



ILLINOIS Focus



Ron Aguilera, President

BENEFITS OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION



I am a believer in Adventist education! I consider myself blessed to be a product of Adventist education. Both my daughters attended Adventist schools from kindergarten through college, they married Adventist men they met at college, are active in Adventist churches that support an Adventist school, and are committed to supporting Adventist education in the future. You and I know that we live in a world where Christian beliefs are under assault from all sides. The messages and philosophies promoted by non-Christian teachers/schools can have an eroding effect on a child's faith journey. That is why we have an Adventist educational system.

In this editorial, I want to share several reasons why I believe Adventist education is essential for our children and invite you to consider Adventist education seriously if your children are not benefiting from one of our ten Adventist schools in Illinois.

REASON ONE: Spiritual focus. Seventh-day Adventist schools focus on preparing students not just for success in this life, but for eternity. The ultimate goal

of each teacher is to see each student in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. To me, this is the most important factor. The eternal impact and value are unmeasurable.

REASON TWO: Individual attention. Public schools tend to have inadequate teacher-to-student ratios while Adventist schools,

maybe because they are smaller, tend to offer better individual attention to their students. Most Seventh-day Adventist schools have a low student-teacher ratio. This allows for more individualized attention and instruction. A student in an Adventist school develops a relationship with their teacher. I look back and am thankful the positive effect of these relationships in my life and in the lives of my children.

REASON THREE: Higher learning. Cognitive Genesis, a four-year study of 30,000 students enrolled in Seventh-day Adventist schools

across North America, found that students in Adventist schools attain superior academic achievement, maybe because Adventist schools tend to attract dedicated teachers who are motivated to teach students who themselves are motivated to learn and excel.

REASON FOUR: Seventh-day Adventist schools have a family atmosphere.

Volume 6 - Issue 2 - April 2019

ISSUE FOCUS EDUCATION

The social relationships students build in a multilevel classroom more closely reflect the social situations individuals encounter in workplaces, communities, and families. The value of this is often overlooked.

REASON FIVE: Exposure to the Word of God. Needless to say, daily

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& MORE



The Book of Daniel holds a prominent place in Seventh-day Adventism. In general, the prophetic passages of the book tend to be the focus of study. However the first chapter of Daniel contains a passage illustrating the prime example of why Seventh-day Christian Education is so important. In summarizing Daniel 1: 3-20, after Jerusalem comes under the control of King Nebuchadnezzar at the beginning of the Babylonian captivity, he orders that the most promising young men of Jerusalem go to Babylon for training for service to the kingdom. Daniel and many others, already educated by Judaic standards, end up in Babylon for re-education to serve the Babylonian Empire. We are familiar with the rest, the attempt to change their diet, their names, and their beliefs. This re-education included teaching the superiority of the Babylonian beliefs, including their spiritual beliefs, and the inferiority of the Judaic beliefs.

Times have not changed much.

All children, from the beginning of their lives, receive training for service to someone or something. What the child eats, their social connections, and what they consider as valuable is instilled as part of their character-building as small children at home, then continuing throughout their formal academic life. At an early age, formal education occupies one third of their day, or more to the point, allowing for sleep, two thirds of their awake time. Now consider this: the institution that controls the school curriculum controls the outcome of the student. No matter the strength of the family life, the defining outcome of the student's education, character, and value system occurs within the classroom. Pause to think about some of the greatest ills around us. The social crisis in the United States with substance abuse, the crime and incarceration rate, the breakdown of the family unit, and the lack of strong moral character. What is happening? Is this God's design?

THERE ARE TWO CLASSES OF EDUCATORS IN THE WORLD. ONE CLASS IS

THOSE WHO GOD MAKES CHANNELS OF LIGHT, AND THE OTHER CLASS IS

THOSE WHOM SATAN USES AS HIS AGENTS, WHO ARE WISE TO DO EVIL...

EG WHITE

FUNDAMENTALS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. 174

The values of the group forming the education curriculum ingrain into the students values that are the most important to that group. Historically speaking, notorious world leaders and villains were well aware of this. In the 19th century, think of the school system model used today designed around industrial work to instill a strong work ethic. (Bells, subject matter etc.) In the 20th century, think of the Hitler youth of Germany (fascism) and the Red

Adventist Education in the BABYLONIAN WILDERNESS



Ron Huff
Superintendent of Education

Guard of China (communism). In this century, we have much "education" occurring over social media leading to extreme beliefs and actions (terrorism). 21st century education train students to go to the next level of learning in a transition from grade to grade over a period of years ranging from potentially age 3 to age 18 and beyond into higher education. Our nation's schools provide an education designed to train our young people with the same goals as Nebuchadnezzar's court in the time of Daniel. Education to meet the needs of the community or "the greater public good" – which is centered on human needs. Our Seventh-day Adventist school system also trains students for service to the world, God, Jesus and the greater good by placing God and Jesus at the center of all curriculum.

