

A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY PRACTICES OF SOME RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

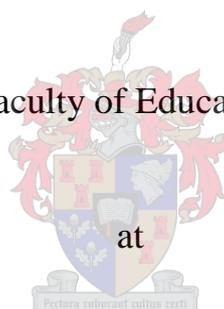
Dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

PhD in Philosophy of Education

in the

Department of Education Policy Studies

Faculty of Education



Stellenbosch University

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December 2014

DEDICATION

To Priscilla, my wife, who was there to encourage and support me throughout my studies, to my children, Ancilla, Phillip, Rico and Larry, who understood what it was to have a father who spent so much time with his studies, to my children's spouses, Enrico, Karen, Ronell and Michelle, and also to my grandchildren, Isla, Amity, Liam, Jordan and Tayla. Knowing that all of you were there, most of you praying for me and urging me to complete my studies, gave me the courage and inspiration to reach my dream.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation argues that, for several reasons, school boards serving the various Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Western Cape have not carried out their functions and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. Although the school boards meet on a regular basis, there appear to be several problems that contribute to a lack of effective performance by the board. Through an analysis of data constructed from interviews and questionnaires, the study reveals that many board members feel that they are not fully equipped to carry out the responsibilities of a governor, and furthermore that they do not belong because they do not feel a part of the decision-making process in the school. They therefore are willing to spend time and effort to equip themselves for the task through capacity building programmes and ongoing training. I contend that, in addition to capacity building programmes, the voices of individual members need to be heard as they participate, deliberately, in decision-making processes. This dissertation contends that if the boards are to function optimally, all stakeholders, particularly the school board members, should engage in capacity building programmes and also experience deliberative, democratic citizenship. They must be given an equal voice to participate in deliberations concerning policy formulation and other decision-making processes. This will help them to realise their democratic right to participate and also to experience inclusivity as a free member of the society in which they live.

Keywords: Seventh-day Adventist schools, school governance, role players, capacity building, deliberative democracy, democratic citizenship, inclusivity.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie proefskrif argumenteer dat skoolbestuursrade wat verskillende Sewende-dag Adventisteskole in die Wes-Kaap beheer om verskeie redes nie hulle pligte effektief en doeltreffend nakom nie. Hoewel die beheerrade gereeld vergader is daar blykbaar verskeie probleme wat bydra tot 'n gebrek aan die vervulling van hulle pligte. Deur die ontleding van data saamgestel uit onderhoude en vraelyste is daar gevind dat veral die raadslede, en tot 'n kleiner mate ander belangstellendes, voel hulle is nie ten volle toegerus om die verantwoordelikheid van 'n raadslid te dra nie. Hulle voel ook dat hulle nie deel is van belangrike beslissings wat in die skool geneem word nie. Daarom is hulle bereid om tyd te maak om hulle vir die werk van 'n raadslid toe te rus. Ek hou voor dat behalwe vir die gebruik van kapasiteitsbouprogramme moet die individue se stemme gehoor word en moet hulle 'n kans gegun word om saam te praat en ook aan belangrike beslissings deel te neem wat verband hou met die skool en die opvoeding van die leerder. Hulle moet hulle demokratiese burgerregte uitvoer, deelneem aan die ontwikkelinge wat in die skool plaasvind en daardeur sal hulle stemme ook gehoor word.

Slutelwoorde: Sewende-dag Adventisteskole, skoolbestuur, rolspelers, kapasiteitsbou, beraadslagende demokrasie, demokratiese burgerreg, inklusiwiteit.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have contributed to the success of my dissertation. I owe them a debt of gratitude and appreciation for their assistance and support.

Firstly of all, my gratitude goes to God for giving me the wisdom, knowledge, understanding and insight to pursue such a rigorous course of study. He granted me physical and emotional strength to pursue the study and see it through to its completion.

Secondly, I was honoured to have had Professor Yusef Waghid, a committed educationist and an academic par excellence, as my supervisor. He accepted me as his student without question, and then nurtured my potential in an extremely caring and supportive manner. Whenever I was at a loss for words and ideas, he prompted me to think innovatively, creatively and critically in order to bring out the best in me. His intellectual insights have prompted me to value education even more than I have and, above all, he helped me to value people more. I am eternally grateful for having been in the hands of such an accomplished educationist. He spared no effort in sharing his wealth of knowledge and expertise. His supervision has indeed inspired me.

A sincere thank you goes to the Cape Conference Education Department for allowing me to pursue my research in the Conference schools. To the subjects of this study, the schools, principals, staff members, school board members and parents, thank you very much for your cooperation and willingness to be part of this study. You have contributed to my understanding of the difficulties facing school boards, and you have also helped me gain insight into how our boards can be assisted.

A sincere word of thanks also goes to the Administration of Helderberg College, my employing organisation, for granting me the Sabbatical to gather all my data, as well as financial support. I would also like to thank the Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division for their financial support.

Thank you to all my colleagues in my faculty, who encouraged and supported me throughout my course of study.

My deepest thanks and appreciation go to my wife, Priscilla, who supported me through some of my toughest hours, who always encouraged me and sometimes had to do without a husband and friend, as I was too busy. I am very appreciative of my children, their spouses and my grandchildren. Thank you Phillip for always inquiring, "When is daddy going to finish?" I am also grateful to Ancilla, Rico and Larry, for their unconditional love and support. Thank you to my children's spouses Enrico, Karen, Ronell and Michelle, and my grandchildren Isla, Amity, Liam, Jordan and Tayla. You have also played a part in helping me achieve a PhD.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BC	British Columbia
CCMA	The Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration
PTA	Parents and Teachers Association
RQDA	R package for Qualitative Data Analysis
SASA	South African Schools Act
SAU	Southern Africa Union
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist
SGB	School governing body
USA	United States of America

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Preface

I decided to further my studies after working in the Education Department of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church for more than forty years. The obvious choice was a PhD in Education. Choosing a topic was not very difficult because school boards and how they functioned always interested me. I served as teacher, principal and Education Director in the Education Department of the Seventh-day church and, for most of the time, had to deal with school boards. Very early in my career I became aware of the fact that school boards could do much more for the schools that they served. I had already felt then that SDA school boards were not doing enough for their schools. However, as much as I suspected that there must be good reason for that, I never took the trouble to find out what it was.

When I decided to embark on further studies, my decision was to investigate the reasons why it was that our school boards were encountering what I perceived to be problems that hindered their effectiveness and efficiency. After my initial encounters with principals when I started my study, I was convinced that not much had changed with the school boards over the past forty years since I had worked with them. The only change was board members, but for all intents and purposes it was business as usual. I decided that if I could help the Education Department of the church it would be by helping our school boards function optimally. I had no doubt that I had to investigate why there were problems with our school boards.

I was inspired by Prof Waghid – a very kind, caring, compassionate supervisor, an educationist par excellence, who guided me through my study with constructive criticism and timely comments from his wealth of expertise in guiding students.

This study helps us to understand why we have problems in our school boards and offers positive suggestions on how to help our school board members function effectively and efficiently. What I find very gratifying is the fact that many of the suggestions came from the school board members, principals, staff members and parents who participated in this study.

I sincerely trust that this study will assist our SDA school boards to function more effectively and efficiently in years to come, and that, in turn, our SDA schools will reap the benefits provided by well-informed, well-prepared governors. I believe that, with good governorship, we can have excellent schools.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

There have been major changes in the South African educational landscape over the past decade. In fact, Squelch (2000, 128) says that:

Education systems worldwide are subject to ongoing change and reform. As societies develop, the various societal structures respond in kind to mutable contextual realities in which they operate. A major feature of education reform agendas has always been school governance ...

Squelch (2000, 128) asserts that many theorists support the idea of “decentralised education governance”. She further indicates that the school principal initially had all the control in the school and that the major decision-making process rested with him. However, decentralised school governance “is considered to be a more effective and appropriate form of governance” (2000, 129). The decentralisation of school governance meant that all the role players, which include principals, educators, parents, learners (in high schools), and community members, would have a role in the effective operation of the school. School boards (governing bodies) would play more than a merely supportive role in the operation of the school. For the purpose of this research, I shall use the term “board” or “school board”, since this is the term used by the Seventh-day Adventist Church when referring to a school governing body (SGB).

1.2 Background to the study

I have always wanted to be a teacher. I had no grandiose ideas of being a principal, head of department, or such like. I wanted to teach, and be a good teacher. I am a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) by birth and completed my first Teacher’s Diploma in an Adventist institution. I started teaching in the SDA system in 1968 and was appointed principal of a SDA primary school in Athlone, Cape Town in 1971, and four years after I entered the education system of the church. After spending eight years in Athlone, I was transferred to another SDA primary school in Sydenham, Durban. It was during this time that I started working on a BA degree which I completed with majors in English and History. I returned to Cape Town where I taught English at our SDA high school in Kuils River. I was later appointed vice-principal and then principal at the same high school. I completed a post-graduate HED, specialising in English and History.

After working at the high school in Kuils River, I transferred to another SDA high school in Somerset West. I taught matric English and History for a few years and was appointed vice-

principal and later acting-principal. By this time I had completed a BEd degree and had started on a MEd degree. My stay at the high school in Somerset West was short-lived because I was asked to take up the position of Director of Education for the SDA church with its headquarters in Port Elizabeth. After spending two years travelling up and down between Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, sometimes being away from home for a month or more, I decided that I had done enough travelling. At the time, I serviced SDA schools in Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, King William's Town, and Butterworth. We also had six school in Cape Town that I visited regularly. After two years in Port Elizabeth, I accepted a lecturing position at Helderberg College, where I now serve as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. However, my interest in school boards started in 1971 when I was appointed principal of the primary school where I had been teaching for four years.

In the SDA education system, the principal of the school serves as the secretary of the school board, so I have spent many years serving on school boards. In addition, the Education Director is also a member of the school board. So, as Education Director, I attended eleven school boards every quarter for two years. I was the secretary of the school board for fifteen years and served as an elected board member for six years therefore, I have been working with school boards for more than thirty years. Admittedly, my experience with school boards was not very pleasant at times. As Education Director, I faced many challenges with board members, such as time management, quorums, late coming, disinterest, and general apathy. This could be seen in the way the agenda was handled and the attention given to the school itself.

Our SDA schools have always struggled, financially, from my very first encounter in the system. We would discuss many items on the board but there was never enough time to really study and discuss the finances. I do not know if my expectations were too high, but I always left a board meeting feeling that we could have accomplished more. I was always concerned with reporting back to my staff but would be admonished by the chairperson to keep it to the bare minimum. It always bothered me that when decisions were taken regarding staff members, the chairman was the person to approach the staff member but would do so days or even weeks after the decision was taken. My problem was not with the chairperson but with the time taken to speak to the person concerned. I remember when I was a teacher, the principal would tell us about the appointment of new staff, something about the poor finances, and fund-raising that we had to become involved in. When I became principal I naturally thought that I could do the same, but being a young principal, age and experience, I looked to the chairman for assistance but received very little. I had to learn from board to board with very little help from the education department of the church or anyone else for that matter.

I was not involved with school boards on a regular basis after starting to lecture at Helderberg College in 2001. However, I became involved again from 2003 on when I was asked to assist at various schools with certain management and governance issues. Later in 2008, I joined an evaluation team that evaluated some of our SDA primary and high schools. I was involved with school boards again from that point. What I experienced with the boards reminded me of the days that I served on school boards. As time passed, my disillusionment grew with the way our boards conducted their business. I could not put my finger on anything specific but I knew that something was amiss. By this time, I had done a study on school boards, read the SASA from cover to cover and had spoken to the SDA education authorities about what I had unearthed regarding school boards. I was invited to speak at a principal's meeting about school boards but that was for about a half hour or so. Later, I went on another evaluation visit in 2009. I came home totally disillusioned with certain things in the schools as well as our school boards. I decided to investigate what is really transpiring in our schools regarding our boards and the functioning of our schools. This led me to do a doctoral dissertation on the effectiveness and efficiency of our school boards. As I mentioned, I had no idea that there were problems with the boards, but the schools' poor financial situation, living from hand to mouth, lack of maintenance and other related problems were reasons for concern. In my mind, I thought that I would start with the boards, because the board is the governing body and the governing body was responsible for the governance of the school. Many of the issues, I thought, would involve governance. I was not out to solve any problems. In relation to what was happening, I did not want to interpret and explain, only, but critique with a view to see what could be changed, in other words bring about transformation. This would mean becoming more assertive as I sought to empower myself to play a critical role in that transformation.

I felt that we were running façade school boards without getting into actual deliberative governance, and the only way to transform the boards would be to determine the correct interpretation of the events that would eventually lead to transformation. In this case critical theory which is also self-reflective is important in that it would lead to knowledge and understanding of the situation. In my understanding of what was really happening on the boards, it was hoped that transformation would lead to emancipation. Emancipation that would lead to deliberation of a different kind where the governing body sees the need for change. It is through critical theory that the deeper meanings are unearthed. It meant going below the surface and not doing a superficial study the school boards. We can make all the assumptions, but we need to uncover the assumptions that prevent us from understanding the true nature of what is being investigated. I believe that this understanding is emancipatory because it gives us the true meaning of what is happening in society, in this case the true nature of school

governance and what it is all about. I believe that interpretation is important here in that it helps us to understand the nature of what is being investigated. This leads to self-discovery and transformation. In this instance critical theory would explain what is wrong, identify agents for change and provide criticism that would lead to achievable goals for transformation. Here is also a strong case for interpretivism, since the researcher must interpret the elements of the study which means interpreting the human element involved in governance. There is a focus on meaning, which is socially constructed. In the case of the boards, multiple meanings with the goal of understanding because unlike positivism, interpretivism does not rely on prediction. Data must be constructed, analysed, and interpreted. Interpretivism can thus lead to transformation. In interpretivism, the researcher looks for what is specific, unique, and even deviant. Interpretivism depends on knowing what people think, what kind of problems they are facing and how they deal with them. It is interactive in nature and depends on participation and cooperation. At times, people may not, for some reason or the other, deal with their problems but suggest how they may be dealt with. Thus positivism is not an option here since it is objective in nature, relies on explanation and has a very strong element of prediction. Furthermore, it does not deal with specifics but relies on what is general and representative.

Critical theory emerged from the German theorists known as the Frankfurt school, and is a multidisciplinary approach with the ultimate aim of transforming society. My disillusionment with school boards could only be satisfied through critical theory, since a critical theory approach aims to create opportunities to empower and liberate, in other words transform. Many aspects of the boards frustrated me, but the critical theory approach inspired me to interpret what is happening at the schools with the aim to bring about transformation. Some of the changes that need to take place are system changes. I have been involved with SDA schools since 1968 and the method of choosing school board members has not changed in spite of obvious flaws in the system. In the SDA context, wherever a SDA school is situated, the SDA churches in close geographic proximity support that school financially and in any other way possible. Support may vary from five to fifteen churches. Each church elects a member to serve on the school board. The person becomes a member for at least a year, and in some schools for two years. In certain cases, the church elects the same member to serve for more than one year. Principals and teachers have asked the churches, on numerous occasions, to elect a parent who has a child at the school or a person who is interested in education and who has specific skills to assist the school. This does not always happen. Often, people who are not interested and who do not have specific skills that will help the school end up on the school board. In the context of church elections, some people are appointed to the school board for the sake of giving them

a position in the church. Rasi (1999:3) says that school board members must bring the following qualities to their task:

- (1) seasoned knowledge about the operation of a school; in areas such as education, management, finances, marketing, development, and law,
- (2) willingness to devote time and energy before, during, and after board meetings to ensure the success of the school, and
- (3) a commitment to contribute from their own resources or secure funds from other sources to ensure the continuity and growth of the school.

Furst on the other hand says that “boards can effectively serve three major functions: policy making and enforcement; oversight of school operations; and cheerleading for the institution” (2004, 4). I have found that many on the board expected the principal to come up with policies where needed, whereas the board together with the principal should determine certain policies. It is then up to the school administration to implement the policies. The board’s responsibility is to see that the policies are implemented. I have had untold problems with this concept, since many board members felt that they did not have the expertise to deal with policy. It was as if they were saying – you and your staff determine policy, and we will rubber-stamp it.

Transformation was needed to get members involved in policy-making.

As I mentioned earlier, in October 2008 I was asked to serve on an evaluating team to evaluate the primary schools in Cape Town. One of the areas that we had to evaluate was the role of the school board in the operation of each school. It was interesting that as far as governance was concerned, school A “was struggling to get its board members to attend meetings”. A recommendation made at school B was that “the administration addresses the serious lack of school board attendance and finds solutions to the problem”. One of the recommendations made for school C was that “the school and the SDA Education Department provide full training concerning the responsibilities and duties for all new school board members at the start of each year”. I was responsible for drawing up the reports and submitting them to the relevant authorities of the SDA Church. They were aware of the recommendations, which included interim visits at the end of twelve months to determine whether the recommendations had been carried out. More than a year had passed and, according to the principals, very little had been done to carry out the recommendations and nothing has been done concerning the school boards. This fact strengthened my resolve to analyse the school governing practices in SDA schools. I wanted to do this with a view to transform, liberate, and empower school boards.

Furst (2004, 4) claims that “[a]lmost all Adventist schools have governing boards. Their effectiveness is as varied as the schools they govern”. Dealing with the school board is a major

function of school administration, but how to do so effectively is seldom taught in education courses. Furst further claims that “the reason for this is, at least in part, that very little research exists on the effectiveness of boards, as well as administrators’ methods of dealing with them”. He asserts that his claim arises from personal observation and what he has experienced both as an administrator and as a board member. I concur with him because I have experienced and observed SDA school boards over a period of more than thirty years. In recent conversations with principals, I was informed that the situation has not changed since the last evaluation of the schools. Boyatt (2004, 13) says that a challenge for most boards is to use their time effectively and efficiently. Higgs and Jackson (2004, 20) argue that “it takes a year or more for a new board member to understand the operations of the school”. They assert that “most school board members learn through trial and error”. It is worth noting that an association like the Illinois School Board Association states that “many board members learn their roles by the seat of their pants”. For example, one of the functions of the board is to monitor the finances of the school. This implies that a board member must have an adequate knowledge of accounting procedures. How many board members have this kind of expertise? Waghid (2002, 107) indicates that “there remain a number of impediments (in relation to individuals), which could be the reason why they fail to function properly”. These include “parent governors who might have a good attitude towards improving schooling, but they do not often have the skills and knowledge to operate effectively”.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa operates a number of primary and secondary schools. The schools that I will concern myself with are situated in the Western and Eastern Cape. There are six schools in the Western Cape and five in the Eastern Cape, giving a total of eleven schools. In order to understand our system, I need to explain the hierarchy of the church. The world church is made up of thirteen world divisions. Each division consists of several unions. Unions consist of conferences and conferences consist of a number of churches in a given area. The Cape Conference that I will be concentrating on forms part of the Southern Africa Union, and the Union forms part of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. The Cape Conference has its headquarters in Port Elizabeth. The Union under which we fall has its headquarters in Bloemfontein.

It therefore should now be easier to understand what I mean when I speak about a Conference or the Union. The Conference leaves the board to govern the school and attend to its effective functioning. The boards, however, have not been effective themselves. This has been an ongoing problem that has resulted in parents withdrawing their children from SDA schools, and others not sending their children at all. As a result there is a need for effective governance

that will lead to effective schools, and thus restore the parents' faith in the Adventist system of education.

Heystek (2004, 308) observes that:

For many schools especially the black schools involvement by the parents at governance level is new. The limited training ... coupled with their uncertainty regarding their functions and duties, make it difficult ... to work harmoniously together.

The final motivation for this study was the need to research whether school boards are sufficiently equipped to govern, and to make recommendations that will provide solutions to any deficiencies.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The problem addressed in this research is the ineffective functioning of the school boards that operate the Adventist schools in the Cape Conference. The schools continue to struggle with finance, staff, discipline, equipment, policies, maintenance of the grounds and buildings, and effective operation. The boards, for reasons that I investigated, have been unable to assist with these challenges in a significant way. For example, there are discrepancies when it comes to salaries and allowances for different institutions. School boards can play a greater role when it comes to school governance, particularly finance.

When one becomes aware of certain phenomena, there is always speculation of what the causes may be. Suggestions and opinions may be expressed to explain possible causes, but without empirical evidence they will remain suggestions and opinions.

This study intends to explore existing problems with school boards in the Seventh-day Adventist Church schools, such as a lack of capacity building programmes and training, which has contributed to poor and ineffective school governance. The purpose of the study was to explore, gain insight into and determine the nature and extent of the problems. This was done by means of a philosophical-empirical inquiry. The data constructed by means of structured interviews and questionnaires were analysed to justify the depth of the problems with school boards in SDA schools.

The first set of questions relating to ineffective boards is: What is the nature and extent of the problems experienced by the boards? What can be done to help the boards play a more active role in governance? What kind of training will equip boards to function more effectively?

The first argument emanates from these general questions: existing problems experienced by school boards in Adventist schools, primarily a lack of capacity building programmes and training, have contributed to poor and ineffective school governance.

Most of the board members lack knowledge of the operation of a school, and they are not prepared to sacrifice time to carry out their responsibilities. They must also be prepared to sacrifice financially. They are not paid to execute their responsibilities and they sometimes have to dig into their own pockets to support the school. Reasons for the perceived problems were investigated.

The second set of general questions relate to training: Are the board members willing to undergo training in areas in which they lack expertise? Are they willing to sacrifice time for continuous training in order to gain the expertise they lack, and so equip themselves to carry out the functions and responsibilities of a board member effectively?

The second argument is that board members are willing to sacrifice time for continuous training in order to gain the expertise they lack, and so equip themselves to carry out the functions and responsibilities of the board effectively.

The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Department of Education 1996) makes it clear that:

The Head of Department must establish a programme to –

- (a) Provide introductory training for newly elected governing bodies to enable them to perform their functions; and
- (b) Provide continuing training to governing bodies to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them to assume additional functions.

Further that:

The Head of Department must ensure that principals and other officers of the education department render all necessary assistance to governing bodies in the performance of their functions in terms of this Act.

The first objective of this study was to create awareness of the functions and responsibilities of the school board. Secondly, it was to determine where their lack of expertise lies; thirdly, to determine what kind of continuous training is necessary to equip people for their work as board members; and fourthly to determine the time and effort members are willing to sacrifice in order to learn to function effectively.

1.4 A critical theoretical framework

Carr and Kemmis (1986, 129-130) identify five of the formal requirements that any approach to educational theory needs to accept:

First, it is apparent that educational theory must reject positivist notions of rationality, objectivity and truth. Secondly, educational theory must accept the need to employ the interpretive categories of teachers. A third feature of any approach to educational theory is that it must provide ways of distinguishing ideologically distorted interpretations from those that are not. It must also provide some view of how any distorted self-understanding is to be overcome. A fourth requirement for educational theory, then, is that it must be concerned to identify and expose those aspects of the existing social order which frustrate the pursuit of rational goals and must be able to offer theoretical accounts which make teachers aware of how they may be eliminated or overcome. The fifth requirement is the need to recognize that educational theory is practical, in the sense that the question of its educational status will be determined by the ways in which it relates to practice.

The 'Frankfurt School', which originated in Germany, accepted these requirements and developed a "view of theory usually labelled 'critical theory'" (Carr & Kemmis 1986, 130). The Frankfurt School consisted of a community of philosophers and social thinkers. An "overriding concern ... has been to articulate a view of theory that has the central task of emancipating people from positivist 'domination of thought' through their own understandings and actions" (1986, 130). It is the aim of critical theory to "reassess the relationship between theory and practice in the light of criticism of the positivists" (1986, 131). Critical theorists like Max Horkheimer, Theodore Adorno and Herbert Marcuse "saw great danger for modern society: the threat of the end of reason itself" (1986, 131). The early critical theorists thus saw the need to return to "the work of Aristotle and consider his conception of 'praxis' as 'doing' rather than making."

I believe that critical theory is a different way of looking at the issues and problems facing communities. It leads to a change of mind-set, a different way of looking at social problems. Critical theory constrains humans to free themselves from all forms of domination. Once liberated and emancipated they are free to be themselves, and empowered to be active role players in their communities as well as in the various institutions and structures that form part of their communities. Empowerment means that people are given the means to achieve the goals they set for themselves. It means that they can construct mechanisms to cope with everyday life. Empowerment, emancipation, accountability are all part of the critical paradigm.

Peca (2000, 3-4) avers that:

Critical theory focuses on the oppression of the individual, the group, and of society by self-imposed or externally imposed influences. In order to emancipate people on all three levels of oppression, people must engage in a critique of personal, situational, and historical forces which cause oppression. Critical theory posits reality as created by man. Critical theory also acknowledges the existence of objective reality and is thus ontologically consistent with the positivistic paradigm. Its goal is human emancipation.

Furthermore, Clark (n. d.) says that “critical researchers assume that the knowledge developed in their research may serve as a first step toward addressing...injustices. As an approach with a definite normative dimension, the research aims for a transformative outcome.” Jensen (1997) had the same in mind when he stated that the “ultimate goal of Critical Theory is to transform, or present society with a just, rational, human, and reconciled society.” Gall et al. (1999, 361) concur with the previous writers by stating that:

Critical theory represents a broad school of thought that involves uncovering the nature of power relationships in a culture, and that also seeks through its inquiries to help emancipate members of the culture from the many forms of oppression that operate within it.

According to Gall et al. (1999), critical theory makes several assumptions. I will highlight some of them. First of all, there are groups in society that are privileged over others. They further state that “criticalists believe that the widespread cultural oppression in contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when non-privileged groups accept their lesser social status as natural, necessary or inevitable” (1999, 361). As was stated earlier, oppression can come from outside sources or it can be self-imposed. Gall et al. (1999, 362) make it clear that:

Critical theory strives to highlight the sense of frustration and powerlessness that non-privileged groups feel with respect to their opportunities to realize their potential, and to provide insight to guide them toward greater autonomy and ultimately emancipation.

Secondly, it is stated that “oppression has many faces” and that “it is necessary to examine all the cultural categories that are used to separate and oppress different groups and to consider their joint operation and effect” (1999, 362). We can argue that we live in a democracy and that the oppression of the past no longer exists, but ethnic backgrounds, gender, social class and other cultural characteristics must be taken into account as we endeavour to understand each other and as we try to finally emancipate ourselves and others from the shackles of the past. Schools are open irrespective of race, colour or creed and, as such, we must all work together to see our educational institutions flourish. Thus, as school board members, we must embrace each other and help each other become an effective body. I suspect that many of our school board members suffer from self-imposed oppression. This research therefore sets out to examine the reasons for these perceived problems with school governing bodies (SGBs) and to provide solutions that will help our SGBs become more effective.

Another very important assumption is that “language is central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious awareness)” (1999, 362). We use language to encode our experiences. It therefore is important to remember that we live in a country that has eleven languages. So people who speak a different language to those whose first language is English,

for example, will have different conscious and unconscious experiences. This must be taken into account when you serve on a school board, since the members of our school boards come from different cultures and speak different languages (Gall et al. 1999, 363).

The final assumption I would like to mention is that “all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted” (Gall et al. 1999, 364). Gall et al. (1999, 364) explain that:

In the context of education, this assumption implies that the beliefs and activities of students, teachers, and the other groups involved in education are inevitably affected by the experiences with power and dominance, both within and outside the system.

For example, some members of the school board, especially the chairperson, the teacher representative and maybe one or two other influential members, may be seen by other members as well read and educated, to the extent that they feel insecure and intimidated and fail to function effectively, possibly due to self-imposed oppression or for some other reason.

Historical baggage from the past may also have a role to play in these feelings of insecurity. This could cause members to stay away from meetings or to attend them erratically. Others might attend and give the minimum input, which could be the total of their involvement. These are some of the aspects that I suspect exist, but have yet to prove, and are possible causes of the poor performance of school boards. If it is that some or all of these problems exist, it is the work of this research to indicate as such and then to rectify the situation, thereby emancipating the participants and empowering them to participate effectively. Gall et al. (1999, 365) state that:

Despite the widespread effects and taken-for-granted nature of much cultural oppression, criticalists seek to balance their criticism with hope, and a deep belief that the emancipation of non-privileged groups will improve the life conditions of all groups and individuals.

The integration of theory and practice therefore is very important in the respect that it will help communities cope with their daily frustrations. In my opinion, schools and their school boards form part of these daily frustrations. The inability of the school boards to govern their schools effectively forms part of this everyday frustration. It is perceived that the members are ill-equipped, lack expertise in many areas, lack education, lack training, and receive no orientation when appointed. It might well be that some of them accept the position believing that they will receive training. If these problems are so, it adds to the frustration of school board members.

According to Carr and Kemmis (1986, 136), “Habermas concedes that self-reflection and self-understanding may be distorted by social conditions, then the rational capabilities of human

beings for self-emancipation will only be realized by a critical social science that can elucidate these conditions and reveal how they can be eliminated”.

The social conditions of some of the areas in which our schools are situated are extremely poor. Many schools operate under very trying circumstances. Governing bodies face what seem to be insurmountable challenges. A critical social science therefore “will seek to offer individuals an awareness of how their aims and purposes may have become distorted or repressed and to specify how these can be eradicated so that the rational pursuit of their real goals can be undertaken” (Carr & Kemmis 1986, 136). Carr and Kemmis (1986, 136) indicate that:

A critical social science will provide the kind of self-reflective understanding that will permit individuals to explain why the conditions under which they operate are frustrating and will suggest the sort of action that is required if the sources of these frustrations are to be eliminated.

We must remember that, just a few short years ago, people were still under apartheid rule. Powerless and trapped, many had no control over their lives. One would have thought the situation would have changed since our democratic elections, but these changes do not occur overnight. We live in a free, democratic society, but many people are bound by chains of ignorance, a lack of education and possibly also a few self-imposed oppressions from which they are struggling to escape. Critical theory suggests that these can be eliminated when people take control of their lives, if necessary with the assistance of others. This means that, if there are problems with the school boards, these can be rectified through a process of education and training. Habermas (in Carr and Kemmis 1985, 134) contends that

Knowledge is never the outcome of a ‘mind’ that is detached from everyday concerns – on the contrary, it is always constituted on the basis of interests that have developed out of natural needs of the human species and that have been shaped by historical and social conditions.

In this research I hope to point out that we need to forget about our oppressive past and to realise that, as individuals, we have a right to participate in the structures of society. We need to realise that we can participate effectively and make a meaningful contribution in the societies where we live through a process of education. Carr and Kemmis (1986, 137) point out that critical theory “is not ‘critical’ simply in the sense of voicing disapproval of contemporary social arrangements but in the sense that it attempts to distil the historical processes which have caused subjective meanings to become systematically distorted”.

A philosophical study uses a critical approach, and since this is a philosophical study that looks at the practices of school governing body, which to a large extent involve marginalised and excluded people, I will attempt to construct arguments about why particular problems exist.

McLean (2006, 8) says that “investigation of aspects of the social world always involves theories: acknowledged or not... Making theories explicit allows interrogation, testing, modification and development of beliefs, values and arguments in the research process”. She further asserts that, “whatever the differences between critical theorists, there is common dual commitment to critiquing current conditions and to propelling action towards future emancipation and social justice”. At the same time McLean (2006, 8) makes it quite clear that:

critical theory does not aim to produce definitive knowledge, nor does it posit straight forward, inevitable progress. Critical theory constructs arguments, which should always be kept open, about how we are doing and what it would be wise to do; it aims, in particular, to put brakes on moves by powerful and inhumane to distort human life.

It may be that many people are not free from the chains of the past. We need to break from the past; a complete transformation needs to take place by realising that “individuals and institutions can be transformed for better or worse whether or not we are seeking radical change” (McLean 2006, 15). As I did my research and determined what are now perceived to be the problems with school governing bodies, I hoped that the solutions would prove to be emancipatory and transformative. A critical approach therefore was important to make sure that school governing bodies are challenged to govern effectively and efficiently.

The objectives of the study were to create an awareness of the functions and responsibilities of school boards, to determine where their lack of expertise lay, to determine what kind of continuous training was necessary to equip individuals for their work as board members, and to determine the time and effort members were willing to sacrifice in order to learn to function effectively. I had to interact with all the role players, by way of questionnaires and structured interviews, to justify the depth of problems with school boards in SDA schools, and critically analyse the work of other researchers and writers in this field to determine what they have constructed through research and what governance practices they have found in other schools. I also consulted the work of researchers who have made critical inquiry into education policy practices and transformation in education.

My aim was to understand the depth of the problems with school board practices in SDA schools, and why these problems exist. As mentioned earlier, there are reasons for the perceived problems that exist and these were investigated. I have worked with SDA school boards for more than twenty-five years and my experience has been that there are problems. These problems were verbalised and discussed, and found that in fact they do exist. Solutions were thus constructed that would help the school boards govern more effectively and efficiently. My aim was to empower all the role players and help them to realise that theirs is a task of great import if they wish to see the schools become effective, excellent schools. It is

hoped that they will see that they can make a difference if they become proactively involved in the daily operation of the school.

I wanted to make a critical assessment of each school board in order to help them understand what is required in order for them to transform not only themselves, but also the schools that they serve. By empowering them it is hoped that they will see their responsibility in the light of a partnership in education. The school boards must see themselves as partners with a vested interest in education, and realise that they are making an investment in education, the dividends of which will be seen when young people qualify and take their place in the community and society.

I think it is critical to understand the needs of the individuals who make up the school boards. It is only when these needs are determined that one can analyse them effectively in the light of the many practices that may or may not be employed by school boards, and then offer solutions to the perceived problems. Karlsson, Pampallis and Sithole (1996, 30) make it clear that:

Changes in the system of school governance need to be planned so that learners, parents, the community, school personnel, and administrators are all prepared and understand their roles, the objectives, powers and functions of governance structures, and the outcomes that are anticipated. In particular provision must be made to ensure that these role-players can acquire the necessary knowledge and skill to perform their functions properly.

It is important that all the role players work together, in harmony, in order to see that our schools become excellent schools, places where learners can grow to their full potential and achieve the outcomes that will equip them so that they can make a contribution to society. Waghid (2002, 104) says that “democratic school governance demands that relevant role-players perform two crucial tasks: understanding the consultative meanings of the concept such as consultation, collaboration, co-operation, partnership, mutual trust and participation, and practicing or implementing these meanings”.

1.5 Effective and efficient governance

There is no doubt that when fully equipped, school boards can perform their tasks effectively and efficiently. However, what is meant by effective and efficient governance? There are several aspects to the question. First of all, there must be a professional approach to governance. It is in this professional approach that board members learn to work together as a team and value their differences as they come to decisions in their deliberations. Effectiveness and efficiency also depend on the leadership. The leader must be one that inspires, builds confidence, mutual respect, and trust. It also means true accountability. Functions and responsibilities must be carefully defined and in turn, the board must govern and allow the

principal and the staff to manage. Effectiveness also depends on what each member brings to the board. Each member's contributions must add value to the smooth functioning of the board.

In order to be effective, each member must be prepared to accommodate diversity, value diversity, and embrace diversity for the greater good of all involved. No member must come with an agenda, but must be prepared to be a good team player. Boyatt (1999:4) says effective board members display the following:

- have a positive, supportive attitude;
- are receptive and respectful listeners;
- possess integrity and are worthy of trust;
- are able to communicate well with others and do so openly, honestly and clearly;
- display a high level of professionalism; and
- operate with fairness.

I cannot overemphasize the aspect of trust. When roles, responsibilities, and functions are clear and members understand what it is that must be done, then trust is high. Of course privacy and confidentiality must be respected. Needless to say, an effective board member should be willing to sacrifice time, particularly leisure time and even family time. I would also say that in order to be effective, a board should be able to listen attentively, analyse carefully, identify specifically and then put decisions into operation. The board should, therefore, make sure that it is doing the right thing, for the right reason, know what is being done, how it is being done, why it is being done, and what the possible outcomes could be. I also believe that an effective board sets goals for itself, and then assesses its own performance. However, the board should also be efficient in its dealings and operations. This means that there should be open and timely communication between all stakeholders. Managing as well as governing the school should be done efficiently. This means that there must be improvement in how things are done and the time taken to do it. Certain tasks can be completed in a certain amount of time but often takes too long to complete. If the board is given "homework" for a report-back meeting then it must be done. Too much time is taken rehashing old decisions to the detriment of the efficiency of the meeting. People do not want to spend an hour on a decision that could take fifteen to twenty minutes. Procrastination also robs boards of their efficiency. Whenever items are left over for the next board, it creates problems of its own. I have found that when this happens, a board never has enough time to complete its agenda drawn up for that specific meeting. If items are to be handled, handle them promptly. If people are to be contacted, do so immediately after the board or the next day. The efficiency of the board suffers when it fails to carry out its functions

promptly and judiciously. Some issues drag on from meeting to meeting. Certain decisions that have been made and voted on are rehashed and unnecessary time is spent on them.

Unfortunately, some decisions are handled very unprofessionally. Often days elapse before decisions are carried out, particularly when it involves staff. In the meantime individuals are informed via the “grapevine” before official notification. Efficiency is also affected by time wasting, projects that are not followed through and plans that are not put into operation. On the other hand, some projects and plans are executed at exorbitant costs even when advice to the contrary is given. I believe that cost effective planning is a part of working efficiently. Finally, I believe that when things are done competently, they are also done efficiently. In other words when people lack competence, efficiency suffers. This brings me to the question of capacity building.

1.6 Capacity building

I believe that capacity building leads to effectiveness and efficiency, if the necessary learning is applied and used correctly. Many school board members lack experience, expertise, and education to fulfil the task of school governor. Education and training will develop attitudes, values, and skills. These capabilities will help board members to deliberate in ever-changing situations and thus make a valuable contribution to the boards on which they serve. This will also lead to development of the communities that they serve. Their skills, competencies, and expertise developed as a result of education and training will help them bring value as they interact with their boards and society. In other words they need to build the capacity needed to be a good, knowledgeable governor. This capacity is evidenced in their knowledge about their responsibilities and functions received during training. This capacity is further seen in their interactions and deliberations on the board. It is, then, important to nurture the capabilities of the board members through training, and in this way build the capacity of each member enabling them to fulfil their roles on the board. Capacity building thus leads to transformation of the board members which in turn will help them meet the increasing demands placed on them by society. Capacity building also helps the member to develop attitudes towards education with regard to the vision and mission of the school, and how the aims and objectives can be achieved. Capacity building can be achieved in various ways, but must be ongoing since the education landscape changes so often, and school board members should keep abreast with all these changes.

1.7 Research method

In this research I wanted to investigate the existing situation prevalent in school governing bodies with the intention of rectifying it. In this respect I used critical theory linked to interpretive research. I intended to improve what I see as a bad situation in order to liberate and empower individuals as we seek to redress some of the inadequacies of the past. It therefore was important to understand what has gone wrong with school boards by interacting with and interviewing the participants. The various role players have assigned meanings to what they understand to be the work of the school board. By linking interpretive studies with critical theory it is possible, through research, to understand what has gone wrong and how it can be rectified. McLean (2006, 9) states:

Critical theory is normative: the purpose of critique is to delineate a more just and free future. ‘Critical’ refers not only to a critique of social conditions, but also to Kant’s idea of self-reflective examination of limits and validity of our own knowledge and understandings. Critique involves reflection on what we take for granted, identifying the constraints of injustice, and, freeing ourselves to consider fairer alternatives.

It is in the light of critical theory that arguments therefore can be constructed about why our school boards are not operating successfully. Coupled with this, the interpretive approach provides a deep insight into “the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live in it” (Schwandt 1998, 221). Interpretive research assumes that reality is socially constructed and the researcher becomes the vehicle by which this reality is revealed (Andrade 2009, 42). Questionnaires and interviews therefore were ideal, since one is sharing in their everyday life experience and comes to understand each role player’s argument regarding the work of the school board. Each role player would have constructed his or her own reality regarding the work of the school board. One has to get inside their world, interpret what is happening and work at rectifying and improving the operation of the school board.

According to Rowlands (2005, 81),

The foundation assumption for interpretive research is that knowledge is gained, or at least filtered, through social constructions such as language, consciousness, and shared meanings. In addition to the emphasis on the socially constructed nature of reality, interpretive research acknowledges the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is being explored, and the situational constraints shaping this process. In terms of methodology, interpretive research does not predefine dependent or independent variables, does not set out to test hypotheses, but aims to produce an understanding of the social context of the phenomenon and the process whereby the phenomenon influences and is influenced by the social context.

Bearing the above aspects of interpretive research in mind, then, this dissertation sought to explore the phenomenon otherwise known as the school board to determine its role in the social context of schooling.

According to Burbules and Warnick (2003, 25), “a good deal of work in philosophy of education is less concerned with discourses, principles and systems, and more with fairly specific policies and practices that define educational business as usual...”. This study, therefore, set out to question a particular educational practice or policy, viz. to explore, gain insight into, and explain reasons for ineffective board governance, and then to provide some solutions to assist the boards to become effective bodies. Qualitative methods were used to get detailed information about the source of the problems. Questionnaires and structured interviews were used.

The survey method is the most commonly used descriptive method in educational research (Cohen and Manion 1985). Cohen and Manion (1985, 94) further indicate that, “whether the survey is large scale... or small scale ... [t]he collection of information typically involves one or more of the following data-gathering techniques: structured or semi-structured interviews, self-completion or postal questionnaires...” As already stated, I used structured interviews and self-completion questionnaires.

Questionnaires were sent to all the educators in the school, as well as to a sample of learners and parents. Structured interviews were conducted with the various school board members and with the principals. They were also given a questionnaire to complete.

I believed that important information about the functions and responsibilities of the school boards could be obtained from non-school board members, such as the educators, parents and learners.

The purpose of the interviews was to determine the work of the school boards, how they see their functions and responsibilities, whether they understand what governance is, the scope of their present work, how it compares with what they should be doing, and whether they see themselves as an effective body. A further purpose was to determine their willingness to participate in continuous training exercises to improve their expertise in school governance.

Higgs and Jackson (2004, 20) point out that “Adventist elementary and secondary institutions are operated by school boards with five basic areas of responsibility: curriculum implementation, personnel support, institutional finance, physical plant, and public relations”.

Our school boards have the same responsibilities. I have served on school boards for many years and have found that many of those who serve lack expertise and are, for example, unable to ask the right questions relating to the finances of the school. If a board member is to take responsibility for the finances of the school, then he or she must be able to read a financial statement.

With the above in mind, the interviews were scheduled as structured interviews and were held with each respondent in exactly the same way. This minimised the influence of the interviewer so that a more objective result could be obtained. It also made it easier to draw comparisons.

Questionnaires were hand delivered to the educators, learners and parents. The learners were asked to hand questionnaires to their parents. I spent eight weeks delivering questionnaires to specific schools and collecting them. Interviews were spaced over a period of time depending on the availability of the school board members and principals. I spent at least seven months administering, collecting and writing up information. The target groups were principals, educators, learners, parents and members serving on the school boards.

The data was analysed as soon as it had been obtained. Once the results had been determined, solutions were sought from the data supplied.

Andrade (2009, 45) paints an interesting picture when he says:

Let's imagine a scenario at the beach in which a huge wave is approaching the shore. There is an excited surfer on top of the big wave and two scared children in a small inflatable boat right below the colossal wave. On the shore, a girl is admiring her boyfriend's dexterity and the petrified children's mother is watching the looming mass of water approaching the boat. On the adjacent cliff there is a relaxed monk meditating on the infiniteness of the universe, while enjoying the sea breeze and the sound of the sea. If we want to conduct research on what that wave means for beach-goers, our results will depend on who the respondent is. Interviewing one of the participants would give insights from that participant's perspective only, which may be insufficient or misleading, because their personal and intimate experiences with the wave are quite different from that of others. If the interpretive researcher wants to create an integral and persuasive piece of research around this phenomenon, each participant's different perspectives should be included.

By the same token, all the role players involved with the school boards should be interviewed and should be required to fill in a questionnaire in order to get views on the school boards from all perspectives. The role players included school board members, educators, learners and parents. The school board members included the chairperson, the principal and others drawn from the staff, the clergy, as well as parents.

1.8 Proposed structure of chapters

In Chapter 1 I have explained my background and interest in the research, as well as the problem with school boards, in particular the lack of effective and efficient governance. I selected all the Seventh-day Adventist schools, six in the Western Cape and five in the Eastern Cape, for inclusion in the study. Although one of the schools in the Eastern Cape has a high school and a primary school section, they are governed by one school board. I explored the concept of critical theory and included the work of several theorists. Interpretive research is combined with critical theory as part of the theoretical framework and method of research. My contention is that there are problems with SGBs, relating to a lack of expertise to govern effectively and efficiently. I used questionnaires and interviews to get the data and used the findings to suggest solutions to the problems and in this way rectify the situation.

Chapter 2 deals with the school boards in South Africa. It discusses the present situation in which school boards find themselves, and includes discussion of important aspects of the South African Schools Act. It highlights what is happening at present and how school boards are functioning. It includes a discussion of the constitution of a school board and how it is adhered to. The discussion also includes capacity building as indicated by various authors.

Chapter 3 highlights the school boards of the Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Cape Conference. The discussion includes the constitution, composition, functions and responsibilities. Reference is made to Adventist education in general, since all Adventist schools are governed in more or less the same way. I also compare and contrast our school boards with that of state schools.

Chapter 4 deals with the research itself. I went to each school to administer the questionnaire and do the interviews. The data was collected and carefully analysed in order to ascertain the extent of the problems. Once the problems were determined it was possible to work on solutions that can be applied to rectify the situation.

Chapter 5 is a discussion of the specific problems determined in Chapter 4. I indicate how I envisage remedying the various problems. The literature has already provided information that shows that training must be done, but how it should be done and what specifically must be done is not always clear. My aim was to provide specific strategies and techniques that can be used to remedy the situation. The school boards must have training in specific areas that will empower them to do their work. It is hoped that the solutions will be used to help the SDA schools build strong, effective school boards.

Chapter 6 consists of a discussion of the implications of the research. There are implications for existing school boards as well as for future school boards. It is hoped that the implications will be emancipating and liberating. It is further hoped that they will lead to empowering people to play a more active role in school boards so that our schools become excellent schools.

Finally, Chapter 7 deals with the implications for effective and efficient school governing practices in SDA schools and the relevance of this study to the debate on school governing bodies.

KEYWORDS: Seventh-day Adventist schools, school governance, role players, capacity building, deliberative democracy, democratic citizenship, inclusivity.

Chapter 2

SCHOOL BOARDS – A GLOBAL VIEW

2.1 Background

In Chapter 1 I discussed the strong support there was for “decentralised education governance”. This eventually materialised with the establishment of the school governing body or school board. However, I mentioned that there were many problems with the functioning of these boards, particularly in Seventh-day Adventist schools. I went on to discuss a critical theoretical approach to dealing with these problems. The approach is to integrate theory and practice. This will help us see the relevance of including all the role players in the decision-making processes at the school. The concept of ownership is important, since in the context of education in South Africa we are still dealing with a legacy of the apartheid era. Many have not disengaged themselves from the shackles of the past.

In this chapter I will discuss school boards, taking into account specific countries, including the history and function of school boards in the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States of America (USA), Australia, Canada and South Africa. I will also determine their influence on school governance in South Africa, and will discuss the history and origin of school boards in South Africa and the influence of globalisation. Finally, I will look at school boards in the Seventh-day Adventist church.

2.2 Introduction

Gann (1998, 7) observes that “the history of governing schools is the story of how ordinary people eventually got to have a say in the running of their schools”. This is an important observation in the context of education in South Africa. When we look at our boards today, it is indeed ordinary people who form part of our school boards, and who take responsibility for overseeing the various facets of the operation of our schools.

According to Gann (1998, 7) there are three levels of operation. These levels are:

School governance – people with the responsibility for an individual school; local level of school administration with more or less control over the first level, and national government which exerts its influence in a number of ways, through Acts of Parliament...

Mintz (2010, 1) says that “governance of schools is becoming an increasingly important issue, as educators begin to realize how crucial it is to empower participants in any educational process”.

He asserts that:

The more the student learner can be empowered, involved in making decisions about his or her education, the more powerful that force can be toward helping them to take responsibility for their own learning (Mintz 2010, 1).

Mintz makes an important assertion, because it is my contention that an educator is not there just for teaching the three Rs, but is preparing the learner for life. The learner is preparing to take his or her place in society, and not just take a place, but make a useful contribution. Mintz (2010, 1) further states that:

In a true democratic process, decisions are made by using all the creative forces and all the authority of the many participants who are involved in making these decisions. To the extent that they are disempowered by special groups having veto power, to that extent is the authority and creative power of the total body eroded.

The goal of school governance should be to empower all the role players. For too long, the education of our children has been left to the educators alone, while we sit by like idle spectators. We complain when things go wrong, but then revert to being passive bystanders. By empowering all the role players, we can have a direct say in the education of our children. For a decade or more, a concerted effort has been made to include all the role players in the decision-making processes at school governance level. For a long time, most of the decision making in the school rested with the principal. In certain cases, the school had an administration committee that included two or three senior educators. However, the principal chaired the committee and had his specific agenda voted for, with scant consideration of the suggestions of others. However, there were strong moves by local communities, as well as by parents, to become involved in decision making. Over a period of time, reforms were introduced that resulted in the involvement in decision making of parents, learners, educators, staff and certain members of the community. In fact, Baron (1981, 1) states:

A feature of school systems in many countries over the past fifteen years has been the interest shown in setting up or reforming councils or boards concerned with the government of individual schools. Such councils, mainly though not wholly advisory in character, are composed in varying degrees of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, and local citizens.

It is evident from this statement that the idea of a school board is not a new one, and has been in operation for more than thirty years, although they were not of necessity called school boards. Through the years there has been pressure for the decentralisation of and changes in school governance. Brabant (2007, 3) says that governance is now seen as an important means “to overcome the division between rulers and ruled in representative regimes and to secure the

input and commitment of an increasingly wide range of stakeholders in policy formulation and implementation”.

She further asserts (Brabant 2001, 3) that:

When educational systems are decentralised, stakeholders that gain power in decision-making processes are children, parents, community members, school directors, and teachers. Consequently, governments and school administrators yield some. They see their roles transformed into one of coordination of initiatives and responsibility for communication of successes and failures throughout the system, in favour of collective learning.

2.3 Changes in school governance

Baron (1981, 1) puts it very cogently when he states that:

A feature of school systems in many countries over the past fifteen years has been the interest shown in setting up or reforming councils or boards concerned with the government of individual schools. Such councils, mainly though not wholly advisory in character, are composed in varying degrees of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, and local citizens; and are concerned with the organization and discipline of their schools, with their resources and their use and, in most cases, with substantial reservations, with their curriculum and staffing.

Before the clamour for change, countries had different ways of governing their schools. Baron (1981) indicates that ad hoc boards were found in the United States and Canada, whilst the responsibility fell to the local Education Authority in Britain. However, in countries such as France, West Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Australia, the state was responsible for governance.

2.4 Overview of school governance

This overview covers governance in Britain, the United States of America, Australia and South Africa. I have chosen these countries because, first of all, they are developed countries, and also because it is important to see how the liberal views in these countries involve their democratic practices. Furthermore, the liberal views and democratic practices globally also would have influenced school governance in South Africa.

2.4.1 School governance in the United Kingdom

Gann (1998, 8) traces the history of school boards in England, starting from the Dark Ages, when boards of trustees were responsible for setting up and running English schools. The schools were “originally church institutions but by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries more and more schools were set up by groups of lay people...”. The entire running and governing of the schools was in the hands of the trustees. By the 1830s the Church of England and the

British Foreign Schools Society provided elementary education. They received grants from the government and, according to Gann (1998, 8), these “church school managers (until the 1986 Education Act, all elementary and later primary school governors were called managers) were not inclined to take orders, just as long as the grant kept coming” (1998, 8).

Gann (1998) states that the first big legislation came in 1870, when the 1870 Education Act was introduced. It is interesting that “deciding who should administer the schools involved a very democratic system for the time”. We must remember that the “1870 Education Act brought some 5.2 million children into compulsory elementary education by 1895” (Gann 1998, 9). The country was divided into school districts, and school boards, which varied in size from five to fifteen members, were created. The number of members on the board was decided according to the population of the district. Gann (1998) further says that these members were elected every three years by cumulative vote (1998, 10).

Gann (1998, 10) says that “the school boards created under the Elementary Education Act were the most democratically constituted of all elected bodies of local government,” and further explains that while the 1870 Education Act was of great significance for the schools, and a step in the right direction, a debate concerning the control of the schools and how they should be financed took centre stage. The debate now became a political one.

Gann (1998) poses the question – what was the outcome of the 1870 Education Act? Church and state were now in conflict because of the extended representation, as well as the powers wielded by the new boards. Sutherland (cited in Gann 1998, 11) says that the boards “were considered to be breeding grounds for radical agitators”. Their effectiveness as vehicles for radical change was called into question. The 1870 Education Act, however, laid the foundations of the modern school governing body.

2.4.2 Governing bodies in the nineteenth century

Following the 1870 Education Act, many managers were engaged in fund raising for the school, inspecting, appointing staff, and visiting the school. Parents, however, were not very happy that the local church minister, shopkeeper, and other locals controlled and administered the school. This led to apathy on the part of the parents and resulted in a lack of commitment. However, as time went on, more and more professional staff took over the duties of the boards. Lay people were pushed out and the 1902 Act later swept away the school boards. Local

government now took over and, by 1945, representative governors were appointed (Gann 1998, 15).

