

1. Headline Results

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Participant Numbers

This book is a report and analysis of the findings from a survey conducted among attendees at the 2018 Teachers' Convention of the North American Division (NAD) of Seventh-day Adventists (SDAs) that met in Chicago from August 6 to 9, 2018. Table 1.1 records the number who participated in the survey (see Chapter 7 for an explanation of the various numbers).

Table 1.1 The Number of Participants in the Survey

	Q1 Only	Partial with Q1 but no Demographics	Demographics and other Responses but no Q1	Q1 and Most Other Questions Incl. Demographics	Totals
Paper-based Surveys	10	9	64	466	549
SurveyMonkey Surveys	64	30	6	446	546
Totals	74	39	70	912	1,095

The Teachers

Their responses to the survey reveal the following key statistics for the teachers in Adventist Schools in the NAD:

- 42.5% had a Bachelor's degree, 51% a Master's degree, and 5% a Doctoral degree (see Table 7.3 in Chapter 7);
- 52.7% are aged from 40 to 59 years (see Table 7.2);

- 70% of them have worked for the Church for more than 10 years (see Table 7.7);
- 89.6% attend church worship services at least once a week (see Table 7.8);
- 96% report a positive commitment to the local and world SDA Church, and their most frequently reported level of commitment was “very strong” (see Table 7.8);
- 99.3% said that they had made a personal commitment to Jesus that was still important in their life (see Table B.86 in Appendix B);
- 98.3% believe in a personal God who seeks a relationship with human beings (see Table B.90);
- 94% pray at least once a day (see Table 12.1 in Chapter 12) and 96.4% have received a definite answer to a specific prayer request (see Table 16.2 in Chapter 16);
- 87.5% read their Bibles once a week or more often (see Table 12.1);
- 96.9% agreed that the “Bible is the work of people who were inspired by God and who expressed their message in terms of their own time and place” (see Table 14.2 in Chapter 14);
- 87.8% of them tithe at least 10% of their income (see Table 12.3);
- 95.9% expect Jesus to return to earth a second time (see Table 15.1 in Chapter 15);
- 78.9% use religion (41.4%) or religion and common sense (37.5%) as the basis for deciding what is right and wrong (see Table 14.1);
- 90% strongly agreed that they serve the mission of the Church through their work as teachers (see Table B.66).

These teachers are human, and their school principals and church administrators will probably testify to the fact that the teachers in Adventist Schools in the NAD are not without their faults. But considered from the perspective of what is important in their own spiritual lives, in their commitment to the mission of the school and commitment to the wider mission of the church, they are a highly laudable group.

Teachers' Understanding of the Mission of their Schools

Question 1 of the survey invited participants to respond in their own words to the following: “I work at a Church-connected school / organization. If I were asked what the mission of my school / organization should be, I would say [please write one or two sentences]: ...” These responses from participants were provided without prompting from the survey. After multiple readings of the responses from participants, and using NVivo as a tool, common themes have been identified by Sherene Hattingh and reported in Chapter 8. They are listed in Table 1.2, starting with the most frequently occurring theme (see further discussion of methodology and results in Chapter 8).

**Table 1.2: Themes from the NAD responses to Question 1:
Goals of School**

Theme	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
1. Lead the children to Jesus	342	34
2. Education	265	26
3. Preparation for this world	209	21
4. Service learning	203	20
5. Eternity focus	203	20
6. Share the Good News	187	19
7. Christ-centered education	161	16
8. God's love	98	10
9. No response/don't know	88	9
10. Community focus	51	5
11. Distinctly Adventist	36	4

Question 2 asked teachers to rate a series of pre-defined goals for their schools according to the following criteria:

0. Does not apply to my organization
1. Should NOT be a purpose or goal of my school / organization
2. I feel neutral about this as a purpose or goal of my school / organization
3. An important purpose / goal of my school, but not one of the top three
4. One of top three purposes / goals of my school (use this in 3 or 4 answers only)

The responses are listed in Table 1.3, which reports on the percentage of teachers that identified a particular goal as being one of the top two or three goals of their school, in rank order, starting with the highest percentage. The table also lists the percentage of participants who suggested that the goal should not be a goal of their school (see Chapter 9 for a fuller discussion of these goals and the responses from participants, and Tables B.25 through B.39 in Appendix B for details of frequencies of the responses to the individual items).

