



The National Black Church Initiative SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT

Submitted by Rev. Anthony Evans to

Honorable Rev. Clifford Jones, Senior Pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC

Honorable Rev. Fred Luter, Senior Pastor of the Franklin Avenue Baptist Church and former President of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, LA

March 12, 2024

HELP US BRING 6 MILLION CHILDREN BACK TO CHRIST OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS



AND I WILL GIVE THEM A HEART TO KNOW ME, THAT I AM THE LORD: AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE, AND WILL BE THEIR GOD: FOR THEY SHALL RETURN UNTO ME WITH THEIR WHOLE HEART. JEREMIAH 24:7

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Introduction

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SUNDAY

We are going to need and train some 10,000 new Sunday School teachers.

The sociology of this effort will have broad ramifications in helping to bring together one church in Christ and thus having an enormous effect on creating the type of brotherhood and love that is found in the Holy Scriptures that has eluded the present Christian Church.

Such an effort will take prayer, understanding, and all the fruits of the Spirit. More so, it will take divine leadership that has been ordained for such a movement and such a time as this. This cannot be achieved without the guidance of the elders of the church from all Christian denominations that confesses Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior.

The National Black Church Initiative has launched this ambitious plan of bringing 6 million children back to Sunday School against the backdrop of very alarming statistics of children on the state of the children's well-being.

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Children in Poverty

Among the 74 million children living in the United States, 11 million live in poverty.

1 in 6

Children Under Five

One in six children under five (3 million children) was poor, the highest rate of any age group.

Children remain the poorest age group in America, with children of color, children under five, children of single mothers, and children in the South suffering from the highest poverty rates. Two years since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, child poverty remains a paralyzing problem that both causes and exacerbates significant disturbances in the lives of all children in our country. Although the number of children living in poverty has fallen from 11.6 million to 11.1 million between 2020 and 2021 In the final tally, the pandemic managed to push more than one million children over the threshold into poverty.

Systemic racism ingrained into our American institutions has been a historical roadblock perpetuating child poverty. Current statistics indicate the ongoing effectiveness of the roadblocks in pushing the American Dream of economic mobility further out of reach, especially for Black and Brown children (see <u>Table 2</u>).

- Among the 74 million children living in the United States, 11 million live in poverty.
- One in six children under five (3 million children) were poor, the highest rate of any age group.
- The pandemic forced children already in poverty even deeper into poverty. Almost half (47%) of all children living in poverty live in severe or **extreme** poverty, a number which rose from 4.5 million before the pandemic to 5.5 million in 2021.
- The South, home to 47% of children in our country who live in poverty, experiences the highest child poverty rates with 1 in 5 children living in poverty.
- 9 million children faced hunger and food insecurity.
- 4 million children lived without health insurance.



The pandemic has been instrumental in highlighting how inadequately our American economic system serves and supports children and families. Income and wealth inequalities continue to cause exhaustive harm to children in low-income households, in which families of color remain dramatically over-represented. In 2021, the median family income of White households with children (\$102,700) was roughly double that of Black (\$46,600), Hispanic (\$57,800), and American Indian/Alaska Native (\$53,900) families with children (see <u>Table 7</u>). Since 2005, Black families have consistently earned the lowest incomes and only half as much as other racial/ethnic groups between 2019 and 2021.

Growing up in poverty has wide-ranging, sometimes lifelong, effects on children, putting them at a much higher risk of experiencing behavioral, social, emotional, and health challenges. Childhood poverty also plays an instrumental role in impairing a child's ability and capacity to learn, build skills, and succeed academically. Much work remains for the benefit of America's children.



Child abuse and neglect are serious public health problems and <u>adverse childhood</u> <u>experiences (ACEs)</u>. They can have long-term impacts on health, opportunity, and wellbeing. This issue includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role (such as a religious leader, a coach, a teacher) that results in harm, the potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. There are four common types of abuse and neglect:

- **Physical abuse** is the intentional use of physical force that can result in physical injury. Examples include hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or other shows of force against a child.
- Sexual abuse involves pressuring or forcing a child to engage in sexual acts. It includes behaviors such as fondling, penetration, and exposing a child to other sexual activities. Please see CDC's Preventing Child Sexual Abuse webpage for more information.

