JOINING & REMAINING

A Look at the Data on the Role of Adventist Education

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The all-important matter...

Should be “the conversion of the students.”

*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 436
ACCESSION TO THE CHURCH

The Role of Adventist Education
Adventist Education

LONGEST and LARGEST EVANGELISTIC EVENT

held by the Adventist Church
Duration 800 to 37,400 hours

5-9 hours/day

160-260 days/year

1-16+ years
## Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Evangelists</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>5,915</td>
<td>54,282</td>
<td>1,200,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2,435</td>
<td>39,386</td>
<td>603,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Schools</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>5,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges &amp; Universities</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>14,384</td>
<td>145,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>8,514</td>
<td>108,656</td>
<td>1,954,920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

December 31, 2016
Adventist Education

LONGEST and LARGEST EVANGELISTIC EVENT

Effective?
## Baptisms in Adventist Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Baptized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>33,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>33,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>40,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>49,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>50,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>49,774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>48,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>47,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>43,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>49,308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

445,843 baptisms

A conference established each year
Does Adventist Education make a difference?

![Chart showing the percentage of Adventist families who joined the church based on the level of Adventist education their children received.](image)

- **No Adventist Education**
  - Never joined the church: 38.3%
  - Joined the church: 61.7%

- **Some Adventist Education**
  - Never joined the church: 4.6%
  - Joined the church: 95.4%

- **12 Grades Adventist Education**
  - Never joined the church: 0.0%
  - Joined the church: 100.0%

W. E. Minder

*Children of Lake Union Adventist families*

*N=807*
Average Years Attendance: Adventist School

W. E. Minder
Children of Lake Union
Adventist families
N=807

Never Baptized: 2.42
Baptized: 8.06
Does Adventist Education make a difference?

13x more likely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Never Baptized</th>
<th>Baptized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Adventist education</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1+ years Adventist</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11+ years Adventist</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jim Epperson
Children of Southern Union Adventist families
N=844
Adventist Education Is Mission

“The work of education and the work of redemption are one.” *Education*, p. 30
Adventist Education Is Mission

Reaffirm the central role of Adventist education in the evangelistic mission of the church.
RETENTION IN THE CHURCH

The Role of Adventist Education
Members who leave

Since 1965: 34,385,004 church members

Net loss rate: 39.95%

Of 10 members, 4 have slipped away.
In 2000-2012, there were 13,648,281 accessions. Our net loss rate: 43.36%
Youth who leave

Landmark “Youth Retention” study

▪ Over 1,500 baptized 15- and 16-year-olds
▪ Representative of Adventist youth: Large & small churches, small towns & big cities, public schools & Adventist schools, all ethnic groups
▪ Interviewed each year for the next 10 years

How many left the church by age 25-26?

Many demographic groups, approaching: 50%
Where is the flock that was entrusted to you, your beautiful flock?

Jeremiah 13:20
Seven Studies

Retention and Adventist Education:

1. Valuegenesis Study (multi-year)
2. Youth Retention Study (longitudinal)
3. Epperson Study (dissertation)
4. Rice Study (dissertation, longitudinal)
5. Minder Study (dissertation)
6. Center Creative Ministry Study (global, qual)
7. ASTR “Leaving the Church” Study (global)
Valuegenesis Study

Data from 2,267 12\textsuperscript{th}-grade Adventist students in Adventist schools showed that the more years of Adventist schooling, the greater the person’s

- Denomination loyalty
- Adventist orthodoxy
- Intention to remain an Adventist at age 40


Factors that Develop Religious Faith

- Attending an Adventist School
- Family I grew up in
- Mother's faith
- School weeks of prayer
- Father's faith
- Grandparents' faith
- Adventist summer camps
- Student weeks of prayer
- Pathfinders
- My Bible teacher
- Bible classes in school

Valuegenesis3 Study (2010)
81% of all students said...

“Attending an Adventist school is the most important thing that has helped me develop my religious faith.”

–Valuegenesis3 Study (2010)
Youth Retention Study

• A 10-year study of youth (N=1523), beginning at ages 15-16

• Key finding: Number of years in an Adventist school was positively related to:
  ✓ Commitment to Jesus Christ
  ✓ My relationship with Christ is stronger now
  ✓ Religion is important in my life
  ✓ Personal Bible study

Dudley, 2000; Thayer, 2008

N=844
Rice Study

2x more likely to stay

Public high school graduates
- Never Baptized: 63%
- No Longer a Member: 38%
- Member not Attending: 7%
- Baptized and Attending: 37%

Adventist academy graduates
- Never Baptized: 6%
- No Longer a Member: 13%
- Member not Attending: 5%
- Baptized and Attending: 77%

Rice Study

2x more likely to pay tithe

- Public high school graduates: 26%
- Adventist academy graduates: 74%
- Pay tithe: 50%
- Do not pay tithe: 50%

Similar findings in Valuegenesis study and Youth Retention Study.

