

Learning Together

Curriculum Newsletter of the Southwestern Union

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Looking Out for Your Future

With the current uncertainties regarding our national economy, it might just be a good idea to take a look at your own financial future as it bends and winds on down through the years. Are you planning ahead—while at the same time exercising wisdom in your daily financial dealings?

Almost two decades ago, a fine former union education director named Larry Smart stopped me in a hallway to ask if I, as a beginning director, was busy putting my financial house in order. His counsel was to work hard and care for family over the first forty years of life and then to look out for oneself rather diligently for the rest of one's days: good counsel in some ways but weak in the long term scheme of things.

In today's world, you just cannot wait until you are forty or fifty to plan your financial future. Are you busily working on paying off your mortgage, seeking the lowest possible interest rates and adding to your payments as often as possible to assist shortening your mortgage term and thus saving thousands and thousands of dollars? Are you into one of these rather simple Dave Ramsey type plans in which you pay off bills one at a time until you can shout, "We're debt free!" I seem to remember something about cutting up most or all of your credit cards as a part of that plan, too! Do you budget wisely and seek sales for the purchase of almost every discretionary purchase? Have you learned sales resistance—how to just say No!



Beyond these beginning steps, are you investing for your future, utilizing some of those most basic investment plans such as a 403(b) pre-tax savings account? Do you always, without fail, put into the denominational retirement plan all of the pre-tax portion of your salary (currently two and one half percent) that you need in order to gain the maximum employer match of one and one quarter percent of salary? If not, you are just losing some fifty percent interest and burning thousands of dollars over the years! Your portion to gain the maximum match goes to two and three quarters percent beginning July 1, 2008 (2.99 percent for ten month employees), and then shortly to three percent (3.26 percent for ten month employees). That two or three percent may seem a lot of money to you right now, but, by 2011, with the added employer match which rises to three percent by 2011 and the regular employer contribution (five

percent) to retirement, it will give you eleven percent (11.95 percent for ten month employees to achieve equalization with twelve month employees) of your salary toward eventual retirement. Over a thirty to forty year career, that compounded investment should lead you to a quite comfortable retirement income. But, if you fail to put in enough of your salary to qualify for the full match and thus lose more than half of your planned retirement funding, you may end up at retirement time with some major financial challenges—who wants to be passing out shopping carts at Walmart for the rest of their days?

All right, why am I mentioning the match to you now? Well, the reason is that our church retirement leaders have pointed out to union education directors that many of our teachers are not qualifying for any of the employer match. Thus, they are leaving themselves open to financial disaster at retirement time. Administrators have gotten the message, pastors have generally made the right choices, but, for some reason, our teachers are sailing blithely along just ignoring the need to invest in their own futures. My counsel, loud and clear, is to call or write your conference or academy treasurer and say that you want to sign up for the full three percent salary (3.26 percent for ten month employees) contribution to retirement NOW, so that you won't forget as the adjustments in employer match come over the next few years. Just this morning, I went up to talk to treasury to make sure that I was contributing enough to qualify for every single matching dollar possible.

For those of us who are a little older—maybe a whole lot older!—we may need to do some catching up. I personally admit to getting behind in retirement planning (No one ever talked to me about the need, and then, too, I thought that the Lord would certainly return before I reached the age of 30!), but over the past decade my wife and I have been biting the bullet, pinching every penny, and making major catch up contributions to our own separate 403(b) plans. Oh, how I wish I had started making just small contributions forty years ago! Don't you make the same mistake! By the way, if you have challenges with understanding your retirement with AIG Retirement (formerly VALIC), you should schedule an appointment with our AIG Retirement Advisor, Stuart Wenger, at 972-383-7224 or 214-448-9026. He has lots of answers and can give you a big boost in planning for your future financial needs. DW

Mission: Helping Others



A willingness to assist others is a basic value that we strive to teach every student. We even call the Lord's instruction in this area the "Golden Rule." Likely the best way to build this value is to practice helping others whenever we see a need.

Thus, we are inviting you and your students to share in a wonderful mission project to assist orphaned children in South Africa. These beautiful children have lost both parents to disease, often

AIDS, and their homes are headed by the oldest child who sometimes is as young as nine years old. The government provides basic education and school uniforms, and our own Hope for Humanity (Ingathering to you old timers!) is providing the one meal a day that these children receive, five days a week. Nothing on weekends! Our project is to provide bulk food for several hundred of these children near the Nhlengelo Mission so that they can prepare their own meals on the weekends for the next year at a total cost of around \$85,000.00.

