

## Survey Finds Teachers 'Dispirited,' Uninvolved in Reform

"Teachers surveyed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching have offered a dark assessment of the reform movement that confirms, the foundation says, that the teaching force is not only 'dispirited' but 'less empowered' than it was five years ago.

"In the survey, which Carnegie officials term the largest ever conducted among teachers, 70 percent said the national reform effort deserved a 'C' or less; 20 percent gave the reform movement a failing grade.

"More than half the teachers polled said morale within the profession had substantially declined in the past five years—despite the fact that activity on behalf of education had significantly increased.

"The teachers also said, however, that they believed the reform movement had been successful on many fronts, including raising student achievement levels, clarifying goals of schools, and increasing teacher salaries.

"The foundation's 'Report Card on School Reform: The Teachers Speak' is based on the responses of 13,500 teachers. The report, released [in May 1988] was written by Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation."—*Education Week*, vol. VII, No. 35, May 25, 1988. Reprinted by permission.

## Rate of Retention, Graduation for Blacks in U.S. Up Sharply

"The proportion of young blacks who dropped out of high school declined sharply from 1975 to 1985, while the percentage who earned diplomas showed a corresponding increase, the Census Bureau has found.

"Over the 10-year period, the proportion of black 18- to 21-year-olds who were high-school dropouts fell from 27 percent to 17 percent, while the proportion who graduated rose from 62 percent to 71 percent, the bureau reported in a study released [recently]. . . .

"The unemployment rate for black 16- to 19-year-olds is 31.4 percent, compared with 14.1 percent for whites in that age group, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Overall, the black unemployment rate is 12.2 percent, compared with 4.6 percent for whites.

"The declining percentage of black dropouts appears to be part of a long-term trend that began around 1970. . . .

"But similar gains have not been made by Hispanics, according to the Census

Bureau data. The proportion of Hispanic 18- to 21-year-olds who had left high school without graduating remained about 30 percent from 1975 to 1985, the study found.

"For whites in that age group, the proportion who had dropped out decreased by 1 percent over the decade. . . . The proportion of whites who graduated from school remained at 81 percent during the period studied.

"Although the total number of college students increased by 15 percent during the 10-year period, the college-enrollment rate for black 18- to 21-year-olds remained at 25 percent, the study found.

"The proportion of whites in that age bracket who were enrolled in college increased from 35 percent in 1975 to 39 percent in 1985.

"Most of the growth in college enrollment was among students age 25 and older, the study found. In 1985, 38 percent of all college students were over age 25.

"Among other findings from the study: "About 40 percent of both black and white 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in nursery school in 1985.

"Of the children enrolled in nursery school, 66 percent of the blacks attended school all day, compared with 28 percent of the whites.

"In 1985, 64 percent of the black 3- and

4-year-olds attending nursery school were enrolled in public-school programs, compared with 30 percent of their white counterparts.

"About 64 percent of black kindergartners were attending school all day in 1985, twice the proportion of whites."—*Ibid.*, vol. VII, No. 25, May 25, 1988. Reprinted by permission.

## Dust Particles From Lead Removal Pose Health Threat to Children

"The most common methods of removing lead-based paint may release dust particles that could be especially hazardous to children, a new report by a government-industry task force concludes.

"Children who lived in homes where paint was removed with conventional techniques, the study found, were more likely to have higher levels of lead in their blood after the procedure than children living in home where more up-to-date 'model' methods were used. . . .

"The report concludes that 'the abatement process may pose a more immediate hazard than the "un-abated" intact lead-based paint unless the abatement is done properly.'

"The task force urges the development of stricter standards for lead-based paint removal, similar to those in place for

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asbestos removal.—*Ibid.*, vol. VII, No. 39, June 22, 1988. Reprinted by permission.

## Bright Ideas

### Hotline

• “There are many kinds of ‘Homework Hotline’ in operation . . . , most of them for students. In Orlando, Fla., Westridge Junior High School came up with a variation on the theme—an idea to keep parents informed on homework assignments given their children. Parents are invited to call the hotline between 4 and 7 p.m. to find out which teachers assigned homework that night. An announcement of important school events finishes the recorded message.”—*It Starts in the Classroom*, October 1987. Reprinted by permission from *It Starts in the Classroom*. Copyright 1987, National School Public Relations Association.

### Hospital Program Keeps Students Well

• “You have control over your own well-being. You can choose to be healthy by choosing a healthy lifestyle. That’s what elementary school children are learning in the Shawnee Mission (Kan.) school district, thanks to a \$25,000 gift from the Humana Hospital to create the new Sunflower Wellness Center in two rooms of an elementary school.

