



## **THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION**

I read with interest a recent Spectrum article entitled “Adventist Education in North America.” The author, Richard Hart, details some of the challenges facing Adventist education today, as well as identifying some potential options for change (Hart, 2021). Enrollment, in particular, has been declining in our PK-12 schools and higher ed institutions. What can be done?

There are many variables that impact enrollment, but evidence suggests that academics rises to the top when parents and students select schools (Robinson, n.d.). (Personally, I made the decision to move from one university setting to another because of the quality of the teaching and learning.) So what makes for strong academics? Based on my experience, it is sustainable leadership that has the capacity to respond continuously to change and to strive for coherence in four areas--focusing direction, cultivating collaborative cultures, deepening learning, and securing accountability (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Such actions are supportive of both teaching (faculty) and learning (students). Note the snapshot below of these four areas.

### **Focusing Direction**

Articulate the shared vision, goals, and strategy in a Continuous School Improvement Plan.

## **Cultivating Collaborative Cultures**

Maximize the use of learning communities that are committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and family-school-community partnerships.

## **Deepening Learning**

Develop structures and processes for professional learning that build the collective capacity of staff to support a culture of change.

## **Securing Accountability**

Utilize internal and external assessments of programs and processes as part of data analysis for continuous school improvement.

### References

Fullan, M., & Quinn, J. (2016). *Coherence: The right drivers in action for schools, districts, and systems*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Hart, R. H. (2021). *Adventist education in North America*. Retrieved from <https://spectrummagazine.org/news/2021/adventist-education-north-america>.

Robinson, S. (n.d.). The value proposition. Retrieved from <https://sais.org/app/uploads/2021/07/The-Value-Proposition.pdf>.