

Sabbatarian Educational Environment

A Plan

(Version 2.2, January 2004)

1) Mission Statement

The Sabbatarian Educational Environment provides biblical and vocational education in a biblical, non-denominational Sabbath-observing environment to prepare students for a life of Christian service.

2) What Kind of Education Will Be Provided?

In many western countries, the “state” has become “god”. Life’s major decisions are not based upon the best understanding of the Scriptures or upon what is obviously best for our fellow man, but upon satisfying the myriads of requirements of numerous levels of government, education and professional organizations. While the latter cannot be ignored, the Bible and brotherly love must come first in Godly education. The goal of SEE is to operate from a sound biblical basis and interface with the world’s systems as necessary and practical.

No existing secular or Christian accrediting organization would accept these kinds of plans, so no accreditation will be sought.

On the other hand, SEE will be a place for on-going learning, not a place to declare that it has “all knowledge”. SEE will not become a “church organization” with satellite congregations, but will encourage those who attend to return to their home areas with the physical and spiritual truth they have gained and put it to work to serve God and man.

a) Christian Core

These classes will be required by all who attend.

i) Bible basics

Reading the Bible, understanding the origin and authority of the Bible and learning how to study the Bible will be the main emphasis. These classes will not attempt to prove nor dissuade students from any particular group’s teaching. If a Sabbatarian denomination with SEE students finds it necessary, they may send a teacher to teach their particular doctrines to their students.

ii) Personal commitment, praise and worship

Students will be required to attend certain services, and encouraged (but not coerced) into believing on Christ as their Savior and committing their life to him.

iii) Personal confidence and communication

All students will be shown how to speak their mind with confidence and kindness, even confrontational or group situations. This is valuable for the Christian life and for the workplace.

iv) Evangelism and discipleship training

Students that attend two years or more will be required to complete a Certificate of Ministry.

v) All-campus assemblies

Students will hear a variety of SEE speakers and outside speakers designed to promote growth and unity among the staff and students.

b) Technical Education with Certification

To give students marketable skills—to interface with this world’s systems—many good jobs are available through certifications. There is no need for accreditation or even formal schooling for the learning process. Certifications may be obtained from:

- i) Large companies (for example, Microsoft has a Certified Network Engineer program).
- ii) State governments have a whole host of tests providing certification for: appraisal, auto repair, construction, child care, heating & air conditioning, real estate, refrigeration, etc.
- iii) Professional Associations offer certifications for numerous things from sports referees and camp counselors to computer and radio operators to management and secretarial skills to legal and library services.
- iv) “Self certification” is also possible in some fields such as graphic design, web design, editing, etc. One simply assembles a portfolio of one’s own work and applies for jobs based upon that.

c) Internet Degree Programs

For many legitimate fields of study, the only way to effectively work in them is through obtaining an accredited degree. Many colleges and universities now offer accredited Internet courses, which are accepted like other degrees. SEE will provide the computers and high-speed internet access to make studying effective. Students will be highly encouraged to enroll in such courses in groups. The biggest problem with Internet courses is that students working alone tend to lose interest. When several students enroll in the same program, they will be able to share books, software, lab equipment, etc. Tutoring by the SEE staff will also be possible.

A partial list of online accredited degrees includes: accounting, business administration, civil engineering, computer science, e-business, education (elementary, middle and high school), electrical engineering, environmental science, healthcare, information technology, management, marketing, mechanical engineering, paralegal, pharmacy, product development, radiology, and telecommunications. More can be found at websites such as www.allonlineschools.com.

d) Required Work/Study.

Everyone will be required to do some work to help build the SEE environment.

e) Christian Music, Drama, Dance and Art

These areas of study are frequently immoral in secular institutions. SEE will provide opportunities for believers to work together in these fields on more of an extracurricular basis. Preparing students to be able to make a living in these fields will not be an immediate goal of SEE. However, goals do include the making of a traveling music, dance and drama group to promote SEE, and the production of Sabbatarian Christian CDs and videos.

f) Physical Education, Recreation and Sports Programs

People always think more effectively when they have sufficient exercise.

g) Advanced Biblical Studies

- i) Courses covering every book of the Bible
- ii) Course explaining where various man-made doctrines entered mainstream Christianity
- iii) Doctrinal study methods with concordances, lexicons, computers and other English-language helps

iv) Biblical Hebrew and Greek

h) Truth the World is Leaving Behind

- i) Truth in Science: Creation not evolution.
- ii) Truth in Health: Take care of what God made not simply suppress the symptoms of sin.
- iii) Truth in Law: Our legal system was designed for individuals to represent themselves, but almost no individuals know how to do that. The legal system has been left to increasingly corrupt lawyers and judges.
- iv) Truth in Government: Simple rule of law with individual responsibility and punishment for crimes, not government with god-like authority and stifling regulation.
- v) Truth in History: the story of God working with His people, not the work of men evolving to “higher levels”.

