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ATTITUDES OF MEMBERS OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
CHURCH IN MONTANA TOWARD THE SUPPORT  
OF MOUNT ELLIS ACADEMY

by

RONALD WILSON CHRISTENSEN

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

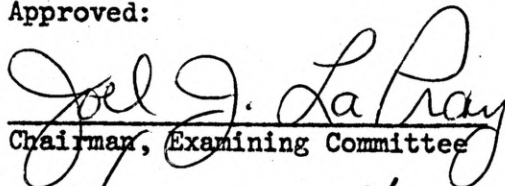
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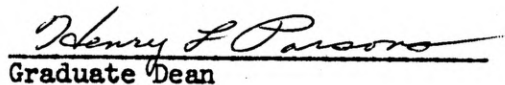
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the attitude of the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana toward the support of Mount Ellis Academy, a church operated secondary school, located at Bozeman, Montana.

This investigation was accomplished with the aid of a questionnaire completed by two hundred fifteen members of the church selected by a random sample from a possible population of thirteen hundred seventy five. The questionnaire included five major areas broken down into seventeen individual questions. The five major areas were justifying the cost for operating the school, meeting the expectations of the constituency, continued operation of the school, feeling regarding the new gymnasium and future building programs. A review of literature was utilized to add meaning to findings.

From the survey of the membership it was shown that there was general agreement that the school should continue in operation and satisfaction was shown concerning the type of learning being achieved, consequently the feeling seems to be that the money spent is worthwhile. The feeling that the money spent for the new gymnasium was a practical expenditure and that the industrial arts building is a real need, however expansion of the dormitories, administration building and a church building received negative responses.

Minor areas covered by the survey indicated that some type of work for every student was a necessity, the sports program needed to be de-emphasized and that the enrollment should not be limited to Montana students but that students from within the state should have first opportunity to attend.

Recommendations were that there needs to be improved communications between school and constituency, the administration should take into consideration the high interest by lay members, the industrial arts building is of top priority, larger dormitories should not be planned and that the sports program should be low-keyed.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Formal nonpublic school education, says Ferrer (1956:14), has existed in North America since 1635 when "Boston Latin" first opened its doors to the education of the youth of that city. Until about 1840 all education in this country was nonpublic; however, with the Kalamazoo decision, according to Brickell (1969:12) tax money became available to support public schools. On November 7, 1922, the people of the state of Oregon voted to adopt an amendment to the education law to become effective in 1926, which would not allow private schools to operate in that state; however, that law was found unconstitutional in the Supreme Court case (1925:510) of *Pierce, Governor of Oregon, ET AL. v. Society of Sisters*.

Actually nonpublic schools in the United States have made a complete turnabout so that what was at one time the only type of education available has become a small minority among the large number of educational institutions in this country today.

Nonpublic, non church related schools receive their financial support from tuition and endowments while church related schools' financial support comes from tuition paid by parents of the students, gifts from friends and subsidies from the religious denomination supporting that school.

### Mount Ellis Academy

Support for Mount Ellis Academy comes from a combination of tuition, \$2300.00 for the nine month 1974-75 school year, and a church subsidy from members of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Montana.

Since financial support for Mount Ellis Academy comes as a freewill offering from the church members in Montana and since the parents of the students also support the academy both by sending their children and paying the tuition it is safe to say that the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana support Mount Ellis Academy.

### Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine the attitudes of members of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Montana toward the support of their secondary school, Mount Ellis Academy.

### Purpose of the Investigation

The purpose of this investigation was to obtain a sample of the attitudes and opinions held by the constituent membership regarding the support of Mount Ellis Academy.

The findings of this survey will be taken into consideration as the church leadership makes plans for the operation and further development of this educational facility.

### General Questions to be Answered

Several questions pertinent to this investigation are as follows:

1. Does the constituency feel that the results, education received, and cost justify the means?
2. Is there enough favorable feeling and support for the school to remain in operation?
3. Is the feeling regarding the gymnasium, finished just three years ago, favorable or unfavorable?
4. Would the constituency support a further building program?
5. Is the school operated to the satisfaction of the constituents?

#### General Procedures

In order to obtain the information necessary for this study, this researcher collected data by circulating a questionnaire to a systematic random sample of adult members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana. These questionnaires went to only one adult member of a household unit. It was possible for a father and son to receive the questionnaire, but only if they resided in different households.

#### Limitations

The limitations of this investigation are described as follows:

1. The review of literature was limited to materials available in the library at Montana State University.
2. The questionnaire went to only one adult member of any one household.
3. The researcher accepted by faith that the person answering the questionnaire was absolutely honest.

### Definition of Terms

Constituency according to Websters (1971:486) is a group or body that patronizes, supports or offers representation, a body of supporters.

Parochial Schools are schools which are maintained by a religious body, usually for elementary instruction as defined in Websters (1971:1643).

Private schools according to Websters (1971:1804) are schools which are established, conducted and primarily supported by a non-governmental agency.

Mount Ellis Academy is a co-educational boarding school in the senior high level, located four miles east of Bozeman, Montana. The academy is owned and operated by the Montana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists whose headquarters is in Bozeman.

The school plant (Mount Ellis Academy 1974:3), its staff and curriculum are accredited by the North Pacific Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Northwest Accrediting Association and the State Department of Education for Montana.

## CHAPTER II

### A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This review of literature will be presented under six main topics--- Population Explosion Results In a Hard Look at Parochial Schools, Community Relations with the School, Attitudes toward Parochial School Finance, Parental Attitudes toward Parochial School Operations, Attitudes toward Discipline, and The Results of Parochial School Education in the Lives of its Recipients.

#### Population Explosion Results in a Hard Look at Parochial Schools

According to Donovan (1971:73) there has come a change in attitudes of parents of children who would normally attend parochial schools. For over a hundred years children were sent to parochial schools that they might receive a religious based education which would protect the faith of the child. Greeley (1967:425) says that the purpose of the church related school was to make students better, "Better than clean and better than white" and keep the sheep from wandering from the fold. A further purpose was stated by Donovan (1971:73), who said it was to unite the millions who were migrating to this country.