2.4.3 School governance from 1970

Gann (1998, 15) indicates that school boards in England and Wales date back the late 1960s. Many did not see the importance of school boards. There were three aspects that denied the governing bodies any significant role, namely full-time professional staff of education in the local authorities and the schools, political elements in the local government, and the central government failing to define a specific area of responsibility for the governors. Various attempts were made in the 1970s to strengthen the governing bodies. The problem was that, before 1986, the 1944 Act did not spell out the area of responsibility that governing bodies could call their own.

However, the Taylor Report released in the 1970s provided reasons for the participation of all role players in school governance. This was followed by a debate after which the Green Paper on Education called for inclusivity and democratic participation in school governance (Gann 1998). By 1984, according to Gann (1998, 20), the government had made a proposal that governing bodies should be restructured to contain a majority of parents – a proposal that was dropped when the parents indicated that they wanted representation, not control.

Over a period of just more than ten years, education became one of the central issues in political dialogue leading up to the 1987 general election in England. Gann (1998, 21) says:

Margaret Thatcher stated in *The Independent*, 17 July 1987, “Just as we gained political support in the last election from people who had acquired their own homes and shares, so we shall secure still further our political base in 1991-92 – by giving people a real say in education and housing”.

After about 150 years of state control, the schools became the responsibility of the local community. New governors were appointed under the 1986 Act and took office in 1988, “just in time to face the beginnings of a revolution in educational administration and management” (Gann 1998). It was clear that governors were responsible and accountable to “the parents and the local education authority” (Gann 1998, 21).

2.4.4 Parents’ participation

It is clear from various sources that, from the early 1960s, parents were concerned about education and schooling and wanted to play a part in the education of their children. What they wanted was meaningful participation in the decision-making processes of the school. Since all

could not have a say, this was done through representation on the school board. In this way they would have a voice and participate in the governance of the school. People wanted change and, in many instances forced change in the administration of public affairs, especially in schools.

2.4.5 Governance in England since 1986

There has been an ongoing debate on governance since 1986. Barton *et al.* (2006, 3) suggest that there is confusion over the role of the school board resulting from the tensions between three issues:

1. Concern about how to maintain and strengthen local accountability, in particular to parents,
2. Anxiety about excessive governing body responsibilities, bureaucracy and workload, and associated demands on head teachers, and
3. The need to create a more focused and influential model of governance and promote a shared leadership model in the school.

The model adopted since 1986 is that all stakeholder groups are equal. Therefore, when elected to governorship, all members are regarded as equal. However, the size of this body can be up to 22 members, of whom at least 14 to 18 are governors, and this poses a problem. The stakeholders represented have “traditionally been defined as parents, teachers, local authority, religious groups, local business and community groups as well as those who represent founders or sponsors”(Barton et al. 2006, 3). Decision making becomes extremely complex when so many groups with divergent views have to be accommodated. The danger is that the group can become so big that it results in them becoming inactive, inefficient and ineffective.

However, as a result of new legislation, parents now form the majority of governors. It is interesting to note that parents are still not aware of the responsibilities of governors and therefore do not hold them to account when things go wrong, even in “schools identified as failing, yet government continues to cite parental involvement as the key to improving schools” (Barton et al. 2006, 4). Non-involvement or limited involvement of parents remains a serious problem. Until parents take ownership of the schools through school boards, we are going to have to be satisfied with mediocre schools, poorly equipped schools, and under-performing schools. Where parents have held the school board accountable, schools have improved tenfold. Schools need to engage parents and, until this happens, the role of parents in school governance will remain a serious problem, not only in the UK, but all over the world.

It is clear that an effective governing body comprehends its responsibilities and key functions. It can, therefore, be held accountable for the way it functions in the school. It is imperative that

it provides strategic leadership and governs efficiently and effectively to ensure the success of the school. Furthermore, it must streamline management so that the governing body can function optimally and have smaller committees to assist with various functions. (Barton et al. 2006).

It is important that there is public accountability. For this purpose, local stakeholders must be chosen to serve as governors. There must be sufficient and fair representation and also include a small committee appointed by the governing body with powers to attend to management issues in the school. As indicated earlier, there must be a strategic approach to governance. This means that all governors must have the skills and the experience to carry out their responsibilities efficiently and effectively (Barton et al. 2006).

One can readily see that school governance is very important in the UK.

With regard to religious schools, Scott and McNeish (2012) state that England has five main types of Faith schools. All are governed by strong governing bodies. Four receive funding from local authorities which include: Community schools, Foundation and Trust schools, Voluntary –aided schools and Voluntary-controlled schools. Academies are separately funded. In 2012, there were 6 814 maintained faith schools out of a total of around 20 000 maintained schools (2012, 6). A number of studies that investigated effective leadership have concluded that strong leaders play a major role in school effectiveness. Besides school leadership, governance and parental expectations are important in the context of a faith school (2012, 9). There is also evidence that religious values may help to shape the leader’s approach to transformational leadership. One of the key challenges for leadership in religious schools is the need to build capacity, including the recruitment, retention and development of school leaders, staff and governors (2012, 10).

Governors need experience, skills and expertise to deal with a range of diverse challenges emerging from an ever-changing educational landscape. Governing bodies need to understand and share the leadership challenges faced by the school. The quality of the governing body influences school improvement. Where there is low capacity and low competence, negative outcomes result. However, where competence and capacity is high, it influences school improvement positively (2012, 18).

2.4.6 School governance in Australia

During the 1980s and 1990s, “devolution” was the buzz word in Australia and New Zealand. The word was used to describe “the process of restructuring and decentralisation in education during the 1980s and 1990s” (Squelch 2000, 135). Squelch (2000, 135) states that “the

devolution of power and authority to school communities had been affected through the establishment of school councils [akin to our governing bodies]”. Although all of Australia was involved in devolution, the Victoria project was cited as the best and served as a model to all other states and territories. She goes on to say that the amendments to the Education Act of 1958 made sure that local role-players shared in the decision-making process that involved educational policy and in addition, extensive powers were given to the councils (Squelch 2000). The Northern Territory followed suit and elected councils that consisted of parents, teachers and community members. The secondary schools also elected students to serve on the councils. There was a proviso, however, that parents should be in the majority (Squelch 2000).

Devolution and decentralisation have occurred in many countries. Many positives have come out of this and it is agreed in general that there are many benefits to be enjoyed. However, problems still exist, the most prevalent being between the governors and principal, and between parents and school authorities.

Another important aspect of Australian Education is the self-governing school. This has become a global phenomenon and has certainly provided freedom for school principals from government bureaucracy.

2.4.7 Self-governing schools

In Self-Governing schools, policies were formulated by the governing body in consultation with the principal. It was the principal’s responsibility to implement the policies (Gamage 2006, 18). In self-governance, boards were funded and were also responsible for day to day operations of the school. They had the power to appoint staff or terminate their services. This applies to other countries, like the UK, New Zealand and the USA. Most of the independent schools in Australia operate in the same way. The Governing Council was akin to that of a board of a company with principal acting as the CEO, responsible for carrying out decisions (Gamage 2006).

It would appear that this is a good idea in theory and that it certainly can work, but the Governing Councils have limited power to make decisions and have now become more of a “policy taker” than a “policy maker”. However, self-governance is important because the stakeholders have more control over their schools, are more committed, understand their problems better, are flexible and creative, and definitely cheaper than the bureaucrats who do not really serve their clients effectively (Gamage 2006). To function in an environment of self-governance, “principals need to engage more in communication, co-operation, and coalition

building. Furthermore, “teaching staff, parents, and community representatives must be brought into the school-level decision making process” (Gamage 2006, 18).

2.4.8 School governance in the USA

According to Reimer (2008, 1), “governance is the integral leadership role and central purpose for the existence of the school board in modern America, and a function that only the school board can provide”. She makes it clear that the school board must not be involved in the administrative or professional functions of the school. The school board is there only to govern. However, it seems that school boards have struggled to carry out their responsibility. One of the reasons for this is that school boards do not know what their responsibilities are. As a result they become involved in the administrative and professional functions of the school and fail to govern. Reimer (2008, 1) stresses that the “local school board has the power and potential for unprecedented and purposeful leadership within democracy’s excellent virtues like equity, peace, justice, freedom, and hope.” Democracy has the capacity to bring minds together so that they can dream greater dreams (Reimer 2008).

Reimer (2008, 2) makes a very striking statement when she says that “school boards have a critical role in the growth and continuance of our democratic society, and we need them to be effective governors. Democracy is fragile, and without great governance, especially at the school board level, it is threatened”.

Governance appears to be difficult because governors have made it so. It seems complicated, and the confusion that has resulted comes from the members themselves. It is the responsibility of the state department and the local school administration to demystify the concept of governance. Reimer (2008, 4) states that “school boards are the most immediate form of representative democracy in America – when school board members remember their purpose at the governance table”.

2.4.9 The Chicago school reform programme

In the late 1980s, co-operative governance was initiated in Chicago. Its main aim was to improve the quality of education, as well as student achievement. The Chicago School Reform Act of 1988 was adopted especially for this purpose. As a result of this legislation, considerable power and decision-making authority were given to the local school councils. According to Walberg and Niemiec (in De Groof *et al.* 1998, 104), “the rationale for the transfer was simply that local citizens and school personnel know their school best and, if given the chance, are in

the best position to solve most of the problems experienced by schools (i.e. local solutions to local problems)”. The local council consisted of 11 members, with the parents forming the majority. This was challenged in court, but the principals lost the case. Although the school councils thought that they were doing very well, an assessment after four years proved otherwise. De Groof *et al.* (1998, 104) state that “despite radical reform legislation and transfer of considerable power to local school councils, there has scarcely been any demonstrable progress on outcome goals”.

2.4.10 The Kentucky initiative

Kentucky also passed legislation, leading to the establishment of decentralised, democratic school governance. The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 made the “establishment of School-Based Decision-Making Councils in every public school mandatory” (De Groof *et al.* 1998, 104). These councils consisted of two parent representatives. This drew criticism to the extent that the issue was debated during the 1996 legislative session. Unfortunately, no conclusion was reached. The teachers’ union, however, felt that teachers should be in the majority (De Groof *et al.* 1998, 104).

2.4.11 School governance in Canada

Canada consists of 13 jurisdictions, each with a number of school districts. However:

While there are a great many similarities in the provincial and territorial education systems across Canada, there are significant differences in curriculum, assessment, and accountability policies among the jurisdictions that express the geography, history, language, culture, and corresponding specialized needs of the population served. The comprehensive, diversified, and widely accessible nature of the education systems in Canada reflects societal belief in the importance of education (Education in Canada: An Overview n.d., 2).

As in other parts of the world, educational restructuring and the question of school board governance have been debated for some time. According to a report by Craig Melvin (1996, 1):

The general trend in recent years has been to reduce the number of school boards, to enhance school-based governance, and to centralize financial controls. At the same time, most provincial governments support local lay control of education and the continuance of elected single-purpose school boards. Efficiency, accountability, fiscal equity, parent involvement and educational improvement are the primary reasons given for governance restructuring.

Fleming (1997, 1) says that, although school boards exist, they are “somewhat accountable in theory but barely accountable in practice”. He indicates that many drastic changes have taken place and continue to take place, with very little public concern or debate. However, the politicians have taken note of the public’s apprehension about school costs and accountability

of school governance structures (Fleming, 1997). Fleming (1997) avers that the reduction of school boards and in some cases the elimination of school boards is part of a century-old movement to make governance of public schools at local level more efficient.

Melvin (1996) indicates that, in British Columbia, the law allows for Parent Advisory Councils while in Alberta the law provides for parent input in management decisions at the school. In Manitoba there were very few changes involving school governors. In Quebec, parents form part of an Orientation Committee. Each school has a parent committee as well. In certain instances, students at high school level form part of the orientation committee. In New Brunswick, according to Melvin (1996, 4):

The government, on March 20, 1996, passed legislation that eliminates school boards altogether. Parent councils at school and district level would provide some local input... Parents would be elected at the school level and appoint the district councils from their numbers.

It is clear from the examples given that parents in every school are given the opportunity to form part of the management of the school. In these cases, of course, they have to govern. They are also given specific responsibilities so that they do not become involved with the responsibilities of the principal and teachers.

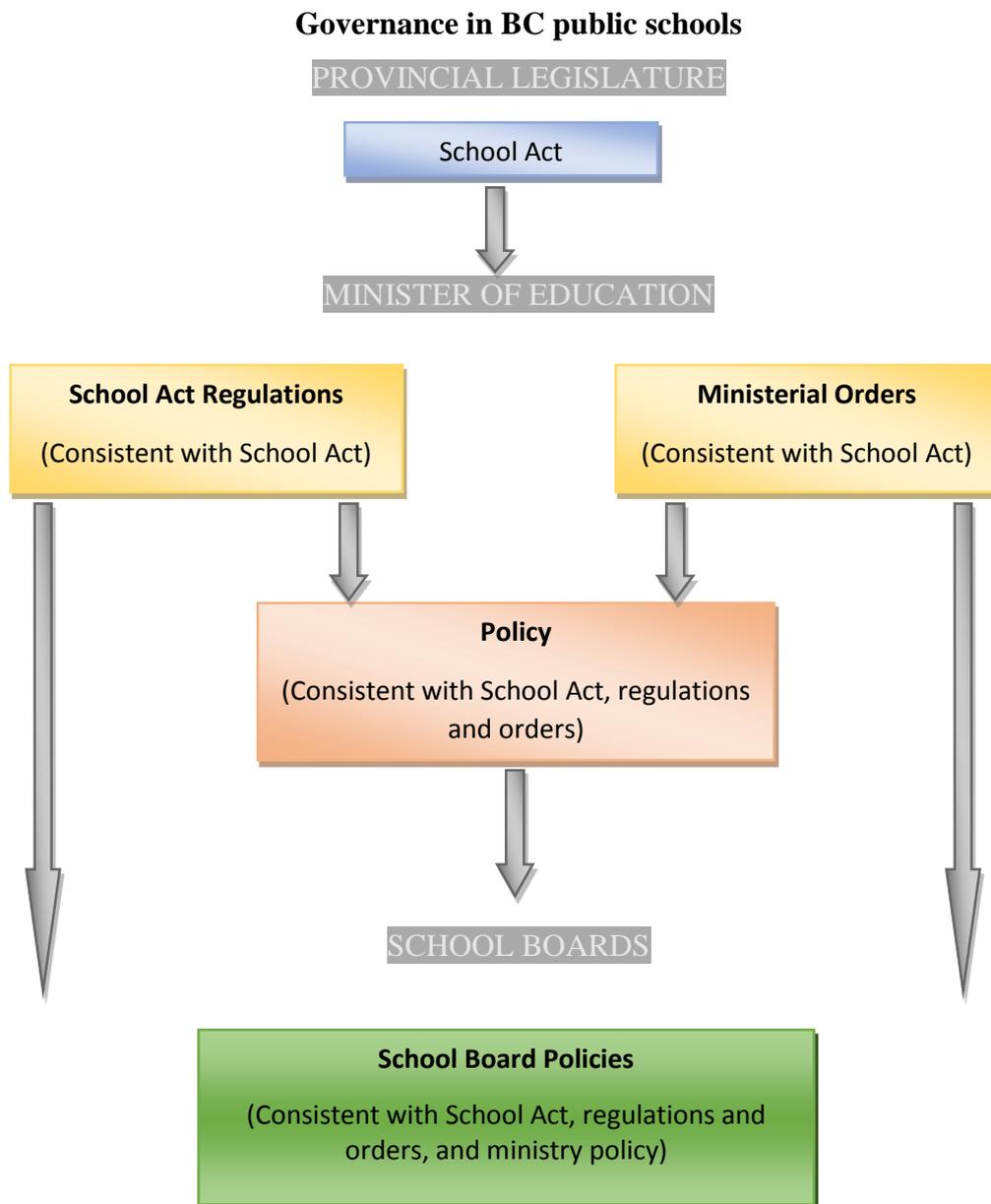
In British Columbia (BC) in particular:

The *School Act* sets out the rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, principals, school district officials, school boards, and the Minister of Education. The Act also gives authority to school boards to govern according to public school legislation and regulations (Parker 2006, 41).

2.4.12 Governance in public schools in British Columbia

It is clear that parents and the wider community are involved in the daily operation of schools in British Columbia. This occurs through their involvement in the school boards, committees or councils. The Ministry of Education has an “Accountability Framework”, which “focuses on the school and school board attention and resources on improving student achievement”. The school boards play a major role in the schools in BC because the “school boards are responsible for designing and providing educational programs that reflect the wishes of the local community. They are also responsible for the management and operation of schools in the district” (Parker 2006, 43).

The following diagram illustrates the interrelatedness of governance in BC public schools.



Source: Parker (2006, 42).

Parents and the community, as mentioned before, play a major role in school governance in Canada. Community members make up the boards and run the boards, many of whom have no experience in the field of education. It is also interesting to note that governance works in both directions with the top structures influencing the bottom structures and vice versa (BC Ministry of Education n.d.). It is evident that the top-down approach to educational governance is disappearing in many parts of the world. The principal or headmaster or head teacher is no longer the sole decision maker. It is also gratifying to see that the community, especially parents who have children in the school, are playing a greater role in school governance. A number of questions can be raised at this time, questions that pertain to school boards all over

the world. Do the members who form the school boards know exactly what their responsibilities are in relation to the administration of the school? Is their governance effective? Are all the stakeholders represented on these school boards? Do the local government departments allow them to function without interference, or are they just bodies in name? Are they allowed to participate in the decision-making processes of the schools? I raise these questions because we must be sure that the school boards are allowed to function without interference so that they can carry out their responsibilities and make their contribution to the growth and well-being of the schools they represent.

2.4.13 School governance in South Africa

Prior to the 1990s, school governance played almost no part in the governance of the school in South Africa. The principal was at the head of affairs and he or she wielded all the power. The school was governed by the principal, who made use of the power vested in him or her by the Department of Education. All final decisions rested in his or her hands. The governing body or school board, according to Squelch (2000, 128) “played a supportive role with restrictive powers and functions. They tended to have symbolic powers rather than actual authority”. Many schools had governing bodies, although the majority of black schools did not have governing bodies per se.

2.4.14 The need for co-operative school governance

Squelch (1998, 102) states that “traditionally in South Africa, and elsewhere, school governance and management have been hierarchical and authoritarian in nature”. She makes it clear that the principal was in control and that the decision-making power rested with him. Furthermore, there was “minimal participation from teachers, parents and students”. She cites Holt and Murphy, who stated that “school leaders in most countries in the past have been lords in their own fiefdoms” (Squelch 1998,102). She says that the role of school governing bodies was more supportive in nature than actually being involved in important decision making. However, over the years there has been tremendous support for a decentralised, co-operative approach. Squelch (1998, 102-103) says that the “efficacy of co-operative school governance” is based on the following:

It is a democratic form of governance based on the principles of representation, equity and participation. Co-operative school governance presupposes devolution of powers from the central level, i.e. governance and management are decentralised. Decentralising power is thus also aimed at reducing centralised bureaucratic control over schools that often prevents schools from responding to change and transforming school environments in order to meet the needs of the community. It further rests on the principle of shared decision making, which presupposes open communication,

consultation and a willingness to negotiate. It requires active participation of all stakeholders who have vested interest in the school. This implies creating the necessary climate, structures and support mechanisms for engendering genuine participation and involvement. This is essential if all stake-holders are to be involved in raising the quality of education. Co-operative school governance is considered to be a more effective means of improving standards of teaching and creating effective schools because it is more inclusive and seeks to meet the collective needs and aspirations of the broader community. Finally, the aspect of adaptability allows schools to be more responsive to the demands of their clients and the changing social environment. This requires flexibility and the freedom of schools to make their own decisions.

The report of the NEPI (1992, 1) highlights the fact that “dispute over governance of education has been a feature of South African political life throughout century”. If we want to transform education in South Africa, it states, education governance is a key issue. The report stresses that much time will have to be devoted to decisions concerning the policy-making process, especially how the system is to be controlled, managed, and administered. In this report there is again a call for a unitary system of schooling so that all stakeholders can participate in the decision making for the institution. In speaking about co-operative governance, the report also mentions that “an important issue is the nature of democracy”.

The NEPI report questions the tensions between representative and participatory conceptions of democracy. Furthermore, the debate centres around “who should be represented in any system of education governance, the form such representation should take, the levels at which the various interest groups should be represented and the nature of the policy-making process” (NEPI 1992, 4). It also makes it clear that “the nature of the future governance system will be crucially affected by the underlying conception of democracy”. Again the report highlights the fact that the communities have been seeking involvement in the management of their schools. So “moves to democratize school governance involve both examining the notion of community control and critically analysing the forms that this demand has taken”. Of paramount importance is, of course, “the final form of the future constitution” (NEPI 1992, 4-5). We know, at this stage, the form the constitution has taken.

2.4.15 Decentralised school governance

According to the South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996, “the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and it may perform only such functions and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the act” (Section 16) (Department of Education 1996). Under the same Act, schools are categorised as juristic persons (Section 15). After the general elections of 1994 and the adoption of the new constitution, a brand new system of

education was created. Squelch (2000, 137) states that the “new system of education was based on the fundamental principles of democracy, unity, non-discrimination, equity, and equality, further that the most important aim of transforming the apartheid education system was to create a system of education that ‘open[ed] the doors of learning and culture to all’ and that would benefit the country as a whole and its entire people”. What was very important too was that the new system “[aimed] to develop a democratic system that provided for the participation of all stakeholders with a vested interest in education” (Squelch 2000, 137).

Copp (2001, 1) writing about “parent-centred governance”, states:

Governing bodies are built up of stake-holders. They bring together parents, school staff, Local Authority and sometimes church representatives, as well as representatives from business and the wider community. Although other models would be possible, we have no wish to change this ‘stakeholder model’, which is built on well-established principles of democratic accountability, and offers real potential for developing schools as centres of wider community involvement.

There is no doubt that we want our parents, staff and wider community to be involved in the management of our schools. How this management is to take place has always been the question. Through school board representation, the parents, staff, and wider community now have direct input in the decision-making process in their schools.

Squelch (1998, 101) citing the White Paper, says

the principle of democratic governance should be increasingly reflected in every level of the system, by the involvement in consultation and appropriate forms of decision making of elected representatives of the main stake-holders, interest groups, and role-players.

She (Squelch 2000, 137) makes it clear that,

in keeping with international trends, South African schools have subsequently moved towards greater decentralised school governance. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 has mandated the establishment of democratic structures of school governance which provide the basis for decentralised governance between education authorities and the school community. The rationale for the establishment of representative school governing bodies is essentially to ensure that teachers, parents, learners, and non-teaching staff will actively participate in the governance and management of the schools with a view to providing better teaching and learning environments.

Although we clearly see that more power was given to the local level, some power still stays in the hands of the education authorities. Squelch (1998, 107) states that,

while there is clear evidence of a shift in authority to local level, devolution of power is never absolute with control remaining firmly in the hands of the central education authorities. Moreover, although many South African schools have always tried to

operate in a democratic way, co-operative governance has been at the discretion of the principal and dependent on his personality.

What we must realise is that there are now specific regulations regarding the election, composition and work of the school governing body. That this has been written into law in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 is a very important step for school governance. However, Squelch (1998, 107) says it is ironic that the “creation of co-operative governance structures and a ‘bottom-up’ approach to governance and management have been mandated from above”.

In this whole change to local-level governance structures, one must not forget the contributions of the progressive mass-based structures like the National Education Co-ordinating Committee, the Congress of South African Students, and the South African Democratic Teachers’ Union, to mention but a few (NEPI 1992, 15).

2.5 School governance in the SDA World Church schools

Dunbebin (1999: 10) states that historically American schools and teachers have been managed by school boards whose membership represented the communities. The citizens of the USA felt that the strength of their school system lay in the fact that local community school boards provided guidance instead of depending on centralised control, which would be a more distant body. The rationale was that the local board knows more about the community and their needs. However, the history of local control suggests micromanagement and interference in the private lives of teachers. Over the past few decades though, the church school system of education has seen major developments and has become far more systematized. Policies and procedures have been introduced which now holds the school boards accountable and in addition, specified limits have been applied.

The school board is responsible for leading and guiding the school. In the Adventist system of education it plays a very important role in maintaining a quality school program. As governors, the members: must know how a school operates, taking into account all areas of operation; must be willing to devote time and energy to make sure that the school operates successfully; must make sure that the school is financially viable and even be prepared to give personal funds; must be acquainted with Adventist educational organization (Thomassian, 2010:7). All Seventh-day Adventist schools the world over base their belief regarding Christian education, on the Bible and the writing of E.G. White. This has provided a distinct philosophy of education. The aim of Seventh-day Adventist Christian education is to prepare students for this world and for God’s Kingdom. Furthermore, the school provides students opportunities to

develop a personal relationship with God. The education program makes allowance for the uniqueness of each student and endeavours to educate the head, the heart and the hand. Students are encouraged to be of service to others and also to be sensitive to the needs of mankind (Thomassian, 2010:7).

Canosa (2010:9) contends that “Private education in general, and Seventh-day Adventist education in particular face extraordinary challenges in contemporary America.” This is evidenced by a number of school closures in the North American Division. The reasons for the closures include: lack of finances to operate, declining enrolments, aging infrastructure, modern technology, and finding competent leaders to manage the schools. These are some of the challenges faced by the school boards (Canosa, 2010:9). School boards that do not understand governance procedures and that do not carry out their responsibilities can threaten the very existence of the schools. “Conversely, school boards that understand and apply spiritually-based governance principles to their work often help their school to thrive” (Canosa, 2010:9). Boards must be strong, autonomous entities. Strong boards understand their functions and responsibilities, are accountable to their stakeholders, effectively facilitate constructive change, and are committed to their work as governors.

Governance is not an easy task. Harvard professor Richard Chait (1996:1) stated that governance is “... an unnatural act.” Another leading proponent of governance policy observed that board members are typically intelligent, well-intended, candid people who, when functioning as a governing board, are often an incompetent group of competent individuals (Canosa, 2010:10). The late Peter Drucker claimed that all boards have one thing in common, “they do not function.”

At an Adventist Education Summit held in Orlando, Florida, Seventh-day Adventists discussed the critical role that school boards have to play, citing competence and training as important issues. Canosa (2010:11) concurs and states that if Adventist schools are to survive in the current climate then effective governance is crucial. He poses two critical questions:

- Do effective boards lead or manage? and,
- What does it take to be an effective board?

Canosa (2010:12-15) concludes that school boards must lead and leave the school administration to manage. Only things like overseeing financial performance, personnel recommendations, and other activities that rightfully fit into a board’s management responsibilities should be handled by the board. Some boards find it difficult to lead and not micro-manage. However, with strong board leadership, the board should focus on strategic issues. Often the school administration refers issues to the board that should be handled by the

school administration. At times the principal fails to provide the board with adequate information, forcing the board to ask for additional details (Canosa, 2010:12).

Boards should govern through strong leadership if they are to be effective. Canosa (2010:14) makes it clear that “Generative boards (boards that ask what’s the question?) seek to find solutions through creative engagement, driving problematic issues to outcomes that are not just solved but that more importantly “make sense.”

Adventist education in the UK as in the USA follows very clear and well-defined guidelines. The Education Department of the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists follows the SDA philosophy of education that promotes education as a vehicle to help students to come to know Jesus. Education is delivered through five broad operational areas: Administration, Development, Evangelism, Raising Education Standards, and Service. In fact, Gibbons & Silva (2006, 8) state that “faith schools are not just religiously affiliated, but also often embody the kind of admission and governance practices that policy makers wish to promote.”

School boards play a crucial role in the application of these areas. SDA schools in Australia follow the same SDA philosophy of education and have given special attention to the composition of their school boards. A report on governance in Australian independent schools (ISCA Research report 2008, 3-7) indicates that many similarities exist within schools across the government, Catholic and independent sector. (SDA schools form part of the independent sector.) However, there is a significant difference in how they are managed. Independent schools are largely autonomous therefore, effective governance is crucial. More than half the independent schools in operation in Australia today have been established in the last 30 years. There are tremendous challenges facing education in Australia today, including the question of diversity and autonomy. It is the responsibility of the governing body to respond to these challenges. Independent schools in Australia are noted for their quality of education and strong leadership. The report highlights several key findings, two of which are:

- Independent schools have healthy governance structures, and
- Governing bodies in independent schools operate fairly and openly.

Crumley, et al. (2012:33) reported a positive relationship between schools and their governing entities especially in the North American Division. In a study which included “governance,” principals shared some of their most successful initiatives. These included:

- Choosing school board members intentionally based on what they can bring to the table.
- Creating a non-profit-style board with member selection based on interest, support and influence.
- Scheduling collaborative meetings for pastors and teachers.

- Enhancing board training with a consultant and Philanthropic Service for institutions.

In spite of the many appreciative comments, principals still indicated a number of challenges. They expressed the following: better working relationship between school faculty and staff and school board members, increased support from Conference leadership and pastoral community. They also expressed the following concerns about their boards: apathy among some board members to support change, the school board does not participate in gathering funds, micromanagement from the school board, school boards often lack appropriate training, board members fall short in areas of innovation and expertise, poor selection of school board members, and board education as well as unity were needed (Crumley, et al., 2012:33). As I mentioned earlier, SDA schools the world over base their Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist education on the Bible and the writing of E.G. White. The education department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has also issued a document on the Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist Education which is used as a guide in all SDA schools. SDA schools all over the world are governed by school boards however, many SDA educationists will agree that there are not many books that have been written on SDA school boards. Nevertheless, every effort is made to provide board members with school board manuals and other related material as well as training (in some schools) to help the boards function effectively.

2.6 School governance in Seventh-day Adventist schools in South Africa

Education in the Seventh-day Adventist church (SDA) started more than a hundred years ago. For the purpose of this dissertation, and to show our schools are a part of a world-wide system, I will give a brief history of the origins of education in the SDA church.

2.6.1 A brief history of education in the SDA church

The SDA church, which is found all over the world, is divided into 13 world divisions or regions. Each Division is made up of several Unions, and each Union is made up of several Conferences. The Division into which the SDA church in South Africa falls is called the Southern India Ocean Division. The Union into which the SDA church in South Africa falls is called the Southern Africa Union. The Conference into which the schools that feature in this dissertation fall is called the Cape Conference. The Cape Conference comprises the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape.

The SDA church, with its headquarters in the USA, coordinates a global educational programme that includes 7 600 schools, colleges and universities. These institutions have over

80 000 teachers and 1 545 000 students. The church's education system is found in 145 countries. Education for primary school children was advocated by Adventists during the 1850s and 1860s. However, the SDA church in North America has operated a system of elementary, secondary and higher education since 1872 (Department of Education SDA Church).

2.6.2 Early beginnings of Adventist education in South Africa

In 1893, Claremont Union College, the first Adventist College outside of the USA, opened in Kenilworth, Cape Town (Greenleaf 2005, 10). This signalled the start of SDA education in South Africa. Over more than a hundred years we have grown to one senior college, a number of high schools, and several primary schools. For the purpose of this dissertation, I will concentrate on the schools in the Cape Conference. This Conference, as stated before, covers the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape. The schools used in this study are situated in the Western and Eastern Cape.

2.6.3 Adventist schools and their boards

I will discuss the schools in more detail in Chapter 3. However, it is important to note that each of these schools has a school board. The boards may not all operate effectively, but they assist the school to a certain extent. The history of the schools is fairly well documented, but there is very limited information on the school boards. I know that, in 1999, all the schools were required to bring their school board constitution in line with the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. I was responsible for issuing that directive, since I was the Education Director at the time. At this stage, I need to clarify the situation that prevailed in the SDA church in the Cape, and that affected our schools. At the time that I was Education Director there were two Conferences. The Cape Conference was primarily a white Conference, while the Southern Hope Conference, which I worked for, was a merged Conference consisting of black and coloured churches. The two white primary schools and one white high school had their own Education Director. While the schools in the Southern Hope Conference were mixed, the schools in the Cape Conference admitted a limited number of black and coloured pupils. The Southern Hope Conference and the Cape Conference later merged to form a new, merged Cape Conference. For all intents and purposes, all the schools are now open to all. Since our schools are independent, religious institutions, we naturally give first preference to Adventists, but we do not exclude anybody on the basis of race, gender or religion. In fact, in many of our schools the non-Adventist roll is greater than the Adventist roll. As mentioned earlier, the schools were asked to bring their school board constitution up to date. Now, many years later, the constitutions still have not been updated. It was hoped that, when I did the research component

of this dissertation, the schools would be encouraged to update their constitutions or would already have updated their constitutions.

Since the Adventist schools must be registered with the Department of Education in their respective provinces, and since more than 90% of them receive a state subsidy, they are required to follow certain regulations. In this case, whatever applies to SDA schools in the SASA must be adhered to. In this case, their constitutions must be updated.

Let me reiterate:

Almost all Adventist schools have governing boards. Their effectiveness is as varied as the schools they govern. Dealing with the school board is a major function of school administration, but how to do so effectively is seldom taught in education courses. The reason for this is, at least in part, that very limited research exists on the effectiveness of boards, as well as administrators' methods of dealing with them (Furst 2004, 4).

This research therefore is important, since it will contribute to the body of knowledge about SDA school boards in South Africa. Furthermore, it is hoped that the recommendations that will be forthcoming will be used by the SDA schools and school boards to enhance their effectiveness, and so that their schools can become excellent schools. The school boards should reach the point where they contribute toward the growth of the schools to such an extent that the schools become self-supporting instead of depending so much on contributions from the Conference. As mentioned earlier, I will discuss the Seventh-day Adventist schools in detail in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE GOVERNANCE OF ITS SCHOOLS

3.1 Introduction

In the words of Higgs and Jackson (2004, 20), “Seventh-day Adventists operate one of the biggest parochial school systems in the world”. In fact, Adventists operate 5 005 primary schools, 1 214 high schools and 99 colleges and universities worldwide. It is the objective of the church to “ensure that students receive a balanced education in harmony with denominational standards and ideals.” Furthermore,

Adventist elementary and secondary institutions are operated by school boards with five basic areas of responsibility: curriculum implementation, personnel support, institutional finance, physical plant, and public relations. School board accountability and board assessment pose many questions. Conference... school principals have received training to prepare them for the role of school leadership. However, most school board members learn through trial and error (Higgs and Jackson 2004, 20).

The question is whether we can afford to leave an educational institution that must prepare pupils for life in the hands of a school board that operates on the basis of trial and error? The answer is an emphatic no! Therefore, it is important that we determine what the problems are, and how we can equip and empower the board members to function effectively from the start of their term of office. A brief and closer look at the church’s education system worldwide will give us a better picture of the system that we are dealing with.

3.2 Seventh-day Adventist education worldwide

As explained in Chapter 1, the Seventh-day Adventist church is divided into divisions. Each division is divided into unions and unions into conferences. Each division has a number of primary schools, high schools and tertiary institutions. The following table gives the SDA world education statistics as at December 2009.

Table 3.1 SDA world education statistics

Division	Primary schools	High schools	Tertiary institutions
East-Central Africa	1 100	471	6 + 5*
Euro-Africa	29	12	9 + 1*
Euro-Asia	7	5	2 + 1*
Inter-America	706	307	14
North America	738	108	15
Northern Asia-Pacific	22	25	5
South America	577	290	14
South Pacific	289	62	4 + 2*
Southern Asia	105	157	9 + 15*
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean	218	115	5 + 7*
Southern Asia- Pacific	881	100	16
Trans-European	52	40	10 + 7*
West-Central Africa	1 159	63	3 + 7*

*Second number is for teacher-training institutions. Adventist World Statistics 2009. (JAE 2010, 2).

South Africa falls in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. We are part of the Southern Africa Union and our conference is the Cape Conference. This shows that our education system in South Africa is part of a worldwide Adventist education system.

3.3 Historical milestones in the expansion of SDA education worldwide

Greenleaf (2005) provides a timeline of a number of important events in a 150-year development of Seventh-day Adventist education worldwide. For purposes of brevity I will just mention a few. The following is a table indicating the year the institution was established and in which country.

Table 3.2 SDA institutions and year of establishment (Greenleaf 2005, 10-15)

Year	Institution	Country
1872	First church-sponsored school	USA
1893	Claremont Union College	SA
1897	Avondale School	Australia
1898	First school	Argentina
1899	Mission seminar Friedensau	Germany
1902	Duncombe Hall Missionary College	England
1912	La Plateria Mission	Peru
1915	Adventist Seminary	Brazil
1917	Philippine SDA Academy	Philippines
1919	West Indian Training School	Jamaica
1921	Seminaire Adventiste du Saleve	France
1939	Adventist College Beirut	Lebanon
1942	Colegio Agricola Industrial Mexicana	Mexico
1944	Spicer College	India
1954	Solusi Training School becomes Solusi Missionary College	Zimbabwe

There have been many other developments in Adventist education since 1954. I have chosen to mention events up to 1954. Although I have listed a number of tertiary institutions, most of these institutions have a high school and, in some cases, a primary school attached to them. In 1999, the worldwide enrolment in SDA primary schools surpassed 5 000. In 2002 the number of teachers in Adventist secondary schools exceeded 20 000.

It is clear that the Adventists operate a formidable, worldwide education system and the six schools in the Western Cape that form part of this research belong to this system.

3.4 Seventh-day Adventist institutions in the Western Cape

3.4.1 Helderberg College

As stated in Chapter 2, Claremont Union College, established in 1893, was the first Adventist College outside of the USA. The college's name was changed to South African Training School in 1919, a name that it retained until 1922. In 1923 it relocated to Spion Kop in Natal, and was then called Spion Kop College. When it moved to Somerset West in 1928 it was first called African Missionary College, and was later renamed Helderberg College. The college offered degrees and diplomas in various disciplines. Included in these qualifications were three-year and four-year teaching diplomas. The teaching diplomas were discontinued in 1989. The college prepared teachers to serve, especially in Seventh-day Adventist schools. These were obviously Seventh-day Adventists who could share the distinct Adventist philosophy of education with the students in their care.

From its early beginnings the college was open to all who were willing to live in harmony with the rules, regulations, principles and standards of an Adventist college. The students were expected to show proper regard for the Bible, and also to attend all the religious services on campus. However, thinking that it was in accordance with the requirements of the state Education Department, only white students were allowed to attend. So, for a number of years, the college trained only white teachers, whilst Bethel College, Helderberg's counterpart, trained black teachers. Seventh-day Adventist coloured and Indian teachers were trained at Good Hope College in Kuils River. Bethel College and Good Hope College were established after Helderberg College. These were established to cater for their particular population groups.

3.4.2 Good Hope College

The coloured people of the Seventh-day Adventist church attended an institution called Good Hope Training School, which opened on 1 May 1930. Here, coloured ministers and teachers were trained for service to the coloured community of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

According to Du Preez and Du Pre (1994, 76):

In 1930 the primary school offered Sub A – Std 6 and the secondary school, Stds 7 & 8. The Training School offered ‘Std 9’, i.e., the 1-year Normal Course (an early name for teacher training). Certain students went on to complete ‘Std 10’, and then completed a 2-year Normal/Theological Course. These students were trained to be teachers as well as ministers.

In 1963, Good Hope Training School relocated to a new campus. The words “training school” were dropped and the newly located school was called Good Hope College. After a number of years, Helderberg College opened its doors to all races and, as a result, Good Hope College dropped its college section and became a high school catering for pupils from grade 7 to grade 12.

As a worldwide system, the Seventh-day Adventist Education Department adhered rigorously to its philosophy of education. This philosophy can be traced back to an author and pioneer of the Adventist church, Mrs E. G. White. In her writings on education, she laid the biblical foundation on which the Seventh-day Adventist education system is built. As the years passed, more and more schools were established. This created a need for Seventh-day Adventist teachers, therefore Adventist young people were recruited to attend the colleges to prepare for teaching. I am in teaching today as a result of such a recruitment drive.

With the passing of time, the college section of Good Hope College, as indicated earlier, as well as that of Bethel College, closed. In fact, both Good Hope College and Bethel College today are high schools. The theology faculty of both Good Hope and Bethel moved to Helderberg College. Up until today the SDA church in South Africa does not train its own teachers. Our schools employ government-trained teachers who are Adventists. If our schools are unable to employ such teachers they are forced to employ non-Adventist teachers.

One might wonder why the Adventist schools prefer Adventist staff. The answer lies in the Adventist lifestyle and philosophy of education, and the attempt to maintain an Adventist culture in their schools. From this one can conclude that the board members are either all Adventist, or the majority are Adventist. Seventh-day Adventist schools are independent schools, but they admit students irrespective of religion, sex and race. In fact, the schools are open to any student who is willing to abide by the rules and regulations and also uphold the standards of the institutions.

Many non-Adventist students were attracted to SDA institutions particularly during the “struggle years”. There were very few disruptions during times of boycotts and educational

upheaval, and the standard of work has always been good. Having so many non-SDAs was definitely not a problem, but with the advent of non-SDA teachers and pupils the schools lost some of their SDA distinctiveness, mainly because there were some the non-SDAs who were not willing to abide by the SDA philosophy of education. I am not blaming the non-Adventists for this, since the Adventist should have maintained the Adventist culture in the school. There is a policy that the non-SDA roll not exceed 25% of the total school roll. Some schools were now compromising their SDA standards in favour of conforming to practices in secular institutions just to please a few. This also came as a result of a lack of resources, financial difficulties and also a lack of commitment on the part of the main role players. The SDA system is a Bible-based system, so the teaching of the subject Bible was very important. There was a time, however, when even Bible was no longer taught as a subject in several of our schools. If our schools had strong SDA boards, this would never have happened. As I understand it, Bible is now included as a subject. The board must take responsibility for curriculum implementation and see to it that SDA standards are maintained in SDA schools.

As I see it, Seventh-day Adventist schools are indeed at the crossroads, particularly the schools in the Cape Conference. Unless school boards take decisive and appropriate action and deal effectively with governance matters, our schools are going to find themselves in serious trouble regarding a number of policies that need to be in place.

3.5 Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Cape Conference

As mentioned earlier, there are ten schools in the Cape Conference – three high schools and seven primary schools. Six schools are situated in the Western Cape and four in the Eastern Cape. This dissertation will concern itself with the schools in the Western Cape. I will now give a brief overview of each school.

3.5.1 School A

School A is governed by a school board that comprises the following members: the education director, located in Bloemfontein; from the Cape Conference: the president (the chairperson), the treasurer and a representative of the Executive Committee; from the school: the principal (the secretary), the vice-principal, the treasurer and a teacher elected by the staff; the chairperson of the Parents Teacher's Association and three elected members; and an ordained minister of the SDA church. Here we have a possible 12 members, of which three are parent representatives. Even though there still are a few shortcomings, the constitution is fairly comprehensive. School A has recently amended its constitution to bring it in line with the SASA. However, the Cape Conference has not accepted the changes, so the school is still operating with an outdated constitution. It is the responsibility of the school board to update

and amend the constitution so that the board itself can function effectively. However, it is also important for the Cape Conference to study the SASA so that they can see how far they can align the SDA school's constitution with the Act without compromising the SDA philosophy of education. Furst (2004, 4) says that "boards can serve three major functions: policy making and enforcement; oversight of school operations; and cheerleading for the institution". He further states that "boards are most effective if they concentrate on their two main functions: policy and oversight. The board should determine the policies to govern the school, and leave the administrators to implement those policies" (Furst 2004, 8). It therefore is important to have a constitution that includes all the necessary information pertaining to the school board.

3.5.2 School B

School B is governed by a school board comprised of the following members: the education director in Bloemfontein; the Cape Conference president (the chairperson), treasurer or associate treasurer and the Cape Conference education director; the regional director from the Western Cape regional office; from the school: the principal (the secretary), business manager, vice-principal, two staff members: one teaching and one non-teaching; two learner representatives; three parents; the PTA chairperson; and the local church pastor. The constitution is fairly comprehensive but lacks some specific elements. It is very important to note that, out of a possible 17 members, only three are parent representatives. The constitution does not quite conform to the SASA, but then again it can be argued that School B is an independent school and, as such, does not have to conform to the SASA. All items in the constitution are numbered, but the constitution has no specific articles or sections that are usually used in citing and quoting.

3.5.3 School C

School C is one of two SDA schools accredited by Umalusi. Its constitution was updated a few years ago, but it is yet to be seen if there is any alignment with the SASA. The school has a system in terms of which three parents form a small sub-committee that acts as a channel between the PTA and the school board. Regular meetings are held between the three parents and the school administration, and in turn all parents are kept up to date with developments at the school via a newsletter.

The board consists of the following members: the education director, situated in Bloemfontein; the Cape Conference president, treasurer and education director; the principal, vice-principal, and secretary of School C; the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the PTA; pastors of the supporting churches; and one member from each of the 10 supporting congregations. It is

difficult to determine how many parents serve on the board. The representatives from the churches should be parents who have children in the school. However, if there are no children from a particular congregation, then the church chooses anybody to serve on the board – as long as they have someone to represent them.

3.5.4 School X¹

In an interview with the principal, I found that the constitution of the school was in the process of being revised. The school board had not considered aligning it in any way with the SASA. There was a tremendous amount of uncertainty among the members concerning the functions of the board. They saw their function as financial, more than anything else. The principal experienced a number of problems with the board, although he did not enumerate them. The present constitution under which they were operating was extremely outdated. The constitution still referred to the Southern Hope Conference, which merged with the Cape Conference in 2005 and then changed its name to the Cape Conference. In fact, according to the present constitution the board consists of more than 60 members. The board is made up as follows: the education director, located in Bloemfontein; from the Southern Hope Conference (the name was changed to Cape Conference): the Conference president, treasurer, education director and the Western Cape regional director; from the school: the principal and treasurer; two representatives from each of the 27 supporting churches; all pastors of the congregations; a representative from the Western Cape Education Department; the PTA chairperson; and two permanent educators appointed by the staff. This school has serious board problems and needs to appoint a more manageable board. The constitution needs a major revision.

3.5.5 School D

The school has a functioning school board, but once again is using a constitution that is badly in need of revising. I found the constitution very confusing. Take, for example, the composition of the board. The constitution states that the “School Board shall consist of no less than fifteen (15) members excluding the chairperson of the school board”. This is already confusing. However, according to the same constitution, the board comprises the following members: chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer, principal, two educators, and up to eleven church representatives. So potentially we can have a board of eighteen members, including the chairperson. Another very confusing statement in the constitution is that “the funds of the school shall be deposited into an account of the school and such funds shall be safeguarded in harmony with the financial and auditing policies of the school”. Upon inquiry, I found that the

¹ The school named X was later removed from the list because some respondents from this school did not complete all the requirements for the research.

school has no “financial and auditing policies”. The constitution is very badly numbered. It starts with 1 but, after 6, it jumps to 6.3. After 6.3 it goes back to number 3 and then suddenly jumps to 7.3. As indicated earlier, this constitution needs urgent revising. Needless to say, it does not align itself in any way with the SASA.

3.5.6 School E

This school revised its old constitution and aligned the new one as closely as possible with the SASA. Once again, for no apparent reason (at least the principal was not told why), the Conference did not accept the revised constitution. The result is that the board and the school per se are still functioning with an old constitution. The board consists of the following members: the education director situated in Bloemfontein; the president or the treasurer of the Cape Conference; the primary school principal; the chairperson of the PTA; one pastor; six representatives from two churches; two administrators of the college; and a representative from the Western Cape Education Department. In this school’s case, fourteen members make up the school board. It is not clearly spelt out how many parents serve on the board. If one takes the PTA chairperson and six church representatives as being parents, then we have seven parents serving on the board. However, this might not be the case.

It is my contention that none of the school boards has received any training or preparation for the responsibility of governing. No workshops have been conducted and nothing constructive has been done to empower the members of the school board. Whether this is in fact was to be determined in the interviews. Capacity building is very important if we want our boards to govern effectively and if we want our schools to operate to their full potential.

What is also evident is that the constitutions differ from each other. One would have expected all the primary schools’ constitutions to be the same and the high schools’ constitutions to be the same. Minor differences might include information about supporting churches, but other than that there must be uniformity. The SASA was promulgated to make sure that a democratic system of governance existed in all schools and that they were consistent in dealing with their stakeholders. What the SDA schools need is a consistent, uniform system of governance, as suggested by the SASA, even if the SDA system has to keep specific elements that make them unique to any other system.

3.6 Election of school board members

The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development states that election of school governing bodies is the third largest public elections in the country. More than 5 million parents can vote but many choose not to. With that statement in mind, the time has come that

the Education Department of the SDA church takes a serious look at the election process in both the primary and high schools, and give all parents an opportunity to participate in the election of school board members. I am sure that if parents feel a part of the process, they will be more willing to support SDA schools.

3.6.1 Appointment of members to primary school boards

The Cape Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist church is divided into two regions: the Western Region and the Eastern Region. The schools that form part of this study are situated in the Western Region, in various suburbs of the Cape Peninsula. Table 3.3 gives an indication of the number of staff members and learners in each school.

Table 3.3
SDA schools in the Western Cape

School	Number of staff members		Number of pupils
	Teaching	Non-teaching	
School A	13	4	138
School B	19	8	323
School C*	8	7	167
School X*	8	4	179
School D*	8	1	160
School E*	10	4	144
Total	66	28	1 111

*Includes principal

The Cape Conference has more than seventy congregations in the Western Region, and each school has a number of congregations that provide some financial support. By virtue of that support, each congregation has two church members that serve on the board of the school it supports. One is usually the elder of the congregation, and the other a member chosen by the church. The member chosen must preferably be a parent who has a child in the school. If the church cannot find such a person, they will then appoint anybody who is willing to serve on the school board. One of the challenges that the Cape Conference faces is that some schools are supported by more congregations than others. Some of the congregations profess to have so many expenses that they cannot give the school any financial support. However, those congregations still send their representatives, while other representatives do not attend at all. Since the method of appointing members to a school board is different from that stipulated in the SASA, one can easily end up with a board of more than twenty members. In spite of that possibility, some boards still struggle to obtain a quorum. Often there are too few board members that attend, with the result that the board cannot transact any business. They do, however, continue with the meeting.

3.6.2 Composition of a primary school board

The school board of a primary school usually comprises the following:

- (a) The Education Director – Southern Africa Union Conference
- (b) The Education Director – Cape Conference
- (c) A representative from the Western Cape Education Department
- (d) The principal of the school
- (e) The chairperson of the PTA
- (f) The pastors of supporting churches
- (g) One representative from each supporting church

This was the composition prior to the SASA. The composition has not changed to meet any requirements contained in the South African Schools Act. As mentioned earlier, there are plans to update the constitutions. Thus far this has not taken place. Furthermore, independent schools, it seems, are not duty bound to follow the constitution outlined in the SASA.

3.6.3 Composition of a high school board

The appointment of members to a high school board differs from that of a primary school board. According to the high school constitution, the school board comprises the following members:

- (a) The Education Director – Southern Africa Union Conference
- (b) The Education Director – Cape Conference
- (c) The President – Cape Conference (chairperson)
- (d) The principal (secretary)
- (e) The vice-principal
- (f) The treasurer of the school
- (g) One educator elected by the staff
- (h) The chairperson of the PTA
- (i) Three parents elected by the executive committee
- (j) An ordained minister of the SDA church

The constitutions, as they are at present, do not include non-teaching staff on the board, and neither are the parents in the majority. One high school has learners on the board and the other does not.

3.6.4 Membership of the governing body of an ordinary public school

- (2) Elected members of the governing body shall comprise a member or members of

each of the following categories:

- (a) parents of learners at the school;
- (b) educators at the school;
- (c) members of staff at the school who are not educators; and
- (d) learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school.

The number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a governing body who have voting rights (Section 23).

The South African Schools Act is very clear on the composition of the school board. I think it will be in the interest of Seventh-day Adventist schools if they apply the membership requirements of the Schools Act. After each triennial session, the executive committee of the Cape Conference appoints the high school board. Again, I feel it would do no harm if the committee were to study the SASA and see what can be incorporated into the constitution of the high school, especially when it can benefit all the role players. Table 3.4 indicates the representation on the various school boards.

Table 3.4

Representation on the school board

School	Educators	Non-educators	Learners	Parents	Others*
School A	2	1	0	3	6
School B	1	1	2	3	10
School X	1	0	0	0	10
School C	1	1	0	3	13
School D	2	0	0	0	16
School E	1	1	0	3	10

NB Figures for School X have been updated to a more manageable number

*Others include Union, Conference, WCED representation, pastors, church representation, school administrators and PTA officers.

It was very difficult to determine the number of parents on the primary school boards because numbers were not specifically spelt out. There was no indication that a certain number of parents serve on the board and one could not conclude that the PTA chairperson was a parent; neither could one conclude that church representation included parents. This is probably a weakness that needs to be rectified when the constitutions are revised. The other problem is that the constitutions differ from each other to a large extent. It therefore is imperative that revisions are done as soon as possible.

3.6.5 South African Union Conference Working Policy 2005

The SAU working policy says the following, among others, about the governance of schools:

3.6.5.1 High schools

A conference high school is governed by a management board appointed by the conference. The school board shall consist of at least seven members. It makes allowance for three members of the institution to serve on the board, i.e. the principal of the school, who is also the secretary of the board, the vice-principal, as well as the business manager. Furthermore, the following must be included: the conference president, who serves as chairperson, the education director, the treasurer, and the union education director (SAU 2011, 137)

3.6.5.2 Primary schools

“The school board shall consist of at least five members depending on the size of the school and the number of supporting churches, with the principal serving as secretary. The conference education director shall be a member ex officio of the school board. A significant percentage of the board should be parents of children attending the school so that the board may profit from parental view-points and counsel that result from close-up observation and experience” (SAU 2011, 140-141).

