

# *Mission Sessions*

## ***Suriname Mission Of Seventh-Day Adventist***

**Report Education Department**

2020 – 2023



**ADVENTIST EDUCATION**

*Journey to Excellence*

Zuster Blackman Judith

## INTRODUCTION

### ADVENTIST PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

To recreate the image of the Maker in man and thus to bring him back to the purpose for which he was created, the harmonious development of his physical, spiritual and intellectual faculties, so that the divine purpose of creation is realized in Him.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God is infinitely loving, wise, and powerful. He relates to people on a personal level, presenting His character as the ultimate standard for human behavior and His grace as the means of restoration.

Seventh-day Adventists recognize that human motives, thinking, and behaviors fall short of God's ideal. Education in the broadest sense of the word is a means of restoring people to their original relationship with God. Families, schools, and churches work with divine institutions to prepare students for responsible citizenship in this world and in the world to come.

Adventist education conveys more than academic knowledge. It promotes balanced development of the whole person – spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. The dimensions of time span to eternity. It seeks to develop a life of faith in God and respect for the dignity of all human beings; build character akin to that of the Creator; cherish thinkers rather than mere reflectors of other people's thoughts; promote loving service rather than selfish ambition; maximize the development of the potential of all; to embrace all that is true, good and beautiful.



## MISSION:

The Advent schools in Suriname are dedicated to the systematic development of the entire personality of each student entrusted to them. Through a balanced program of study, worship, physical and social activities, the department seeks to establish a foundation of Christian principles on which the pupils can build his or her future and thus become a worthy citizen in this present and in the future life.

## VISION:

Every student in Suriname who is in Adventist Education needs to know about a loving Savior who has come to save mankind and so that they can be ready to meet God.

## FORMATIE

JAAR	SCHOLEN	AANTAL LEERLINGEN	AANTAL ZDA LERAREN	AANTAL NIET ZDA LERAREN	AANTAL INTERIEUR VERZORGERS	AANTAL WACHTERS
2020-2021	Veritas	280	11	8	6	0
	Iporoma	45	4	1	1	0
2021-2022	Veritas	286	8	10	6	2
	Iporoma	43	4	0	2	0
2022-2023	Veritas	320	4	14	7	3
	Iporoma	61	4	1	2	0
2023-2024	Veritas	347	5	14	7	3
	Iporoma	58	4	1	2	0

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In order to pursue the goals mentioned earlier, a number of training sessions had been provided and some spiritual activities had been included in the annual program. The purpose of the training was to make the teachers even more proficient in their work, but also to gain more insight and knowledge into the objectives of Adventist education. The aim of the activities was to bring faith in the love and power of God to full bloom or awakening in both the pupils and the teachers.

OP sabbat 5 september werd het programma ENDITNOW gehouden. Het thema was “DE WONDEN VAN MISBRUIK . Kunnen we meer doen?” In de middag was er een pannel discussie via zoom. Het panel bestond uit een een majoor van politie, een social worker , en een predikant. De Luisteraars kregen de gelegenheid om vragen te stellen. Het was een gezegende middag.

Date	Subject	Presenter	Target group
September 21-23	Philosophy of Adventist Education	G. Daniel	All Teachers
September 21-23	Philosophy Adventist Education	G. Daniel	All Teachers
September 21-23	Methodology Religious education	Ps. R. Blackman	All Teachers
September 21-23	Personal development plan	W. Roseval	All Teachers
September 21-23	Distance learning	B. Elshot	All Teachers

Date	Subject	Presenter	Target Group
October 2020	Guidance on how to create a POP.  IGL guidelines in different subjects	Ps. R. Blackman	All teachers
February <u>30</u> 2021	Integration Faith and Learning.	G. Daniel	All teachers
February <u>30</u> 2021	Philosophy Adventist Education  <u>Purpose of Adventist education</u>	Dr. Br. H. Bowman	Teachers, members, and educators.
April 17, 2021	Why Adventist <u>education</u> .	G. Daniel	Teachers and members.
August 15, 2021	Nurturing Faith through Adventist Education	<u>CARU</u>	Directors
August 30, 2021	Philosophy of Adventist Education	Dr. Bowman	All teachers

November 20 2022	The Prayer Life of Jesus. Walking with Jesus.	Ps. R. Blackman	School leaders
April 28, 2022	Classroom management. The Christian Teacher	J. Blackman Ps. E. Blackman	Teachers
June 24, 2023	Adventist Education	Dr. D. Magloire	Teachers

### **Some activities of the past period.**

The Covid 19 Pandemic also had a major impact on schools. Especially at the beginning of the year 2021, the schools were closed several times. This was because of the total lockdowns that had been declared by the state. But also because of the many infections among both teachers and students.

