drug users. It can also be spread when the bodily fluids of an infected person come into contact with an uninfected person’s mucous membranes (eyes, mouth, or nose) or cuts in the skin. The disease is not spread by casual contact such as holding hands, sitting next to a person at school, living with a roommate with HIV, etc. A person with AIDS is subject to opportunistic infections, some of which are life threatening if left untreated. A child or teacher who is HIV-positive or who has AIDS does not have to be excluded from school unless he or she has an opportunistic infec-

**Bacterial meningitis is potentially fatal and requires immediate emergency treatment.**

Bacterial meningitis is potentially fatal and requires immediate emergency treatment. Infected children should be allowed to participate in class activities, including playing with other children and receiving hugs from teachers.

Teachers and school nurses should take precautions (including the use of disposable latex gloves) when dealing with injured children. Any surfaces that become contaminated with blood should be cleaned with hot soapy water or with a mixture of bleach and water (about one-fourth cup bleach to one gallon of water).31

**Strep Throat:** This highly contagious disease is most common in children between the ages of 5 and 15, but can affect people of all ages. If a child has a sore throat, there’s a strong possibility that she or he has strep throat. Strep bacteria can become airborne, so sneezing and/or coughing can spread it to other individuals. Some children may carry the infection without showing any symptoms.

**Symptoms:** Children with strep throat may complain that their throat hurts or feels scratchy when they swallow or eat. They may have a fever above 101° F (38.3° C.), and swollen and tender lymph nodes (glands) in the neck. Some children may have a headache, stomachache, or rash, and a
red, swollen throat with patches of pus. Treatment and prevention: Strep throat is curable with antibiotics. Left untreated, it can cause serious damage to the heart and joints (rheumatic fever), and kidney problems. Prevention is the same as for pinkeye—keeping children home from school, good hand washing, and the use of tissues for sneezing and coughing.34

Prevention—Know the “Hot Spots”

In the school environment, the hot spots for germs are in the bathroom, the cafeteria, and the classroom. Students transport germs to school after being exposed to sick people at home and in public places.

The most important hot spot for germs is the hands: Many people realize there are germs in hospitals, bathrooms (e.g., toilet bowls, sink), kitchen sponges, and waste containers. But many people are not aware that hands, telephones, and doorknobs also transmit germs. When people have a cold or the flu, they wipe their noses many times during the day, so the germs linger on the hands, where they can be spread through contact with other hands and a variety of surfaces.35

Good hand washing: To prevent the spread of germs, the most important step is proper hand washing, along with thorough cleansing of utensils and surfaces. Hands should be washed before and after eating, during and after meal preparation; after using the bathroom; and after coughing or sneezing.

Good and thorough hand washing means using soap and water vigorously for approximately 15-20 seconds and then drying the hands thoroughly with disposable towels or an electric hand dryer. If it is hard to judge how long 15-20 seconds is, silently sing the happy birthday song (or the alphabet song) through slowly twice while washing your hands. You can make hand washing a game by teaching children this simple procedure.36

Younger children need guidance about when and how to wash their hands. Teachers can use age-appropriate materials to encourage and reinforce this behavior.

As part of your health curriculum, teach students how to maintain a healthy immune system.

Items such as desks, tables, counters, computer keyboard and mouse, lab equipment, toys and playground equipment, and other shared items should be cleaned daily with a bactericidal disinfectant. Other surfaces that need frequent disinfecting include the floor, doorknobs, bathroom sinks, toilet bowls and flushing handles, as well as all surfaces used for eating. Disinfectants kill germs that are not visible, but can nonetheless cause disease.37 Schools should supply antibacterial soap or alcohol-based hand cleaner in the bathrooms and cafeteria.

If antibacterial soap and clean water are not available, use disinfectant antibacterial or alcohol wipes, or gel hand cleaner (containing at least 50 percent alcohol) for hand cleaning.38 If none of the above is available, it is important to practice and teach children to keep their hands away from their eyes, nose, and mouth. Rubber gloves can serve as a temporary means of protection.

