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# Adventist Academies in Crisis

by Richard C. Osborn

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Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools have never been stronger—but this is no time to rest on our laurels. The recent outpouring of concern over the state of American public schools, as expressed in numerous national commission reports,<sup>1</sup> has serious implications for Adventist education as well:

Adventist schools have not been immune from some of the major weaknesses that have cropped up in American public schools in the past few decades. Of particular concern to this report are two major crises facing our present system of secondary education: the growing shortage of teachers at all levels and the potential threat to the unique Adventist philosophy of education posed by changing graduation requirements.

Over the past three years, the public attention given to improving America's schools can be compared to the intense focus on education resulting from the Soviet Union's beating America into space with the launching of Sputnik in 1957. Such intense public and media attention is bound to result in significant steps to improve public schools. As American public schools improve, Adventist schools should also stay on the cutting

edge in order to remain an attractive alternative for increasingly consumer-conscious church members.

The present crisis in American education has been expressed most vividly in "An Open Letter to the American People" from *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, a study prepared in 1983 by The National Commission on Excellence in Education at the direction of former U.S. Secretary of Education, Terrell Bell:

... the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people. . . . We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament.<sup>2</sup>

The commission quoted from Paul Coperman's startling conclusion that until the present decade,

Each generation of Americans has outstripped its parents in education, in literacy, and in economic attainment. For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach those of their parents.<sup>3</sup>

Another critic of American secondary schools is John Silber, president of Boston University, who stated in an interview with *U.S. News and World Report*:

Quite simply, today's high-school diploma is a fraudulent credential. It doesn't guarantee a level of literacy for the graduate. . . . What the high school diploma tells you is that a student was institutionalized for 12 years. That's all. You wouldn't know whether the student had been in a prison colony, a reform school or a place for mental defectives.<sup>4</sup>

What evidence do these critics of American education use to prove their case?

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Richard C. Osborn, who is writing a doctoral dissertation in United States history at the University of Maryland, is starting his sixth year as principal of Takoma Academy. Having served as a teacher and administrator for elementary and secondary schools, he was appointed chairman of the curriculum committee for the National Council for the Social Sciences.

## *Academic Performance*

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The dramatic decline in Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) results for high school seniors between 1963 and 1980 became one factor that focused so much attention on education. The average verbal scores on the SAT dropped more than 50 points, and mathematics scores declined nearly 40 points. Even more startling is the tremendous decline in the number of students scoring at the top of these tests. American students are becoming more and more average each year. Between 1975 and 1980 college remedial mathematics classes increased 72 percent and now make up one-fourth of all mathematics courses taught in college.<sup>5</sup>

One survey compared the academic performance of American students to that of students in several other countries, with alarming results: American high-school students scored in the lowest one-third of all countries surveyed in comprehension; lowest in mathematics; and the lowest average scores (shared with Ireland) in civics education.<sup>6</sup>

The Seventh-day Adventist system has not been immune to these declines. When Takoma Academy conducted an analysis of the IQ scores of incoming freshmen between 1970 and 1980, the results were comparable to the national trend. In 1970, 18 percent of Takoma Academy's students scored below 99, 59 percent between 100 and 120, and 23 percent above 120. By 1980 these figures had almost reversed with 30 percent below 99, 57 percent between 100 and 120, and only 13 percent above 120.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of these declines, Takoma Academy has produced record numbers of winners for Adventist academies in both the National Merit Program and National Achievement Program for Outstanding Negro Students. The same 1980 freshman class cited earlier produced 12 winners out of a 1984 graduating class of 107 in these programs. Further, a remarkably high 23 percent of Takoma Academy seniors taking

the 1985 SAT were recognized as "high scorers" (meaning they scored 600 or higher) by the American College Board.

The contrast between these high achievers and the very low scorers (another 20 percent scored below 300, bringing Takoma Academy's mean score to 469, six points below the national average) illustrates the challenge faced by Adventist teachers. The traditional bell curve is not found in many Adventist classrooms. Teachers find a large number of "A" and "B" students, a large number of "D" and "F" students, and very few "C" students where the class average should be.

Although testing should not be used as the sole criteria for student achievement, it is an important diagnostic tool in achieving academic excellence. One positive advance

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made by the North American Division Office of Education under the leadership of its director, F. R. Stephan, was the recent passage through its curriculum committee of a recommendation that all K-12 schools use the same test. Previously each school chose its own test.