The school switched to distance learning. This took place in various ways. Children who were not able to receive the learning material online could go to school to pick up the work.

### **2020**

Sabbath, October 10, was the education Sabbath. On that day, all involved in Education were invited to the Bethel Church. The turnout was very good. The theme for that day was "**EDUCATION AND REDEMPTION ARE ONE.**"

Sabbath School was led by Pastor Roel Blackman. The topic discussed was "The Place of the Bible in Education." It was a fruitful discussion. Participation was good.

Pastor Emanuelson held the service on the theme of Education and Salvation are One.

We were all blessed by the service. Everybody involved in education received a memory stick from the department. Before they went home, everybody was offered something to eat and drink.

On October 18 there was a meeting with the school leaders of the Veritas and the Iporoma school. Together with the chairman Pastor Edward Blackman, Sister Carla Emanuelson and the Director of Education Sister Judith Blackman we met at Leiding. The purpose of this meeting was to talk about the start of the new school year, preparing the parent information day, planning the activities for the year and the accreditation. It was a fruitful get-together.

November 12 was an online training from the Caribbean Union. "CHILD PROTECTION" The need to pay more and more attention to the safety of our children is very great. Through this training we have been made aware that this subject needs more attention.

## **2021**

After the Christmas holidays, the school remained closed for a while. On February 15, the teachers were called to report to school. Preparations were made to start distance learning.



March 4 was “reading day”. This is an annual event to stimulate reading in children. Each school gives its own content to this event. A delegation from the CCS was present at the Iporoma school this year. Mrs. Bekker and her team, in collaboration with Alcoa, brought their own Surinamese stories that they read to the children. The captain of the village of Erowarte and the District Commissioner also read aloud. It was really nice and special. The kids enjoyed it. Reading books were also donated to the Iporoma School, including the series “Wij en de wereld”. The children were given a bookmark with the text Psalm 119:105. The Visitors were also received a “Prioriteit” magazine.

At the Veritas School, attention was also paid to this day. Several people were invited to read aloud. The stories were carefully selected by the school leader. They were true stories that bore witness to Christ. The readers themselves were also impressed by the stories. The children of the Veritas School were given a bookmark with the text from Proverbs 18:15. The visitors were also given a “Prioriteit” magazine.

### **Day of Prayer March 10.**

The theme for that year was 'Heroes of Faith'. The days of prayer are meant to let the children experience the power of God through prayer. Through the Bible heroes, the children learn that trusting in God is important. Children passed on their prayer requests and these were prayed for. Parents were also invited to be present that day.





At both schools there were pastors and other leaders present who told the Bible stories to the children in creative ways. After the story, the children were allowed to express the purpose of the day in a creative way, by means of coloring pages, theater and/or other works.

In April, a Steering Committee was set up. This committee would carry out the tasks of the school board and prepare the board for its re-entry. The chairman of this committee was Sister Gilma Daniel.

Thanks to donation's from Decker Petroleum, The Caribbean Union, Change ID Foundation and Adra Suriname, both schools were equipped with computers, laptops, a beamer and a large projection screen. This equipment will be used to support the education process.

On September 19, we received the sad news that one of our janitor's Iraida Wijngaard passed away. Iraida has been associated with the Veritas School for many years. In addition to her work as a janitor, she also operated the school's cafeteria for many years. We mourn her passing. In Iraida we lost a faithful worker.



## Reading Day March 7.

For this day, the Veritas School was visited by the President of the state Chandrikapersad Santokhi. It was, of course, very special and exciting to have the president visiting. He read to a number of children in the upper grades. It was a special experience. He received a fruit basket and also the book "The Way to Health". Sister Saskia Walden, then a minister of state, talked about the impact the Veritas School had on her own life. It was a wonderful testimony and at the same time this was to stimulate the children and teachers not to give up. There is hope.



