

Institute for Christian Teaching  
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**GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRATING  
ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY IN  
THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN INDIA**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

It is an important task of curriculum management in Adventist secondary schools in India to engage in frequent monitoring of existing programs leading to their support, augmentation, maintenance, modification or termination. Present trends in society demands closer supervision by the management of secondary school activities, and curriculum is defined as the sum total of student activities which the school sponsors for the purpose of achieving its objectives through faith and learning. India is a large country. We have more than 258 schools operated by Seventh –day Adventists with 132000 students and 6000 teachers.

## **SPIRITUALITY**

A sense of moral “oughtness” is essential to the formal and informal curriculum whole process. Along with a sense of self, there must be attentiveness to others. A rich imagination is needed to discover ways of living together and pursuing common goals. None of this will happen unless we as teachers are committed to looking through the eyes of each of our students and confronting the lived reality and possibility of the common good of all of us. It will help us if we can give our students splendid and striking examples of those who live virtuous lives.

Hayes (1997) described the work of Jesus Christ that of pedagogue. This education is not one that produces lawyers, engineers, computer programmers or the like. Careers, making a living, and job specialization is useful; but they are not enough. This is not an education for anything; it is an education of someone, of a human person. Such a perspective allows

us to realize that whatever furthers humanization furthers the work of the church. “The church is the community in which intimate union with God and man is demonstrated to be identical, because there the identity of the two is lived.”

Whatever furthers humanization is the work of the church. Instruction in literature, science, philosophy and social interaction, as well as instruction in religion, is directly related to the work of the church. Whatever makes us more human makes us more like God, whether we explicitly acknowledge this or not, claims the theologian, Michael Himes. When we grasp this insight, we understand our calling as a holy work, and it gives us courage because we do not do it alone. Jesus is our pedagogue, our companion-tutor, during this process of education

### **Definition of the Curriculum**

Curriculum is the totality of learning experiences provided to students so that they can attain general skills and knowledge at a variety of learning sites (Marsh, 2004, p. 5).

### **Aim and Mission**

Adventist education prepares pupil for a dynamic life of useful and joy-filled lives, fostering friendship with God, all-round development, Bible-based values, and selfless service in accordance with the Seventh-day Adventist mission to the world. See Appendix A for the complete Philosophy of Adventist Education.

### **Vision**

To know, inspire, experience, and share our hope in Jesus Christ through Adventist secondary schools.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The student learning outcomes are based on the following important aspects of the school life. It is very vital that the coordination is maintained between students and teachers and administration.

### **Assessment**

Teachers are expected to give considerable attention to the progress which their pupils are making. Progress is a matter with which parents are also vitally concerned; almost the first question a parent will ask a teacher is, 'How is my child getting on at school?' Both formal and informal attention should be given by the teacher to the matter of pupils' development without fail. Formal assessment is measured by the tests and examinations whereas informal assessment is the general observations and judgments given by the teacher. This type of assessment is very important in our schools. To have better outcomes, we need to give greater attention to teaching and learning activities, and to extra-curricular activities in the campus. Assessment--whether of individuals or institutions--is redemptive in nature and always seeks God's high ideal of excellence. It is acknowledged that it is extremely difficult to measure progress towards some objectives which parents will be looking for; but this not a reason for not trying. (Nicholls & Howard, 1978, p.70).

### **Christian Virtues**

Every teacher who has to do with the education of young students should remember that children are affected by the atmosphere that surrounds the teacher, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant. If the teacher is connected with God, if Christ abides in his heart, the spirit that is cherished by him will be felt by the children. If teachers enter the schoolroom with a provoked, irritated spirit, the atmosphere surrounding their souls will also leave its impressions. Therefore we expect the administrators and the teachers to develop Christian character, Christ alike nature, love, gentleness, friendly behavior, courtesy, forbearance, and patience. Teachers and students are to come close together in Christian fellowship. The youth will make many mistakes, and the teacher is never to forget to be

compassionate and courteous. Never is he to seek to show his superiority. The greatest of teachers are those who are patient, and most kind. "By their simplicity and their willingness to learn, they encourage their students to climb higher and still higher" (White, 1949, p. 269).