Too many Adventist academies keep test results secret, fearing competition with other Adventist academies or public high schools whose students may achieve better scores. Because of this secrecy, it is currently impossible to assess the condition of education among Adventist academies throughout the country. Yet this information is essential in helping a school or church-wide system improve its program. Many non-Adventist

schools have shown dramatic increases in their test scores as a result of an entire community focusing on those skills needing improvement.

## *Changing Lifestyles*

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The casual values of many teenagers, with the proliferation of drugs, premarital sex, crime and cheating, have also caused society to focus on high schools. The church expects Adventist schools to be the last bastion of church values, while the local church and families seemingly give up that responsibility. As more students come from broken homes, the challenges become even greater.

As Ernest Boyer points out:

For many teenagers, the high schools may be the only place to get support and ease the pain of personal trauma and deep hurt. . . . Today's high school is called upon to provide the services and transmit the values we used to expect from the community and the home and the church.

However, Boyer also cautioned:

We do not suggest that schools can be society's cure for every social ill. A report card on public education is a report card on the nation. Schools can rise no higher than the communities that support them.<sup>8</sup>

Could we not paraphrase the same cautions for the Seventh-day Adventist Church: A report card on Adventist academies is a report card on the church. Adventist academies can rise no higher than the church communities that support them.

It is easy for church members to blame church schools for declining church standards. Our schools are supposed to discipline children who come to school wearing their mothers' jewelry; they are supposed to deal with youngsters who are on drugs while their parents openly drink alcoholic beverages in front of them; they are supposed to instill moral values in homes where mothers and fathers have live-in lovers; they are supposed to provide Bible classes that will take the place of religious instruction at home; and they are supposed to uphold traditional Sabbath observance practices when larger

numbers of Adventist families hardly participate in the life of the local church on Sabbath.

Values education in an Adventist setting is one of the most important goals of Christian education, but schools cannot accomplish this task in isolation from the rest of the church.

## *Declining Enrollments*

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Adventist schools have shared in the decade-long decline of the American school population as cited by national commission reports. By 1990 the school-age population will have declined 14 percent from its peak in 1970.<sup>9</sup> The class of 1977 produced a total of 2,840,000 graduates from all public high schools. The graduating class of 1991 is projected to total 2,169,000—a decline of 24 percent. Seventh-day Adventist academies have shown similar declines. The graduating class of 1979, which was the largest in the history of Adventist academies in the United States, amounted to 4,383 graduates. The North American Division Office of Education estimates that 3,153 students will graduate in 1991 from academies in the United States—a decline of 28 percent.<sup>10</sup> These declines have already closed several academies and threaten several more during the present school year.

A major challenge facing American public education is the declining number of white families who have school-age children. In the 1950s, more than 75 percent of all white families either had children or grandchildren being educated in school, which gave a vast majority of the white population a direct stake in the quality of education being offered. In 1981 only 52 percent of all white families had school-age children, while 71 percent of all black families and 75 percent of all Hispanic households had children in school.<sup>11</sup>

The Seventh-day Adventist Church faces similar challenges. According to a June 20, 1985, *Adventist Review* article citing Gottfried

### Oosterwal's findings:

Fifteen years from now the church in North America will be 38 percent white and 37 percent black, with the remaining 25 percent made up of minority groups such as Hispanics and Asians. Fifteen years ago the ratios were 73 percent white, 20 percent black, and 7 percent other.<sup>12</sup>

The white church population in the United States is aging. As the white membership is shrinking—due to smaller families, apostasy, reduced involvement in the church and the lack of success in evangelism among whites—the non-white membership is growing. Under these circumstances, will the wealthier white church members continue to support Adventist schools as vigorously as they used to? At some critical point in enrollment patterns, many white Adventist families feel uncomfortable sending their children to schools with a high minority population. Some of these fears can only be

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described as blatantly racist. Some of the fears relate to the stigma against interracial dating, a perceived decline in academic standards or the fear of increased disciplinary problems in schools with high minority populations. While many of these concerns are invalid, they are perceived by many whites as genuine problems. Some white Adventists have reacted by sending their children to primarily white schools, such as elite private schools or the burgeoning fundamentalist Christian schools.