All the SDA schools’ constitutions fulfil some of the requirements of the working policy. It is evident that not all the elements were taken into account when the constitutions were drawn up. The primary schools should take particular note of the fact that “a significant percentage of the board should be parents.”

3.7 Theoretical approach

The aims of this dissertation are to ascertain whether there are problems with the school boards, if so, where do these problems lie, and how can it be determined what they are in order to find possible solutions. Solutions were needed so that transformation could be effected. I had to interact with individual school governing bodies and other role-players involved in school

governance, in order to meet these aims. I also had to look at the work of other authors in this field to see what type of practices they experienced. My analysis of school governing body practices would give me reasons why they act in the way they do. In other words what meanings would they ascribe for their actions? I knew that something was amiss but had to determine what it was. I had to understand the meanings that they attached to their experiences, and then bring about transformation. Depending on what their experiences were, I needed empowerment and then in deliberation with the governors and other role players, determine what kind of empowerment they needed. This takes me into the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the daily issues that people face, as well as meanings they give and of course how they interpret them. The two pivotal issues in interpretive inquiry are: the self-understanding of the individual which forms the basis of all social interpretation and human consciousness which remains transparent. Therefore interpretive inquiry stresses the notion that analysis involves more than observation. The fundamental point, according to Fay (1975:74) is to reach self-understanding of the person acting in the situation, analysing and understanding his or her reasons for their actions. In other words actions have to be explained not merely observed. Fay (1975:71) argues the interpretive approach to social science comprises action concepts – “doings” as opposed to “happenings.”

Interpretive inquiry rejects the claim that all events we want to explain are of the same logical type in terms of the view that human actions belong to a different logical category from all other events in the world. For interpretive inquiry an understanding of human beings and society is logically different from an understanding of the natural world (Fay, 1975:74). Therefore, in an interpretive paradigm education policy research can be described as “qualitative” where use is made of “narrative knowledge, archival knowledge or observational knowledge.” Research that involves human practices, in this case the study of school boards, are difficult to quantify. Unlike positivism, you cannot pin it down with “prediction.” Research results are presented in narrative, hermeneutic or qualitative form. In opposition to positivist inquiry, interpretive inquiry “view(s) the human being as a subject of knowledge principally capable of reflection, (potential) rationality, discursive communication, and social interaction (Kelchtermans & Schratz, 1994:244). This is what drew me to critical theory, the fact that it is not just a matter of understanding and explaining but critiquing and transforming. The fact that critical theory is reflective, emancipatory and advocates change inspired me. Whilst positivists rely on the experimental which is essentially quantitative, critical theory depends on the explanatory, practical and normative. In other words, the qualitative. Research based on positivist inquiry uses research methodology which sees meanings as separate from people’s subjective interpretations, consciousness and intentions. Research discourse in the positivist

tradition draws on neutral, objective, or statistical language, which includes, for instance, widespread use of questionnaire-driven surveys (Kelchtermans & Schratz, 1994:244). Critical inquiry was therefore, best suited to my research since critical inquiry contends that positivist and interpretive inquiries, at best only describe or explain the social world, and that critical inquiry provides resources both to criticise and change the social world. For critical inquiry “... the truth or falsity of (its) theories will be partially determined by whether they are in fact translated into action” Fay (1975:95). It thus made sense to use critical inquiry as an approach to my study. The goal of critical theory is to transform, to change. The goal of my study is also to transform, to change, and to empower. It is clear that positivism would not have worked in this study because it undermines the human element. Positivism looks for pre-determined meanings which cannot work in this case. In my study I needed to explain the different interests and expectations of the stakeholders involved in school governance. Each group had a story to tell and it was my responsibility to analyse each story with reference to interpretive theory. I needed to get to the deeper meanings of what stakeholders were saying and writing in their questionnaires. Attitudes, and the way replies were given also helped me construct and interpret meaning. In this way interpretive inquiry which collapses into critical inquiry explains, analyses, and elucidates meanings. So I used critical theory which is a form of self-reflective knowledge involving understanding and theoretical explanations to understand and transform society. In this study, I use critical theory but draw on interpretivism.

3.8 Conclusion

The education department of the SDA church has provided clear guidelines on how the schools should be governed and who should serve on the boards. The church will definitely profit from taking a look at the SASA, and then incorporate into the high school and primary school constitution those elements that do not clash with the philosophy, ideals and standards of SDA education. However, to determine the nature and extent of the problems with the school boards, I needed to understand, interpret, explain and critique. Critical theory is thus ideally suited to achieve this.

Chapter 4 will deal with the SDA system of education in detail, and then discuss the constitution proposed by the SASA and how it is linked to the constitutions of the SDA schools. I will also discuss the church’s policies with reference to the school boards and determine how the SASA affects governance in SDA schools, if there is any impact at all. I will use a semi-structured interview to determine the extent of problems experienced by the

boards. In the process I shall also interview the staff and some parents to determine their perceptions of the school board. Finally, I shall be able to analyse the problems and determine what can be done to solve the problems.

CHAPTER 4

DATA SOURCE: EXPLORING EXISTING PROBLEMS WITHIN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH SCHOOL BOARDS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the interpretive paradigm that guides this dissertation. I discuss interpretivism and narrative inquiry in as far as they affect the data construction techniques. This chapter also deals with the school boards in SDA schools in the Western Cape, and with SDA school boards in general. The research design presents reasons for a qualitative study and also discusses the schools involved in the study. I discuss and present data-constructing techniques, the analysis of which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Interpretivism has to do with how we see, understand and interpret events and the many social structures that we deal with on a daily basis. In the context of a school, the school board is a social structure that all the role players involved in a school have to deal with on a regular basis. The meanings they assign to their interaction with the board become very important in the interpretation thereof. Walsham (1995, 3) says that interpretive studies assume that people create and associate their own subjective meanings as they interact with the world around them. Interpretive researchers, in turn, attempt to understand phenomena by accessing the meanings participants assign to them. Thus in this dissertation there is a search for meaning, and a search for reasons why the school boards in Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Western Cape are not as efficient and as effective as they could be.

One unfortunate aspect is the lack of source material dealing with Seventh-day Adventist school boards in South Africa as a whole. There are no sources, documentation or any information on schools boards and whether any assessments have been carried out. There is such a dearth of information that even the schools cannot help themselves. As mentioned earlier, I have been involved with SDA education for more than forty years. I served on high school and primary school boards for more than twenty years and, at the time, tried with no success to make school boards more involved in the schools they served. This dissertation is an attempt to determine what the problems are and the ways how the problems can be addressed. I will analyse the data constructed and then propose ways in which school governance structures can be attended to.

Pring (2000, 96) states that:

To understand other people, requires understanding the interpretations which they give of what they are doing. We need to know their intentions. We need to know people's

intentions and their motives. We need to know how they understood or interpreted the situation. For this reason researchers talk of subjective meanings of those they are researching – that is, the different understandings and interpretations which the participants bring with them to the situation.

Another important concept in our understanding of the interpretive paradigm in qualitative research is narrative. Narrative inquiry, according to Mabovula (2008, 36), intends to inform practice as well as clarify criteria that are appropriate for assessing the merit of the narrative research approach based on the interpretive model. Elliott (2005, 36) says that, over the past twenty years, there has been a tremendous interest in narrative evidence, especially in the social sciences.

In the light of interpretive research, I have used semi-structured questionnaires, followed by semi-structured interviews as a follow-up to the semi-structured questionnaires, to construct the data for this research. Narrative is of value in the respect that the respondents were not afraid to reveal how they viewed the school boards, and even the board members themselves were not afraid to reveal how they felt about the body on which they served as members. Elliot (2005, 37) avers that “[i]nterpretive analysis demands that we understand how subjects of our research make sense of events and experiences and require dense, detailed and contextualised description”. She also states that the researcher who wants to present a convincing argument of qualitative evidence that the ordinary [wo]man can understand must use basic tools that will help him/her see beyond the content and not take the obvious for granted.

4.2 Interpretivism and narrative inquiry

We all see the world differently. We all interpret the world in our own subjective way. We can all look at the same thing, experience the same thing, but interpret it differently. It is for this reason that I chose various respondents to determine how they experienced the school board. I needed to determine why it was that boards were perceived as being ineffective and inefficient. I needed first-hand information from role players who were involved with the school boards on a regular basis. I also needed as much information as possible to make sure of “thick” descriptions. I therefore decided to use interviews and questionnaires. The respondents were teachers, parents and board members. I also interviewed the principals to see how they experienced working with their respective boards. The respondents represented five schools. Although I had originally chosen six schools, I had to withdraw the sixth school since it was impossible to get a group of teachers and a group of parents to attend an interview. I did manage to interview the principal as well as the board, but all efforts to interview the other role players failed. I did not choose any other role players because I felt that the teachers, parents

and principals interacted with the board more than anyone else. I interviewed the board members as well to determine whether they understood their role, whether they felt they were fulfilling their role, and whether they needed any training in preparation for their role as school governors. Using narrative inquiry helped me to understand whether the ‘social construct’ called the school board was fulfilling its role effectively and efficiently.

How we see the world differs from social group to social group. Our ‘social constructions’ are constantly changing as new experiences encountered on a daily basis force us to readjust to how we understand things. It is for this very reason that we need the interpretive and hermeneutic tradition for us to understand the world from the perspective of the tradition of which we are a part (Pring 2000, 55). As mentioned before, none of us is alike. Each one’s life history is different. We do not all see things the same way. This is important for narrative inquiry, since we also see events and life experiences from another person’s perspective. All this then becomes very subjective, since it is my perspective and the perspective of the other. Pring (2000, 98) reinforces this when he says:

Since no [wo]man can have another person’s life history, no one will share exactly the same interpretations and thus have the same experience. The phenomenological emphasis upon the examination of experience as such combined with the claim that such experience will be filtered through one’s unique life experiences, points to the importance of ‘subjective meanings’ or subjective interpretation of that experience in our understanding. To understand particular events one must see things from the point of view of the participants or of the people who are involved-how they interpret events and thereby constitute those events as events of a certain sort.

With the advent of decentralisation in education, the need arose for strong democratic structures at grassroots level to manage the education process in the school. School boards were appointed for this very purpose. This meant that there now needed to be close working relationships among several role players. In the past, most of the decisions were made by the principal as head of the institution. At times there would be consultation with senior staff members, but it was the principal who controlled and managed the school. The principal now has to share power with several role players as a result of a change in governance structures. In fact, it is now the principal’s responsibility to empower the board and other role players to ensure effective and efficient governance of the school. This ‘giving away of power’ or ‘sharing’ power has not met with the approval of all principals. Even teachers see the inclusion of parents on the school board as a threat to their role in the school, particularly in the classroom. The difficulty has been to get all the role players to work together and not to engage in power struggles. Unfortunately, various role players still see each other as a threat. This became obvious as the interviews progressed. Narrative inquiry thus helped to get all these negative

feelings verbalised in both written and spoken form. As a result, narrative inquiry provided a vehicle to understand what the various role players were experiencing. Young (2000, 7) says that narratives can also serve to explain meanings and experiences when groups do not share premises sufficiently to proceed with an argument. She further states that groups must be willing to work out just solutions to their conflicts and problems from across situated positions.

Many who were marginalised, and many who do not have a high level of education, have been reluctant to participate in the democratic practices of school governance. They have also shown a strong reluctance to serve on school boards, as I have found in some of the Adventist schools. In the case of one of the schools, no one wanted to serve as chairperson. There are several reasons why people do not want to serve. Young (2000, 11) explains:

Democratic theory has not sufficiently thematized a problem that people frequently identify with democratic processes that formally satisfy basic normative conditions of the rule of law, free competitive elections, and the like. Many criticize actually existing democracies for being dominated by groups or élites that have unequal influence over decisions while others are excluded or marginalized from any significant influence over the policy-making process and its outcomes. Strong and normatively legitimate democracy on this intuition, includes all equally in the process that leads to decisions all those who will be affected by them. Theorists and political actors might call this theme of inclusion into question, however, from several points of view.

As indicated earlier, the main role players involved in policy making and decision making in the school were those in the Education Department at head office, whilst the principal had to carry out the decisions made. All that changed with the birth of a democratic South Africa. Education has been decentralised, and all the role players now have input into the education process in the institution. The Education Department still hovers over all, but the policy-making and decision-making processes involve the principal, teaching staff, support staff, parents, learners, the school board, and other co-opted individuals. However, as mentioned before, some do not want to serve for various reasons, including lack of education, lack of expertise and ingrained negative experiences of the past. It is for this reason that narrative is so important. Narrative also serves to empower and helps disenfranchised groups to assert themselves. It further provides a way in which these groups can express their experiences and beliefs, which they otherwise would not have shared, and thereby engage in fruitful debate (Young 2000, 53). Young also argues that a more complete account of modes of political communication serves as a remedy for exclusivism in deliberative practices. She says that it describes ways in which respect and trust can be developed, making it possible to understand all cultures and also moving people to acceptance and action (Young 2000, 57).

Young (2000) refers to the political functions of three modes of communication, in addition to making arguments. The three modes are greeting, rhetoric and narrative. Her argument is particularly relevant in the light of all the changes that have taken place in education, including open schools and the admission of learners from all cultural groups. It calls on all to be particularly tolerant of each other, to accept that there are cultural differences and that these differences carry over into school governance structures. This means there should be democratic participation in school governance structures in which no one is excluded. Whereas confrontation accompanied participation in the past, we now need understanding, maturity in dealing with one another, cooperation between cultures, sensitivity, and a conciliatory spirit. Seventh-day Adventist schools are multicultural schools.² In order to avoid a clash of cultures it was imperative that the prejudices of the past remain in the past. All role players in school governance structures should be exposed to the possibilities of working together as fellow South Africans. It is encouraging to see all race groups represented on the school boards of SDA schools, especially where the school body was composed of various groups. However, historical reasons, which include lack of education, feeling of low self-worth, and feeling that “I will not be able to make a meaningful contribution” were used by parents, especially previously disadvantaged parents, to decline positions on the school board.

4.3 School boards in Seventh-day Adventist institutions

As mentioned earlier, there is a lack of resources for dealing with school boards in SDA schools in South Africa. A number of overseas-based SDA educators have written articles on school boards that appear in various editions of *The Journal of Adventist Education*. Osborn (2004, 3) stated that his work as a board member was guided by a number of Biblical principles, through which he recognised that the Lord had built the school, that as a board member he had to share his faith with the students, that as a board they were the body of Christ, that there was safety in the board, and that as servant leaders they were stewards of what the Lord had entrusted to them. Of course, this is speaking purely from an SDA perspective. Referring to SDA schools, Boyatt (2004, 10) states that, when the new school board is chosen at the beginning of the year, many of the members are new. Therefore, the principal must discuss the policies, functions, responsibilities and other governance practices with the school board members. He further indicates that this is the responsibility of the principal, since he is a professional educator

²For many years now, SDA schools have been open to any learner irrespective of race, gender, colour, creed, language, nationality, age and the like. All learners are welcome, as long as they are prepared to uphold the values and standards of the school.

serving on the school board. We know, of course, that according to the SASA an educator must also serve on the board.

I mention some of these aspects that are carried out in SDA schools overseas, such as in America, Great Britain and Australia, to show that SDA institutions in South Africa have not applied many of these important facets to their boards. Boyatt (2004), for example, speaks about the functions of the boards, which include formulating the necessary policies, and finding the necessary resources to support the vision and mission of the school so as to enhance the education programme and benefit the learners. The board must assist with the marketing of the school and make sure that the school is financially healthy. It is the responsibility of the principal and his financial officers to teach board members how to read and understand a financial statement. As we shall see later, these are important aspects that SDA schools in South Africa should seek to include in the work of their boards.

4.4 Democratic participation

It is imperative that the school allows all stakeholders to play an active part in the life of the school. The school board is of paramount importance. Democratic participation is indeed an absolute necessity. School governance involves parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, and the principal, and in the case of a high school, also learners and any other co-opted community members. As far as SDA schools are concerned, this is not entirely so. I view democratic participation as power sharing. In fact, the principal should empower the other stakeholders so that they can make meaningful contributions to the school, especially when it comes to policy making. There will be far greater involvement in the school if all the stakeholders are a part of the decision-making process. Stakeholders will be more willing to contribute to, and assist, the school in its various ventures if they feel a part of the democratic structures of the school. When representatives on the school board are elected democratically, even those who cast their votes will feel part of the democratic process and thereby feel part of the governance structure of the school. Unfortunately, the election process of representatives on the boards of SDA schools is completely different to that of public schools. This will be discussed later, in greater detail.

4.5 Research questions

In order to investigate the ineffective and inefficient functioning of the school boards, as well as the training of school boards in SDA schools, the following research questions were posed.

1. What is the nature and extent of the problems experienced by school boards?
2. What can be done to help the school boards play a more active role in school governance?

3. What kind of training will equip school boards to function more effectively?
4. Are the school board members willing to undergo training in areas where they lack expertise?
5. Are the board members willing to sacrifice time for continuous training in order to gain the expertise they lack, and so equip themselves to carry out, effectively, the functions and responsibilities of a school board member?

4.6 Research design

According to Creswell (1998, 19), “if an individual is willing to engage in qualitative inquiry ... select a qualitative study because of the nature of the research question”. He says that, in qualitative research, the question often starts with *how* or *what*. If there is a strong rationale to pursue a qualitative study, the following is specified:

First, select a qualitative study because of the nature of the research question.

Second, choose a qualitative study because the topic needs to be explored.

Third, use a qualitative study because of a need to present a detailed view of the topic.

Fourth, choose a qualitative approach in order to study individuals in their natural setting.

Fifth, select a qualitative approach because of interest in writing in a literary style...

Sixth, employ a qualitative study because of sufficient time and resources to spend on extensive data collection in the field and detailed analysis of ‘text’ information.

Seventh, select a qualitative approach because audiences are receptive to qualitative research.

Eighth, and finally, employ a qualitative approach to emphasize the researcher’s role as an active learner who can tell the story from the participants’ views rather than as an ‘expert’ who passes judgment on participants (Creswell 1998, 19-20).

The nature of the research question necessitated a qualitative approach. Six schools were included in the research, two high schools and four primary schools. As researcher I made use of semi-structured interviews and semi-structured questionnaires. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the education department of the Cape Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The six schools were Conference schools; therefore, for ethical reasons, permission to do the research was requested and was granted by the Conference. Permission was also granted to obtain copies of each school’s constitution. The constitutions contain a section that deals with the school board. Strict confidentiality and anonymity were maintained to ensure that no school or person could be identified. Pseudonyms were used for this purpose. According to Creswell (1998, 19-20), “unquestionably, the backbone of qualitative research is extensive

collection of data, typically from multiple sources of information ... we consciously consider ethical issues – seeking consent, avoiding the conundrum of deception, maintaining confidentiality, and protecting the anonymity of individuals with whom we speak”.

In qualitative research, the importance of confidentiality and anonymity is paramount. Our respondents trust us when they share information and life stories with us. The least we can do is honour that trust by not divulging their identity. Again, Creswell (1998, 20) puts it very cogently when he states that:

After organizing and storing our data, we analyze them by carefully masking the names of respondents and we engage in the perplexing (and lonely if we are the sole researcher) exercise of trying to make sense of the data. We examine the qualitative data working inductively from particular to more general perspectives, whether these perspectives are called themes, dimensions, codes, or categories. We (re)present our data, partly participants’ perspectives and partly based on our own interpretation, never clearly escaping our own personal stamp on a study. Throughout the slow process of collecting data and analyzing them, we shape our narrative – a narrative with many forms in qualitative research. We tell a story. We talk about our experiences in conducting the study. We let the voices of our informants speak and carry the story through dialogue.

4.6.1 Sample of Seventh-day Adventist schools

As indicated earlier, six SDA schools were initially used in the study. The schools are operated by the Cape Conference of SDA and each is governed by a school board. Three schools were in the former Southern Hope Conference of SDA where I served as Education Director in 1999 and 2000. I therefore have an intimate knowledge of the schools, having also served as principal at two of the schools in the former Southern Hope Conference before I was appointed Education Director, and later as teacher and vice-principal at the high school operated by the former Cape Conference. The former Southern Hope Conference served the black and coloured constituencies of the Conference. The other three schools were part of the former Cape Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and served the white constituency. As stated previously, when the two Conferences merged to form one Conference on 13 March 2006 the new Conference was named the Cape Conference. The six schools are now operated by the Cape Conference and serve all race groups. The Cape Conference also operates five schools in the Eastern Cape.

The schools that formed part of this study are all located in the Western Cape and are in fairly close proximity to each other. All the schools can be visited in one day, a trip that would entail travelling only ninety-four kilometres. Another reason for using the Cape schools only is that using the schools in the Eastern Cape would not necessarily have yielded different results.

When I served as Education Director for the Southern Hope Conference in 1999 and 2000, all the schools in the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape were part of my responsibility. So, as mentioned earlier, I do have an intimate knowledge of the schools, how they operate, as well as the responsibilities and functions of their boards. Besides, I have been involved in seminars and presentations with all our schools and still keep in contact with them on a fairly regular basis. I am personally acquainted with a number of members who serve on the various boards, hence am aware of certain things that occur in these boards. Given all my experience of working with the boards, and realising that they can be far more effective and efficient, I decided to do the study on the SDA school boards in the Western Cape.

Table 4.1 Summary of selected schools

Name of School	Province/City/Suburb	Learner population
School A	Western Cape/Suburb	Multicultural
School B	Western Cape/Suburb	Multicultural
School X	Western Cape/Suburb	Multicultural
School C	Western Cape/Suburb	Multicultural
School D	Western Cape/Suburb	Multicultural
School E	Western Cape/Suburb	Multicultural

It is important to note that all the SDA schools are open to whosoever wishes to attend, as long as the learner is willing to abide by the rules and regulations of the relevant institution.

4.6.2 Selection of participants

Semi-structured interviews are particularly useful when you work with small groups. The respondents or participants in the semi-structured interviews were chosen particularly because they interact with school boards on a regular basis. Given the research questions, the principal, teaching staff and parents were in a good position to provide information on governance in the school. As stakeholders they also would have a major interest in how the school is governed. The boards were also included in the semi-structured interviews because it had to be determined whether their members understood their functions and responsibilities, and also whether specific training, skills and expertise were needed to improve their ability to govern the school.

The following table indicates the respondents chosen at each school to complete the semi-structured questionnaire.

Table 4.2 Respondents chosen to complete questionnaire

School	Principal	Staff	Parents	School board	Type of questionnaire
Hillcrest	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Riverside	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Good Hope	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Helderberg	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Good Hope H	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Helderberg H	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.

I delivered the semi-structured questionnaires to each school by hand. The study had been explained to all concerned on a previous occasion, so there was no need to repeat this. The principal of each school, with the help of the school secretary, took responsibility to hand a questionnaire to each respondent. Certain difficulties arose, which will be explained later, resulting in the sample size being smaller than anticipated. However, there were sufficient respondents to supply enough data that could be used effectively. All those who completed a questionnaire were included in the interviews. However, some problems also arose with the interviews. This will be dealt with later.

The following table indicates the respondents chosen to participate in the semi-structured interview.

Table 4.3 Respondents who participated in semi-structured interviews

School	Principal	Staff	Parents	School board	Type of interview
Hillcrest	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Riverside	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Good Hope	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Helderberg	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Good Hope H	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.
Helderberg H	X	X	X	X	Semi-struct.

The following table shows the respondents who completed both the semi-structured questionnaire and the semi-structured interview.

Table 4.4 Respondents who completed semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews

School	Principal	Staff	Parents	School board	Semi-structured interview and questionnaire
Hillcrest	X	X	X	X	X
Riverside	X	-	-	X	X
Good Hope	X	X	X	X	X
Helderberg	X	X	X	X	X
Good Hope H	X	X	X	X	X
Helderberg H	X	X	X	X	X

The research sites therefore comprised six Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Western Cape.

4.6.3 Gaining access to the schools

Prior to undertaking the research I wrote to the Executive Secretary of the Cape Conference requesting permission to conduct the research in the Conference schools. I had contacted him earlier and discussed the whole concept with him. He realised that the research would be beneficial to the Conference and told me to contact the Education Director. Unfortunately, the Education Director resigned just prior to my sending off the request. For an entire year the Conference was without the services of an Education Director. A year later I made the same request. By this time the newly appointed Executive Secretary was also the acting Education Director. He gave permission for me to pursue the research in the SDA schools in the Western Cape. I eventually received a letter, dated February 2011, granting me permission. At the same time the Executive Secretary also requested that the schools cooperate with me in my research. A new Education Director was appointed later in 2011 and I again had to request permission to go ahead with my research. A second letter was sent to the schools requesting their cooperation. (See Appendix A for letters.)

I scheduled appointments with all the principals in order to prepare for the semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. This first visit served a dual purpose. Firstly, it was to discuss the research in detail and arrange for separate appointments with the principal, staff, school board and parents. Secondly, I had a set of preliminary questions on the school board. I asked the principals these questions individually, to determine whether there indeed was a case to be made regarding ineffective governance in SDA schools.

4.6.4 South African Schools Act, 1996: Act No. 84

Before I discuss my first visit to the principals, I would like to mention salient points documented in the South African Schools Act. It is obvious from the preamble that the Act was designed with all the stakeholders in mind. Its purpose was to create, amongst others, a “new national system” and “to redress the past injustices”. Whereas the previous national system had a top-down approach, the new system made provision for all the role players in the education system to have input into the functioning of the school. Over and above everything else, the status of the public school is spelt out very clearly. Section 15 of the Act states that “[e]very public school is a juristic person, with legal capacity to perform its functions in terms of this Act”.

Decentralisation placed the governance of every public school in the hands of the school governing body or school board. Section 16(1) indicates that, “[s]ubject to this Act, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body”, while Section 16(2) states that “[a] governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school”.

The Department makes it clear that the governing body must function according to a constitution. Section 18(1) reads, “[t]he governing body of a public school must function in terms of a constitution which complies with minimum requirements determined by the Member of the Executive Council by notice in the Provincial Gazette”.

By virtue of the South African Schools Act, the school governing body or school board became an official part of the public school system in the Republic of South Africa and had the responsibility to foster democracy in schools. In the process of fostering democracy, it also had to promote the principles contained in the constitution of our country, particularly those sections that pertain to education and to the rights of children. Promoting democracy can be a daunting task for a school board, especially in the light of the current difficulties confronting education in South Africa.

Carr and Hartnett (1996, 50) observe the following:

Current uncertainties and confusions surrounding education can only be understood by placing recent educational reforms within a perspective which will allow these reforms to be brought into more open confrontation with critical questions about the kind of society that they help to sustain. Only by articulating a vision of education grounded in democratic values will it be possible to ensure that non-technical, non-utilitarian questions about moral and social purposes being served by recent educational changes are neither neglected nor ignored.

Reimer (2008, 1) says the following about promoting democracy in the school:

Many boards offer compelling leadership and vision; most really do not know what they are supposed to ... recognise that the local school board has the power and potential for unprecedented and purposeful leadership with democracy's excellent virtues – equity, peace, justice, freedom, and hope. School boards are possibly democracy's best kept secret.

Reimer (2008, 2) makes a compelling argument when she states that:

School boards have a critical role in the growth and continuance of our democratic society, and we need them to be effective governors. Democracy is fragile, and without great governance, especially at school board level, it is threatened.

She mentions two very important points pertinent to this research, namely “effective governors” and “great governance”. It is imperative that we have effective governors in order for schools to operate optimally. Furthermore, great governance will ensure that all role players are involved and that the school itself produces the desired results. Here we are not only referring to scoring high marks and passing well, but also to the fact that schools must prepare pupils to function effectively in society.

Reimer (2008, 19) contends that “school boards are the most immediate form of representative democracy in our country”, and furthermore, that when board members deliberate and eventually take decisions, their decisions either strengthen and protect or weaken democracy and education. The role of the constituency is clarified when she says that the voice of the constituency is critical when it comes to policy formulation. That voice must especially be evident in board decisions (Reimer 2008, 19). Reimer regards the role and function of the board as being of the utmost importance, particularly with regard to democracy and education. She drives home the point that, when board members fail in their responsibility, the consequences can be catastrophic. Today, more than ever before, there is a need for educated men and women who will lead and protect democracy (Reimer 2008, 21).

The roles and responsibilities of board members are clearly outlined in the constitution of the school. Each Seventh-day Adventist school has a constitution. One of the articles in the constitution and by-laws deals specifically with the school board. It highlights membership,

invitees, officers, quorum, meetings, vacancies, and administrative authority. Until recently, two of the schools had outdated constitutions, while two schools had updated their constitutions to include a number of aspects contained in the SASA. These constitutions were rejected by the higher organisation. The other schools had acceptable constitutions, but the section on school boards was not very comprehensive. A new draft constitution was sent to each school from the office of the Education Director, Southern Africa Union Conference. The schools were expected to tailor the constitution according to their unique situations, and all the schools eventually will have uniform constitutions.

I planned my visits with the principals very carefully. During the first visit I discussed my research, and during the second visit I asked the same eight questions, as indicated in the next section, of each principal. I have included a brief summary of the responses that I received, without specifying which principal gave which reply. A copy of the questions has been included in the appendix. I then visited the principals for a third and fourth time in order to collect the semi-structured questionnaire and also do the semi-structured interview, after which I followed up with the fourth visit, which was the verification visit.

4.6.5 Questions asked of the principals

Question 1. The South African Schools Act requires all public schools to establish a school governing body or school board. Are you aware of the requirements of the Act regarding school governing bodies or school boards?

The term school board is used in SDA schools, so I will be using the term “school board”. With question one I wanted to ascertain whether the principals had in fact given particular attention to the SASA, especially regarding school boards. The Act contains a number of requirements some of which could easily be included in the constitutions of SDA schools without compromising the religious standards and principles of the school. Their responses included the following: “I am aware of it but have not really studied it.” “I only know certain sections of the Act.” “I do not really know the Act,” and “Yes, I am aware of the requirements”. From these responses I concluded that most of our educational leaders in SDA schools are not au fait with the SASA. I must also add at this stage that most of the principals registered a very high level of frustration with their school board. I will not discuss these frustrations at this stage, but merely mention the fact that they indicated their frustration at the mere mention of the necessity of having a school board.

Question 2. Does the school have a constitution and when was it updated?

Question two had a twofold purpose. One was to determine whether the school had a constitution, because the constitution would have included a section on school boards. I also wanted to determine how recently the constitution had been updated. The responses were positive to the extent that each school had a constitution. However, some schools had updated their constitution the year before, some were in the process of updating and some were functioning with outdated constitutions. In fact, one school's constitution was worded and set out so poorly that no school could possibly operate with such a constitution. In most cases, important requirements contained in the SASA, which could have been included, were not included. One noticeable item was that parents were badly under-represented. While my research was in progress, the Education Director of the SAU sent each school a draft constitution that they had to tailor to their needs. I have checked with each school and, up to November 2012, very few were operating under a new constitution.

Question 3. Does the school's constitution comply with the SASA in any way?

As much as what the Act applies to public schools and not necessarily to private schools, there are requirements that SDA schools can include comfortably. A few examples, as mentioned before, would include more parent representation, pupil representation in the case of high schools, certain policies relating to pupils, and general governance of the school. All the principals stated categorically that it would be good if certain requirements were included in their constitutions.

According to the South African Schools Act, 16. (1), "The governance of every public school is vested in its governing body". The same should apply to SDA schools, in which the school board does indeed govern in every aspect of the word. Section 23. (9) states that "[t]he number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a governing body who have voting rights". When discussing this with the individual principals, there appeared to be fear that parents would be "taking over the running" of the school.

Question 4. Did the board meet regularly during the past two years?

This question was to determine whether the board met regularly. All principals responded in the affirmative. However, two very important observations were made by all the principals. Firstly, that some of the SDA pastors, who are in fact bona fide members of the school board, do not attend regularly, and secondly, some do not attend at all. In the SDA education system, the

pastor is an important link between the church and the school. Keresoma (2008:32) makes it clear that “educators and pastors must nurture one another”, and that teachers and pastors must provide spiritual direction for pupils. Furthermore, the school and the church can form a partnership if the pastor is “affirming and supportive”. The second observation that was made is far more serious. It was stated that the principals found it very difficult to get a quorum at most meetings. At times the principal would have to phone a board member and ask the member to attend in order to have a quorum. The principals indicated that it was very difficult to transact business when there was no quorum. I found this to be alarming, because I had had the same experience at several schools where I had served as principal, and even when I served as Education Director. This told me that the situation had not changed in twenty years.

Question 5. Do you fully understand the functions of your school board?

This question was posed specifically to determine to ascertain how far the principal could help the school board members with their responsibilities, and produced some startling responses. The responses included: “Yes, I think it is mainly financial.” “Not really”, and “What is the role of the school board?” The last response was alarming, because at least fifty percent of the principals were not sure about the role of the school board. I concluded that very few principals could actually give the board the guidance that it needed. In general, the principals depended on the presence of members from the higher organisation to provide guidance whenever the school board met. I should possibly have ascertained how well the members of the higher organisation knew the functions of the school board. They usually were there to guide on church policy issues, more than on governance issues. Furthermore, this left me wondering how the boards handled the “sticky” matters relating to church policy or governance, which arose from time to time, when members from the higher organisation were not present. On further inquiry I was informed that, if members of the higher organisation were not present and a “sticky” matter arose, it would be left for the next meeting if it was not urgent. If it was an urgent matter, the principal would contact Head Office the following day in order to get clarification.

Question 6: How far, do you think, should the school board be involved in the day-to-day operation of the school?

I needed to know whether the principals viewed the school board in a governing capacity or in a managing capacity. One principal wanted the school board to be involved in some way, but did not specify which way, whilst others stated categorically that the school board was not there to

micro-manage the school. It was clearly stated by many principals that the school board should govern through the principal and the staff, who in turn manage the day-to-day operation of the school. A quarterly report back to the school board would be a clear indication whether the school was managed effectively. This included implementing decisions made at school board level. However, the principals expressed their doubt about the effective governing of the schools.

Question 7. Do you have a code of conduct for your board members and are all the members in possession of a copy of the document?

The school board members are accountable for governing the school and as such must live up to a particular code of conduct. Five principals responded negatively and one principal had a code of conduct for school board members. Each school board member of this particular school had a copy of the “Code of Conduct for School Board Members”.

Question 8 Would you say that your school board is properly constituted and that all the role players are adequately represented?

This question was asked to determine whether all the role players were adequately represented on the school board. Two principals responded “yes” and four principals responded “no”. In the case of one high school there was a reluctance to appoint pupils to the school board. In the case of some primary schools there was a feeling that if you appointed more parents to the school board, they would “take over the school” and control the school board with their votes. To my mind this was an unfounded fear, because parents, especially if they are not teachers, would know very little about managing a school. They might try to force their opinions, but that could be handled by a seasoned chairperson. Besides, with adequate training, the school board, including the parents, would know what their roles and responsibilities were.

After having completed the questions with all the principals and studying their responses, I had a good idea whom I should include as my respondents to answer the semi-structured questionnaire and also to participate in the semi-structured interview.

It was during my first visit with the principals that I shared details of my research. I discussed how I planned to go about my research and the importance of the cooperation of all the respondents. I proceeded to arrange a meeting with each school board. At the meetings with the

various boards, I discussed why I was doing the research, the nature of the research, and I mentioned the benefits it would hold in the light of my research questions. A formal action was taken at each board and voted on as well, allowing me to work with the respondents as outlined to them. Each board also agreed to complete a semi-structured questionnaire, and to return at a set date for the semi-structured interview, as well as on a date for the verification process. In order to save time and travelling, the principals agreed to speak to their respective staff members and arrange a time for the semi-structured interview. I hand delivered the semi-structured interviews to every school. I arranged to do the interview on the day that I arrived to collect the questionnaires. This I did for all the respondents. Before I started the interview with each respondent or groups of respondents, I explained the purpose of the research, the part each respondent could play, and the invaluable information it would provide. Furthermore, I explained how it would help to improve the governance in the school if the desired data was obtained and it proved to be of value in this regard. Difficulty arose with the semi-structured questionnaires and interviews with the parents. Some principals were of the opinion that they would speak to specific parents in order to get their cooperation. I eventually decided that it would be better to write a letter to the parents, explaining what the research entailed and requesting their participation in completing a semi-structured questionnaire as well as participating in a semi-structured interview. I gave each principal ten letters and ten semi-structured questionnaires, and they agreed to hand it to parents that they felt would be willing to participate. Getting ten parents to participate proved quite difficult indeed. A number of parents were reluctant to participate and I did not manage to get ten parents in any of the schools. I eventually agreed that I would be satisfied if I could get at least five or six parents. I further agreed that each stakeholder group would return its semi-structured questionnaires on the day and at the time when the semi-structured interviews took place. I supplied each principal with semi-structured questionnaires for staff members, board members and parents, and one for each principal. Copies of the questionnaires can be found in appendix C.

The following table indicates number of respondents who completed a semi-structured questionnaire at each school.

Table 4.5 Respondents who completed semi-structured questionnaires

School	Principal	Staff	Parents	School board	Type of questionnaire
Hillcrest	1	6	5	6	Semi-struct.
Riverside	1	3	4	5	Semi-struct.
Good Hope	1	5	6	5	Semi-struct.
Helderberg	1	7	4	7	Semi-struct.
Good Hope H	1	6	5	5	Semi-struct.
Helderberg H	1	5	6	6	Semi-struct.

The following table indicates the number of respondents who participated in the semi-structured interview at each school.

Table 4.6 Respondents who participated in the semi-structured interviews

School	Principal	Staff	Parents	School board	Type of interview
Hillcrest	1	7	4	5	Semi-struct.
Riverside	1	X	X	7	Semi-struct.
Good Hope	1	7	4	5	Semi-struct.
Helderberg	1	9	3	7	Semi-struct.
Good Hope H	1	6	4	5	Semi-struct.
Helderberg H	1	6	5	5	Semi-struct.

The following tables show the total number of respondents who completed both the semi-structured questionnaire and the semi-structured interview.

Table 4.7 Total number of respondents who completed the semi-structured questionnaire

Schools	Principals	Staff members	Parents	School board members
6	6	33	30	34

Table 4.8 Total number of respondents who completed the semi-structured interview

Schools	Principals	Staff members	Parents	School board members
6	6	37	21	34

I made use of semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. This I felt would allow for open and in-depth responses. The respondents were not restricted to a specific answer or a choice of answers. It was also hoped that the answers would be honest and from the heart, exactly as the respondent experienced working with the school board, as well as the way they experienced governance in the school. This applied to the school board as well. The only way in which the board could get any help, if they needed it, would be to talk about their experiences and what their needs were as a board.

As mentioned earlier, the interviews with the principals were not difficult to arrange and conduct, since I had made earlier visits to each school. During my first visit I had frank discussions with the principals stating the reasons for my research. The principals realised that they were encountering various problems with their school boards and were eager to know what the reasons were, how to solve them, and also how to make governance more effective. Amongst others, the principals mentioned a lack of regular attendance, a lack of participation and support, and the inability to act decisively.

As indicated earlier, I also visited the school boards in advance to explain my research. The members were interested in the nature of the research and how far it would benefit them as well as the school. It was fortuitous that the boards realised that there were deficiencies, although they were not sure specifically what they were. I explained that I would use the semi-structured questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews to determine, if there were problems, what they were and the extent thereof. I would then share the results, suggestions and recommendations with them at a later stage. The principals had spoken to their staff members and had shared the correspondence from the Conference office with them. They therefore were prepared to complete the semi-structured questionnaires and also participate in the interviews. However, as can be seen from the statistics, far fewer parents were prepared to participate in the interview, hence a few more staff members joined the interview.

Parent cooperation was not very easy to obtain. I gave each principal letters to be handed to at least eight to 12 parents requesting them to participate in the semi-structured interview and to complete the semi-structured questionnaire. I was fortunate in that the PTA committees of three schools agreed to participate. It was rather difficult to get parent cooperation at the other three

schools. Eventually, a few parents responded, resulting in 21 parents participating. This figure may be very low, but the narratives that came from these parents were very valuable. The information obtained was an eye-opener for me.

After transcribing all the interviews, I first went through them to exclude all the extraneous information. This took several sessions and was extremely time-consuming. However, it was a valuable exercise since I could now concentrate on the actual answers given to the questions, as well as extract valuable discussion points relating to the boards and their work. The analysis of the data relating to the questionnaire and the interview will be discussed in Chapter 5. Harris and Brown (2010, 1) indicate that “questionnaires and interviews are often used together in mixed method studies investigating educational assessment”. Harris and Brown (2010, 1), citing Kendal, state that, “while questionnaires can provide evidence of patterns amongst large populations, qualitative interview data often gather more in-depth insights on participant attitudes, thoughts, and actions”.

There are many arguments emanating from the literature on the merits of questionnaire and interview data, and whether comparisons between them are appropriate. Harris and Brown (2010, 2) mention that, “[i]n the research methods literature, questionnaires and interviews are seen as having differing and possibly complementary strengths and weaknesses”. They conclude, however, that “despite the weaknesses of both questionnaires and interviews, these are important means of obtaining direct responses from participants about their understandings, conceptions, beliefs, and attitudes; hence these methods cannot and should not be discarded” (Harris and Brown 2010, 2). I will determine how the data obtained from the interviews and questionnaires contribute to the research on school boards.

I will now discuss validity and reliability.

4.7 The question of validity and reliability

Seale and Silverman (1997, 379-80) state that authenticity rather than reliability is often the issue in qualitative research. The aim is to gather an ‘authentic’ understanding of people’s experiences. Open-ended questions and interviews are often used in qualitative research to gain this understanding of people’s experiences. These authors also state that the quality lies in the use of language to paint pictures in which we even get to know ourselves better. Many authors refer to the rigour of qualitative research. It is often a very big task to construct huge amounts of data from interviews and questionnaires and to analyse and interpret the data so that what it reveals is credible and can be justified based on plausible explanations. Golafshani (2003, 600) refers to precision, credibility and transferability as characterising qualitative research. He

further states that “qualitative researchers seek illumination, understanding and extrapolation to similar situations”. Furthermore, Golafshani (2003, 601) states that, in qualitative study, reliability equates with a “purpose to explain”, while quality has the purpose of “generating understanding”.

With reference to my research, I worked with groups of respondents, requiring them to respond to interviews and questionnaires. The data constructed would then have to explain and generate an understanding of the questions relating to the research. There is no doubt, however, that trustworthiness is a crucial element in qualitative research. One must remember that reliability and validity take different forms in qualitative research. That form is justifications and argumentations based on thick descriptions and member checking. Rigour, as mentioned earlier, is described by Twycross and Shields (2005, 36) as the overall planning and implementation of the research design and whether it was done in a logical and systematic way. Furthermore, rigour refers to discipline and adherence to detail with strict accuracy. To achieve trustworthiness, thick descriptions and member checking play a crucial role. Qualitative research is also iterative, so the research has to make sure that everything is logical and that the design, question formulation, data construction and analysis are all interrelated and agree with one another. A tremendous responsibility rests on the researcher, who uses the various strategies, to verify the constructed data that determine the reliability of the study. According to Morse *et al.* (2002, 11), verification strategies include methodological coherence, large enough samples, and a relationship between sampling, data collection, analysis, thinking theoretically, and theory development.

In this study, the questions match the method and both agree with the data and analysis thereof. Furthermore, the participants were all directly involved in the research topic and were the best samples from which to obtain information. There also is definite interaction between the data and the analysis thereof. Some interesting and new ideas emerged from the data, which will be discussed later. However, there was a definite understanding between the theory and the development of the arguments. The important thing is to maintain rigour throughout the study, and this will be discussed in the next section.

4.7.1 Verification in qualitative research and maintain rigour in the study

Qualitative researchers use different criteria to verify their research than quantitative researchers use. Many researchers speak about the consistency of the data, as well as whether it is sensible. The results must also meet with the approval of other researchers and educators. One must be able to understand the world experienced by the respondents who participated in

the research and, in turn, be able to explain what they experienced. This very aptly applies to the respondents in this study, who were involved in school governance. Strategies like triangulation, member checking and thick descriptions serve to confirm the credibility of qualitative research. In the case of the present study, thick descriptions, rich with meaning from detailed descriptions given by the respondents, served to verify the credibility and dependability of the constructed data. I also shared the transcripts with the respective stakeholders to verify whether I had transcribed the interviews correctly. In these discussions I further confirmed that what was transcribed was exactly the way they experienced school governance. All my preliminary findings were shared with the principals of the respective schools. They all agreed and verified the factual aspects of the data and also agreed with the analysis presented. As mentioned earlier, the aim was to arrive at the truth by describing and understanding the experiences or stories told by the respondents. There was a correlation between the interviews and questionnaires in this study, and as mentioned earlier, aspects of this study were similar to those of a study done in SDA schools in the USA, where similar problems were found to exist. One can readily see that validity and reliability in the qualitative research paradigm are different from that of the quantitative research paradigm. The qualitative research paradigm uses personal experiences, life stories, interviews, questionnaires, observation and other means to describe what is happening in the individual's life. Once the data is constructed, meaning is attached by way of analysis and using the facts as they are presented. Trustworthiness is crucial in determining the reliability, credibility, dependability and validity of the research. In other words, when other researchers examine the study they must find it trustworthy and credible. Bashir, Afzal and Azeem (2008, 41) state that "the idea of discovering truth through measures of reliability and validity is replaced by the idea of trustworthiness, which is defensible and establishing confidence in the findings".

Morse et al. (2002, 9-13) discuss the verification process, and it is their contention that this process must occur during the research process in order to ensure trustworthiness and credibility. In this way, errors can be corrected at every step as you go along. This refers to the iterations of qualitative research. The authors contend that, by systematically checking the data, you can remain focused on the analysis and interpretation of your data which is then verified at every step. Morse et al. (2002, 12-13) mention five specific aspects as part of verification strategies:

First, the aim of methodological coherence is to ensure congruence between the research question and the components of the method. Second, the sample must be appropriate, consisting of participants who best represent or have knowledge of the research topic. Third, collecting and analysing data concurrently forms a mutual interaction between what is known and what one needs to know. The fourth aspect is

thinking theoretically. Ideas emerging from data are reconfirmed in new data; lastly the aspect of theory development is to move with deliberation between a micro perspective of the data and a macro conceptual theoretical understanding.

On the other hand, Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012, 83) suggest the following alternate terms with respect to validity: trustworthiness, worthy, relevant, plausible, confirmable, credible and representative. Another term that has also becoming more common, say Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012, 83), is “legitimacy”. They also state that the most common term used on the list above is credibility, which refers to “confidence in the truth of the context”.

With regard to reliability in qualitative inquiry, Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012, 83) state that the following terms have been proposed: “Stability, consistency, predictability and accuracy.” The most common word used that belongs to the same group is “dependability”. They proceed to explain that the goal for the researcher is to understand or explain a particular phenomenon. They state that “[w]e must rely on our own judgment and that of our peers – judgment based on information available – to decide whether or not what we do and have done, and the findings we present, are valid” (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012, 84). It is further argued that one does not want to replicate qualitative research because it is not designed with that in mind, further, that qualitative research is inductive and that even semi-structured interviews, where the same questions are used, need a great deal of inductive probing to elicit the requested information. Furthermore, a yardstick is needed to know whether the constructed data, summaries and interpretation thereof are valid.

Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012, 85) suggest that “transparency of process is critical to making a convincing case for the validity of one’s findings and interpretation”. They aver that, “although explicit documentation and description of procedures does not guarantee validity, it does provide information for others” (2012, 85). In other words, others can then determine the credibility of the findings and their interpretation. What can also substantially increase the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings is if “the same trends and themes emerge within the data from different participant groups and data construction methods” (2012, 85). They state further that “nothing in qualitative research is more important to these ends than using verbatim quotes ... words, quotes are the stars of qualitative research. They bring the raw data – the participants’ words – to the reader and are what connect the phenomenological world of the participant to the data summary and interpretation generated by the researcher” (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012, 95).

Much of what has been said about trustworthiness and credibility applies to this study. I have detailed the data very carefully so that there is evidence of thick descriptions. The rechecking

of the transcriptions and verifying what had been said with all the groups of respondents was carried out very successfully. I have made extensive use of verbatim quotations in the study. This definitely gives credibility to the findings of the study. Furthermore, I believe that there were ample checks and balances to ensure trustworthiness and credibility.

The iterative nature of qualitative research, particularly in this study, which made use of semi-structure interviews and semi-structured questionnaires, contributes to the credibility of the findings. I know that bias exists, but I have tried to use questions that would have elicited information as truthfully as possible. However, I realise that nothing is absolutely bias free, although I do believe that it was not a big problem in this study. What definitely added to the trustworthiness and credibility of this study is the fact that the same trends and themes emerged from the different groups of respondents using the same data construction methods. Qualitative research is inductive by nature and I do believe that the data constructed from the interviews and questionnaires is credible, as can be seen from the verbatim quotes later in this study.

I now reflect on ethical issues.

4.8 Ethical issues

Certain ethical issues are bound to surface whenever empirical research is carried out. It is important for me to take ethical issues into consideration, especially when there are implications for the respondents. Silverman (2000, 200), citing Max Weber, says that the values of the researcher affect the research in one way or the other. He also states that, whether it is qualitative or quantitative research, the researcher has a dilemma about whether to disclose too much specific information about the research to the respondents for fear of contamination. He makes it clear that, when you are studying people, particularly their behaviour, or if ask them questions, you have to face your values as well as your responsibilities towards your respondents. Silverman (2000, 200-201), citing Mason, mentions the following ways in which ethical issues impinge on the qualitative researcher:

1. The rich and detailed character of much qualitative research can mean intimate engagement with the public and private lives of individuals.
2. The changing directions of interest and access during qualitative study mean that new and unexpected ethical dilemmas are likely to arise during the course of your research.

Silverman (2000, 201) says that there are three ways in which to confront ethical issues, should they arise. You should first examine the purpose of your research, after which you must

determine which groups or individuals will be affected by the topic or might be interested in the topic. He then suggests that you look at the implications of your research topic for those parties if you leave it the way it is phrased. Citing Kent, Silverman (2000, 201) says that there must be informed consent, which means that you must give the correct information about your research, especially if it is relevant to the subject's decision whether or not to participate. Furthermore, the researcher must make sure that the respondents understand the information, and lastly the researcher must ensure that participation is voluntary and, where respondents are not competent to agree, to obtain consent by proxy.

Under no circumstances should information be withheld from the respondents. Permission must be obtained in advance to conduct interviews, and times must be scheduled at the convenience of the respondents. Once a good rapport has been built with the respondents, it will open the way for cooperation and also keep the channels of communication open. Another important aspect is how you plan to use the data. Respondents need to be informed how the data will be used and they must know that they will be protected by anonymity and confidentiality.

In the case of this research, permission was requested and granted. I paid personal visits to the school principals and the boards to explain the nature of the research. Letters were sent to parents giving them the freedom to participate. Anonymity and confidentiality were explained and maintained. All respondents had a choice whether or not to participate. Indeed, some chose not to participate. Furthermore, the respondents had the choice to withdraw at any stage.

As far as ethical issues are concerned, I believe that I have upheld the ethical rights of the respondents, which include, as suggested by Flick (2009, 40-42), informed consent, no participant must be harmed in any way in the data construction, justice must be done to all participants in analysing the data, the dignity and rights of all participants must be maintained, and strict confidentiality and anonymity must be maintained when writing about your research.

4.9 Summary

This chapter uses narrative inquiry as a theoretical basis for data construction and analysis. The method is an interpretive one, using qualitative research. Two methods of constructing data were employed, namely the semi-structured questionnaire and the semi-structured interview. The semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews gave me insight into what was really happening in SDA schools in the Western Cape as far as school boards were concerned. All the data derived from the semi-structured questionnaire and the semi-structured

interviews will be analysed in Chapter 5. The data constructed will be used to assist school boards in their governance of the schools.

The next chapter, Chapter 5, provides an analysis of the data using the interpretive approach. It will become clear what the needs are as far as SDA school boards in the Western Cape are concerned.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS: EXPLORING EXISTING PROBLEMS IN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH SCHOOLS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO POOR AND INEFFECTIVE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on existing problems with school boards in some of the Seventh-day Adventist church schools in South Africa. The purpose was to explore, gain insight into and determine the nature and extent of the problems. The data constructed by means of semi-structured interviews and semi-structured questionnaires was analysed to justify the depth of the problems in some school boards in SDA schools in South Africa. My aim was to understand meaning-making amongst the chosen respondents involved in governance in the schools.

In order to analyse the data constructed from the respondents I also borrowed from phenomenological research. Worthington (n.d.) citing Patton, states that phenomenology is focused on meaning-making and further asserts that “phenomenology is a school of philosophical thought that underpins all of qualitative research” (n.d., 1). Phenomenology, therefore, has specific consequences for “qualitative methods, including participant behaviour and interviews” (Aspers 2004, 3).

Aspers (2004, 5) further asserts that, in order for us to understand the world, we must “meet the demands of phenomenology”. In this context it is important to produce explanations established in the individual’s personal situation (Aspers, 2004). It is not a case of simply describing people’s state of mind, but to understand “why and how things happen, and this must refer to the way people think about these phenomena” (2004, 5). In empirical phenomenology the approach requires verbal interaction with those studied in the field. Meaning is transmitted primarily by words, for which interviews are most suitable (Aspers 2004). Kramp (2004) states that if the researcher wishes to understand a phenomenon or an experience, then narrative inquiry would be the qualitative research method to use. It serves as an effective way to undertake the “systematic study of personal experiences and meaning...” (Kramp 2004, 104). Once the interview has taken place, the researcher is free to construct the narrative, using a specific framework to interpret meaning and understand the phenomenon (Kramp 2004). In narrative inquiry, the researcher is called upon to describe rather than explain. This is borne out by Groenewald (2004, 5), who asserts that the “operative word in phenomenological research is ‘describe’”.

