

Of Interest to Teachers

Shopping for Summer Courses?

Still searching for the best continuing-education course or program for this summer? Visit CIRCLE and save time. Discover all that Adventist colleges have to offer online and on-campus for teachers and education administrators at <http://circle.adventist.org/conted.htm/>.

Get prompt answers to your curriculum and instruction questions from CIRCLE's service team at webmaster@circle.adventist.org/. CIRCLE is a growing database of curriculum and instruction resources accessible online at <http://circle.adventist.org/>, connecting Adventist educators anytime, anywhere.

Adventist Virtual Learning Network Conference

Announcing the 2002 Adventist Virtual Learning Network (AVLN) Conference! The conference will be held at Southern Adventist University, in Collegedale, Tennessee, U.S.A., June 26-28 with pre-conference sessions scheduled for June 23-25. This year's theme is Sharing Christ Through Technology. Featured speakers are Rena Palloff and Keith Pratt, authors of *Building Learning Communities in Cyberspace*. For more information, visit <http://www.avln.org/>, write to AVLN, 6371 Long Lake Rd., Berrien Springs, MI 49103, or telephone (616) 471-4939.

Money Math Book Available

Money Math: Lessons for Life, written by for use in high school math classes by Mary C. Suiter and Sarapage McCorkle of the Center for Entrepreneurship of the University of Missouri–St. Louis, is now available.

The authors of *Money Math* consider the teaching of personal finance as a life skill as important as reading and writing, but point out that in a recent survey, only 12 percent of respondents said they learned about personal finance while in school. Without such training, the authors say, young people will be forced to depend on their parents for information, which may not be the best course, as they may have had little training themselves; or may have to rely on trial and error, a method that can be costly, both financially and in terms of its impact on family stability and personal choices.

Lessons included in *Money Math* teach students how to save and invest, understand and calculate compound and simple interest, explain how taxes are calculated and collected (gross and net income), and include a variety of practical exercises and applications like figuring out the cost of redecorating a room,

developing a personal budget, using a spreadsheet, and suggestions for using computer technology for math applications. The teacher's edition includes a description of each lesson, objectives, concepts to be taught, materials required, procedures, activities, and answers.

For additional information, contact the Center for Entrepreneurship & Economic Education, University of Missouri–St. Louis, 8001 Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 62121-4499 or <http://www.usml.edu/~econe/>. Reproduction of the document is permitted and encouraged.

Benefits of Small Schools

A growing number of researchers are reporting that both reducing class size and shrinking enrollment at schools is important to ensuring better outcomes for students. Several studies have shown that schools with low enrollments have better academic results, lower dropout rates, and less student violence. Researchers agree that the ideal enrollment is no more than 300 students for an elementary school, no more than 500 for a middle school, and 600 to 900 for a high school.

But in most U.S. school systems, "bigger is better" remains the prevailing ethic. From 1940 to 1960, the average enrollment in public schools rose from 127 to

653 students. Today, 71 percent of all high school students go to facilities with an enrollment higher than 1,000.

Educators and researchers cite the benefits of smaller schools, such as a transformed educational climate, more interaction with adults, as well as higher test scores and fewer dropouts. The most common objections: (1) the cost of constructing and operating smaller schools and (2) the greater variety of courses and extracurricular courses available at larger schools.

A 1997 study by New York University researchers revealed that although smaller high schools may have to spend more per pupil, they produce higher graduation rates, which means those schools spend less money per graduate than a larger school does. As for the variety of courses, large schools have their drawbacks as well as their advantages. There is less competition for spots in drama clubs, athletic teams, if classes are large, students get less attention, and access to library materials and computers may be limited.

But the most important benefit of smaller schools, cited by nearly everyone, from researchers to teachers to parents to students, is the ability of teachers and students to get acquainted and to form an warm, intimate community of learners.—From "A Case for Smaller Schools," by Valerie Strauss in the *Washington Post*, August 8, 2000, A10. ✍

Advertisement
Removed