The race issue is one of the major unspoken educational issues in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United States. The church must study this problem in an

open manner. We must not, cannot and will not deny admission to students on racial grounds. At the same time, we must develop a program that will avoid a segregated secondary school system, with high-tuition boarding academies remaining the bastions of white parents and day academies quickly losing white enrollments. A program must be developed to convince white parents that church members must learn how to live, study and work together in a multiethnic world if they expect to do the same in heaven.

Demographics are not the only reason for declines in Adventist enrollment. Depending on the area, anywhere from 50 to 70 percent of the church's members do not have their children in Adventist schools.<sup>13</sup> Several factors contribute to this lack of support for Adventist schools.

Some parents have not made Christian education a sacrificial priority. Others have made considerable sacrifices—living in small apartments, working several jobs, driving old cars and seldom taking vacations. Their children often catch this vision by working their way through Adventist schools.

For other families with several children in different educational levels, providing a Christian education is a seemingly impossible task. Typical annual expenses for Adventist schools for the 1985-1986 school year amount to \$1,000 for elementary students, \$2,800 for day academy students and \$5,600 for boarding academy students. Church employees get special tuition assistance for their children to attend Adventist schools: 30 percent of tuition in a day school setting and 60 percent of tuition in a boarding school. However, for the laity who do not get such assistance, the high costs may be prohibitive, unless the school or local church helps with worthy student scholarships. Some families, because of personal pride, find it difficult even to ask for such assistance.

American Adventists are not as rich as once thought. A recent survey conducted by the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews

University, even though based on such a limited sample as to only be suggestive, illustrates that Adventist members generally fall into lower income categories than the general population. According to this report, 59 percent of all Adventists in the United States make less than \$16,000; 25 percent make between \$16,000 and \$24,999; 14 percent make between \$25,000 and \$49,999; and two percent make above \$50,000. The percentage of Seventh-day Adventists at the lower end is significantly higher than that of the general population.<sup>14</sup> On such income levels, families cannot support many children in Christian schools, and if the children are not legally old enough to work, the problem becomes even greater. The efforts of the church to build endowment programs should continue to be encouraged. Adventist businesses, through the strong efforts of the Adventist Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI), should be applauded for their efforts to bring industries to Adventist academy campuses. Church members who no longer have children in schools should continue to feel a spiritual obligation to support Christian schools through contributions to worthy student funds or with other donations. More importantly, the church should reorder its priorities so that the local church can receive more funds back from tithes to support the ministry of the teacher.

Some parents have expressed dissatisfaction with Adventist schools. They feel that Adventist schools are not as different from public schools as they should be. Others think that more academically or socially elite schools are doing a better job, or that our schools do not have a broad enough course offering. Some parents worry that Adventist schools are inferior in teaching quality, plant facilities and curriculum. Many of these parents regard the spiritual values being taught in Bible classes and throughout the Adventist academy program as being far less important than academics.

There are also a growing number of parents who were raised in Adventist homes but who have not been practicing the Adventist

lifestyle or attending church on a regular basis. However, they want their children to have an Adventist education. As the children get older, inevitable conflicts develop between what they are taught in school and their parents' practices. As a result, these parents may be exceptionally critical of Adventist schools or withdraw their children from our schools.

The church should work very hard to develop strategies to deal with these concerns. However, we should never stray from what Ellen White called true education:

True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world, and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.<sup>15</sup>

Adventist schools constantly need to address ways to achieve this lofty goal.

## *A Vanishing Breed*

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Adventist schools—and the American school system in general—suffer from a severe shortage of quality teachers.

The current reversal from the earlier teacher surpluses of the 1970s has caught many American educators by surprise. As word went out that teaching was an overcrowded profession, fewer students went into education. The number of graduates of education departments from around the United States declined in 1983 to 120,000 from a 1970 total of 314,000.<sup>16</sup> Particularly severe are shortages of teachers for mathematics, science, foreign languages and English. *A Nation at Risk* reported that half of the newly employed teachers in mathematics, science and English were not qualified to teach those subjects, and that fewer than one-third of all physics classes in the country were being taught by qualified teachers.<sup>17</sup> With the demands on many Adventist teachers in small academies to teach six and seven classes a day, the prob-

lem of teacher qualification in the church also grows. Even larger schools are finding it more difficult to find qualified teachers in some areas.