Waters (n.d., 1) supports the other authors when she says that:

The goal of qualitative phenomenological research is to describe a “lived experience” of a phenomenon. As this is a qualitative analysis of narrative data, methods to analyse the data must be quite different from more traditional or quantitative methods of research.

Waters (n.d., 1) further asserts that:

Any way the participant can describe their lived phenomenal experience that can be used to gather data in a phenomenological study. You can use an interview to gather the participants’ descriptions of their experience, or the participants’ written or oral self-report, or even their aesthetic expressions (e.g. art, narratives, or poetry).

In relation to what is stated above, I used interviews, followed by questionnaires, as data collection instruments.

A number of authors therefore have indicated that narrative inquiry is used to generate and analyse data, and that it is a well-accepted research methodology.

As far as school governance in some SDA schools in South Africa is concerned, the voices of the role players have never been heard before. There have rumblings of discontent from several quarters, but no one has taken up the cause for their voices to be heard. Thus, in this study, their voices have come out, loud and clear, with a definite call for help and for change. It was clearly stated by one of the teachers: “Teachers’ voices are not heard.” Another teacher specifically stated: “Change needs to come.” And yet another: “Change needs to come about at the school.”

The questionnaires and interviews were analysed by reading through the data, coding the data using the R package for Qualitative Data Analysis, and then looking for specific themes that were repeated in both the questionnaires and interviews, and also themes that stood out in particular. The themes that emerged were then synthesised to construct the narratives. The aim was twofold; firstly, to determine first-hand what the various respondents experienced in their interaction with the school boards, and the board members interacting among themselves and with other stakeholders. This would give meaning to the stakeholders’ narratives of how they experienced the school boards. Secondly, without having to compromise the data, to relate their original narratives to their everyday experiences and get the story of what they experienced on a daily or regular basis when interacting with the school board. At the same time, the researcher had to bear in mind and examine closely the questions and theoretical constructs guiding the research.

5.2 Analysis of narratives

The data from five principals, five groups of staff members, five school board groups and five groups of parents are presented in this section. The responses of three male principals and two female principals to questions asked in an interview and to a separate questionnaire given to each one were gathered in order to construct their experiences with their school boards. The responses of five different groups of staff members to questions in an interview and to separate questionnaires given to each one were gathered to construct their experiences with the school boards of their individual schools. The responses of five groups of school board members to questions in an interview and to separate questionnaires given to each one to ascertain how they viewed their work, preparedness for governance and their need for skills were gathered to construct their experiences as school boards. Finally, the responses of five separate sets of parents to questions in an interview and to a questionnaire given to each one regarding their experiences with the school board of their respective schools were gathered to construct their experiences of their school boards.

Semi-structured, open-ended questions were administered personally, and semi-structured, open-ended questionnaires were also hand delivered personally. These types of questions were preferred because they allowed the respondents the freedom to respond as they wished. Furthermore, the data obtained would be of greater benefit than if the questions had been structured and closed-ended. I used themes that emerged in order to analyse the data. These themes formed the basis of the findings of this dissertation.

Groenewald (2004, 17) makes a very valid observation when he cautions against the use of the word ‘analysis’ because of its connotations of phenomenology. His argument is that the term analysis means breaking into parts! This, he says, means that the observable facts would be lost, and therefore the word explicitation should rather be used. This implies an “investigation of the constituents of a phenomenon while keeping the context of the whole” (2004, 17).

Qualitative methods aim to understand the what, how and why of the particular phenomenon being researched. They look at the attitudes and lived experiences of the subjects or respondents who relate the narratives. Therefore, before one considers an analysis or explicitation, Guest, Macqueen and Namey (2012, 30-31) suggest that one considers several questions. These questions include:

What is the practical purpose of the analysis?

What is the analytic purpose?

How is the analysis connected to the research question(s)?

How large is my data set?

Which data should I use for a particular analysis?

Who is the audience for my analysis, and how will members judge the process and subsequent findings?

The answers to these questions will become apparent as I proceed.

5.2.1 Research questions

At this stage I repeat the research questions because the analysis will be closely linked to the questions. The analysis should, in the process, answer the research questions and provide the storyline for narrative inquiry.

The first set of questions relating to ineffective boards is: What is the nature and extent of the problems experienced by the school boards? What can be done to help the school boards play a more active role in school governance? What kind of training will equip school boards to function more effectively? The first argument that emanates from these general questions is: existing problems experienced by school boards in Adventist schools, primarily a lack of capacity-building programmes and training, have contributed to poor and ineffective school governance.

The second set of general questions relate to training is: Are the school board members willing to undergo training in areas where they lack expertise? Are the board members willing to sacrifice time for continuous training in order to gain the expertise they lack, and so equip themselves to carry out, effectively, the functions and responsibilities of a school board member?

The second argument is that school board members are willing to sacrifice time for continuous training in order to gain the expertise they lack, and so equip themselves to carry out the functions and responsibilities of the board effectively.

It is the purpose or objectives of the study that provide the narrative. The narrative is the thread that should hold all the themes together as they are integrated in the analysis. So, you must know what you want to find out, what you want to convey and how you are going to convey the constructed information.

5.2.2 Objectives of the study

I mention the objectives here again, since it will help to guide the narratives as the data is constructed into texts that will give meaning to the inquiry and the outcomes of the analysis. The first objective of this study was to create an awareness of the functions and responsibilities of school boards. Secondly, to determine where their lack of expertise lay; thirdly, to determine what kind of continuous training was necessary to equip individuals for their work as board members; and fourthly to determine the time and effort members were willing to sacrifice in order to learn to function effectively.

5.2.3 Data analysis

This section presents data taken from five different schools. A single respondent and three groups of respondents provided sets of data for each school. In each school I interviewed the principal as a single respondent. Each principal also received a questionnaire to complete. I also interviewed groups of between five and ten staff members of each school, groups of between five and ten board members of each school, and groups of between five and ten parents of each school. Each staff member in the group, each board member in the group and each parent in the group was given a questionnaire to complete.

After completing the transcription of the interviews I used the software package RQDA to code them and then constructed themes from the data. I collated all the questionnaires in each specific group and, using the same software package, coded the questionnaires and then constructed the themes that emerged. (See Appendix B for Interview Questions and Appendix C for Questionnaires.)

In the case of the interviews, I took each question separately and collated the responses from each school under a specific question. The respondents from each school were asked the same questions in the interview. So, I took question 1 and wrote down the responses from schools A, B, C, D and E. I did so for each question. I applied this procedure to the principal, staff members, school boards and parents of each school. Similarly, I took the questionnaires and collated all the responses, and then applied the same procedure. In the case of the questionnaire, I took the first question and collated all the responses from the staff of school A to question 1 and put them together. I then proceeded to do the same for each school. What I now had were responses to question 1 from each staff member who participated, and from each school placed together. I proceeded to do this with every question in the questionnaire. I applied the same procedure to the principals and other groups of respondents from each school. (See Appendix D for responses to Interviews and Appendix E for responses to Questionnaires.)

Using the same RQDA software program, I constructed a diagrammatic representation of the main themes and the codes that went along with each theme.

I will now proceed to the analysis, integrating the questionnaires with the interviews. Themes that emerged, and which formed the basis of the findings for the narratives of the principals, include experiences in relationships with the board, how the principals experienced the functions and responsibilities of the board, the need for training, experiences in fulfilling the vision and mission of the school, performance assessment, experiences that led to specific issues of concern, and how the principal experienced the input from the higher organisation.

5.3 Responses from the school principals

Generally, all principals had a good working relationship with their boards. The principal at School A stated: “We actually have a good working relationship.” Another principal, at School B, said that “... our patrons trust us. I must be able to have the board in on this”. The element of trust and adhering to policy came through very strongly. Principal C noted that “open and honest communication with your board” was important. Principal D concurred with C and said that, with “school board matters I try to communicate ... and carry out decisions that are made”. Principal E admitted that “our relationship has not always been constant ... but I think the relationship has improved remarkably of late”. There was no doubt that all the principals tried their utmost to develop and maintain a good, positive relationship with their school boards. They saw their role of maintaining a positive relationship as being of great importance. Principal E went so far as to admit that “I build up a personal relationship in the interest of the school – so that you support each other and do not work against each other”.

However, there were times when the principals felt that the board was not fulfilling its role. Principals highlighted the fact that the board was not proactive. Principal A stated: “I believe the board must be proactive.” Principal B said: “Proactively the board gets 5/10. To me one of the greatest concerns is when the board is not actively involved in the school governance matters.” The principal appeared to be very agitated and distressed and stated that “currently, I feel I’m right against a brick wall. I need my school board now specifically ... and I do not have my board here”.

One would have thought that the chairperson at least met with the principal to prepare the agenda, but in many cases this was not so. Generally, there was a lack of support from the school board. Principal E said that “very often the board itself does not really know what their identity is in terms of what their responsibilities are ... there is confusion as to what their specific roles are”. In addition to other responsibilities, Seventh-day Adventist church pastors

also serve as school board members. All the principals reported that pastoral attendance at school board meetings was very poor.

With regard to fulfilling the vision and mission of the school, only principal C mentioned something positive. It was quite evident, then, that most of the school board members did not know what the vision and mission of the school were all about. The lack of knowledge of the vision and mission of the school had a direct bearing on the boards' inability to fulfil their role. Principal B mentioned that members chosen annually "do not always understand their function". Principal C stated, "but they definitely don't know the importance of the role they need to and must play to run a school efficiently". Principal E concurred by stating: "I perceive the board underestimates the role which it should be playing."

At the same time, all the principals agreed that the lack of an updated constitution had played a part in the ineffectiveness of the school board. At the time of the interview, and on completion of the questionnaires, most of the schools were operating with outdated constitutions. Some were being revised, while other schools were planning to revise theirs. Two schools revised their constitutions but the revised constitutions were rejected by the higher organisation for one reason or another. Towards the latter part of writing this chapter, copies of draft constitutions were sent to all the schools. The constitutions contained the functions and responsibilities of the school board. Principal E stated that "one of the reasons why I have not given them a constitution is because the present constitution is outdated, antiquated".

Since, as stated by many principals, the board did not understand its role, and since they had not been appraised of their functions and responsibilities, it stood to reason that their performance could not be assessed in any way. In any event, all the principals indicated that no assessment instrument existed, in spite of the fact that these schools had been in existence for many years.

The principals raised several areas of concern. During the interviews, Principal A stated that "the part that worries me, that is left more or less entirely to us is the budget. There are very few people on the board that know terribly much about the budget...". The principal indicated that that was why they were dependent on the Conference to send a representative to the board who could explain the budget and financial statement to the board members. This was a concern of a number of principals. The principals also made it very clear that it was very difficult to get people to serve on the board and that, when members were elected, they did not attend regularly. There was a lack of support and often boards had to go ahead without a quorum. Principal D was deeply concerned that they could not even get a chairperson to lead

the school board. As mentioned earlier, the principals were also very concerned that pastoral attendance was poor and often lacking.

Another serious concern voiced by the principals was the lack of expertise on the school board. This was one of the main reasons why they felt that the school board needed training. Principal A went so far as to say, “The board needs training ... I do not think of the board only, anybody that is placed in the position in which I am sitting...”. Principal B said, “the board needs training”, and then admitted that “they do not know very much about the operation of the school”. During the interviews, and later from the questionnaires, it became apparent that the school boards of the various schools were not involved in the strategic planning and knew nothing about the overall vision of the school. Responses to involvement in strategic planning and the overall vision of the school included: “not very involved”, “it does not come together to plan strategically”, “very little”, “the board is not involved in drawing plans”, and “not involved at all”. The principals were very candid in their responses and various principals indicated that they needed help to solve the difficulties experienced with the boards. However, the question of training was one that all the principals supported. They also agreed that an induction and orientation programme would benefit all school board members. No school had an induction and orientation programme, no school offered any training for new school board members, neither was any training given to new or existing members. As mentioned, all the principals agreed that school board members needed training. They even mentioned the specific areas in which training was needed, but were not sure who should do the training. Principal A said, “It is a brilliant idea. One would have to find the time to train them.” In response to the questionnaire, Principal A said that “they need to understand financial statements, working policies, and general administration of the school”. Principal B stated that the school board needed “training in finance... They do not know much about the operation of the school”. Furthermore, Principal B reiterated in the questionnaire that if there was training, “this will inevitably have a positive spin-off, in knowing their functions and responsibilities”. The rest of the principals all indicated that training was needed on finance, understanding their role, and being “empowered”. Other areas of training included procuring funds, knowing their role, training in chairmanship, how the school is operated, school promotion and the latest developments in the field of education. The responses varied as to who should do the training. Principal C felt that the “higher organisation should do the training”. Principal E suggested that “the Conference and we as principals train our school boards more effectively”. Principal A suggested that the chairperson does the training, whilst principal C felt that “a person with people skills and who has the knowledge of the importance of the school board to the school ... rather an external person”. Principal B felt that “[e]xperts can be called in”.

All the principals agreed that they would definitely recommend training: “as often as there were new members”, said Principal A. Principal B stated, “Initial training for incumbents but then two-yearly ...”. Principal C advised “at least once a year depending on the needs of the school ... Once board members know their important role in the running of the school, they should and would be more motivated to support the school”.

Principal D supported “short presentations by experts possibly at each meeting of the school board”, whilst principal E stated that “an intensive session of training at the commencement of the year would not be wise ... rather tackle training as the need arises”.

5.3.1 Summary

The responses of the principals were very clear in both the interviews and the questionnaire. There were many problems and something specific had to be done to empower the boards and help them accept accountability for their work as governors. In some way it was also necessary to free them from the shackles of their oppressive past and bring about transformation that will help them feel secure and accepted as governors. Through a process of education, the board members can be given the opportunity to reach their potential as human beings interacting with others on the board without feeling insecure and without feeling intimidated when confronted by those who are more learned and educated.

5.4 Responses from the staff members

The major themes that emerged from the interviews and questionnaires conducted with the staff of each school were experiences of interacting with the whole board, questions of representation on the school board, the functions and responsibilities of the school board, whether there was a need for training, and specific observations by the staff members.

I will deal with the responses of the staff members of the schools in a general manner and not refer to a specific school. In most cases, responses were voiced about the same concerns, this highlighted the fact that the staff members of the different schools experienced the same problems with their school boards.

The staff members were very clear on what they considered to be the functions and responsibilities of the school board. There was a clear link between some of the responses of the principals and that of the staff members. I often heard frustration, sometimes a negative voice, and even sarcasm. Judging from the responses, the way that the staff members experienced the board was not very positive. There was also an indication that staff members felt that the administration of certain schools deliberately withheld information from the school

boards. A staff member stated, “The board is limited in terms of access to information.” Referring to the board, another staff member said, “People are not as transparent as they should be.” The staff member then posed a very relevant question: “Is it a power game?” Another staff member stated that, “in reality the school board should be powerful”, but the school board “rubber-stamps” because of an information deficit. It was quite apparent that there was a “them” and an “us” in all the schools when reference was made to the school board. The relationship between staff members and school board members in all the schools definitely was an unhealthy one. (One could deduce from the responses that many staff members regarded the school board as an entity that the school could do without.)

The relationship between staff members and school boards was poor, and very little interaction occurred between staff members and school board members. This was borne out by what the members of staff experienced. Their attitudes were evident in their voices, and their use of words displayed their innermost feelings. The following represented the voices of a number of staff members regarding their interaction and relationship with the school board. These responses came from all five schools: Problem with the trust factor; things are decided for friends...benefits...that’s when the trust falls flat; the school board does not know what is happening in the school; the board lacks communication and transparency; we do not know who is on the board.

This was indeed a problem, especially when staff members did not know who served on the board.

Other responses included: No interaction whatsoever; the board is extremely inactive; they just come to meetings and that’s it; the board does absolutely nothing; I do not know who is on the board; if you were to ask me now, I would not know who is on the board; we know some of them.

I must admit that these responses shocked me and even caused me to wonder whether some staff members did not have their own agendas. But the responses were all more or less in the same vein and voiced by staff members from all the schools.

By admission, some staff members made no effort to find out who was on the board. It was stated:

I’ve never asked who is on the board and I’ve never been told.

Relationships therefore were very poor, strained and often non-existent. Where there was no interaction, the relationship of necessity suffered. Remarks concerning relationships between

staff members and board members were particularly harsh on the part of staff members. One could detect frustration in their voices during the interview in particular. This applied to all the schools. Responses included: there should be an open, co-operative relationship; we do not know each other ... as far as I know there is no relationship....; there is no liaison between the different camps, i.e. board and staff; I feel that there should be a closer relationship; a distant one; the majority of staff has never met the board; no relationship; there isn't any relationship. However, I must also add that all was not doom and gloom. A few staff members saw the school board differently and voiced their experiences in the following words:

Good. Not enough transparency, not enough feedback to staff; some decisions seem to be 'rubber-stamping' or 'window dressing'.

Although the above responses highlighted a problem or two, at least the staff members saw the relationship as good. Another staff member commented:

A cordial, transparent one, but limited to certain issues.

Maybe this staff member did not regard the 'limited to certain issues' as not being transparent. Other positive voices regarded the relationship as:

Good and open relationship. Board looks at the needs of the staff.

Another said:

Good. The staff have little clue as to what goes on in the school board.

This response appeared to be somewhat difficult to understand. Maybe the person saw it as a good thing that the staff did not know what went on in the school board.

Finally, a staff member commented:

The school board is normally supportive of the teaching staff.

In the context of experiencing a good relationship and positive interaction, the indications were that this was a problem area.

There were some very strong views from the staff on their experience as far as representation on the school board was concerned. Although our schools are Seventh-day Adventist institutions, they are open to all who wish to attend, irrespective of colour, creed, sex or race. In fact, non-Seventh-day Adventists support our schools very well. However, when it involved school board representation these were some staff members who felt that only SDAs should

serve as board members, whilst there were those who wanted to see non-SDA representation as well.

A staff member commented:

Make sure representation is Adventist. Keep the school in line with Adventist policy.

Another raised the question:

Should there be a small representation of non-SDA on the school board?

A categorical reply to the question of representation on the board was:

We only have SDA representatives. We have more non-SDA than SDA learners. We should have more non-SDAs on the board.

This response came from a seasoned SDA teacher. Staff members found that parents were not well represented on the school board.

Responses in favour of more parents included: We need to open our boards to non-Adventist parents; a good representation of staff and parents; parents that can really make a contribution must be on the school board; maybe a good idea would be to involve some more parents; more parent representation, more pastors, more teachers.

The staff members experienced and definitely saw a lack of representation in certain areas. They wanted to see all the stakeholders represented and definitely more parents. Many wanted to see more than one teacher on the school board. They also called the process of electing school board members into question. If this process was a more transparent one, it would definitely have allayed the fears of many staff members.

In many instances, staff members were not informed of the election process. Some had no idea about how it was done. That was why the feeling was that the principal chose “buddies” who would not rock the boat and ask difficult questions; the selection of members should be taken more seriously; ...have a sound mind and unbiased ... school management or administration members should not represent the staff ... I think each teacher should be given a chance to serve on the board at least once in their school life.

Responses like these showed that staff members had concern for their schools and that some would have liked to make a contribution, but that the system apparently did not allow for it.

Another major concern of staff members was the way in which the board functioned and how members carried out their responsibilities. As mentioned earlier, they were very clear on what

the boards' functions and responsibilities were. The staff members set the bar very high for the school boards, and rightly so, because the school board governed the school. The following responses to staff perceptions regarding the functions and responsibilities of the board were voiced during the interviews and were also included in the responses on the questionnaire. Before I indicate the responses, I need to mention that the staff members all agreed on several functions and responsibilities. Included in the answers to the questionnaires were: keeping the school on track to see to all general matters that will ensure the school's effective running; ... supporting function and disciplinary function ... law enforcement; strategy formulation; governance; ... spiritual, financial, academic, human resources, well-being of school; ... make good decisions in best interest of school ... manage the school business ... hire staff, handle difficulties, inform parents ... identify problem areas ... assist in such problem areas; upkeep of school, finances ... form a link between school and churches ... involved in the function of the school; they should be involved in all aspects of the school; the school board is responsible for the healthy functioning of every part of the school.

From the responses it is evident that the staff members of the various schools were well-versed in what the school board's functions were.

However, most of the staff members responded negatively when it came to the application of the functions and responsibilities. Many indicated why, in their opinion, the school boards were not functioning optimally. Both in the interviews and from the information in the questionnaires there were utterances and written responses in which the staff members described what they experienced. The following came to light: Decisions made by the board are not passed on to the staff; ... they do not have a well-communicated goal ... it's running but how effective is it; we are not planning ahead, just trying to keep going; it is a privileged position where you do not divulge crucial information that people should scrutinise.

Then, in favour of the school boards, some staff members felt that "selective information is given to the board". Many stated that the boards knew very little about finance and budgeting. It was also stated that old policies hamper the board from functioning effectively.

The way staff members experienced their school boards also became evident in responses to the questions on training. In the light of what was happening in the schools, the staff members were in a position to give opinions on several issues. Although very few had any interaction with their school boards, and although they had no idea (in many instances) who served on the school boards, they knew what the school board was there for and they knew from experience what was needed to govern effectively. At certain schools, the staff members indicated clearly

that the principal governed with the staff and that the school board had no idea what it was to govern.

The following were the areas suggested by the staff members where the school board needed training: finances; general conference policy; understanding financial reports; effective teamwork and communication; administration; school policy; ... establishing goals; strategic planning; human relations; professionalism in dealing with finances; reading a financial statement; working policy of the institution; responsibility of the school board; preparing a budget; running of a school; improving the school buildings; help with fund raising; leadership; accounting; communication; learn correct procedures; where there is a need to correct issues honestly, handle them honestly; legal matters; faithful attendance; take ownership of the school; confidentiality; public relations; why a school board is important and what is expected of them; how to handle conflict; meeting procedures.

The list was a formidable one, but these were expressed by the staff members. The staff members had no doubt that the school boards had certain powers, but the exercise thereof was often questionable. A particular staff member who experienced the negative impact of a board decision, stated: "... very negative; had to appear ... when a fellow teacher complained ... but they ignored my complaint ... public attacks on me ..."

There definitely were particular staff members who had negative experiences in their interaction with the school board. I must add, however, that I did not know the full story, but in the name of transparency these issues needed to be mentioned. One could readily see that embedded in the above list were definite areas of training that needed urgent attention.

In addition, the staff members made several suggestions of changes that they would make if given the opportunity. Some of them may impinge on privacy and confidentiality, but I mention them all the same: Open the board to interested observers ... transparency ... less chance of bias; less power to the chairman/principal/treasurer; more information available to board members; better information flow and communication; use of sub-committees and training resources; support teachers in classroom with resources; decentralisation of authority, independent thinking on the part of members, informed decision making; I would make sure that the school board takes time to meet, address and socialise once in a while with staff ...; meetings are conducted in a more transparent way; more staff members are included in the board for effective input; think progressively, plan aggressively, set goals, have strategic plans that are measurable; more participatory style of management; school board chairman should

meet with staff to get more input; more active role with communicating decisions ... is representative of all the stakeholders.

Here was another list that appeared very demanding, but these were the stories told by the staff who worked in the institutions governed by the various school boards. There was a definite lack of expertise, therefore training in specific areas was a priority.

5.4.1 Summary

I have concluded from the responses of the staff members that they want a far greater voice in the election of school board members and also in what happens on the school board. They would like to place items on the agenda and would like detailed feedback after each school board meeting, particularly on those items that affect them as staff members. They would like to choose their own staff representative and would prefer that no information is withheld from the board. The majority of staff members want their voices to be heard and want a close relationship with the school board, whilst others are quite content with the way the board operates.

5.5 Responses from parents

Parents formed another group of stakeholders that would have knowledge of the existence of the school board as a governing body and that would have experienced the board first hand. Their narratives merged with those of the other stakeholders, since all would be involved in the effective operation of the school. Themes emanating from the data from the parents included: the functions and responsibilities of the board and of parents, interaction with the board, and representation on the board. Parents were quite willing to voice their opinions and even offer suggestions for the effective functioning of the board. Although they were by far in the minority as far as board representation was concerned, their narratives were absolutely pertinent to this study. Some parents had positive experiences, like the parent whose child had difficulty adjusting to the school and the board intervened, whilst others had their concerns.

One of the most significant current discussions in Seventh-day Adventist schools is parent representation on school boards. It has become increasingly difficult to ignore the part played by parents as important role players. The parents felt that there had to be more of them on the school boards, but the principals felt that parents would “take over” the boards. According to the SASA, parent representation on the board should be more than fifty percent. Since SDA schools are private institutions they do not have to subscribe to this percentage. However, as mentioned, in recent years parents have shown an increasing interest in the education of their children, especially if they are paying for it. The parents’ responses to the questionnaires

indicated that they were well aware of the existence of the school board and came by that knowledge in various ways. When asked if they knew about the school board and how they came to that knowledge, the responses included: yes, from the PTA; yes, from one of the parents; yes, the school prospectus; I am aware, because I am an ex-teacher; yes, growing up my father formed part ... yes ... I was informed by one of the teachers.

Very little was mentioned by any of the parents on whether they had interacted with the board in any significant way.

In fact, during the interviews, parents categorically stated that they had never received any direct communication from the school board. It could be argued that the board should communicate through the principal. However, if the governing body wanted parental support for any initiatives from their side, then they should have communicated with parents directly and not necessarily through the principal. Parents had this to say: from past experience the board never communicated with parents; since I have been here nothing; there were staff issues... the board was forced to bring it to the parents; the PTA should have access to the board.

The parents play a key role in the life of the school and, when it comes to governance, they should be aware of who the governors were. Most of the respondents had no idea who served on the school boards. A few respondents could mention up to three names, which included the name of the principal. Besides not knowing who the school board were, parents were never involved in the formulation of any policies.

A parent commented:

We have not received anything from the board and have not participated in any discussions.

Another said:

The only policy that I have seen is in the prospectus – but nothing that the parents really have a say over.

Some parents approached the principal of their school and wanted to know if they could introduce something good that was done at other schools. They were told:

This is not ‘other schools’.

Parents specifically mentioned:

We were basically informed what the policies are. Specifically the discipline policy, uniform, and code of conduct.

All may be user friendly, but we would like to question the uniform policy for example. On what was that policy based?

It was somewhat surprising that parents had no or very little say in policies that affected them and their children.

In spite of this, the parents were eager to support the schools. As far as representation was concerned, the parents wanted to see more parent representation. Responses to who should be represented included: any parent willing to serve; parents, school, children; learners, teachers, staff and contract workers, parents, local churches; the structure as it is since gives representation to all role players; maybe more parent representation; financial investors, alumni, staff, church representations, parent representation, school teachers and principal; parents, teachers, Conferences, Union members; the parents, staff and churches; parents, the principal and members from the community.

The parents were also clear on what they would do to help with the responsibilities of school board members.

During the interviews it was stated that the largest number of parents that served on any of the school boards was no more than three. The boards consisted of between twelve and fifteen members.

The parents agreed that school boards should: see to the finances, protect and improve school property; monitor, manage and take ultimate responsibility for the successful running of the school; effective management; govern and make policies for the school.

I have just mentioned a few. However, the parents stated that they could also contribute. They stated the following: back and forth feedback ... as a parent it is easier for me to feed that information back to the board not ratting; if there are things happening in the classroom, it has to come to light, good and bad things; as a parent you are in the best position to do that; you've got a mouthpiece – the child; there are lots of parents with skills and the board must go to the parents and try to get more parents on the board; as a parent I would suggest that members attend the board meetings, support the board and also voice concerns to the school board.

When asked whether they thought the board was functioning effectively, the responses varied. Some felt the board was functioning effectively but that there was room for improvement; one

said yes, although there was not sufficient representation and regular attendees. Some were in no position to respond due to various reasons, and some gave no response. All the parents responded in the affirmative that there must be a close working relationship between the school board and the parents.

5.5.1 Summary

The parents' responses suggest that they want to play a bigger role in the school, they want to know who the school board members are, and they are willing to play their part in the success of the school. Both the interviews and the questionnaires showed consistency in the fact that the parents wanted to know what was happening at the schools.

5.6 Responses from school board members

The school board itself plays an important role in that it serves as the governing body of the school. Central to the entire discussion on governance is the governing body or school board. Therefore I felt that, at the heart of understanding governance in SDA schools, was understanding the school board itself. Were they aware of their functions and responsibilities? Was there in fact a lack of expertise? Did they feel that they needed training and, if so, what kind of training? Furthermore, were they willing to sacrifice time and effort? To obtain answers to these questions and more, I interviewed a group of school board members of each of the five participating schools and also asked each school board member to complete a questionnaire.

Once again I analysed the data using themes. The themes that emerged were: the functions and responsibilities of the board, representation on the board, training of board members and challenges faced by board members. Other matters relating to governance also surfaced.

There was no doubt that the board members understood what the term school governance meant. Responses varied and included the following:

The policies and bodies which ensure that the school runs smoothly and effectively.

School governance would make sure that all the necessary policies for the smooth running of a school are in place and put into practice.

School governance would refer to the governing structures and system of the school. This would determine the ultimate objectives and how it will be attained.

School governance is referring to the manner in which the school's objectives are set, policies are made and maintained, how the school is managed and administered and execution thereof.

Responses showed insight into what governance entailed. When it came to the implementation of aspects of governance, the easy ones were those pertaining to voting financial items,

especially budgets. However, when it came to matters of discipline, curriculum, planning, preparing budgets and employment, the boards experienced major problems. During the interviews, a common factor was the lack of guiding policies, and a lack of procedures that should be followed.

A board member commented:

I think if your policies and guidelines are in place then you won't have a problem at school board level because you have a guideline and a plan to follow...

Another said:

If that's not in place you keep revisiting and rehashing the same old thing...

It was also stated that:

...with expulsion if there is enough evidence then action will be taken. If procedures are not in place the board would ask that procedures be followed before the matter comes to the next board.

If procedures were in place, then a matter would not have to come to the next board meeting, as it could have been handled immediately. The data suggested that most of the school boards had minimum positive impact on the schools that they served. When asked about the positive impact of the board, a board member from one school said:

Too new to tell, working things are not in place.

A member from the same board said:

We just had a case that lasted a year; it's a struggle with these things.

A board member from another school said:

Available people are chosen to the board, not necessarily people who know what is going on. Not all members make a contribution on the board.

Comments from two other schools included:

There is no clear guidance, no clear document available for board members of our responsibilities toward the school and the board; apart from that the chairman does little to implement decisions made – where necessary for board involvement.

There was increasing concern on the part of board members that they were not performing.

There was also the debate on how far the board should involve itself in the management of the

school. The fact was that the principal and his or her team should manage and the board should govern – they were the governors, the governing body. The day-to-day matters were to be left to the principal and staff. The board could monitor that decisions taken were carried out, but it was in no position to micro-manage. In their favour, all boards realised the extent of their powers and were very careful not to go beyond their boundaries. When it came to defining functions and responsibilities, the responses showed that the board members were able to do so.

Responses included: approve budgets; approve school policies; make sure policies are adhered to, and make sure there are constitutions ... be responsible for legislative decisions; ensure a quality standard education.

But, when asked to explain whether the board was fulfilling its functions and responsibilities, the members were not too sure of that.

At school A, a board member responded:

We, i.e. the management committee of the school that serve on the board, normally handle all ... then bring things to the board. They give the final yea or nay.

A member from school B said:

The board does nothing. Involvement is in meetings only. Board members are not disinterested but there is nothing laid out for them to do.

A member from school E responded:

I think they should provide a list of things the governing body should address. Where is the standard? What is the benchmark? A manual will do very well for us...

The responses to the questionnaire were far more emphatic. These were responses from school board members to the following question: As you see it, is the school board fulfilling its functions and responsibilities?

School A:

As was mentioned in 2.4, I am not clear about what the functions and responsibilities are. However, I imagine that currently some mundane functions are taken care of. I have a sense that far more could be done.

School B:

To a certain extent, but while we are meeting only once a quarter, urgent matters cannot always be addressed immediately.

School C:

In principle the school board strives to carry out its functions effectively. Generally it is fairly well done; however, there is room for improvement.

I include these responses from School D:

It is meeting some of its functions but with training the members can be made influential.

No. Many of them do not attend meetings. They have no idea what is required of them.

Not at the moment, because our parents are not part of the school board structure.

School E:

I would not comment much, I am still new on the school board. In general I would say yes.

Responses from school E were all positive, but school board members used words like 'reasonably' and one said an outright 'no'. Three members were sure that the school board was fulfilling its functions.

It has become increasingly difficult to ignore the fact that school board members should have been provided with training in order to function effectively and efficiently. In this way they would also have developed the expertise that they lacked. Training would play a very important role in preparing board members for governance. In the present educational climate, where all role players need to have a say in the operation of the school, the school board should stand in the forefront, shouldering the responsibility by making sure that schools function optimally.

All board members were asked specifically whether the board needed training to prepare members to function effectively and efficiently. They were also asked to explain why they needed training and in which particular areas training was needed.

The responses revealed that there was an overwhelming need for training. Only two respondents felt that members were chosen for their knowledge and skills and so did not need much training. The rest of the school board members felt that training was an urgent need.

Responses revealed the following:

School A:

I do believe there is such a need – we as the school board operate within the confines of provincial and national legislations not to mention the church legislation and policy specific to our contents. We need to be educated within those bounds as well as proper procedures to follow within those bounds.

School B:

Yes, not all members fully understand the nature of their responsibility. They could be more effective with greater understanding of their respective roles.

School C:

Yes, to determine areas of responsibility and accountability.

School D:

They need training stating clearly their roles and responsibilities. The Conference should do the training. Seems the school board does not have power. It must be clarified then the board must act on it.

At the beginning of the year the incoming board needs to have a workshop on roles and responsibilities.

School E:

Maybe there should be an orientation for new board members of this year. I think we should have started with the orientation at the first meeting. There should be an orientation for the new board.

The responses were clearly in favour of formal training. However, the areas in which they needed training covered a number of aspects. I will list the areas as they were communicated: training in policies, constitution, government acts, meeting procedures, policy making, reading financial statements, use of modern technology, governance, how to guide the school in financial matters, job description, training in the SASA, governance pertaining to their role.

This is a long list, but would these same members be prepared to sacrifice time and effort in order to undergo this kind of training?

Responses to both the interviews and questionnaires indicated a willingness on the part of the majority of the school board members to undergo training. Once again, responses varied

because there were people from different walks of life fulfilling various other responsibilities besides serving on the school board. These were some of the responses:

School A:

Yes, I would. I think sessions of 2 to 3 hours a term would be manageable. Yes, whatever is necessary. I would. I feel I could donate between an hour and two hours per week to this training. Yes continuous training is important in order to keep up with new regulations and rules – one day a month.

School B:

Yes, it would be seen as a sacrifice rather for the betterment and enhancement of one's personal being.

Yes. This form of training in areas should be ongoing since there are regular changes and development in these areas. As much time as is needed.

Yes. Training once a year, especially at the end of the year in order to be prepared for the New Year.

School C:

Yes/No

Having served on the school board for over 10 years, I believe I have understood what is required, but there are always newcomers who have little or no experience.

School D:

Yes. Two hours a week.

One hour.

Yes, preferably on Sundays.

School E:

A day seminar or a few hours.

Yes. 2 hours

Yes. 2-4 hours per month

Yes. One or two hours a week.

It depends on individual to individual, being a person who is willing to learn and grow.
I would be willing to undergo continuous training.

Yes. 3 hours per month.

It was clear that the majority of school board members wanted training and were willing to sacrifice time and effort to this end.

The question of representation was a point of discussion on numerous occasions. Adequate representation plays an important role in the maintenance of a good balance of representatives and makes sure that all role players have a voice. Representation has become an increasingly important consideration in governance structures of schools. In recent years, there has been interest in who served on school boards, as well as in the election process. In the case of SDA schools, representation was spelt out in the constitution of the school. However, because SDA institutions are private schools, representation differed from that set out in the SASA. Board members had much to say concerning representation. Responses from each school board supported the question on representation.

School A:

The school constitution gives you the guidelines as to who should be on the board.

Learners should be represented and I do not mind more than 50% parents.

School C:

Not many people pitch for board meetings. There are representatives from each church but they do not pitch.

We are happy with three parents on the board.

Several comments from School B showed that all the board members were not happy with the representation.

The school board is well represented.

There are parents and learners on the school board.

The school board is not balanced. There are three parents on the school board but they do not attend.

There are five school representatives on the school board.

School D:

Why can't we consider getting more parents on the school board?

The president of the Conference was spoken to, to get pastors to the Boards, but nothing materialised.

School E:

I looked at the Act and it emphasised the representation of more parents than anyone else.

We do not know the constitution of the governing body.

We do have female representation.

We must attempt to get more females on the school board. Traditionally it was just males.

The questionnaires also yielded a variety of replies. Some felt that the representation was adequate, and others suggested more parent representation. Some responses were poles apart – a board member from school C responded:

Inadequate, ineffective, and disinterested,

whilst a board member from school E responded:

Adequate.

Sufficient representation of all relevant stakeholders on the school board.

In between, of course, there were a variety of other responses. Some were very positive, whilst others expressed less than total satisfaction with school board representation.

The school board members voiced several challenges that they felt were serious enough to mention. They said that their experience with the board was hampered by these challenges.

The following were the major challenges.

a. Poor attendance:

Members very often felt that attending the board meetings was a waste of time because very few members attended. In more than one instance, numerous votes were taken without a quorum in attendance. The board members who attended regularly were very concerned about the non-attendees and the effect it had on the efficient functioning of the school board.

b. Poor pastoral support:

This was a serious concern in all the schools, as most of the meetings had no pastoral attendance or not all the pastors were present.

One board member said: “The pastors are not interested; therefore the church members will not be interested in sending their children to the school.”

c. Board members were frustrated when it came to the employment of teachers. Often their recommendations were not accepted by the higher organisation.

d. Absence of policies and guidelines:

Board members felt that they were hampered by the absence of policies that would help them deal with matters pertaining to staff, discipline and some financial issues.

e. Constitution:

Board members stated categorically that they needed an updated constitution. A constitution had to be placed in each school board member’s hand. There were many loud voices that called for a constitution.

f. Accountability:

Finally, the board members took accountability very seriously. They realised that they were accountable to all the role players for their effective functioning as a school board and for making sure that the school operated as efficiently as possible. Because they took their accountability seriously, they saw the need for training that would help them function effectively. They wanted to experience the training in order to gain the expertise needed to govern the schools.

5.6.1 Summary

The data constructed here show that the majority of the school board members were aware of their shortcomings in their performance as school governors. They were willing to spend time undergoing training that would help them function effectively and efficiently.

The implications of this analysis will follow in Chapter 6, along with recommendations for the efficient and effective governance of SDA schools in South Africa.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS FOR DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY FOR ALL ROLE PLAYERS INVOLVED IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN SDA SCHOOLS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the main areas of concern that contributed to the lack of governance and management. There were very definite problems that showed a great need for citizenship and deliberation on the part of all role players. There was no doubt that the role players needed to be educated on how to engage in deliberative democracy and how to enjoy democratic citizenship as valued role players. Role players eyed each other with suspicion. There was a feeling that each group worked in its own interests, whilst some groups felt that they were left out because of the authoritarianism practised by the school board. There was no doubt, judging by what most people said, that the school board members should have functioned as democratic governors.

I therefore will discuss what each group said and what each group suggested should in fact happen to improve the situation. I will also show why there must be democratic citizenship in order for the school board members to function as democratic governors. In the final analysis, there must be deliberative democracy if the boards are to function effectively.

6.2 What do the parents say?

The parents highlighted several areas of grave concern. Woods (2005, 1) says that “the essence of democracy is how people govern themselves as opposed to how they are governed by others”. He states that issues related to democracy are “hotly debated issues”, because of meanings attached to the “nature of democratic societies, organisations and groups” (2005, 1). Woods (2005, 6) states further that, “by the empowerment of parents and students through resource related choices education has the potential ... to produce greater responsiveness and academic effectiveness”.

In both the interviews and the questionnaires, the parents were very concerned that they were not involved in the schools. In other words, they wanted the principals to ask them to do things for the schools. They mentioned specifically that parents have skills and expertise, but the schools did not want to involve them. Besides that, the parents wanted to see more parent representation on the school boards. A major concern was communication. The boards did not communicate with the parents, so they felt isolated and left out of the life of the school. The parents also indicated in no uncertain terms that they were not asked to give input into policies

and decision making. They interpreted this as a lack of transparency and put it down to the authoritarianism of the school board. The parents specifically mentioned that they had no input into policy and decision making, no participation in any discussions, and in fact would like to have questioned certain things, like the uniform policy, for example. It was also stated specifically that, because there was no parent input in some decisions and because the school itself was not open to suggestions from the parents, there was a lack of commitment on the part of the parents.

Woods (2005, 30) states that “[s]tudies... found that greater involvement in decision making is characteristic of higher producing schools”. Further, Woods (2005, 207) says that it is argued that those “who experience democracy are more engaged, committed and willing to give their potential to the organisation”. Woods (2005, 42) argues for inclusivity based on human status. He says that, “whilst teacher leadership is a matter for study and discussion, less prominent in the field of leadership is a focus on non-teaching staff, students and parents” (2005, 42). The situation was that parents wanted a say in the education of their children, they wanted to feel that they belonged and they wanted to have a say in the decision-making process. However, there was no interaction with and no communication from the school board. As parents they wanted a closer relationship, more contact and more parent involvement. They wanted the opportunity to voice their opinions. Gutmann and Thompson (2003, 36) say in relation to the process of deliberation that

decisions are more likely to be morally justifiable if decision-makers are required to offer justifications for policies to other people, including those who are both well informed and representative of citizens who will be most affected by the decisions.

I contend that the parents have a right to be aggrieved, since most of them have very little say in the education of their children except for sending their children to school. There is a definite need for democratic citizenship that will see all parents participate in the education of their children. At the moment many of them are mere onlookers and are only expected to participate whenever the school has a major fundraising drive or any activity that requires parents to make financial contributions. Gutmann and Thompson (2003, 46) put it very succinctly when they state that

...persons should be treated not merely as objects of legislation or as passive subjects to be ruled. They should be treated as political agents who take part in governance, directly or through their accountable representatives, by presenting and responding to reasons that would justify the laws under which they must live together.

What is of great significance was that the parents said that the board was not open to them and, furthermore, that they did not even know who served on the board. This was a clear indication

that the parents did not even have a say in the election process. In fact, several respondents suggested that the method of appointing members to the board should be revised. Young (2000, 22) states that

In the deliberative model democracy is a form of practical reason. Participants in the democratic process offer proposals for how best to solve problems or meet legitimate needs, and so on, and they present arguments through which they aim to persuade others to accept their proposals. Democratic process is primarily a discussion of problems, conflicts and claims of need of interest. Through dialogue others test and challenge these proposals and arguments.

The parents wanted the opportunity to discuss, debate, dialogue and challenge, not to satisfy their own agendas but to be part of the democratic process. Young (2000, 23) also points out that, in the inclusion model “a democratic decision is informatively legitimate only if all those affected by it are included in the process of discussion and decision-making”. As indicated earlier, parents stated categorically that they should be given the opportunity to voice their opinions and participate in the decision-making processes. This, in my opinion, was a major failure on the part of the schools. There needs to be a change of mind-set on the part of the education authorities of the SDA schools as far as parents are concerned. Parents do not want to “take over”. They want a say in the education of their children, they want to contribute, and they want democratic participation. Schools are obligated to provide the kind of interaction with parents that will add to good governance and the election of good governors.

There was no doubt that there was a need for democratic citizenship so that parents could participate in deliberative democracy and be made to feel a part of the school family. There was a major need for interaction and communication with the school board and the school so that the parents could feel free to make a commitment to the well-being of the school. The parents made several proposals on how this could be achieved.

6.2.1 What do parents propose should happen to achieve democratic citizenship?

The first proposal that came from the parents was that more parents should be appointed to the school board. Once this had been established, sub-committees should be appointed that included parents so that they could deal with or discuss policies affecting the learners and the parents. In this way the school would get parents to buy in to the idea of giving the school their full support. By including parents, the school would also benefit from the parents’ perspectives and input. The parents had stated that, if the Conference wanted the school to succeed, then more parents should be involved in the decision-making processes.

It was also proposed that, at the beginning of each year, the chairman should send a letter to each parent introducing himself and his team. Then, early in the first quarter, the principal

should arrange a meet-and-greet session during which the board, parents and teachers interact with one another.

Another strong proposal was that parents should be informed before each school board meeting is convened and that the board should allow parent input via a PTA representative who should serve on the board. In this way, all the parents' concerns expressed at a PTA meeting would be taken to the school board for discussion, as none of the concerns reached the school board under the present setup.

A further proposal was that, at the regular PTA meetings, the PTA representative who served on the school board should provide the parents with input concerning any decisions made by the board, particularly those that concerned the parents. Feedback should be provided particularly on those issues that parents sent to the board in the first place.

Another proposal that parents felt strongly about was that board members should attend all school events as far as possible. It was even suggested that school board members were welcomed by name so that the role players in the school were aware of the presence of school board members. The parents felt that the board was not interested in the school, and that their presence at events would prove their interest. While speaking to the parents, I sensed that there was a great measure of distrust, because many parents felt that school board did nothing for the school or their children, and in turn did not involve parents who were interested and in fact had the expertise to help the school in several areas.

Young (2000, 27) states that "people who live and work together face some problems, whether external or internal, which can best be addressed by some co-operative action". This is exactly what the parents wanted. They were aware of the many challenges in the field of education. They wanted to work with the school board and the school to address and find solutions to many of the problems, external or internal, facing education and the schools in particular.

Coupled with the previous proposal, the parents highlighted several ways in which parents and the school board could foster a closer working relationship, regular communication and interaction. Here they referred to a number of school events in particular. The events include, but are not limited to, campus clean-ups on a Sunday, the prize giving, school concerts, school fetes and initiatives like a big walk or a surf walk.

Since Seventh-day Adventist schools are church schools, it was proposed that church representatives who served on the school board provide regular reports to the entire congregation that serves a particular school. In this way all would know what was happening at

the school, and at the same time an interest in the school would be fostered. This could also serve as a recruiting strategy to get more SDA children to attend the school.

A final proposal, which came from the high schools in particular, was that a quarterly newspaper should be sent to all parents by from the school board, not from the school, in order to keep them in the “loop” with the progress of school as well as board matters that affected them. In this way there would be regular contact and regular dissemination of information, and the parents would feel that they were involved in the school. They would feel part of a democracy in which they could interact as individuals.

6.2.2 Summary

As far as the parents were concerned, I could see that they wanted to be included in the deliberations; they wanted to experience deliberative democracy in which they had a say in the education of their children. Many felt that they had expertise that could be utilised in the school, but the school was not interested. It would do a world of good if SDA school authorities not only noted the proposals, but were to implement them and involve the parents. Three aspects stood out, namely communication, interaction and relationship. With the application of these, parents would experience deliberation and democracy, and the much needed democratic citizenship would become a reality for all stakeholders.

6.3 What do the staff members say?

Staff members had some very serious misgivings about the boards that served their schools. Judging from the interviews and the questionnaires, staff members felt that they had very strong cases concerning their frustrations with the responsibilities of the boards that they said were never carried out. In many instances, staff members spoke very disparagingly about their boards. They had serious problems with certain board practices and referred to the authoritarianism practised by the board. The board often was referred to as “them”, and of course when they referred to themselves they spoke about “us”. Again, there clearly was a need for democratic citizenship and deliberative democracy. The teachers said that they were tired of the status quo and that things had to change. They taught in schools where they had very little say about what transpired in the school. School boards were for the favoured few, and the rest had no idea or knew very little of what was discussed in the school board meetings. What I see here is an opportunity for transformation – an opportunity for deliberative democracy – but it was the board that should have taken the initiative and made sure what their functions and responsibilities were. This would have helped them gain the confidence of the staff members. There was no doubt that something had to be done to get the staff to regain their confidence in

the school board. Of importance here was “who counts in decision making, and who is accountable and to whom” (Woods 2005, 13).

What the staff members were really saying was that their voices were not heard. My understanding was that they counted for nothing. It was even categorically stated that the administration of certain schools gave their school boards limited information so that certain things that occurred in the school were covered up and not exposed. Teachers encountered some of the very problems that parents encountered. There was a serious lack of communication between the staff and the school board. The boards were accused of non-transparency and that they were never available for consultation with staff members. These were serious allegations.

Another serious issue was that, in many instances, staff members did not trust their school boards. Staff at School A went so far as to say that their school board decided things for friends, referring to housing in particular. Another term that surfaced very often was “rubber-stamping”. It was of grave concern to staff members that their boards merely “rubber-stamped” what the administration of the school brought for discussion. Staff members also made an urgent call for change. Staff called for democratic decision making. But, because they lacked a sense of belonging, it was difficult for them to support the school one hundred percent. Many staff members indicated that to them it was just a job, and that they looked forward to the end of the teaching day when they could go home and put up their feet. They felt very little loyalty towards the school and the organisation. Staff members desired meaningful interaction with their board in order to build a close relationship so that they could feel appreciated and part of the institution. This would contribute towards a change in mind-set and a better working relationship.

On the other hand there were staff members who felt that the board was not empowered to interact with staff or even to act independently from the school administration. However, with a lack of training, no access to a constitution and a lack of expertise, school boards could really not do what was expected of them. Staff members felt that, in the absence of consultation and participation, the school board actually had no interest in the school. Woods (2005, 15) says that “participation has a positive impact on teachers too ... like the teacher who explained how much she appreciated having a say in what goes in the classroom and the school”. Among the staff members there was a strong case for democratic citizenship. Besides the obvious school leadership, all role players were leaders in their own right when it came to supporting the schools on the committees in which they served. I fully agree with Woods (2005, 17) when he says:

Democracy and democratic leadership are about who we are as social human beings, continually engaging in creative social action, influenced by and influencing others. This is what the development conception of democracy is most essentially about. Its centre of gravity is the flowering of the person – his or her positive attributes, capabilities and unfolding humanistic potential in a social order in which they are actively and self-consciously engaged.

To my mind, this is what we want to see when it comes to our role players being involved in our schools – “the flowering of the person – his or her positive attributes ... humanistic potential”. This will certainly see our institutions grow and prosper. The staff of the schools were well aware that the school boards did not know what their functions and responsibilities were. Some school boards were aware of some of them, but generally many individuals were not. The staff could even tell where the lack of expertise was and what kind of training was needed. Woods (2005, 28), speaking about transformational leadership, says that “people have to feel commitment and a sense of direction and worth to participate in change. Greater recognition, accordingly, is being given to the importance of passion and purpose”.

6.3.1 What do staff members propose should happen?

Staff members offered a number of suggestions that they felt would solve the crises they were experiencing with regard to their school boards.

The first was that school boards open their meetings to staff who were available to come in as observers. They then could get first-hand experience of what happened at school board meetings. The understanding, of course, was that they would be asked to leave when sensitive items were discussed so that only duly elected members were privy to the sensitive information.

There was also a strong suggestion that less power be given to the chairman and the school administration regarding the withholding of information, and furthermore that more information was made available to the board members. In this way it would not be the prerogative of the administration of the school what information was made available to the school board and what was withheld.

Staff members also felt very strongly that there had to be a better flow of information and that use had to be made of sub-committees. In this way more members could be co-opted to form these committees and information would then not be confined to an authoritarian school board that felt that a very limited amount of information should be disseminated to staff members. Another way of looking at this, said some staff members, was to decentralise the authority of the board when it came to including all the other role players in decision making.

The fact that many staff members had no idea who served on the school board and did not even have a clue to their names was a serious one. There was general consensus that the school board should make time to socialise with staff members. It would also add to the feeling of inclusivity that staff members would have liked to experience.

The aspect of transparency was another serious issue. This had led to distrust of the school board. To solve this, there had to be a report back to the staff immediately after the board meeting had taken place. The staff felt that they had to dig for information. If they were a part of the institution, then they should be part of sharing in the information, and decisions taken at the school boards, especially as it pertained to them, had to be shared. Participation and consultation were what they asked for.

The staff also felt that to solve the problem of “rubber-stamping” decisions already made by the administration committee, the school board had to think progressively, plan aggressively and also set goals. The staff members wanted to see this happening in their schools and they wanted to be part of the process. They called for a participatory style of management, with measurable strategic plans.

Staff members insisted on training for all board members. There was a lack of expertise and a lack of skilled people, therefore training was an absolute necessity. Staff members accused their board of inactivity, a lack of interest, that they did absolutely nothing and that they just attended meetings. Some did not even attend. Many staff members indicated that the board members did not know what their functions and responsibilities were. To solve this they had to go through sessions of training. Those sessions of training would prepare them to govern and not merely “rubber-stamp” decisions already made by the management committee.

Lack of attendance at meetings was another problem that the staff felt should be solved. The staff members felt that it should be mandatory for all pastors to attend school board meetings. Furthermore, there should be more church and Conference involvement in the school, and particularly in the board meetings. Another solution to boost attendance was to appoint parents who were concerned about the school and who were interested in the school. There somehow had to be a change in the thinking of the members, to the point that they had the interest of the school at heart.

With reference to the attendance problem, staff members wanted serious attention given to the method of electing board members. The observation was that the present method was flawed and that, in future, principals and staff members should be included in the election process. Adequate representation of all stakeholders was a burning need, which meant more parent

representation. Another suggested solution to non-attendance and apathy on the part of those elected would be to handpick members and make sure that they were progressive thinkers who would work in the interests of the school.