3) How will the Environment work?

a) Daily Worship

Staff, teachers and students will gather together for morning worship, teaching and prayer. This will only be a half-hour session, but the purpose that everyone at SEE is working together to serve God must never be lost. These sessions will focus on the greatness of God and everyone’s need for Him. They will avoid doctrinal differences that might exist among the staff and students. (Those issues will be studied in other Bible classes.)

b) Intensive Courses

Rather than the typical hour-long classes offered at many schools, the SEE learning day will consist primarily of a morning and an afternoon class, each 3 hours long. Time blocks of this length are required to do plumbing projects, pull out auto engines or create new web sites. This is also a good way to dig into Bible study. Courses will run for some number of weeks depending upon how much the subject requires. Some courses, such as music and physical education, make more sense with a shorter amount of time each day. These will be taught before and after the two major 3-hour blocks. Evening and Sunday courses will be added as necessary.

c) Student Living Environment

The millennia-old methods used by educational communities will be put into service:

- i) Men’s and women’s dorms for the young single people.
- ii) Private apartments, trailers or homes for married people.
When facilities are available, finances are in order and parents are in agreement, marriages among students will be encouraged. It is better for students to marry during their school years, finish and then return to either the husband or wife’s home area than it is for students to finish school, set up life in a nearby city hoping to find a mate, and then never return home.
- iii) Common dining hall
- iv) Shared laundry, transportation and other resources

d) Staff Environment

- i) Similar to student environment with larger, private living space.

- ii) Relatively low paid. SEE may not have much money. Those who come to work should be dedicated to building SEE, not to making money. Staff will receive a place to live, food to eat, use of campus facilities and some money.
- iii) Some teachers will be able to come to SEE on an extended vacation to teach their class for a few weeks. The intensive 3-hour class model makes this possible.
- iv) Other teachers may be unable to come to SEE regularly, but teach a course over the Internet. Half-day or all-day Sunday courses should work well for SEE students and Sabbatarian teachers. The students along with *some* teachers need to be together for fellowship and guidance. A few distantly-located Internet teachers will not detract from the See environment. (That practice is more sensible than bringing many Internet teachers together for a school, and then teaching Sabbatarian students who all live distant from each other.)

e) Staff Positions

The following jobs are considered essential to run SEE. If it starts very small, one person may take on multiple jobs. If the facilities of some other establishment are shared, the last four or five jobs may not be needed. Notice that a deliberate effort has been made to use biblical terminology, rather than corporate terminology. The term “overseer” is rendered “bishop” in some Bible translations, but “bishop” is avoided because of its frequent association with the Roman Catholic Church and its off-shoots. The term “minister” as used in the Bible essentially means “servant”.

- i) General overseer
- ii) Minister of Worship
- iii) Overseer of teaching
- iv) Minister(s) of teaching
- v) Minister of Music, Drama, Dance
- vi) Minister of Recreation and Sports
- vii) Steward (business manager)
- viii) Scribe (general office help)
- ix) Minister of Food
- x) Minister of Housing
- xi) Minister of Maintenance

As the size of SEE increases, there will be a need for more and more assistants. Student help will be used in all areas.

4) Following the Bible More Closely

As time and resources permit, there is much else that should be done to provide a Godly environment for those who spend a few years at SEE. All of these can be started very small. For example, the SEAL program could start with one older person contributing some of their retirement money and doing some work in exchange for room and board.

a) SEAL—Sabbatarian Elder Adult Living

There is a **paradox** that exists with regard to our elder adult brethren today. Generally, older seniors have a great experience and knowledge of the true values of life. But, in our present world those experiences, skills and talents are under-appreciated. Worse yet, elderly people are often left in government or institutional programs which in theory take care of their needs, but often, in reality, starve their minds and bodies. These problems are especially real for some

independent Sabbatarian believers who no longer have much of a local congregation and who may not have any family to help them.

i) **Integrate elder adults into the SEE environment**

The same shared dining hall, laundry, transportation and recreation facilities may also be used by seniors. While they may not live in the same units or compete in the same games, many of the facilities can be shared.

ii) **Ideal workmates**

Seniors can often provide the knowledge and experience of how to do things; young people can provide the strength and energy to carry them out. This applies to many areas of life, including Bible studies, crafts, campus maintenance, flower arrangements, gardening, cooking, decorating, construction work, nutrition, health care, recreation, office work, etc.

b) Farming

i) **Biblical methods**

Emphasis should be placed on organic farming methods designed to efficiently produce good food, not big profits. This will involve observing the land Sabbaths of the Bible, healthy seed production, crop rotation, natural fertilizer, cultivation and harvesting. It will include natural fowl and animal feeding, production and meat/egg harvesting as provided by God's laws.

ii) **Savings to the campus**

Foods grown can be processed and preserved for winter consumption. Excess food can potentially be sold into the organic food market.

iii) **Opportunity for research**

iv) **Job opportunity**

c) Biblical Health

Too much of our healthcare system is based upon what government agencies or insurance companies will pay, and what drugs can be made profitably. The needs of the individual are often lost. On the other hand, many "alternative medicine" practices of the day are also primarily designed to make their promoters wealthy. Health needs to be treated from a perspective of those who care for others and are interested in the truth about what works and what does not.

