

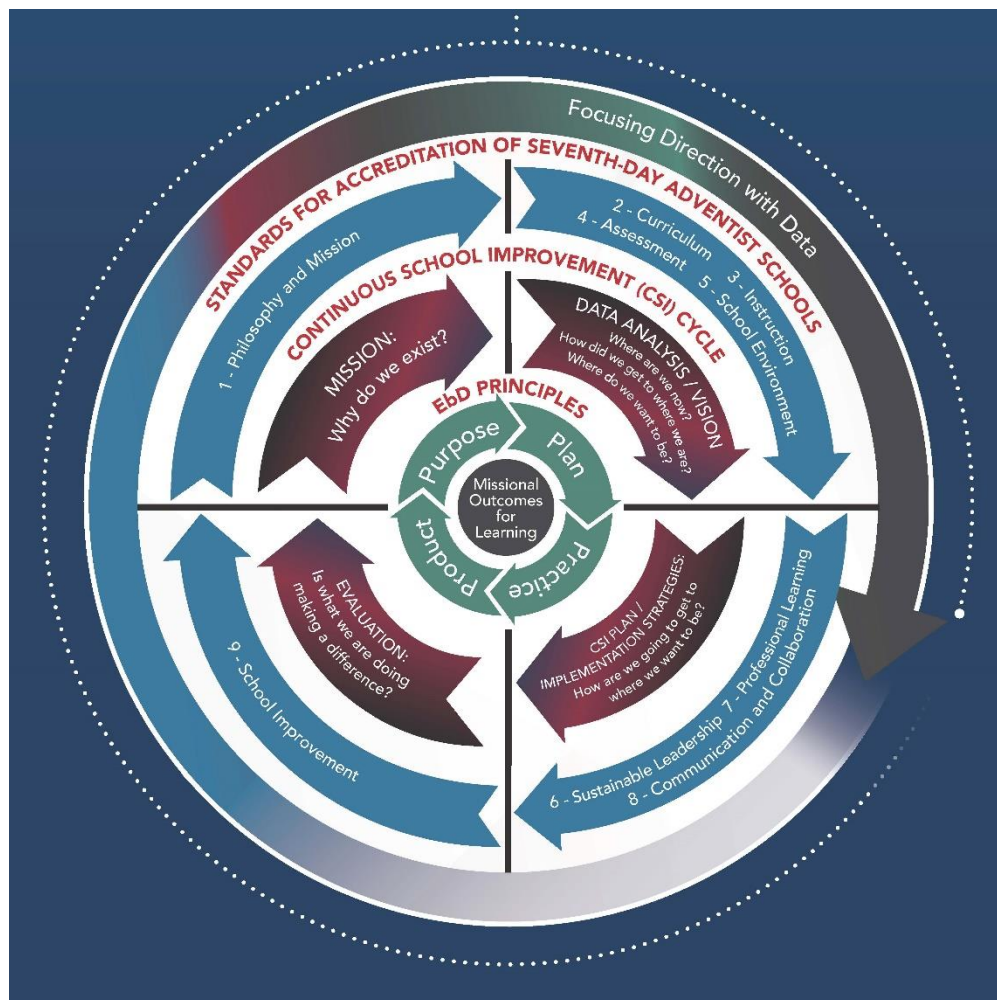
## 22 EDUCATION *by Design*

*"The greatest care should be taken in the education of youth to so vary the manner of instruction as to call forth the high and noble powers of the mind" (White, 1875).*

**Adventist education should not be left to chance;  
it must be planned, implemented, and evaluated with intention.**

Based on this guiding principle, the Southwestern Union Conference Office of Education has developed a new branding for PK-12 education—**Education by Design (EBD)**. The brand signifies that we are intentionally focused on identifying and creating coherence among the components that contribute to a journey to excellence in Adventist education.

The ultimate goal of Adventist education is to make visible the Adventist worldview to learners. Thus, teaching and learning must be purposely designed to accomplish this goal, beginning with the articulation of the core values and beliefs, the mission, and the vision of Adventist education. Below is our conceptual framework that identifies the key components of teaching and learning as well as their relationship to other parts.