Furthermore, staff members felt that the school management or administration should not represent the teaching staff. A staff member chosen by the staff should represent them and their interests on the school board. With this kind of arrangement there would be a greater chance of transparency and openness. It would also form part of the democratic process to give staff members a say in the election of school board members. Staff members wanted to experience a citizenship of feeling needed, wanted, appreciated and part of the institution for which they worked. One of the ways to achieve this was the recommendation that staff members serve on the school board on a rotational basis. This would give each staff member an opportunity to serve on the school board at least once in his or her lifetime. This is democratic citizenship – where all staff ultimately are involved in the life of the school.

The last solution to solve the inclusivity problem would be to include more parents on the board. Some staff members felt that the parents would ‘gang up’ and control the school board and the school, but the majority stated that more parents on the school board would be an asset to the school, especially if they worked in the interest of seeing the school grow and prosper.

6.3.2 Summary

It was very obvious that staff members wanted a voice in the smooth functioning of their schools. They insisted on participation and consultation. Communication and transparency were also key aspects in final solutions to their problems. They wanted the authoritarianism of the school board nullified and, in its place, have meaningful interaction. This would also take care of the inactivity on the part of the board that staff members had become aware of. There was no doubt that those solutions would lead to deliberative democracy, in which the staff indeed would have a voice in the successful operation of the school. Interaction with the board, an active, vibrant, hardworking board, and a board that was up to date with all the policies and procedures were what staff members wanted to see. Finally, the staff members wanted to see training provided for the school board so that they could govern and not just attend meetings.

6.4 What do the principals say?

The principal is one of the main presiding officers of the school board. The principal is also the educational leader of the institution. As such, all the other role players look to the principal for guidance and expect the principal to take the lead. However, when it comes to governance, the principal has to work very closely with the school board and must of necessity be a democratic

leader if he or she expects the rest of the role players to participate, deliberate and interact meaningfully. Woods (2005, 8) states that:

Leadership in the deliberative model involves finding ways to facilitate and sustain deliberation, which includes addressing obstacles to free and equal participation in the discourse of deliberation. In order to enable active participation by all, diversity of cultures, views and values has to be respected by those in both formal and informal leadership positions.

Woods (2005, 9) further states that “democratic participation enhances the capacity to realise deeply embedded human potentialities”.

No wonder then that the principal of School F stated very clearly that not only did the school board members need training, but principals needed training as well. However, we were dealing with the school boards and there was clear evidence that the principals had a number of issues with their school boards. Working effectively with a school was not easy, and working conditions had been exacerbated by the many changes that the education system had undergone over the past twenty years or so. In the words of Harber (1998, 17), “What is required is not a return to a more competent and efficient form of authoritarianism but a new, democratic understanding of what effective schools and an effective education system look like”. Unless we have an effective education system, we are going to continue to have governance problems because an ineffective system results in ineffective schools. The governance structures will find it very difficult to function in an ineffective education system. Principals are expected to function effectively in the ineffective education system and they therefore encounter numerous problems with their school boards.

One of the major complaints from principals was that policies were not in place that could guide them as well as the school boards. In the absence of numerous policies, principals and boards were left to flounder in the dark. A lack of policies led to poor decision making, and this affected the rest of the role players. The absence of policies also made it difficult for the implementation of new, democratic governance structures.

Coupled with the absence of policies was the fact that the school boards did not fulfil their roles and responsibilities. This was of grave concern to the principals. Poor attendance and erratic support affected many meetings. One of the major reasons for this was that many parents lacked the expertise to make meaningful contributions on the school board. Harber (1998, 21) states that “nationally these seems to have been considerable parent apathy about elections to the governing bodies, which is ironic considering that legally they must be in the majority”. The fact is that very few parents served on the boards of the schools in this study. Very often, principals struggled to get a quorum for their meetings and had to phone members

and beg them to attend the meetings so that the board could transact business and have enough members to vote. Some principals went ahead and transacted business without a quorum.

Another major difficulty was that the school board had no identity. One of the principals stated categorically that the board felt that it did not belong. Members came because they were chosen and, more often than not, contributed very little by way of discussion. Very serious admissions had come to light. Principals stated that the school boards had not been empowered to do their work. All the principals agreed that functions and responsibilities were never communicated to the board members. No training had ever taken place and, naturally, no assessment of their performance as a board. Furthermore, board members had not received copies of constitutions and policies, and had never been involved in strategic planning for the schools. Harber (1998, 21) states that because “implementing the new democratic school governance structures will not be easy”, various departments are going all out to see that new structures are successful. Amongst others, “development of rules for the new governing bodies, ... running workshops on such matters as how to chair meetings and take minutes as well as programmes on conflict resolution and participative decision-making” (1998, 21) were initiatives implemented to prepare governors for their responsibilities. Up to now, the Education Department of the Seventh-day Adventist church has done nothing to prepare governors to govern their schools effectively and efficiently. The principals felt that their hands were tied because they were in no position to offer effective training. My contention is that principals should make a concerted effort to get the Conference’s Education Department to conduct the necessary workshops. As a democratic educational leader, the principal must of necessity take the lead to get his entire board trained so that they can govern effectively and efficiently. A good place to start would be to ensure that board members felt a part of and could identify with the institution. These members needed to experience democratic citizenship in order to identify with the institution. Once this had taken place, the training could follow.

6.4.1 What do principals propose should happen?

First of all, the principals suggested that in order to solve some of the problems the board members should think positively. Schools faced and are still facing tremendous financial challenges and the pressing question was, are funds available? Inevitably the answer is no, but the principals felt that this should not deter board members from finding other ways and means of solving their problems. Again, my solution would be to agree with the principals to get the boards to think positively. They should not allow what cannot be done to prevent them from doing what can be done. Parents, staff and principals have made repeated calls to the school board to assist with fundraising events and earmark those funds for special projects in the

school. The time has come for innovation on the part of the school. They should not continue to pursue the same events that bring in less and less funds for the schools coffers. Role players felt that boards did absolutely nothing. This was mentioned very often during the interviews and in the questionnaires. The staff and parents in particular felt that the school boards were doing far too little. Therefore, school boards should be proactive and not wait to see what the school administration was planning. They had to come up with innovative ideas and fund-raising suggestions and then assist with the implementation of those suggestions. In my experience, the boards certainly did too little and often left governance and management to the principal and staff.

As far as democratising a school is concerned, Welgemoed (1998, 37) suggests that “educators, education managers, administrators, governors, parents, learners and education and development, i.e. authority, community and economy interact with one another to form an interdependent whole”. In this way, they can exist as a “democracy”. In this way, too, there will be “a culture of teaching and learning”. She further stated that the way to go was “restructuring the school to include greater participation in decision making and power sharing among parents and staff through a programme of decentralisation of management (Welgemoed 1998, 39).

Welgemoed (1998) proposed a specific governance structure that involved parents’ participation in five portfolios. Parents with skills in these specific areas were appointed to committees chaired by members of the governing body. As a result, there was a marked improvement in the relationship between parents and the school (Welgemoed 1998, 39).

The data for my study indicated clearly that there was a need for the appointment of committees on which parents could serve and make their contributions. If this procedure was followed, parents would definitely feel part of the democratisation process.

Welgemoed (1998, 39) also proceeded to involve educators in the governance structures. According to my data, educators, i.e. staff, felt particularly aggrieved that they knew very little about what constituted the governance of the school and about the school board itself, and because they had very limited or even no participation in the governance structures. In many instances, administrators, instead of a duly elected staff member, represented the staff on the school board. According to Welgemoed (1995, 40), “it appeared that the restructuring process was relatively successful as it related to parents and educators”. They later saw the “value of including learners in the decision-making and management” process as well.

The inclusion of all the role players in the governance structures of SDA schools is imperative. The formation of committees will ease the pressure on the principal and the school board, because committees will be made up of role players, e.g. parents, staff and community members, who are skilled in specific areas. These areas could include “educational, finance, maintenance, promotional, discipline, fundraising, legal” (Welgemoed 1995, 39), and any other deemed necessary by the school administration and the school board. All role players would then enjoy their democratic rights in decision making and power sharing, and in this way they would be empowered to function effectively and efficiently.

It is extremely important that principals attend to the updating of constitutions, as well as policies, in the schools. Too many of the constitutions were outdated, and in a number of instances there were no policies to guide the schools. All role players need to bear in mind that policies help to guide the decision making and procedures in the school. However, policy making must be an inclusive process and, once voted, all must abide by it. The following policies, amongst others, were non-existent in most of the SDA schools in the Western Cape: Attendance Policy, Discipline Policy, Admissions Policy, Homework Policy, Special Needs Policy, Education Policy, Child Protection Policy, Guidance to the Board of Governors, and Health, Safety and Security Policy. This is sufficient reason why the principals and the school boards find it so difficult to function effectively and efficiently.

Another solution suggested by the principals that would overcome ineffectiveness and inefficiency was to appoint a school board to serve three years at a time. The principals stated that it was meaningless to appoint a board to serve a year at a time. The board would no sooner have started its work than it had to end its work for the year. The result was that very little was done, considering that the board met only four times for the year. Three years would give the school board an opportunity to accomplish much for the school. Changes take time and, if certain things were to be changed in the school, the management and board would need more than a year to effect these changes. Since people do not take easily to change, time would be an important factor. Welgemoed (1995, 46) said that “education in a democracy for a democracy is possible, but sustaining the democracy is a challenge”. She further averred that “stakeholder participation is critical to the successful transformation of our schools and country”.

A major problem was how to effect deliberative democracy among people who lacked the skills and expertise to discuss and make major decisions. Elster (1998:1) said that, largely under the influence of Jürgen Habermas, “the idea that democracy revolves around the transformation rather than simply the aggregation of preferences has become one of the major positions in democratic theory”. Parents, staff, principals and even the board members

themselves want transformation and innovation. But where do you start to effect this? The solution lies in training the board members. The members had no idea what their functions and responsibilities were. None of them was in possession of an updated constitution, and none of them had been involved in policy making. In order to empower the board there should be training, orientation, induction and assessment of the work done. The SASA makes it clear that board members must be trained in all aspects of governorship. Staff, parents, principals and board members themselves highlighted areas in which they needed training. Areas mentioned included finance, meeting procedures, policy making, functions and responsibilities, democratic leadership, some legal aspects of governance, communication skills, strategic planning, setting goals and aims, how to govern effectively, how to monitor certain aspects of school management, human relations and handling sensitive issues with confidentiality. This is an enormous task, but school board members were prepared to give up time for training. Training would solve a number of problems that principals were experiencing with their boards.

6.4.2 Summary

It was obvious that the principals needed training in democratic leadership themselves, before they could attend to the training of board members. The Conference's Education Department should give serious attention to this aspect. Furthermore, no time should be wasted, the empowerment of school board members should receive urgent attention, and they should be provided with the necessary training so that they can become agents for transformation and change at the schools they serve. In addition, the principal's burden will become much lighter, since the principal can now depend on the school board to govern and he and his team would be left to manage the school. If the governors were equipped to do their work effectively and efficiently, the principal, along with his team, would be left to manage the school effectively and efficiently, and there would be a far better working relationship between the school board and the management team.

6.5 What do school board members say?

Data from the interviews with and questionnaires completed by the school board members indicated very clearly that our school boards are in crisis. The members stated categorically that the absence of policies and guidelines made it very difficult to govern. This was discussed in the section pertaining to principals. Poor attendance and a lack of parents on the school board made it very difficult to transact business. Yet all stakeholders should be involved. Harber (1998, 20-21), citing the Department of Education, says that "[a] school governance

structure should involve all stakeholder groups, in active and responsible roles, encourage tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision making". This is not always possible where members fail to attend, where they do not know their roles and responsibilities, and where they are not really given the opportunity to interact effectively with all stakeholders. It therefore is important that policies, guidelines and a constitution are provided for all board members.

Another cry from the boards was that they were not really involved in decision making, but merely had to vote on decisions made by the management committee. According to some role players, the board was made out to be inadequate because, under certain instances, they took so long to implement decisions. However, it came to light at School F that the higher organisation had failed to act timeously on some decisions made by the school board and, in certain instances, the school experienced delays of up to one year. As far as decision making goes, when the school board meets, it and the management of the school should entertain discussion by allowing input by various board members. After discussion and careful deliberation, a vote should be taken. School board members should not be expected to vote on decisions made by management without in-depth discussion. Input from all stakeholders is important in democratic participation. The board should also identify people to deal with specific problems and set a time frame for a report back on how the issue in question was dealt with.

Members were concerned that if they were expected to function effectively and efficiently, they would need training in all aspects of school governance. Some were willing to undergo continuous training, while others asked for workshops and seminars. It is clear that board members want help; they want training so that they could carry out their governance functions. The Education Department of the Conference should plan for this training at the beginning of each year, depending on the needs of the school board. If the board is appointed for three years, there can be interim workshops to update governors on new or the latest trends in school governance.

Besides training, school board members also questioned the method of appointment to the school board. There is a distinct difference between appointing members to a primary school board compared to that of a high school board. Board members requested that appointments to the school board should follow a democratic process in which all stakeholders are involved. The Education Department of the Conference would do well to study the procedures followed by the National Department of Education. Stakeholders want a say in this process, therefore the necessary structures should be put in place to cater for this democratic process. If a democratic process is followed, the board would feel part of the school, whereas they felt that they did not

belong, which made it very difficult to take ownership of the schools where they served. Without deliberative democracy, the stakeholders found it very difficult to carry out their responsibilities which they were not aware of in the first place. In his discussion of “integration towards human capacities”, Woods (2005, 39) states that this

tends to be associated with a functional approach to human capacities emphasizing the valuing of expertise and development of people who can most benefit the organisation, and developing people potential.

In the process of training, people’s capacities and expertise must be taken into consideration. Training should tend towards developing the potential of the member so that the member can indeed benefit the organisation, or in this case the school when serving as a board member. Another way to solve the “lack of knowledge of functions and responsibilities” problem is to prepare a school board manual that contains everything that will prepare a member to govern. To solve the attendance problem, it may be wise to start on time and end on time. School board members have indicated that school board meetings start late and end late, and that no one offers an explanation for this. The result was that many just stayed away from school board meetings. Punctuality is an important value that must be inculcated in every member.

6.5.1 What do school board members propose should happen?

During the interviews, and as expressed in the questionnaires, school board members offered a number of solutions in addition to those already mentioned. They were sure that they could function effectively and efficiently if a number of things were put into operation.

Board members were very vociferous in the interviews and quite outspoken in the questionnaires when they suggested solutions to meet what was lacking in their governance. In her discussion on democratic legitimacy Benhabib (1996, 67) refers to three public goods that “complex modern democratic societies” need to secure. These are “legitimacy, economic welfare, and a viable sense of collective identity”. She asserts that “not attaining one or a combination thereof would cause problems in the functioning of these societies such as to throw them in crises” (Benhabib 1996, 67). Education has experienced these kind of crises because of the great disparity between the various groups that make up the population of South Africa. Schools became sites of struggle, and the SASA was promulgated as part of the effort to solve the problems. However, as long as there is a great disparity between the schools in urban and in rural areas, we are going to be faced with educational crises. In a democratic country, people expect that everything should be equal, but it will take many more years to wipe out the inequality experienced in the past. For now we will have to make do with what we have and at least do it to the best of our ability. Governance in schools is one such thing that

can work for the good of the school. All stakeholders must participate in the democratic process and school boards must be empowered to do their work effectively and efficiently.

Benhabib (2002, 169) argues that:

democracy and citizenship can co-exist, because the former frames education as a process of active consent and participation. Whereas the latter designates the sense of belonging people demonstrate when socialised into educative practises. Action participation and belonging are both conceptually connected to some form of engagement in relation to someone else...

What is needed at school board level are people in conversation, people who are willing to show their belonging to by engaging in active debate and strengthening their attachment to others and to the school. Again, Benhabib (2002, 162) avers that “educating people to be democratic citizens involves making them aware of the right to political participation, the right to hold certain offices and perform certain tasks, and the right to deliberate and decide upon certain question”. This is what is needed by school boards to help them function effectively and efficiently.

I now turn to the solutions proposed by the school board members. The school board members proposed a number of solutions that will help them to function more effectively and efficiently.

They have to overcome a legacy, as pointed out by Welgemoed (1998, 38). She states:

Despite the inequalities, colonial influences were evident in most schools, whether advantaged or disadvantaged, and authoritarian hierarchies and structures existed. Learners certainly did not have much to say in school matters. ... participation, power-sharing and consultation in decision-making were rare. Apartheid led to breakdown in relations between learners, parents, educators, education managers and authorities, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Conflicting attitudes and values emerged. Disrespect and distrust marred relationships ... education and development of skills suffered, and a culture of violence, destruction and resistance prevailed instead of a culture of teaching and learning.

The fact of the matter is that not much has changed. Violence, stabbings, killing and vandalism still prevail. It is in this context that our school boards must live and work.

Therefore, the first change that the board members suggested was that more aspects relating to school programmes should be discussed at the school board meetings, rather than routine matters that could be handled by the school management. Some members put time and effort into attending school board meetings, only to find, as one board member put it, that “it is a waste of time”.

School board members were frustrated because of a lack of policies, guidelines and a constitution. They stated that the higher organisation was not very effective in the function that it carried out with regard to the board. Board members felt aggrieved when, after making a

decision, they were told that they were wrong because a particular procedure was not followed. They would have preferred that the procedures to be followed when handling certain issues were explained to them before they were called upon to handle them. The expulsion of a learner was a case in point. Furthermore, members wanted a greater say in matters pertaining to the school instead of being dictated to by the higher organisation. Their argument was that they were appointed to a position, given a job to do, given no training to do the job, then continually told how to do it, or simply asked to sit back while the higher organisation did the job. They felt inadequate and also side-lined. When it came to decision making they were merely asked to rubber-stamp. Democracy does not operate in this way. Democracy means that you are an integral part of the school and that you participate meaningfully and also deliberate meaningfully as a democratic citizen.

The school board members felt very strongly that they needed training in all aspects of governorship. This would equip them with skills to function intelligently whenever meetings were called. Once they had received the training and were equipped to do the job, they would feel more adequate to participate. To solve the problem of time wasting, the board members wanted school board minutes and financial reports handed to them well before the meeting. They would then have the opportunity to study the documents and interact meaningfully at the duly called meetings. The board members further indicated that more parents were needed on the school boards. By adding more parents, the level of involvement in school governance would increase because there were many parents who were willing to serve. At the same time, to solve the problem of inactivity, it was mooted the members should be handpicked if those elected gave no or very limited input. Of course all members were to undergo training and would then be expected to participate and deliberate intelligently. There would be greater participation because stakeholders would see their participation as their democratic right. To solve the problem of large boards, it was suggested that all school boards be reduced to smaller boards and, if needs be, that the chairman could co-op people with expertise in specific areas.

Another serious problem was that, although the majority of school board members belonged to the SDA church, many of them did not have a clue of the Adventist Philosophy of Education. There therefore was a great need to educate board members about SDA education, its philosophy and the operation of SDA schools.

Board members also mentioned that no one checked on compliance with decisions that were made. Members should be appointed to monitor and report back to the board, especially if certain things voted by the board were to take place. A smaller board would solve the problems of attendance, punctuation and general governorship. What was significant was the fact that

board members showed very little accountability. This is a direct result of poor practices, lack of education, not knowing what is going on, not knowing what to do, and not knowing how to carry out their functions and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. One cannot blame the board members for the position in which they find themselves. They indicated very clearly that they were willing to undergo training, but that those in authority were too slow to set the wheels in motion that would see the training implemented. These were the people's stories, their narratives, told to the best of their ability in the hope that the authorities would respond and provide the necessary training.

Elster (1998, 8) defines deliberative democracy as “collective decisions made with the participation of all who will be affected by the decision or their representative: and this is the democratic part. ... It includes decision making by means of arguments offered by and to participants who are committed to values of rationality and impartiality: this is the deliberative part”. I offer this explanation because the board members had stated that they wanted to be more involved in democratic deliberation. They felt that this would encourage ownership and accountability. The boards were also suffering an identity crisis, they needed a sense of belonging to and they wanted to take ownership of the schools that they governed, but a democratic process had to be pursued in which they could achieve their citizenship and feel a worthy part of the institution; a place that they could call home.

Furthermore, they also wanted to be involved in drawing up policies, provided all stakeholders were represented. To enhance the relationship between the school board and other stakeholders, the board suggested more open communication. There would then be a greater willingness for change and, with more expertise on the board, there would be more innovative ideas for the school.

Last but not least, all SDA schools face low enrolments. This situation needed urgent attention. One way to assist was for all board members to carry out publicity and marketing functions. The rationale was that, if the board was functioning effectively, it could go out and advertise the school. It was hoped that this would boost enrolment.

6.5.2 Summary

The abovementioned proposals and solutions came from the board members themselves. It is never easy to look at yourself, become critical of yourself and then correct what is causing the criticism. This was done very effectively by the board members. It is now up to the authorities to work at helping the boards to become effective and efficient. What counts in the board members' favour is that, through training, they can become fully aware of their functions and

responsibilities. During this time they will also discover where their lack of expertise lies. A concerted effort could then be made to train them, first in areas where they need the most help, and later in other areas that cause unpleasantness and stress. They were willing to sacrifice time and effort for the necessary training. Principals, education directors and the Conference itself should take the opportunity to prepare for an extensive training session or sessions at the start of each school year.

I have explained the data provided by each of the stakeholders, principals, parents, staff members and school board members. All concur that there were major concerns that had to be addressed as far as the school boards were concerned. All have spelt out what those concerns are and the way they see it and experience them. They also offered solutions and very strong recommendations of what could be done to remedy the situation. All wanted to see well-functioning, effective and efficient boards, and this can only be achieved if all the role players work together by adopting a democratic approach in which all can have an equal say in the governance of the schools.

I will now provide a summary of my findings on South African SDA schools in the Western Cape and then look at similarities in SDA schools in certain parts of the USA.

6.6 A summary of the findings in some South African SDA schools in the Western Cape in relation to findings in SDA schools in certain parts of the United States

6.6.1 Areas of concern

Staff, principals, parents and school boards highlighted several areas of grave concern. These areas have affected the effective and efficient functioning of the school boards in SDA schools in the Western Cape. What was experienced and clearly voiced by the various respondents has clearly shown that, unless all schools move towards well-articulated democratic practices in all boards, the schools will not prosper and grow. There is no doubt that there is an urgent need for deliberative practices, coupled with citizenship. Voices that have been excluded, particularly those of parents in all schools and learners in high schools, must be given their democratic right to participate. The only way in which democratic practices can be enhanced in our SDA schools is if all role players are given the opportunity to participate in educational governance. If there is to be genuine nation building through education it will constitute a complete break with the past, and then all must be given a chance to participate in the governance structures of our schools. Of course we understand that this will be done through representation, and that a democratic process would be followed in electing the representatives. We need to give the marginalised an opportunity to participate. Failing that we will never be democratically strong

and our school will slump to below the mediocre. With governance at an all-time low, SDA schools cannot afford to leave the situation as business as usual, hence the solutions and recommendations. Many areas of concern were identified. I would like to highlight what I see as the most important areas. These are: representation; functions and responsibilities; training; communication; conference and pastoral support; method of election; relationships; involvement; documentation; policies, constitution, roles and responsibilities; transparency; and co-opting expertise.

I have discussed the above concerns at length, including solutions and recommendations offered by the various stakeholders in the SDA schools in the Western Cape. However, since the SDA church is a worldwide organisation and has schools, colleges and universities all over the world, I would like to refer to similar problems experienced by some of the SDA schools in three different parts of the USA. Our school system is particularly strong in the USA in a division known as the North American Division. I referred to the world divisions earlier in this dissertation. Whilst looking at our schools in the Western Cape, I thought I would do some investigating further afield to see if any of our other schools, in other parts of the world, experience the same problems with school governance. I would like to refer to three specific parts of the USA where our SDA schools experienced the same problems.

6.6.2 Potomac Conference, Virginia

Dr Clarence Dunbedin, Associate Superintendent of Education for the Potomac Conference of SDA in Stanton, Virginia, conducted an open-ended survey on what teachers thought about how their boards functioned. According to Dr Dunbedin, information and ideas were shared by a random group of teachers, principals, superintendents, board members and one conference president. He states that “suggestions came directly from teachers’ experiences” (Dunbedin, 1999, 10). The most frequently listed concerns were as follows:

- a. Poor communication skills that affect interaction between board members and education employees;
- b. Inaccurate understanding of their board member role;
- c. Poor selection process; and
- d. Lack of in-service education for board members (Dunbedin 1999, 11).

The above concerns were identical to those highlighted by the respondents in the research conducted in the Western Cape SDA schools. Dunbedin (1999, 10-14) discussed each of the above concerns as reported in his open-ended survey of the respondents. The observations by

Dr Dunbedin's respondents were similar to that of the respondents who participated in my interviews and questionnaires. I will discuss each very briefly in order to show the similarity.

6.6.2.1 Poor communication skills and understanding their role

The teachers complained that board members listened to parents and students and then discussed the matters on the board before verifying the accuracy of the reports with the teachers concerned. They indicated that the board members did not know the teachers and should pay a visit to their classrooms. Furthermore, the teachers felt very strongly about the fact that they were not included in decision making (Dunbedin 1999, 11-12). Similarly, complaints from parents and teachers in the schools in the Western Cape were that board members did not know them, they were not careful with confidential matters discussed on the board, and board members should come to visit the schools and sit in the classrooms in order to see what was happening in the schools. They made it quite clear that board members had no idea what their functions and responsibilities were. Dunbedin (1999, 11) suggested that, to solve the problem, "boards should receive regular in-service orientation to help them understand their roles... acquaint themselves with education codes and policies ... not to mismanage but to govern".

6.6.2.2 Selection process

Dunbedin (1999, 12) stated that educators were "concerned about the process for identifying and selecting potential board members". Respondents in the SDA schools in Western Cape expressed the same concerns and called for change to be effected immediately. Both teachers and principals stated that the selection process in SDA schools in the Western Cape was flawed, and that the wrong people were appointing as members of school boards. Dunbedin (1999, 12) suggested that, "to improve the selection process, a job description be used as the basis for identifying possible candidates". He stated further that "a brief summary of the candidate's talents and interests should be made available".

6.6.2.3 In-service opportunities for board members

Dunbedin (1999, 13) suggested that boards meet more frequently. Time could be spent on boardmanship to enlarge the members' knowledge. At the same time, board members should be supplied with reading materials like specific journals articles, for example to help them keep abreast of what was happening in education and so improve their boardmanship.

6.6.2.4 Inaccurate understanding of their role

Dunbedin (1999, 11) stated that “many teachers strongly believed that board members do not understand what a board is supposed to do”. The same observation was made about the Western Cape school boards in this study. This brings me to the second Conference in the USA that I would like to mention.

6.6.3 Southern Union Conference, Georgia

Higgs and Jackson (2004, 20-21) state that “Adventist elementary and secondary institutions are operated by boards with five basic areas of responsibility. They are: curriculum implementation; personnel support; institutional finance; physical plant and public relations”. They were also concerned about governance training, so a questionnaire was sent to school board members of Adventist day academies in the Southern Union Conference in Georgia, USA, to request their opinions concerning board governance training, ... when asked about governance training, here is how they responded. Before I indicate their responses, I need to say that their replies were identical to the ones that I received from the school board members in SDA schools in the Western Cape when faced with the same questions. Responses from board members in Georgia, USA included: they (the school board members) just come in and assume a position; it (governance training) is one of the weaker links of our academies; the older ones train the younger ones; there is no attention to governance training... wrong decisions and confusion and misunderstanding result (Higgs and Jackson 2004).

As indicated by the board members of the SDA schools in the Western Cape, it takes more than a year to get used to the responsibilities of the board. It is for this reason that there is a call for a two- or three-year tenure period.

The Southern Union Conference in Georgia indicated that there should be a programme of governance training. All new members would be required to attend and, at the same time, it would serve as a refresher course for experienced members. I would say that this is absolutely necessary if we want our boards to function effectively and efficiently.

Survey respondents in the Southern Union Conference indicated several reasons for the need for governance training. According to Higgs and Jackson (2004, 21), these were:

- a. To reduce confusion about role definitions, functions, and responsibilities of administrators as contrasted with those of the board;

- b. To provide board members with general knowledge about their legal responsibilities for operating the school; and
- c. To provide a system of accountability.

The third example of overseas SDA institutions is that of the Lake Union Conference in Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA.

6.6.4 Lake Union Conference

The office of education had arranged a teachers' convention for schools in the Union. One of the exercises was to divide into groups and discuss specific questions. The question for group four was, "What procedures would you suggest to create a positive relationship between the administrator and the board?" According to Higgs and Jackson (2004, 21) said that the recommendation that received top priority was "training sessions to delineate responsibilities." There was a great need to give board members a job description. In the case of this study, respondents to the interviews and questionnaires in SDA schools in the Western Cape mentioned on a number of occasions that school board members did not know what to do and that they needed a job description.

Another area of concern in SDA schools in the Western Cape was that of accountability of school boards. Coupled with accountability was whether boards did a self-assessment or a self-evaluation to monitor their own performance. In SDA schools in the Western Cape, there were no assessment instruments available so none of the boards ever did a self-assessment or a self-evaluation, neither were they ever assessed by the SDA Department of Education. With regard to accountability, according to Higgs and Jackson (2004, 22) "data received indicated that only a small percentage of boards conducted any form of assessment". I concur with Higgs and Jackson (2004) when they state that evaluation and assessment of boards is imperative. They state the following reasons:

1. To enhance the credibility of the board;
2. To identify strengths and weaknesses;
3. To improve goal settings and specific areas of improvement; and
4. To keep the public and the board member better informed about the board's progress in achieving its goals (Higgs and Jackson 2004, 21-22).

6.6.5 Summary

I find it of great significance that SDA school boards in other parts of the world, particularly in some SDA Conferences in the USA, are experiencing the same problems that SDA schools

boards are experiencing in the Western Cape, South Africa. A question that one may well ask is whether this is confined to SDA schools only. Again, I have a hunch that many of these problems are endemic to boards of state and other schools as well. Unfortunately, this research does not include looking at schools outside of the SDA church. However, it might be a good idea to investigate how stakeholders outside of the SDA school system experience their school boards. Furthermore, it would pay the SDA schools in the Western Cape and possibly in other parts of the world to take a serious look at their school boards and determine how stakeholders experience their school boards. At the same time, I trust that the solutions and recommendations offered in this dissertation will provide a turning point in the life of each SDA school board in the Western Cape as they apply to their situation. I now turn to a discussion of deliberative democratic school governance and effective governance in SDA schools in the Western Cape.

6.7 Deliberative democratic school governance

6.7.1 Introduction

As mentioned earlier, several notable changes took place in South Africa with the advent of democracy in 1994, not the least of which was in the area of education. Not only did the constitution guarantee education for all, but the promulgation of the South African Schools Act guaranteed democratic deliberative participation for all stakeholders via governance structures in all schools. When the new governance structures came into force, it was not easy for many principals, who controlled their schools in an autocratic fashion. It appears that this authoritarianism was carried over into many school boards. In the case of SDA schools in the Western Cape, many teachers and parents stated categorically that the school boards operated in a very exclusive manner. Teachers mentioned that if you served on the school board you were counted among the elite. When referring to the school board, the teachers spoke about “them” and “us”. The teachers therefore felt that they had no voice. Parents felt that they had no voice as well, and admitted they had no idea who served on the school board, and that more parents should be appointed to the school board instead of so many school personnel. Certain principals admitted that they feared that, if more parents were elected to the board, they would “take over”. Again, one gets the feeling that certain principals were afraid that they would lose control of the board and the school. Certain high school principals stated that allowing learners on the board would be a grave mistake. It was stated that the learners were too immature, could not keep confidences and would not be able to make a meaningful contribution on the board. It was clear that, when it came to representation, learners, parents and teachers were not well

represented, thus depriving them of an effective, deliberative democratic voice on the school board.

6.7.2 What is deliberative democratic school governance?

Mabovula (2008, 302) says that:

Deliberative democratic school governance (DDSG) will be a self-renewal strategy to be managed collaboratively on a consensual basis by all members of school governance. It will need to be carefully planned and implemented in order to benefit all stakeholders. It is an educational strategy that is intended to change beliefs, attitudes and values of school governance stakeholders so that they can better adapt to change. Its long-term goal will be to increase the school governance capacity for self-revitalisation, increase its stakeholder ability to adapt to new conditions, solve problems and create a culture that focuses on the continuous growth of the schooling system as a whole.

Elster (1998, 1) says that “[t]he idea of deliberative democracy, or decision making by discussion among free and equal citizens, is having a revival”. He further states that “under the influence of Jürgen Habermas, the idea that democracy revolves around the transformation rather than simply the aggregation of preferences has become one of the major positions in democratic theory”.

Gutmann and Thompson (2003, 31) state that “theories of deliberative democracy consist of a set of principles that are intended to establish fair terms of political co-operation in a democratic society”. It is clear from these definitions that there is a need for deliberative democracy in SDA school boards in the Western Cape.

6.7.3 Democratic participation

It is clear that all stakeholder groups must participate in the schooling system by way of governance structures. However, in the case of the stakeholder groups in SDA schools in the Western Cape, many had no say in decision making, policy making and other matters affecting the learners, school, teachers and parents. Gutmann and Thompson (2003, 34) state categorically that “we cannot justify coercive laws to persons who had no share in making them”. Stakeholder groups feel that they are not part of the system, not part of the governance structure and therefore do not belong. Democratic citizenship therefore is needed. This means that stakeholder groups need to be educated on how to engage and how to belong. Waghid (2010, 21) posits that “educating people to be democratic citizens involves making them aware of the right of political participation, the right to hold certain office and perform certain tasks, and the right to deliberate and decide upon certain questions”. Waghid contends that people must be educated so that they can take their rightful place in society. They must realise that

they cannot be excluded from “holding certain positions or performing certain tasks” (Waghid 2010, 21). This education process should help people realise the inclusivity that exists in the governance structures. They must experience what it is like to work with people of different cultures, creeds, religious persuasions and sex. Those things should not prevent people from participating as democratic citizens. They must also realise that being different does not exclude one from participating with others. Sometimes they must agree to disagree. which is all part of the deliberative process. It is during the educating and training sessions that individuals learn to discuss, deliberate and come to decisions, and that some things often are agreed upon by consensus irrespective of personal feeling. When individuals in governance go through this process of education they also realise their rights as citizens. This makes it easier for them to deliberate and participate in governance structures. I therefore argue very strongly that school boards in the SDA school system should engage in deliberative democratic practices, as this will ensure participation by all, inclusion of all and treating one another as equals. In other words, all will be guaranteed equality of voice. Waghid (2014, 29) states that “democratic education is to give voice ... rather than being included as voiceless participants in a democratic activity”. Waghid (2014, 30) also confirms Ranci re’s contention that “equality relates to the capacity of everyone to speak and listen”. In other words, every person therefore has an equal opportunity to speak, thereby exercising the democratic right to be heard. Equality, however, does not come as a result of waiting for it, but equality is confirmed by participation and intervention. The Ranci rian conception is that, like equality, freedom is not something that people make for others, but that the liberatory actions come as a result of equality of intelligence (Waghid 2014). In other words, democratic deliberation gives people the freedom to express themselves freely. However, this is achieved by giving a voice to the voiceless. This freedom means that “they can see and think for themselves and are not dependent upon others who claim that they can see and think for them” (Waghid 2014, 32). This is particularly true of school board members, who just attend meetings to vote, not to say a word, and only rubber-stamp as it were, leaving all the speaking to those whom they think are more intelligent. Waghid (2014, 33) puts it very cogently when he says that “democratic education is about people doing things for themselves, which places them in a position to be emancipated in the name of equality”. That is why I argue for education and training – capacity building for all school board members.

6.7.4 Summary

All who serve as governors should be given an equal opportunity to deliberate, participate, and to voice concerns and opinions without feeling intimidated or made to feel out of place.

Mabovula (2009, 221) says that the “basic concept is that each school governance individual is to be treated equally, and with due regard to his/her actual personal preferences”. According to Mabovula (2009, 222):

Calls for the inclusion of individuals and/or groups who will be affected by the policy decision under consideration as an important and necessary requirement to achieve true democratic legitimacy. The conditions of inclusion entail the interaction among participants in a democratic decision-making process in which people hold one another accountable.

I cannot overemphasise the aspect of education and training for school governors to help them realise that it is their right to participate and to deliberate democratically. These rights are enshrined in the constitution and apply to all citizens.

I conclude this chapter with insights from Waghid (2010, 21):

democratic citizenship education is the notion of educating people about the right to deliberate and decide on certain questions. ... We should recognize the right of people capable of speech and action to be participants in the moral conversation, whereby they should have the same rights to various speech acts, to initiate new topics and to ask for justification of the presuppositions of the conversation.

Waghid (2010, 21) further concurs that “only then do people become participants in an educative process underpinned by democratic citizenship”.

Administrators of SDA schools in the Western Cape, as well as officers involved in SDA education, would do well to follow the principles contained in deliberative democratic citizenship. In this way, participants in the governance structures will receive the necessary education to govern effectively and efficiently. The end result will be seen in excellent SDA schools in the Western Cape.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE IN SDA SCHOOLS AND THE RELEVANCE FOR RESEARCH

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 6 I dealt with major areas of concern about school governance, as highlighted by the staff, principals, parents and school board members. I also referred to certain parts of the USA where SDA schools were experiencing similar challenges. I then discussed deliberative democratic school governance and concluded that it was a definite need in SDA schools in South Africa, particularly in the Western Cape, if school governance were to be carried out effectively and efficiently. I argued that all stakeholders should participate and deliberate as democratic citizens if effective school governance was to succeed in SDA schools. However, I make a strong case, based on my findings, for the training of all stakeholders and awareness of their functions and responsibilities by all stakeholders involved in school governance. This concluding chapter aims to demonstrate the implications for effective and efficient school governance. It will also offer the contribution of this study to research; respond to potential criticism; and offer possibilities for future research. I also reflect on my journey of educational research as I dealt with schools. Before I discuss the points just mentioned, let me offer a summary of the research by consolidating the core findings and arguments.

7.2 A summary of and foundation for the dissertation

In the foregoing chapters of this dissertation I explored the school board practices of some of the schools operated by the SDA church in South Africa. As evidenced by the study, the underlying causes, which include a lack of capacity-building programmes and training, have contributed to poor and ineffective school governance. The study was driven by the need to explore, gain insight into and determine the nature and extent of the problems experienced by the school boards. In order to validate my assumption regarding the school boards, I endeavoured to answer two sets of questions. Set one: What is the nature and extent of the problems experienced by the school boards? What can be done to help the school boards play a more active role in school governance? What kind of training will equip school boards to function more effectively?

The first argument emanates from these general questions: existing problems experienced by school boards in SDA schools, primarily a lack of capacity-building programmes and training, have contributed to poor and ineffective school governance.

Set two: Are the school board members willing to undergo training in areas where they lack expertise? Are they willing to sacrifice time for continuous training in order to gain the expertise that they lack, and so equip themselves to carry out, effectively and efficiently, the functions and responsibilities of a school board member?

The second argument is that school board members are willing to sacrifice time for continuous training in order to gain the expertise that they lack, and so equip themselves to carry out their functions and responsibilities.

To answer the above questions, and in support of my arguments, I provided a global view of school boards in Chapter 2. I included the history of school governance as it relates to other countries as well as to South Africa. I further sketched the change that occurred in school governance worldwide, including in countries like the USA, England, Australia and Canada, as well as those in self-governing schools. I also discussed the history of school governance in South Africa and how decentralisation was effected in 1996. I included a brief history of education in SDA schools and the early beginnings of SDA education South Africa. This was followed by a discussion of SDA schools and their school boards. The history was important because school boards are not a new innovation in the SDA schools. I argued, however, that not all school boards functioned optimally. I further argued that their effectiveness varied.

Taking the above considerations into account, in Chapter 3 I discussed the SDA education system and the governance of its schools. I discussed what the system entails and the fact that it is a worldwide system. At this stage I referred to all the schools specifically included in this study, as well as to their constitutions, which specifically detail the election process, composition and responsibilities of the school board. What was of significance, though, was that some of the constitutions were badly outdated, others lacked important information and some did not spell out the functions and responsibilities clearly. There was an obvious lack as far as the constitutions were concerned. However, during my investigation, draft copies of a model constitution were sent to all SDA schools. It was evident that the Education Department of the SDA church had played its part by communicating the necessary information to the schools, but some of the schools had not applied the policies relating to governing bodies. My contention is that the officers of the SDA Education Department have to make sure that the necessary governance structures and capacity-building programmes are in place.

Chapter 4 explored the existing problems in SDA school boards, using the interpretive paradigm that guides this dissertation. There thus was a search for meaning, and a search for reasons why the SDA school boards were not functioning optimally. I tried to understand the

voices of the various stakeholders with the use of narrative inquiry. I tried to discover reasons for poor governance in this way. So, through the eyes of each participant's experiences I could construct data from the questionnaires and interviews. I agree with Pring (2000, 98) that "to understand particular events one must see things from the point of view of the participants or of the people who are involved in how they interpret events ...". I then discussed the sample of SDA schools used in the study, as well as the participants. I also asked the principals specific questions relating to governance, constitutions and the SASA. I further discussed aspects of the arguments of this study and how plausible they were in relation to validity and reliability.

In Chapter 5 I analysed all the data constructed from the interviews and questionnaires. Of significance was the fact that the various stakeholders faced similar problems in their respective schools. Very often, the various groups of stakeholders representing their respective schools gave almost identical responses. This is significant, since none of the groups of stakeholders was in contact with one another. In my view, each school should take responsibility for its own governance. Principals should agitate the higher organisation for assistance and support for the training of governors. I further discovered that, in many cases, staff members were at loggerheads with their boards and even with the administration of their schools because of the lack of information coming from school board meetings. The lack of dissemination of information from the boards was done in a very subtle way, to give the impression that all was well, whilst underneath the calm waves was a boiling mass ready to explode. What was also startling was that staff members and parents regarded the school board in terms of "them" and "us", when in fact all should have been involved in operating the school democratically.

In Chapter 6, I explored the implications for deliberative democracy of all role players being involved in school governance in SDA schools. I surveyed what each group of stakeholders said and also how they suggested the problems be solved. All the stakeholders highlighted several areas of grave concern and then offered suggestions and possible solutions to the problems. The conclusions I drew were that all stakeholders needed training and that all were willing to give up time for training. It was also agreed that it would be an educative experience. However, more than that, I found that there was a dire need for deliberation that stakeholders wanted a voice – they wanted to be heard. They wanted to be involved but needed training to participate democratically. There was a deep desire to engage deliberatively in a democratic way. Thus, if they received training they could exercise their democratic citizenship as true, informed governors.

I argued that the groups of stakeholders involved in governance in SDA schools must receive training and be educated to carry out their responsibilities. They should know what their functions and responsibilities are and be given the chance to exercise their deliberative democratic citizenship. They will experience a feeling of belonging as they make their verbal contributions. They will then feel equal to every other member as they allow their voices to be heard. Irrespective of their differences they will learn that you can agree to disagree and that there is no shame in that, as long as their voices have been heard. They will learn that you do not always get your way in a democracy, but because you are equal to the next person you will act in a responsible manner. I contend that, above all, they will feel that they serve a purpose as governors and that they have not attended their meetings just to rubber-stamp. I now turn to deliberative democratic school governance.

7.3 Deliberative democratic school governance

The parents and staff felt that they were not really part of the decision-making process. Even members of the school board felt that way. Many parents and staff viewed the school board as an elitist group that shared very little with the rest of the stakeholders. It was specifically stated by staff that “sometimes it looks like the board is autonomous; the (staff) representatives (on the school board) do not consult with their constituents (fellow staff members); the school board is rather secretive”. Some staff members suggested that the school board was a privileged group and that staff members were merely there to do as they were told. Many parents felt that the school did not want to involve them and that the principal, along with the school board, consulted them only when they were needed to do fundraising. Parents were not really involved in the school in a democratic way. Both parents and staff felt that they were really outsiders and not part of the decision-making process in the school and could not participate in the everyday life of the school. It was really the responsibility of the principal and the school board to involve all their stakeholders in the operation of the school. They were responsible for making the stakeholders understand what it means to be a citizen in a democratic society. Through deliberation, not only when they needed funds, the school board could have educated the stakeholders to participate democratically in deliberations involving the school. The school board could have spelt out the rights, functions and responsibilities of governors as they participated democratically and helped them experience what it is to contribute to the functioning of the institution, especially when it came to decision making and policy formulation. I argue that our schools would function far better if all stakeholders were afforded their democratic right as citizens to deliberate as equals on the school board, thus giving them a voice in matters pertaining to the school.

At present the situation, according to the teachers and parents, is that all decisions are driven by elitist boards. As indicated by some parents, they only received input concerning a certain matter at their school when they applied pressure on the principal and the school board. This is certainly not what democracy is all about, least of all deliberative democracy. I contend that the stakeholders, including school boards and principals, must be educated to engage in a deliberative, democratic way. In other words, all stakeholders should have their voices heard and all should have the democratic right to know and deliberate about school matters that affect and concern them. This, I believe, will only happen when the Education Department of the SDA church takes responsibility for educating stakeholders and including deliberative democratic practices in the schools. Deliberative democratic practices can be attained if our school boards became inclusive, rather than exclusive. In other words, it is necessary to communicate with the staff and parents and all other relevant stakeholders and to allow them their democratic right to be involved in decision making and policy formulation. Let them have a voice. The idea is to make them partners in education. They should not be made to feel like outsiders, as if they do not matter. Young (2000, 55) calls these “issues of external exclusion”. She calls it external exclusion because people are deliberately kept out of governance processes. She suggests that a place to start to include all stakeholders is with a greeting or public acknowledgment of the person or group. Since many parents and staff members feel that they are ignored and excluded, democratic inclusion can start with greeting and acknowledgment as democratic citizens (Young 2000, 56-57). Once the greeting has been concluded and pleasantries passed, individuals and groups will find it easier to communicate with each other and then discuss things of mutual interest or share matters of concern and other common problems. There is a need for inclusion so that stakeholders can share in deliberative democracy. I would argue that part of the training process would be to include democratic values like equality, respect, inclusivity, politeness, determination, courage and nobility of character, to mention a few. I will now look at the implications of deliberative democracy for school governing practices in SDA schools in the Western Cape. This can probably be applied to all SDA schools in South Africa.

7.3.1 Implications for school governance practices

Before looking at what can be done to make sure that all stakeholders become inclusive, deliberative, democratic participants in governance in their schools, I would like to look at school governance. As I indicated earlier, many of the main stakeholders involved in education prior to 1994 were excluded from school governance structures, including educators, parents, learners, community members and other interested parties. However, the South African

Schools Act (No 84 of 1996) guarantees a democratically elected governing body or school board that is mandated to formulate policies, rules and regulations, and then to make sure that they are adhered to. This meant giving a voice to all stakeholders involved with the school. The Act makes it very clear who should serve as governors. However, given the legacy of the past, the implementation became a problem to many. The South African Schools Act also provides for capacity-building programmes so that all those elected would feel a part of the structure and also equal to other members serving as governors. Parents have to be in the majority with regard to representation. Unfortunately, many aspects of the SASA do not apply to private schools. That is why the Seventh-day Adventist school boards did not adhere to the SASA. This, as what was pointed out by the constructed data in Chapters 5 and 6, created many difficulties for SDA schools and their governance structures.

All the stakeholders indicated that they wanted to exercise their democratic right to participate in decision making or policy formulation, whether as a member of the school board or merely as a citizen interested in the welfare of the school, particularly if they had children attending the school. There were staff members who stated that each staff member had to have at least one opportunity to serve as a school board member during their tenure at the school. Furthermore, parents wanted not only fair representation, but also that information regarding policies and decisions taking be passed on to them. In certain cases they wanted to be consulted before policy decisions were ratified. This was their way of participating democratically and also feeling a part of the process.

I have no doubt that capacity-building programmes would educate for democratic citizenship. In other words, members of the school board, who represent the stakeholders, would receive the training to function democratically. I believe that in this way they could deliberate in such a manner that would respect each other's diversity and even agree to disagree on certain matters but in a non-confrontational manner. They would be prepared to behave in a manner becoming of a democratic citizen in which respect and tolerance are shown to all. In other words, instead of each one wanting his or her way, they would deliberate, respect each other's viewpoints, respect each other's diversity and culture, and eventually come to consensus. This, I believe, would signal, at least in part, their growth as democratic citizens. However, opportunities should be afforded for this growth, as they are not present in SDA governance structures. Besides, the school governance structures were loaded in favour of the school administration and higher organisation. Stakeholders were aware of this and called for radical change.

Pring (200, 17) states that:

Central to educational research, is the attempt to make sense of the activities, policies and institutions which, through the organization of learning, help to transform the capacities of people to live a fuller and more distinctively human life.

It is this kind of transformation that is needed. Capacity building will assist with the transformation from voiceless individuals to deliberative democratic citizens.

I therefore argue that there must be capacity building to transform stakeholders and afford them the opportunity to deliberate democratically. Until they experience true citizenship, governorship at individual schools will remain a problem. Weinstock and Kahane (2010, 1) state that “democracy should be understood as the exchange of reasons rather than merely as the confrontation of contending interest”. Unfortunately, this has been the experience of the school boards. Various stakeholders referred to the confrontational issues that arose, some which took long periods to solve. Weinstock and Kahane (2010, 1) also state that “the justification of policies in liberal democracies should be more democratic”. Stakeholders have urged this on the education authorities. They want deliberative democracy so that they could participate as democratic citizens in institutions where their voices were seldom and sometimes never heard. Weinstock and Kahane (2010, 2) make it very clear that deliberative democrats are not an elitist group and that, when “participating in the democratic process they should be civic minded”. They state that when participating in the democratic arena, participants should be open-minded and even “allow themselves to be swayed by arguments”. If they allowed this they would have a better view of everybody’s argument or contribution to the debate and they would then be able to participate more meaningfully and in turn deliberate far better. Weinstock and Kahane (2010, 4) state that “deliberative democracy is part of a larger project to do with the role of communication and with the gradual overcoming of obstacles to communication”. In the context of governing bodies or school boards, communication is of paramount importance. In a democracy where schools are open to people from all walks of life, we find that individuals from different language groups serve as governors. They must deliberate democratically and therefore communication is very important. There is no doubt that many of the prejudices of the past still exist and these prejudices, for example, pose an obstacle to communication. Until there can be mutual trust among members there will be obstacles to communication that must be overcome. This can only happen when democratic citizenship and deliberative democracy are realised and trust and mutual respect replace distrust and other prejudices.

Weinstock and Kahane (2010, 4) argue that deliberation should be committed to liberty and opportunity. They also argue that deliberating citizens should deal carefully with one another and not foster “controversial arguments from conceptions of the good” (2010, 4). In this regard resources of public reason would play a part. If we want highly effective school boards, and if we want to educate people to be democratic citizens and participate in the running of the schools, we must take into account their language, ethnic and religious commonalities. There must be mutual respect for each other’s cultures. People need to identify with each other and work collectively toward a common cause, which is the success of the institutions that they serve. To achieve this they must view each other as equals, respecting each other’s diversity. In spite of cultural differences, people should feel free to participate democratically, realising that each individual has his or her own story to tell. Waghid (2010, 31) argues that we must create space for others to tell their stories, and if we cannot do that then we have not provided conditions for deliberation. Waghid (2010, 31) further asserts that, when people deliberate, they must actually engage collectively and not merely participate. This aspect came through very clearly while collecting data, since many stakeholders indicated clearly that they wanted to be actively involved in decision making and policy formulation, and in the operation of their institutions. It was clearly stated on several occasions that many serve on the school board but were merely required to “rubber-stamp” decisions. However, many clearly stated, both during the interviews and in the questionnaires, that they wanted to be part of the discussions, they wanted to contribute, in other words they wanted to exercise their democratic citizenship and engage in the deliberations concerning the institutions as participants. They wanted to make suggestions and see those suggestions either being accepted and used, or otherwise rejected with good reason in order to accept a better suggestion. Either way, they would be engaging, deliberating, and participating as free and equal moral human beings. Of course there were those who did not really care about participating. They felt that the board was doing a good job and saw no reason to interfere. Where some staff members insisted on serving on the board, one in particular said that, if asked, he would refuse to serve. This particular staff member had no desire to serve as a board member. However, staff in this category were in the minority. The majority by far wanted to participate meaningfully by having their voices heard. They were not interested in rubber-stamping decisions, but in discussing, debating and deliberating on issues before decisions were made.

I have no doubt that all the groups of stakeholders, including the board members themselves, wanted more than mere participation, more than merely attending meetings, more than merely rubber-stamping decisions. They wanted to engage as free, moral human beings in democratic deliberations and make a difference in their schools, but they were not all equipped to

participate. The next section will deal with preparing stakeholders for active participation. We will now look at capacity building.

7.3.2 Capacity building for stakeholders

Stakeholders would only realise their full democratic citizenship and deliberate intelligently if all had the capacity and know-how when it came to governorship. This meant that a process of education and training was needed that would provide them with knowledge to participate and engage effectively. Members who serve on the boards come from all walks of life, and not all are equipped for the rigours of governorship. The reason why many stayed away was because they lacked the skills and knowledge to serve on the boards. It was only after accepting the appointment that they discovered the real work involved, and often it was too late to withdraw. There is no doubt that, in order for the boards to function effectively and in order for all stakeholders to develop a sense of belonging and have the belief that they were enjoying deliberative citizenship, there first had to be training and capacity building. The Seventh-day Adventist education authorities should have taken responsibility for training board members for governorship.