- **Emotional abuse** refers to behaviors that harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being. Examples include name-calling, shaming, rejecting, withholding love, and threatening.
- **Neglect** is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. These needs include housing, food, clothing, education, access to medical care, and having feelings validated and appropriately responded to.

For more information about preventing child abuse and neglect definitions please see <u>Child Maltreatment Surveillance</u>: <u>Uniform Definitions for Public Health and</u> <u>Recommended Data Elements [4.12 MB, 148 Pages, 508]</u>.

Child abuse and neglect are common. At least 1 in 7 children have experienced child abuse or neglect in the past year in the United States. This is likely an underestimate because many cases are unreported. In 2020, 1,750 children died of abuse and neglect in the United States.

Children living in poverty experience more abuse and neglect. Experiencing poverty can place a lot of stress on families, which may increase the risk for child abuse and neglect. Rates of child abuse and neglect are 5 times higher for children in families with low socioeconomic status.

Child maltreatment is costly. In the United States, the total lifetime economic burden associated with child abuse and neglect was about \$592 billion in 2018. This economic burden rivals the cost of other high-profile public health problems, such as heart disease and diabetes.



We live in a society where children are virtually raising themselves without much parental care, guidance, and ethical training.

Society has no clue in offering the necessary ethical and biblical teachings that the child needs to help build character development. This charge is left exclusively to the Church by God but there seems to be no hunger for it. Sunday School, according to Church experts, has been dying for the past 40 years. The question is why the Christian Church allowed the Sunday School to die and what was the rationale. Despite the reasons why, we can accurately measure the downward spiral of the child's alarming statistical existence with the abandonment of Sunday School by the Church

The Church cannot afford to continue to disregard this crisis. If we do, we literally will not have any children to make a society going forward.

This new Sunday School Movement is an emergency attempt to address the alarming rate of signs that generations of children continue to be lost. No one seems to have answers, the parents are exhausted, the social scientists are baffled, and the police have run out of energy thus the child continues to spiral out of control.

This new Sunday School Movement hopes to restore, renew, revitalize, and reshape the churches' commitment to children.

Children cannot teach themselves.

This is the job of both society and the Church, which is today opposed to one another. Society does not trust the church anymore and the Church does not trust society. We are at a moral crossroads in society and this initiative hopes to break the bond of the devil on the soul of our children. When our children begin to come back to Sunday school and spiritually internalize the ethics and teachings of Jesus Christ – those negative statistics cited above in our children will begin to transform themselves.

Thus, underlining why the crisis exists in the first place. The parents are confused about what to teach the child. Society continues to devalue the importance of the child's emotional, physical, and spiritual development and the new science concerning brain development in children's education. The Church decided to neglect its biblical mandate and leave the child at the will and the expense of both the parent and society neither understands the true needs of the child thus causing spiritual confusion and a vacuum in the soul of the child.

This is why the National Black Church Initiative has decided to launch this important Sunday School initiative to help both the parent and society by reminding the Christian Church of its role in teaching clear biblical ethics to help grow the child's ethical and moral character. In other words, the Church must reclaim its biblical mandate to save the soul of the child.



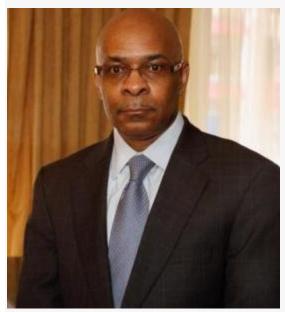
NBCI Moves to Rebuild, Revitalize and Reimagine Sunday School Traditions by Bringing 6 Million Children Back to Christ



Rev. Anthony Evans, President, National Black Church Initiative



Rev. Dr. Mark McCleary



Rev. Sheldon Williams

The children need to be equipped with the principled teachings of Christianity to ensure holistic preparedness within sacred and secular endeavors.