In 1962, one hundred thousand first grade children could not be accepted into Roman Catholic schools due to a lack of room, consequently they were enrolled in the public schools. As they continued to attend, their parents evaluated them against their peers in the parochial school

and found little difference between them; consequently, there is now little qualm of conscience in not attending the parochial school. According to Neuwein (1966:257), many parents with children in the public schools feel little if any responsibility in supporting the parochial school system.

Donovan (1971:61) says that the more educated Catholic Americans become the more liberated they are from the anti-religious influences which had earlier inspired parochial schools. It seems that the only plus in favor of parochial schools is the religious influence and that is offset by the greater value, set by the parents, in quality of education and in receiving the tools for becoming a part of and fitting into the American dream. The priority now seems to be to become fully American rather than fully Catholic.

Donovan (1971:26), also said that the children most likely to attend parochial schools are from families in average or higher socioeconomic income brackets. The families in these brackets tend to support the new urban parochial school while the capacity of the inner city perishes with low income families are having a difficult time with school finance.

#### Community Relations With The School

Attitudes toward what goes on in the school, be it public or private, have a great deal to do with the survival of that school. Support comes from the community be it the general public in the operation of

the public school or the church community which supports the parochial schools.

In a study made in California by Norton (1970:538-540) only 18 percent of the citizens felt that their opinions were not of much influence and that 50 percent of the people surveyed felt that the opinion of citizens were slightly felt. In this same study the researcher found that school personnel and the public have considerable differences of opinion regarding relative priorities of school goals. It is pointed out that the "open door" policy is a myth but that citizens feel that some policies are not "open doors" but "closed minds". Feelings have been expressed that with the rejection of school referendums the administrators should see the writing on the wall and give some attention to student unrest and teacher militancy as well as public concern. Community interaction with the school staff in the setting of specific goals and determining the school's purpose for existence will do much to alleviate this major school problem.

One principal, quoted by Myer (1974:94), said that the best defense against a vocal minority is to regularly involve all segments of the community with serious efforts to tell them the whole story.

#### Attitudes Toward Parochial School Finance

Parochial school finance has long been the matter of serious discussion. To begin, McMannus (1963:134) presents these three facts:

1. Catholic schools are here to stay. The church is firmly committed to the building and operating of these schools and parents have a right, not a mere privilege to enroll their children in Catholic schools.
2. Catholic schools perform a task of preparing young people to become citizens of this country, citizens who serve with honor and distinction in both public and private life.
3. Catholic schools need and deserve some type of tax aid in order to continue the high quality of education which this whole nation needs.

As a basis for the above reasoning, Mr. McMannus (1963:135) offers the following statement concerning the Roman Catholic Church and its stand on tax aid to Catholic schools. He says:

"This teaching is perfectly clear. It is that a government which collects school taxes from all citizens is obliged by distributive justice to appropriate an equitable share to all qualified schools rendering a public service. From this teaching it follows that federal and state laws forbidding tax aid to Catholic and other qualified nonpublic schools are unjust and ought to be repealed or amended."

In a study by Gilbert (1971:2) of parents' attitude toward government finance of private schools, it was found that of the eight hundred twenty three who responded to the questionnaire 43.1 percent thought the government should support the school, 16.7 percent felt the parents should pay the tuition and 26.2 percent felt that the cost should be handled mutually between the government and home.

Donovan (1971:39) says that 21.8 percent of elementary school income and 59.4 percent of secondary school income plus 5 percent fees come to the school in the form of tuition and fees with the remaining

73.2 percent and 35.6 percent respectively being raised by the church in the Sunday morning offering at each service. He goes on to say that as the more affluent Catholics move into the suburbs those remaining have an increasingly difficult time in paying either the tuition or adding appreciably to the morning offering.

Good discipline and moral teaching aren't enough to satisfy the parent of today. Donovan (1971:97) goes on to say that the parent of today wants a good education for his child. He isn't satisfied with large class size, untrained teachers or primitive facilities and equipment. Today's parent wants new buildings, curriculum planning, reduced class size, educational television, teaching machines, etc.

#### Parental Attitudes Toward Parochial School Operation

In most cases parents still maintain a great deal of respect for parochial education but they also hold some very high ideals for it and they expect the administrators to meet those ideals. For example, Gilbert (1971:3) found that 93.7 percent of the parents felt that there should be rules governing student behavior and they were in favor of the rules in existence at that particular school. Fifty eight percent even went so far as to say they favored corporal punishment.

In the following six groupings made by Neuwien (1966:262-277), will be found a summary of the attitudes which parents hold toward parochial education and what they, the parents, expect as a return from their investment.

Each category is listed from greater in importance to least in importance.

What parents expect of the school operation:

1. Effective qualified sisters, priests and brothers as teachers.
2. Effective and qualified lay teachers when needed.
3. Prepare students for college.
4. Help gifted and slow learner.
5. Not have large classes in small room.
6. Physical fitness program for boys and girls.
7. Not give much homework.

Religious expectations of parents:

1. Teach children to know about God, Christ and the church.
2. Train children to practice religion.
3. Give children Catholic friends and a good example.
4. To foster vocations, sisters, priests and brothers.
5. Have only religious teachers, sisters, priests and brothers.

Academic expectations of children by their parents:

1. Teach to read and write clearly and well.
2. Be strong in arithmetic and science.
3. Be aware of history and today's social problems.
4. Appreciation for music and art.

Parents' expectations of personal virtue:

1. Teach children to be honest, truthful and moral.
2. Teach children to think for themselves.
3. Train children in self-discipline and hard work.

Social virtues expected by parents:

1. Train children in respect of persons and property.
2. Make children good citizens of the United States.
3. Produce community and national leaders.
4. Teach to get along with others such as Jews.
5. Teach to like other nationalities and races such as negroes and Puerto Ricans.
6. Teach to help others in foreign countries.

