

It Can Be Done!

Returning an Adventist School to Health

SDACC Teachers Convention
(August 19, 2009, and less than 3 hours
from authentic Mexican food)

Eight Steps + One "Always Step"

Step 1. Ask and answer the right questions

- Am I willing to admit my part of the problem?
- Do I have a compelling vision for my school?
- Am I willing to do whatever it takes?
- Are there enough of the right people in the right places to do what our school needs done?

How do you get the right people in the right places?

- Pray
- Become a PPB (Polite but Persistent Burr)
- "Create a crisis"
- Bring in an audit team

Bottom Line: You may need to push for reform anyway, even if you're alone.

Step 2. Become a school of prayer

Make prayer integral in:

- church meetings
- school staff meetings
- among the student body

Step 3. Be or find the right local leader

- Q. Is the current leader the right one?
- Are they genuinely spiritual?
 - Are they passionate about Adventism?
 - Are they visionary?
 - Do they value personal and corporate accountability?
 - Are they trusted?
 - Are they already pushing for reform?

Step 4. Discover the true state of your school

Two possible ways:

- Outside auditing team
- Expose yourself/staff/etc., to really good schools

Step 5. Master the Fundamentals of Adventist Education

Some of the fundamentals are:

- Student salvation
- Teacher/student relationships
- Safety
- High-quality academics, teachers, & staff
- Inculcating in students a strong work ethic
- Instilling a passion for the unique mission for the Adventist Church
- Parent user-friendliness

Step 6. Relentlessly eliminate weaknesses or make them irrelevant

- Prioritize your weaknesses and eliminate them whenever possible
- Always eliminate weaknesses in the fundamentals FIRST
- If you can't eliminate a weakness, make it irrelevant through:
 - *Mitigation
 - *Truth telling

Step 7. Get the good word out/Enlist wide-spread support

- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Don't forget non-verbal communication, because **EVERYTHING COMMUNICATES.**

Step 8. Embed the positive changes in the culture of your school

Some methods to do so:

- Develop best governing board you can
- Develop best staff you can
- Be very specific with the conference as to what your needs are staff-wise
- Consider establishing endowments
- Alter administrative practices at the conference & union level (ch.19)

There is no step 9! Instead there is...

The "Always Step":
Always, always, always pursue "transformational" money

Laws of Transformational Finance:

1. "If all I seek is operational money, my school will never turn around."
2. Money is nearly always a secondary indicator.

Corollary: Money follows value and vision, but rarely precedes it.