This will be one of the most important movements in Christian history, which has the power to transform the Church into the power center in a world that has chosen the wrong direction."

- Rev. Anthony Evans, President of the National Black Church Initiative

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, November 22, 2023 /<u>EINPresswire.com</u>/ -- National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) Moves to Rebuild, Revitalize and Reimagine Sunday School Traditions by Bringing 6 Million Children Back to Christ (Church)

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a coalition of 150,000 African American and Latino churches that constitute 27.7 million churchgoers, is launching a bold initiative, Reimagined Sunday School, as the conduit for bringing children back to principled living. Traditionally, Sunday School has served as the identified platform for providing religious and ethical teachings to young children and adults alike about Christianity. Through the experiences found in parables and the lives of people, those attending Sunday School would be prepared for living with principles of Christianity.

More specifically, in Matthew 19:13-14, "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." With the charge found in this commandment, NBCI assumes a literal response through Reimagined Sunday School as an intentional, innovative, and integrated approach toward teaching, learning, and leading to foster principled living for children. Rev. Anthony Evans, President of the NBCI responds as he smiles with joy "This will be one of the most important movements in Christian history, which has the power to transform the Church into the power center in a world that has chosen the wrong direction. Christ wants the Church to play a central role-The key words here are 'Sunday School'."

The recent upticks in children-led carjackings, teacher shootings, and other illegal and unethical behaviors are creating chaos within families and/or their loved ones. Some of these children are members of NBCI congregations and some of them are not. Yet, what we know from religious scholars, every successful society is inclusive of established religious systems and practices. NBCI utilizes moral and biblical authority found within the ethics and teachings of Jesus to promote the importance of such religious teachings in the lives of children. Moreover, given an earlier report released by the Pew Center, while diminishing, religion remains important. "Three-quarters of U.S. adults say religion is at least "somewhat" important in their lives, with more than half (53%) saying it is "very" important. Approximately one-in-five say religion is "not too" (11%) or "not at all" important in their lives (11%)." Thus, the fact that adults consider religion as important, being able to engage collaboratively presents a unique opportunity to involve both adults and children in this endeavor.

Thus, Reimagined Sunday School is fundamentally situated within the belief of Sunday School as being the first official school of every child. Given the role of Jesus Christ as dedicated to God the Father, such positioning sets a divine standard that every child brought into this world needs to be dedicated to the Lord. The dedication serves as a sign of thanksgiving to God and the privileges therein to take care of, educate, and empower children with the ethics and teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. Such positioning also serves to reinforce the existence and concept of early child development, primary school, and founding of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as situated within the origins of the Sunday School structure as put forth by the Black Church. Reimagined Sunday School serves as a direct platform to restore moral order and uphold the church's moral charge as found in Provers 22:6, "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it." It is highly impossible to believe anyone will object to the Black Church working to restore the imperative of moral order.

More specifically, through Reimagined Sunday School, the Black Church will utilize this extraordinary moment to provide biblical, ethical, and social guidance. The Church will once again work hand-in-hand with the parents and provide parents with the necessary skill set to be the first teacher in their child's life. The Church will intentionally address issues and root causes of child development, physical and sexual abuse of the child, and behavior modifications. In other words, Reimagined Sunday School plans to offer diverse teaching and learning opportunities that are engaging and exciting and filled with opportunities for helping children to build communication skills and interpersonal behavior as well as to support both children and their parents through counseling, training, listening, and other social endeavors.

Reimagined Sunday School will integrate the latest scientific research in the child development area as part of the redefined structure of Sunday School. Such an approach will be inclusive of collaborative endeavors with religious experts as well as college and universities to provide "Train the Trainer" seminars for Sunday School teachers to understand the latest and most effective best practices in child development, particularly with an added emphasis on both Black and Latino children. Reimagined Sunday School will seek to partner with the local school system to enhance academic enrichment and learning assistance for those children who face learning challenges. Additionally, NBCI is partnering with ACCEYSS to incorporate the use of STEM-related activities to plant the seed of a new generation of scientific thinkers and workers. Dr. Shetay Ashford-Hanserd,

Founder of the Association of Collaborative Communities Ensuring Equity for STEM+C Success (ACCEYSS) shares "I am convinced that the Reimagined Sunday School movement has the potential to exponentially increase the number of historically marginalized youth who have access to science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and computing education in underserved and underresourced communities."

