

MENNONITE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

EST. 1889



Mennonite Collegiate Institute Annual Report to Congregations – 2023

“The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.” Psalm 145:13

Praise the Lord for his everlasting faithfulness towards MCI and thank you to our generous supporters.

In 2023, we saw many examples of God’s faithfulness to MCI and its community. After several years of low enrollment, questions arose about MCI’s future. Would 2023 be MCI’s last? Or would we look back on 2023 as the beginning of a turn-around for the school?

To help navigate the way forward, the MCI Board of Directors, its Leadership Team, and a committee of MCI supporters developed the Strategic Plan, which was presented at a community meeting on April 25, 2023. This plan can be found on our website at: <https://mciblues.net/about-us/board-of-directors/>. Inspired by the words of Scripture (Jeremiah 29:11, Romans 12:2, Isaiah 40:31), the plan establishes five strategic pillars as the focus for the next three years:

1. Financial stability
2. Recruitment and retention of students
3. Educational and program excellence
4. Clarification of MCI’s identity
5. Stakeholder engagement

At that meeting, the Board also shared the school’s need for \$500,000 of financial contributions to make it through to the end of the 2022-2023 school year and remain open for 2023-2024. During April and May, many teaching staff made the difficult decision to find employment elsewhere due to the uncertainty at MCI. The MCI Board met in late June to discuss and put forward a motion regarding the future of the school; by the faithfulness of God and dedication of our donors the decision was made to be open for the 2023-2024 school year and beyond.

MCI’s Leadership Team spent the end of June and the summer filling vacant positions. By the grace of God and the willingness of many individuals, all but one of the vacant teaching positions were filled by the beginning of September. Students enrolled in Grade 11 Chemistry, Grade 12 Biology, Grade 10 Geography, and Grade 9 Social Studies for first semester have been completing coursework using an online platform called Informnet. With a new hire starting in the second semester, we plan to move away from this course delivery method.

The current school year has been full in the best of ways. We are pleased to continue to offer students opportunities for growth in faith and community through daily chapels, our annual Christian Life Retreat at Red Rock Bible Camp, and the upcoming youth conference, Youth Orbit, in January. We have cherished time spent connecting with the wider MCI community of parents, alumni, and supporters at events like our Soup and Pie and Fall Concert, Christmas Concert, and PAC-coordinated movie nights and family

carnivals. This fall we offered students an opportunity for hands-on learning during a six-week block of 'Workshop Wednesdays', where staff, alumni, and parents led specialized subjects such as agriculture, photography, set building and design, outdoor education, and bouldering. Another six-week block of different workshops will take place in the second semester.

Significant progress has been made toward the goals expressed in the Strategic Plan. Details were shared with the MCI community at the Annual General Meeting in November. Here are a few highlights:

- With the help of a newly formed Donor Development Committee, MCI successfully raised more than \$600,000 in donations and pledges by the end of August.
- The Leadership Team and Board worked hard to establish a realistic and manageable budget for the 2023-2024 school year.
- Student enrollment came in at 55 students to start September, including 3 international students. We anticipate a slight increase in enrollment for the second semester with 3 new students joining us.
- We revived Youth Orbit in March 2023, attracting over 100 students, and look forward to another successful Youth Orbit in January 2024.
- We convened a new Educational Advancement Committee to examine and enhance MCI's educational program.
- We have heard calls to find new ways to engage with our stakeholders. This includes our supporting churches, other local churches, our surrounding community, and our alumni.

As we work, we remain focused on MCI's mission:

Our purpose is to educate young people in an Anabaptist Christian context, seeking to develop their God-given potential...

Our goal is to raise up a generation who express Christian hope by serving others, promoting peace, and providing Christ-like leadership within the church community and secular world.

-from the MCI Mission Statement

Since 1889, young people have had life-changing experiences at MCI. In this Christ-centered environment, students have received a high quality, well-rounded education, formed life-long friendships, and grown in faith and faithfulness. Our alumni have gone on to significant roles of service and leadership in the church, local community, and wider world. We call on our churches and constituents to come together in trust and unity to support MCI with their talents, gifts, and prayers. Please continue to pray that God's wisdom will guide us as we continue to discern the way forward.

Submitted on behalf of the MCI Board of Directors and Leadership Team

by Jennifer Klippenstein, B. Ed., Interim Principal