We will be sending you materials including brochures, video footage, and bulletin board illustrations to assist your students in joining with all the other K-12 students across North America in helping to meet some of the needs of these children. As I recently told a second grade class where I was sharing some video pictures of the children, all the kids are wonderful children who love to play and smile and have fun just as we do. They just need a little assistance from us for a while, a little helping hand!

If you have not already received your fund-raising materials, why not share a few pictures with your class from the Internet. Just go to www.hope4.com and click on the Africa tab at the top of the page. I hope that the faces of the children will touch your heart as they have touched mine.

Our Southwestern Union Conference Education Advisory Council recently voted to endorse this project and to set a goal for our Union of \$5.00 per student, certainly an achievable goal. We want to make this a quick one month

project—March 1—March 31—of sharing with other children across the world.

We do have tentative plans for a second mission project for next fall to raise the funds to build a new school for the students at Maluti Hospital in South Africa. Currently the



upper grade students are meeting in a metal storage container with holes cut in the metal walls for windows. Conditions get terribly cold in winter and hot in warm weather as the sun beats down on the metal structure.

Thanks for considering mission projects to involve our students in assisting needy students across the world. Helping others usually helps us help ourselves! DW

Helping Special Kids

Yes, I know that all God's kids are special, but some are more special than others—those who have special needs that you can help fulfill. We hope that you have been able to take some formal coursework in special needs, but even if that has not yet happened for you, it will be most helpful if you will refer to the newly-developed *REACH Manual* (Reaching to Educate All Children for Heaven) which is being piloted this year. Every school in our union will be receiving a CD-ROM copy of the manual, and the manual will also be available on the web. Some major revisions to the *Manual* are planned for down the road, but we think that what we already have will be most helpful to you and your students. We do not expect you to become a specialist in this area of Adventist education, but we do expect you to do your prayerful best to assist every student in reaching her/his highest potential while guiding every child into a positive lifelong friendship with Jesus Christ. DW



Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)



Early Childhood Education and Care within the NAD denominational structure has officially been assigned to the Education Department. We still plan to operate our current system as a K-12 educational system for legal reasons, but our educational administrators will carry responsibilities for early childhood education programs and for child care which occurs within church-owned structures and church-operated programs. Within the next few months, we will probably be hiring additional personnel at the union office to specialize in working with ECEC programs across the union territory. As you can imagine, quite a number of new plans, policies, and requirements will have to be developed to deal with bringing all of our ECEC programs to an acceptable level to achieve state and local licensure and NAD accreditation. Some of these changes will happen right away, and some may take a year or so to implement. Although we are not totally thrilled with this new responsibility, we do understand the need to have appropriate plans, policies, and programs in place to ensure quality ECEC across North America. Please join us in praying for guidance and direction. DW

News Notes from Here and There

- The *Pathways 5-6 Writer's Handbook* may be delayed slightly this fall, but other Pathways materials are on track to be ready for the start of next school year. Do stick with the scheduled times for each unit since books for grades 5-6 will be coming out during the school year as they are scheduled. Plan to attend the teacher training section for grade five and six teachers this coming May 5-6, 2008, at SWAU. Before attending, it would be helpful if you have watched the excellent training video that Dr. Carol Campbell produced with NAD and union support. We sent a copy to every school last fall, so it should be available to you.
- Check out the updated Journey to Excellence webpage for a vast collection of resources, particularly <http://www.journeytoexcellence.org/practice/instruction/spiritual/> This site will continue to provide the very best in screened materials for classroom use. Try some of the other tabs at the home page.
- Help us recruit new teachers! Talk more about the good and great things that you have discovered in teaching, and say less about the challenges. Teaching on God's team is really a most satisfying career! Also, for those of you who are new, check out the newly-passed federal program that will provide major student loan write offs after ten years of work in our schools or in other public service occupations. See the link and read to the bottom of the page for a link to the details of the new government program. <http://www.capenet.org/teach.html#Top>
- Education Day is coming for many of our churches. For sermon ideas see, <http://www.nadeducation.org/dynamic.html?wspID=464> Do your part to make this a special day for church members, students, and teachers! Remember, Education Day comes only once a year!
- Who is Lamar Nangle? He is the new coordinator of the APLE program at Griggs International since Durwood Lee retired last fall.
- If you have classroom or school spiritual resources that you are willing to share, please contact Garry Sudds, (Garry.Sudds@lucsd.org) the Lake Union Director of Education, who is coordinating a committee to develop a broader resource collection in this crucial area.
- Will you please include a photo permission form in your



registration materials for next school year? It is helpful if both you and we have permission to utilize student photographs in promoting and marketing our schools. See the included sample form.

