
HAITI SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

A School for Life

Mission Statement:

Haiti Sustainable Education (HSE) will provide a comprehensive coed K-12 education for the children of the community of Grand-Bois, in a boarding school setting where children can focus on learning without facing the challenges of daily life in Haiti.

Goals:

HSE is planning to fulfill its mission by focusing on the six C's:

Communication:

Our students, upon graduation will be able to speak, write and communicate fluently in French, Creole, and English.

Critical Thinking:

Project-based learning (PBL) concepts - part of our curriculum will guide students through tasks with real life problems that the community faces.

Creativity:

Students will work in an environment that promotes creative thinking.

Collaboration:

Create an environment that encourages group learning and fosters leadership potential.

Character education:

Return to the teaching of civic and moral values in the classroom in order to strengthen the personality and moral character of our future citizens.

Culture:

Create an environment that will promote self-efficacy and a sense of community. Students will learn the importance of giving back to the community and philanthropy. Furthermore, our students will acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the future and become leaders.

Financial Sustainability:

We anticipate that funding will come from foundation and government grants, donations, and from rental income from using facilities during the summer.

Benefits of the boarding school structure:

The boarding school structure is instrumental for achieving HSE objectives. In rural areas of Haiti, there are many barriers to obtaining an education. The boarding school structure will help reduce some of these barriers by providing an environment that is conducive to learning, and where students can flourish without the worries or burden of their economic and social position.

In poor rural areas, like Grand-Bois, it's common for children to have only one meal per day. It is difficult for children to focus on academics, if they are suffering from malnutrition. At HSE, students will be provided with nutritious meals and snacks. Also, due to a lack of an established

public transportation system, some children are forced to walk long distances on foot or go by horse to attend school. In a boarding school, students don't worry about getting to school; the school is their home.

Grand-Bois lacks basic infrastructure, such as public transportation, sewage systems, and adequate housing. HSE will also provide housing for faculty and administrators. This will help attract qualified teachers and administrators by ensuring access to these basic necessities.

*"A school should be a model home, a complete community, and an embryonic democracy."
Francis W. Parker*



A child fetches water at the watering hole for his family.



Edwidge's uncle (the priest), aunt (the teacher), and grandmother (seated).

Genesis for HSE project- by Edwidge

Since I began working in boarding schools more than 18 years ago, it has been my dream to build a modern boarding school in my family's village in Haiti. It was only by the luck of the draw that I wasn't born and raised in the village of Grand Bois. My father was the youngest son in a family of eleven, yet he was one of four children (3 boys and 1 girl) that my grandparents chose to send to the city to be educated. Of the four children that my grandparents sent to the city to be educated, the eldest became a priest, the second a lawyer, the girl a teacher, my father on the other hand dropped out of school during his senior year of high school to marry my mother.

In a country with no social security or welfare, when a family makes huge sacrifices at the expense of some of your siblings for you to have an education, you are expected to give back to your family and community. This is something that my father failed to do, and I am reminded of that every time I visit my father's village and see some of my first cousins living in poverty. This is also one of the reasons that I am passionate about HSE.



Edwidge with the children of Grand-Bois.

Are there other non profit organizations serving the Grand-Bois community, and does Grand-Bois need a boarding school?

There are very few NGOs working in the Grand-Bois community. We have talked to and plan to collaborate with ServeHAITI in the future. They are a faith-based organization focusing on providing care to the people of Grand-Bois. They also have a few water, microfinance, education, and infrastructure projects. ServeHAITI's efforts to date in education include teacher training and making small enhancements to the primary school building. They do not operate a school.

Below is a description of the Grand-Bois Community from their website:

“Grand-Bois, Haiti is located in the Département de l’Ouest, the center of which is about 40 miles (77 kilometers) east of Port-Au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, and near the Dominican border. A single, unpaved road bisects the region, which measures

approximately 200 square miles (450 square kilometers) and is bordered to the south by Lake Étang Saumâtre and to the east by the Dominican Republic. Residential areas cluster around sources of water, which include small ponds, lakes, and a stream that is dry for a portion of the year. The population is organized in small villages and townships.

There is little or no accessibility to electricity, telephone, postal services, television or radio signals, or Internet. It is lacking basic social services and, most importantly, schools. According to a 2003 census, the population of Grand-Bois was estimated at approximately 65,000 inhabitants, 25,000 of whom are under the age of 18, and approximately 70% of whom work as subsistence farmers. The median household income in rural Haiti is \$300 per year and Grand-Bois is one of the poorest rural regions.”

What you can do:

HSE has been incorporated (EIN: **45-4473507**) and has filed for 501(c)3 designation with the IRS. We are now waiting for the certification letter.

In the interim, we are looking for additional members for HSE's Board of Directors. Ideal candidates would have experience in international education, resource development, or experience running a 501c3 organization in Haiti. If you can recommend someone please don't hesitate to contact us.

We also need volunteers, so if you would like to help, please tell us about your areas of expertise. We are particularly interested in individuals with grant writing experience.



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