



**Hispanic Pastoral and Leadership Education, www.MennoniteEducation.org/HPLE
Annual Report to Mennonite Education Agency Fall 2009
Submitted by: Rafael Barahona, MEA associate director for HPLE**

1. What are your greatest opportunities for collaboration with Mennonite area conferences?

The HPLE office is at the forefront in the training of Hispanic leadership and is constantly looking for opportunities to partner with conferences in this endeavor. Some of the conferences that have Hispanic congregations are using the Instituto Bíblico Anabautista (IBA) program. Area conferences can be strong supporters by endorsing and encouraging leadership to go through and make use of the HPLE programs. HPLE would appreciate those conferences not using our programs to encourage their Hispanic congregations to become active participants in the HPLE programs available to them.

2. What is the greatest barrier to developing stronger mutual support and relationships with area conferences?

Due to some turnaround in staff at conferences, there is some lack of knowledge about the programs offered by the HPLE office. However, it is possible to see an effort to cover those gaps.

3. What can MEA do to help strengthen the relationship between educational institutions and conferences?

MEA/HPLE, in partnership with Mennonite Mission Network and Iglesia Menonita Hispana (IMH), continue to advocate for education by encouraging schools, area conferences and congregations to work together in order to strengthen the work of education.

4. How has your institution/council/program connected with area conferences and congregations to discern educational needs?

HPLE is working closely and exploring different ways to develop partnerships with conferences that have Hispanic congregations, i.e., Southeast, Western District and Lancaster. In our conversations with conference leaders, we find that the IBA program responds the best in fulfilling the educational needs at the congregational level.

5. What can you and MEA do together to discern educational needs?

HPLE greatly appreciate MEA's staff and board for their vision and support in the ongoing work of the HPLE office. HPLE continues to work with IMH congregations and conferences to discern the ways to best utilize the resources being offered to them.

6. What resources and training opportunities are you offering to area conferences, congregations and members?

HPLE offers two educational programs. IBA offers a two-level, four-year, biblical theological education that is congregationally based. The new Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano (SeBAH) program offers a 27-month, undergrad ministerial education using a combination of face-to-face and distance instruction. In addition, HPLE provides an annual continuing education for pastors. Also the e-zine, *Meno Acontecer*, is linking congregations by offering information as well as biblical studies, messages and meditations to both congregations and members.

7. If you like, include a few paragraphs about notable events or milestones (of any type) for your institution/council/program in the past year

- In September 2009, IBA celebrated 21 years of ministry with a gathering of close to 100 students, tutors and alumni.
- IBA continues to open new centers in several congregations that had never used the program before.
- SeBAH was launched in July 2009 at the Mennonite Church USA Convention. The program has generated interest of several pastors and other leaders who want to earn a certificate at this formal level. There is a collaboration agreement in the works with the Mennonite colleges and universities to grant/recognize the 28 credits. Funding for curriculum writing is needed. Classes start early in 2010.
- At the end of 2009, *Meno Acontecer* has close to 600 subscribers. Beginning with the January issue, the e-zine will offer a “printer friendly version” to distribute to those people who don’t have Internet access which will add to the readership. *Meno Acontecer* continues to be a venue for other Mennonite agencies and institutions to communicate with the Hispanic constituency. Last November 2009, IMH officially discontinued their newsletter *Encuentro* in favor of *Meno Acontecer* serving its needs. HPLE and *The Mennonite* welcomed this move.



**Mennonite Early Childhood Network, www.MennoniteEducation.org/MECN
Annual Report to Mennonite Education Agency, Fall 2009
Submitted by: Kathryn Aschliman, coordinator**

1. What are your greatest opportunities for collaboration with Mennonite area conferences?

- We utilize contacts at churchwide meetings.
- We made the following presentations at the Education Leaders Gathering (ELG) 2009:
 - “What’s happening in early childhood education?” - Kathryn Aschliman
 - “Nurturing Faith in Young Children” - Kathryn Aschliman
 - “Church/early childhood program relationships: More than sharing a building” - Linda Taylor
- We offer seminars at Mennonite Church Conventions. At the recent convention in Columbus, we made the following presentations:
 - “Nurturing young children’s spiritual development” - Tami Keim
 - “Healing Trauma—Healing the Heart” - Barbara Oehlberg
 - Mennonite Early Childhood Network meeting - Kathryn Aschliman
- We introduced a newly developed MECN brochure at ELG 2009.
- We submit a prayer request to MEA’s monthly *Prayers for Faith and Learning*.
- See # 6 below.

2. What is the greatest barrier to developing stronger mutual support and relationships with area conferences?

We have limited opportunities for face-to-face dialogue.

3. What can MEA do to help strengthen the relationship between educational institutions and conferences?

- We are interested in the possibility of offering Webinars with capacity for feedback.
- We should develop guidelines for establishing preschool programs; we have already received requests for this type of information.

4. How has your institution/council/program connected with area conferences and congregations to discern educational needs?

- We distributed a questionnaire to our network through an E-alert on March 25, 2009.
- We recorded questions and concerns voiced by participants at the seminars and MECN network meeting at Mennonite Church USA Convention 2009.
- We contacted conference personnel for help in identifying through-the-week programs for young children and for names of persons at the conference level to address parenting issues.

5. What can you and MEA do together to discern educational needs?

We are watching with interest the discussions for developing a Shared Distance Learning System.

6. What resources and training opportunities are you offering to area conferences, congregations and members?

- We alert our network to resources through e-alerts which can then be found on our Web site.
- We are offering consultation services for the development of a Herald Press Sunday school curriculum for two-year-olds that may also be used in through-the-week programs. Programs in our network are piloting some of the lessons.
- We awarded scholarships for replying to a survey to three persons to attend the Mennonite Educators Conference in February 2010.
- We publicized the Women and Preschool Speaker Directory, 2010-2013, which lists 118 speakers who address concerns related to parenting, family and children's issues plus 11 additional categories.
- Linda Taylor, on behalf of MECN, presented "Laying the Foundation of Mennonite Education for the 21st Century" written by JoEllyn Peterson, Leonor Kennell and Linda at the Mennonite Education Symposium in September 2009. Information from the symposium presentations will be incorporated into a forth-coming book.
- We had an inquiry about setting up a Presbyterian early childhood network patterned after ours.

7. If you like, include a few paragraphs about notable events or milestones (of any type) for your institution/council/program in the past year.

We have noticed references in church publications to Mennonite Church USA educational worldwide endeavors with young children. In September, 2009, Mavis L. Olesen, IPP/PDD Education Coordinator for MCC, joined our network. She noted that "Kristina Lewis taking a new assignment in preschools in Uganda, told me about this site."

Upon further investigation, we learned 15 MCC Global Family projects specifically focus on early childhood. They are located in Africa, Asia, Latin America/Central America and Europe/Middle East. Mavis noted that "we are in touch with many young people (some trained, some not) in early childhood education." She mentioned that the MCC Education newsletter disseminates information broadly so MECN provided her with information of how to access our Web site.

We posted MCC's descriptive "Children's Care Center in South Africa" on the OUR STORIES page and provided information for sponsoring these Global Family centers. We also offered resources from our Web for use in MCC's new Toolkit resource for MCC representatives, a three component series focusing on equipping early childhood educators.