7.3.3 Implications for school governance

It is clear that the school boards would continue to encounter problems if members were not actively involved in deliberations as democratic citizens, if members were not given the opportunity to express themselves as active participants, and if they failed to experience a sense of belonging. In other words, there has to be capacity building and preparedness and the members have to be trained to become informed governors. When members experience a sense of belonging and feel that they are contributing actively and participating in decision making and policy formulation by having their voice heard, governorship will take on a new meaning for all stakeholders involved on the school board. I believe that a spin-off will be that it will even affect stakeholders who do not serve on the school board. The school board will realise that they must include all other stakeholders and not be exclusive. The school board is not a club for a chosen few, but a body that should govern a school effectively by including all stakeholders in their deliberations and decisions. Waghid (2010, 20) puts it very cogently when he says that “belonging” means that people are committed to the task of education by being more accountable to the process and deepening their attachment to it. I believe that this can be achieved through school boards that impart the feeling of ‘belonging’ and by being inclusive in all their operations. There are, however, other important aspects that must be taken into account when one looks at the implications for school governance. I would like to address, especially

those that were highlighted during the interviews and mentioned in the questionnaires. Firstly, there is a definite dearth of leadership. I mentioned earlier that there was one school that could not even find a chairperson. Let me also add that educational leadership, in certain instances, is also a problem. When this lack of strong leadership filters into the boards, it impacts the school negatively. When problems occur as a result of poor leadership, our first reaction is what is wrong with the school? There is nothing wrong with the school but everything wrong with the leadership. Poor leadership spawns many other problems relating to poor financial management, lowered standards, poor discipline, poor management, and poor governance. What is needed are people with authority and autonomy that can act and see that the job gets done. These are issues that many role-players, particularly staff members felt very strongly about. Throughout the history of SDA schools the emphasis has been on accountability, sound financial management, good governance and excellent operation. However, this has not always been possible due to amongst other factors, poor leadership. Every effort should be made to appoint strong educational leaders and also strong board chairpersons. Leaders must also provide strategic direction to make sure that the school achieves organizational performance. The board must have the right people with the right skills and expertise. The question of accountability is another serious consideration. School boards must be assessed on a yearly basis to determine how well they are fulfilling their tasks. An improvement plan can be followed when they know their strengths and weaknesses, and in this way meet the many demands of society. Stakeholders are wary of “business as usual” especially in educational institutions where so much is demanded by way of accountability and where change occurs at such a rapid pace.

Unfortunately, many SDA church members render poor support to their schools because they have lost faith in their schools. There are various reasons for this, including those already mentioned. Faith in the SDA school system needs to be restored. In many instances, we have more non-SDAs than SDAs in our schools. The non-SDAs have more faith in our system. SDA schools need firm, fair, but good, strong leadership. Leadership that will give SDAs a reason to send their children to SDA schools. Another implication is that the board must be seen to govern and the principal and staff left to manage the school. There must, however, be a close working relationship between school and school board, which to a large extent is not evident. It is a good idea to engage in in-service training for boards and administrators but to get leaders from industry or business to do the training. This will improve the quality in management as well as the quality in governance and encourage parties to work together. Then, there must be careful planning by the school board when it comes to expenditure. Using financial resources effectively and efficiently are marks of good governance.

Another important issue highlighted during my research was a lack of pastoral and conference support. The pastor, who is a school board member, serves as a link between the school and the church. I believe that poor pastoral support of the school results in poor support by the church.

Pastors should support their local schools and it's imperative that they attend school board meetings. One of the greatest assets a SDA school can have is a supportive pastor, who makes it a point of attending the school board meetings. The pastor must also support the school by sending his children to the SDA school. Many church members will very readily follow the example of their pastor. More importantly, the pastor reports back to his church what transpires at the school and encourages church members to enrol their children. In this way he serves as a link between church and school.

The board has a very important task of making sure that teachers are treated fairly and equitably. An accusation levelled at some boards reveals that they are partial towards certain staff members. This, according to certain staff members, had been seen in personal practices such as employment. There is an employment policy that should be followed and boards are responsible to make sure that policies are not bent at the expense of fair practice. In fact the board establishes the policies with the aid of relevant stakeholders and the administrator sees to it that they are carried out. If the principal fails, the board is forced to step in, which results in the board governing and managing.

I also noticed from the data constructed, that there were times when due process was not followed. This had resulted in boards having to vote large sums of money for individuals who had taken the school to the CCMA. The board should be aware of its legal responsibilities and if not, must be duly informed of what they are. In my opinion the board should have a clear vision of what it wants to achieve. This vision must be followed up with careful planning. Funding must be made available for the board to carry out its tasks and of course for training, to make sure that members are empowered to carry out their responsibilities. The data also indicates a number of issues that need to be addressed. I will give a brief summary of some of the issues.

7.3.4 Issues to be addressed

The Education authorities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa should address the following, so that when new boards are chosen structures will be in place to adequately address, any deficiencies on the part of board members.

a. Method of electing a board:

The present methods must be revisited and it must be determined whether it is in the best interest of the schools. Urgent study must be given to staff representation, learner representation in high schools and parent representation.

b. Orientation Programme:

An orientation programme is an absolute necessity. No school board should be allowed to start the year's work with an orientation programme. The nature and details of the orientation should be determined by the principals and the education Director of the Conference.

c. Training:

A complete programme of training in governorship must be prepared which includes all the facets of school governance. This should be done at the start of each academic year.

d. Continuous In-service Training

Continuous in-service training ties in with the aspect of training. This needs to be structured very carefully with the facilitators who will lead out. Convenient dates and times must be determined that will suit all board members. This could be done on a regional, district or area basis. Educational authorities, school boards and principals can decide what is best.

g. Package of information

All new school board members must be given a package of information when they start their tenure. What goes into the package can be determined by the school authorities and the Education department of the church. It could include: a manual, in the absence of a manual: a constitution, a job description, functions and responsibilities, dates of meetings for the year, school statistics, names of board members and staff members etc.

i. Policies and Legal Liability

Policies are very important in any institution. Board members must be au fait with all the policies pertaining to the school as well as specific legislation in the country, the SASA in particular. If there are any new policies that must be formulated, then all stakeholders must be involved. The governors must also know what their legal liabilities are. These must be communicated to them at the start of their tenure.

j. Meeting between School Board and Staff

Since there is an unacknowledged tension between staff and board, more so on the part of the staff at certain schools; it would be a good idea for a meeting between school board and staff where they discuss how to work together to improve the school. By working together, I believe the tension will be relieved and staff and board will have an opportunity to get to know each other but in a working environment where they serve side by side.

k. Code of Conduct for board members

Since board members have highlighted things like: starting late with meetings, ending meetings late, late coming, absenteeism, and inactive members, it is therefore appropriate to draw up a Code of Conduct for board members. There are such copies available and with permission, can be adapted to the needs of particular schools. This is a priority, since many boards fail to have a quorum when they meet.

l. What the School Board is responsible for in the school

Although roles, functions and responsibilities would have been have been included in the orientation, the package and the training, I believe an itemised list would serve as a reminder of what school board is responsible for in the school. This would serve as a reference list and a reminder, and therefore, at a glance they would know what governorship is all about.

Other issues include: careful monitoring of finance, more parent representation on the board, use of appropriate procedures to place items on the board agenda, giving each person a voice and no “rubber stamping,” keeping members informed so that those who represent specific groups of stake holders can report back to their groups, for example the PTA. Leadership training should feature high on the list. In fact, if the above is to take place, strong leadership is required to see that it is implemented. Strong committed leaders will make sure that the board

stays on task and that it does not deteriorate into a social gathering. It is very easy to get side-tracked and stray way off the agenda. This can be very time consuming. A proactive board plans and makes things happen.

School administration is very complex because we live in a complex society, therefore, boards must be strong, resolute, and govern effectively. The fact that the board shapes policy means that the board must have all the information at its disposal. There must be transparency when it comes to transactions and executive decisions. Transparency will lead to a better working relationship between board and staff members. School staff tend to view the board with deep suspicion because very little of what goes on is communicated to the staff. This once again boils down to strong, committed leadership. Boyatt (2008:7) says that management means handling the affairs of the school but leadership means taking the school “places.”

The last point I would like to discuss, very briefly, is strategic planning. The strategic planning must involve short term and long term goals. Capacity building, empowering, giving the people a voice, automatically includes them in strategic planning. Parents will now exercise their democratic citizenship and participate in building for the future. There are several things that must be planned for in the short term that involve day-to-day management, but there must be long term strategic planning for the sustainability and viability of the school. SDA schools can survive, in spite of the fact that many have closed in the United States. It depends on the support of all stakeholders, strong leadership, a deeper understanding of an educational enterprise and how it operates, and having dedicated, committed, men and women in leadership positions who can manage on a day-to-day basis and above all who can govern effectively, efficiently, and competently.

School leadership face a number of challenges, these include: globalization, advances in information technology, stakeholder expectations, new approaches to education, and a host of environmental concerns. The fact that we are part of this global village gives us a greater opportunity to benchmark and learn from other education systems. Furthermore, it places a greater responsibility on SDA boards to perform and make sure they survive external scrutiny.

7.4 Significance of the study and its contribution to research

This study is significant in the field of Philosophy of Education, specifically for the theory on deliberative democracy. Both staff members and parents indicated that they wanted their requests to be heard. They wanted a voice, they wanted to engage in deliberations, and to play a specific part in decision making. The parents indicated that they wanted to present their views as parents. The staff members wanted the board to enable democratic decision making so that

they could have a say and give input. There were categorical requests to be heard. The parents and teachers did not want to rubber-stamp. It was not just a case of being a member. It therefore is clear that deliberative democracy cannot just be about people engaging, but also about the way they do, namely to express their equal intelligence or intellectual voice, as claimed by Rancière. The parents and staff members wanted the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns. As expressed by a parent, “parents rightfully trained can have a positive effect on the school”.

This means that deliberative democracy is not just about people talking back, as Benhabib would argue, but, more importantly, that they express their equality in terms of speech, and this is what the staff wanted. They regarded the school board as a committee of a chosen few to which they had no access and could offer no voice. But they also wanted to express their equal intelligence or intellectual voice and that is why they wanted change. This, I feel, is an important contribution to the debate, since the stakeholders, particularly the staff, wanted a voice and, more so, wanted to express their intellectual voice in a particular way; a way in which they would be heard and acknowledged as equal citizens. In other words, they wanted full participation as equals.

7.4.1 How does this study fit into the field of education?

Again, I believe that the answer lies in allowing teachers, parents, learners and other stakeholders a voice in the operation of the school that they represent. For too long, those stakeholders have been spectators in a game played by the education authorities that govern the schools. Teachers, parents and learners have not been allowed to exercise their democratic right to express themselves, voice their concerns and opinions, and in this way to express their intellectual voice. They have been the silent majority that has been required to raise a hand to vote, but not to express their equality in terms of speech. I believe that the time has come for education authorities to give teachers, parents and learners an equal voice in the governance of education institutions.

For years these stakeholders had accepted whatever was given to them, whether they wanted it or not. They were forced to accept decisions that were made on their behalf, that concerned them, but in which they had no voice. A single decision, for instance about a summer and a winter uniform for a school, can easily be settled by giving everybody an equal voice instead of having parents tear out their hair when there is a demand for a uniform and not the means to purchase it. They are forced to put themselves into debt for a cause in which they had no voice. On the other hand, if the discussion had been opened to all and not just to an exclusive few, the

parents' cooperation would have been no problem. The same would apply to disciplinary procedures in a school, or drawing up a code of conduct for teachers, learners and school board members. It is imperative to allow all stakeholders who will be affected by particular decisions to be part of that decision-making process. All stakeholders have a right to equality in terms of speech, especially when it comes to matters, decision, discussions and policies that affect them.

7.4.2 Finding a voice: how, who and what have I become?

I want to reflect on how this study has influenced and changed me as a person, and who I have become. As I reflected on how teachers, parents and learners should have a voice in education, I am reminded of my formative years as a teacher, a principal and as an education director. I think back on how the voices of parents, teachers and learners were stifled, and today I realise how wrong it was then and how wrong it is today. Over the past few years I have found my voice through this study, and have come to realise that all stakeholders should be allowed to express their equality in terms of speech. As an educator I am now free to advocate that.

7.4.2.1 Who I have become

Many events have contributed to who I am today. One does not start out as an independent thinker. After qualifying as a teacher, my potentialities as a person were recognised very early in my teaching career. I was appointed as a principal after just a few years of teaching. It was while serving as a principal that I realised that every person in my care, every child in my care, needed my guidance and my compassion. I recognised the potential in every educator and learner in my care through my encounters with principals under whom I served. One principal was extremely exacting, whilst the other showed care, compassion and concern. It was here that I could fulfil the words of Waghid (2010, 36) that deliberative engagement must be accompanied by the desire to treat people fairly, justly and humanely. In other words, I must be compassionate towards others – people differentiated on the basis of skin colour, sex, religion, status, creed and the like. My attitude has been that we are all born equal and we have the potential to become whatever we set our minds to. This has determined my compassionate attitude towards my fellow human beings.

I learned to become a critical thinker and not just accept what was placed before me. We are all fellow human beings who face many challenges. Some challenges are the same, others may be different, but the important consideration is that we understand each other and have compassion for one another. I particularly have encountered a lack of compassion in school board meetings. Not only do school board members lack sympathy for each other at times, and become quite agitated and impatient, but there often, for one reason or another, is a lack of

compassion for individuals whose names may have come up for discussion. I have learnt to weigh arguments critically before drawing any conclusions or coming to a decision.

I have been challenged intellectually and emotionally by Benhabib, Young, Pring, Ranci re, Waghid and others. Given South Africa's past and the unequal education that many had to endure, now is the time for all of us to put that compassionate imagining into action and do our part, wherever possible, in redressing some of the ills of the past. I work at an institution where we offer values-based education. I believe that our common values should guide our interaction with each other. As human beings we are dependent on each other. As has aptly been stated, no man is an island. Therefore, in our interaction with each other we need to allow for deliberation. Democratic, meaningful deliberation will allow us to see the other side of our humanity, and should drive us to deal compassionately with one another.

I am convinced that far more can be achieved in our school boards when we allow each one's intellectual voices to be heard and, no matter what is said or how people feel about certain matters, that we deal compassionately with one another. Through what I have become, I have been able to share not only with the faculty that I head, but also the students that I teach. In my compassionate interaction with others, I have come to realise just how human I am and how I need their compassion in return.

7.4.2.2 What I have become

As a result of this study I have become consciously aware of the fact that every single human being has a voice that should be heard. I learnt anew that one should not judge on the basis of sex, colour, creed, ability or any of the other ways in which human beings judge each other. We should respect each other because we are all human beings. We should value each other because of our humanness. Above all, everyone has a voice that should be heard, and in fact must be heard. In the practice of democratic citizenship we recognise each other as equals because each one of us has a voice, a story to tell, and deliberative democracy demands that voices be heard even if they cause controversy. This will invoke discussion and deliberation, which will give us an opportunity to exercise our compassion towards the other. Although this is practical and exercised throughout life, it should be displayed in all school boards where people from different walks of life meet to deliberate on educational matters.

I have been personally stirred to make sure that, when I engage with the students in my lectures, I allow them to have a voice. At the same time I have encouraged members of the committees on which I serve to allow their voices to be heard, and not just come to vote. I have experienced a new freedom in which I am not afraid to voice my opinions and concerns on

meetings that I serve. Furthermore, I encourage principals, teachers, parents and learners in our Seventh-day Adventist schools to exercise their democratic right to be heard, especially on matters relating to them, to education and to the operation of their schools.

7.4.3 Potential criticisms and possibilities for future studies

Here I propose to answer any potential criticisms that might arise on the basis of this study. I would never have thought that teachers and parents would be so intent not only on engaging, but engaging meaningfully and in a democratic way in the deliberations concerning the schools they represent. Some critics might argue that it will be well-nigh impossible to give all stakeholders a voice through the school's governance structures. I argue that this is in fact possible through a process of representation, committees and dissemination of information. All the stakeholders have representatives on the school board. Parents and teachers must be well represented. Through staff meetings, PTA meetings and sub-committee meetings, information can be placed on the school board agenda and, after discussions, information can be shared with the stakeholders. In this way everyone has a voice on the operation of the school. The needs of all the stakeholders will be met and everyone will feel that they have participated democratically.

Another criticism can be levelled at the fact that there are those who still hold on to the prejudices of the past and this could easily be a stumbling block to the effective functioning of a multicultural board. Here I feel that all involved, especially those serving as governors and the education authorities, should develop a sense of compassionate imagining, in terms of which all can be valued and accepted for who they are. People are different, cultures differ, levels of education differ, but with training and compassionate imagining, all should be able to express their equality in terms of speech.

In order for this debate to continue, further studies could be carried out to see how the highlighted concepts would apply to high schools only or to primary schools only. This study involved two high schools and three primary schools operated by the SDA church's Education Department. Further studies can involve non-private schools, in other words state school, to determine if any problems exist in their school governing body practices. I suspect that they have their problems as well, which may be the same or different. Nevertheless, it would be worthwhile investigating their deliberative democratic citizenship practices. The concept of compassionate imagining would be another worthy concept to investigate. With everything that is going on in education today we need to know how inclusive or exclusive school governing body practices are. Are all the groups inclusive, or is there still a subtle practice of exclusion

among stakeholders and a lack of compassion in dealing with one another. Maybe others could add to the debate by viewing their experiences as governors of schools or as stakeholders in particular schools.

7.5 Concluding summary of the dissertation

The study started with a look at perceived problems that existed with school boards in Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Western Cape. The objective of the study was to explore existing problems, such as a lack of capacity-building programmes and training, which have contributed to ineffective school governance in Seventh-day Adventist church schools in the Western Cape.

Chapter 2 traced the history of school boards in several countries, as well as their work and responsibilities, and concluded with a brief history of Education in the SDA church. Chapter 3 dealt with the SDA education system and the governance of its schools. There was a very clear indication that the SDA education system provided clear guidelines on how their schools should be governed. Chapter 4 explored the existing problems within Seventh-day Adventist church school boards in the Western Cape. A sample of six schools was used, but due to a lack of participation on the part of one group of respondents, one school was withdrawn. The chosen respondents comprised staff, parents, school board members and principals. The respondents were interviewed and also completed questionnaires, from which the data was extracted. Using narrative inquiry I was able to construct the data and analyse the stories that emerged from the interviews and questionnaires. Chapter 5 focused on the existing problems that have contributed to poor and ineffective school governance. From the responses obtained I argued that these are indeed problems that need to be addressed if school boards were to function optimally. The chapter also revealed the specific needs of stakeholders in their attempts to be of value and to participate and engage in a deliberative way with the school authorities. Chapter 6 discussed the need for the deliberative democracy of all the role players involved in school governance in SDA schools. This chapter deals specifically with the concerns expressed by all the stakeholders, as well as what they suggested could be done to solve the problems. I argue that all stakeholders must be given an equal opportunity to deliberate and to participate in governing the school.

Finally, I argue for deliberative, democratic school governance and democratic citizenship in which the voiceless are given a voice. This is not just a matter of rubber-stamping what a previous committee had decided, but having a voice in the discussions and deliberations and experiencing inclusivity. This is a matter of contributing by having your voice heard, and experiencing the freedom of equal participation and equality with all other stakeholders. I

demonstrated how this can be achieved using the argument of Jacques Rancière, who says that “the space of possibility” is opened to allow space for stakeholders to speak their minds (Waghid 2014, 20). In our multicultural schools with their past history of separation, segregation and racism, it is important for this space to be created so that, in terms of “Rancière’s affirmation, anyone is equal with anyone else and that this also implies that the one who orders is equal to the one who is ordered” (Waghid 2014, 29).

Through a process of education and training, through deliberative democratic citizenship, and by giving a voice to the voiceless, SDA school boards can experience the effectiveness and efficiency that should become an essential feature of all their schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

6 Hill Street
Kuils River
7580
4 May 2009

Pastor S. Zinn
Executive Secretary
Cape Conference

Dear Pastor Zinn

This is the follow-up to our conversation regarding my PhD research in the Conference schools. As explained, I would like to assist our schools by determining how effective our school boards are with a view to helping our boards govern more effectively. This will involve interviewing principals, staff, parents of learners, and school boards.

I believe that if our boards were to operate optimally, it will produce successful schools and in turn take the workload off the conference, since our boards will then govern effectively. I have spoken to the principals of our schools and they are eager for this research to take place. I do, however, need permission from the conference to pursue this research. I have tried for the past month to contact the Education Director, but have not been successful. I desperately need to get on with my planning and thus need your consent to write to the principals outlining my research, so that they have it in writing. This will open the way to approach the boards.

I believe that my research will benefit the conference and the schools, particularly the school boards. We do not have a school board manual geared for Adventist schools in South Africa, and this can be the forerunner to that kind of document.

The results will be confidential. No names, schools, or boards will be identifiable to anyone but myself, and the results will be available to all role players only.

I, therefore, respectfully request that the conference grants permission for my research in the schools.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely

P P Plaatjes

Pastor J. Julies
Education Director
Cape Conference
27 October 2010

Dear Pastor Julies

I am currently doing a PhD in Education with Stellenbosch University. I have reached the stage that if all goes well, I'll be able to visit schools early in the New Year.

I am engaged in doing "a philosophical analysis of school governing body practices." This will of course involve our school boards. The final outcome will be to assist our school boards to govern effectively. I have chosen as a sample all the SDA schools, i.e. primary schools and high schools. I need the permission and blessing of the Conference to proceed.

What I would like is to obtain permission to approach each school, via the principal, and to do my research in each respective school. I plan, first of all, to obtain a copy of each school board's constitution. Thereafter, I would like to interview all the role players, which will include school boards, principals, educators, and parents. I will be using questionnaires and interviews, since this is qualitative, interpretive research.

No school or individual will be named in the research. I will be using the alphabet to distinguish between individual schools. This research will in no way identify an individual school, principal, parent, or any other individual. The research is purely to analyse school governing body practices with a view to recommend what is best practice that will make our board's efficient and effective so that we in turn can boast of effective, good, excellent schools.

As soon as the Conference grants me permission to proceed, I will contact the principals in the Western Cape, inform them of the permission granted to carry out the research, and plan how I can do my research at their institution without interrupting the school programme.

Thank you so much for considering my request.

Yours faithfully

Phil P. Plaatjes



Cape Conference

Head Office - Port Elizabeth
7 Heugh Road, Wolmer, 6070
PO Box 5961, Wolmer, 6065
Tel: (041) 581-0100
Fax: (041) 581-0103
Website: www.sdCAPE.org

Eastern Regional Office
PO Box 1213, East London, 5200
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Fax: (043) 726-1612

Northern Regional Office
Postnet Suite 148
Private Bag X5879, Uppington, 8800
Tel/Fax: (054) 331-3743

Western Regional Office
PO Box 279, Somerset West, 7129
Tel: (021) 852-1140
Fax: (021) 851-2718

23 January 2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN - re: PHILLIP PLAATJES ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Dear Principals and Chairpersons of School boards of the following schools in the Western Cape (& Bethel Combined School, if possible)

Good Hope Primary
Good Hope High
Helderberg Primary
Helderberg High
Hillcrest Primary
Riverside Primary
Bethel Combined School (Eastern Cape)

The Cape Conference Education Department would like to enable Mr Phillip Platjes to attend the school board meetings of the above schools as he is doing doctoral research which concentrates on the impact of school board meetings in Seventh-day Adventist schools. He also requests permission to make a five minute presentation at these meetings to explain the purpose of his research and schedule meetings for interviews.

Kindly allow Mr Platjes this opportunity to pave the way for greater understanding between schools and their board members.

Yours sincerely

CJ BEUKES
Education Director, Cape Conference of SDA's

HELDERBERG HIGH SCHOOL

TO LEARN TO LIVE TO SERVE



Tel: (021) 855 4949 Fax: (021) 855 4955 Address: PO Box 22, Somerset West, 7129 Web: www.helderberghs.co.za

28 February 2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that the Helderberg High School Board has granted Phillip Paul Plaatjes permission to interview the relevant role players in pursuance of his Doctoral Research project in School Governance, per School Board minute 2012/42.

Yours faithfully

JLM MASON

Secretary to High School Board



OFFICIUM EST SACRUM

GOOD HOPE HIGH SCHOOL

Reuter Street, Sarepta, Kuils River, 7580
P.O. Box 56, Kuils River, 7579, Western Cape SA Tel.: +27 21 903-1185/6 Fax: +27 21 903-6920
e-mail: ghhs@mweb.co.za

Wednesday, March 07, 2012

Mr PP Plaatjes
6 Hill Street
KUILS RIVER
7580

Dear Mr Plaatjes

This serves to confirm that the School Board (**Action No. 12/11**) has granted Mr PP Plaatjes permission to interview the headmaster, staff and board members for research purposes.

Yours faithfully

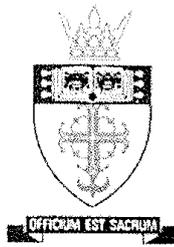
R de Buys
Deputy-Headmaster

/js

GOOD HOPE HIGH SCHOOL
REUTER STR
KUILS RIVER, 7580



A Seventh-day Adventist Institution



RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL
P O Box 331, ATHLONE, 7760, 260 Klipfontein Road, 7764, riverside@telkomsa.net
Tel / Fax: 021 637 6669, Fax: 086 600 5866, Tel: 021 638 0404(principal)

12 March 2012

Dear Mr Plaatjes

Re: SCHOOL BOARD ACTION

Herewith confirmation of the School Board's granting of permission for you to conduct interviews with the School Board for the purposes of gathering information with the aim of completing you doctoral thesis.

The relevant actions are listed below:

21 February 2012

MR PHILLIP PLAATJES - RESEARCH - voted to

Accede to the request from Mr Plaatjes to briefly address the Board with regard to the current research being undertaken by himself.

SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD - voted to

Convene a Special Board meeting on Thursday, 22 March 2012 at 18:30 in order for Phillip Plaatjes to conduct the interviews with the School Board members for his doctoral thesis.

Wishing you every success with you academic plans.

Yours sincerely

MR N FORTUIN

Principal

RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL
PO. BOX 331, ATHLONE 7760 / KLIPFONTEIN ROAD
TEL +27-(0)21 637 6669
FAX +27-(0)21 637 6669
EMAIL: riverside@telkomsa.net

HELDERBERG

PRIMARY SCHOOL



✉ 22, Somerset West 7129 hpsadmin@hbc.ac.za www.helderbergps.co.za
☎ (021) 8551482 ☎ (021) 8551482

8 March 2012

Dear Mr Plaatjes

re: SCHOOL BOARD ACTION

Herewith confirmation of the School Board's granting of permission for you to conduct interviews with the School Board for the purposes of gathering information with the aim of completing your doctoral thesis.

The relevant actions are listed below:

SB 2012/1 MR PHILLIP PLAATJES – RESEARCH
voted to

accede to the request from Mr Phillip Plaatjes to briefly address the Board with regard to the current research being undertaken by himself.

SB 2012/2 SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD – 01 MARCH
voted to

convene a Special School Board meeting on Thursday, 1 March 2012 at 19h00 in order for Phillip Plaatjes to conduct the interviews with the School Board members for his doctoral thesis.

Wishing you every success with your academic plans.

Yours sincerely

WM SPARROW

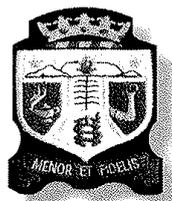
Principal



A member of the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist Christian School System

HILLCREST PRIMARY SCHOOL

5 Bollihope Crescent Mowbray Cape Town 7700
Tel/Fax 021-689-4187 Principal 021-686-0090 hillcrestschool@mweb.co.za



Mindful and Faithful

16 March 2012

To whom it may concern

This is to notify you that on the Board Meeting held 6 February 2012, the Board granted Mr Phillip Plaatjes permission to do interviews with Parents, Teachers and Board members to complete the research work for his Phd in Education Policy.

Please feel free to contact the school should you need more information.

Kind regards

R. Booysen

Mrs. R. Booysen
Principal

Hillcrest Primary School
5 Bollihope Crescent
Mowbray 7700
TEL: 021-6894187
FAX: 086 6161 382

APPENDIX B

Semi-structured Interview Questions for the School Board Members

(Follow-up questions to the questionnaire)

1. What aspects of school governance do you find easy to implement?
2. What impact do you think the school board has had on the school?
3. How far do you think the school board should concern itself with the day-to-day running of the school?
4. Are there functions and responsibilities that the school board is carrying out that should be left to the administration of the school to deal with?
5. Do you think that your school board, or any other school board for that matter, needs training? Why? Why not?
6. What particular areas of school governance would your school board need training in and who should do the training?
7. How much time would you be willing to spend on governance training and what form should it take?
8. How representative should the school board be?
9. Who is the school board accountable to and what is the school board accountable for?

Semi-structured Interview Questions for the Staff Members

(Follow-up questions to the questionnaire)

1. What would you say are the most important functions of the school board?
2. Would you say that these functions are carried out effectively and efficiently by your school board?
3. Are there matters that are handled by the school board that can adequately be handled by the school administration? Elaborate.
4. How often have you as an educator interacted with the school board? If it is not too personal, can you explain?
5. How effectively are the decisions of the school board carried out?
6. How far is the school board involved in the life of the school?
7. Do you think your school board, or any other school board for that matter, should undergo any form of training in preparation for their work and what would be the main areas of concern?
8. What are your thoughts on representation on the school board?

Semi-structured Interview Questions for School Principals

(Follow-up questions to the questionnaire)

1. How would you describe your role in developing a positive relationship with the school board?
2. Tell me about the times that you felt the school board was not fulfilling their role.
3. In which specific areas has the school board given direction that has proven absolutely favourable for the school? (Especially in the face of what would appear to be mounting problems?)
4. What kind of input has your school board given in the revision of your constitution?
5. How does the school board help to fulfil the vision and mission of the school?
6. What instrument does the school board use to assess its performance?
7. What kind of induction programme is provided for new school board members?
8. As far as you are concerned, in which specific areas does your school board need training?
9. How do you think your school board will respond if you suggested training in certain areas?

Semi-structured Interview Questions for Parents

(Follow-up questions to the questionnaire)

1. Who do you think should serve on the school board?
2. If you were chosen to serve on the school board, what do you think you should know about in order to serve effectively?
3. Which of the policies developed by the school board are important for the operation of the school?
4. If you were chosen to serve on the school board, in which areas do you think you will need training?
5. How can you as a parent help the school board to function more effectively?
6. What do you think is the school board's role in enhancing learner achievement?

APPENDIX C

Semi-structured Questionnaire

Semi-structured questionnaire for parents.

Instructions: Please tick the appropriate block under General Information. Respond to the questions as openly and candidly as possible. All information is valuable for the purpose of this research. Please remember that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence and complete anonymity will be maintained. Besides my supervisor, Prof. Waghid, no one else will have access to any information furnished.

1. **General Information:**

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1 Gender: Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1.2 Marital status: Married | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Female | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.3 Age Group: 18-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1.4 Educational Level: Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> | B degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41-50 | <input type="checkbox"/> | M degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Over 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> | D degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.5 Occupation: | | | |
| 1.6 Have you ever served as a school board member? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |

2. In order to assist the researcher to identify areas of concern in which the school board can be assisted to work more effectively and efficiently, please answer the following questions as candidly as possible. In your response, describe the way in which you experience school governance.

2.1 Are you aware of the fact that the school is governed by a school board? How did you come to this knowledge?

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2.2 Can you furnish me with some names of school board members?

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2.3 Who do you think should be represented on the school board?

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2.4 Explain, according to your understanding, what the functions of the school board are.

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2.5 In your understanding of the functions of the school board, do you think that they are functioning effectively? Why or why not?

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2.6 How have you interacted with the school board over the past twelve months?

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2.7 Have you received any correspondence from the school board, via the school, to participate in any activity planned by the board? Mention the activity and state whether the correspondence stated it was an activity planned by the school board.

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2.8 Why do you think parents should serve on the school board?

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2.9 Have you been informed of any policies developed by the school board and, if so, which policies?

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2.10 Do you think there can be a closer relationship between the school board and the parents? How do you think this relationship can be fostered?

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Thank you very much for your participation and for answering the questions so honestly, openly and candidly.

Your responses contain valuable information that will be used to promote the effective and efficient functioning of the school board.

Semi-structured Questionnaire

Semi-structured questionnaire for the school principal.

Instructions: Please tick the appropriate block under Biographical Data. Respond to the questions as openly and candidly as possible. All information is valuable for the purpose of this research. Please remember that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence and complete anonymity will be maintained. Besides my supervisor, Prof. Waghid, no one else will have access to any information furnished.

1. **Biographical Data:**

1.1 Gender: Male

Female

1.3 Age Group: 18-30

31-40

41-50

Over 50

1.2 Marital status: Married

Single

1.4 Educational level: Diploma

B degree

M degree

D degree

Other

2. In order to assist the researcher to identify areas of concern in which the school board can be assisted to work more effectively and efficiently, please answer the following questions as candidly as possible. In your response, describe the way in which you experience school board governance.

2.1 How would you describe your relationship with the board?

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2.2 How well do you think the school board understands its role?

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2.3 Describe the ways in which the school board provides a sense of direction for the school.

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2.4 How knowledgeable is the school board regarding the work of the school?

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2.5 Does the school board understand its functions and responsibilities as outlined in the constitution? Explain.

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2.6 How involved is the school board in strategic planning and the overall vision of the school?

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2.7 How often does the school board assess its own performance?

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2.8 Would you recommend training for the school board? Why?

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2.9 What kind of training would be beneficial to the school board?

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2.10 If training is needed, how often should it be done and why?

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2.11 In your opinion, would school board members be interested in training? Explain.

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2.12 Who do you think should be responsible for the training?

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Semi-structured Questionnaire

Semi-structured questionnaire for school board members.

Instructions: Please tick the appropriate block under Biographical Data. Respond to the questions as openly and candidly as possible. All information is valuable for the purpose of this research. Please remember that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence, and complete anonymity will be maintained. Besides my supervisor, Prof. Waghid, no one else will have access to any information furnished.

1. **Biographical Data:**

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1 Gender: Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1.2 Marital status: Married | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Female | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.3 Age Group: 18-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1.4 Educational level: Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> | B degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41-50 | <input type="checkbox"/> | M degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Over 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> | D degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1.5 Occupation:

1.6 Do you have a child or children attending the school of which you are a board member? Yes No

2. In order to assist the researcher to identify areas of concern in which the school board can be assisted to work more effectively and efficiently, please answer the following questions as candidly as possible. In your response, describe the way in which you experience school governance.

2.1 What do you understand by the term “school governance”?

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2.2 Explain why you think there should or should not be a school governing body to govern the school.

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2.3 What do you think should be the nature and extent of the powers of the school board?

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2.4 What do you understand are the functions and responsibilities of the board?

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2.5 As you see it, is the school board fulfilling its functions and responsibilities? Explain.

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2.6 Do you think there is a need for the school board to undergo any form of training to prepare members to function effectively and efficiently? Elaborate.

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2.7 In which specific areas do you need training to prepare you for effective school governance?

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2.8 Would you be willing to undergo continuous training in the areas in which you feel you need assistance, and how much time would you be willing to sacrifice for such training?

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2.9 How would you describe stakeholder representation on the school board?

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2.10 If it is in your power to bring about changes to the school board, what would those changes be?

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2.11 What are the major challenges that you face as a school board member?

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2.12 Are there any other observations that you have that you think will help your board to function more effectively?

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If you need extra space for answers, please use the back of these sheets, or add extra sheets.

Thank you very much for your participation and for answering the questions so honestly, openly and candidly.

Your responses contain valuable information that will be used to promote the effective and efficient functioning of the school board.

Semi-structured Questionnaire

Semi-structured questionnaire for teaching staff.

Instructions: Please tick the appropriate block under Biographical Data. Please respond to the questions as openly and candidly as possible. All information is valuable for the purpose of this research. Please remember that all information will be treated with strictest the confidence and complete anonymity will be maintained. Besides my supervisor, Prof. Waghid, no one else will have access to any information furnished.

1. **Biographical Data:**

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1 Gender: Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1.2 Marital status: Married | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Female | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.3 Age Group: 18-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1.4 Educational level: Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> | B degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41-50 | <input type="checkbox"/> | M degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Over 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> | D degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.5 Are you a current member of the school board? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.6 Have you served as a board member in the past? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2. In order to assist the researcher to identify areas of concern in which the school board can be assisted to work more effectively and efficiently, please answer the following questions as candidly as possible. In your response, describe the way in which you experience the work of the school board.

2.1 What are your perceptions with regard to the functions and responsibilities of the school board?

.....

2.2 How would you describe the powers of the school board?

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2.3 In your opinion, should the powers of the school board be curtailed or extended? Explain.

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2.4 What type of relationship exists between the school board and the staff?

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2.5 What kind of impact have school board decisions had on the school?

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2.6 How is the school board involved in the governance of the school?

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2.7 What should be the school board's role in the finances of the school?

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2.8 Is there a need for the school board to undergo any training to prepare them to function effectively and efficiently? Elaborate.

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2.9 If the school board needs training, what do think would be the most important areas to concentrate on?

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2.10 If you were chosen as a board member and it is in your power to make changes, what changes would you make?

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2.11 What are your thoughts on representation on the school board?

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2.12 Are there any other observations that you have that you think will help your board to function more effectively?

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If you need extra space for answers, please use the back of these sheets or add more sheets.

Thank you very much for your participation and for answering the questions so honestly, openly, and candidly.

Your responses contain information that will help the board to function more effectively and also help your school to become an excellent school.

APPENDIX D

Responses from interviews with parents

Q #	Questions and responses from parents
1.	Who are the role players that should serve on the school board?
	SCHOOL A
	The majority should be parents, then teachers, and the management.
	SCHOOL B
	If the school and Conference want to make a success they should involve the parents. More parents must be on the board, because you have one person and that person represents the PTA. I do not know how the choosing of the board goes about, but I want to say before choosing they should make people aware that if you are going to serve on the board maybe the bigger issues of hiring and firing, they must also be conversant with the education system. I am not saying that people must be educated but at least people must know one or two or three things.
	SCHOOL C
	One parent said he knew because he was a member in the past but did not mention role players in particular. The rest of the parents were new to the school and did not know the school was operated by a school board.
	SCHOOL D
	The parents mainly and three to five teachers, depending on the size of the school. Most of the parents had no idea that there was a board, let alone who should serve on the board.
	SCHOOL E
	I do not know of anyone or any parents who serve on the board. In terms of transparency there should be parents on the board so that they know what is going on behind the scenes so that you can give your input or you might be missing out on people with skills and expertise that can take the school forward. At least a third should be parents.
2.	How does the board share feedback about decisions that affect the parents of the learners?
	SCHOOL A
	Parents should be informed via a newsletter. If parents feel strongly about something, school uniform for example, the board must play a role. The PTA should have access to the board.
	SCHOOL B
	From past experience the board never communicated with parents, only the school. Nothing has come directly from the board.
	SCHOOL C
	No, the board has not communicated with us. All fundraising drives are organised by the PTA and the staff. Nothing from the board.
	SCHOOL D
	Board has never communicated with the parents. The school communicates by means of letters but nothing has been received from the board.
	SCHOOL E
	Since I have been here nothing. There were staff issues that the board eventually brought to the parents. Because the staff member was dismissed, the board was forced to bring the matter to the parents – there were too many questions regarding the staff member.

3.	Has the board adopted policies and practices in which parents were engaged?
	SCHOOL A
	No, nothing. The prospectus states most of those policies and the rules of conduct of the school.
	SCHOOL B
	I do not know of any such thing. Parents had no input into the disciplinary policy.
	SCHOOL C
	Not really, the principal and staff work on the major policies.
	SCHOOL D
	We have not received anything from the board and have not participated in any discussion.
	SCHOOL E
	I have not. The only policy that I have seen is in the prospectus – but nothing that parents really have a say over. We are basically informed what the policies are. Specifically discipline policy, uniform, code of conduct. All very user friendly, but we would like to question the uniform policy for example. On what was that policy based? When we mentioned what was done at other schools, we were told that this is not “other schools”.
4.	Are you aware of any sub-committees chosen by the board to deal with certain matters pertaining to the school?
	SCHOOL A
	No sub-committees. But if parents feel strongly about something like uniform for example, then the board must play a role.
	SCHOOL B
	Only the PTA chooses sub-committees to work on certain projects, not the board.
	SCHOOL C
	The PTA works with sub-committees not the board. It is important for parents to be members of the PTA to make recommendations to the board.
	SCHOOL D
	The school board has never set up sub-committees that I know of.
	SCHOOL E
	No, we are aware of none. Assume that it was decided by school board no sub-committees. I served on the PTA but no feedback related to sub-committees came from the board to the PTA.
5.	How can you as a parent help the board to function effectively and efficiently?
	SCHOOL A
	Back and forth feedback. Good to know that if there was an issue it is rounded off – isn’t left hanging and one wonders about what has happened. Also as a parent it is easier for me to feed that information back to the board, not rattling. If there are things happening in the classroom, it has to come to light. Good and bad things. As a parent you are in the best position to do that. You’ve got a mouthpiece – the child.
	SCHOOL B
	There are lots of parents with skills and the school board must go to the parents and try to get more parents on the board. Someone must check on the work of the school board.

	SCHOOL C
	There must be some access out of the school board that must be shared with parents. The PTA members who serve on the school board must communicate with the PTA committee who in turn must communicate with the parents on school board matters that affect them.
	SCHOOL D
	As a parent I would suggest that members attend board meetings, support the board and also voice concerns to the school board.
	SCHOOL E
	The PTA should fulfil the role of giving input to the board. Things are mentioned to the school board representative from the PTA and the representative should take it up. We should know who to take an issue up with if the principal is too busy to handle all the issues. Some decisions on the school board should have parent input. The school should inform the parents before the school board meeting takes place and ask for input into some issues. The school is not really open to suggestions, which is why you are not getting so much commitment from parents.
6	What do you think is the school board's role in enhancing learner achievement?
	SCHOOL A
	The board must understand the ethos of the school and what the school is trying to inculcate. The board must buy into that concept and work to foster that ethos. The school board must monitor all the facets of the school – finance, teaching, standard of education.
	SCHOOL B
	The school board must see that the government policies do not affect the school because we are a church school. The board is not open to the parents. The board should guide the school. We do not know who the school board is. There must be meeting where they introduce themselves. The Conference must make time to introduce themselves at a PTA.
	SCHOOL C
	The school board must take a greater responsibility for finances and avoid putting learners out of class.
	SCHOOL D
	The board must inform parents about any decisions taken that affect the children. The board must communicate with parents on matters of concern.
	SCHOOL E
	The board has a big role to play. Besides education, there are issues like textbooks to use, curriculum, what resources the child has access to and events planned by the school. Maybe there should be a change of events and the principal should entertain other suggestions.

Responses from interviews with principals

Q #	Questions and responses from principals
1	How would you describe your role in developing a positive relationship with your school board?
	SCHOOL A
	We actually have a good working relationship. They do not depend entirely on my guidance. If they disagree with us, they will be happy to give their suggestions. The part that worries me, that is more or less entirely up to us is the budget. There are very few people on the board that know terribly much about the budget and that is why we are dependent on the Conference, to their accountant and we're unhappy if he is not there. I may look at it and it looks alright to me, but I am not an accountant. We are happier if there is someone who has come through to look at the budget. Our accountant then leaves it to the Conference accountant to peruse and comment on in the school board.
	SCHOOL B
	I must be able to get on with them, to trust those in authority. I must do what policy says and not go outside the boundaries of policy. The board keeps us in place. I must see that the academic programme runs smoothly, feasible as far as finances are concerned, have our patrons trust us. I must be able to have the board in on this.
	SCHOOL C
	Communicate; you must have an open and honest communication with your school board via e-mails, letters, and personal calls. I give each new school board member a welcome note to make them feel part of the team. I build up a personal relationship in the interest of the school – so that you support each other and do not work against each other. You've got to get all your school board members to think in a positive way.
	SCHOOL D
	I play the most important role because I represent the school and staff. With regard to school board matters I try to communicate as early as possible and carry out decisions that are made. At the same time know them well enough when to take the initiative and when to consult. The difficulty is that each year you have a new set of school board members. One should try to have them appointed for three years at a time. We need to bring our constitution into line.
	SCHOOL E
	Our relationship has not always been constant. It has improved since we had a change of school board chairman. It should be seen as somebody who holds the hands of the school to accomplish what they need to accomplish, but I think the relationship has improved remarkably of late – it has not always been that way.
2	Tell me about the times that you felt the school board was not fulfilling its role.
	SCHOOL A
	I believe the board must be proactive. You won't get anybody to serve on the board. The boards in high schools are not so involved as the boards of primary schools. The problem with many boards is that we have people with no expertise.
	SCHOOL B
	The school board does not always fulfil its role. Proactively the school board gets 5/10. The real impetus with the board is not there. To get board members to be here more often is difficult.
	SCHOOL C

	Currently, yes. I feel I'm right against a brick wall. I need my school board now specifically when the parents indicated that they would like to meet my board and I do not have my school board here. Half my school board is not going to be here tonight. I need the school board to be there in manpower. I do not have a pastor that is coming here tonight and that is not the first time for [School C]. That is one of our biggest problems to get our pastors here. It does not give the organisation a good name. I feel that I do not have the support of the board at this stage. We have three pastors and it would have been nice if they could have attended. It's important for the board to support the school on the social side as well.
	SCHOOL D
	Speaking from experience I decide what goes on the agenda. The chairman does not even sit with me to plan the agenda. There are many things that should be looked at, that are not looked at.
	SCHOOL E
	There is a lack of support at times. It has actually come out in one of the previous meetings that in order for the school board and the school to sell the school to the community, they need an identity. And it has come out that very often the board itself does not really know what their identity is in terms of what their responsibilities are, what their objectives are and where they stand. I think sometimes there is confusion as to what their specific roles are. I think that is an area where the school and the education department of the Conference could definitely improve.
3	How does the school board help you fulfil the vision and mission of the school?
	SCHOOL A
	This board did not help to draw up the vision and mission statement; the previous board did before visit from the Adventist Accrediting Association. Nothing is really done regarding that. The board spends most of its time putting out fires.
	SCHOOL B
	I hope that they are aware of the vision and mission statement. So that they are in line and sync of what we stand for. Broadly they've got the vision and mission statement of the church at large but of the institution I think not. After the Adventist Accrediting Association visit we must take the school board along so that they understand.
	SCHOOL C
	I think it's the way they live their lifestyle. Their participation, willingness to be on the board itself, the interest they show in the children and the school.
	SCHOOL D
	Members have seen the vision and the mission statement but do not relate their actions to that. The board has not inquired as to the philosophy of Adventist education and has not queried the big non-Adventist roll over the SDA. Neither did the Conference question the majority of non-SDA. There has been no audit of baptisms or interest of non-SDAs in the Adventist church.
	SCHOOL E
	Quite honestly it has not been given to them. It's available of course on the internet on our website, but no it has never been given to them per se.
4	Has the board received a copy of the constitution?
	SCHOOL A
	We need a current updated constitution. We have updated current policies.

	SCHOOL B
	We have not revisited the constitution as such. We have not revised over a number of years. It's about twice that we referred to the constitution.
	SCHOOL C
	The board has not received a copy of the constitution; it must still go to the board.
	SCHOOL D
	The board has not looked at the constitution. It needs to be revised.
	SCHOOL E
	The board has never been given a copy of the constitution.
5	Has the school board formally been apprised of its functions and responsibilities?
	SCHOOL A
	No, not that I know of. No. They know they are there to meet when they are told to meet and we listen to every bit of their input.
	SCHOOL B
	Their functions and responsibilities have not been outlined to them. Not many of them know about the operation of the school. Some members are too far removed from the school.
	SCHOOL C
	No, the functions and responsibilities have not really been spelled out to the board.
	SCHOOL D
	No, the school board has not been informed.
	SCHOOL E
	That is a problem because one of the reasons why I have not given them a constitution is because the constitution is outdated, antiquated. I feel it would be ridiculous to hand out a constitution that is still antiquated. References are made to things that do not even apply anymore.
6	Does the school board need training and who should do the training?
	SCHOOL A
	The board needs training but I do not know who. Somebody that's aware of that sort of thing. I do not think training of the board only, anybody that is placed in the position in which I am sitting and I'm talking about previous principals as well. It is a brilliant idea. One would have to find the time to train them. I like the way the government has chosen their members for the past three years.
	SCHOOL B
	The board needs training. All schools need a good governing body. Our school board needs training in finance, how to procure funds, and they do not know very much about the operation of the school. I think that they will be a bit apprehensive because of their other responsibilities. But who will do the training? What will it consist of?
	SCHOOL C
	The school board needs training on the financial side and how to read financial statements correctly. Also to understand their role and how important it is for the representatives to report back to the churches, what is happening at the school. They should know they play a role here. They've got to report back to the churches the positive and the negative. If there is something negative it must come out – don't hide the negative because you can overcome the negative. The Cape Conference should do the training but they support very

	badly. I think that the board will appreciate training. It will give them a better vision and it will help them grow spiritually as well, so that they know that the work they are doing is for the Lord.
	SCHOOL D
	Some would respond positively to training but it would depend on the pastors who chair the nominating committees that choose school board representatives. We can't even find a chairman.
	SCHOOL E
	I am sure that the board would assume its role and responsibility if the Conference and we as principals train our boards more effectively. I must admit that I have done no training. It's a case of give us your names and we move on from there. There has been no training from our part. I'm not sure whose responsibility it is to train the school board. In my mind it should actually be the CAPE Conference Education Director's responsibility. To train the school boards. That person can go to all the school boards and get them together and do the training instead of training one board at a time. I can train our board but where is the emphasis going to be? If the Education Director does it, it will be a uniform thing for all schools.
7	Does the board assess its performance?
	SCHOOL A
	No, we do not even have an instrument.
	SCHOOL B
	No, there is no instrument to do so.
	SCHOOL C
	I don't think I would know where to start with an assessment like that. If there is an instrument you can see these are our strengths and these are our weaknesses. But it is also to revisit your strategic planning all the time. How you have really been growing over the last couple of years. And if you have not grown, the board must tell you. We have a close relationship on our board and we know it is in the interest of the school not ourselves.
	SCHOOL D
	Never, there is no instrument.
	SCHOOL E
	Never done so, in the absence of an instrument to use.
8	Do you have any induction or orientation programme for the school board at the beginning of the school year?
	SCHOOL A
	I have not thought of an induction or orientation programme for school board members, but it is a marvellous idea. Where do find them, I need to put these things in place. I actually find that my board does not ask silly questions I've got a good board at the moment, a balanced board.
	SCHOOL B
	No, we don't have an orientation or induction programme for school board members, but that might work if it is a short period of time.
	SCHOOL C
	No, we do not have an induction or orientation programme for school board members.
	SCHOOL D
	No, we do not have an induction or orientation programme for school board members; maybe we can ask the

	Education Director of the Conference to do it.
	SCHOOL E
	No induction or orientation programme.

Responses from interviews with school board members.

