



Mennonite Education Agency Report to Indiana Michigan Mennonite Conference April 2022

Mission Statement: MEA will strengthen Mennonite education for restorative leadership, work, and service throughout the church and the world.

A season of change at MEA

Greetings from Elkhart, Indiana, as the seasons begin to transform from winter to spring. MEA is also



entering a season of change. On September 1, 2021, **Rev. Dr. Michael Danner** (left) was named Executive Director and CEO of MEA. Michael serves as part of a shared staffing arrangement between MEA and Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. In this shared staffing role, Michael provides leadership to MEA as the Executive Director and leadership to the church vitality team of MC USA as the Associate Executive Director. **The goal of the shared staffing arrangement is to reimagine the education ministry of the church to better serve the needs of MC USA members, congregations, and conferences.**



Shana Peachey Boshart (left) was appointed Faith Formation Minister as of November 1, 2021. In this new role, Shana serves in partnership with the Mennonite Schools Council (preK through grade 12 schools) and is expanding "Mennonite education" to include faith formation at the congregational level as well.

The goal of MEA going forward is to build on what continues to be vital from the past, while considering the educational needs of the whole church, including local congregations and area conferences, non-degree educational programing, and resources for church-based leadership development.



CFO and Senior Director Lisa Heinz (right) retired at the end of December after 23 years of service. **Janice Eigsti Miller** (left) a Goshen College graduate, began as the new CFO of MEA on January 1, 2022. Heinz' retirement marks the end of an era at MEA. Over the past three years, two other long-term MEA leaders retired: Carlos Romero and Elaine Moyer. With three new staff in leadership roles, we are excited about MEA's future! It is an opportunity to reimagine how MEA can best

serve the education needs of Mennonite Church USA, congregations, conferences, and the schools.

MEA's Hispanic Ministries Education programs: SeBAH & IBA

MEA's Hispanic Anabaptist Biblical Seminary (**SeBAH - Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano**) and the Hispanic Anabaptist Bible Institute (**IBA - Instituto Bíblico Anabautista**) continue to offer strong theological and biblical teaching from a uniquely Hispanic and Latino/a Anabaptist perspective. These programs always strive to be accessible and affordable. MEA's Hispanic Ministries

also produces **MenoTicias**, a digital magazine in Spanish, produced in collaboration with Mennonite Church USA staff.

IBA (*Instituto Bíblico Anabautista*):

- **IBA student Josué González has been named moderator-elect of Iglesia Menonita Hispana**, the Hispanic/Latino/a constituency group of MC USA. Josué will graduate from IBA this Spring. One of the best affirmations of our work is when our students emerge as leaders in the church. We are very proud of Josué!
- **More than thirty IBA students are expected to graduate this Spring** from three study centers in the Bronx and Brooklyn, NY, and from one study center in Miami, FL.

SeBAH (*Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano*):

- Fourteen SeBAH students are participating this trimester in the Pastoral Accompaniment course.
- Six new students will be enrolling in SeBAH in the upcoming summer term.
- The SeBAH graduation ceremony will be held at Hesston College on Labor Day weekend, September 2022, in combination with the IBA Tutor Training.

To learn more about IBA or SeBAH, or to enroll, visit <https://www.hispanicmennoedu.org/>.

MEA's Investment Fund

The **MEA Investment Fund** serves over twenty MC USA-affiliated schools, congregations, area conferences, and other education-related programs. **MEA has contracted with Everence Financial to provide administrative support to the Investment Fund Committee**, a role previously held by the MEA CFO. Everence brings particular expertise and resources, which will contribute to the continued success of the fund. Taylor Caouette, a Goshen College graduate, has been appointed by Everence as the MEA Investment Fund Facilitator. As of February 28, 2022, the Total Fund was valued at **\$204.7 million**.

Other ways MEA is supporting Anabaptist values in education

- **Reporting:** The **2021-2022 Enrollment Report** is an annual compilation of enrollment data from all member educational institutions and programs from early childhood through continuing education. Based on headcount in the fall 2021:
 - Mennonite educational institutions are touching the lives of **9,101 students**: a decrease of 249 (2.7%) students from the 2020 total of 9,350.
 - In higher education, the total headcount decreased by 108 students (with decreases of 13 in adult degree-completion, 108 in graduate, and 13 in seminary and increases of 26 in undergraduate).
 - Preschool, elementary, and secondary education levels showed a decrease of 127 students (2.5%).
- **Electronically:** MEA works through social media and other digital promotions to amplify the work of the schools and to emphasize Anabaptist values. We encourage you to "follow" MEA and the affiliated schools!

- **Prayer:** The [**MEA prayer newsletter**](#) is a monthly prayer resource that continues to be a blessing to the schools and local congregations. These prayer requests come directly from the schools across all levels of Mennonite education to help congregations and individuals know how best to pray for the schools and the work being done towards faith formation. The prayer requests can be shared in bulletins each week and/or printed or emailed to congregants each month for home use.
- **Human resources:** MEA publishes a weekly [**Job Board**](#) and distributes it to congregations, schools, constituents, and donors across the denomination and beyond. Schools affiliated with MEA can list their job openings at no charge. There are a significant number of vacancies at all levels across Mennonite education, including several principal/head of school positions. MEA is providing support to several search committees.

The MEA board and staff thank you for the many ways you support Mennonite education across the church!

Submitted by Michael Danner
Executive Director, CEO
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MD/jvg