EDUCATION Matters
in the Southwestern Union Conference
May 2024
Volume 28 • Issue 2

The Valuegenesis Project

Three Decades of Understanding Adventist Youth

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The Valuegenesis Project has been a corner–stone in understanding the lives and faith of Seventh–day Adventist youth for over thirty years. This collaboration, involving the North American Division Office of Education, La Sierra University, and a team of researchers, has embarked on its fourth study, Valuegen–esis 4 (VG4), as of 2021–22. Through decades –long research, including previous studies in 1990, 2000, and 2010, Valuegenesis offers invaluable insights into the spiritual growth, challenges, and changing dynamics within our youth community.



VG4 aims to deepen our understanding of Adventist youth today, building on questions of faith development, community engage–ment, and personal challenges that have been part of the project's fabric since its inception. It maintains a core set of 209 sur–vey questions, covering crucial areas such as personal spirituality, church involvement, family and educational influences, and pressing issues like mental health and lifestyle choices. Additionally, VG4 introduces new areas of inquiry to reflect emerging societal trends and concerns, including online activi–ty, mental well–being, and global awareness.

The insights gained from VG4 are precious for church leaders and members. They offer a mirror reflecting our youth's current state and guide us in shaping more engaging, supportive, and relevant educational, spiritu–al, and family environments. The project underscores the importance of our collec–tive role in fostering a faith community where young people feel understood, val–ued, and inspired.

An official website has been launched, giv–ing church members direct access to the project's findings. The team is actively pub–lishing the results online and is preparing a detailed report to be released soon. This report will offer an in–depth analysis of the current state of our youth's faith and lifestyle, highlighting how these have evolved over the last thirty years.

Link to the Valuegenesis Website: https://faithinstitution.org/

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PURPOSE

Leadership Camp—Leadership Camp will be held September 12–15, 2024 at Lone Star Camp.

Education by Design Scholarship—In July of 2024, you will receive information from the Union treasury regarding the Education by Design Scholarship.

Education *by Design*

Recruitment of Teachers—Two initiatives regarding the recruitment of teachers have been developed: SWUC Teacher Education Scholarship and SWAU Intro to Teaching Dual Credit Course. Contact Dr. The at SWAU if an academy would like to offer the Intro to Teaching Course.

Aspiring Teacher Club—Scholarships are available to inspire the next generation of teachers from among our academy students. Contact Jackie Downs (jdowns@sffcfoundation.org) from the SFFC Foundation if you are interested.

PLAN

Library Resources—The Southwestern Adventist University Library has developed a collection of open-source resources for academy students that can be found here.

Robotics Grant—Robotics Grant Applications are due July 1. The grant will enable your school to purchase some basic equipment to begin a robotics program.

Kindergarten Encounter Program—Everyone that attended the Kindergarten Encounter Training will receive a Resource Kit. The list price for the Kindergarten Encounter Resource Kit is $154.00; the discounted price if you order now is $119.00.

Elementary Curriculum Timeline—See the attached chart for timeline information.

Education Code Edits to 4400—PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

1. Stand-Alone Pre-School Program

Pre-School Program: A program that provides a natural extension of trustworthy care for children to enable children to grow spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Children must be three years of age by September 1 of the year they are enrolled, to be eligible for enrollment into the pre-school program.

2. Stand-Alone Pre-Kindergarten Program

Pre-kindergarten Program: An educational environment designed to stimulate the growth and development of four-year-old children until they enter kindergarten. The program is designed to enhance the learning experiences of children with emphasis on spiritual, physical, social, and emotional growth prior to the kindergarten year. Children must be four years of age by September 1 of the year they are enrolled, to be eligible for enrollment into the school-based pre-kindergarten program. (A classroom with children who have not reached four years of age by September 1 of the year they are enrolled, may not be classified as a pre-kindergarten program.) When a school extends its program to include three-year-olds, the school will need to operate under the title Pre-school and verify state requirements for the operation of an Early Childhood Program.

3. Stand-Alone Kindergarten Program

Kindergarten Program: A readiness program which is conducted in a formal school setting and designed to prepare children for the first grade. Length of a child's stay in the program depends upon his maturation level. Children must be five years of age by September 1 of the year they are enrolled, to be eligible for enrollment into the school-based kindergarten program.