**2022**

This year's day of prayer was on March 9. The theme was "THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD"

The children and staff started the day with a joint worship service in the church, which was provided by pastor Steven Tulp. Then they went to the different classes where the Bible story was told. It was good to see some parents with the toddlers who supported the teacher by helping the children with their work.

The children have learned from the Bible stories of Hannah, Elijah, Ruth, and Jonah, that God provides for our needs. They also learned to show gratitude to God for the providence of the plan of redemption.



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On March 10, the inauguration of the media library of the Veritas School took place. After a renovation of the classroom, it was decided to dedicate all computers, laptops and all other equipment to God. There were present the members of the executive board, the education secretary, some members of the school board and of course the school management and the children of group 8. After the various speeches, it was time for the consecration prayer. The chairman, Pastor Edward Blackman, said the prayer. After that, the plaque was unveiled.

On March 13, we received the news that Sister Anita Roseline Maatstaf-Davis, a retired teacher, had passed away. Sister Maatstaf was involved in education within the Surinamese mission for many years. She founded the school at Erowarte, now the Iporoma school, and had held many positions in education since then.

Sister Maatstaf has meant a lot for our education. She certainly understood the purpose of Adventist education. We cherish the hope that we will follow the example she has left us.

March 31 was the inauguration of the media library of the Iporoma School. A renovation had also taken place here. Present were the chairman of the Surinamese mission, the secretary, the secretary of education, and a representation of the District Commissioner of that area.



From 22 – 28 June, Dr. Hillary Boman and his wife visited Suriname. Dr. Hillary Bowman was the Education director of the Caribbean Union. During this period he attended the Veritas and Iporoma school. He also interviewed teachers, school leaders, and mission officers. Sabbath, June 25, was Education Sabbath. All teachers were invited to attend. The turnout was very good. It turned out to be a very blessed day. After a delicious lunch, dr. Bowman presented a workshop.

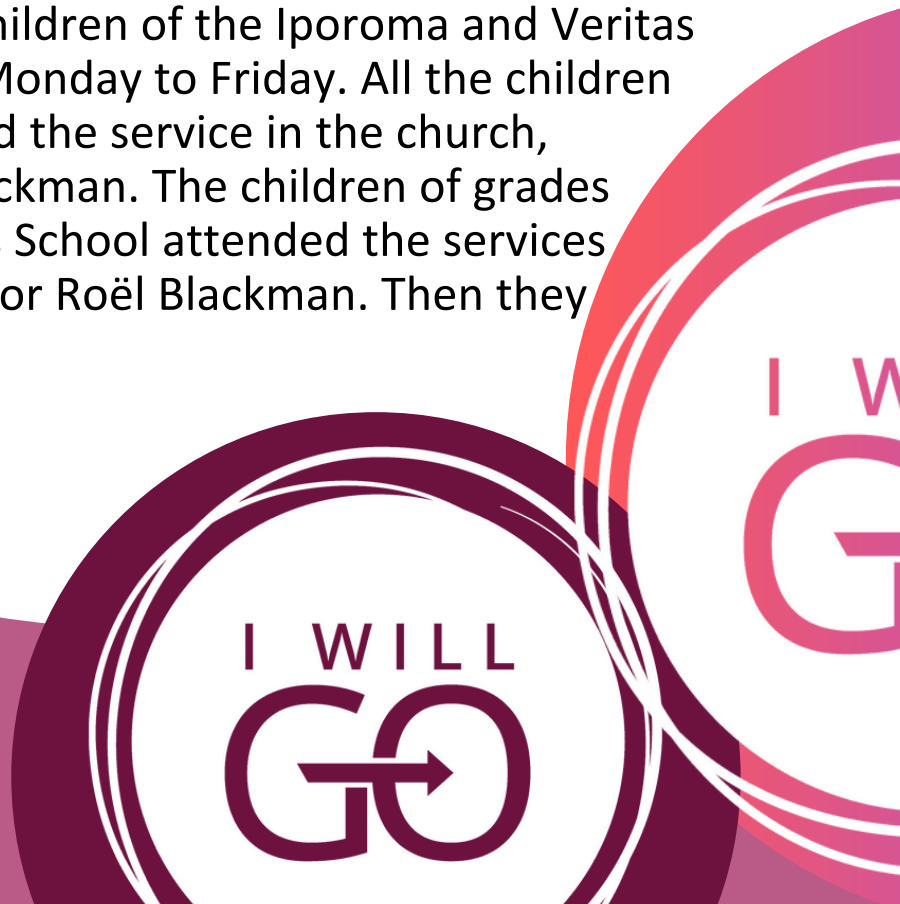
On Sunday, June 26, we had our constituency meeting. During this meeting, the school board was elected. On Sunday, June 26, the first meeting of the newly elected board was held. Dr. Bowman gave a presentation on the purpose and working methods of the board. He left on Wednesday, June 29. Dr. Bowman had indicated that he was retiring.