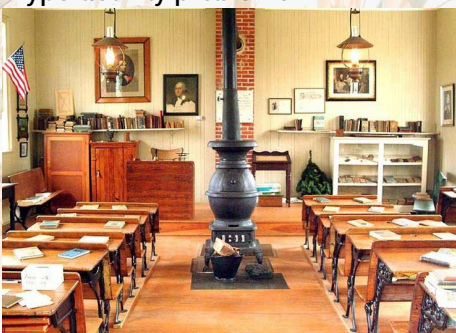
Parents have a clear choice of where this education occurs based upon their background, life experience, and financial considerations. Daniel and all of the young men, perhaps hundreds or thousands, sent to Babylon did not have a choice. Yet we know of only Daniel and three others, who, because of their educational foundation, were strong enough to resist Babylonian re-education and remain faithful to God. The rest succumbed to the pressure to conform. Today, how many of our young people would have the spiritual strength of Daniel?

Lori Aguilera,
Associate Superintendent of Education and
Director of Special Education

Creative **SEATING**



When you compare classrooms 100 years ago and today, you will see that much has changed. The school room is no longer heated with a wood stove, work is not done on a slate, and women teachers can now marry. But some things have not changed – the seating. Students are expected to stay seated in a hard chair and desk for long periods of time, even if they are very young or have attentional or hyperactivity problems.



In the Illinois Conference the classroom environment has changed to flexible seating. This gives students options where they will do their work after they receive instruction. It could be at a standing table, on an exercise ball, on a chair with exercise bands attached, kneeling at a low table, lying down on a mat or on a bunkbed or sitting on a beanbag or couch.



Mrs. Martin, a teacher in Illinois Conference, had 5 students with hyperactivity and attentional problems and there were so many discipline problems that it made it difficult for her to teach. When she changed the classroom environment and gave the students the choice of flexible seating, the discipline problems went away, because it allowed students the movement they needed to attend. She will call the students to the carpet to sit while she gives instruction, then they can take their clipboards and find the flexible seat that will work for them to do their work. She followed the research that shows that flexible seating increases motivation and engagement in students, provides more oxygen flow to the brain, improves metabolism, provides more ease of collaboration between students, and uses up excess energy. The biggest benefits found in students when they were allowed to choose flexible seating were higher academic test scores and a drastic reduction in behavior problems. Humans aren't meant to sit in one place for long periods of time, especially young students or those with hyperactivity or attentional problems. Approximately 15% of our students have ADHD and when teachers require these students to sit in one place such as a hard chair and desk all day, these students will create their own movement, but usually get in trouble for it.

Research shows that allowing student movement helps learning and drastically reduces behavior problems, yet we sometimes ask our students to sit still for an hour with little freedom for movement. Teachers can start with small changes to help provide movement for their students. They can provide seats that have built in movement like a bungee chair, or they can provide wobble cushions for students to place on their chairs, this way they can move when they feel that they need to without disturbing others around them.



Some students like to have the option to stand as they are doing their work, so provide standing tables or simply put bed risers on some of the desks to make them standing desks.

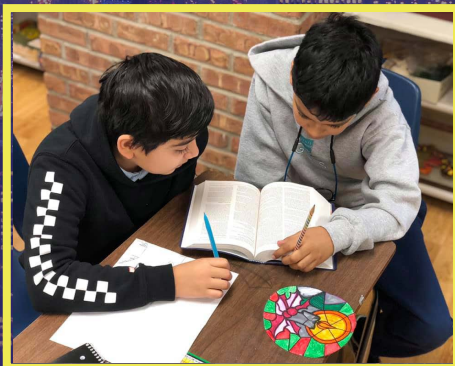


Teachers can also provide a wobble seat that lets the student rock in place, provide

CONTINUED TOP OF PAGE 5

Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old we will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

This is a promise from God we all depend on. As parents we cling to it when we see our children making poor choices and decisions. We know that God is not slow at fulfilling His promises. But what does the word "train" mean? What way should our children go? The dictionary tells us that the word train means "to be taught through practice and instruction." Synonyms of the word include, study, learn and prepare. The word train sounds like a lot of hard work. As parents, we are busy! We have full-time jobs, a house to clean, shopping to be done, and church duties to take care of. How much time are we spending on "training?"