What has caused these shortages? First, women and minorities no longer find that teaching is their only option. In addition, many teachers already in the profession are dissatisfied with low salaries, poor working conditions, heavy parental demands, administrative pressures and the absence of advancement opportunities. One estimate reveals that one half of all new teachers leave the profession after five to seven years.<sup>18</sup> In a 1981 study, more than one-third of all high school teachers said that if they had it to do over again, they would not or would "probably" not go into teaching, double the number of teachers who gave a similar response in 1976 and three times that of 1971.<sup>19</sup> Informal surveys of Adventist educators reveal similar results.

A corollary to teacher shortages is teachers' decreased competence. This is a growing problem in both public and Adventist schools. First, good teachers are leaving their positions. One study of individuals who stopped teaching revealed that "based on ability grouping, 72.9 percent of the low ability students were still in teaching compared to only 59 percent of the most able students."<sup>20</sup> Second, the quality of those entering the teaching profession has been steadily decreasing. In a recent international literacy examination, education students scored lowest of all college students. In the American College Testing Program, of 19 fields of study, education students placed 17th in mathematics scores and 14th in English.<sup>21</sup>

Some of the most dramatic declines have taken place in SAT scores. Education majors generally come from the lower half of college classes on these test results. Quoting from Boyer:

From 1972 to 1982, SAT verbal scores for high school seniors planning to become education majors dropped steadily from 418 to 394—a loss of 24 points. SAT math scores during this period fell from 449 to 419—a 30 point drop.<sup>22</sup>

Similar concerns are being voiced by principals and educational superintendents in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Some will tell you privately that on occasion they have to do what some public schools do—fill teaching positions with "warm bodies."

Perhaps the church will have to adopt the growing national consensus (even supported by some teacher unions) that teachers should be given proficiency tests before they begin teaching.

### *Teacher Salaries*

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**T**he biggest problem with recruiting and retaining quality teachers is low pay. The teaching profession is the lowest-paid profession in the United States. In addition, teacher salaries have not kept pace with inflation. One estimate revealed a "13 percent drop in public school teachers' real salaries from 1970 to 1980, and a 16 percent real reduction in the compensation of independent school teachers."<sup>23</sup>

Public school teachers in the middle Atlantic region average \$23,082 per year compared to an average of \$16,188 for private school teachers. At the lower levels of the pay scale, Adventist teachers compare very favorably to public school teachers. In Montgomery County, Maryland, a beginning teacher starts at \$15,561 compared to the Seventh-day Adventist teacher rate of \$16,092 for the 1984-1985 school year. However, a major problem with retention in the Adventist system is the fact that an Adventist teacher with a professional certificate can reach a maximum pay of \$23,360 in six years. In contrast, a public school teacher can rise through 18 steps to a salary of \$35,824. In addition, the public school teacher receives extra compensation for department chairmanships and extracurricular responsibilities that are simply part of the job description for Adventist teachers.

Can individuals be expected to join the

teaching profession, knowing they will never be able to afford a home or children? Are we going to force our teachers to “moonlight” in order to maintain subsistence living? Fewer bright young people are willing to make such sacrifices to become educators.

Nor do parents (including educators) encourage their children to enter the profession. The number of parents who said they would like their children to be teachers declined from 75 percent in 1969 to 46 percent in 1981.<sup>24</sup>

As a recent *Washington Post* editorial stated, “Salaries are crucial, and those systems that offer below-average money cannot expect above-average teaching for their children.”<sup>25</sup> Boyer emphasized that “our society pays for what it values. Unless teacher salaries become more commensurate with those of other professions, teacher status cannot be raised; able students cannot be recruited.”<sup>26</sup>

### *The Adventist Teacher*

**A**dventist teachers are some of the most dedicated workers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Faced with extensive preparations, limited resources, low salaries, questioning parents, inquisitive school boards, and students with a wide range of learning abilities, they perform at a consistently high level. They are committed Christians who have dedicated their lives to the mission of true education.

We currently have a strong group of teachers, many of whom came into the profession when housing costs were lower and lifestyle needs more minimal. They feel the salary structure—with its medical, educational and retirement benefits—is adequate. They also appreciate the tremendous freedom in the Adventist classroom, compared to the more tightly regulated curriculum of the public school, and feel that Adventist students are often easier to work with. Many teachers are encouraged by strong support from Adventist parents and believe that giving service to others provides many intan-

gible benefits not measurable in dollars.