### **Knowledge**

It was identified long ago that the curriculum is a body or corpus of knowledge to be organized, communicated, acted upon and in some sense reproduced by the students in a school system. Skilbeck (1984, p. 30) in his book has mentioned about a liberal or general education should be grounded in systematic study of clearly defined areas of knowledge: not subjects necessarily, but domains individualized and differentiated by (i) concepts; (ii) a logical structure needed to make propositions; and (iii) criteria for truth. All learning is grounded on faith in a certain set of presuppositions or worldview. The Christian worldview recognizes a supernatural as well as a natural order. Adventists define knowledge more broadly than that which is merely intellectual or scientific. True knowledge encompasses cognitive, experiential, emotional, relational, intuitive, and spiritual elements. An acquisition of true knowledge leads to understanding which is manifested in wisdom and appropriate action. This change can be brought by dedicated teachers in secondary schools. We motivate the teachers to put in their best in everything to teach students and bring them to the foot of cross.

### **ROLE OF THE TEACHER**

The teacher usually has the advantage of a course of study and practice to prepare him to carry out his role. He is a person above average in general academic ability, with interests, ideas, abilities, and experiences that can be used for the benefit of his pupils. He needs to be able to assess his capabilities without too much over estimation or underestimation. He needs also to be able to communicate and work with others as well as to be able to develop these skills in his pupils. There is no doubt about the strengths and weaknesses among the teachers but they are expected to work in harmony for the betterment of the students and institution.

Adventist secondary school teachers are expected to exercise high standards of moral life. They need to be above reproach. They should be able to adapt the lifestyle of Jesus Christ in their lives. They should become models for students.

### **ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR**

Administrators are also role models, not only for students but also for teachers. They articulate school vision. The position of school principal is certainly an exciting one to uphold. So many different groups and individuals have expectations about what the school principal should do and should achieve for the community as well as for their children. It is very important to keep in mind the desires of the parents in all his dealings. Parents and community members expect a public-minded, highly principled person who is open to outside initiatives and who will communicate information regularly to them. Teachers expect their school principal to be an instructional leader and a supporter of curriculum initiatives and to be very visible and active around the school building. Students expect a sympathetic counselor and final arbiter on matters of justice, discipline and penalties, but above all, an inspirational, charismatic figurehead. The Church and State departmental officials and senior regional officers expect school principal to be thorough, reliable and efficient and capable of implementing and monitoring departmental policies and not to be overly influenced by vocal minority groups.

The expectations in total are overwhelming and in most cases, perhaps unrealistic to achieve all at once but the role of the school principal contains many conflicts and ambiguities. The principal leads a communication network a two-way flow of information between schools and head office and community agencies and individuals. The principals also exercise that resources are in place (faculty/teachers, material, physical facilities) to support instructions through the formal curriculum.

## FORMAL CURRICULUM

According to Sutton, (1991) the formal curriculum is concerned with making decisions about both content and process; making decisions about a variety of issues and topics; and involving many groups and decision-making at many levels. In this process, we as individuals should not become a stumbling block in the growth of the child.

The Adventist school curriculum should promote academic excellence and should include a core of general studies needed for responsible citizenship in a given culture along with spiritual insights that inform Christian living and build community. Such citizenship includes appreciation for the Christian heritage, concern for social justice and stewardship of the environment. A balanced, integrated curriculum should address the major developmental needs in the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and vocational realms. All areas of study should be examined from the perspective of the Biblical worldview within the context of the “Great Controversy” theme. The teachers should be involved in integrating faith and learning in the curriculum. The teachers should get interested in faith/learning integration approach; teach their subjects from a Biblical—Christian worldview perspective, and discover in the subject matter, the themes that naturally allow for an explicit connection between the curricular content, on the one hand, and Christian faith, beliefs, and values on the other. Teachers highlight these connections in their course plans, lectures, student assignments, class discussions, thought questions in examinations, and other learning experiences, with the goal of leading their students to develop their own Bible-based view of knowledge.

We should consider every child who comes to our school as a gift from of God. Therefore, our primary focus of the entire curriculum is to mould, love and accept. The purpose of Adventist education is to help students reach their highest potential and to fulfill God’s purpose for their lives. Student outcomes constitute a significant guiding criterion in assessing the health and effectiveness of the school. Every student should realize that it is a God given opportunity and a privilege to study in an Adventist secondary school.

The instructional program of the classroom should place an appropriate emphasis on all forms of true knowledge, purposefully integrating faith and learning. Instructional methodology should actively engage the needs and abilities of each student, giving opportunity to put what is learned into practice and be appropriate to the discipline. Administrators and teachers in Adventist secondary schools make a decision about what believes, which gives it identity and sense of purpose. An institution's belief determines its commitments. This is the only way the educational process can make sense and the institution can fulfill its unique, distinctive mission in the confusing environment of school education.