Ellen White tells us in the book Education; "A child's first teacher is the mother." She also writes, "The work of co-operation should begin with the father and mother themselves, in the home life. In the training of their children they have a joint responsibility." I would say it is also the father. In our busy lives, a parents' duty to their child is to "train" them up in the ways of God. To teach them about the character of God and how much He loves them. God inspired

Train Up a CHILD



Katrina Baun,
Principal, Gurnee
Christian School

Ellen White and the founders of our church to start Adventist schools for our children to help parents in the process of growing our children up in the ways of God.

The first Adventist school was started in 1856 in Battle Creek, Michigan. Our educational system now operates more than five-thousand institutions around the globe. All of our Adventist schools have the same mission; to educate our students to be with Jesus for eternity. This world is not our home, heaven is our goal. We must train our children to be in the world but not be of it.

What an amazing plan God provided for us as a church. A way to educate our children and keep them as far away from the world for as long as possible. A way to protect our children and still have them learn everything they need to know. A way to teach them not only about math, science and history, but also of God's love and the plan He has for their lives. A way to train students for a life of service as missionaries, doctors, or teachers, for example.

I work as a teacher and principal at Gurnee Christian School, located

in Gurnee, Illinois. We have 108 beautiful students who come to us every day. I have the privilege, along with many other God-fearing educators and volunteers, to teach these children about God's love and His plan for their lives. We are not perfect. We make mistakes. Through this process of "training," we are able to partner with the parents to give the best possible opportunities a child can have.



As parents and as educators, we have an awesome responsibility to "train" our children. This comes through accomplishments and failures, joys and tears, abundance and sacrifice, and much, much prayer. In the end, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any one should perish but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

My husband, Ryan, once gave this example when asked why sending his children to Adventist schools was so important to him. He said, "We are in war, and I have the choice to send my children into battle without body armor or to sacrifice and spend the money to buy them body armor. I choose to buy the body armor every time." How will you send your child into battle?

How will you send your child into battle?

CREATIVE SEATING - CONTINUED

a scoop chair, or have exercise bands for the bottom of the desk or chair for students to push on.



Patrice Jenkins created seats by putting foam and material over plywood to put on top of a crate or creating a bouncy seat with a ball in a crate and Yanina Jimenez uses bunk beds for students to study in.



When you think of it, when you go home and want to read, do you sit at your kitchen table or do you choose to relax on a couch or comfortable chair- students are no different. I encourage you to do some research on how flexible seating can change your students' behavior and increase their academic scores, and instead of saying, "sit still," you will provide a classroom that will invite them to get up and move.

- Lori Aguilera



...HIGHER ACADEMIC TEST SCORES, REDUCED BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS...

Some students have a difficult time staying focused, so they choose to do their work in chairs with pull over covers or tents so they can block out distractions.



Continued: Benefits of Adventist Education

exposure to Biblical lessons reinforces the moral development of growing children who need steady leadership from their teachers. Combine this with church involvement and spiritual environment at home, and there is an increased loyalty to God and the Church.

Adventist education reflects the beliefs, values and lifestyle of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. More than 100 years ago the Adventist Church developed a 'blueprint' for holistic education. This plan acknowledged the importance of not only the intellectual, but also the spiritual, physical, social and emotional dimensions of education. The Adventist schools in Illinois strive to echo this 'blueprint' by maintaining a balance between all these different dimensions. This allows us to develop well-rounded and confident young people who not only love life at school but also have the potential for a successful and fulfilling future, as well as a lifelong commitment to God and the church. I have benefitted from my lifelong commitment to Adventist education, and I hope you will too.

- Ron Aguilera

INTRODUCING...

Lori Thordarson is the new Kindergarten Teacher at Hinsdale Adventist Academy. She writes: My husband Thor and I have been married 36 years and have 3 amazing children. We are blessed with a lovely daughter-in-law, and 2 precious grandsons.

We moved to Chicagoland in October of 2017 when my husband began his new job with AMITA Health. We love the community and being close to the "big city."

I began my teaching career in Akron, Ohio, where I taught Kindergarten-2nd grade in various combinations. It was there I discovered my passion for teaching kindergarten. Kids never cease to amaze me and I find them refreshing and pure. My heart is so full and happy when I am surrounded by the laughter of little ones. After 9 years we moved to La Porte, Indiana, where, after a brief period in the public school, I was asked to come on board as the K-4 teacher/Principal of our local church school. It was a pleasure to serve there for 15 years in various capacities.

One of my favorite hobbies is traveling to warm places, especially the beach! Those sunsets and warm breezes never get old! I also enjoy drawing, painting, reading, walking my dog, and being support crew for my husband's athletic adventures!



