

Persevere — Keep On Keeping On

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‘Keep on keeping on’ is an old saying usually used as an encouragement when bad things happen—when we want to run from it all; but I would suggest that we can also say it when things are relatively good, but could continually improve. “Let us not become weary in doing good,” wrote the apostle Paul, “for in proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up” (Galatians 6:9, NIV). This invitation to persevere is one that we all continually need. It is a call to faithfulness, and yet it is also an affirmation that somehow, in spite of all our challenges, God will bring us through to our promised destiny with Christ.



In the past decade, we have undertaken some major initiatives to see more clearly where we are in terms of educational services in Canada, and what we can do to better serve our constituency and the surrounding communities, and fulfill our mission. These included a master plan, developed and adopted in 1996/7 and revised in 2001; an education survey of over 5,000 church members across Canada in 1998; an education summit in 1999; a survey of attitudes and perceptions toward Adventist schools in Canada of over 3,000 selected Adventist and non-Adventist parents of school age children in 2003; and most recently, in September/October 2005, an education survey of over 900 Adventist church employees in Canada.

Reports were given about these initiatives in various committees and constituent gatherings and published in the *Messenger* regularly. Documents developed with recommendations and action plans implemented, or still being implemented, are now available on our Canadian Adventist Teachers network (CAT~net) website <http://catnet.sdacc.org>. The Canada-wide “Achieving Excellence in Adventist Schools in Canada” action plans have been fully implemented to date, with some parts of the conference and schools’ action plans still being implemented.

Also, an ad hoc committee to study boarding academies in Canada is currently preparing recommendations to be considered by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC) board. An in-service for the Education Council members, the SDACC officers, conference presidents, and ministerial directors, dealing with ‘Pastors and Teachers Working Together for Adventist Education’ is planned for March 3, 2006. The plan is for the conference participants in this in-service to organize similar meetings of their pastors and teachers, seeking the best ways of cooperation in ministering to the youth of our Church in Canada.

I was encouraged by significantly more positive attitudes of Adventist church employees toward our schools in 2005 as compared to 2003. The following comment of a teacher testifies of the quality and commitment perpetuated in our schools: “I believe in Adventist education. That’s why I teach in a Seventh-day Adventist school. My soul mission is to see my students in heaven. There are many excellent teachers in other schools, but my teachers both modeled and taught me to know and love Jesus. They worshiped with me and prayed

both with and for me. This is the legacy my teachers gave me and this is the legacy I want to pass to my own students.”

It is this kind of people that I have been blessed to work with in Canada since September 1, 1993 – first in Quebec, then in Ontario, mostly at the SDACC. After a visit to the New Jersey Conference and prayerful deliberation with my wife, Nada, and in consultation with the SDACC administration, I have accepted the call of the New Jersey Conference executive committee to become their superintendent of schools, effective February 1, 2006.

We praise God for all of you who have touched our lives and supported our ministry in Canada. You will remain in our hearts and minds forever! I will assist the SDACC administration and office of education during the transition time until my replacement is chosen, hopefully sooner than later. As we look into the future, let us be reminded of the Apostle Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 3:6, “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.” God bless and let’s ‘keep on keeping on’ until that day when we will be invited to live eternally together with our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.