Rice Study

3x more likely to marry an Adventist

Southern California 13-year longitudinal. 
N=264
Minder Study


- No Adventist Education: 38.3% (50.8% of whom never joined) vs. 10.9% (16.4% of whom joined but then left)
- Some Adventist Education: 16.4% (78.9% of whom joined and remained)
- 12 Grades Adventist Education: 98.2% (1.8% of whom never joined)

*N=807*
Center for Creative Ministry Study

- SDA Education
- Other Education

Lapsed & Ex-Members: 17% vs. Current Members: 56%

3x More Lapsed & Ex-Members compared to Current Members

Are the **accession** and the **retention** of children and youth in the Church associated with their participation in **Adventist education**?
Yes!

Consistent
Persuasive
BARRIERS TO THE REDEMPTIVE PURPOSE of Adventist Education
3
Barrier #1

Many children and youth from Seventh-day Adventist homes are not attending Adventist schools.
Over half of global church members report no experience of Adventist Education.
Proportion with No SDA Education by Division

- ECD: 52.2%
- IAD: 66.0%
- NAD: 29.0%
- SAD: 60.3%
- SID: 76.0%
- SPD: 48.4%
- SSD: 55.9%
- TED: 47.5%
- WAD: 65.5%
“All our youth should be permitted to have the blessings and privileges of an education at our schools, that they may be inspired to become laborers together with God.”

E. G. White. *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 44.
Dismantling Barrier #1

✓ Pastors and educators proactively share with parents the positive and consistent relationship between Adventist education and the proportion of children and youth joining and remaining in the Church
Church leaders intentionally establish initiatives, in partnership with local fields and congregations, to boost the availability of Adventist education to Seventh-day Adventist children and youth.
Dismantling Barrier #1

✓ Educational institutions **create viable avenues** by which Adventist students of limited means may obtain a Seventh-day Adventist education
Barrier #2

Many teachers in Adventist schools are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
Teachers in Adventist Schools

- Adventist: 71.4%
- Non-Adventist: 28.6%

December 31, 2016
Teachers in Adventist Schools

- Elementary: 73.5% Adventist, 26.5% Non-Adventist
- Secondary: 69.5% Adventist, 30.5% Non-Adventist
- Wkr Train: 67.1% Adventist, 32.9% Non-Adventist
- Tertiary: 69.1% Adventist, 30.9% Non-Adventist

December 31, 2016
Proportion of Adventist Teachers

The graph shows the proportion of Adventist teachers from 2007 to 2016. The proportion started at around 74% in 2007 and dropped to approximately 70% by 2010. There was a slight increase in 2011, followed by another decrease. The proportion stabilized around 68% from 2013 to 2016.
The mission of the Church is evangelistic. Adventist education must fulfill the mission.
To be effective...

An evangelist must first be a believer
“In all our churches there should be schools, and teachers in these schools who are missionaries. Fulfill the mission Evangelists.
“If the instructors have a religious experience themselves, they will be able to communicate to their students the knowledge of the love of God that they have received.
“These lessons can be given **only** by those who are **themselves truly converted.**”

E. G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 168
Church leaders at all levels establish and regularly assess **specific objectives** (with corresponding KPIs) for educational systems and schools within their territory to progressively increase the proportion of Seventh-day Adventist teachers in Adventist schools.
Church leaders in collaboration with Adventist IHEs establish and strengthen teacher training programs, potentially to include special subsidies for those training as elementary and secondary teachers.
Dismantling Barrier #2

✓ Leaders of Adventist IHEs develop and implement strategic plans in order to **acquire or prepare qualified Adventist educators** in each academic area offered
Barrier #3

Many pastors are not aware of the evangelistic role of Adventist education, nor perhaps convinced of its efficacy.
Pastors Believe...

Members who have not experienced Adventist education and their likelihood of leaving the church.

- More likely: 60%
- No difference: 40%

Pastors’ Years of Adventist Education

One in three pastors have had fewer than five years exposure to Adventist education.

Only ~14% of pastors have completed all of their education in Adventist institutions.

Dismantling Barrier #3

☑ Adventist Seminaries and Schools of Religion incorporate **required courses in the Ministry of Adventist Education** in the programs of study for all students specializing in pastoral ministry, religion, or theology
Adventist Seminaries and Schools of Religion require an internship in an Adventist school of all ministerial students who have not completed at least one year of study in an Adventist primary or secondary school.
Dismantling Barrier #3

✓ Ministerial and educational leaders emphasize through publications and at meetings of Adventist pastors the evangelistic effectiveness of Seventh-day Adventist education, especially in terms of accession and retention.
In Adventist Education

Children and youth experience...

“In the highest sense, the work of education and the work of redemption are one.”

*Education*, p. 30
All your children shall be taught by God.

And great shall be the peace of your children.

Isaiah 54:13
TAUGHT BY GOD
Seventh-day Adventist Education