

## The Fond Doux Flyer June 2026

### Search for Excellence in Education

One of the major commitments of the Foundation is to provide basic education for those unable to pay for it, especially in our affiliated schools. Most of the Haitian schools are private. Parents most pay tuition for their children to attend to school. But if the parents cannot pay there is no school. The Foundation did not start out with the idea of sponsoring basic education. But the Haitians came to us asking for help over time for three schools. Without our aid they could not pay the teachers. The result is that the Foundation is now providing education for over 300 students from pre-school through 6th grade.



**Platon School Children with Vita Mamba**

The first school to be sponsored was the Good Samaritan School in Platon. Platon is a remote village north of Fond Doux. The Foundation first became interested when mission team members sought a place to swim. This school is supported by the generosity of William and Mary Jo Devorick of Lititz, Pennsylvania and a women's group in Swansboro UMC, in Swansboro, NC.



**Methodist School in Session.**

The second school is the Methodist School of Fond Doux for which we are in desperate need of sponsors. This summer we are building a community center/school which will house most of the school.

The third, the latest, is the School for Tomorrow in Ravine Parc, part way up the mountain north of Fond Doux. We introduced the teachers of the first two in last month's Flyer. This month we will introduce the teachers at Ravine Parc later in this month's Flyer.

The search for excellence in education has at least three perhaps four characteristics. The first is to recruit and retain competent first-rate teachers. The Foundation's plans for improving the teacher's competency are two: 1. Starting with the school on our campus (The Methodist School of Fond Doux), we plan to gradually increase the number of university educated teachers. This will require an increase in teacher's salaries and improved facilities. Then as our resources permit we would like to follow with the other two schools. 2. We also plan an extensive teacher in-service training program. Our General Manager is meeting with the administrators of the three schools to plan common teacher training.

A second characteristic of a good school is adequate facilities with sufficient equipment and resources to enable the teachers to teach. This past year we have improved the facilities at both Ravine Parc (new and additional furniture and chalk boards) and Platon (kindergarten space). We are poised to begin the entirely new first-class building on our campus, which will house part of the Methodist School. We have purchased teacher's books for all three schools.

A third ingredient is a proper curriculum. The Haitian Ministry of Education has provided an outline for a very good curriculum, which the Foundation endorses. It is a comprehensive program with three major parts: Preschool (ages 3-5), Fundamental Education (ages 6-14) and Secondary Education (ages 15-18). Our schools include Preschool and the first 6 grades of Fundamental Education but not grades 7-9.

The goals of Preschool (What Students Must Know and Be Able to Do) are communicate clearly in Creole, begin discovering French, solve simple problems, express emotions and needs, participate in group activities, explore their environment, and develop early artistic and physical skills.

Key Competencies at the end of Fundamental Education are communicate with ease in Creole and French and in basic English/Spanish; reason and solve problems using math, science, and logic; act as responsible citizens rooted in Haitian culture and values; study and protect their environment; design and carry out projects creatively; develop physically, emotionally, and socially; plan their educational and professional future.

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The fourth ingredient of excellent education is a system of evaluation. We must be able to assess how the students are progressing in order to be able to intervene when students are not gaining the knowledge and/or learning the skills desired. That means that the teachers must have a list of knowledge and skills to be gained for each and every class and a method of assessing student progress. The Foundation has requested each school (every teacher of every subject) to have a document listing what a student shall have learned by the end of each course. It is a work in progress.

### The School for Tomorrow

Finding competent teachers and keeping them is a struggle for the school in Ravine Parc. This past year they had a 67% turnover in teaching staff (6 of 9). However, four of the new teachers have previous teaching experience, including one with a university education and another that is attending a normal school. Two are brand-new teachers, but one of them is also attending a normal school. All of the returning teachers have significant teaching experience, although none of them have a university education except for the educational director.