“The center, one of two new health-related programs set up in the district

through partnerships, served 1,200 fifth and sixth graders in the 1986 school semester.

“Classes are bused to Sunflower for half a day where they first rotate among six learning centers devoted to nutrition, stress management, exercise, the respiratory and cardiovascular systems and the skeletal and muscular systems. They learn in a variety of ways, including computer programs, filmstrips, games, models and hands-on experiences with a stethoscope, heart monitor and other equipment. With the computer, for example, they might select a meal from a fast food menu and get an immediate read-out on calories, carbohydrates, fat, iron and vitamins in their meal.

“In the fitness clinic where they spend the second half of their tour, the students are tested for many factors: blood pressure, heart rates, lung capacity, reaction and movement time, hand-eye coordination, body composition, posture, strength and flexibility. During the last half hour they participate in aerobic exercises and a brief review.

“Each child carries a clipboard where test results are recorded. Later, they receive a printout of 21 parameters of fitness comparing them with all other boys and girls in their grade. Physical education teachers use the profiles to provide follow-up activities, such as stretching or posture exercises to correct problems—

both individual or classwide. The classes return at the end of the year for posttesting to measure results.

“Finally, parents are invited to an evening meeting to get their children’s individualized evaluations and plans for improvement. If serious problems are detected, the nurse monitors the student for a couple of days then contacts the parents to seek medical help.”—*It Starts in the Classroom*, October 1987. Reprinted by permission from *It Starts in the Classroom*. Copyright 1987, National School Public Relations Association.

## U.S. Falters on Test of Geography

“American adults ranked near the bottom in an international test of geographical knowledge, and those 18 to 24 years old performed the poorest of all, a survey released [in August] by the National Geographical Society has found.

“The survey of 10,820 adults from nine nations concluded that many Americans ‘appear to be lacking in basic geographical knowledge and skills,’ such as the ability to name NATO countries or to locate England on a map of Europe.

“It found, moreover, that the U.S. was the only country tested in which the youngest respondents did not outperform the oldest group, and the young adults scored lower than those in a similar study conducted in 1947.

“These results, said Gilbert M. Grosvenor, president of the society, suggest that the nation’s level of geographic knowledge is declining at a time when it is most necessary.

“Our adult population, especially our young adults,” he said, “do not understand the world at a time in our history when we face a critical economic need to understand foreign consumers, markets, customs, foreign strengths and weaknesses.”

“The survey, conducted for the society by the Gallup organization, was based on responses from 1,611 Americans and adults from Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and West Germany . . .

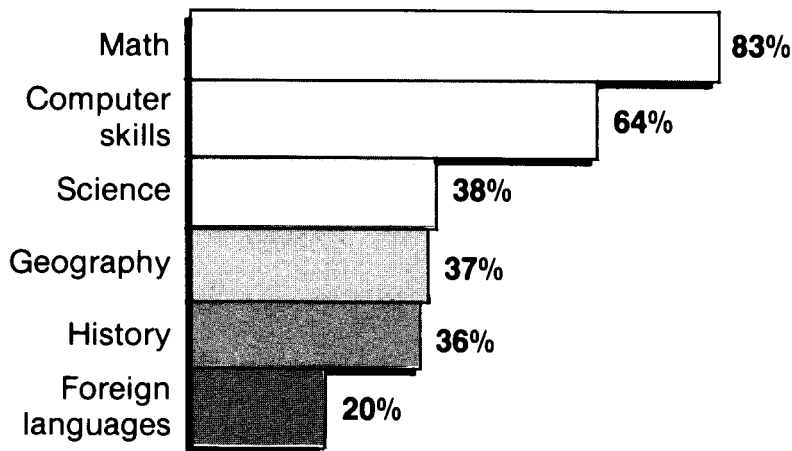
[Adults from Sweden and West Germany scored best, with U.S. respondents outscoring only those from Italy and Mexico.]

“Despite the recent media attention to global war zones, three-fourths of Americans could not locate the Persian Gulf, and 45 percent could not spot Central America. Fewer than half were able to identify England, France, South Africa, and Japan, and 14 percent—representing

*Continued on page 47*

## The Need to Know

Percentage of people surveyed who said it is absolutely necessary to know something about these subjects:



Source: Gallup Survey, National Geographic Society

demographic factors within and without the church that affect the funding of Adventist education; (2) new strategies to increase funding for all levels of Adventist education so at least 10 percent more eligible students can attend Adventist schools; and (3) a ministerial continuing education series and in-service seminars for pastors, lay leaders, and all church members on stewardship and financing Adventist education.