- After a review and recommendation from the Southwestern Union Health Textbook Review Committee, the NAD has adopted new secondary health texts for this coming school year. It amazed our committee how far the world of textbooks has come toward good old Adventist beliefs and standards. These new texts do come with some superb supplementary materials that you will want if you teach health.
- Thanks for all of your wonderful work for our kids! Blessings! DW

ASDASA 2009

ASDASA stands for Association of Seventh-day Adventist School Administrators, and the next convention is planned for Portland, Oregon in early 2009. We are attempting to tie this convention to a national marketing seminar, so final dates are not yet available although February 15-19, 2009, looks promising. We are still planning for all Bible teachers to be a part of the ASDASA program with their own breakout track. Plan now to attend! DW

Cognitive Genesis Thanks!

Many thanks for all your labors with the Cognitive Genesis testing program! I know that it has meant a lot of extra work for you, but the preliminary results have been most positive and have helped with our marketing program. The long term conclusions that will not be available for another year or more should help us plan for the future, building on strengths and repairing weaknesses. We may add a fourth year to the study because of the challenges of the first year's data collection. Do keep emphasizing capitalization and math computational skills, our two lowest areas. DW

Corel Continuing Contract

The NAD has renewed the national contract that allows you to use the entire Corel office suite at no charge to your school. Although we hope that you will continue to teach Microsoft Office since it is so widely used across the world, Corel WordPerfect and all of its additional powerful graphics programs are available to you at no cost. We recommend purchasing a set of the disks from the NAD to install the programs since the downloads are quite time consuming even with a fast Internet connection. We still have a few sets of the graphics disks at the union office which we will be happy to send to you at no cost. Please note that updates are also available at no charge during the contract period. If you are overwhelmed by the graphics programs—or even WordPerfect—you or your students might try the free tutorial programs at <http://www.lynda.com/corel/freetraining>. DW



PATHWAYS IN-SERVICE

May 5, 2008

SOUTHWEST ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY
KEENE, TX

Workshop Description

This workshop is designed to provide information necessary to implement the 5th and 6th grade Pathways literacy curriculum.

Objectives

This workshop is designed to provide the opportunity for the teacher to gain the following understanding:

- ✓ Develop a classroom schedule using block scheduling
- ✓ Review instructional strategies used in a balanced-reading curriculum
- ✓ Explore components of a Daily Lesson Guide
- ✓ Explore student assessment used with a balanced-reading curriculum

Procedures Designed to Meet the Objectives

Lectures Discussions Modeling Small Group Activities

Credit

10 Professional Activity Credits (PAC)

Time Involvement

Workshop begins at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, May 5 and ends at 5:30 p.m.

Participants

Only persons assigned to teach grades 5 and 6 for the 2008-2009 school-year who have not attended a previously held Pathways in-service are expected to attend this in-service.

Cost

Southwestern Union Conference and the NADOE will cover travel, housing for one night, cost of materials related to the workshop, and meals. Local conferences will cover substitute teacher expenses for the day of the in-service.

See You May 5 For A Rewarding Experience!

SMALL SCHOOL WORKSHOP

July 21-24, 2008

Southwestern Union Conference—Burleson, Texas

Workshop Description

This workshop is designed to provide information necessary to be an effective multi-grade teacher. One day will be spent observing a successful teacher in a multi-grade classroom. the remainder of the time will be spent in lectures, discussions, group work, and make-and-take-it activities.

Objectives

This workshop is designed to provide the opportunity for the teacher to gain the following understanding and competencies:



Develop a classroom schedule



Produce two weeks of lesson plans for at least six subjects



Complete pages 8-9 of the NAD School Register



Submit accurate School Board minutes as instructed

Procedures Designed to Meet the Objectives

Lectures

Discussions

Viewing

Field Trip

Planning of Lessons

Group Work

Observe Classroom Teaching

Credit

One hour college credit through Southwestern Adventist University available

Or

38 Professional Activity Credits (PAC)

Time Involvement

Workshop begins at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, July 21 and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 24. Make-and-take-it activities are scheduled for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings.

Cost

Local Conference will cover travel expenses. Union Conference will cover housing, food and SWAU registration expenses.

Application, housing, meal information, daily schedule, and materials list will be sent to participants in May.

Contact your conference superintendent to reserve a space.