**Teachers after an In-Service Training Session**

The new teachers this school year are:

- 1. Laurent Dawenchie**, Kindergarten 2 (front row, extreme right). She previously taught at the Christian Academy, a school near Fond Doux, from 2022 to 2024.
- 2. Rose-Carla Joseph**, 1st Grade (front row, second from right). She has 2 years teaching experience although she never completed high school (needs another year). She previously taught at the grammar school Jacque Premier in Port-au-Prince. Because of the insecurity in the area, she couldn't stay. When she came to live in the Ravine Parc community, she asked for a teaching position at the

school and has been teaching at the School for Tomorrow since the Fall of 2025.

**3. Patrick Sylvain** 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade (back row, extreme left). He also lived in Port-au-Prince; but because it is unsafe, he couldn't stay. He came to live with his aunt in Ravine Parc. He had no previous teaching experience except for helping some children with their homework.

**4. Anecheca Jean**, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade (front row, third from right). She is also a brand-new teacher without previous teaching experience, but she is now simultaneously attending a university in Miragoâne.

**5. Almando Gene** 5<sup>th</sup> Grade (back row, second from right), previously taught at Ravine Parc from 2016 to 2020, then at Christian Academy from 2022 to 2023, and at Capois la Mort in Fond-Doux from 2023 to 2024. He returned to Ravine Parc this past School year 2025-2026. He is also now attending Miragoâne Normal school.

**6. Diones Jeune**, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade (front row, third from left), previously taught at Ravine Parc from 2016 to 2020. He left because of low pay. He taught at the Christian Academy from 2020 to 2024. He is a graduate of Miragoâne Normal school. He returned to Ravine Parc this year "to save the school" although he took a pay cut.

The returning teachers are:

**1. Soeurète Blaise**, Kindergarten 1 (front row, extreme left). She has 7 years teaching experience. Her first teaching job was at Deny Cezère in Port-au-Prince from 2021 to 2016. From 2016 to 2017, she taught at Sainte Catherine in Port-au-Prince. She left Port-au-Prince because where she was living was no longer safe. She has been teaching at Hope for Tomorrow since the Fall of 2023.

**2. Marianne Bogelin**, Kindergarten 3 (front row, second from left), is the oldest teacher in the school and has 26 years of experience, all at the School for Tomorrow starting in 2000.

**3. Gelin Saintil**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (back row, second from left), is a person in his 50s with three years teaching experience, all at the Hope for Tomorrow School.

**Ancito Gene**, Educational Director (back row, extreme right), is a graduate of Miragoâne Normal School. He attended on a Foundation scholarship. He has 10 years teaching and educational administrative experience. He taught at the school Thomas Vinelon from 2016 to 2019 and has been at the school Hope for Tomorrow since 2019, first as a teacher and later as an administrator.

**Bencia Jeanti** (not pictured) is the building manager.

**Chantal Noël**, a classroom aid (not pictured), started this year.

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## Agriculture Day at Methodist School



### Mackenson Gives Out Seedlings

The Methodist School celebrated Agricultural Day on May 1st. Each student was given a seedling from our agricultural agent's (Mackenson Hillaire's) nursery, located on our campus across from the Methodist School.. They were instructed to plant it in a good place near their house. The hope is that they will maintain it and perhaps learn about gardening.



### Talking about Gardening at the May 1<sup>st</sup> Celebration

The club will meet every Saturday. Mackenson's contractual goal is to increase food production through home gardens in order to make a dent in the hunger and malnutrition in the area. There is no place better to start than with children.

Board Member Linda Mitchell, Liaison for Agricultural, has been urging him to give instruction to children and youth as well as adults. She said that his role should be on the instruction of gardening. Other people will be responsible for the Bible stories and self-improvement skills.



### Students with their Plants

On May 16<sup>th</sup> as a follow up to Agriculture Day, Agronomist Mackenson Hillaire began a club for youth.

The club is for youth aged 10 to 17 years old. When the club meets, the classes will be divided according to the age of the children. Youth 10 through 12 years of age will be in the same class, those 13 through 15 will be in the same class, and those 16 and 17 will be in their own class. Each of these classes will have a moderator who will guide the youth and instruct them on personal development, life skills, Bible lessons, and lessons and techniques on agriculture.