### Models for Listening to Constituencies

Several models for listening to constituencies will be developed during 1988 and 1989. These will utilize effective ways to elicit concerns, values, and recommendations of a broad range of constituency groups. Subsequently to be detailed in facilitators' manuals, these models will be used in training at least one facilitator from each NAD conference to engage constituencies between March 1989 and August 1990 in planning for Adventist education. (Facilitators will be carefully trained persons who help promote the plans prepared by the study groups.)

The listening/visioning sessions are designed to reach out quickly and solidly to key constituencies of the church: youth, parents, teachers, pastors, local and union conference lay, professional educational and church administrative leadership, as well as the grassroots membership of the church. As they meet in visioning conferences, project personnel will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, believing that He will lead the membership of the whole church in planning the educational/redemptive mission of the church.

Visioning conferences have three components: reviewing strategic information about Adventist education, setting goals, and determining priorities and directions for specific action plans that will renew and revitalize Adventist education. Plans will (1) commit those involved to make a difference in Adventist education, (2) show constituencies and church leadership that the whole church is responsible for bringing about needed change, and (3) involve constituencies in discussing critical issues relating to their needs, concerns, and hopes for the future. Plans should define priorities, address critical issues, encourage pilot testing of promising new ideas, and facilitate ongoing evaluation.

Several events in the Pacific Northwest, Canada, and the Lake and Southwestern unions have already involved educational leadership, union executive committees, academy principals and Bible teachers, and elementary and secondary teachers. Additional events will involve parents, teachers, students in Adventist and non-

Adventist schools, and pastors and educational leadership in the Atlantic, Southern, and Pacific unions.

Priority topics include ethnic needs, rationale for school/college choice, psychological ownership of and meaningful involvement with local schools, promoting the Adventist educational system and exploration of new strategies for funding Adventist education.

PROJECT AFFIRMATION is designed to assist the church in its battle for the minds, hearts, and souls of its young people, to show young people and their families that the church and spiritual values are relevant to their needs and those of their fellow human beings. It also seeks to ensure that our schools minister to the needs of students and their families as whole persons created in the image of God. We solicit your prayers and your support for PROJECT AFFIRMATION. □

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## NEWS NOTES

*Continued from page 29*

themselves informed but not pushy, were open to differing opinions but yet were convinced of the necessity for a Christian worldview to permeate the college classrooms."

Another participant commented, "I have become aware of a teacher's need to shore up his worldview and his classroom practices."

But the best compliment to the institute came when one teacher observed, "I enjoyed the institute so much, especially the exchanges with all those other teachers, that I'd come again next year if it weren't against the rules."—Wilma McClarty. □

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*Dr. Wilma McClarty is Professor of English at Southern College of SDA, Collegedale, Tennessee, and a participant in the first Institute for Christian College Teaching.*

## OF INTEREST TO TEACHERS

*Continued from page 42*

a projected 24 million Americans—could not identify the United States.

"A separate 81-question test administered to the Americans found similar gaps in knowledge.

"For example, only half knew the country in which the Sandinistas and Contras were fighting; 25 percent could name the countries that acknowledge having nuclear weapons; and only 15 percent could name the world's largest city.

The study also found that Americans consider map-reading skills more important than the ability to write a business letter or use a computer. But less than two-fifths of Americans consider geographic knowledge 'absolutely essential' to be considered a 'well-rounded individual.'"—*Education Week*, vol. VII, No. 39, August 3, 1988. Reprinted by permission.

### State Board Advice on Home Schools

"State education officials should work both to cooperate with the growing home-schooling movement and to set basic standards for it, the National Association of State Boards of Education suggests in a recent report . . .

"The 10-page report is intended only to provide state-board members with background on the issue. NASBE has no official policy on home schools, a spokesman for the group said.

"Among its other suggestions, the report calls on state officials to

"Establish a procedure between public educators and home-schooling parents.

"Define criteria for home schooling at the state level, and apply them uniformly throughout the state.

"Establish regulations to monitor students educated at home but officially enrolled in a private school. Such 'satellite students,' it says, should receive a diploma clearly differentiating them from regular students.

"Require that home-school parents hold at least a high-school diploma or a General Education Development certificate.

"Limit 'process requirements' to submission of a list of texts and materials, a proposed syllabus, or the name of the correspondence course the parent intends to use.

"Require that the results of a nationally normed test as baseline data for each child who will begin home schooling at age 8 or older.

"Require that, during the first two years of schooling, the parent report quarterly on the child's progress to either the state or the district.

"Hold parents accountable for the academic progress of their children by requiring either a yearly evaluation by someone other than the parent, a portfolio of student work, or the results of a standardized test."—*Education Week*, vol. VII, No. 39, August 3, 1988. Reprinted by permission. □