School bathrooms: Toilets and sinks are not the only germ havens in bathrooms; the door handles score high, too. Researchers “revealed that almost 100% of bathroom door handles have traces of staphylococcus, streptococcus, salmonella and E. coli.”39 Even if people do remember to wash their hands after going to the toilet (it is estimated that a third do not), afterwards they turn off the water faucet, use a paper towel, then open the bathroom door, thus reinf ecting their washed hands three times. So it is important to get a paper towel without touching the container, then use the paper towel to turn off the water faucet and open the bathroom door.

If possible, schools should install dispensers that do not require people to touch them to obtain a paper towel. They can also put antibacterial soap in the bathrooms and food preparation areas, and place a trash can by the door of the bathroom so that everyone can leave with really clean hands.

The classroom: Crowded classrooms and dormitories are an excellent place for the transmission of germs, especially during the winter months, when there is less air circulation. If there are screens on the windows, open the window slightly to allow fresh air into the room.

Within the classroom, germs lurk on many surfaces. Teach students to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough and sneeze and to place the used tissues in a trash can. Make sure that students wash their hands frequently throughout the day.

School Policies

Schools should have a well-enforced policy of not allowing sick children to attend and requiring a doctor’s note before children who have been seriously ill can return to the classroom.

Ideally, schools should be staffed with school nurses or other medical professionals who have responsibilities designated by school health policies and management. Such policies should include health screenings, assessments for chronic and acute illnesses, first aid for school-related injuries, immunization tracking and enforcement, managing and controlling the spread of communicable diseases and illnesses, administration of medication and treatment, and consultation with parents as needed.

An area in the school should be set aside to quarantine sick children until their parents can pick them up. In the dormitory, a room should be set aside where students with communicable diseases can reside until they have recovered.

Schools should also have policies and procedures for managing students with special health needs (i.e., those requiring monitoring and medication for diabetes, those requiring seizure prevention and management, cauterizations, gastric tube feedings, oxygen, those who are HIV-positive, and others).
Those who are in contact with children on a daily basis . . . should be encouraged to get flu shots.

R. Patti Herring, Ph.D., R.N., is an Associate Professor at the School of Public Health, Department of Health Promotion and Education at Loma Linda University. 

Vanessa Jones, R.N., M.S., is a registered Nurse Anesthetist at Loma Linda University (Medical Center – LLUMC) and a Dr.P.H. student in the School of Public Health, Department of Health Promotion and Education, Loma Linda University.

Part II will deal with diseases spread by insects and by food and water.

Resources

National Immunization Hotline—1-800-232-2522 [English] or 1-800-232-0233 [Spanish]

Flu Resources for Schools

CDC Flu Information Hotline [English and Spanish] 1-800-CDC-INFO (800) 232-4636; (888) 232-6348 (TTY) or the CDC Website [http://www.cdc.gov].

For state or local health departments, go to http://www.cdc.gov/other.htm.

For “Key Facts About the Flu,” a fact sheet about the flu (symptoms, prevention, treatment), go to http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm.

For more information about treating flu, its symptoms, and information about why children or teenagers with flu-like symptoms should NOT take aspirin, go to http://cdc.gov/flu/about/disease.htm.

CDC Resources:


NOTES AND REFERENCES


5. Prisco.

6. Regan and Fowler, pp. 31-37.

Here is a sample policy on how to deal with medication administration at school:

Instructions to parents: If possible, administer your child’s medicine at home. However, if the child’s condition requires around-the-clock medication, please follow these rules:

• Provide the school office with a written order from your child’s doctor with the student’s name, the name of the medication, the time it should be given, the dosage, how it should be administered (orally, injected, inhaled, etc.) and stored, and how long it should be given (one week, the entire school year, etc.).

• Over-the-counter medicine must be brought to school in a sealed, unopened bottle by the parent/guardian.

• The parent/guardian must sign a release form allowing the school to administer specified medications to each child in the family who is enrolled in ________ School.

• All medication must be picked up by the parent/guardian at the end of each semester. All unused, expired, and unclaimed medicine will be discarded.

The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools has information about the flu: “School Health Issues: Flu Season and Schools”: http://www.healthmschools.org/sh/influenza.asp.

Questions and answers about the flu: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa.