## A Tragic Burn Victim



### Chivens Louis

Chivens Louis is the son of Desulmé Hermite, one of her nine children. He is six years old and a student in Mona Felix's first grade class at the Methodist School. On May 5<sup>th</sup> he suffered a terrible accident and extensive burns to his head. His mother had just returned home from the market. Chivens told her that he was hungry. She gave him some oil and rice. He went outside to prepare the rice. She was inside the house. Apparently while making or assisting in making the rice, his head fell into the pot badly scalding him and giving him severe burns.

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**Typical Haitian Cooking**

To visualize this awful event, remember that most Haitians have no kitchen. They cook with a large pot over an open fire. The pot is big and the child is small. He leans over and we see the result! That he survived is surprising.

### **Food Distribution Responses**

The FDF board has authorized the Haitian Advisory Committee to choose three families each month to receive an emergency food kit. This distribution is to help at least some families in very difficult times. No family is to receive food two months in a row. This process does not begin to address the widespread hunger situation in and around Fond Doux. Every family that receives emergency food is also visited by our agricultural agent to evaluate whether they can create a garden to provide more food for themselves.

The families always express extreme gratitude for these gifts. One woman who lives with her son and takes care of 4 children not her own said, “Oh Jesus, look at how blessings have come into my home today. All glory to you, Father God.”

Another widow, who lives with three children (one disabled) and a grandchild said, “I am truly grateful for this food assistance, as it will help us greatly today. I had lost hope, but because of you, I now have hope again. I believe that God has heard my prayers, because that was all I had in this very dark moment. We did not know what we were going to do. Thank you very much to the FDF. This food means so much—it is not just a meal. It can save us from hunger and from many difficult and dangerous situations we could have faced.”

Another woman who herself is visually impaired and who sometimes suffers confusion had three children (all deceased). As a result, she is now with great difficulty caring for 6 grandchildren. She expressed great gratitude

and joy for the food assistance and said, “My prayers are that God may continue to bless you abundantly.”

Her house is also in bad shape and leaks when it rains. She said, “I often cannot sleep in peace. My children would have been the ones to take care of me (and the grandchildren), but sadly, they are no longer alive.” Unfortunately, our housing repair program is on hold for lack of resources. We cannot repair her leaking roof.

### **Condolences**

Clinic director Dr. Dieuseul Istache’s sister and aunt of our General Manager Junior Merjuste, Lysena Eustache, died this past month. Our thoughts and prayers to these staff members and their families in these trying days!

### **Beyond the Clinic**

The Foundation operates the Fond Doux Community Clinic, an urgent care facility that provides basic health care for people in the Fond Doux Community. It averages above 100 patients a week. Unfortunately, the clinic is sometimes unable to provide all the care that a patient needs. We then need to refer them for tests or treatment that we cannot provide. These other facilities charge for their services, and the clinic does not have the money to pay for all these extra services. Then if the patient cannot pay, they do not receive the care that they need..

Occasionally, the Foundation is able to help because some donors have contributed to a special emergency medical care fund. This past month the Foundation was able to help two such patients. One was an elderly patient who needed tests and treatment from a urologist. The second was a child needing help because of severe vision problems. We thank the donors that enabled these two patients to receive the care needed.

But sometimes we cannot help. Although we do great work at the clinic, there are still unmet medical needs.

For more information on our projects or to donate, you can reach the Foundation in a number of ways:

Website: [www.fonddouxfoundation.org](http://www.fonddouxfoundation.org)

Email: [John@fonddouxfoundation.org](mailto:John@fonddouxfoundation.org)

By US mail at: Fond Doux Foundation, PO Box 51443, Durham, NC 27717.

Or through Epworth UMC Church, Durham, NC

Website manager: Brent Engel

Newsletter editor: Rev. John Clausing

The Fond Doux Foundation engages friend-to-friend with people in and around the village of Fond Doux, Haiti, helping to provide better access to medical care and health education, improved nutrition through agriculture and animal husbandry, educational scholarships, and intercultural faith-based activities. FDF is a 501(c)3 organization based in Durham, North Carolina.