5) Where Will it Be Built?

a) It is most likely that SEE will be built wherever the best facilities are offered.

(a) It could exist in a big city, the isolated countryside or somewhere in between. If multiple places become available, we will simply ask God to show us which is best in the long run. The nearness to a big city will determine a number of important factors.

b) Near a Big City

It will be much easier for SEE students to do work to earn money when there are many people around. It will also be possible to preach the gospel to them, invite them to SEE events and interact in many other ways. The downside is that some of the world's ways will more quickly filter back to SEE, there will be more problems with government control and students will have a tendency to stay in the area, rather go back to their home.

c) An Isolated Environment Far from Most People

Jobs and supplies will be more difficult to obtain, but nevertheless possible, especially via Internet. Preaching and interaction opportunities will be limited, but it will be easier to concentrate on running the community by Biblical methods.

6) How do we get there?

a) Send the detailed plan to those who are interested in helping. Obtain written commitments to help where possible.

For example, a person might commit themselves as follows: “Between the years of 2004 and 2008, I will come to teach auto mechanics at SEE in exchange for room and board and \$15,000 per year, provided there are no family emergencies or significant changes in my economic situation.” The point is not to sue the person if they do not keep their promise, but to build a list of such commitments so that all involved can know who are planning to do what.

b) Obtain commitments from planners. Ask them to promise to help in one of these or other specific ways:

- i) Pass on information about SEE to other groups of believers.
- ii) Find technical certifications that lead to good jobs and corresponding teachers or teaching materials for them.
- iii) Find the best affordable, marketable Internet degree programs.
- iv) Compile and distribute the work of others.

c) Make a database of potential staff and their abilities. Obtain limited commitments to teach if the opportunity is available.

d) Make a list of potential students. Obtain commitments from them to attend SEE if it becomes available in the near future and if they are not prevented by certain other life commitments.

e) Planners should match students to available staff and Internet programs to determine the ones needed to start.

f) Do not collect money now, but collect pledges from people who will keep the money until there is a good place to spend it.

The common practice of “traveling around to raise money that largely ends up paying for airfare, motels and nice restaurants for the people who travel around to raise money” is an abomination.

g) “D-Day” (“Do-it Day”) (or maybe “SEE-Day”?) After prayer and fasting, the SEE planners will, God willing, come to a day where it appears that there is enough men, women and material available to make SEE a reality. The planners and students will recheck their commitments to find how many are able to keep them. If enough are willing and able, the program will swing into action. A timetable will be made, those offering money will be asked to send it, and an opening day will be set.

7) *How will this be financed and governed?*

The SEE government will be selected after D-day. It should be governed by those who are providing the facilities and doing the work. If that is primarily one person or a small group of people, then it will be a small group. If it is many, then, many will govern. The government will be firmly bound to implement the plan for SEE as laid out in this and future documents. SEE will maintain its independent status—it will not become tied to a particular church organization, but serve Sabbatarian believers from a variety of congregations.

The legal form of the organization will most certainly be that of a local church congregation. This provides the most Constitutional protection. It will be a non-exclusive congregation—students and staff may also be members of other church organizations or local congregations.

The cost of SEE **to the students** will vary considerably based upon how much is given by others—both money and time. For a nine-month year, the following are possible:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Food:	\$2000	\$3500
Room:	\$50	\$2000
Utilities	\$50	\$100
Teaching	\$1000	\$8000
<u>General</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$2000</u>
Total	\$3100	\$15600

Hopefully, a lower figure will be possible, but it would mean that the costs of the rooms and administration would be paid by others and that most of the teachers are volunteers. The \$2000 per month is a very basic menu taking advantage of inexpensive and surplus food wherever possible.

8) *Why should this succeed?*

- a) **This effort is solely designed to serve God’s people and to serve God—not enhance a particular church organization or make anyone rich or famous. It will not be a “big money” operation which will attract people who simply want a nice job where the Sabbath is not a problem.**
- b) **There are numerous other groups that create educational/living environments like this. They come from all sorts of religions; some are atheists. If people who do not know God can do it, should not the people who plan to reign with Christ at his return be able to do it?**
- c) **This effort could start as small as twelve people—a few students and a few teachers. But with enough commitment, it could begin with a bang: 40 to 60 people involved.**

May God guide and bless this effort.

— Norman Edwards