Practical expectations of parents:

1. Have space in school for all Roman Catholics.
2. Train for good jobs when they grow up.
3. School to get help from parents when needed.
4. Get more money from the federal government.
5. School shouldn't be expensive for Catholic parents.
6. Schools should help parents control the dating of children.

One study made by Gilbert (1971:5) found that parents wanted more feedback from teachers about their child's progress and in general more contact with the school. In this same study it was found that, "Parents thought that teachers and administrators had poor attitudes toward and relationships with their students."

Attitudes Toward Discipline

The public's chief concern regarding public schools in 1973 was over the matter of discipline. The use of drugs, teen-age crime, chronic wars between parents and teachers, teachers and students, students and parents and between boards of education and almost everyone else, has caused the schools to become the battleground of society and everyone is venting his anger on the local institution of learning.

Goldstein (1973:455) found that as the public looks at education today it sees a lack of discipline, too much psychology, too much liberalism, too much freedom, too little organization and too few hard-nosed standards.

Donovan (1971:94) found that Roman Catholics wanted strict discipline for their children while at school and Gilbert (1971:2) found

that parents by about 83 percent wanted the administrators to make the rules by which the school should be run.

It was found that upon close examination of enforcement of rules, that suburban America sees discipline enforcement as very necessary and desirable but for someone else's child. The moment their child is affected the requirement demanded before now becomes "needless, suppressive and the hallmark of a bygone era" and that, says Goldstein (1973:455), is the underlying problem in our educational system.

There may be an answer to the dilemma in the paragraph above for a plan is suggested by Buchan (1973:453) whereby the community is encouraged to support the education of the community by forming a committee of mayor, street workers, gang members, etc. In following this plan it was found that a lack of academic success was the factor which led to dropping out and reading retardedness was the greatest factor. This solution came from the gang members of the committee which was set up to solve the runaway disciplinary problems of the school and community.

#### The Results of Parochial Education in the Lives of its Recipients

Students with no Roman Catholic background showed less religious maturity than college seniors with 16, 14, 12 or 4 years of Roman Catholic education. The parochial school seems to impart important information on the development of adult religious attitudes. Even though this may be true, McKenna (1961:387) has shown that agreement with Catholic

religious principles does not show a direct relationship with the number of years spent in a Catholic school.

Catholics attending Roman Catholic schools and having Roman Catholic friendships do better in business than Roman Catholics from public schools with Roman Catholic friendships, however, Roman Catholics from public schools without Roman Catholic friendships achieve better in business than Roman Catholics from Catholic schools who do not form strong Roman Catholic friendships, says Greeley (1967:432).

Greeley (1967:433) goes on to say that the best achievers are those from Roman Catholic schools with Roman Catholic friendships because of cliques which are formed and are satisfying, consequently they are often more free from upsetting emotional experiences.

The most lasting effects of parochial education seem to be found in the lives of individuals from homes which are solid Catholic. It appears that marriage within the church is greater if educated in Roman Catholic schools and because of this union they will remain strongly connected with the church.

The impression of parochial education on the lives of persons from nominal homes seems to be very negligible. Greeley (1967:430) found that children from marginal homes seem impressed while with their peers and at school but seldom do they marry a strong devout spouse or remain strong on all points learned in the school.

Summary

This review of literature has shown that a great deal is expected of parochial school education by those who support it as well as by those who are its recipients. Financial problems are great and overshadow parochial education. The results of this type of education don't appear to be as great and as long lasting as the investment calls for.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES

In an attempt to organize a survey of opinions about attitudes of members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana toward the support of their secondary school, Mount Ellis Academy, an outline of specific procedures will be given in this chapter. Areas included in this chapter discuss the sampling procedures, the methods of organizing and collecting data.

#### Population Description and Sampling Procedure

The population consisted of one thousand three hundred seventy five adult members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church living in the state of Montana. The survey was mailed to two hundred seventy five of these members selected randomly by taking every fifth name from a membership list. Only one adult from any one household received the questionnaire.

#### Categories to be Investigated

The following areas were studied as a basis for this investigation: (1) Do the results justify the cost of operating the school? (2) Is the school operation satisfactory to the constituents? (3) Is it desirable to continue operating the school? (4) What is the feeling toward the new gymnasium? (5) Is there enough interest in the school to support future building programs?

Each of these five categories contained from two to three

questions, consequently seventeen questions were included on the questionnaire. A five point "Likert Scale" running from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" followed each item. A sample of the questionnaire is included in Appendix C.

#### Method of Collecting Data

A questionnaire designed by the investigator was sent to one adult member of one-sixth of the homes of members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana.

In an effort to explain the purpose of the questionnaire, two covering letters were attached and mailed with the instrument. One letter was on the official letterhead of the Montana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and from the president of the church in Montana. This letter explains that the church's headquarters in Montana is in full cooperation with this project and encourages the filling out of this form and the importance of it being returned. The second letter is from the investigator explaining the purpose and giving adequate directions for filling out the questionnaire and what to do with it when it is completed. A self-addressed stamped envelope was included in the cover letter. When the requested respondents did not respond within two weeks a follow-up letter with another questionnaire was sent.

#### Method of Organizing Data

The data presented in table form shows the attitudes and degree of feeling toward Mount Ellis Academy and its operation. Ample space

was provided for additional comment which the investigator summarized in Appendix D. Each table provides frequencies and percentages of responses.

#### Precautions Taken for Accuracy

In an effort to reduce the number of errors occurring in filling out the questionnaire, the instrument was given to a small group of church members numbering no less than fifteen persons. This group were members of the Bozeman Seventh-day Adventist Church. A tape recorder was used to record all conversation between the respondents of this test group and the investigator. The tape was studied carefully so that problems noted by the respondents could be clarified prior to officially sending out the instrument. The length of time required to fill out the instrument was also noted and mentioned in the covering letter.

Upon receipt of the returned questionnaire the investigator analyzed the results with the aid of the Sigma Seven computer located at Montana State University. The items and percentages were then analyzed and placed in table form.