Jere Clayburn has served since 1995 as a teacher and administrator in seven schools. Starting as a multi-grade 7-9 teacher in South Carolina, he transitioned to 9-12 science which he is currently doing now at Hinsdale Adventist Academy.

Jere completed his Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Biology at Andrews University, and enjoys sharing his love for learning how everything works. He has been married for 25 years to Loretta, and they have two college aged children, Jolene and Tyler.

YOUTH HAPPENINGS

Summer Camp at Akita is coming soon! We are thrilled that you will make it part of your plans and register to spend one week with us. Our theme this year is "I Am" based on John 8 where we're reminded that when we know the truth, we are set free. Jesus says, "who the Son sets free, is free indeed." This is an awesomely real declaration of identity. Jesus mentions how a slave has no place in the family, but once we've been brought into the family then we have this identity as part of God's family and that is an identity of freedom. How fantastic is that? Come and discover more with us. See you at Akita!

**COMING EVENTS: HI-C RETREAT (PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS) APRIL 5-7
ADVENTURER FUN DAY APRIL 14**



Fawn Scherencel,
Hinsdale Adventist Academy Principal

SHINING THE LIGHT

"For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." - 2 Corinthians 4:6

In December, students at Hinsdale Adventist Academy (HAA) walked into the chapel to discover one of the walls had been painted black. Over the next few weeks a beautiful image began to emerge, two people praying surrounded by light with Jesus looking over them.

Ana Korac (sophomore) is an artist and Student Association Pastor. She was inspired by the school's spiritual theme for the year "Shine Through Me." Ana and several other students from the high school art class decided they wanted to create a visual reminder of the theme in the chapel, so they began contemplating the best way to visually convey the message. Ana knew the image needed to be simple, but powerful, something everyone could be blessed by and find meaning in. At first they considered a candle or other symbols traditionally associated with shining light, but ultimately they decided to depict individuals praying and Christ watching over them as a direct reminder of what the Bible teaches us. Ana wanted to be clear that "Jesus is watching over us" and she was intentional about making the light grow increasingly brighter as it became closer to Christ. Ana says she hopes that the mural will mean something different to every person who views it. Hannah Piroski, a fellow sophomore, says the painting reminds her to "eliminate other things from life in order to have a more pure heart and to shine clearly." Ana's personal interpretation of the mural is that it takes "A strong connection with God for Jesus to shine in you before you can shine out to others."



The Bible clearly calls us to shine for Christ, while simultaneously teaching us that the only way for us to have light is to reflect His. This year students and staff at HAA are putting our spiritual focus on what it means to "Shine Through Me." We recognize that everything we do is a consequence of the light God shines on us and that without Him, we would never have the opportunity to shine. Likewise, we are seeking to be used by the Holy Spirit to shine the light of Christ so brightly that everyone around us will see it.

As a school, we know that our purpose is to teach students to "not [be] mere reflectors of other men's thoughts," but rather to "grow in knowledge and in faith" so that we will reflect Jesus. Likewise, we also know that our students have a calling, even our youngest ones, to shine for Jesus. Throughout the school year students have the opportunity to encounter Jesus every day in every lesson and build a close personal relationship with Him. At HAA, children from preschool all the way through high school lead worships, sing praises, pray together, and follow Christ's example for their daily life. By putting our focus on this spiritual theme our prayer is that we will not only gain wisdom, but also a deeper relationship with Jesus in order to better serve our gospel mission. Our prayer is that Hinsdale Adventist Academy will be "the light of the world."

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I KNOW SOMETHING GOOD ABOUT.....

Emilio Villeda...

...fourth grade student at Hinsdale Adventist Academy won the school spelling bee and made it through round five of the SCRIPPS Regional Private School Spelling Bee.

Gianna Torres and Cody O'Brien...

...Gianna (eighth grade student) and Cody (Senior) from Hinsdale Adventist Academy won the All Tournament Team Awards at the Andrews University Newmyer Classic Basketball Tournament for Most Valuable Players.

Chandran Daniel...

...Music Director at Hinsdale Adventist Academy, presented at the Illinois Music Educators Association on the topic of urban education. Mr. Daniel has presented at half a dozen professional conferences throughout the country in the past year and been recognized as an "Emerging Leader" in music education.

Rachel Arner...

...recent graduate of Hinsdale Adventist Academy (Class of '15), is the guest speaker for the 2019 Hinsdale Church Youth Retreat. Over 50 young people have registered to attend the retreat.

- Submitted by Fawn Scherencel, Hinsdale Adventist Academy Principal

Presenting Jesus **IRRESISTIBLY!**



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