At the 17th session of the Caribbean Union in July this year, Dr. Daphne Magloire was elected as the Union's Education Director.

## **2023**

At the Veritas School we had the celebration of 2 jubilant teachers and 1 janitor in February 28. Together with the children and other teachers, these ladies were honored. We thank God for them and for their years of service.

March 6-11 was the week of prayer. The theme for this year was "CONNECTED TO JESUS." The children of the Iporoma and Veritas schools went to church from Monday to Friday. All the children of the Iporoma School attended the service in the church, provided by Pastor Edward Blackman. The children of grades four, five and six of the Veritas School attended the services in the church provided by pastor Roël Blackman. Then they went back to class.



The children learned how important it is to be and remain connected to Jesus. On Thursday 9 March, the Iporoma School celebrated its 60th anniversary. The members of the Mission's executive committee were present at this special event. The president of the Suriname mission pastor Guno Emanuelson spoke about the history of the Iporoma School. The education secretary spoke about the growth of the school. A former teacher of the Iporoma School br. Carlo Reemnet, who was on holiday in Suriname, shared his experience with us. It was a beautiful celebration.

The day of prayer ended on Friday at both schools. On the Sabbath, March 11, there was a baptism of 2 children from the Veritas School in the Bethel church. Glory to God.

From June 21-27 we were visited by Dr. Daphne Magloire, Education Director of the Caribbean Union. On Thursday, June 22, we went to Erowarte. It was a whole new experience for her. She was very warmly welcomed by the team and the children of the school.

After a lively song service in 4 different languages, dr. Magloire had a short worship service with the children. She spoke of God's love for them.

Sabbath June 24, was education day. In the mission's multipurpose hall dr. Magloire had a presentation on faith and learning. We regret, having to report, that not one teacher from the Veritas School was present at this training.

On Sunday there was a training for the school board. Unfortunately, also only a few members turned up. She spoke on the topic "SCHOOL BOARD MANAGEMENT"



At the end of the school year, 6 teachers of the Veritas school submitted their resignation. Of course, it was quite a job to fill in vacancies at that time. At the beginning of the new school year, there were no teachers for all classes. A letter was sent to parents that some classes had to stay at home. This news reached the press. On Sunday, October 1, there was an emergency meeting of the school board to discuss how to handle the situation that had arisen. It was agreed that 2 former teachers would help until new teachers could be appointed. The agreement was made that a message would be sent to the parents that the children could go back to school on Tuesday, October 3. On Monday, October 2, the media men were at school.

There was a clear agreement that information to the outside world could only be given by the communication leader. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Several teachers chose to air their grievances through the media. These messages appeared on social media. That was the beginning of posting a lot of negative messages on different media channels. Accusations and reproaches against the education secretary, her husband and the organization.

It is deeply regrettable that these negative reports were believed by individuals both outside and inside the organization, without making an investigation to verify whether all this was true.

It is regrettable that the school was used for this purpose, when we should be pursuing a higher goal. The purpose of our education is to exalt and proclaim Christ. However, it has been chosen to ignore this lofty goal.





On Thursday October 5 and Friday October 6 there was a training for all teachers from both schools. This was held in the multipurpose hall of the mission. It were 2 fruitful days. Dr. Magloire again did the presentation on faith and learning via zoom. Pastor Guno Emanuelson spoke about the organizational structure, Pastor Roel Blackman taught practical ways how to integrate the Bible into the curriculum subjects.