#### Summary

In conclusion, a seventeen-item questionnaire was mailed to two hundred seventy five members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana. The respondents responded on a five-point "Likert Scale" which followed each item. Data is presented in table form and a

written explanation about the results of each questionnaire follows each item.

The tables and written explanations showing the results of each questionnaire item are found in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### SURVEY OF ATTITUDES OF MEMBERS OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN MONTANA TOWARD THE SUPPORT OF MOUNT ELLIS ACADEMY

#### Introduction

This survey was mailed to two hundred seventy five adult members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana. The persons receiving the survey were selected by a random selection from a possible population of one thousand three hundred seventy five. Of the two hundred seventy five questionnaires mailed, two hundred fifteen respondents returned their questionnaires and twelve questionnaires were returned as undeliverable by the United States Postal Service.

The survey instrument mailed to the constituent members contained seventeen questions dealing with various areas of interest and concern in the operation and expansion of Mount Ellis Academy. This questionnaire may be found in Appendix C.

The questions in this questionnaire fall into seven general groupings. Question 1 deals with enrollment; questions 2, 3, and 4, quality of education; questions 5, 6, and 7, lay member involvement; questions 8 and 9, conditions of present buildings; questions 10, 11, 12, and 17, building expansion; questions 13 and 14, the work program, and questions 15 and 16, the sports program.

The instrument which was developed by the researcher has been analyzed and broken down into seventeen tables for ease of comprehension.

The tables show the questionnaire item as well as the number and percentage of responses to the question. Following each table will be found a description of the dominant characteristics of that table. In three cases two tables have been placed together so that the reader can easily compare the significant features of the tables which deal with similar questions. The tables placed together are for questions 8 and 9, 11 and 12, 15 and 16.

For a number of the questions those responding felt like expressing themselves more clearly than simply making a mark of agreement or disagreement. These responses have been placed together in Appendix D.

Question 1. The enrollment at Mount Ellis Academy should be limited to students from Montana families.

| Response Scale | SA  | A   | U   | D    | SD   | NR  | Total |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-------|
| Number         | 7   | 11  | 11  | 117  | 55   | 14  | 201   |
| Percent        | 3.3 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 54.4 | 25.6 | 6.5 | 100   |

Two hundred one persons responded to this question. A total of one hundred seventy two (80%) disagreed or were in strong disagreement with the idea that only students from Montana should attend Mount Ellis Academy. The general feeling seems to be that students from Montana should have the first opportunity to attend, then if room permits students from out-of-state should be allowed to enter. Only eighteen (8.4%) of the

respondents felt that enrollment should be limited to Montana students.

(See Appendix D)

Question 2. The Montana Conference should continue to operate an academy in the state of Montana even though the public schools offer facilities which can be equal to or better than the church can provide.

| Response Scale | SA   | A  | U  | D  | SD | NR  | Total |
|----------------|------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 145  | 56 | 1  | 1  | 2  | 10  | 205   |
| Percent        | 67.4 | 26 | .5 | .5 | .9 | 4.7 | 100   |

It will be of interest to the reader to notice that of the seventeen questions asked in this survey this question received the most responses. Two hundred and five people responded and of that total two hundred one (93.4%) either strongly agree or agree that the school should continue in operation. If this is an unbiased survey and the researcher feels it is, then this appears to be a mandate from the people that the school remain in operation.

Question 3. The school board endeavors to hire the best qualified teachers for the academy.

| Response Scale | SA   | A    | U    | D  | SD | NR  | Total |
|----------------|------|------|------|----|----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 54   | 109  | 33   | 2  | 0  | 17  | 198   |
| Percent        | 25.1 | 50.7 | 15.3 | .9 | 0  | 7.9 | 100   |

The constituency supporting this school evidently feel satisfied with the level of learning obtained at Mount Ellis Academy for one hundred sixty three (75.8%) of those responding were in strong agreement or agreed that the teachers hired were well qualified. Only thirty three (15.3%) were undecided and only a fraction (.9%) were dissatisfied.

Question 4. The quality of education received at Mount Ellis Academy is equal to that offered by the public schools.

| Response Scale | SA   | A    | U    | D   | SD  | NR  | Total |
|----------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 47   | 100  | 38   | 6   | 5   | 19  | 196   |
| Percent        | 21.9 | 46.5 | 17.7 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 8.8 | 100   |

The respondents to this question were strong in agreement as seen by the first three categories. One hundred eighty five (86.1%) responded in these areas, however this is not a landslide positive response as thirty eight (17.7%) were undecided which brings the positive responses down to 68.4 percent. Please note that of that total only 21.9 percent were in strong agreement.

Question 5. The church members in Montana are well informed as to the operation of Mount Ellis Academy.

| Response Scale | SA  | A    | U    | D    | SD  | NR  | Total |
|----------------|-----|------|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 11  | 51   | 41   | 78   | 17  | 17  | 198   |
| Percent        | 5.1 | 23.7 | 19.1 | 36.3 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 100   |

In the area of communicating the school's operational and procedural activities to the supporting members, there are 44.2 percent who feel they aren't being informed. Those falling in the area of being undecided did not constitute a high percentage nor did those who failed to respond.

Question 6. There is sufficient lay involvement in the over-all operation of Mount Ellis Academy.

| Response Scale | SA  | A    | U    | D  | SD  | NR   | Total |
|----------------|-----|------|------|----|-----|------|-------|
| Number         | 7   | 60   | 77   | 30 | 14  | 27   | 188   |
| Percent        | 3.3 | 27.9 | 35.8 | 14 | 6.5 | 12.6 | 100   |

Greater and greater impetus is being given round the world to grass roots involvement in church related activities. In response to question 6, it may be noted that 35.8 percent of those responding were undecided. This is greater than the total of either the strongly agree, and agree or the area of disagree or strongly disagree. Those

in the area of the undecided are on the fence and will fall either way. The future of the academy could well be determined by the manner in which this 35.8 percent are dealt with. This undecided block of respondents may represent a block of constituents that could be a significant factor in future planning of the academy.