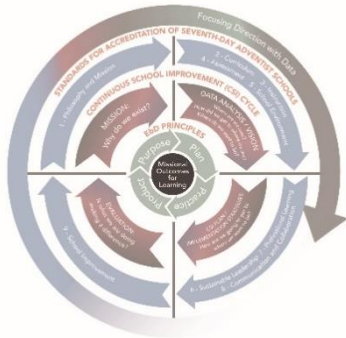
## Core Values and Beliefs

Core values and beliefs serve as the foundation for the Framework.

1. Adventist education prepares learners for excellence and success in this life, both academically and vocationally.
2. Adventist education prepares learners for eternity by introducing them to Jesus as Lord and Savior and placing the biblical worldview at the center of education as the lens for all knowledge and life.
3. Adventist education prepares learners to serve others by teaching Adventism's unique doctrinal package, particularly God's Great Commission for worldwide mission and the Second Advent.

## Missional Outcomes for Learning—The **WHY** of Adventist Education

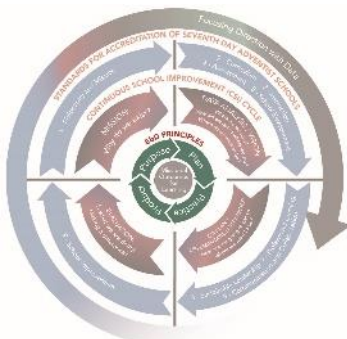
The mission or purpose for Adventist education—**Collaborating for learning excellence through faith and service**—is further articulated in a set of missional outcomes or 7Cs that are at the heart of the Framework. The outcomes identify the overarching competencies that are necessary for success in this life as well as for eternity. They serve as through lines for the other components as well as metrics for measuring whether the mission is being accomplished.



1. Connection to God and Others
2. Citizenship
3. Collaboration
4. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
5. Creativity and Innovation
6. Communication
7. Character

## Education *by Design* Principles

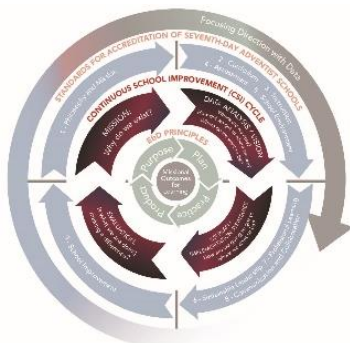
Guiding principles are necessary to not only organize the components of the whole, but to demonstrate the links or relationships among the parts. They also serve to provide horizontal as well as vertical alignment across the resulting quadrants in the Framework.



Purpose  
Plan  
Practice  
Product

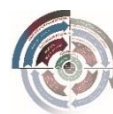
## Continuous School Improvement Cycle—The **HOW** of Adventist Education

Excellence is about building a culture that encourages continual, planned improvement. The Continuous School Improvement (CSI) Cycle, a research-based tool that uses data analysis to drive staff engagement for improvement, is implemented to meet this goal as well as meaningfully embed the missional outcomes in practice. In the *Education by Design* Framework, the CSI Cycle is divided into four parts with accompanying guiding questions that address how excellence is achieved across the system.



1. Mission
2. Vision
3. Development/Implementation of CSI Plan
4. Evaluation

Mission defines the fundamental purpose of an organization, describing why they exist, and endures through time. A mission, though, needs to be more than just a statement; it needs to be measurable. Thus, we have expanded our mission statement—**Collaborating for learning excellence through faith and service**—to include the missional outcomes that serve as metrics for measuring the degree to which we have accomplished our mission.



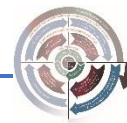
### *Vision*

Vision is the desired future state of an organization in terms of its fundamental objectives relative to key, core areas—curriculum, instruction, assessment, environment—which are subject to the context of the times. The PK-16 Task Force has just completed their work on creating a research-based vision for Adventist education. Just as with mission, the vision statement—**Designing teaching and learning to achieve missional outcomes**—is further articulated in visional outcomes, relative to the core areas, that serve as metrics for measuring the degree to which we have accomplished our vision.



### *Development/Implementation of CSI Plan*

Based on data analysis, a Continuous School Improvement Plan is developed and implemented to transform the vision of excellence into strategic goals and action steps that introduce change related to areas of need. The SWUC CSI Plan 2020 has three goals that have been identified as critical to excellence in teaching and learning. One of the key elements in the implementation of the CSI Plan is sustainable leadership, which maximizes the use of collaborative structures and professional learning in building the collective capacity of staff to support a culture of change.