The child of today is the builder of tomorrow. It is only through a well designed and effectively implemented curriculum that the child can be equipped to realize his inner potential and to contribute meaningfully to nation-building and church building. The curriculum is basic to the aesthetic, emotional, ethical, intellectual, physical, social, vocational and spiritual development of the child.

As observed by Horne, H. and Brown, S (1997), "if the teacher is the guide, the curriculum is the path." "A good curriculum marks the points of significance so that the student does not wander aimlessly in our institutions".

### **Instruction**

Content and methods come together with pupils and the teacher in a learning opportunity. This might be described as a planned and controlled relationship between pupils, teacher, materials, equipment and the environment in which it is hoped that desired learning will take place. This can be achieved by teachers who are committed to implement the right method of teaching.

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Teachers and principal should work together as brethren. All those teachers who are teaching subjects like mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology and also arts, commerce and other vocational course must include practical classes along with lectures. They should always use new methods and latest techniques in their teaching. Teachers gain respect only when he/she is able to handle the subject matter to the expectations of the students. All teachers are expected to integrate faith and learning in all their teaching. It is necessary for us as teachers to exercise this authority. Integrating Faith and Learning in Curriculum Development in Specific Subjects.

### **Bible**

The Bible should have first place in the curriculum. An understanding of the revealed will of God, enlarges the mind, expands, elevates, and endows it with new vigour, by bringing its faculties in contact with stupendous truths. If the study of the Scriptures is made a secondary consideration, great loss is sustained. The minute the Bible is excluded from our schools, Satan will find his way to destroy the school.

### **History, Civics, Geography, Literature, Philosophy, and Languages**

All the subjects which are mentioned above should have the root from the Bible. The Bible is the source of all knowledge. We encourage all our students and teachers to study the subject matter in the light of the Word of God. James 3:17 says that the wisdom given is first pure.

### **Science**

The understanding of sciences will be better when it related to the Bible. We are to obtain knowledge of the Creator. All true science is but an interpretation of the hand writing of God in the material world. Science brings from her research only fresh evidences of the wisdom and power of God. Rightly understood, both the book of nature and the written Word are from God.

### INFORMAL CURRICULUM

Beyond the formal Curriculum is the informal to achieve goals for Wholistic Education and student outcomes. According to the secondary education commission of 1952-53, by Agarwal (2003) "It includes the totality of experience that a pupil receive through the manifold activities that go on in the school-in the class-room, library, laboratory, workshop, playground and in the numerous informal contacts between teachers and pupils. In this case the whole life of the school becomes the curriculum which can touch the life of the students at all points and help in the evolution of balanced personality".

It is very important and vital in our management to be vigilant in our dealings with students and teachers in our institutions so that we will not be a stumbling block in the life of every student who comes to an Adventist secondary school.

According to Donaldson, (1987) it is a tool in the hands of the artist (the teacher) to mould his material (the pupil) in accordance with his ideal in his studio (the school). It is very important to conduct school assemblies, two week of prayers, one at the commencement of the school year and the second one towards the close of the academic year, chapels, A. Y. classes, prayers groups, singing groups and lay activities on Sabbath afternoons.

It is vital to provide the information regarding maintaining good health. Our body is the temple of God. We are expected to maintain and keep it healthy. Therefore, school administrators are expected to inculcate in the mind of every student to work out a systematic plan to keep good health. Ellen G. White has a beautiful statement for all of us. She says that "Grains, fruits, nuts and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our creator. These foods prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart strength, a power of endurance and vigor of intellectuals that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet (White, 1949, p. 296).

In order for children and youth to have health, cheerfulness, vivacity, and well-developed muscles and brains, they should be much in the open air, and have well-regulated

employment and amusement. Children and youth, who are kept at school and confined to books, cannot have sound physical constitutions. The exercise of the brain in study, without corresponding physical exercise, has a tendency to attract the blood to the brain and the circulation of the blood through the system becomes unbalanced. It is expected of the institution to provide for our-door games like volley ball, foot ball, cricket, table tennis, lawn tennis and host of other recreational activities like running, walking. No competitions, no bets, no gambling, etc. should be provided. Some one has suggested a simple formula i.e., run a kilometer, play a game in the school campus, your spirits elevated with exercise. This is almost guaranteed that exercise reduce tension, drains frustration, enhances a sense of well-being, and improves sleep and helps students concentrate better.