Q #	Questions and responses from school board members
1.	Which aspects of school governance do you find easy to implement?
	SCHOOL A
	I think if your policies and guidelines are in place then you won't have a problem at school board level because you will have a guideline and a plan to follow, a blueprint that can guide you. If that's not in place you keep revisiting and rehashing the same old thing it has been. There isn't a solution because nothing is in place. Those policies need to be updated as well, policies need to be current. Policies need to be ironclad.
	SCHOOL B
	Vote on financial matters and disciplinary issues. The other things are more discussions that we have. With expulsion if there is enough evidence then action will be taken. If procedures are not in place the board would ask that procedures be followed before the matter comes to the next board. Generally the board will vote on sub-committee or get a team to investigate serious financial issues.
	SCHOOL C
	Easy to implement matters relating to the plant e.g. painting. When it comes to matters of the school – discipline, curriculum, planning – the board has very little input. Board would vote disciplinary matters but leave it to the principal to implement. E.g. when it comes to employee there is no decision by the board or Conference. It is emotionally difficult to implement decisions taken by the board. If the finances are communicated well then implementation is not difficult. Sometimes the practicality of certain decisions in specific areas is not easy – e.g. cutting down on photocopying.
	SCHOOL D
	In my opinion, issues pertaining to the budget. The budget is prepared and the board just gives input, and then votes the budget. Members do not have input drawing up the budget. The treasurer draws up the budget and sees to its implementation.
	SCHOOL E
	Most of the things that are discussed are issues that arise that are basically the day-to-day management of the school. If management is done very well it is easy to acknowledge it is done correctly and approve issues. If the budget is balanced and presented – there might be one or two issues where monies have been shifted but if it is done logically, openly and correctly it's no problem to see the correctness and approve it. A difficult issue is to employ a teacher who does not completely meet all the requirements of the Conference. It is a major problem because there is not a pool to choose from. It's a very frustrating process to go through a process but it is not our decision after all. Is there a policy that says only Adventists are to be employed?
2.	What kind of impact has the board had on the school?
	SCHOOL A
	Too new to tell, working things are not in place. The things we struggle with the most are our non-Adventist teachers and how to discipline our children. Because those things are not in place some parents think you can't give my child detention. We just had a case that lasted a year; it's a struggle with these things. Now you need to get a lawyer to come and help you. If we had all the things in place it would be much easier, if those things were in place and if the higher authority had reacted at that particular time. Our problem with this school – there are delayed actions. I'm talking about delays of a year or more – not delayed on our part – we have stopped getting advice from FEDSAS for instance in this case. They told us exactly what to do and we were

	told not to do it – because this terrible Union that we belong to that was going to give us evil thoughts and we were not going to comply with Adventist rules and regulations.
	SCHOOL B
	(No reply for a considerable period of time.) They vote the budget and salaries, they make those decisions. Most financial decisions are made at the beginning of the year – things are normally accepted. The biggest challenge is “as funds are available”. Some board members do not worry whether you get as bonus or not, The staff rep. on the board must fight for the staff. Some people on the board do not have financial knowledge. Most of the people do not know what is going on, on the financial statement. Available people are chosen to the board not necessarily people who know what is going on. Not all members make a contribution on the board.
	SCHOOL C
	Without the board we cannot function. They need to vote on recommendations made by management. Management is important when preparing for the board. The board basically votes on management’s recommendations. It would appear that the school board in the church context is just a sanctioning committee for the management committee. Impression that the board is a sanctioning committee. The board members do not attend meetings. We get up to eight members at a board. The board apart from the chairman does little to implement decisions made – where necessary for board involvement. Pastors have failed us year after year. The problem with board is that pastors should attend.
	SCHOOL D
	There is no clear guidance, no clear document available for board members of our responsibilities toward the school. I would like to have at the beginning of the year clear guidelines, a workshop, this is your role and responsibility and these are issues to be dealt with in the meeting, so that meetings can be more efficient.
	SCHOOL E
	I suppose we did have the fortunate opportunity of sitting on the board last year when we had some legal difficulties. I suppose the way that the board continued to basically support. Night after night the board had to come back and go through the next carefully calculated legal step to make sure we don’t get into trouble at a later stage – saw the dedication of the people returning, it took so much time and frustration certainly opened my eyes. Some came through exams. Just walked into it – spirit the board had to know they had to protect the school. I think we definitely made an impact.
3.	How far should the board concern itself with the day-to-day management of the school?
	SCHOOL A
	The administration committee and management must do that. Our board does not try to manage but I don’t think the board should be given absolute authority at the school and that the Conference as a higher body on our structure should have a role player representative on the board but it should not usurp the power of the board in decision making. If all our legal documentation were in place we could do that. Now nothing is in place we can’t do that. I think the board can be more efficient than it is if its hands were not tied as it often is. The problem is the higher authorities send their representatives but seems as though the representatives are not sure what the policies are. They are not informed because the policies are so outdated. They have way too many loopholes as well.
	SCHOOL B
	The board should be well informed of the school programme – objectives, expectations, and the governance

	<p>programme. There should be a role they must play as far as the programme is agreed on that particular level. There must be some involvement. I don't think we always have that. It does not mean they must be the executive powers of the plans. I do not think they have to be physically to be interested because we can phone, we can send e-mails, those kinds of things. Decisions are made on board; the president cannot always be here. Since last year we had more involvement from the Conference through the education director. The PTA involvement needs to improve. The board needs to involve itself with the day-to-day running of the school but there is a difference between managing and governing. The school must manage.</p>
	SCHOOL C
	None. The pastor pops in now and then, since he is the chairman. Our mailing system makes it easy to communicate with board members.
	SCHOOL D
	Assume school management – principal with his staff sees to the day-to-day. If there are issues beyond that and they need the board then they consult the board. Board handles major plant changes. Management has certain powers to run the school.
	SCHOOL E
	I think the board must let the educators carry on with what they are trained to do and what they are good at and I think under any circumstances should we sort of micro-manage what happens on a day-to-day basis at the school. I also think we are quite fortunate in that the Adventist church is always there to look strategically where we are going and with tactical things that happen on a day-to-day basis it would be ludicrous to get involved in each – we are already busy involved in our own issues – that if we just make sure – steering in the right direction. I suppose that's the job we are supposed to do. We are also fortunate that the Adventist church has very clearly defined goals and it's very easy to keep on heading in that direction and I suppose as long as the educators make sure that we do not hit any rocks along the road and things are done in the right way we do not have to get involved on a day-to-day basis. I do not think we have time for that. I won't have the time to do that. The board should hear reports of day-to-day operations and management. The school board gives direction and looks at bigger issues that must be addressed, and leaves the day-to-day management to the management committee.
4.	Are there functions and responsibilities that the board is carrying out that you feel the administration of the school could deal with?
	SCHOOL A
	Not really. We normally handle all that and then bring things to the board. They give the final yea or nay. Nitty gritty goes to the admin., and management meets before the board on the same day. They look at what is put on the agenda and if they feel they cannot manage a certain thing, they will iron out the problem before it even gets to the school board.
	SCHOOL B
	Sometimes things that should go to the board. Generally the administration does not send things to the board that can be managed on management level. Some disciplinary matters go to the school board that the school really can handle. Things that go to the board are usually things that should go. Five out of ten members on the board are employed by the school.
	SCHOOL C
	The board does nothing. Involvement is in meetings only. Board members are not disinterested but there is

	nothing laid out for them to do. There is no job description for them. There is nothing in black and white as to what a board member should do accepting just to attend. Geographic location plays a major role.
	SCHOOL D
	No response. Board could not think of anything.
	SCHOOL E
	We would say being a church organisation we are the owners of the institution. I think they should provide a list of things that the governing body should address. Where is the standard? What is the benchmark? We all bring our own experience from serving in other organisations. A manual will do very well for us – what the board should address. Culture in schools differs, which means different agenda items.
5.	Do you think there is a need for the school board to undergo any form of training to prepare members to function effectively and efficiently?
	SCHOOL A
	Yes. There are some that probably need training. We need training in policies – the main thing. Training with regard to church policy as well as country – national legislation with regard to education. We are not up to date or clued up with that. Then you can make informed decisions. Especially when we get new board members because they need to get a copy of our constitution, whatever acts and things that we need. The board members need to have that otherwise you can't make good decisions. We do not have anything to give new board members.
	SCHOOL B
	Yes definitely. Need training in finances. How to guide in terms of making sure that the relevant issues are being handled as far as the finances are concerned, such as placing priorities where they belong, and making sure that the school's budget is handled efficiently and that we have understanding about ownership and governance matters pertaining to their role. We definitely can do with training as a board. Meeting procedures as well. We do not really know meeting procedures. The initiator should be the chairman of the board with his secretary. They are not to do the training but the planning. As an individual, what are your responsibilities on the board and how to bring them to fruition when it comes to the school?
	SCHOOL C
	Maybe a little enlightenment as to what their job is. There is a copy of their job description but I have not seen one. Maybe training at some level but the important factor is attendance. At least attend meetings and get to know what is happening. Once people start attending then some guidelines can be given. Orientation would be a great idea. The job description for board members should be sold at church level. The Conference Education Director should be responsible for the training.
	SCHOOL D
	They need training stating clearly their roles and responsibilities. The Conference should do the training. Seems the board does not have power. Issues must be clarified and then the board must act on it. At the beginning of the year the in-coming board needs to have a workshop on roles and responsibilities.
	SCHOOL E
	The person I think who should be responsible for this is the Conference – Education Department. This will improve our function for the future years. Maybe there should be an orientation for the new board members of this year – constitution should be put down and the functions and the office bearer – function of chairman –

	<p>this has this function. I think we should have started with the orientation at the first meeting. There should be an orientation for the new board.</p>
6.	<p>In what particular areas of governance do you need training and who should be responsible for the training?</p>
	<p>SCHOOL A</p>
	<p>Training in policies. Constitution and any acts that we need. Board members need the information so that they can study it. Training in meeting procedures. The Conference Education Director should do the training.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL B</p>
	<p>Training in finances, in governance and meeting procedures. How to guide the school in financial matters and governance pertaining to their role. The chairman of the board should initiate the training.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL C</p>
	<p>Policy, finance, job description, involvement in the school at some level, attendance at school functions. At local church level the minister should guide the nominating committee in the choice of a school board representative.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL D</p>
	<p>No clear guidelines in filling posts. Workshop roles and responsibilities. The board has no idea what is happening at the school. The Conference should do the training.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL E</p>
	<p>Training in the SASA. Training to look at a financial statement then some accounting aspects would make sense. Training to say, look at that, look at that, this is a balance and that is where we get that from. I just check income and expense that's fine. I do not understand it so they can tell me anything. The Conference Education Department should do the training.</p>
7.	<p>How much time would be willing to spend in governance training? Which form should it take?</p>
	<p>SCHOOL A</p>
	<p>One hundred percent of our board members are intelligent, so they just need the information at their fingertips so that they can study it. So when it comes to training they will just have a few questions to ask but I do not think it is going to be a major training session. It might be a sit down with the board and ask questions or a sit down with somebody and ask questions that you know. That will be after they have studied the relevant documents as to the whys and the wherefores. Perhaps a discussion forum where the relevant documentation is there and we go through it.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL B</p>
	<p>There should be ongoing training in regular sessions.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL C</p>
	<p>Two to three hours is more than enough. Can be done on an area basis in the form of a workshop or seminar with a question-and-answer session.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL D</p>
	<p>A workshop saying these are your roles and responsibilities. Once a month or quarter.</p>
	<p>SCHOOL E</p>
	<p>We could take advantage of the promotion of Christian Education in one of the churches. Say for instance it's "Christian Education Day" in the "All Nations church". The person who would administer the training would</p>

	come and do a general church programme as a seminar, and then the board members have to be there because it is meant for them but at the same time it benefits the congregation at large. They would know exactly what the functions of the governing body are. They could save time if they did a Sabbath seminar. In that way the congregation would also know about the board and its functions.
8.	How representative should the board be?
	SCHOOL A
	The school constitution gives you the guidelines as to who should be on the board. Learners should be represented and I do not mind more than 50% parents. One third of the board is parents. A fatal flaw is how parents are elected to the board. The principal, administration committee and teachers would be in the best position to elect parents to the board.
	SCHOOL B
	The board is well represented. There are parents and learners on the board. The board is not balanced. There are three parents on the board but they do not attend. The school and Conference make up the bulk of the board. There are five school representatives on the board.
	SCHOOL C
	Not many people pitch for board meetings. There is a representative from each church but they do not pitch. We are happy with three parents on the board.
	SCHOOL D
	Why can't we consider the possibility of getting more parents on the board? The Adventist school is run by the SDA churches – the churches contribute so they have a say in the running of the school. The president of the Conference was spoken to, to get pastors to the boards but nothing materialised. The pastors are not interested; therefore the church members will not be interested in sending their children to the school.
	SCHOOL E
	I looked at the Act and it emphasises the representation of parents more than anyone else. In our case, what was the process in electing a governing body? We do not know the constitution of the governing body. We do have female representation. We must attempt to get more females on board. Traditionally it was just males.
9.	Who is the school board accountable to and for what?
	SCHOOL A
	We should be accountable to the school, the parent body, the learners and the school body. We should be accountable for the finances number one, the curriculum, results, effective discipline, and the whole plant.
	SCHOOL B
	The Conference, parents, learners, especially the needs of the learners. We should be accountable for realising objectives and goals of the school and also govern effectively and efficiently.
	SCHOOL C
	We are accountable to God, the churches, Conference, learners and all the role players. We are accountable for the curriculum, vehicles, everything pertaining to the school. Governing effectively and efficiently and see that every facet of the school runs smoothly.
	SCHOOL D
	We are accountable to the Conference, the state, stakeholders, parents, ensure the principal and staff the freedom to run the school.

	SCHOOL E
	<p>We are accountable to the school. This is sometimes where the management gets it wrong, we are civil servants and we serve the school. We must act in the best interests of the school. Good to hear that people are passionate about protecting the school and not harming the school. I think what is relevant is what are we accountable for? We must evaluate ourselves and see what the standard is. We are accountable to God, the parents; we are the image of the school. We are accountable for financial performance, enrolment, organisation culture, and leadership. We must take ownership of the school.</p>

Responses from interviews with staff members.

Q#	Questions and responses from staff members
1.	What would you say are the most important functions of the board?
	SCHOOL A
	Good representation of staff and parents. Run school and if there are any disciplinary problems, managing the problems as well as financial problems. We should be able to deal with that or address it. Strategic planning – that's what your vision and mission are all about. Originates with governing body.
	SCHOOL B
	To provide overall vision, long-term and short-term benefits. The board is limited in terms of access to information. People are not as transparent as they should be, is it a power game? Is it a privileged position where you do not divulge crucial information that people should scrutinise? Serving on the board means you are off limits. Teachers make no input to the board. Teachers' voices are not heard – no feedback or limited feedback from the board.
	SCHOOL C
	Knowledgeable enough to make sensible decisions for the school – assist with the smooth running of the school. See to staff appointments and disciplinary actions.
	SCHOOL D
	Make policies for the school, so that the school can run orderly and that everybody that is on the school board understands the policies of the school and knows the policies of the school. Teachers, finance, physical plant, teachers trained and qualified.
	SCHOOL E
	The school board is the boss of the boss. The school belongs to the governing body. Makes big decisions regarding appointments, salaries, large financial issues. Exercise control over finances.
2	Are there matters handled by the school board that can adequately be handled by the school?
	SCHOOL A
	The board is inhibited by a lack of information. There should be interface between the board and staff. The board is given one side of everything. The board needs to be available to the staff.
	SCHOOL B
	Many times the DC recommends to the board e.g. expulsion but the board takes the child back without taking into account the many warnings the child has had and in turn tells the school they did not follow procedure. It is better for the school to handle, but the school board does not inform the school of the process to follow.
	SCHOOL C
	The board has no interest in the school. Pastor X takes an interest, but the board is extremely inactive. The staff governs and manages the school.
	SCHOOL D
	There are times. The most important things the board sees to are staffing and budgets.
	SCHOOL E
	The most important things are handled by the board – appointments, salaries, large financial issues.

3	Would you say the functions are carried out effectively and efficiently?
	SCHOOL A
	In some ways, yes. Problem with the trust factor. Things are decided for friends – benefits, houses and so on. That’s where the trust falls flat. Generally doing well but just the trust factor – not always sure about decisions being made. They want everybody to agree with them. School board does fulfil its function because we’re running, but they do not have a well-communicated goal that we can say oh! Our school board is doing this – we know they are doing something but don’t know what the goal is. It’s running but how effective is it? Subjects offered show lack of strategic planning. There’s a bit of improvement over the last two years. We are not planning ahead, just trying to keep going. No, especially the teachers on the board. The board should be informed – many are volunteers but not active members.
	SCHOOL B
	Effectively in terms of the authority they have from the board, but effective in running the school – no.
	SCHOOL C
	No. A definite no! I do not think so. I think it is time we looked at the way we are instructed to make up our boards. The old way of appointing boards is not feasible.
	SCHOOL D
	No. We do not know what the constitution says. We have no copy of the school’s policies. The board does not know what they are supposed to do. They do not know their functions. The previous principal told them what their functions are but he is gone and the policies have gone with him. The churches do not know what the functions of the board members are. The board members are not educated about what they are coming to do here. They know nothing about the curriculum, finance, budgeting. They just come to ask questions.
	SCHOOL E
	They must be more involved in the finances of the school. They must know what is happening on a monthly basis with income and expenditure. There must be some control by the board. Policies are so old already they have been - pink file policies, those things we go through every year. If there’s a new one to be set up, we set it up and then get taken to the board. When the board makes a decision we do not argue with the board. When the principal comes back and says the board has made this decision, we accept it. We have the right to question it if we want to, but we accept it as it is. I think trust is very important. We trust our deputy head, we trust our principal, we trust our system in the school, and we trust our board.
4	How often have you as a staff interacted with the board?
	SCHOOL A
	School board does not know what is happening in the school. The board lacks communication and transparency. We do not know who is on the board. The board only rubber stamps.
	SCHOOL B
	No. We only interact with the principal. Only know there are board meetings. Change needs to come.
	SCHOOL C
	No interaction whatsoever. The board is extremely inactive.
	SCHOOL D
	They just come to meetings and that’s it. The board is not involved in fundraising; they initiated nothing for the school. The board does absolutely nothing. Everything handled by principal and staff. The staff knows

	some of the board members but not all. Board does not know that they can be sued as a board. Educators do not know where they stand with the Conference and Union. Decisions made by the board are not passed on to the staff. We want to know what the board is allowed to do.
	SCHOOL E
	I do not know the school board. We know some of them. If you were to ask me now, I would not know who is on the board. I know the principal, vice-principal and treasurer. I do not know; it's an unknown confidentiality. I've never asked who is on the board and I've never been told. It's never been given to you as a teacher. It's only when you're in an admin. capacity that you know how the whole cog turns in the management of schools.
5	What are your thoughts on representation on the school board?
	SCHOOL A
	Make sure representation is Adventist. Admin. Committee, principal, deputy, two or three staff then parents should serve on the board. Keep the school in line with Adventist policy. We do not have a constitution that spells out membership. There is no sound way of appointing certain member to the school board. Care should be taken as to who is appointed to the board. Cliques run the school and only certain things are taken to the board.
	SCHOOL B
	We are guided by the constitution. Should there be a small representation of non-SDA on the board? The PTA and the Alumni should be represented on the board.
	SCHOOL C
	It would be fantastic if you had a person from supporting churches who takes an interest in education – passion for Christian education and they drive it at the church. The Conference needs to look at grouping the churches that support the school. The old groupings do not work. Earmark people and invite them to sit on the board. It is a battle to get a quorum, to get representatives and ministers to attend. We need to open our board to non-Adventist parents.
	SCHOOL D
	We have no say how the board is constituted, but we feel they must be orientated about the policies of the school, they must know everything. We only have SDA representatives. We have more non-SDA than SDA learners. We should have more non-SDAs on the board.
	SCHOOL E
	In our setup the church board members and Conference members sometimes do not have children in the school anymore so they do not have a love for the school or any interest. If you have parents involved in the school they want things for their children, so they are willing to plough back into the school. People on the board do not have children in the school so they do not see the need. Parents that can really make a contribution must be on the school board. We can't have parents on the school board that do not have children in the school. They must have a connection. Our boards lack people with expertise in key areas.
6	Does the school board need training and what should the training entail?
	SCHOOL A
	Yes, they need training in policy and what their role is. The principal should do the training. Can be weekend training in the form of a seminar.

	SCHOOL B
	The board needs professional training. Everybody needs training, even learners on the board need training. We assume that we know the functions and responsibilities.
	SCHOOL C
	Yes, so that they know what's expected of them. If they can't meet it, they can withdraw and we can get someone else. They need training in all areas. They must know what they let themselves in for when they are asked to serve on the school board. Give them a job description.
	SCHOOL D
	They need training in everything that pertains to the school including education, policies, and curriculum, how the budget is applied, how committees are elected. They do not know a thing. Church should be educated how to choose a school board member.
	SCHOOL E
	They need training in values and sit-in experience when it comes to the classes – not to assess us but to observe interaction with the children and the teachers. Actually what it involves to be in a classroom. They are all busy with their own jobs but if they have taken on a responsibility and commitment to the school then they must do their homework. Legal training needed. Get the most educated to serve on the board so you won't need so much training.
7	How far does the board involve itself in the smooth running of the school?
	SCHOOL A
	We can't hold the board responsible for decisions because they have not been informed. The school board does not know what is happening in the school. Selective information is given to the board. I feel positive about what is happening on the board at present but transparency is definitely needed.
	SCHOOL B
	We have no idea. We only hear announcements that there are board meetings. Do not know who serves on the board. Change needs to come about at the school.
	SCHOOL C
	They must know something about the school. Some people sit on the board and have nothing to offer. Some do not come anyhow. The church representatives on the board should go back to their churches and tell the church about the needs and problems in the school. They represent the school at the church and must promote the school.
	SCHOOL D
	The board is not governing. We can't even find a chairman. Nobody wants to be chairman.
	SCHOOL E
	We go with all the decisions made by the board. We trust the board.
8	How effectively are the decisions made by the school board carried out?
	SCHOOL A
	We are not always sure about decisions; there is a lack of communication.
	SCHOOL B
	We would not know, we do not get a report back. The staff must dig for information regarding decisions made by the board. We had some report back by two staff representatives.

	SCHOOL C
	They do not make decisions. We make decisions and recommendations, they just vote it. The staff governs and manages. The board needs training.
	SCHOOL D
	The board does absolutely nothing.
	SCHOOL E
	The principal tells us what has been decided. If there is something that we have against it then we discuss it. He will tell us decisions that the board has made and sometimes we have the right to veto a decision.

APPENDIX E

Responses to questionnaire from parents.

			Responses to questionnaire - parents
Resp.#	Pop.	Q#	Questions and responses
		2.1	Are you aware of the fact that the school is governed by a school board? How did you come to this knowledge?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.1	Yes. Prior to enrolling my child – at the open day held for prospective new learners to the school – school principal informed all new parents about it. Also when I had a one-on-one interview with the school principal prior to my child’s enrolment at the school.
2	Par.	2.1	Yes, every school has a school board.
3	Par.	2.1	Yes, having been employed by the SDA church for 15 years assisting at four primary schools in the Western Cape.
4	Par.	2.1	Yes. School prospectus.
5	Par.	2.1	Yes. When I applied the school board had a meeting and accepted my son.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.1	Yes, from one of the parents.
2	Par.	2.1	Yes, I am aware that the school is governed by the school board; I came to be aware through my interaction with the school and during the course of my work.
3	Par.	2.1	I was involved with it at some stage as a rep. on the board and as an SDA I got to know it.
4	Par.	2.1	Yes.
5	Par.	2.1	Yes, from PTA.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.1	Yes, my old high school had one.
2	Par.	2.1	Yes! I ask questions about things concerning my family and kids’ schooling.
3	Par.	2.1	Yes, via the school PTA and school principal.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.1	No response.
2	Par.	2.1	No.
3	Par.	2.1	Just from general knowledge.
4	Par.	2.1	I normally visit public and private schools as my work requires and assist where there are disputes that is when I became aware.
5	Par.	2.1	I am aware, because I am an ex-teacher.
6	Par.	2.1	No response.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.1	Yes. When applying for my child at school a review was being done by the board. Also had a little trouble with child adapting to new school and the school board was involved.
2	Par.	2.1	Yes. While serving on the PTA, I was made aware of decisions that are governed by the school board.
3	Par.	2.1	Yes. Growing up, my father formed part of church boards and through hearing various

			discussions, heard of the running of the school.
4	Par.	2.1	Yes, I am aware that the school is governed by a school board. I was informed of this by one of the teachers at the school.
		2.2	Can you furnish me with some names of school board members?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.2	Respondent could mention one name.
2	Par.	2.2	Respondent could mention one name.
3	Par.	2.2	Respondent could name several members.
4	Par.	2.2	No. Respondent knew no names.
5	Par.	2.2	No.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.2	No.
2	Par.	2.2	Respondent could mention most of board members.
3	Par.	2.2	Respondent could indicate clearly who serves on the school board.
4	Par.	2.2	Respondent knows who serves on the school board.
5	Par.	2.2	Respondent could furnish at least three names.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.2	No, I do not know who they are.
2	Par.	2.2	Respondent knows who some of the board members are.
3	Par.	2.2	Respondent knows who serves on the board.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.2	No response.
2	Par.	2.2	Respondent managed to give two names, one who did not serve at all.
3	Par.	2.2	Do not know.
4	Par.	2.2	No response.
5	Par.	2.2	I do not know them by name but I know the chairperson physically.
6	Par.	2.2	No response.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.2	Respondent knew two members.
2	Par.	2.2	Respondent named three members.
3	Par.	2.2	Respondent has good knowledge of members.
4	Par.	2.2	Respondent mentioned three names.
		2.3	Who do you think should be represented on the school board?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.3	Parents, teachers, administrative staff members.
2	Par.	2.3	Any parent willing to serve.
3	Par.	2.3	More than 50% SDA members. Parent representation, learner representation.
4	Par.	2.3	Majority parent representation and teacher representation.
5	Par.	2.3	Parents and school teachers.

			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.3	Parents, school, children.
2	Par.	2.3	Parties that should make up the school board may include church representatives, school administration representative, school staff representation (teaching and non-teaching), parents and student representation.
3	Par.	2.3	Learners, teachers, staff and contract workers, parents, local churches.
4	Par.	2.3	The structure as is gives representation of all role players. Maybe more parent representation.
5	Par.	2.3	Parents, learners, teachers, administration.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.3	Parents.
2	Par.	2.3	Parents, teachers, conference, union members.
3	Par.	2.3	The parents, staff and churches.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.3	No response.
2	Par.	2.3	Parents concerned can be raised and heard.
3	Par.	2.3	Parents.
4	Par.	2.3	Parents, the principal and members from the community.
5	Par.	2.3	Parents, teachers, and learners.
6	Par.	2.3	Teachers. Parents, possible sponsors.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.3	The principal, secretary, about 2-3 teachers and parent representatives.
2	Par.	2.3	Financial investors, alumni staff, church representation, parent reps., school teachers and principal.
3	Par.	2.3	Parent representatives, staff representatives, investors/funding representatives, Education Dept. representatives.
4	Par.	2.3	The principal, a few chosen parents, teachers.
		2.4	Explain, according to your understanding, what the functions of the school board are.
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.4	Administer school funds etc.; Protect and improve school property; school's image; etc.; address issues around collection of school fees etc.; address and put legal structures in place to protect and ensure safety of learners.
2	Par.	2.4	To collect money and to bring about improvements in the school.
3	Par.	2.4	Monitor, manage and take ultimate responsibility for the successful running of the school.
4	Par.	2.4	Effective management.
5	Par.	2.4	For the financial side, rules, etc.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.4	Make key decisions around school governance.
2	Par.	2.4	The functions may include guiding and aligning the school to state and church policies

			and statutes. Setting long- and short-term goals and objectives. School development and day-to-day running of the school.
3	Par.	2.4	Conflict resolution in our schools and advisory roles. Audit of all systems (monitoring).
4	Par.	2.4	To advise admin. on management; to give guidance on policy matters; provide resources and training for staff members; to administrate needs of staff members.
5	Par.	2.4	Governs and make policies for school.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.4	Seeing to the overall running of the school.
2	Par.	2.4	See to correct functioning of school, guidance.
3	Par.	2.4	To maintain the school funds so that school can remain liquid; to formulate policy for the school; to control fully the operating of the school.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.4	No response.
2	Par.	2.4	To assist with non-educational activities of the school, ensure that planned activities do take place, to be the voice of the parents.
3	Par.	2.4	See to full running of school and their finances.
4	Par.	2.4	To adopt a code of conduct for learners at school, adopt a constitution, support principal, control the school property, buildings and grounds.
6	Par.	2.4	It is to assist in the smooth running of the school and look after the interests of the school.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.4	Without a school board a school cannot function well. The school board is there to make decisions that are best for the school and the children attending at school.
2	Par.	2.4	To make governing decisions that will determine how the school is run and to ensure a high standard is maintained. To ensure the finances are being utilised wisely.
3	Par.	2.4	To oversee the running of the school in the broader sense. To make major decisions regarding finances /staff appointments and to handle major issues regarding discipline or misconduct on the part of staff/learners/ parents as related to the school.
4	Par.	2.4	To see to the day-to-day running of the school, payment of salaries, etc.
		2.5	In your understanding of the functions of the school board, do you think that they are functioning effectively? Why or why not?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.5	I am a new parent at the school since Jan. 2012.
2	Par.	2.5	It seems as if the school is well managed after a report rendered by one of the school board members.
3	Par.	2.5	Yes, although not sufficient representation and regular attendees.
4	Par.	2.5	Not really aware of inputs.
5	Par.	2.5	Yes.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.5	Not able to answer.
2	Par.	2.5	They are functioning effectively; however, there is room for improvement.

3	Par.	2.5	Yes, they attend meetings and resolve <u>some</u> issues. No – they meet for a short time and are not fully represented at times. There is need for improvement.
4	Par.	2.5	Much time is devoted to issues that could be handled administratively, but since quarterly meetings are held it becomes necessary.
5	Par.	2.5	To some extent.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.5	Have not yet seen them in action as yet. I am a new parent at the school.
2	Par.	2.5	Yes. At this school it is good. Things are good, stable, controlled and disciplined.
3	Par.	2.5	Yes, having served on the board I can honestly report that we as a board have met these functions.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.5	No response.
2	Par.	2.5	So far they have not been as effective as they should because only two meetings have been held and out of the two only one meeting was attended by parents.
3	Par.	2.5	Do not know.
4	Par.	2.5	Yes. They are effective for the smooth running of the school and its governance.
5	Par.	2.5	I cannot say but I can assume that they are functioning effectively because there are no problems at school.
6	Par.	2.5	Yes, when there is enough support from teachers, parents, and students.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.5	Yes. To me they functioning perfectly, sure they must have their internal issues but in the end decisions made are done in the interest of the school.
2	Par.	2.5	Yes, as the school has a reputation of maintaining a high standard and fairness to all.
3	Par.	2.5	Yes, but I am new in the schooling system as a parent and have not had too much to do with the board or decisions made by them, to be able to answer effectively
4	Par.	2.5	I think the school board is functioning effectively. All news concerning the school is communicated to the parents.
		2.6	How have you interacted with board over the past twelve months?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.6	I am a new parent.
2	Par.	2.6	No response
3	Par.	2.6	Regular attendance.
4	Par.	2.6	No.
5	Par.	2.6	No.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.6	No interaction.
2	Par.	2.6	I have had no direct interaction so far.
3	Par.	2.6	Through the school report.
4	Par.	2.6	The only way is to write letters pertaining to educator's needs. Through the educator rep.
5	Par.	2.6	None.

			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.6	Not yet interacted with them.
2	Par.	2.6	Asking questions about matters and has become a member.
3	Par.	2.6	By attending a board meeting with active participation.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.6	No response.
2	Par.	2.6	Yes.
3	Par.	2.6	Never.
4	Par.	2.6	I have not interacted with them.
5	Par.	2.6	I did not.
6	Par.	2.6	Have not interacted and that is because of my unavailability.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.6	I can just praise God that my child has settled down and is all good. The school board assistance in whatever it may be pertaining to my child was helpful.
2	Par.	2.6	Yes, when needing to explain and ask for understanding regarding my late payment of school fees.
3	Par.	2.6	My dealings have been with the principal and not with the board as a whole.
4	Par.	2.6	No.
		2.7	Have you received any correspondence from the school board via the school, to participate in any activity planned by the board? Mention the activity and state whether the correspondence stated it was an activity planned by the school board.
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.7	No response
2	Par.	2.7	Notified via sms about a swim-a-thon.
3	Par.	2.7	No activity planned by the board per se.
4	Par.	2.7	No.
5	Par.	2.7	No.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.7	No.
2	Par.	2.7	There has not been any correspondence.
3	Par.	2.7	Can't remember.
4	Par.	2.7	No.
5	Par.	2.7	No.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.7	Not yet.
2	Par.	2.7	Yes. To help on PTA. Now I am a member.
3	Par.	2.7	No.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.7	No response.

2	Par.	2.7	Yes, the fete planned for the end of May. (Actually planned by school not board.)
3	Par.	2.7	No.
4	Par.	2.7	No response.
5	Par.	2.7	None.
6	Par.	2.7	None so far.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.7	We get a lot of invitations. We do not always attend as it is out of our way but we ask family close by to support.
2	Par.	2.7	No.
3	Par.	2.7	No.
4	Par.	2.7	Not that I can recall.
		2.8	Why do you think parents should serve on the school board?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.8	To bring the needs of the learners as well as bring positive contributions to the school board's attention. Encourage good/better relationships between parents and school board. Assist with improving general functioning of school, facilities, etc.
2	Par.	2.8	So that parents can be aware of what happens behind the scenes.
3	Par.	2.8	It is their school.
4	Par.	2.8	More direct input.
5	Par.	2.8	For the sake of their children.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.8	To bring an objective point of view "external".
2	Par.	2.8	Parents should serve on the school board so that they can represent the interests of the parents in the decision-making process.
3	Par.	2.8	To represent thoughts and ideas and concerns of all parents as they are also stakeholders.
4	Par.	2.8	With the new governance structure of the Education Ministry in the country, it is compelled to allow parents to be part of the decision making. Parents rightfully trained can have a positive effect on the school. It will have insight into discipline and related problems and they can assist better than any other role players.
5	Par.	2.8	Parents are one of the stakeholders of the school.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.8	They have vested interest in the school.
2	Par.	2.8	Students/pupils make up who the school is. Parents are critical role players.
3	Par.	2.8	Without their input the school will battle to function fully; parents also need to take "ownership" of the running of the school.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.8	No response.
2	Par.	2.8	To ensure that the funds raised are used for what they are planned for and that the conditions of the school are satisfactory.
3	Par.	2.8	To represent themselves and children's interests.
4	Par.	2.8	To be part of the decisions made at school as they have children in the school.

5	Par.	2.8	Parents are the stakeholders at school.
6	Par.	2.8	To represent the interests of the parents, to get a better idea of what the school's plans are for the kids.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.8	Then the school has a view from a parent's side when decisions are to be made.
2	Par.	2.8	To raise issues/concerns that parents may have regarding decisions that are made that affect them.
3	Par.	2.8	Parents form an integral part of a school. It is important for parents to feel that they have a say in their child's education and that their needs and their children's needs are met to the best of the board's abilities.
4	Par.	2.8	To represent the views and concerns of the parent body.
		2.9	Have you been informed of any policies developed by the school board, if so, which policies?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.9	No response.
2	Par.	2.9	No response.
3	Par.	2.9	Financial policies relating to school fees.
4	Par.	2.9	No.
5	Par.	2.9	No.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.9	None.
2	Par.	2.9	I have not had any information.
3	Par.	2.9	Can't remember.
4	Par.	2.9	No.
5	Par.	2.9	No.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.9	None at the moment.
2	Par.	2.9	No response.
3	Par.	2.9	Not that I can recall during my time at the school.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.9	No response.
2	Par.	2.9	No.
3	Par.	2.9	No.
4	Par.	2.9	No response.
5	Par.	2.9	No.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.9	Yes. The school's policies are given to you when applying by them. Just recently the time of school hours was adjusted.
2	Par.	2.9	I am unable to recall any at this time.
3	Par.	2.9	No new policies, but the board decided on dress codes, discipline guides etc. as laid out in the prospectus.

4	Par.	2.9	Not that I can recall.
		2.10	Do you think there can be a closer relationship between the school board and the parents?
			SCHOOL A
1	Par.	2.10	I have not been at the school long enough to answer this question.
2	Par.	2.10	Yes. The school board must make more contact with the parents.
3	Par.	2.10	Definitely – more parental input; open door policy of management.
4	Par.	2.10	No relationship. Improve communication via regular newsletters.
5	Par.	2.10	Yes. When the school board can let the parents know when there is a board.
			SCHOOL B
1	Par.	2.10	Yes. Through ongoing communication and visibility of school’s activities and key issues.
2	Par.	2.10	Yes. There can be a closer relationship between school board and parents. The relationship can be fostered by means of a constant, constructive and objective interaction.
3	Par.	2.10	Yes, meetings can be held on a Sunday where majority of stakeholders can participate and more time can be found to exhaust issues.
4	Par.	2.10	Yes. More parent involvement. Survey of parent expertise and willingness to help. If parents are acknowledged they will continue to support. Have parents on all committees at school.
5	Par.	2.10	Yes. More parents as board members, at least five, and more PTA meetings.
			SCHOOL C
1	Par.	2.10	Yes. The board needs to be more visible. Maybe attend one of the Parents’ and Teachers’ meetings.
2	Par.	2.10	No, the school maintains a good, tight relation already – communication and intentions are communicated well.
3	Par.	2.10	I do think that things are working reasonably well. I do feel that we need to make the PTA more function orientated.
			SCHOOL D
1	Par.	2.10	By having meetings in each term. Be part of excursions.
2	Par.	2.10	Yes. Often and more communication and evaluation of the board by the parents based on the outcomes or achievement as per yearly plan.
3	Par.	2.10	By regular meetings.
4	Par.	2.10	Yes, by always updating the parents about any activities and developments at school level.
5	Par.	2.10	Yes, school activities such as fundraisers, awareness days, etc.
6	Par.	2.10	Yes, if people like me would try harder.
			SCHOOL E
1	Par.	2.10	The school board can actually every year introduce themselves to parents at a meeting. A closer relationship than this school and parents I am sure you won’t get.

2	Par.	2.10	Yes, by asking parents to voice their opinions/concerns re. matters relating to the school or decisions made by the school board.
3	Par.	2.10	There should be a very close relationship but it is difficult as so many parents are working and don't have time or energy to serve on committees or be involved in the running of the school. Not sure how to achieve this goal.
4	Par.	2.10	No response.

Par = Parents

Responses to questionnaire from principals

Responses to questionnaire - Principals			
Resp. #	Pop.	Q #	Questions and responses
		2.1	How would you describe your relationship with the board?
P1	SC A	2.1	Very good.
P2	SC B	2.1	Always viewed the board as the authority on all matters concerning school governance.
P3	SC C	2.1	An open and mutual trust between administration and board. I must say it is a privilege to be part of my school board. The trust they put in me makes me feel worthy to be the principal of the school. I would like the board to be more involved and support the school in financial decisions on a weekly basis. Just to come in and pray with the staff will be great.
P4	SC D	2.1	With the local church school board representatives and staff who serve on the board the relationship is very good. There is often misunderstanding with the financial manager whose office is off campus and who serves other schools also.
P5	SC E	2.1	Have a good relationship with the board. Have found them to be supportive of school and always willing to offer assistance when necessary.
		2.2	How do you think the board understands its role?
P1	SC A	2.2	Well. Board members as a whole are educated and dedicated to Christian education. The higher powers need to expedite decisions made by the board.
P2	SC B	2.2	Those that are elected and serve for a period of two/three years get to understand their role fairly well. But those members that are chosen yearly /annually do not always understand their function well. Induction/briefing is important.
P3	SC C	2.2	Not very well. They know they have to attend these meetings according to church and school policy but they definitely don't know the importance of the role they need to and must play to run a school efficiently.
P4	SC D	2.2	We have a very small board but have well-informed members.
P5	SC E	2.2	I perceive that the board underestimates the role which it should be playing/is playing. Whilst I may lead the school, the board should be a supportive consultative role. I am not entirely sure that they see it this way though.
		2.3	Describe the ways in which the school board provides a sense of direction for the school.
P1	SC A	2.3	They support us in our decisions but are also frustrated by higher organisation's delayed actions.
P2	SC B	2.3	The school board serves to be the eye to see to it that that school functions/operates well. Members that are affiliated with the school must report on the running of the school. The board must then direct where it is needed.
P3	SC C	2.3	Our school board trusts the recommendations made by management and with very little discussion they will vote a recommendation. They will however provide direction

			regarding the spending of big amounts of money and the upgrading of the school.
P4	SC D	2.3	The approval of the budget, the appointment of new staff, scrutinising the AAA recommendations
P5	SC E	2.3	Direction in terms of offering sound financial advice; Historically the board needed to deal with an extremely aggressive, “picky” parent last year (2011). The Board sacrificed many hours of their time in consultation in order to resolve this matter.
		2.4	How knowledgeable is the board regarding the work of the school?
P1	SC A	2.4	We inform them of most aspects regarding the work of the school.
P2	SC B	2.4	The school board composition is such that all have a fair knowledge of the work of the school.
P3	SC C	2.4	They know very little.
P4	SC D	2.4	There are board members who are involved in school administration. Most are knowledgeable about the work of the school.
P5	SC E	2.4	I perceive that the board is not always up to date with the current, latest educational trends. This does sometimes hamper them in decisions which they need to make. Some board members are not au fait with educational trends at all. They are there as representatives. This is a challenge! Training/exposure would be advantageous, to be provided by the Cape Conference Education Director.
		2.5	Does the school board understand its functions and responsibilities as outlined in the constitution? Explain.
P1	SC A	2.5	The present constitution does not really outline the functions and responsibilities.
P2	SC B	2.5	The school board does not always get to see or study the constitution. This might lead to misconceptions with regard to responsibilities and functions.
P3	SC C	2.5	No – churches choose the last person to represent the church on the school board.
P4	SC D	2.5	A new constitution will be presented at the next board for approval, which will contribute to board members having a clearer understanding of their functions and responsibilities.
P5	SC E	2.5	No, I don’t think so. The board members have not even been given a copy of a constitution, as our version is antiquated. Our board painstakingly designed an updated constitution, passed it on to the CC and they did not approve it. We therefore still operate with an outdated constitution.
		2.6	How involved is the school board in strategic planning and the overall vision of the school?
P1	SC A	2.6	Not very – area which could be addressed.
P2	SC B	2.6	The school board meets every quarter and although it does not come together to plan strategically, the staff gives input at planning sessions.
P3	SC C	2.6	Very little – admin does strategic planning and board just votes and trusts that admin made the correct decisions.
P4	SC D	2.6	Strategic planning is left to the principal and staff. The board is not involved in drawing plans. Whatever activities the staff proposes the board either approves or rejects.
P5	SC E	2.6	Not involved at all. Appears as if that aspect is left to the management to handle.

			Problem is that this essential component is neglected, due to time constraints.
		2.7	How often does the school board assess its own performance?
P1	SC A	2.7	Never.
P2	SC B	2.7	It hardly gets together to do this.
P3	SC C	2.7	Since I've become principal – never...sad to say this.
P4	SC D	2.7	There is no instrument being used currently to measure the performance of the board.
P5	SC E	2.7	The school board has never done an assessment of its own performance since I have been principal of HBPS (June 2001). This is regrettable, as it appears as if they are there because they've been nominated, going through the motions till they are replaced.
		2.8	Would you recommend training for the school board? Why?
P1	SC A	2.8	Yes – need to understand financial statement, and be introduced to the way the school is run.
P2	SC B	2.8	Yes. This will inevitably have a positive spin-off in knowing their functions and responsibilities.
P3	SC C	2.8	Yes, yes and yes. The school board should play a more important role, should be more involved in the running of the school. Someone with exceptional financial skills should be part of the board.
P4	SC D	2.8	Yes. There are many changes in the field of education which the board needs to be made aware of.
P5	SC E	2.8	Yes! Most definitely. Many board members are not familiar with how the school operates and with what their rights and responsibilities are. Training would certainly empower them a lot more.
		2.9	What kind of training would be beneficial to the school board?
P1	SC A	2.9	Financial and understanding financial statements, SAU working policy and general administration of the school.
P2	SC B	2.9	Governance/how the school operates, finances – money matters are crucial to any institution, procurement, plant, maintenance, etc.
P3	SC C	2.9	Their role as a member of the board. The part that they should play. To promote the school and very important to get sponsorship and financial support from companies in order for admin to concentrate on the educational side of the school.
P4	SC D	2.9	Reading of financial statements. Latest developments in the field of education and the consequences to the school especially financial. Changes in legislation relating to schools.
P5	SC E	2.9	Responsibilities and rights of school board members. Reading/understanding a financial statement or report. Brief synopsis of Child Protection Act in terms of abuse. Latest educational trends, e.g. CAPS, Orientation session.
		2.10	If training is needed, how often should it be done and why?
P1	SC A	2.10	As often as there are new members.
P2	SC B	2.10	Initial training for incumbents but then two-yearly if it can't be done yearly. A stacked programme does not allow for too many sessions (training).
P3	SC C	2.10	At least once a year depending on the needs of the school and the efficiency of the

			board. Once the board members know their important role in the running of the school, they should and would be more motivated to support the school.
P4	SC D	2.10	Possibly at each meeting of the board – short presentations by experts. It would mean efficient organisation by the secretary of the board to provide information to board members before meetings so that decisions may be taken quickly.
P5	SC E	2.10	Will have to be done at random and as situation arises. I think that an intensive session of training at commencement of year would not be wise as members are professional people with limited time resources. Rather tackle training as need arises.
		2.11	In your opinion, would school board members be interested in training? Explain.
P1	SC A	2.11	Depends on their busy schedules. Could make it a prerequisite.
P2	SC B	2.11	Yes. This opens one’s perspectives to the running of the institution’s programmes. Will put them in good stead in relation to other programmes.
P3	SC C	2.11	Yes, definitely. I think pastors should know the importance and not just vote any church member to represent their church on the school board. We feel that the churches just vote the person that they don’t know what portfolio to give to, as school board representative and that that person has no interest in the school. The very best and I’ll say it again; the very best person on the church board should be the representative for the school board. In that way the church and the school can work together.
P4	SC D	2.11	Yes; even if they are familiar with the material presented, it helps to get the mind focused on priorities.
P5	SC E	2.11	Yes, most definitely. I have had feedback that this would be welcome and it is essential. As mentioned earlier, it will empower the board members a lot more.
		2.12	Who do you think should be responsible for the training?
P1	SC A	2.12	Chairman – he should know everything.
P2	SC B	2.12	The Conference or Union for they have a wide scope and run various institutions.
P3	SC C	2.12	A person with people skills and who has the knowledge of the importance of the board to the school. Not the pastor and not the principal. Rather an external person (not from the specific school or supporting churches of the school) from the Seventh-day Adventist organisation who will give the pastors and members of the school board the necessary training. Each school should be trained individually as each school and board has their own needs. The trainer should also have the required knowledge of the needs of the school, and very important, a person who can be trusted by all parties and not go and talk about schools and compare schools, as each school has its own needs and requirements.
P4	SC D	2.12	There may be knowledgeable people sitting on the board. Experts can be called in.
P5	SC E	2.12	The Cape Conference Education Director should take the lead re this, and may co-opt others to assist and guide if and when necessary.

SC = School

Responses to questionnaire from school board members

Responses to questionnaire - School Board Members			
Resp #	Pop.	Q #	Question and response
		2.1	What do you understand by the term “school governance”?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.1	The policies and bodies which ensure that the school runs smoothly and effectively.
2	Brd	2.1	The body that governs the school.
3	Brd	2.1	School governance would make sure that all necessary policies for the smooth running of a school are in place and put into practice.
4	Brd	2.1	Leading of school e.g. policies and general running of school.
5	Brd	2.1	School governance is the leading of the school by all role players toward a predetermined goal or objective.
6	Brd	2.1	The board which determines the operation of the school.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.1	The system by which a school is operated/run by its administration.
2	Brd	2.1	School governance would refer to the governing structures and system of the school. This would determine the ultimate objectives and how it will be attained.
3	Brd	2.1	The school as an institution must be governed or managed by a specific person/group in order to achieve its goals.
4	Brd	2.1	A school needs to have a body that runs the school. Rules and regulations need to be in place.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.1	The term refers to collective individuals forming a committee that sees to the effective functioning of the school.
2	Brd	2.1	Usually from the “top downwards” with little input from the “bottom up”.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.1	As a board member school governance would be making strategic decisions on the board that would give the school direction into the future.
2	Brd	2.1	A body that is knowledgeable about the constitution and policies to govern a school.
3	Brd	2.1	Governance should be vested in the school board and should be allowed to perform such functions and obligations in terms of clear policy guidelines.
4	Brd	2.1	The body that gives guidance to the school with regards to finances, disciplinary measures, improvements, etc.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.1	Controlling body.
2	Brd	2.1	To ensure that the school is managed according to the constitution of the school.
3	Brd	2.1	School governance is the way in which a school is directed/controlled by a specific group of people.
4	Brd	2.1	School governance is referring to manner in which school’s objectives are set, policies are

			made and maintained, how school is managed and administered and execution thereof.
5	Brd	2.1	The owners of the institution provide framework for management and decision making to serve the interests of the stakeholders and ensure neither management nor owners take undue advantage of their position of trust.
6	Brd	2.1	Relationship between learners, teacher and parents.
		2.2	Explain why you think there should be or should not be a school governing body to govern the school.
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.2	There probably should be a school governing body to ensure accountability by the school (teachers and management) to the stakeholders/constituency of the school.
2	Brd	2.2	There should be because there must be diversity of different people with different abilities to make it easier for the management team.
3	Brd	2.2	There needs to be a body of people representing all walks of life so that a balanced view can be maintained whilst ensuring the smooth running of the school.
4	Brd	2.2	Should be but needs to be comprised of different role players so as to create a balance and to help advise the management.
5	Brd	2.2	I believe there should be a school governing body to govern the school, but it should include all the role players in the school system through a democratic process of appointment. It fosters leadership accountability.
6	Brd	2.2	There should be a school governing body so that they can hold the school staff accountable for actions taken. A school governing body should ensure smooth operation.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.2	It is imperative that a school must have a school governing body otherwise will go under if there are no checks on the systems regarding governance.
2	Brd	2.2	It is important that there is a governing body – this allows for involvement of all stakeholders and role players in the governance of the school. It also ensures that there is accountability.
3	Brd	2.2	There should be a governing body at the school in order to manage the school. The governing body will also see that all the goals/aims of the school will be achieved, e.g. aims like academic programme, social programme, needs, spiritual programme, etc.
4	Brd	2.2	Rules and regulations need to be adhered to. How else can you run a school if there are no rules? It can become chaotic. Structures should be in place.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.2	Each school must have a school board that provides effective visionary leadership.
2	Brd	2.2	Someone or a body has to take ultimate responsibility and make final decisions to benefit and maintain the school.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.2	Governing body is there to give support to the principal and administration. It allows other stakeholders i.e. parents and other members of society to give input and balance to major decisions made about the operation of the school.
2	Brd	2.2	There should be a governing body to see that the school's finances are properly controlled,

			see that records of the school are correctly and properly completed and stored away, see that school property, buildings and physical structure is kept in a good condition, proper education policies are upheld and taught to the learners, learners are taught by educators who are qualified to administer and teach, and that all committees that are established at the school perform duties that are given to them.
3	Brd	2.2	The SGB must take ownership of Good Hope P/School. The SGB must therefore play an active role overseeing effective running of the school in close collaboration with the school management team.
4	Brd	2.2	I think there should be a SGB as it is there to give guidance on all aspects of the school.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.2	To monitor and man the school also aspiring for the best school standard.
2	Brd	2.2	Yes, to function as an independent body having the best interest of the school and learners at heart.
3	Brd	2.2	I think that a school governing body is important in order to make sure that the goals/plans of the school are accomplished and to provide direction.
4	Brd	2.2	Ultimately the SGB should serve the best interest of the school, assisting the principal with implementation of the various policies and structures which should be in place. However, the SGB should not be prescriptive, but supportive.
5	Brd	2.2	The governing body provides framework for effectively conducting the school's management and business. The board should ensure strategic management.
6	Brd	2.2	There should be a governing body so that the school could run smooth and for communication purposes.
		2.3	What do you think should be the nature and extent of the powers of the school board?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.3	The school board should be an advisory body which monitors the performance of the school, i.e. results, extramural activities, discipline in general.
2	Brd	2.3	Appoint teachers, finances of the school, etc.
3	Brd	2.3	They should be there in an advisory capacity as well as making sure important decisions are made fairly and consistent with policies and guidelines.
4	Brd	2.3	Advisory as well as having decision-making powers – as they should be made up of stakeholders.
5	Brd	2.3	Their powers should be ultimate. Anything less would hamper their ability to deal with problems quickly and decisively. The nature of their powers would be anything regarding the steering and welfare of the school.
6	Brd	2.3	They should determine the administrative operations of the school.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.3	The school as institution must report to the school board which in turn serves as the watchdog of the institution.
2	Brd	2.3	The school board should make/vote on all major decisions of the school and will take responsibility and remain accountable for the school's actions with the outside world in

			particular.
3	Brd	2.3	The school board must have powers. The powers entrusted to them must be used in a positive way and not be manipulative. And also use their powers to uplift the school.
4	Brd	2.3	More power to be given to management of admin. Board not there to see to day-to-day running of school.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.3	The school board is responsible for all matters pertaining to the school especially as contained in the school constitution.
2	Brd	2.3	Total and final say in all decision making.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.3	Maintaining and improving academic and spiritual standards at the school. Since finances are important in the operations of the school the board has to keep a firm hand on the financial management.
2	Brd	2.3	They should form the policies of the school and see that it is put into practice. Members of the board should be knowledgeable.
3	Brd	2.3	The right to nominate/recruit/select staff members. To deal with the school's budget, to take responsibility for the school's assets, buildings, to determine relevant policies in line with SA Schools Act and the Western Cape Provincial Education Act.
4	Brd	2.3	It is there to give guidance and not to control the functioning of the school.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.3	Not to interrupt the teachers' activities. Only to play the roles displayed in the school manual for the school board, if only there is such a manual.
2	Brd	2.3	Diverse demographics in as many as possible areas of function responsibilities and representative of the school population.
3	Brd	2.3	Firstly, I think that the school board should operate within the guidelines of the Word of God. It should be a democratic body that values the input of all the role players.
4	Brd	2.3	Advisory capacity. Ultimately they are responsible; not to be prescriptive. Sometimes I question the reason why some members are there...personal reasons or to assist the school.
5	Brd	2.3	The board has the ultimate power to take strategic decisions that affect operation issues. The board has the accountability and should have commensurate authority.
6	Brd	2.3	Administrative powers.
		2.4	How would you define the functions and responsibilities of the board?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.4	I can't remember being told or having been given a document which outlines the functions and responsibilities of the board. All I know is that the board ratifies/makes appointments; approves budgets and salary audits; deals with disciplinary offences; approves leave and regulations; addresses certain complaints by staff. It probably also approves school policies.
2	Brd	2.4	No response
3	Brd	2.4	Make sure the necessary policies are in place, make sure policies are adhered to, and make their expertise available to assist the Admin. with their responsibilities.