### Goal #1

**Continuous School Improvement Planning**—Collaborate with conferences and schools in the use of data for continuous school improvement.

*Three years ago, SWUC educational leadership were introduced to the concept of continuous school improvement. This was followed by a webinar series on the four stages of the CSI Cycle, reinforced*

through a digital workbook. A common language has begun to develop as schools put in place collaborative structures to support continuous improvement.

## Goal #2

**Academic Excellence**—Improve academic excellence for learners by bringing coherence to curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices through a standards-based approach.

*We are beginning the process of transitioning to standards-based practices, which will be phased in over the next four years. Standards-based refers to integrated systems of instruction, assessment, grading, and reporting that are based on students demonstrating understanding or proficiency of the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. Leadership were first introduced to the concept two years ago. A webinar series is ongoing on related topics, reinforced through a digital workbook.*

## Goal #3

**Leadership**—Strengthen the leadership skill of superintendents, principals, school leaders, and those who support them in leading learning.

*In July 2020, 83 education leaders in the Southwestern Union joined virtually for a week-long Leadership Institute, **Leading the Journey**, focused on both academic leadership and operational responsibilities. The learning was shaped by the three stances of a good leader: the change stance, the implementation stance, and the sustainability stance. Change, in particular, is a key concept in leadership; leaders must have the capacity to respond continuously to change. COVID provided a ready example of how our system can successfully adapt to change, in part because we have a coherent center—a mission—which allows us to sustain our practices during challenging times. A Community of Practice for Leadership has been established to provide an ongoing collaborative structure for capacity building.*

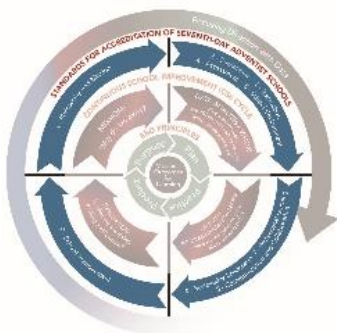
## Evaluation

There are two levels of evaluation—internal assessment and external assessment—for educational systems. Within the context of Continuous School Improvement, we are focused on the internal assessment of programs and processes designed to support implementation of the CSI Plan. Metrics are associated with each of the CSI goals as well as the mission and vision outcomes to measure the impact or effectiveness of improvement efforts.



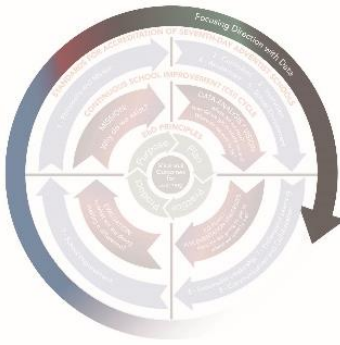
## Standards for Accreditation of Seventh-day Adventist Schools—The **WHAT** of Adventist Education

*Standards for Accreditation of Seventh-day Adventist Schools* serves as our external assessment. The nine standards are aligned with the CSI Cycle and articulate what matters for school-wide improvement, while measuring the collective impact on teaching and learning.



- |                           |                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Philosophy and Mission | 4. Assessment             | 7. Professional Learning           |
| 2. Curriculum             | 5. School Environment     | 8. Communication and Collaboration |
| 3. Instruction            | 6. Sustainable Leadership | 9. School Improvement              |

## Focusing Direction with Data



Central to the use of the Framework is the continuous collection and analysis of data. Multiple measures of data—demographic, perception, student learning, and program/process—are critical at every stage of the CSI cycle. In addition to the internal and external measures, new annual surveys have been developed to collect perception data. Student learning data is being collected, in part, with a recently adopted assessment, *MAP*, which is administered three times a year to establish benchmark data to inform instruction.

In summary, the Southwestern Union is designing a PK-12 educational system that will serve to guide us on our journey to excellence. The **Education by Design Framework** provides clarity and coherence regarding the structures and processes that define the **WHY**, **HOW**, and **WHAT** of Adventist education. With intentional focus on purpose, planning, practices, and product, teaching and learning will remain relevant and sustainable as we make visible the Adventist worldview to learners.

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