Question 7. The needs of the academy are being clearly conveyed to the church members.

| Response Scale | SA  | A    | U  | D    | SD  | NR  | Total |
|----------------|-----|------|----|------|-----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 11  | 81   | 43 | 50   | 12  | 18  | 197   |
| Percent        | 5.1 | 37.7 | 20 | 23.3 | 5.6 | 8.4 | 100   |

The channels which communicate the needs of the school are evidently fairly well open as 42.8 percent strongly agree or agree that they know what the needs are, however 28.9 percent disagree and strongly disagree. If those who are undecided are placed with these, then the total is 48.9 percent who either don't know what the needs are or aren't sure if they know what the needs are. If the institution is to continue in operation there must be more communication to the constituency as nearly half of the members aren't sure what the needs are.

Question 8. The classroom building at Mount Ellis is adequate and meets the educational needs for a school of this size.

| Response Scale | SA  | A    | U    | D   | SD  | NR   | Total |
|----------------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|-------|
| Number         | 7   | 54   | 88   | 21  | 12  | 33   | 182   |
| Percent        | 3.3 | 25.1 | 40.9 | 9.8 | 5.6 | 15.3 | 100   |

Question 9. The dormitories are adequate for housing the academy students.

| Response Scale | SA  | A    | U    | D    | SD | NR   | Total |
|----------------|-----|------|------|------|----|------|-------|
| Number         | 8   | 78   | 63   | 24   | 15 | 27   | 188   |
| Percent        | 3.7 | 36.3 | 29.3 | 11.2 | 7  | 12.6 | 100   |

In these two questions we are attempting to discover attitudes of the constituency toward the most used buildings on campus. In both cases there are rather high numbers of respondents who are undecided as to the best response. In both cases those in strong agreement are very few in number while those in agreement have the highest percentage. This is true for all except those responding in the area of the undecided in question 8 which has 40.9 percent undecided. It appears that of those responding, the majority feel that the dormitories are adequate; however, nearly half are undecided as to the adequacy of the classroom building. It is interesting to notice that of the entire questionnaire, number eight was left blank by the greatest number of respondents.

Question 10. The money spent for the gymnasium-auditorium was a worthwhile investment.

| Response Scale | SA | A    | U   | D   | SD | NR  | Total |
|----------------|----|------|-----|-----|----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 86 | 96   | 12  | 3   | 0  | 20  | 195   |
| Percent        | 40 | 43.7 | 5.6 | 1.4 | 0  | 9.3 | 100   |

The reason why 83.7 percent of those responding to this question answered in the affirmative may be due to the fact that the gymnasium-auditorium is used by the constituents for their meetings during their annual ten-day convocation. If this is the reason, then it is obvious that people will respond in a positive manner to something they see a need for. Clearly depicting the needs of the school may be the answer in financing planned expansion.

Question 11. We should, if the accrediting bodies made the recommendation, launch into an expansion of our industrial arts building.

| Response Scale | SA   | A    | U    | D   | SD | NR  | Total |
|----------------|------|------|------|-----|----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 45   | 89   | 50   | 8   | 2  | 21  | 194   |
| Percent        | 20.9 | 41.4 | 23.3 | 3.7 | .9 | 9.8 | 100   |

Question 12. For the past two years the enrollment at the academy has broken all previous records. If this continues the dormitory facilities should be expanded to accommodate more students.

| Response Scale | SA   | A   | U    | D   | SD  | NR  | Total |
|----------------|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Number         | 32   | 101 | 35   | 17  | 12  | 18  | 197   |
| Percent        | 14.9 | 47  | 16.3 | 7.9 | 5.6 | 9.8 | 100   |

Since both of these questions deal with expansion of present facilities and since there is a significant change in the responses to these two questions, this writer feels it is necessary to place the responses together for ease of comparison.

Question 11. Actually this was a loaded question for the recommendation by the accrediting bodies to enlarge the facility has already been made. The Industrial Arts program has been one of the strongest areas on campus, however, the facilities are crowded. The reader will notice that 63.3 percent of the respondents are in favor of the expansion. Only 14.4 percent show a negative feeling or failed to respond. Therefore, it is imperative that the 23.3 percent or nearly one quarter of the constituency be made aware of the needs and recommendation.

Question 12. This question deals with expansion of present facilities as does the previous question; however, it will be noticed that the number who disagree and strongly disagree are considerably greater while those failing to respond remain exactly the same. It is

interesting to note that while those who agree and strongly agree remained approximately the same, those in the undecided area fall 7 percent. Evidently some of those who are undecided about an industrial arts building were against building larger dormitories.

Question 13. The school pays a minimum wage of \$1.60 per hour. Each time wages increase there is a corresponding increase in tuition. The students should work a required number of hours a day without pay in order to remain in school if this made it possible to significantly reduce the tuition cost.

| Response Scale | SA   | A    | U    | D    | SD  | NR | Total |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|-----|----|-------|
| Number         | 27   | 77   | 39   | 37   | 20  | 15 | 200   |
| Percent        | 12.6 | 35.8 | 18.1 | 17.2 | 9.3 | 7  | 100   |

Although nearly half of those responding to this question were in favor of a change from the present system if it would lower the tuition cost, a very high percentage, actually 26.5 percent, were in disagreement with it. Add to that number those who failed to respond and the total comes to 33.5 percent, or one-third. The 18.1 percent in the undecided area could go either way, consequently a picture develops which shows a significant number who do not agree with work without pay no matter what the outcome costwise might be.

Question 14. All students, no matter what the financial status of their parents, should work a minimum number of hours if he is to remain in school.

| Response Scale | SA   | A    | U   | D    | SD  | NR | Total |
|----------------|------|------|-----|------|-----|----|-------|
| Number         | 64   | 96   | 14  | 23   | 5   | 13 | 202   |
| Percent        | 29.8 | 44.7 | 6.5 | 10.7 | 2.3 | 6  | 100   |

There is no question as to what the constituency feels about the importance of a student becoming involved in some type of physical labor as shown by the results of this question. A full 74.5 percent of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that every student, no matter what his financial background might be, needed to be involved in some type of work. The remainder, only forty two out of a total of 202 were divided between being 14 undecided, 23 in disagreement and 5 in strong disagreement.