When these teachers retire or leave the profession, what will the church do? We can no longer rely on talk about sacrifice and mission to recruit enough quality teachers to replace those who leave.

At the present time the Seventh-day

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—*Washington Post*.

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Adventist Church is doing little to address this issue. The Columbia Union Conference recently approved the appointment of a commission on teaching that will address some of these issues.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, many Adventist educational leaders still express little concern for potential shortages or the problem of teacher quality.<sup>28</sup>

Genuine problems in the church make raising teacher salaries difficult. First, salaries of teachers are tied to those of ministers, and unless current philosophies change, the ministers who control the salary structure of the church will never allow teachers to earn higher salaries than they do. In addition, a genuine problem exists in many small, rural communities where the Adventist teacher currently makes more money than do most of the parents. This should not be used as an excuse to keep teacher pay low; these communities need to be sold on the idea that if they want the strongest possible education for their children, they will need to pay professional wages. Since higher salaries cannot come from higher tuition costs, a higher percentage of a teacher’s salary will simply have to come from tithe.

Unless the church addresses this issue before the shortages become even more acute, there will not be time to recruit and train bright, qualified teachers. The result will be a further erosion of confidence in Adventist schools.

## Graduation Requirements

The national commission reports focus extensively on the need for the American high school to increase graduation requirements. During the 1960s when the colleges reduced their admission requirements as an outgrowth of the protest movement against adult mandates, high schools began reducing graduation requirements. Secondary schools allowed students to make up their schedules with more electives and fewer required courses. As a result, more students chose easier, less academically demanding classes. The national commission reports have focused on these choices as one of the reasons for the lowered test scores of the past decade.

In recent years, however, high schools and colleges (including Seventh-day Adventist schools) have dramatically increased graduation requirements and admissions standards. Most of the changes increase required academic courses, causing a decline in enrollment in practical education and arts classes. The loss in these areas poses a serious threat to an essential part of the Adventist philosophy of education.

Most of the commissions recommend additional study for high-school students, amounting to four credits of English and three each of mathematics and science; some also suggest additional requirements in computer science, service and work education. Foreign languages are currently experiencing a tremendous resurgence in American schools.

In the past, Adventist secondary educators have argued that we should only be concerned about meeting the admissions standards of the Adventist college in each union. But with the increasing number of students going to non-Adventist colleges, we can no longer accept this narrow view. Many Adventist parents now demand that their children receive the kind of education that will qualify them to enter *any* college.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, Adventists' increasing consumer sophistication leads them to expect that the high tuition rates charged in Adventist academies will result in the best education. Adventist academies must rework their graduation requirements to meet the consumer demands of their constituencies. They must strengthen the academic backgrounds of Adventist students sent into an increasingly scientific, complex and demanding society.

A 50-year analysis of Takoma Academy's graduation requirements illustrates how American education has changed. The emphasis has changed from few to many electives, from three to four years of required Bible classes, from tight to loose industrial arts and home economics requirements, and from required foreign language study for college-bound students to no requirements.

Most academies will have to increase requirements in computer, fine arts, foreign languages, mathematics, science and

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**The gravest threat to the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is the loss of practical classes as students pursue more academic courses.**

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social science in order to meet the new recommendations of national commissions and to satisfy college admission standards. Adding these increased requirements to four required Bible classes will leave Adventist students with little room for electives. Students will need to take an average of six or seven required classes each year, resulting in fewer students choosing electives in business education, home economics, industrial arts, journalism, music, physical education or speech. In some academies, not enough students will take these electives to allow the hiring of a full-time or qualified teacher. Yet



if these electives are eliminated, Seventh-day Adventist academies could become merely college "prep" schools with little to offer the non-college-bound student. This would contradict the Adventist position that both academic and practical classes are needed to produce a balanced Christian citizen. Despite the problems of fitting in new courses while keeping electives and religion courses, our academies must change their requirements.