### **School Life**

A blended emphasis of worship, study, labor, and recreation will characterize the total learning environment, with careful attention given to balance. The campus community will be pervaded by joyful spirituality, a spirit of cooperation, and respect for the diversity of individuals and cultures.

### **Discipline**

Discipline in a Christian school is built upon the need to restore the image of God in each student and recognizes the freedom of the will and the work of the Holy Spirit. Discipline--not to be confused with punishment--seeks the development of self-control. In redemptive discipline, the student's will and intelligence are engaged. The object of discipline is the training of the child for self-government. He should be taught self-reliance and self-control.

The true object of reproof is gained only when the wrong doer himself is led to see his fault, and his will is enlisted for its correction. When this is accomplished, point him to the source of pardon and power. Seek to preserve his self-respect and to inspire him with courage and hope. The children should be directed to follow the rules and regulations

carefully. They should be informed to maintain punctuality for classes and other activities. The behavior on the campus should be acceptable. No foul language is accepted. Good relationships with peers, teachers, administrator's, staff and parents have to be up-right both in side and out side of the campus. They should meet the requirements of the classes, work and home work. Their work should be observed by the teachers without fail.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This paper has been prepared keeping in mind the present trends in the Adventist education and also the commercial education system in which the Adventist education and its philosophy to be identified in our schools.

### **Conclusion**

It is not an easy task to undertake the integration of Adventist educational philosophy into the secondary school curriculum but then nothing concerned with teaching is easy. The study and practice of curriculum development is, however, most stimulating, satisfying and rewarding, second only to the actual implementation of the curriculum. It provides real purpose to the study of the major disciplines of education and offers the opportunity of putting theory to the test in a real and practical situation. No teacher who regards himself as a professional person can afford not to participate in the integration of faith and learning into the educational system.

### **Recommendation**

It can be recommended 1) to direct the minds of the students to the Holy Word; 2) to maintain the quality of supervision and standard of the curriculum in secondary schools; 3) to integrate faith and learning as the integral part of the school System; and, 4) to make the word of God as the central theme of Adventist education.

The emphasis should be given to spirituality, student learning outcomes, role of the

teacher and administrators, formal and informal curriculum and other aspects of the school life.

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## APPENDIX

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has made a commitment to provide a broad education and spiritual formation for its children, youth and young adults within the context of the Christian worldview. The Church extends this same opportunity to other children and youth of the community who share similar values and ideals. Adventist education seeks to maintain academic excellence in all teaching learning activities.

We expect all the educational administrators of the institutions to follow the guidelines given by Ellen G. White in her book *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, as our schools are to be educating schools and training schools; and if men and women come forth from them fitted in any sense for the missionary field, they must have impressed upon them the greatness of the work, and that practical godliness must be brought into their daily experience, to be fitted for any place of usefulness in our world, or in the church, or in God's great moral vineyard, now calling for laborers in foreign lands. White (1949).

This integration of faith and learning is a deliberate and systematic process of approaching the entire educational enterprise--both curricular and co-curricular--from a Christian perspective. In a Seventh-day Adventist settings, its aim is to ensure that students, by the time they leave school, will have freely internalized Biblical values and a view of knowledge, life and destiny that is Bible-based, Christ-centered, service-oriented, and kingdom-directed. \_

### **A Statement of Seventh-day Adventist Educational Philosophy**

Seventh-day Adventists, within the context of their basic beliefs, acknowledge that God is the Creator and Sustainer of the entire universe--animate and inanimate. He created perfect human beings in His own image with power to think, to choose, and to do.

God is the source of all that is true, good, and beautiful, and has chosen to reveal Himself to humankind. Humans, by their own choice, rebelled against God and fell into a state of

sin that has separated them from God and each other, affecting the entire planet and plunging it into the cosmic conflict between good and evil. In spite of this, the world and human beings still reveal, however, dimly, the goodness and beauty of their original condition. The Godhead met the problem of sin through the plan of redemption. This plan aims to restore human beings to God's image and the universe back to its original state of perfection, love, and harmony. God invites us to choose His plan of restoration and to relate to this world creatively and responsibly until He intervenes in history to bring forth the new heavens and the new earth.

The Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is Christ-centered. Adventists believe that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God's character and purposes can be understood as revealed in nature, the Bible, and Jesus Christ. The distinctive characteristics of Adventist education--derived from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White--point to the redemptive aim of true education: *to restore human beings into the image of their Maker.*

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God is infinitely loving, wise, and powerful. He relates to human beings on a personal level, presenting His character as the ultimate norm for human conduct and His grace as the means of restoration. Adventists recognize that human motives, thinking, and behavior have fallen short of God's ideal. Education in its broadest sense is a means of restoring human beings to their original relationship with God. Working together, homes, schools, and churches, cooperate with divine agencies in preparing learners for responsible citizenship in this world and in the world to come.

Adventist education imparts more than academic knowledge. It fosters a balanced development of the whole person—spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. Its time dimensions span eternity. It seeks to develop a life of faith in God and respect for the dignity of all human beings; to build character akin to that of the Creator; to nurture thinkers rather than mere reflectors of others' thoughts; to promote loving service rather than selfish ambition; to ensure maximum development of each individual's potential; to embrace all that is true, good, and beautiful.

**Students completing the secondary level at an Adventist school should:**

Have had an opportunity to commit their lives to God and therefore manifest a maturing faith in Him characterized by personal devotion, public worship, and service and witness to others in fulfillment of the Church's mission. The results will be seen when these children have their week of prayers, prayer bands, Bible classes, personal interviews with chaplain, Baptismal classes, devotionals, weekend services, etc. The school is expected to provide opportunity to students to speak in Sabbath schools, worships, Bible classes and Practical training programs.

Demonstrate competence in communication, quantitative skills, and creative thinking, along with other academic areas that are foundation to excellence in tertiary education and/or the world of work. Today the whole world has been identified as a global village just because of the communication. It is the duty of the school management to introduce communication skills in curriculum, special classes for slow learners and students who would help in improving the skills of the other students. Encourage them to speak in English on the campus, conduct elocution classes, quiz's, debates, and other related programs to make the students strong in their communication. This will help them to focus in a particular line of studies in the future. It is also true that when a student is good in English and communication, they will do better in other subjects.

Demonstrate maturity and Christ-like sensitivity within the family circle, in the choice friendships, in preparation for marriage, and in broad participation within their church and community. Along with academics, the social life is very important. The institution is expected to provide counseling on diet, family, marriage, relationships, community activities and mannerism. This will help them to have a good and strong family. As it says that the family which prays together will stay together.

Make good decisions and wise choices in ways that demonstrate their belief in the body as a temple of God. This includes careful use of time and discriminating selection of music, media, and other forms of entertainment. It is very important on the part of the management to guide students on recreation and amusement. Physical and cultural

activities. Building up of the good character. To help them choose right exercise, books, magazines and the music. Some times, Satan will try to capture the minds of school children through wrong music.

Have developed a strong work ethic functioning competently in everyday life as well as within entry-level work experiences appropriate to their interests and God-given abilities. One great reason why physical toil is looked down on is the slipshod, unthinking way in which it is so often performed. It is done from necessity, not from choice. The worker puts no heart into it, and he neither preserves self-respect nor wins the respect of others. Manual training should correct this error. It should develop habits of accuracy and thoroughness. (Ellen White, Ed., p 22). Every child should be taught on the lines of self-respect and dignity of labor. This is what the Church needs.

The teacher holds a central place of importance. Ideally, the teacher should be both a committed Adventist Christian and an exemplary role model of the Christian graces and professional competencies.

There should not be a teacher employed, unless you have evidence by test and trial that he/she loves and fears to offend God. If teachers are taught of God, if their lessons are daily learned in the school of Christ, they will work in Christ's lines. They will win and draw with Christ; for every child and youth is precious. White Ellen G ( F.E., p 260).

Ellen G. White says that the teachers are to bind the students to their hearts by the cords of love and kindness and strict discipline. Love and kindness are worth nothing unless united with the discipline that God has said should be maintained. White Ellen G (C.T., p. 26). The school family is expected to present themselves to the Jesus Christ and He will direct their lives to be ministers.

Education goes beyond formal schooling. Life-long learning should meet the needs of both professionals and non-professionals. (1) Among professional responsibilities are opportunities for continuing education for certification and career enrichment for educators, clergy, business and health-care personnel, and others. (2) In the non-

professional realm, opportunities exist for programs in such areas as local church leadership, family life, personnel development, spirituality, Christian growth, and service to the church and the community. Programs need to be developed that utilize both traditional teaching techniques and extension learning through media technology. Formal schooling combines with the other agencies of education in preparing the student “for the joy of service in this world and the higher joy of wider service in the world to come”.