Question 15. There should be more emphasis on sports at the academy.

| Response Scale | SA  | A   | U    | D    | SD | NR   | Total |
|----------------|-----|-----|------|------|----|------|-------|
| Number         | 9   | 17  | 48   | 74   | 43 | 24   | 191   |
| Percent        | 4.2 | 7.9 | 22.3 | 34.4 | 20 | 11.2 | 100   |

Question 16. We should become involved with other academies in team sports.

| Response Scale | SA  | A  | U    | D  | SD   | NR  | Total |
|----------------|-----|----|------|----|------|-----|-------|
| Number         | 4   | 15 | 29   | 73 | 80   | 14  | 201   |
| Percent        | 1.9 | 7  | 13.5 | 34 | 37.2 | 6.5 | 100   |

Both questions 15 and 16 deal with the sports program, consequently they will be placed together for ease of evaluation. While it is true that both deal with sports there is quite a difference in the type of involvement under consideration in the two questions. It will be noted that the respondents evidently did not feel there was a great deal of difference, for the number of responses are strikingly similar. By far those responding to these questions are not in favor of an intercollegiate sports program and show a similar negativism for strong emphasis in the intramural sports program.

Question 17. The academy board and conference committee should place a new church building as a number one priority on the campus development priority list.

| Response Scale | SA  | A    | U  | D    | SD   | NR   | Total |
|----------------|-----|------|----|------|------|------|-------|
| Number         | 12  | 31   | 71 | 57   | 22   | 22   | 193   |
| Percent        | 5.6 | 14.4 | 33 | 26.5 | 10.2 | 10.2 | 100   |

This question is another one where no clear-cut picture is obtained. A full one-third are undecided and 10.2 percent failed to respond. A little over one-third (36.7%) are against the building program. When considering the 33 percent who are undecided and the 36.7 percent in disagreement, a picture develops which shows that about two-thirds of the respondents would probably not support the program.

It must be considered that this questionnaire was mailed to the recipients during November, 1974, when the fears of recession were gripping the nation. Naturally, the thought of a building program for a church facility would cause respondents to move with caution.

#### Summary

It has been shown by the questionnaire that out of the two hundred fifteen respondents there is considerable difference in attitudes as to the operation and expansion of Mount Ellis Academy.

The tables are summarized as follows:

Table 1: Enrollment. It was felt that enrollment should not be limited to Montana students, but that they should be given first consideration.

Tables 2, 3 and 4: Quality of education. Evidently the constituency is satisfied with the board's operation of the school as well as the type of learning being achieved and feel that the money spent is worthwhile.

Tables 5, 6, and 7: Lay member involvement. The constituency is about evenly divided as to how informed they are about the operation of the school. They are undecided or refuse to respond to the amount of lay involvement. The constituency evidently feels that the school's needs are not being conveyed to them.

Tables 8 and 9: Conditions of present buildings. The constituency feels that the dormitories and classroom buildings are adequate and see no need for any major change at this time.

Tables 10, 11, 12 and 17: Building expansion. The responses to these questions show that the gymnasium-auditorium was a good investment. There is strong agreement with expanding the industrial arts building, however, there is a negative attitude expressed in the expansion of the dormitories and building a church.

Tables 13 and 14: Work program. The results of these questions show that the constituency is in favor of all students being involved in some type of work program. Even if it would significantly reduce the cost it appears that there would be few in favor of a no-pay work program.

Tables 15 and 16: Sports program. Evidently there is little interest in either an intercollegiate sports program or even strong emphasis on a local level sports program. This fact comes very clear from the responses to these two questions.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The purpose of this study has been to determine the attitudes which the members of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Montana hold toward the support of Mount Ellis Academy. Those responsible for the operation of the school are often left in a quandary as to what the feelings of the supporting constituency actually are toward the school's operation.

There are curriculum changes, staff changes and policy changes, as well as construction both of new buildings and repair of older buildings all of which require an outlay of money and seldom is there feedback as to what those who support the school actually feel regarding the operational activities. This survey has given a random sample of the constituency an opportunity to express themselves anonymously as to their true feelings.

In reviewing the available literature, this researcher discovered that as a result of the population explosion and increased costs, many are taking a hard look at parochial education in America. Those who support this type of education feel they have a right to be heard in regard to its operation both in the financial affairs as well as its operational activities. The constituency wants to know how the

objectives of parochial education are being met in the lives of the school's graduates.

A questionnaire was devised and sent to members of the constituency to garner their opinions and ultimately establish what the true feelings of the supporting members actually are.

The results of the survey and review of literature will be used by the school board as it makes further plans in the operation and development of the curriculum, staff and physical plant.

#### Conclusions

The results from the questionnaire indicate that in general the constituency has a positive attitude toward the operation of the school. It feels that:

1. The school should continue in operation.
2. The board is doing a good job in the selection of a staff.
3. The communication of the school's needs to the constituency needs to be improved.
4. The classroom building and dormitories are adequate.
5. The industrial arts building is in need of expansion.
6. The need for a church building is not a real necessity.
7. The auditorium-gymnasium was a good investment.
8. A work program is a necessity for all students.
9. That competitive sports should be low-keyed.

The reliability of this survey, prepared and used by this researcher, might be affected by the fact that the instrument was not subject to a test-retest comparison.

The data presented in Chapter IV would be valid in the respect that the respondents were free to answer the instrument openly, honestly and frankly in the privacy of their own homes. The survey was carefully tabulated and the numbers and percentages presented in table form in the preceeding chapter are accurate and correct. The descriptions following each table were based on the data found in that table.

#### Recommendations

Most of the recommendations by this investigator concern possible ways in which both the school board as well as the administration can work together in the successful operation of Mount Ellis Academy.