If you have not tried Britannica Online yet, you need to get on board right away to enjoy this wonderful new resource that is provided through a cooperative effort of the NAD and the union conferences. Just go to <http://www.school.eb.com> and sign in using your school's ID number (See your testing materials for your number) and the password **nadsa1**. Not only will you have access to the scholarly Encyclopaedia Britannica materials, but you will also have the excellent Compton's middle school materials, the Britannica Elementary materials, and even the new PK-2 Britannica Learning Zone. Plus, you will find search features that pull from all resources, a fascinating pronouncing dictionary, and much news material that is updated daily. You can create you own online workspace for curriculum development as well as access many appropriate video materials. The free tutorials will even show you how to move video clips into your classroom PowerPoint presentations.

Perhaps one of the best features of the program is that registered students, their parents, and all K-12 teachers can access all of the resources through home computers by using the same passwords. Our contract runs through all of 2008, and we are hopeful of renewing this resource in future years if it is widely used by our teachers and students. DW

Teaching Middle School Science

A newly-updated science curriculum guide is undergoing final editing and should soon be available for publication and for web access at the NAD education website or at the CIRCLE website. However, because of some lingering concerns regarding the non-Christian philosophical basis of any new textbooks for grades five through eight science, the North American Division is seeking ways of working with partners to facilitate an update of current texts. We will bring you information regarding further plans as we hear from the NAD. Please be patient as we try to provide the very best textbooks for science education in our schools. DW



In Service Online

Did you participate along with some 250 other North American Adventist teachers in the first online in service programs held in January and February? We expect the size of the group to increase as word gets around about all that can be learned in a one hour session scheduled for the third Thursday of every month from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. CST. Some of our schools just scheduled the session into their staff meeting so that everyone could share the experience together. Others used a speaker phone connection and a projector to facilitate group involvement. Let us know if you have ideas for future sessions. See the NAD education website (<http://www.nadeducation.org/>) for monthly topics. Also, please note that the NAD-sponsored *Atlantic Union Teacher Bulletin* in linked from the NAD page. If you have not looked at this year's volume, you really should spend a little time investigating all of the great units that are available for download and classroom use. Why not integrate a couple of those units into your classroom yet this year? DW

Kidsview Magazine

Plans call for the delivery of a newly-revised and enhanced *Kidsview* magazine to every classroom in grades three through six beginning this fall. This magazine will be in a relaxed Weekly Reader type format, but it will have a definite Adventist worldview. Features will include exemplary Adventist education offerings with opportunities for publication of student and teacher generated materials. In addition, missions and Spirit of Prophecy will be featured, and every month will bring new word games and neat projects. DW



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Distribution: File at school

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| <i>Somewhere Adventist School</i> | Permiso del padre o guardián para tomar fotografías o video |
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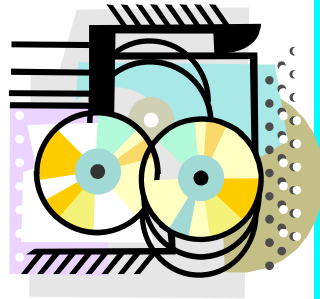
Doy permiso a mi hijo(a):(nombre) _____, para que le tomen fotografías/video con el propósito de promover estudiantes/programas de la escuela.

Firma del padre o guardián

Fecha

Distribution: File at school

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE



This coming fall, we are planning for every school to be utilizing some form of data management software that can provide school data directly to the local conference, the union, and the NAD. The most desirable way of accomplishing this task will be to purchase the new NAD Small School Management software and get it set up this summer. The software will handle the needs of every elementary school in our union, and it will cost only \$50.00 per teacher per year for the entire package, including updates as changes and improvements are made. It will generate all of our forms and reports as well as provide a full-featured web-based grading program. An online tutorial will be available for all purchasers although the program is not difficult to set up for anyone with basic computer knowledge.

We recognize that some schools may wish to stay with their current school management software, and our only requirement will be that your software company provide a direct interface to the NAD management system so that data can be directly transferred into the correct format. Some companies have already said that they could and would handle this interface, but you should check with your provider to make sure before signing on with them for another year.

If your school does not have Internet access by now, you will need to either gain that access or work out a plan with your superintendent so that the conference office of education can transfer your data.

As you probably have heard by now, we do plan to do away with both the school register and the teacher grade book by the fall of 2009 although you will need to save hard copies of your NAD reports and local school electronic grade reports to meet legal requirements. The world of education is changing, and we must change with it! DW

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