4. Combination Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten Program

Combination Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten Program: A combination Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten program includes eligible four-year-old and five-year-old students in the same class. If policies or guidelines differ between the two grades, schools must comply with the strictest regulation. No additional grades from first through eighth are permitted in a classroom with pre-kindergarten.

5. Combination K-1/K-2 Programs

K-1/K-2 Program: A primary grade classroom consisting of kindergarten and first grade, or kindergarten, first, and second grades in an elementary school.

ADMISSION / ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Prior to accepting any applicant the following proper documentation must be on file:

AGE – Entrance age requirements must be followed. Any deviation from them must be approved by the local Conference Office of Education. An original copy of the birth certificate must be presented before a child can be admitted to the program.

a. Preschool children must be at least three (3) years of age by September 1 of the year they are enrolled in preschool.
b. Pre-kindergarten children must be at least four (4) years of age by September 1 of the year they are enrolled in pre-kindergarten.
c. Kindergarten children must be at least five (5) years of age by September 1 of the year they are enrolled in kindergarten.
d. When a state's regulation conflicts with the September 1 deadline, the earliest date supersedes.

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

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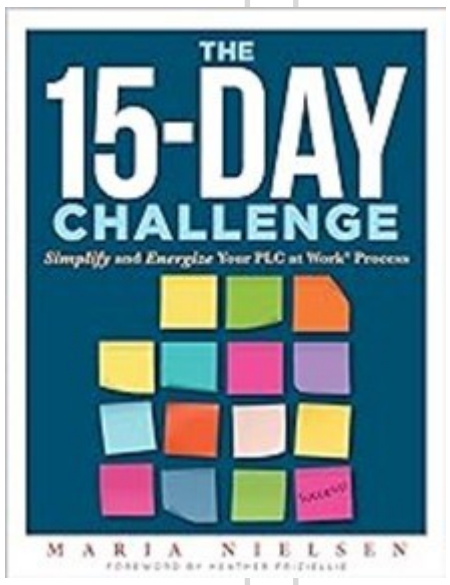
PRACTICE

Webinars—See the attached flyer for 2024–2025 Educator Webinars.

Elementary Math Summer Institute—See the attached flyer for the Math Institute.

Religion Teachers' Workshop—During the fall of 2024, the Union will plan to collaborate with SWAU again and have a workshop for secondary religion teachers. Details will be shared when they are available.

Featured Book Review— *The 15-Day Challenge*, 2024
Author: Maria Nielsen
Get to the heart of essential PLC work when you implement the 15-day challenge for unit planning and design. This book offers a step-by-step process for collaborative teams that builds on the three big ideas and four critical questions of a PLC at Work®. In each chapter, you'll find practical actions for how to support all students in mastering essential learning standards.



ASI Resources for young preachers in training—https://asiministries.org/newbeginnings/

PRODUCT

Data—Survey Data is available on Union-wide implementation of Continuous School Improvement (CSI) and Standards-based Learning (SBL).

Plans—In addition to a CSI Plan, it is recommended that schools develop the following plans:

- Spiritual Master Plan
- Marketing and Recruitment Plan
- Technology Plan
- Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Professional Learning Plan
- Social Media Policy



Rosy Arizaga
New Associate Superintendent
Texico Conference

2023-2024 Excellence in Teaching Award

Sheila Capobres
Greater New Orleans Christian Academy
Arkansas-Louisiana Conference

Ruth Vargas
Tulsa Adventist Academy
Oklahoma Conference

Becky Clark
North Dallas Adventist Academy
Texas Conference

Melisandra Zubik
Cleburne Adventist Christian School
Texas Conference

Ruth Elizalde
El Paso Adventist Academy
Texico Conference

Amy Abernathy
North Dallas Adventist Academy
Texas Conference

Stan Miller
Sandia View Academy
Texico Conference

Excellence in Leadership Award

Lizzette Garcia
Killeen Adventist Jr. Academy
Texas Conference



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SouthwesternAdventistEducation.com

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