The recommendations are as follows:

1. There needs to be improved communication between the school and the constituency regarding the school's operation, its failures and successes, as well as it's financial needs.  
(See also Appendix D)
2. The board and administration should seriously consider the high interest in lay involvement in the operation of the school.
3. As is evidenced in question 10, the people will respond to a

need they see. More graphic display of the needs of the school should be presented to the constituency.

4. The industrial arts building is a top priority need.
5. Larger dormitories should not be planned.
6. The sports program should continue to be low-keyed.

This study has revealed that there is a great deal of interest by the constituency in how Mount Ellis Academy is operated. The constituency wants the academy to continue in operation, to provide an adequate education and to be made aware of what is happening at the school which they support financially.

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#### REFERENCES CITED

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A



BOX 743 1425 WEST MAIN, BOZEMAN, MONTANA 59715 PHONE: 587-3101

OFFICE OF  
PRESIDENT

November 7, 1974

Church Members  
Montana Conference of S.D.A.

Dear Church Member:

This letter is to acquaint you with a questionnaire that Elder Ron Christensen from Mount Ellis Academy is circulating to different members in the state. We strongly support this questionnaire and feel that the answers to it will be useful. It is of vital importance that you answer this questionnaire and return it to Elder Christensen to make his survey practical.

Thanks again for your interest and your help and may the Lord bless you as you think these questions through.

Very sincerely yours,

  
Donald M. MacIvor  
President

APPENDIX B



November 15, 1974

Dear Fellow Church Member:

You are one of two hundred seventy-five people selected from a random sample of members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montana to receive the enclosed questionnaire.

This questionnaire is a joint effort between the Montana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and myself. While my immediate interest is gathering information for a research project at Montana State University, both the conference leadership and we at the academy are interested in the attitudes of our members in Montana toward the operation of Mount Ellis Academy.

The questionnaire will take about fifteen minutes to complete and should provide us with information which is vitally needed as we continue operating a private high school in Montana.

The number appearing in the upper right hand corner of the questionnaire is placed there only that we can know who failed to respond so we can send out follow-up letters. Once the data collection is completed the numbers will be destroyed, so complete anonymity can be maintained.

Please feel free to make any additional comments which would be an expression of your attitude toward the academy on the reverse side of the form. The enclosed self-addressed and stamped envelope is provided for your convenience in returning this form.

Your help with this project is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

R. W. Christensen  
Pastor & Bible Teacher

RWC:rc  
Enc. 3

## APPENDIX C

### QUESTIONNAIRE (Sample)

You will notice that on the questionnaire each question is followed by five sets of letters. These letters are as follows: SA, A, U, D, SD and stand for the words strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree.

After reading each statement we would appreciate it if you would circle the letter or set of letters which represent your feelings about that particular question. Please notice the following example:

The Seventh-day Adventist Church should operate separate schools  
for boys and girls. SA A U D (SD)

The person answering the above question was in strong disagreement so he circled the SD in the right hand column.

You are asked to answer the following questions in like manner according to your personal feelings.

1. The enrollment at Mount Ellis Academy should be limited to students from Montana families. SA A U D SD
2. The Montana Conference should continue to operate an academy in the state of Montana even though the public schools offer facilities which can be equal to or better than the church can provide. SA A U D SD
3. The school board endeavors to hire the best qualified teachers for the academy. SA A U D SD
4. The quality of education received at Mount Ellis Academy is equal to that offered by the public schools. SA A U D SD
5. The church members in Montana are well informed as to the operation of Mount Ellis Academy. SA A U D SD

6. There is sufficient lay involvement in the over-all operation of Mount Ellis Academy. SA A U D SD
7. The needs of the academy are being clearly conveyed to the church members. SA A U D SD
8. The classroom building at Mount Ellis is adequate and meets the educational needs for a school of this size. SA A U D SD
9. The dormitories are adequate for housing the academy students. SA A U D SD
10. The money spent for the gymnasium-auditorium was a worthwhile investment. SA A U D SD
11. We should, if the accrediting bodies made the recommendation, launch into an expansion of our industrial arts building. SA A U D SD
12. For the past two years the enrollment at the academy has broken all previous records. If this continues the dormitory facilities should be expanded to accommodate more students. SA A U D SD
13. The school pays a minimum wage of \$1.60 per hour. Each time wages increase there is a corresponding increase in tuition. The students should work a required number of hours a day without pay in order to remain in school if this made it possible to significantly reduce the tuition cost. SA A U D SD
14. All students, no matter what the financial status of their parents should work a minimum number of hours if he is to remain in school. SA A U D SD
15. There should be more emphasis on sports at the academy. SA A U D SD
16. We should become involved with other academies in team sports. SA A U D SD
17. The academy board and conference committee should place a new church building as a number-one priority on the campus development priority list. SA A U D SD

## APPENDIX D

### RESPONSES CONCERNING QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Question #1

"I would agree if applications were so numerous that some could not be accepted from Montana otherwise."

"Larger schools have larger problems and not so much time for the individuals."

"Keep enrollment around 180-200 for a small school atmosphere and financially solvent. Montana students should be given priority."

"If sufficient space is not available, Montana students should be given preference. Study should be given to charging an additional fee to out-of-state students and/or the recovery of the Montana subsidy from the student's home conference."

"If we would have to reject Montana students because of an index of out-of-state students, Montana students should have priority."

"I think it should not be limited to Montana families, but our conference and school boards ought to be sufficient ability and Christian character to decide with prejudice the ones whom Mount Ellis could benefit from and who would not be detrimental to the school--I feel that liberty should be granted to our elected boards as well as their responsibility! Mount Ellis has many unworthy students who were non-residents."

"But Montana students should receive first preference if overcrowding develops."

"The dorms are large enough, I think, but I see many areas that could use improvement."

"If it means turning down a Montana student, yes."

#### Question #2

"If the public school facilities were ten times better the quality of education by our academies would still be superior because it includes training for service."

Question #3

"There is room for improvement."

"I would hope so, because this is their job."

"I do not know if we do, but strongly agree that we should."