**Table 1.3: Aims of Schools
according to Teachers in NAD Schools**

	One of the top three goals of the School (%)	Should not be a goal of the School (%)
2h. Create environment where students are more likely to accept Jesus	84.1	0.4
2b. Physical, psychological, social and spiritual wellbeing of students	71.7	0.4
2a. Quality	69.0	0.8
2g. Further teaching and healing ministry of Jesus	63.1	0.3
2f. Create a Christian environment in which to work	45.5	0.7
2j. Further mission of SDA Church	26.8	1.9
2e. Meet needs of local community	26.4	0.2
2o. Lead students to join SDA Church and be baptised	26.3	4.2
2m. Put into practice the teachings of the SDA Church	26.1	1.2
2c. Promote a Healthy lifestyle	26.0	0.9
2l. Be an interface between SDA Church and community	22.3	1.7
2n. Make opportunities for students to hear about the Adventist Church	21.6	2.2
2i. Create positive perception of Church	20.6	2.0
2d. Be competitive in sector	12.7	6.9
2k. Make money to support activities of SDA Church	3.9	29.8

Teachers' Understanding of the Goals of the SDA Church

Question 4 invited participants to respond in their own words, as follows: "If I were asked, "What is the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?" I would say [write one or two sentences]: ..."

The responses have been analysed by Wendy Jackson, who read them through several times to identify common themes, using NVivo as a tool. She reports that the most common themes in answers were as follows (see further discussion in Chapter 10):

Table 1.4: Themes from the NAD responses to Question 4: Goals of Church

Theme	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
Share the good news about Jesus Christ	332	33
Leading people to Jesus	221	22
God's love	153	15
Preparation for the future	138	14
Reflecting and Representing Christ	64	6
The Three Angels' Messages	57	6
Make disciples	56	5
Service	42	4
Teaching biblical truth	31	3
Baptizing / increasing church membership	20	2

In Question 5, participants were provided with a set of pre-defined potential goals of the Church. They were asked to classify them according to the following criteria:

0. I do not know / does not apply,
1. Should NOT be a purpose or goal of the Church
2. I feel neutral about this as a purpose or goal of the Church
3. An important purpose / goal of the Church, but not one of the top two
4. One of top two or three purposes / goals of the Church (use this in only 2 or 3 answers)

The participants' classifications appear in Table 1.5, which reports on the percentage of teachers who identified particular goals that they considered to be one of the top two or three goals of the church, in rank order, starting with the highest percentage. The table also lists the percentage of participants who suggested that a given goal should not be a goal of the Church (see Chapter 10 for a further discussion of these goals and the responses from participants, and Tables B.70 through B.78 in Appendix B for details of frequencies of the responses to the individual items).

**Table 1.5: Aims of the Church
according to Teachers in NAD Schools**

	One of the top three goals of the School (%)	Should not be a goal of the Church (%)
5e. Share the message and teaching of Jesus with the world	89.0	0.2
5f. Lead people to accept Jesus as their personal Saviour	88.2	0.1
5h. Prepare people for the soon return of Jesus	67.6	0.7
5a. Provide meaningful worship services	26.3	1.1
5c. Reduce poverty, disease and ignorance	24.4	1.3
5d. Teach an ethical viewpoint	15.6	2.6
5b. Increase the numbers who attend church on a regular basis	8.2	10.4
5i. Persuade people to join the Church through baptism	7.7	17.7
5g. Convince people of the teachings of the Church	4.9	22.1

Does What Teachers Think the Church Should be Doing Correspond to what they Think their School Should be Doing?

When asked what their schools should be doing, teachers in Adventist schools in the NAD spontaneously used words that suggested: “Lead the children to Jesus; Education; Preparation for this world; Service learning; Eternity focus; Share the Good News.” When they were asked the same thing about their church, they used words that would suggest, “Share the good news about Jesus Christ; Leading people to Jesus; God’s love; Preparation for the future; Reflecting and Representing Christ.”

The overlap between these sets of goals, one for schools, and one for the church, is impressive. As far as teachers are concerned, both schools and churches should be about leading people to Jesus; both should be about preparing for the future. In other words, there is a significant congruence between what teachers in Adventist Schools in the NAD think their school should be doing, and how they perceive the wider mission of the Church.

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