In effect, through the principled teachings of Christianity, Reimagined Sunday School encourages the integrated, innovative, and intentional use of the latest and most effective technology and strategies serves to prepare children overall with spiritual, ethical, biblical, and academic forms of individual empowerment.



ABOUT NBCI

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of 150,000 African American and Latino churches working to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing, and the environment. The mission of NBCI is to provide critical wellness information to all its members, congregants, churches, and the public. NBCI utilizing faith and sound health science and partners with major organizations and officials reduce racial disparities in the variety of areas cited above. NBCI's programs are governed by credible statistical analysis, science-based strategies and techniques, and methods that work and offer faithbased, out-of-the-box, and cutting-edge solutions to stubborn economic and social issues.





Section One

What Has Been Accomplished Thus Far?

HELP US BRING 6 MILLION CHILDREN BACK TO CHRIST OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

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Section One

What Has Been Accomplished Thus Far?

Since the November 10th News Conference at Israel Baptist Church in Baltimore, where the Rev. Dr. H. Walden Wilson, II is Senior Pastor, NBCI has been working very hard to build a structure that is supportive of a National Sunday School Movement.

The Creation And Distribution of the Press Release

https://www.fox21news.com/business/press-releases/ein-presswire/670313934/nbci-moves-to-rebuildrevitalize-and-reimagine-sunday-school-traditions-by-bringing-6-million-children-back-to-christ

The Kickoff News Conference, Nov 10th, 2023

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3a_eK3qoKK4&t=1976s



The Creation of the Sunday School Website

The visit to Nashville, Tn.

On November 26- 29th we attended the Sunday School Publishing Board (SSPB) in Nashville TN. To alert the National Baptist Convention USA Incorporated that we are launching this Sunday School Initiative. We met Dr. Berry and Dr. Derick Jackson. We wrote both of them a lengthy email but neither of them has responded to date.

This was very disappointing. Rev. Sheldon Williams, Senior Pastor of the Co-op Baptist Church in the Bronx, NY, observed that their actions were unchristian and how can they think that they are competing against us when our mission is to win every soul for Christ?



https://standingupforchrist.com/strategy

What is the Strategy?

The strategy is for every Christian church to fulfill its biblical mandate as articulated by our Lord and Savior. If you would lift Him up "He will Draw all men up to Him." The word man represents all mankind which includes women and children. This campaign is calling on all Christian churches to register their desire to fulfill their biblical mandate of evangelism and Christian education. We are asking every church in their Annual Christian education service or retreat to commit to the goal of this national Sunday School Program of bringing 6 million children back to Christ. There are three initial strategies that must be employed for the success of this initiative on a church level, evangelistic level, community level, and national level. They are:

1. Fasting and praying – We are asking all churches to fast and pray to be led by the Holy Spirit that this is what God is calling the church to do. We must ask God to bless their pastor to understand the vision to be a part of this national critical ministry to save our children. Fasting and praying allow the body and the soul to rid themselves of all unnecessary worldly elements that will impede the success of this national ministry. We are asking churches to dedicate one service and one night of training for the purpose of fasting and praying for

both divine and biblical clarity concerning the mission of bringing 6 million children back to Sunday School.

- 2. NBCI needs your church to register as a Sunday School supporter through this website and send us a \$200.00 love offering so that we will have the ability to answer all the requests that we know are coming. In addition, and most importantly, your love offering qualifies your Sunday School Department to be eligible for a grant of \$2,500.00 to help purchase Sunday School material because of the increase of children coming back to Sunday School.
- 3. NBCI will designate your church as a Sunday School leader in your zip code/community. As a lead Sunday School church, you will be responsible for organizing up to 15 churches in your community so that there will be hundreds of volunteers going out every Saturday fishing for children to bring back to the Sunday School at your churches. Your group will have the ability to name themselves and report back through our email the name of the Sunday School cluster in that zip code or community. All of our churches will have the responsibility to collect a one-time contribution of \$20.00 from every Christian in their communities. The funds will be sent to NBCI and then bundled and distributed into \$2500.00 grants to help churches purchase additional Sunday School materials.



