

Since the first of more than 30 reports on the status of American education was released in 1983, attention has been centered on schools and their programs with an intensity that has been unmatched except for the furor that followed the launching of Sputnik. Many of the voices raised have labeled the current state of affairs as "A Nation at Risk," a crisis in education, or other (mostly derogatory) descriptions.

Mathematics education in the elementary and secondary school has received its share of attention and criticism. Concern has also been expressed over the dwindling number of qualified teachers, a problem that can only compound the difficulty of achieving quality mathematics instruction.

What are the implications of these concerns to Seventh-day Adventist education? How adequately prepared are the boys and girls attending SDA schools? What long- and short-range plans are being formulated to cope with and correct the immediate problems and provide solutions on a long-term basis? Educators at all levels must give adequate attention to these concerns and develop clearly defined goals for mathematics education. Only by doing so will SDA schools be able to continue to meet the challenges that will confront them in the next decade.

What is the importance of mathematics in Seventh-day Adventist schools and society in general? What should elementary educators and math teachers at the secondary level

emphasize in the mathematics curriculum, and why?

The challenges facing young people in our schools mandate quality mathematics instruction that emphasizes mastery of basic arithmetic and general mathematics skills, development of a "number sense," and command of problem-solving and logical-thinking skills. In addition, significant spiritual concepts and character development principles can, and should, be emphasized through mathematics instruction.

The future of the young people attending Seventh-day Adventist schools will be enhanced by quality mathematics instruction. Society's technological advances and increasing sophistication necessitate adequate preparation to meet the challenges of the future, many of which have not yet been fully defined.

The ability of the church to accomplish its mission depends on its competence in identifying, developing, and utilizing the innate abilities and talents of its young people. This challenge demands that instruction in all subject areas—and especially in mathematics—provide the foundation for life-long learning as well as nurture for attitudes and skills that will advance the spread of the gospel and the hastening of our Lord's return.—Gerry E. Thompson. □

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## *Mathematics Education*

### Implications for SDA Schools