## Conclusion

The number of challenges presented in this paper may seem overwhelming, but some solid achievements can be mentioned with great pride. American education is one of the most democratic systems in the world. Every child has the right to try each level of education. Some students take longer to mature than do others; in America, the student who has not been successful in high school can still get an opportunity to succeed in college. This contrasts with most other countries that allow only the "best" to proceed to the next level of education. Our equal-opportunity system has helped fuel the optimistic feeling among Americans that you really can succeed even if you come from a poor eco-

nomie or social background.

Seventh-day Adventists can also be proud of the fact that Adventists support the second largest parochial school system in the world. Its numerous successes can be seen in the spread of the church's work throughout the world, much of this due to the educational system developed under divine mandate. The success of the graduates of Adventist schools attests to the high quality of education being offered. We have an outstanding group of dedicated teachers, and our system can be favorably compared to any in the world. Because of the leadership of Reuben Hilde, former associate director of the General Conference department of education, Adventists have the best curriculum in the church's history. Because the church gives strong financial support to its schools, we have some of the finest independent school facilities in the country. Accrediting organizations have often praised Adventists for the quality of their program.

The suggestions in this paper are intended to serve as the basis for making Adventist schools even better. The coordinated effort of laypeople, church leaders and teachers can help the Seventh-day Adventist Church assert a leadership role in fostering educational excellence throughout the United States.

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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1. Of the several dozen national reports on secondary schools prepared between 1982 and 1984, this report will focus primarily on four of the most influential high-school studies and implications inherent in them for Adventist schools:

*A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform.* Prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education for the U.S. Department of Education, April 1983. Commissioned by President Reagan.

*High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America.* By Ernest Boyer, sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1983. Boyer is the former U.S. Commissioner of Education and former chancellor of the state university of New York.

*Horace's Compromise.* By TheodoreSizer, sponsored by the National Association of Secondary

School Principals and the Commission on Educational Issues of the National Association of Independent Schools, 1984. Sizer is the former headmaster of Phillips Academy, Andover, and dean of the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University.

*The Paideia Proposals: An Educational Manifesto.* By Mortimer J. Adler for the Paideia Group, 1982. Adler is chairman of the board of editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica* and director of the Institute of Philosophical Research in Chicago, Illinois.

This paper is an outgrowth of presentations to the Columbia Union school administrator's council on October 25, 1983, and to the Columbia Union Conference K-12 board of education on June 5, 1985. In addition, several reports to the Takoma Academy board of trustees and a presentation to the Washington chapter of the Association of Adventist Forums

on March 23, 1985, provided background material for this paper.

2. The National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983), p. 5.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

4. John R. Silber, "Today's High-School Diploma Is Fraudulent," *U.S. News & World Report* (September 7, 1981), p. 53.

5. *A Nation at Risk*, pp. 8, 9.

6. Ernest L. Boyer, *High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), pp. 33-36.

7. From a study prepared by Evelyn Gardner, guidance counselor at Takoma Academy, in August 1981.

8. Boyer, *High School*, pp. 37-38, 57, 6.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

10. North American Division Office of Education, Annual Report (1984), p. 47.

11. Boyer, *High School*, p. 5.

12. James Coffin, "Expert analyzes changing face of Adventist missions," *Adventist Review* (June 20, 1985), p. 17.

13. The 50 percent figure can be verified in some areas of the Columbia Union where an extensive census was taken under the leadership of F. Wayne Foster, former director of education for the Columbia Union.

14. Des Cummings and Clyde Morgan, "The North American challenge: an analysis of church and society," *Adventist Review* (August 9, 1984), p. 13.

15. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903), p. 13.

16. *Education Week* (May 16, 1984). The U.S. Department of Education estimates that one million new teachers will be needed between 1986 and 1990 in order to replace those who are retiring or leaving the profession and to handle the mini baby-boom which is currently taking place.—*Education Week* (December 5, 1984). Other studies predict a shortage of 40,000 elementary teachers during this period based on enrollment figures in college education departments around the country.—*USA Today* (March 17, 1983).

17. *A Nation at Risk*, p. 23.

18. Keith B. Richburg, *Washington Post* (April 29, 1985).

19. Boyer, *High School*, p. 159.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.* The comparable national averages: verbal scores dropped from 453 in 1971 to 426 in 1982,

a 27-point slide; math scores declined from 484 in 1972 to 467 in 1980, a 17-point drop.