The outline of this strategy will be employed all over the nation in every Christian church that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In the coming months, we will have a list of where churches can purchase biblically sound Sunday School materials that are Christ-centered.

The Authorization to Rev. McCleary to begin to work on Sunday School Teacher Certification Certificate Programs.

February 20, 2024

Rev. Mark McCleary Ministries 13842 A (144) Outer Drive Silver Spring, MD 20904

Dear Rev., McCleary,

As you are aware, on November 10, 2023, The National Black Church Initiative launched one of the most expansive Christian initiatives in the history of the Christian church. We are proposing to bring over 6 million children back to Sunday school.

Over the past 30 years, and some will say longer, Sunday School which is the foundation of the Christian Church, became the victim of neglect and disobedience to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This new initiative we hope will rebuild, revitalize, and reimagine the Christian Church for the 21st century.

According to the data we have compiled, we are going to need this new and exciting effort, of some 10,000 new, young Christian Sunday School Teachers. We hope to attract individuals who have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. We will be able to incorporate the new scientific discoveries on brain development in the forthcoming Sunday School Teacher's Training Curriculum and our approach.

Therefore, as the new incoming Chief Operating Officer of the 6 million Sunday School expansion program, I am hereby recommending Mark McCleary's Ministries create the training curriculum protocols for the Teacher Sunday School Training. The protocols should cover three distinctive training levels. First, for beginner teachers' certificate protocol. This will require 26 distinct training modules. Secondly, the intermediate teacher's certificate protocol. This will require 50 distinct training modules. This training level should be able to supervise two beginner teachers in every church. The third level is the advanced teachers' certificate protocol. This will require 100 distinct training modules. This training level should be able to train and supervise the beginner and intermediate teaching levels as well as to conduct a trainer of trainers training program in their geographic region.

The course curriculum will first be online and then based on financial contributions to the Sunday School movement, they will be published under the National Black Church Initiative Sunday School Division. You will be given general authorship credit along with other notable Ministers who will make up the foundation of this new movement.

Upon acceptance and completion, Mark McCleary Ministries will be able to issue an invoice for services after negotiating a fair Christian fee. The timetable for this project will be due November 1st, 2024 if you accept the challenge.

Thank you.

Rev. Anthony Evans Preside





Section Two

Why do the Denominations need to meet in Charlotte to deal with the issues of rebirthing Sunday School in America?

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Section Two

Why do the Denominations need to meet in Charlotte to deal with the issues of rebirthing Sunday School in America?

Four important issues need to be resolved.

The Sunday School Movement needs to rise. 5 million dollars

Issue 1

Church of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons)

All the denominations will be invited to the table. We need to resolve the question of whether the Church of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons) will be invited to be a part of this National Sunday School Movement and whether we will accept monies from the Mormons who are now the richest church in America with a 100 billion dollars.

Issue 2

A Theological and Biblical Question – Dedicate Every Child to Christ

Whether or not the church will assume biblical authority and automatically dedicate every child who walk through our doors to the Lord without parental permission. The rational here, is that the Church must assume biblical authority in the Name of Jesus Christ Our Lord to pray spiritual covering on that child before that child goes back into sick sin world and to parents who have rejected Christ.

In other words, is Christ Church well within its right to offer that child Spiritual covering because of the spiritual crisis now facing both the community and the church. How can the church send that child back into a dangerous world whereby the devil wants to devour his/her soul and the parent does not care because they both are spiritually ignorant of both the church's mission and obligation to that child's soul? The child must be dedicated to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ despite their parent's willful spiritual ignorance and their lack of knowledge of the promise that they made to the Lord when they became parents. This act of the promise that every parent is obligated to be done both consciously and unconsciously, but it is a promise to God.