Question #4

"I'll have to strongly disagree with number four because the education at Mount Ellis is not equal to the public schools. I believe it is far superior."

"I know that the facilities and curriculum of especially larger schools are much better than Mt. Ellis, but the Christian education far outweighs that!"

"I think it is far better."

"I am not sure whether the extent of courses offered at the academy is sufficient to provide an equal background for the students to compete with those from public schools when competing for jobs."

"I don't know, but if not, its teachers and not the facilities are to blame. It should be superior to public schools."

"The quality of education received at our schools should excel that offered by public schools, but it should ever be remembered that 'the true object of education is to restore the image of God in the soul... Were this principle given the attention which it's importance demands, there would be a radical change in some of the current methods of education...'. "

Question #5

"Informed, but could be better informed."

"How can we tell? I knew what went on when our children were there--otherwise we don't hear much except when they want money."

"It is difficult to be well informed regarding academy operation."

Question #7

"If you mean moneywise--yes; otherwise, no. To clarify this, when you need money we are made aware of it."

Question #11

"But there is undoubtedly need of teaching more industrial arts and less of normal book work."

Questions #9-12

"Only need for providing more dormitory space is that if more classroom space and teacher help is provided to take care of more students. There is no need to provide more dormitory space unless more classroom space and teacher help is provided, and not just to gain financially."

"Not unless an industry or more work could be provided."

"I believe the housing for the students is adequate--if the enrollment is kept down and also if the buildings were kept in better repair."

"As far as I know."

"The dorms are large enough, I think, but I see many areas that could use improvement."

"I have very strong feelings about this! I believe Mt. Ellis should not be allowed to grow and grow like 'the other schools'. You lose the brother-sister relationship among the students and the deans cannot possibly have the control over a large number. That is why I support the thought that MEA should be for Montana students and if room is left over--let in others."

"Dormitory facilities should be adequate to house all students who qualify to attend."

"Better to have lavatories in rooms."

Question #13

"There must be a better way."

"I can see the use of free labor, provided tuition was reduced."

However, if this was done and then the tuition again raised, then I'd disagree."

"If that was desireable. It could be desireable from the standpoint of less taxation on portions of income spent for tuition, etc. Some exceptions may sometimes be desireable."

"I would have to study this aspect before deciding because I don't understand the end result."

"I would say a consultation with students and parents by the board. If each student were required to contribute equal free labor, it would lessen the burden of excuse for those less able to meet the higher tuition."

"Renumeration on incentive to give students a sense of contribution to his education."

"Agreed if there is no discrimination between students because of parental social status and also if it will actually lower the tuition."

"No one should be required to work without pay, unless it is in a maintenance cafeteria and then all the students must bear an equal load--rich or poor."

"Agree! If all students work a certain number of hours without pay."

#### Question #14

"Yes, I believe all students should be allowed to work and more work projects should be developed. What about developing gardening, involving the girls in processing food for the academy's own consumption? Seems there might be an area of savings to the school plus developing more work--maybe poultry for eggs. Any that can be developed to a degree of self sufficiency in these days of high costs, should be considered. I do know from four years association or contact with Mt. Ellis that there was room for developing the work program."

"If there is enough work."

"Work never hurt anyone. If it helps cut Academy costs, why not?"

Question #15-16

"The need isn't for more pleasure, but more involvement in soul-winning activities. I'd like to see more activity in the temperance line, and just groups helping people who are in need."

"If sports will come after STUDY, WORK AND SPIRITUAL things."

"Sports are okay, but should never be number one."

"Too far apart for travel."

"Such as tennis, volleyball, ice skating, on a regular organized basis so they can be busy those Sundays there is 'nothing to do'."

"This may be quite costly."

"Don't know how much emphasis is placed on sports at the academy."

"Too much time spent on the road going to and from the different academies already."

Question #17

"A church at the academy is a prime need. It's always neglected as the last item. I wouldn't recommend that it come before an industrial art complex and increased classroom space."

"Industrial arts building should have priority."

"I feel there are perhaps other things more important as number one than a separate church. However, I feel this idea is worth real consideration. This would add a great amount of reverence, also convenience for childrens' divisions, etc."

"I strongly disagree. Non-students should be members and support the Bozeman church. The chapel would then be adequate and if not, the gymnasium could be used. Many of the constituency have to travel more than five miles to attend Sabbath services."

"Not necessarily at this time. You have the gym for this purpose. It still is not out of debt."

"Our students should learn to make first things first. When the parents and faculty make other buildings first, how can we expect our

poor tempted youth to think higher than the adults. They need a dedicated holy place to meet with their Creator. If the adults set the example and follow the advice given, our youth would have more faith and temptations would be easier to overcome."

"Is there a need for a newer or larger church?"

#### Comments in General

"The chorus and band programs put on by the academy are excellent, but the other programs put on for the public are, at least in part, a disgrace. These, I feel, should be brought up to the high standards our church stands for."

"I'd like to see something started as far as a greenhouse is concerned, with a heating unit large enough for expansion, but a smaller greenhouse to start with."

"If the Montana Conference cannot supply all of the needed building and enlargements, perhaps an appeal should be made to the General Conference. Perhaps it could receive the 13th Sabbath overflow. Where has the United States received it other than for Indians? Shouldn't the United States have a turn, if needed?"

"With the state of unemployment in our country, I feel it very difficult to go into any big building program at this time as so many are unemployed and cannot help even if they would like to. I feel with the crowded dorm problems it might be wise to take Montana kids first, then if by August 10th take out-of-state kids to fill the dorms, if that is needed. If more work projects could be invented to employ more youngsters that seems more advisable."

"I would like to see a witnessing program developed as part of the curriculum. Probably as an elective class. Also, I believe that more emphasis should be placed on a good work program to provide adequate work and to train students to have good work habits. Results of the survey would be appreciated."

"We would rather be asked for money than told we owe so much. Sometimes we have priorities for where we want our money to go--but we do want to support our academy and are glad our children were able to go to Mount Ellis Academy."