23. Theodore R.Sizer, *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984), p. 185.

24. Boyer, *High School*, p. 154.

25. Editorial, "The Next Teacher Shortage," *Washington Post* (May 4, 1985).

26. Boyer, *High School*, p. 168.

27. This action was passed at the June 5, 1985, meeting of the Columbia Union Conference K-12 board of education. The action passed by the board establishes a commission on teaching to conduct a study on the problem of teacher retention, recruitment and quality in Columbia Union schools. The commission would be empowered to hire consultants such as individuals at Columbia Union College who have proficiency in developing surveys to determine the extent of the potential problem of teacher shortages, the available pool of teachers presently being trained in Seventh-day Adventist schools and the quality of the present staff as evidenced through college test scores.

28. This statement is based on conversations with several associate directors of education in North American Division unions. Except in the Columbia Union, these individuals showed no major concern or urgency for the potential problem of teacher shortages in their territories. In fact, they reported that in some cases they had far more teachers than they could hire. Some of these individuals did express some concerns about teacher quality. I know of many Adventist junior and senior academies that are having serious difficulties finding qualified math, science and English teachers. Qualified Bible teachers became another shortage area for some schools in the 1985-1986 school year, according to church officials. I am also aware of conferences that were having problems filling multigrade vacancies with K-4 or 5-8 teachers as late as three weeks before the start of the 1985-1986 school year. I suspect our church will face serious shortages in the next few years, but only extensive studies now, before a problem develops, will verify which viewpoint is accurate.

29. Takoma Academy recently convened a committee to address the problem of the increasing number of Adventist students attending non-Adventist colleges. The committee estimates that between 90 and 95 percent of all Adventist students who attend non-Adventist undergraduate programs either leave the church or withdraw from the church's life. Those interested in minutes of this committee may write to the principal, Takoma Academy, 8120 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

*Appendix A*

## National Commission Recommendations Translated for Adventist Academies

1. Devote more time to teaching. Some studies call for as much as a 200- to 220-day school year, which would begin to equal what many other countries now have. Some states are considering a longer school day of at least seven hours. One state is considering requiring at least 150 class hours per Carnegie unit, in contrast to present requirements, which vary from 120 to 140 hours. These proposed changes result from time-on-task studies, which show a direct correlation between time spent in actual teaching and achievement. They also call for less administrative interruption during the class period or school day, less time spent working on jobs and less time spent in study periods without active coaching by the teacher. Many academies, with their large number of off-campus promotional trips, field and club trips and weekend leaves, are already short on instructional time. However, major critics of this proposal emphasize that more time is not needed if it means more of the same approaches. The teacher will need to utilize every minute of the class period in active teaching.

Many Adventist schools could easily increase the school year by more than one week by reducing the two weeks of faculty meetings held before and after the school year.

2. Require competency or achievement tests as a basis for graduation from high school rather than using grades as the sole criteria. Adventist academies are presently graduating students who could not get a diploma from school systems that have such required tests. Graduation should be based on academic progress in acquiring minimal basic skills. The tests would be used to focus on the essential skills students need to improve in order

to pass the test by the end of their senior year.

3. Emphasize writing across the curriculum, not just in English classes. The public probably complains more about the reduced writing ability of high-school students than any other basic skill. Intensive workshops would be needed to improve the writing skills of current teachers.

4. Upgrade science and mathematics programs. The church may need to develop special incentives to encourage college students to become math and science teachers.

5. Reassess the effectiveness of teacher education programs. Some national commission studies are questioning the value of hours spent in colleges of education. More emphasis, they think, should be placed on content classes and on-the-job training. By reducing teacher certification education requirements, perhaps more adults currently employed in other professions could be attracted to teaching.

6. Allow teachers more time to prepare for classes, engage in curriculum development and grade papers. Teachers are now loaded down with many different preparations each day in addition to several sponsorships, supervision responsibility and extracurricular activities. Because of budgetary problems in public and parochial schools, the ideal of two preparations, five teaching periods per day and class sizes of no more than 25 students has become more difficult to attain.

7. Encourage broader community support by local businesses and foundations in order to provide a more solid financial base than church subsidies and tuition income.