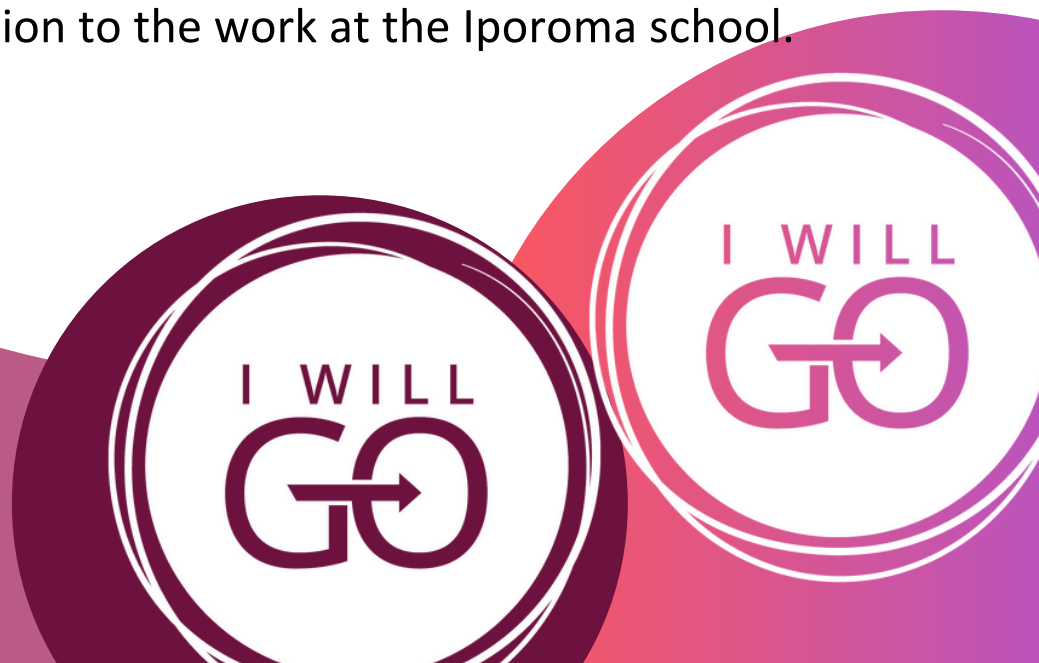
Saturday October 7 was education appreciation day. After a lively song service, we discussed what a model Adventist school should look like. The teachers were allowed to discuss with each other possible changes they would like to see in their school. They have written down recommendations that can serve as a guide when working on a model school. The sermon was preached by Pastor Roel Blackman. After the sermon, all the teachers were honored and thanked for their services to the school. They received a memory stick with the presentations of that day. After that we had lunch together.

After the end of the 2 day training, things went wrong again at the Veritas school. Word reached the education board that the teachers were on strike. Once again, there were reports on social media. Despite clear guidelines in the teachers regulations, that we as Adventists do not go on strike but follow the path of consultation, teachers chose several times to stop working.

My wish is that there will still be an objective investigation so that what is not good can be sorted out and rectified.

In the meantime, 6 new teachers have already been appointed at the school.

The last activity for 2023 was the honoring of 3 teachers from the Iporoma school on December 18. We thank these teachers for their commitment and dedication to the work at the Iporoma school.





## Conclusion

As we reflect on the philosophy of Adventist education as indicated at the beginning of this report, it must unfortunately be concluded that, despite energetic attempts, by various capable persons, through training, presentations, workshops, discussions and consultations with the teaching staff and the school management, the elements of Adventist education as contained below are hardly to be found in our schools to this day.

In Summary.

These must be implemented:

1. God's word should daily be taught to the students.
2. Structural Bible study should be given to students.
3. Faith and learning should be integrated into the curriculum.
4. The school should organize outreach programs in which the love of God is propagated.
5. Days of prayer should be held so children can experience the power of God through prayer.
6. Students should experience the love of God through the teacher.

My wish is that we will focus much more on the philosophy of Adventist education; that we will choose, guided by the Holy Spirit, to move more purposefully towards it, so that we consciously work with God to prepare the children for this life and life in God's kingdom.

Acknowledgments.

First of all, I thank God for the strength He has given me to lead this department according to the directives of His word, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the purposes of our denomination.

That despite the many challenges, He has given me the strength to keep my eye on the philosophy of Adventist Education in order to promote the well-being of students and teachers.

My gratitude goes out to colleagues for their support and I also thank my family for their prayers and motivation.