4	Brd	2.4	Make sure that there are constitutions; policies, etc. and that they are adhered to.
5	Brd	2.4	The school board should be responsible for the legislative decisions which supersede the decision-making power of the administrative committee and don't pertain to the day-to-day running of the school.
6	Brd	2.4	Functions and responsibilities of the board would be to ensure quality, standard education, keeping the Christian principles of the school as well as general smooth operation.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.4	The school board is there to see to the smooth running of the school. The principal reports on activities at board meetings. The school board interrogates the report and makes feasible recommendations pertaining to the functions and running of the school.
2	Brd	2.4	The board is the highest decision-making body. The members should receive reports, decide on the school budget and ensure the viability and effectiveness of the school.
3	Brd	2.4	Must manage the school in conjunction with the administration/management and teachers. See that the plans of the school are brought in fruition. Look at concerns of staff members/parents.
4	Brd	2.4	To manage policy, staff members, parents and learners.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.4	Handle all school matters, run school effectively, communicate with learners, parents and conference. Al must be in harmony with the school's constitution.
2	Brd	2.4	Oversee and sanction decisions and recommendations from school management and accounting officer.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.4	Setting academic, spiritual, financial standards for the school. Periodically measuring these standards, checking for deviations, correcting and improving practices that cause deviations.
2	Brd	2.4	They must at all times be aware of what the school's needs and wants are and be ready to find means and ways to help.
3	Brd	2.4	To make sure that the board functions optimally and in conjunction with school management team in order to serve the needs of our learners.
4	Brd	2.4	To make decisions on serious matters concerning paying of fees, discipline, i.e. teachers and learners, building projects, etc.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.4	If there was a school manual for the school board roles I would say it should indicate the roles of the board, e.g. to assist in the running of the school, not taking the responsibility of the teachers.
2	Brd	2.4	To ensure the school is managed according to the constitution.
3	Brd	2.4	To give guidance in the operation of the school; to uphold the values of the SDA church/Bible truth; to make decisions with regard to various matters affecting the school.
4	Brd	2.4	Appointment of fulltime staff; approving budget of school; keeping tabs on the school's finances; ensuring that the school runs smoothly, i.e. governance.
5	Brd	2.4	No response

6	Brd	2.4	Strategic planning of the school.
		2.5	As you see it, is the school board fulfilling its functions and responsibilities? Explain.
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.5	As was mentioned in 2.4, I am not clear about what the functions and responsibilities are. However I imagine that currently only some mundane functions are taken care of. I have a sense that far more could be done.
2	Brd	2.5	Yes, they are doing it at the moment.
3	Brd	2.5	On the whole the school board is supportive but is hampered by lack of support from the Higher Organisation (Cape Conf.)
4	Brd	2.5	Mostly, but the higher organisations need to deal with important matters timeously to prevent the board having to rehash problems.
5	Brd	2.5	Too early for me to say.
6	Brd	2.5	To a large extent they do, but when extremely challenging situations surface, it is referred to a higher body of governance.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.5	To a certain extent, but while we are meeting only once a quarter urgent matters cannot always be addressed immediately.
2	Brd	2.5	In a general sense, yes. It currently approves the budgets, decides on salaries, appointments and ensures that the school runs effectively under the principal and his team.
3	Brd	2.5	Yes. All plans/recommendations of school/parents/staff members are brought to school board and are discussed and looked at on school board level.
4	Brd	2.5	Yes, they do, but there is room for improvement.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.5	In principle the school strives to carry out its functions effectively. Generally it is fairly well done; however, there is room for improvement.
2	Brd	2.5	Yes, but from "top down" not from "bottom up".
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.5	It is meeting some of its functions but with training the members can be made influential.
2	Brd	2.5	No. Many of them do not attend meetings. They have no idea what is required of them.
3	Brd	2.5	Not at the moment, because our parents are not part of our board structure. To be successful we must have our parents getting involved.
4	Brd	2.5	Partly.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.5	I would not comment much, I am still new on the school board. In general I would say yes.
2	Brd	2.5	Yes, the results.
3	Brd	2.5	Yes, the school board provides a framework within which the school operates. It is also fulfilling the decision-making role.
4	Brd	2.5	Yes. School board is fulfilling its functions and responsibilities. Has always been supportive of the school management.
5	Brd	2.5	Reasonably yes, it is fulfilling.
6	Brd	2.5	No. They lack to cover the financial aspects of the school.

		2.6	Do you think there is a need for the school board to undergo any form of training to prepare members to function effectively and efficiently? Elaborate.
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.6	I would think so since the board often seeks advice on issues. I think it would mainly be knowledge resources that are needed.
2	Brd	2.6	If there is a need by members. Yes!
3	Brd	2.6	The school board members are carefully chosen and are prepared to impart knowledge and skills.
4	Brd	2.6	On the whole the board members are chosen for their input; the only area where they would need training would be SDA policy.
5	Brd	2.6	I do believe there is such a need. We as the school board operate within the confines of provincial and national legislation, not to mention the church legislation and policy specific to our contexts. We need to be educated on those bounds as well as the proper procedures to follow within those bounds.
6	Brd	2.6	Yes. In order for a school board to function effectively they need to have the same vision and goals.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.6	Yes. This will be positive for running of the school. In-depth input will be forthcoming.
2	Brd	2.6	Yes. Not all the members fully understand the nature of their responsibility. They could be more effective with greater understanding of their respective roles.
3	Brd	2.6	Yes. New members need to know their role in the school board. Some members need training in meeting procedure.
4	Brd	2.6	Maybe new learners, parents and teachers who come to board can be trained.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.6	Yes and no. Provided the training is geared more at functions and responsibilities whereas now it is geared more at authority.
2	Brd	2.6	Yes, to determine areas of responsibility and accountability.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.6	Yes. Board members being taught to read financial statements, the use of modern technology to inform members about the operations of the school.
2	Brd	2.6	Yes, members must be educated in: policy making, curriculum taught at school, how the budget of a school works, how different committees are formed and interact.
3	Brd	2.6	Yes, training is needed. We have no clear guidance and direction on how to deal with our budget. We are not sure of all board members' roles to be played at such meetings if exposure to training will equip members with executing their tasks.
4	Brd	2.6	Yes.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.6	Orientation, induction, seminars, to equip members with knowledge on how to play the roles of such a board.
2	Brd	2.6	Yes. Not to learn as you go.
3	Brd	2.6	Sometimes new members are not always accustomed to the way in which a board

			functions. If not familiar with the ethos of the school, guidance needs to be provided.
4	Brd	2.6	Yes. Our SGB members, unfortunately, do not receive any training. This is of concern.
5	Brd	2.6	Yes, there is a need to train and evaluate the board members.
6	Brd	2.6	Yes, we were elected and we do not know the functions, even the constitution.
		2.7	In which specific areas do you need training to prepare you for effective school governance?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.7	I would need training in developing policies which are relevant to schools.
2	Brd	2.7	No response
3	Brd	2.7	Perhaps the Administration of the school can be assisted more visibly and tangibly by their Higher Organisation. Policies and the other necessary documents are not in place, which hampers the Administration in operating effectively.
4	Brd	2.7	Policies pertaining to various items, e.g. retirement, medical aid, allowances, etc.
5	Brd	2.7	Church policy, which is often vague and fraught with loopholes and problems, as well as legislature specific to school management and governance.
6	Brd	2.7	Areas such as Christian influence require training, in order to fulfil the Christian values and principles. Government rules and regulations in order to know your rights and that of the learners.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.7	Finance and procurement.
2	Brd	2.7	Training in governance structuring/restructuring, planning and leadership.
3	Brd	2.7	Meeting procedure
4	Brd	2.7	Meeting procedures and how the school and church operates.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.7	(Respondent offered a sarcastic answer indicating that the respondent is actually hostile to certain questions. E.g. How should I know? How must I know if my accounting knowledge is good enough to follow a financial statement? I have a problem with what some terms may mean in this questionnaire.
2	Brd	2.7	No response
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.7	Financial statements and budgeting, latest developments in the field of education, latest technology available to be used in the field of education.
2	Brd	2.7	Computer skills, how the finances and budgets are worked out.
3	Brd	2.7	Finance, Assets, Physical Resource, Link between Conference/Union and school important.
4	Brd	2.7	In all areas.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.7	Specific roles/school financial stats.
2	Brd	2.7	Meeting procedures, financial statements.
3	Brd	2.7	Understanding of financial reports/budgeting/conflict resolution among various representatives.

4	Brd	2.7	Responsibilities and roles of SGB members.
5	Brd	2.7	Decision-making powers, functions of the board, powers of the board, strategies to effectively perform its functions.
6	Brd	2.7	The school government act and the constitution of the school.
		2.8	Would you be willing to undergo continuous training in the areas in which you feel you need assistance and how much time would you be willing to sacrifice for such training?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.8	Yes, I would. I think sessions of 2/3 hours a term would be manageable.
2	Brd	2.8	Yes, what is necessary.
3	Brd	2.8	Yes, I would be willing to undergo training. The time would depend on whether the training was successful.
4	Brd	2.8	Only if it was a benefit.
5	Brd	2.8	I would. I feel I could donate between an hour and two hours per week to this training.
6	Brd	2.8	Yes, continuous training is important in order to keep up with new regulations and rules – one day a month.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.8	Yes. It should not be seen as a sacrifice rather for the betterment and enhancement of one's personal being.
2	Brd	2.8	Yes. This form of training for training in areas should be ongoing since there are regular changes and development in these areas. As much time as is needed.
3	Brd	2.8	Yes. Training once a year, especially at the end of the year in order to be prepared for the new year.
4	Brd	2.8	Yes. As long as it takes.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.8	Yes/No
2	Brd	2.8	Having served on the school board for over 10 years, I believe I have understood what is required but there are always newcomers who have little or no experience.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.8	Yes. Two hours a week.
2	Brd	2.8	One hour.
3	Brd	2.8	Yes. Preferably on Sundays.
4	Brd	2.8	No response.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.8	A day seminar or a few hours x 2.
2	Brd	2.8	Yes. 2 hours.
3	Brd	2.8	Yes, 2-4 hours per month.
4	Brd	2.8	Yes. One or two hours a week.
5	Brd	2.8	It depends on individual to individual, being a person who is willing to learn and grow. I would be willing to undergo continuous training.
6	Brd	2.8	Yes. 3 hours per month.

		2.9	How would you describe stakeholder representation on the school board?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.9	Not representative enough in the sense that currently there are not enough parents on the board. A system of church representatives rather than parents is still being used. I know however that this will change soon. I don't know how significant this is but since the majority of learner body is non-SDA, there is no non-SDA parent on the board. I don't know whether this would necessarily be desirable or whether in fact it could provide a needed perspective.
2	Brd	2.9	Ok.
3	Brd	2.9	It's representative of the needs of the school.
4	Brd	2.9	Anybody who has a vested interest in the school and can make a positive contribution to the school.
5	Brd	2.9	How would you like me to describe it? Most stakeholders are represented on the board, but not all.
6	Brd	2.9	Have improved the last year after numerous absenteeism.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.9	There should be more parent representation for they are the patrons who support us all the way. A balance of non-Adventist parents/SDA parents.
2	Brd	2.9	This is the inclusion of all with vested interests in the institution and who will have the best interests of the school at heart. All role players should be represented as stakeholders on school board level.
3	Brd	2.9	Very well represented.
4	Brd	2.9	Well represented.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.9	A person with a legitimate interest in the school on a personal level or in the interest of a group.
2	Brd	2.9	Inadequate, ineffective, disinterested.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.9	Currently there are too many school and conference representatives because the local churches are not sending their representatives to the meetings.
2	Brd	2.9	An excellent idea. We need people who have new ideas, who are able to motivate and encourage school board reps, staff and principal to uplift the school.
3	Brd	2.9	Currently I'm serving as Kuils River board member on school board mainly because our church is contributing a portion of its funds towards operational needs of School C. It is important to serve on such a school board because we as a church have a vested interest.
4	Brd	2.9	Most of the members in the area will attend if notified beforehand. There are members who never attend meetings due to the fact that they are too far from the school.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.9	Good blending types for benchmarking.
2	Brd	2.9	Good mix of educators, church reps, parents. Maybe non-SDA parents not well represented.

3	Brd	2.9	Quite well balanced with administrative staff, teaching staff, church representatives and a parent complement.
4	Brd	2.9	Adequate. Sufficient representation of all relevant stakeholders on board.
5	Brd	2.9	Not well represented.
6	Brd	2.9	The representation is good.
		2.10	If it is within your power to bring about changes in the school board, what would those changed be?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.10	I would like the school board to spend more time discussing aspects of the school programme other than just mundane/routine items (where these don't overlap with the functions of the PTA): issues such as spiritual programmes, academics, extra-curriculum, community projects, etc.
2	Brd	2.10	No response.
3	Brd	2.10	The school board is functioning as it should but is hampered by the fact that the Higher Organisation is not functioning effectively.
4	Brd	2.10	No major changes – members of the higher organisation need to execute decisions made at board quicker.
5	Brd	2.10	Frankly, a school board should have the final say on matters and not be <u>subservient</u> to the Conference. The Conference has representation on the board already.
6	Brd	2.10	If possible we need people who know the law because sometimes we face challenges that need expertise above the school or church rules/regulations.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.10	The composition of the board. More parents. Geographically the members are too far apart.
2	Brd	2.10	Raise the levels of accountability of members – increase levels of involvement in school governance.
3	Brd	2.10	To have more parent involvement on school board level.
4	Brd	2.10	Have more parents on the board.
			SCHOOL C
1	Brd	2.10	Appoint people who would love to serve or can serve and who have specific expertise.
2	Brd	2.10	Deal with points raised in 2.9. Have previous minutes and financial report available one week ahead of each quarterly meeting.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.10	A smaller school board membership (it currently has the potential of having up to 30 members if all the board members are present). Invite more people who are knowledgeable about the field of education to sit on the board.
2	Brd	2.10	Have school board reps who are knowledgeable about Adventist education and how they can assist.
3	Brd	2.10	To bring parents of our learners on board – they can play a meaningful role.
4	Brd	2.10	Meetings should start and end earlier.

SCHOOL E			
1	Brd	2.10	One monitors for compliance and assists those who need help within the board in order to function well.
2	Brd	2.10	Some decisions made by the board are dependent on approval from the Conference, making certain critical appointments cumbersome and time consuming.
3	Brd	2.10	To ensure that matters are dealt with in a way that does not arouse undue emotional energy; to always reflect our love for the Lord in the actions which are taken.
4	Brd	2.10	More confidentiality; greater devotion to attending meetings so that there is no stress for me to get a quorum.
5	Brd	2.10	We need a standard governing body manual.
6	Brd	2.10	The principal should not be an office bearer in the committee.
		2.11	What are the major challenges that you face as a school board member?
SCHOOL A			
1	Brd	2.11	A challenge which I can take responsibility for is not knowing enough about the function of the school board. Sometimes as a member, the picture that is presented to you may only be from the perspective of the management and teachers and their bias. Only the things which they deem important are put on the agenda and there is not necessarily time to discuss other issues as mentioned in 2.10. For these reasons I personally feel negative towards the school because I see the school through the eyes of my children and there is often dissonance between what they say and what the 'school' says and when I try to talk in this direction it is not supported by other board members or acknowledged by management.
2	Brd	2.11	No response.
3	Brd	2.11	Time is wasted because necessary policies are not in place. Items are continuously revisited.
4	Brd	2.11	Items being revisited because they have not been dealt with at the higher organisation.
5	Brd	2.11	Lack of experience and my rebellious nature.
6	Brd	2.11	Nothing really! Challenges - maybe the problems/challenges we face when it comes to the non-Adventist educators. When the yearly contracts need to be changed and we might not find suitable candidates.
SCHOOL B			
1	Brd	2.11	When a school board must meet urgently it is not easy to get a quorum.
2	Brd	2.11	Availability of board members in cases of emergency meetings. Lack of effective execution of decisions by members and appointed individuals – lack of accountability by all members.
3	Brd	2.11	Only attended one school board meeting, so at this point in time there are no challenges yet.
4	Brd	2.11	No major challenges yet, just joined the board as a member.
SCHOOL C			
1	Brd	2.11	Members who have no idea of what is going on but are used to rubber-stamp items.
S	Brd	2.11	Often feel I am just required to rubber-stamp issues, decisions I have little or no pre-

			knowledge of. Having to grasp the import of financial reports in a very short space of time. We usually face 3-4 pages, cramped with figures – often very small.
			SCHOOL D
1	Brd	2.11	My busy programme. The little interest shown by local church in Christian education, the lack of direction from the Conference executive committee.
2	Brd	2.11	Tarry too long on certain points that are discussed. Meetings are sometimes too long.
3	Brd	2.11	There are no clear policy/guidelines from Conference which assist the principal in managing the school.
4	Brd	2.11	Meetings are too late. I have to travel alone and do not feel at ease that time of the night.
			SCHOOL E
1	Brd	2.11	Roles not displayed as measures for taking ownership by each member.
2	Brd	2.11	The time spent in meetings.
3	Brd	2.11	Time constraints at times; dealing with sensitive/confidential matters within a required time frame when I would like more time to pray about a matter.
4	Brd	2.11	Quorum issues: not always able to start on time as need to get a quorum. This can waste up to 30 minutes.
5	Brd	2.11	I think we are responding to issues. We need to be engaged proactively to address bigger issues: lack of awareness, constitution, protocols, government documents, procedure of appointment of governing board members and chair.
6	Brd	2.11	No response
		2.12	Are there any other observations that you have that you think will help your board to function more effectively?
			SCHOOL A
1	Brd	2.12	All members having the opportunity to make input on agenda items; receiving the agenda beforehand, receiving the minutes before the next meeting. Being more involved in the mission and planning of the school programmes so that members can take ownership and be accountable to the rest of the school constituency.
2	Brd	2.12	More help from the Conference.
3	Brd	2.12	The Higher Organisation needs to play a more supportive role.
4	Brd	2.12	If we can't draw up our own policies then the higher organisation need to get expert advice from outside to help them draw up watertight, legal documents which include church policies.
5	Brd	2.12	I feel most of the key issues have been addressed by the questionnaire.
6	Brd	2.12	At this stage the board functions quite well.
			SCHOOL B
1	Brd	2.12	Members chosen must be representative of the whole constituency.
2	Brd	2.12	Reporting on all important matters should be done. Direct involvement by all stakeholders should be enforced.
3	Brd	2.12	No observations yet.
4	Brd	2.12	No response.

SCHOOL C			
1	Brd	2.12	All school board members should get a copy of the constitution at the beginning of the year. After the first meeting they must sign that they have read and understand the constitution.
2	Brd	2.12	Perhaps there needs to be a summary sheet as part of every financial report with all the relevant references and notes.
SCHOOL D			
1	Brd	2.12	No response.
2	Brd	2.12	More communication between staff and school board members.
3	Brd	2.12	No response
4	Brd	2.12	No response
SCHOOL E			
1	Brd	2.12	No response
2	Brd	2.12	No response.
3	Brd	2.12	Sometimes we come with preconceived ideas instead of with an open mind; greater willingness to affect change or innovative ideas.
4	Brd	2.12	Quorum as indicated in 2.11. Often no quorum at start. Greater support and input from the Cape Conference.
5	Brd	2.12	Understanding financial statements, publicity and marketing functions.
6	Brd	2.12	No response

Brd = School Board

Responses to questionnaire from staff members

Responses to questionnaire - Staff			
Resp. #	Pop.	Q #	Questions and Responses
		2.1	What are your perceptions with regard to the functions and responsibilities of the school board?
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.1	Extremely important in keeping the school 'on track', also for protection of both staff and students.
2	Staff	2.1	To see to all general matters that will ensure the school's effective running. The highest authority at school level.
3	Staff	2.1	It is the top-level authority to oversee the functioning of the school and its management.
4	Staff	2.1	They should be knowledgeable in school policy. They should represent the school both in supporting function and disciplinary function.
5	Staff	2.1	School board rubber-stamps decisions already made by management (principal and business manager).
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.1	Law enforcement, strategy formulators, monitors, employers – appointers of educators.
2	Staff	2.1	The school board is responsible for the governance of the school and it is the custodian of the institution.
3	Staff	2.1	Spiritual, financial, academic, human resources, wellbeing of the school.
4	Staff	2.1	Ratifies administration's decisions; finalises budgets and serious school matters; should help school project long-term, medium-term and short-term planning; should place strategic plan in action and monitor progress.
5	Staff	2.1	In my perception, the school board's functions are: to uphold policies; to manage the school, learners, staff, school programme, etc.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.1	Have an interest in the running and business of the school. Be so informed that they are able to make good decisions in the best interest of the school.
2	Staff	2.1	To manage the school business – hire staff, handle difficulties, to upgrade the school programmes, departments, maintain school buildings, to inform staff and parents of current education issues.
3	Staff	2.1	My perception is that the school board is an entity designed to identify problem areas in the operation of the school and thereby assist in such problem areas, i.e. school grounds, pupil behaviour, financial difficulties and staff replacement, etc.
4	Staff	2.1	Should be able to arrange and care for upkeep of school, finances, staff discipline. Look at ways of raising finance, using contracts for upkeep, be able to give valid advice in area of education. Work with the principal.
5	Staff	2.1	It is important to have the school board so that the school runs smoothly and it is where the plans are discussed in detail and solutions to the problems have been looked at. Wise decisions should be made.

			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.1	Form link between school and churches. Needs of the school. Churches and Conference needs to assist the school.
2	Staff	2.1	Help build strong educational values, by helping with problems at school. Choose teachers capable of doing their jobs. Members must get involved with school.
3	Staff	2.1	They must be more involved in the function of the school.
4	Staff	2.1	I am not exactly sure what they do. I know they are an important group but don't know what they really do to help the school run/function better.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.1	To enable democratic decision making to be done about important factors affecting the school.
2	Staff	2.1	The real teeth once the Admin Committee has done all in its power. As non-school admin it has a more balanced view of an internal problem/situation/hassle.
3	Staff	2.1	The school board is the core group who makes decisions on behalf of all parents, teachers. They should be involved in all aspects of the school – politics, code of conduct, fundraising, finances, etc.
4	Staff	2.1	Maintain a well-structured school serving the local community in the best possible way, supporting the teaching staff as well as our parents and learners.
5	Staff	2.1	The school board is responsible for the healthy functioning of every part of the school. Appointing staff, handling serious cases regarding learners, parents, staff, looking after the finances, making decisions about new projects, expanding the buildings, etc.
6	Staff	2.1	To provide guidance and to help with making important decisions.
7	Staff	2.1	Takes decisions concerning school policy; sees to it that policies are implemented; appoints staff; investigates complaints from parents.
		2.2	How would you describe the powers of the school board?
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.2	Should be powerful, reality: Rubber stamps – information deficit.
2	Staff	2.2	Falls directly under the Cape Conference. All-powerful in hiring and firing.
3	Staff	2.2	They should initiate all planning and activity and control and veto when things tend to get out of hand.
4	Staff	2.2	They should have authority above other committees at school, but be subject to higher authority.
5	Staff	2.2	Giving clear “clout”/credibility to managerial powers.
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.2	The school board is supposed to give the final approval of whatever plans are put in place for the running of the school.
2	Staff	2.2	Rules and policies for the smooth running of the school. Appointments/discipline/dismissal of staff. Oversee the leadership. Monitors the finance of the school.
3	Staff	2.2	Autocratic and sometimes laissez faire.
4	Staff	2.2	The final power-body of the school.

5	Staff	2.2	There seems to be a difference in the powers of the school board at primary school and high school. In the primary schools lots of power seems to be with churches and reps. It also depends on the number of churches affiliated to a particular school. At high school level there is a set core of representation: Conference president, principal, deputy, business manager, 1 teacher, 1 non-teaching staff member, 3 parents, 2 learners, Education Director, Regional Director, etc. chaplain. In my opinion here is undoubtedly lots of power assumed by this body.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.2	No response.
2	Staff	2.2	The board should be the governing body not just the principal. At HC I think the responsibility lies heavily on the principal – perhaps also at other SDA schools in SA.
3	Staff	2.2	Very limited, i.e. no executive powers. Only recommendation powers.
4	Staff	2.2	Should be able to make decisions for local school. Conference is sometimes out of touch.
5	Staff	2.2	The school board should finalise any subjects discussed and it should be interested in building not destroying the school.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.2	Very powerful.
2	Staff	2.2	Limited. Help with supporting the school (poor)
3	Staff	2.2	Not effective.
4	Staff	2.2	Don't know really. They do seem to be powerful but it looks like they are not doing much.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.2	Would not know as I have not participated on a school board before, otherwise I think that they have a fair amount of power that affects the running of the school.
2	Staff	2.2	To back the school decisions, to override/push better ideas or strategies than admin may be limited to do.
3	Staff	2.2	I guess they have a lot of power.
4	Staff	2.2	Not to control the school but to make sure it runs smoothly.
5	Staff	2.2	Healthy decision-making panel, because you have parents, teachers, and individuals not part of the school. They have the power to say yes or no.
6	Staff	2.2	They ratify decisions that provide structure and direction in the school.
7	Staff	2.2	In the departmental schools the school board has a lot of power. I think in the SDA schools the Conference and the SAU has higher authority.
		2.3	In your opinion should the powers of the school board be curtailed or extended? Explain.
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.3	Definitely not curtailed, but not necessarily extended – yet utilised as it ought to be.
2	Staff	2.3	Not extended. Could lead to lack of confidence from teachers.
3	Staff	2.3	As the top authority extending over all, it should be without limit or restraint.
4	Staff	2.3	Yes, they should be able to deal with issues and have authority to make sure it gets done within reason.

5	Staff	2.3	Extended, but in a meaningful manner by appointing better qualified members re: decision making.
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.3	Not sure, since I am not well versed in exactly what their duties are.
2	Staff	2.3	No response.
3	Staff	2.3	It can be curtailed if it continues to always rubber-stamp decisions from school administration.
4	Staff	2.3	Extended, if they make positive contributions to the enhancement of the school.
5	Staff	2.3	In my opinion, their powers should be curtailed. In view of the structure of this body, they could become an intimidating force. They have power to make decisions which are not always in the best interest of the opposite parties.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.3	No response.
2	Staff	2.3	Extended carefully – be of benefit rather than a hindrance, e.g. the teacher knows best what is good in the classroom.
3	Staff	2.3	Extended. It should have executive powers to implement ideas that will be beneficial to the school.
4	Staff	2.3	Depends on what sort of board they are. At the moment ours vote through motions put forward by staff or Conference. If it was for the better of the school, I would say extend powers.
5	Staff	2.3	I don't think it should be extended more, especially if the way it works doesn't give the school problems. The board needs to be active.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.3	Extended in the sense that more churches be more involved.
2	Staff	2.3	Extended to curtail the principal from riding around and sleeping.
3	Staff	2.3	Extended – principal more involved in curriculum, not to sit in office all day long. Not to load everything on teachers.
4	Staff	2.3	Don't know.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.3	None. Too much power will enable them to make decisions that they do not have practical in-the-classroom experience for. Too little will weaken the system.
2	Staff	2.3	Board members should take their role far more seriously and uphold code of confidentiality – before power is extended.
3	Staff	2.3	Not sure. Maybe extended? They can be involved more.
4	Staff	2.3	In some respects curtail because they are outsiders not involved in the daily matters of the school.
5	Staff	2.3	I think it should stay the same. It had worked well for a long time.
6	Staff	2.3	Neither. They are providing sufficient guidance and support.
7	Staff	2.3	The parents must have more authority so that they can take ownership of the school. They must not just receive they must also give back.
		2.4	What type of relationship exists between the school board and the staff?

SCHOOL A			
1	Staff	2.4	We do not know who is on the board (except our staff). No fault of theirs.
2	Staff	2.4	Good. Not enough transparency; not enough feedback to staff; some decisions seem to be 'rubber-stamping' or 'window dressing'.
3	Staff	2.4	There <u>should</u> be an open, cooperative relationship. We do not know each other or who are members.
4	Staff	2.4	At this moment the school board runs the school, but as staff we are not informed of every decision, as it should be in some cases, but not in all.
5	Staff	2.4	No meaningful interaction, or transparency, or responsibility re: decisions impacting on school.
SCHOOL B			
1	Staff	2.4	As far as I know, there is no relationship as I have never met or seen the board members. I have never heard of any meeting of the staff with the board. Sometimes we do not get proper reports from the board.
2	Staff	2.4	Sometimes it looks like the board is autonomous and some members of the staff wouldn't have met some of the board members. The chairperson should meet and address the staff members at least once per year.
3	Staff	2.4	There is no liaison between different camps, i.e. board and staff. The staff representatives do not consult with their constituents before going to the board. It is ceremonial representation, not effective one.
4	Staff	2.4	A cordial, transparent one, but limited to certain issues.
5	Staff	2.4	I feel that there should be a closer relationship. There should be updated report backs. The staff of a school should feel free to request for any needs.
SCHOOL C			
1	Staff	2.4	Principal informs staff. Pastor – chairperson has visited.
2	Staff	2.4	A distance one.
3	Staff	2.4	Not very strong. Often the teaching staff know very little of the operation.
4	Staff	2.4	Majority of staff have never met board or know who sits on the board. Board, however, feels staff is doing good work and are supportive verbally of what staff accomplishes.
5	Staff	2.4	The board listens and looks at the concerns or problem the staff has highlighted and helps to solve the problem. They should work hand in hand, but unfortunately the board doesn't cooperate the way it should.
SCHOOL D			
1	Staff	2.4	Good and open relationship. Board looks at the needs of the staff.
2	Staff	2.4	I know a few board members. There is no relationship between staff and board members.
3	Staff	2.4	No.
4	Staff	2.4	There isn't any relationship. I don't even know who is on the school board except for the newly elected teacher and staff.
SCHOOL E			
1	Staff	2.4	Do not know.
2	Staff	2.4	Good. Staff have little clue as to what goes on in school board.

3	Staff	2.4	I have no idea who serves on our school board, except for principal and accountant.
4	Staff	2.4	There is no relationship – I do not know who is on the school board. The school board is rather “secretive” and is not aware of the members. Why?
5	Staff	2.4	A healthy one, we give ideas and they give answers and reasons. They look after the teachers.
6	Staff	2.4	The school board is normally supportive of the teaching staff.
7	Staff	2.4	Do not really see them.
		2.5	What kind of impact have school board decisions had on the school?
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.5	Some rather negative ones regarding discipline; selection of staff...but then again, lack of information/communication... I'm sure there are positive aspects.
2	Staff	2.5	On me – very negative! Had to appear before HR lawyer when a fellow teacher complained about my Bible teaching, but they ignored my complaint about her public attacks on our doctrines.
3	Staff	2.5	Lack of leadership has been a major problem. The school board not being informed or empowered is a major problem.
4	Staff	2.5	They have supported the school in disciplining, although too much time was wasted in waiting for the school board.
5	Staff	2.5	Major, employment of non-SDA staff and the impact on functioning as an SDA school.
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.5	Not sure.
2	Staff	2.5	Sometimes positive effect but mostly the board meets for the sake of meeting periodically. Some issues are just hushed away. No follow up from the board on some issues. Mostly it is one-sided.
3	Staff	2.5	Positive and sometimes not clear.
4	Staff	2.5	A feeling of distance, due to non-reporting immediately after meeting.
5	Staff	2.5	No response.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.5	No response.
2	Staff	2.5	No response.
3	Staff	2.5	Not very effective.
4	Staff	2.5	Admin committee and management decide on what needs doing and board votes it through after discussion. I have experience as a principal elsewhere, where I asked for assistance in an area and they voted for totally useless help which caused me as principal extra work and not the help I had requested.
5	Staff	2.5	The decisions that they make are useful to the school, in other words, the board helps the school in many ways. Unfortunately, in our case the staff makes decisions and make sure that the school runs smoothly.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.5	Positive impact. Looks at the needs at a specific time.
2	Staff	2.5	Choosing teachers – poor.

3	Staff	2.5	Choosing poor teachers.
4	Staff	2.5	Don't know that either.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.5	I assume they have assisted the principal where and when it was needed.
2	Staff	2.5	Positive and negative.
3	Staff	2.5	I know there was a disciplinary hearing that involved a teacher and the school board handled all the decisions – Positive impact.
4	Staff	2.5	Big impact. Their decision is final although not always agreed with, e.g. not allowing 2 days of leave before Easter for overworked teachers.
5	Staff	2.5	New grade R class, new hall, aftercare, helped the school to grow.
6	Staff	2.5	Usually positive.
7	Staff	2.5	A staff member was investigated and the case was taken further.
		2.6	How is the school board involved in the governance of the school?
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.6	Lots of meetings.
2	Staff	2.6	No response.
3	Staff	2.6	It is called on to authorise what the admin. /management has decided and implemented.
4	Staff	2.6	They seem to be in the background, and not participating in every area.
5	Staff	2.6	In the light of 2.4, not sure. Sanctioning decisions made by the management?
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.6	I know they should be giving guidance and direction and I assume that that is what is happening.
2	Staff	2.6	Not much.
3	Staff	2.6	It is the final authority. Does not have time to check on issues – ends up endorsing whatever the school administration gives because they do not have time for close examination of detail.
4	Staff	2.6	Not sure.
5	Staff	2.6	Fairly good involvement here.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.6	Sanction and query what the management has discussed and decided.
2	Staff	2.6	Not sure – think the principal does most of the governance.
3	Staff	2.6	No response.
4	Staff	2.6	Very little. They pass the teachers' and principal's recommendations. (+the treasurer's)
5	Staff	2.6	The board and the principal set the date where they update the members about everything happening in the school. They work hand in hand but the members do not show up. This is the challenge the school has.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.6	Make decisions that are final.
2	Staff	2.6	Not at all.
3	Staff	2.6	No, they don't do anything for the school.
4	Staff	2.6	Not sure.

			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.6	No response.
2	Staff	2.6	Being broad-minded is often more effective.
3	Staff	2.6	Do not know.
4	Staff	2.6	Very much so – matters are taken to board when the staff, then the administration committee cannot make a decision.
5	Staff	2.6	They make sure the big component like teachers, buildings, finances, function well.
6	Staff	2.6	Provides guidance; ratifies or reformulates decisions/policies; appoints staff.
7	Staff	2.6	This is where I feel the parents can plough their expertise and experience back into the school.
		2.7	What should be the school board's role in the finances of the school?
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.7	Very involved. They'd have some surprises here if they scouted around a little.
2	Staff	2.7	They need to keep check of the budget and payment of fees.
3	Staff	2.7	They should decide goals and mission and implement actions to achieve these. Manage and check that policy is applied.
4	Staff	2.7	They should investigate all departments and be aware of each one's progress or degrees.
5	Staff	2.7	Ensure that major expenses are decided on in an objective manner and in the interests of the students and the school as a whole.
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.7	Monitor and assist in planning and implementation of the school's financial needs, e.g. helping in fundraising and advertisement of the school.
2	Staff	2.7	School board should make sure that the financial statements are sent to the Conference every month and the books are reconciled every month. Check the expenses of the school in depth and check how money is spent and whether the business department follows good stewardship. Conflict of interest must be explained thoroughly to the business department as well as to the staff.
3	Staff	2.7	Advisory, technical support.
4	Staff	2.7	Besides setting fees and appropriations, set financial goals to cancel bad debts, reduce outstanding money, and appoint business manager for the campus.
5	Staff	2.7	Maybe there should be a more transparent involvement regarding this issue. Maybe budgets, statements (financial) should be made available to staff members – for clearer understanding of financial positions at schools.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.7	No response.
2	Staff	2.7	Take responsibility, do fundraising. Approach the Conference on matters. Structure school fees – line between parents (PTA) and school and Conference.
3	Staff	2.7	Every quarter the staff should be kept up to date with the financial position. The school board should have regular financial statements as well as annual audit reports.
4	Staff	2.7	See needs of plans, get quotes, promote!
5	Staff	2.7	The school board should make sure that the auditors keep the record of the school's

			finance and statements. They should also be deeply involved in raising funds for the school. They should encourage the teachers in any way.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.7	Must look for more ways to provide funds to fund the school – donors and sponsorship. Divide funds to see to the needs first.
2	Staff	2.7	Monitor spending on certain things. Fundraising.
3	Staff	2.7	They can fundraise for the school.
4	Staff	2.7	I do know that the board has to approve the school budget but I think the board should have more say when it comes to finance.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.7	Help/assist with important decisions.
2	Staff	2.7	Overall view: suggestions; call question to expenditure/saving; assist, not rule/govern. Best: work in good partnership with statements, audits rendered by the financial secretary.
3	Staff	2.7	They should be aware of the situation and make plans to improve it.
4	Staff	2.7	Advisory.
5	Staff	2.7	They must oversee it and make sure the appointed person is doing the job. Think of ways to raise more money.
6	Staff	2.7	Supervisory; check whether budget guidelines are adhered to.
7	Staff	2.7	They should realise how important fundraising is.
		2.8	Is there a need for the school board to undergo any training to prepare them to function effectively and efficiently? Elaborate.
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.8	Yes! Know what is expected of them – how to utilise any areas of expertise/knowledge/ interest... know how to communicate – to keep transparency and confidentiality and know how and when to tell the difference.
2	Staff	2.8	Yes.
3	Staff	2.8	As the board may be dominated by parents/laity they could most likely benefit with simple management and meeting proceedings and protocol.
4	Staff	2.8	Yes, basic skills and requirements should be communicated to be on the board, as well as responsibility to be an active member.
5	Staff	2.8	Yes. FEDSAS might be a good place to start re: requirements and qualifications in light of 2.3.
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.8	I feel there is a need. You cannot effectively lead people you do not know and they don't know you. I think they are lacking on that point. There is a gap there.
2	Staff	2.8	Not really, but new members can be given an orientation. They should be supplied with the Policy book, Constitution of the school, Organogram, School code of conduct.
3	Staff	2.8	The board should not be used by a few individuals to settle their scores with their differing colleagues. The board should enquire and make independent decisions.
4	Staff	2.8	Yes, explain purpose, expectations; no personal agendas neither political motives. Aim:

			how to help the institution perform better.
5	Staff	2.8	Not really – seeing that the core structure is made up of skilled people. Maybe parents and learners should be informed what the school board is all about – before involving them.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.8	Yes, someone in the know should inform the members on the basic running of a school and what their role as a member is.
2	Staff	2.8	Certainly.
3	Staff	2.8	Yes, indeed. I.e. financial structure, the source of income. Also more staff members, i.e. teachers should be members of the board. The management of outstanding school fees should be more effective.
4	Staff	2.8	Yes. Explain duties not just four meetings a year.
5	Staff	2.8	If they feel that the knowledge that they have about running the school is not sufficient, training is encouraged.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.8	Yes, because the members do not know what are their specific roles.
2	Staff	2.8	Yes, they need training (some of them). How the school is supposed to be run as a SDA school.
3	Staff	2.8	Yes. School board members do not know their function.
4	Staff	2.8	I can't say as I have never been on any board to evaluate their competency or incompetency.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.8	Yes.
2	Staff	2.8	Good idea.
3	Staff	2.8	Yes, because they are just normal people, some do not have a clue what they are supposed to do.
4	Staff	2.8	Can't say – don't know anything about school board meetings.
5	Staff	2.8	I think so. It is always good to know what you should know in order to do well.
6	Staff	2.8	Yes – reading of financial statements; guidelines as to school procedures.
7	Staff	2.8	Parents should be chosen for their expertise, they must have an interest in the school.
		2.9	If the school board needs training, what do you think would be the most important areas to concentrate on?
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.9	Finances; General Conference Policy is much neglected. If only we had some concerned watchdogs on the board.
2	Staff	2.9	Finances – understand financial reports. Give agendas out before meetings so they have more info.
3	Staff	2.9	Effective teamwork and communication.
4	Staff	2.9	Finance; Admin; School policy – most important.
5	Staff	2.9	Guide/advise management on establishing goals, the need for strategic planning and ensuring such plans are put into action.

			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.9	Human relations.
2	Staff	2.9	If at all training is necessary it must be in the area of finance to make the lay person understand the financial statements.
3	Staff	2.9	Professionalism, dealing with finances.
4	Staff	2.9	Reading a financial statement, working policy of the institution.
5	Staff	2.9	In this case, maybe procedures and processes.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.9	No response.
2	Staff	2.9	Managing schools, handling school-related issues.
3	Staff	2.9	Responsibility of the school board. The preparation of the budget, more teachers should take part in it.
4	Staff	2.9	Running of school. Improving of plant. Help with fund raising in churches.
5	Staff	2.9	Bookkeeping, leadership and accounting.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.9	Leadership, communication, finances.
2	Staff	2.9	Where there is a need to correct issues honestly, handle it honestly. Learn procedures (correct).
3	Staff	2.9	Procedure.
4	Staff	2.9	Sorry, no clue.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.9	Especially legal matters.
2	Staff	2.9	Faithful attendance; take ownership of school as their responsibility; confidentiality.
3	Staff	2.9	Finances – budget, balancing of accounts, public relations.
4	Staff	2.9	No response.
5	Staff	2.9	Just why is a school board important, what is expected of them. How to handle conflict and how to work within a specific time frame.
6	Staff	2.9	Reading/understanding financial statements.
7	Staff	2.9	Meeting procedures.
		2.10	If you were chosen as a board member and it is in your power to make changes, what changes would you make?
			SCHOOL A
1	Staff	2.10	Open the board to interested observers. Both observers and board members could benefit from the transparency – less chance of biased decisions and/or accusations as such.
2	Staff	2.10	Less power to chairman/principal/treasurer. More info available to board members – they need to hold the above people responsible for acting on decisions.
3	Staff	2.10	Better information flow and communication. Use of sub-committees and training resources.
4	Staff	2.10	Support teachers in classroom with resources. Make clear code of conduct for teachers and learners. Educate teachers to enhance their performance.
5	Staff	2.10	Decentralisation of authority, independent thinking on the part of members, informed

			decision making.
			SCHOOL B
1	Staff	2.10	I would make sure the board takes time to meet, address and socialise once in a while with the school staff so we can know, motivate and encourage each other in our service.
2	Staff	2.10	Meetings are conducted in a more transparent way. More staff members are included in the board for effective input.
3	Staff	2.10	Be careful of made-up stories and would ensure the board does not always rubber-stamp decisions already made by a few influential people. Interview other parties affected by the decision before passing judgment.
4	Staff	2.10	Think progressively, plan aggressively, set goals, have strategic plans which are measurable.
5	Staff	2.10	No response.
			SCHOOL C
1	Staff	2.10	No response.
2	Staff	2.10	No response.
3	Staff	2.10	More participatory style of management, i.e. parents' involvement. Two-monthly meetings. Strict records to be kept of teacher's misconduct, i.e. tardiness, pupil abuse, etc. It should be mandatory that local pastors should attend regularly.
4	Staff	2.10	Parent education – discipline, diet, parenting skills.
5	Staff	2.10	None. The only change will be to encourage the school board to be deeply involved in appointing people who know about the school.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.10	More involvement of the churches and the Conference.
2	Staff	2.10	Change the thinking of the member concerning the school. Check the board members' function in the church. They must have the interests of the school at heart, not only waiting to check the members on the board.
3	Staff	2.10	No response.
4	Staff	2.10	Discipline and administration of school.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.10	Employ a remedial teacher.
2	Staff	2.10	No response.
3	Staff	2.10	I would say promoting the school better. When people know about your institution and what you offer they have the option of sending their children here. We are losing SDA learners to other schools – Why?
4	Staff	2.10	More confidence in teaching staff who are well qualified and experienced in classroom management, etc.
5	Staff	2.10	I really do not know.
6	Staff	2.10	More staff support (Prayer wise).
7	Staff	2.10	I will not agree to serve on the board if I am chosen.
		2.11	What are your thoughts on representation on the school board?

SCHOOL A			
1	Staff	2.11	The selection of members needs to be taken much more seriously if the board and those who select them could be made aware of the enormous responsibility that is theirs, there would be much more care taken in this process. Members would probably take their positions more seriously as well. Better attendance at meetings, etc.
2	Staff	2.11	SDA values need to be protected. NB Process of appointing members flawed! Principal chooses “buddies” who won’t rock the boat/ask difficult questions.
3	Staff	2.11	Stakeholders must be adequately represented. Conference, staff, parents, churches, members should be informed and appreciated.
4	Staff	2.11	You should be able to have a sound mind and unbiased (if possible) in helping make decisions.
5	Staff	2.11	Instead of non-SDA representation on school board, latter should aim for larger SDA representation in student body.
SCHOOL B			
1	Staff	2.11	School management or admin. members should not represent the staff or teachers in the board. It should be an ordinary teacher.
2	Staff	2.11	At present only 2 staff members are represented in the board, 1 teaching and 1 non-teaching staff. Since teachers are the backbone for the smooth running of the school, more representation must be included.
3	Staff	2.11	Not usually fully representing all stakeholders.
4	Staff	2.11	Be fair to both sexes, have progressive thinkers, movers and shakers.
5	Staff	2.11	Maybe a good idea would be to involve some more parents. The ratio here could be 75% Adventist parents; 25% non-SDA parents. This will help to uphold Christian principles and values (SDA principles).
SCHOOL C			
1	Staff	2.11	No response.
2	Staff	2.11	SDA school, SDA members, + Holy Spirit.
3	Staff	2.11	More parent representation, more pastors, more teachers, i.e. at least 2-3 staff members.
4	Staff	2.11	People who know about education or are supportive of the school should be chosen.
5	Staff	2.11	They should keep up doing the good work. The school board and the staff at large should put God first and everything should follow. Running a school is not easy. We need God so that the board should make good decisions for the good of the school. The ones who represent the school should know more about it.
SCHOOL D			
1	Staff	2.11	Needs of the school first, learners and the state.
2	Staff	2.11	All church board members do not attend school board to get them interested.
3	Staff	2.11	Very bad, people do not get involved.
4	Staff	2.11	I think it would be a good idea to see what actually takes place in a board meeting and I think each teacher should be given a chance to serve on the board at least once in their school life.

SCHOOL E			
1	Staff	2.11	No response.
2	Staff	2.11	Need SDA and non-SDA reps and effective decision makers.
3	Staff	2.11	I have no idea who represents the school board.
4	Staff	2.11	Family members of teaching staff should not be on school board. (Can be biased.)
5	Staff	2.11	As a teacher with a heavy load I think it would take up too much of my time.
6	Staff	2.11	Administrative staff, teaching staff, church representatives, parents.
7	Staff	2.11	More parents, fewer people who do not have children attending the school, e.g. church reps and Conference representatives.
		2.12	Are there any other observations that you have that you think will help your board to function more effectively?
SCHOOL A			
1	Staff	2.12	I think I have talked and written too much already! All of the best with your research. God bless!
2	Staff	2.12	Transparency! X2! Communicate better with staff members.
3	Staff	2.12	No response.
4	Staff	2.12	They could have more active role with communicating decisions made, as well as goals that the board will pursue.
5	Staff	2.12	No response.
SCHOOL B			
1	Staff	2.12	If only they could be visible and be supportive to the workers, not only the management.
2	Staff	2.12	School board chairman should meet with the staff to get more input. Principal's report must be more elaborate to give the board a clear picture of the school. The meetings should not be conducted for the sake of conducting and members leave immediately without meeting the staff. More interest can be shown by the Conference in the education system.
3	Staff	2.12	It must be representative of all stakeholders, not only school staff members.
4	Staff	2.12	Choose visionaries.
5	Staff	2.12	No response.
SCHOOL C			
1	Staff	2.12	No response.
2	Staff	2.12	I think the Conference should take more responsibility for its institutions – financial, upkeep, upgrading.
3	Staff	2.12	Annual calendar/dates to be determined and teachers given copies. Teachers to have more say in setting the agenda for the board meetings. Chairman to be changed at least every two years. Records to be kept of minutes. Financial status to be shared with staff and parents at least twice a year. Annual audit reports to be candidly discussed with staff, and teachers to be taken into confidence of principal and chairman.
4	Staff	2.12	Realistically, they all hold 9-5 jobs and when do they have time to do what we expect of them? They are unpaid volunteers and to be an unpaid volunteer you need to be passionate about the cause you support.

5	Staff	2.12	Knowledge about the school. School visits by the board.
			SCHOOL D
1	Staff	2.12	Communication, board members do not know each other.
2	Staff	2.12	Principal should be more effective.
3	Staff	2.12	No response.
4	Staff	2.12	I think the board should work on making sure that the school is run well even if it has to fire the principal, or administration or a teacher.
			SCHOOL E
1	Staff	2.12	No response.
2	Staff	2.12	Good chairperson skills to keep meetings focused to the point and concise.
3	Staff	2.12	No response.
4	Staff	2.12	Perhaps some contact with us would break down pre-conceived ideas instead of only “knowing” teachers if the name should arise at board meetings whether for good or bad reasons.
5	Staff	2.12	If all members could be positive and realise it’s about what is best for the school, not just their opinion. Humility and the ability to really listen.
6	Staff	2.12	No response.
7	Staff	2.12	No response.

APPENDIX F

**RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: HUMAN RESEARCH (HUMANIORA)
ETHICS COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORM**

Application to the University of Stellenbosch RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: HUMAN RESEARCH (HUMANIORA)
for clearance of new/revised research projects

This application must be typed or written in capitals

Name: Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms:

Position/Professional Status:

Affiliation: Research Programme/Institution / Department:

Please indicate (✓) if you are a registered student at SU?

YES	
NO	

If yes, for which degree/programme are you registered?

2. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH: *(Please list objectives)*

4. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH (*give a brief outline of the research plan – not more than 200 words. Include who will do what, when, where and for how long to gather data.*)

5. NATURE AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE RESEARCH

5.1 How should the research be characterized (*Please tick ALL appropriate boxes*)

5.1.1 Personal and social information collected directly from participants/subjects
5.1.2 Participants/subjects to undergo physical examination
5.1.3 Participants/subjects to undergo psychometric testing
5.1.4 Identifiable information to be collected about people from available records
5.1.5 Anonymous information to be collected from available records
5.1.6 Literature, documents or archival material to be collected on individuals/groups

5.2 Participant/Subject Information Sheet attached? (*for written and verbal consent*)

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.3 Informed Consent Form attached? (*for written consent*)

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.3.1 If informed consent is not necessary, please state why:

NB: If a questionnaire, interview schedule or observation schedule/framework for ethnographic study will be used in the research, it must be attached. The application cannot be considered if these documents are not included.

5.4 Will you be using any of the above-mentioned measurement instruments in the research?

YES	
NO	

6 PARTICIPANTS/SUBJECTS IN THE STUDY

6.1 If humans are being studied, state where they are selected:

6.2 Please mark (✓) the appropriate boxes:

Participants/subjects will:	YES	NO
be asked to volunteer		
be selected		

6.2.1 State how the participants/subjects will be selected, and/or who will be asked to volunteer:

6.2.2. Please mark (✓) the appropriate boxes:

Participants/subjects are:	YES	NO
Will SU students, alumni of staff data be used in this research		
Will interviews be conducted with SU students, alumni of staff		
Will questionnaires be used and distributed on SU campuses		
Will electronic questionnaires be placed on the SU website?		

6.3 Are the participants/subjects subordinate to the person doing the recruiting?

YES	
NO	

6.3.1 If yes, justify the selection of subordinate participants/subjects:

6.4 Will control participants/subjects be used?

YES	
NO	

6.4.1 If yes, explain how they will be selected:

6.5 What records, if any, will be used, and how will they be accessed? Have you obtained formal permission to use these records?

6.6 What is the age range of the participants/subjects in the study?

6.6.1 Was consent from guardians/parents obtained for participants/subjects 17 years and younger?

YES	
NO	

If YES, please attach the appropriate forms.

6.6.2 If NO, please state why:

6.7 Will participation or non-participation disadvantage the participants/subjects in any way?

YES	
NO	

6.7.1 If yes, explain in what way:

6.8 Will the research benefit the participants/subjects in any direct way?

YES	
NO	

6.8.1 If yes, please explain in what way:

7. PROCEDURES

7.1 Mark research procedure(s) that will be used:

Literature	
Documentary	
Personal records	
Interviews	
Survey	
Participant observation	
Other (please specify)	

7.2 How will the data be stored to keep it safe and prevent unauthorized access? What happens to the data on completion of the research?

7.3 If an interview form/schedule; questionnaire or observation schedule/framework will be used, is it attached?

YES	
NO	

7.4 Risks of the procedure(s): Participants/subjects will/may suffer:

No risk	
Discomfort	
Pain	
Possible complications	

Persecution	
Stigmatization	
Negative labelling	
Other (please specify)	

7.4.1 If you have checked any of the above except "no risk", please provide details:

8. RESEARCH PERIOD

(a) When will the research commence:

(b) Over what approximate time period will the research be conducted:

9. GENERAL

9.1 Has permission of relevant authority/ies been obtained?

YES	
NO	

9.1.1 If yes, state name/s of authority/ies:

9.2 Confidentiality: How will confidentiality be maintained to ensure that participants/subjects/patients/controls are not identifiable to persons not involved in the research:

9.3 Results: To whom will results be made available, and how will the findings be reported to the research participants?

9.4 There will be financial costs to:

participant/subject	
institution	
Other (please specify)	
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9.4.1 Explain any box marked YES:

9.5 Research proposal/protocol attached:

YES	
NO	

9.6 Any other information which may be of value to the Committee should be provided here:

Date:

Applicant`s signature

Who will supervise the project?

Name: _____ **Programme/Institution/Department:**

Date: _____ **Signature:** _____

Director/Head/Research Coordinator of Department/Institute in which study is conducted:

I declare that this research proposal has been approved by the relevant Department or Faculty and that it complies with acceptable scientific research standards.

Name: _____

Date: _____ **Signature:** _____