*Appendix B*

## Fitting All the Commission Recommendations Into an Academy Year

The gravest threat to the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is the loss of practical classes as students pursue more academic courses. Parents are already complaining that if Adventist academies reduce offerings in home economics and industrial arts, they will no longer be Adventist schools. In addition, music programs suffer on day campuses because fewer students can work music into an already overcrowded schedule. The challenge to the boarding academy campus work program is particularly serious. Fitting six or seven classes into a morning or afternoon to accommodate industries on campus will

reduce class time so much that less content can be covered. Some possible solutions:

1. Lengthen the school day and include more periods so students can take heavier loads. This approach would involve more flexible scheduling on the part of faculty members who have been accustomed to a traditional school day.

2. Encourage students to take summer school classes that would permit involvement during the school year in practical courses and the arts.

3. Readopt the approach used in the 1930s and 1940s at Takoma Academy when four full credits of Bible were not required. Each student was

required to take Bible each year, but the classes met fewer than five times during the week. A more formal chapel program could cover some of the same topics. A formal curriculum emphasizing the "integration of faith and learning" as actively promoted by George Akers, new director of education for the General Conference, could be developed. As an outgrowth of this approach, other classes would incorporate more directly some of the content presently being taught in Bible classes. Is there any evidence that our present approach to Bible instruction is working effectively in our schools in light of the large number of apostasies among church members educated through our system? The aim is not less religion in Adventist schools, but a more integrated approach.

4. Offer one of the Bible credits as a social science. The current senior Bible curriculum has

many components that are taught as a social science credit in many public schools, including units on marriage and the family, careers, service and one unit left up to the individual teacher, which could be world or comparative religions. Such a credit needs to be clearly seen by non-Adventist colleges as a social science and by Adventist colleges as a religion credit. It would continue to be taught by instructors with a background as Bible teachers so it would not simply become another social science.

5. Build up practical areas by offering co-curricular activities within active clubs.

6. Subsidize the elective areas to ensure that they are still offered even with reduced class sizes.

7. Sponsor teacher education majors in college who are willing to become certified in practical areas, in addition to the more traditional areas.

## Appendix C

# Model Graduation Requirements for Adventist Academies

Outlined below is a model Adventist academy curriculum that would enable a wide range of students to develop the basic skills needed to obtain a job or enter any college in the United States. This model also provides for the academically weak student whose parents insist, for social and religious reasons, that their child attend an Adventist school, even though the school may not have essential remedial programs that are available in the public sector.

The model contains four types of diplomas. A detailed description of the requirements for three of the diplomas follows. The fourth diploma, a certificate of attendance<sup>1</sup> has flexible requirements designed for the individual student. More information about each diploma is given at the bottom of this chart.

	General <sup>2</sup>	College Preparatory <sup>3</sup>	College Preparatory— <sup>4</sup> Advanced
English	4	4	4
Math	2	2	3
PE/Health	2	2	2
Religion	4	4	4
Science	2	2	3
Social Sciences	2	3	3
Industrial Arts/ Home Economics	2	1	1
Business Education			
Computer		.5	.5
Fine Arts	.5	.5	.5
Foreign Language			2
Typing I		1	1
Work Credit			
Electives	3.5	3	0
Miscellaneous			1
<b>Total Required</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>

1. *Certificate of Attendance*: This diploma would be for students with severe learning disabilities who, for religious or social reasons, are attending an Adventist school. No Adventist school has enough learning disabled students to offer an adequate range of specially trained teachers (diagnosticians, tutors, counselors, psychologists), facilities and teaching materials. However, the school's academic standards committee should work out a specialized program (in consultation with the student, parents, guidance counselor and teachers) that would better meet the learning disabled student's needs.

2. *General*: A student graduating with this diploma would probably enter the job market or go to a vocational school upon graduation. The local community college would also be available if the student decided to attend college.

3. *College preparatory*: This diploma would qualify a student to attend any Adventist college in the country and many other colleges. It would also provide for a few electives. A choice of one English, math, science or social studies elective will give an endorsement in that area. If possible, such electives should be taken as advanced placement or honors endorsement in one of the areas above and write an independent research paper under the direction of a faculty member.

4. *Advanced college preparatory*: A student graduating with this diploma would have all the classes needed to attend any college in the United States. An honors component would be built into the program, with little room for electives, although an extra math or science credit is especially recommended for this diploma. Because of the tight program, no room would be made in the schedule for work experience as mandated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.