“It’s a Snap” offers free hand-washing materials: http://www.itsasnap.org/index.asp.

Schools should also have a policy for student self-administration of medicine such as inhalers for asthmatic children and epinephrine injectors for those with severe allergies.

Finally, schools should supply parents/guardians with a checklist for keeping their children safe and healthy at school. Items on the list should include: immunization requirements, supplying the school with emergency telephone numbers, informing the school about the child’s health issues, keeping children home from school when they are sick, and how to dress and feed children for optimal health, etc.

Part II will deal with diseases spread by insects and by food and water.

R. Patti Herring

Vanessa Jones

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Hands should be washed before and after eating, during and after meal preparation; after using the bathroom; and after coughing or sneezing.

30. “Guide to Infectious Disease for Schools and Day Care Centers,” pp. 11, 12.
35. Preventing the Spread of Germs. Help Your Child Stay Healthy Year-Round,” p. 1; White, et al., pp. 1, 2; Morton and Schultz, pp. 161-167; Guidelines and Recommendations Preventing the Spread of Influenza (the Flu) in Child Care Settings: Guidance for Administrators, Care Providers, and Other Staff,” pp. 1-3.
36. “U.S. School Teachers Give Classrooms Failing Grade on Cleanliness,” pp. 1, 2.
38. White, et al., pp. 1, 2.

This article has been read and approved by the Health Ministries Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The information in this series represents the best of current research as compiled by the authors and verified by the Journal’s copy editor. However, with the passage of time, new information and recommendations may emerge. Readers should consult a health professional for information specific to their personal health status and medical history, and for recommendations relating to public health issues in Adventist schools. It is always prudent to get more than one opinion.

Dr. Beardsley’s new position is Associate Director of Education and Executive Secretary of the Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA). Her responsibilities include managing the tertiary accrediting process worldwide; serving as the General Conference liaison for higher education for five world divisions, and chairing the JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION advisory board.

Speaking about her new responsibilities, Dr. Beardsley says: “Having lived in Europe, the U.S., and Southeast Asia, I realized that when Jesus came as the incarnation of God’s love, He did it using the cultural icons and idioms of a specific historical context. In time and over history, God continues to be Love, but He contextualizes Himself in ways that are meaningful to that time and people. Making God relevant to the lives of people today is a creative challenge worthy of our best efforts. Preparing this generation to do just that is why Adventist education matters.”

In her leisure time, Dr. Beardsley enjoys cross-country skiing, rollerblading (with poles), television production, foreign films, and collecting mushrooms. We are very pleased to welcome her into the General Conference Education Department.

—C. Garland Dulan
Correction: The endnotes were inadvertently omitted from Julius Nam's article in the Summer 2006 issue. We apologize for this error. They are included below.—Editors.

NOTES AND REFERENCES


3. Probably the NAD institution that comes the closest to my proposal is Oakwood College (Huntsville, Alabama), which requires “Fundamentals of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs” and “The Gift of Prophecy” (the latter course can be replaced by “History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church”) to all undergraduate students.


5. The following are the Adventist history courses currently taught at Adventist liberal-arts programs in North America: HIST404 Adventist Heritage (Andrews University); RELH253 Adventist Heritage (Atlantic Union College); RELH315 Seventh-day Adventist History (Canadian University College); RELT270 Adventist Heritage & Mission (Columbia Union College); RELH483 History of Seventh-day Adventism (La Sierra University); HI314, History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Oakwood College); RELT381 Ellen G. White & Adventism and HI340 Adventist History and the Ministry of Ellen G. White (Pacific Union College); RELT138 Adventist Heritage (Study Tour) (Southern Adventist University); RLGN230 History of SDA Church (Southwestern Adventist University); RELB456 Adventist History Research (Union College); and RELH457 History of Adventism (Walla Walla College).

6. This view was first introduced by Ellen G. White, who received a vision from God in March 1858. This content of this vision, which has come to be known as the “Great Controversy Vision,” became the basis for White’s Spiritual Gifts, volume 1 (Battle Creek, Mich.: James White, 1858), and Early Writings (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1945), pp. 145-295. The same content was expanded over the years to become The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1911).


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