The other compelling reasoning behind this important issue is there have been over 3-4 generations who have never been dedicated to the Lord, thus putting the Church in an awkward position of institution such a measure to fulfill its biblical mandate to the Lord before judgment day.

Issue 3

LBGQ Plus Community issues

We must decide how to deal with this ethical legal issue – The LBGQ Plus community. The is an ever-present issue for the Christian Church during this time

of extreme liberalism. How do we want to handle these issues. We will have legal exposure if we ignore these issues.

Here are some possible questions that need to be answered.

This question must be answered before we launch this great movement for Christ.

- Are we going to allow children who are identified as gay to join the Sunday School Movement?
- What exceptions or legal accommodations would be made for these children?
- Does the Sunday School Movement need to hire a lawyer to deal with this issue?
- How do we deal with their parents who threaten to sue to gain entry and special accommodation?
- What legal declarations we must declare or have in place to safeguard this initiative?

This is a serious ethical, legal, and biblical issue that would unrattled this new Sunday School movement and cost us (The Church) millions of dollars if they sued this new Sunday School movement. We must be prepared for such a battle that the devil will surely cast in our path toward bringing 6 million back to (Christ's Sunday School).

Issue 4

Sunday materials and developing core principles

Sunday materials and developing core principles that I in the Christian faith that should be reiterated and approved on what constitutes standard acceptable Sunday School material as opposed to Sunday School material that justifies marriages and sexuality contrary to the Holy Scriptures. The Sunday School conclave must come up with these standards for all Sunday School Materials. The Sunday School materials must also deal with the issue of racism.

The Sunday School conclave must set forth acceptable Christian centered teachers certification material guidelines. In other words, the same principles in the scripture must be governed by the material produced for the teacher and students.

Over the two-day conference, we will hope to resolve these issues in launching this Sunday School Program to bring 6 million children back to Sunday School.



Section Three

CHILDSTATS

DATA ON AMERICAN CHILDREN

hildstats.gov/americaschildren/demo.asp#:~:text=There%20were%2072.5%20million%20children,to%20 78.2%20million%20in%202050.

We will present comprehensive data on where American children are send the strategies behind our missionary programs on how we will recruit and sustain 6 million children in our churches over the next five years.

Understanding the changing demographic characteristics of America's children is critical for shaping social programs and policies. The number of children determines the demand for schools, health care, and other social services that are essential for meeting the daily needs of families. While the number of children living in the United States has grown, the ratio of children to adults has decreased. At the same time, the racial and ethnic composition of the Nation's children continues to change. Demographic composition provides an important context for understanding the indicators presented in this report and provides a glimpse of future American families.

There were 72.5 million children in the United States in 2022, which was 0.4 million less than in 2021. The total number of children is projected to increase to 78.2 million in 2050. In 2022 (the latest year of data available at the time of publication), there were fewer children in the 0–5 age group (22.4 million) than in the 6–11 age group (24.2 million) or the 12–17 age group (25.8 million).

Next Steps

Before the conference takes place, we must identify the elders in the church who would agree to provide structural and spiritual leadership and guidance. NBCI is asking that the Honorable Rev. Clifford Jones, Senior Pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC, and the Rev. Fred Luter, Senior Pastor of the Franklin Avenue Baptist Church and former President of the Southern Baptist Convention assume the position of Elder over this project.

This year we hope to convene a conference in Charlotte at Friendship Baptist Church with about 20 - 25 Christian denominations present.

After the conference, a detailed fundraising strategy will be implemented based upon the support of 20–25 Christian protestant denominations and their encouragement of Black and White Christians to give a minimum of \$20.00 every year to help in the administration of bringing 6 million children back to Sunday School across the United States.



Rev. Anthony Evans CEO of the National Sunday School Movement



Rev. Sheldon Williams Deputy CEO



Rev. Dr. Mark McCleary NBCI National Preacher and National Curriculum Specialist



Rev. Dr. Mark A. Croston, Sr. Chief Sunday Strategist

President TBA

National Sunday School Teacher. TBA

Executive Director (full time paid position) TBA

Sunday School Administrator TBA