SMPC Mission Stories – Dorvens Chancy Part II The School

Transcript for the October 12, 2026 Interview



Tell us about the OFCB school: The buildings, uniforms, rules.

I remember there were two buildings, a two-story building had 14 classrooms, the other part had seven classrooms. The school building were made of bricks. The classroom was painted light yellow. The classroom were large enough to have 25 to 30 students. But most of the time 30, 40, 50, 60 students in one classroom. On each bench would be eight students. It was two blackboards in the front of the class.

Because there were more than one school in Bayonnais, when you're walking to school, having the uniform will stand out from other students. On the first day of class, when you see all the students with their brand new uniform, it was really, really, really cool. Don't get in trouble while you're wearing the uniform, because that would be bad for the school!

The rules were you have to be in class by the time class starts. If you're out and then class already starts, you might get locked out. You cannot use your phone in the classroom when the teacher is explaining something. You cannot talk, you have to stay quiet and listen to them. If a student misbehaves, [it] depends on what you do. You can get sent home then come back to school with your parents or you might get kicked out. It just depends on what you do.

Tell us about a typical day at school.

From kindergarten to sixth grade, you would go to school in the morning. Then from seventh to 13th grade, you would go to school in the afternoon. I would just talk about the afternoon school. So you would get to school around 12:45. Then we have something called devotion where all the students gather together with the instructors and we will sing and then pray. When we get to the classroom, teachers have 45 minutes to teach their subject. When the bell rings, the teacher go to another classroom for another teacher to come to that classroom. The first couple hours I would have three teachers then I would have a 30 minute break.

If you're eating big lunch, you would eat it during that 30 minutes, which is around three o'clock to 3:30. If it's a little snack, you can eat it in the classroom but you will have to get permission from the teacher. We have that 30 minutes, which is when we play and when we eat. We would eat crackers, little tiny cakes and biscuits, sometimes bananas, mangoes.

We come back to the classroom and then have another three teachers till 5:45. Then school would be over for the day and every student will go home.

What subjects do students study?

Everybody in the classroom will have to take the same class. You take all your geology classes from seventh grade to ninth grade. You will have chemistry in 10th grade and then it continues to 13th grade.

What instructional methods did the teachers use?

All our subjects were taught in French. There were times when the teacher is writing on the board and the students would be taking notes. We use our notebooks. That's pretty much all we got over there, so we use them a lot. Most of the time, the teacher will need to explain the notes. If there's something that the students could not understand, then they would try to break it down in Creole to help us understand. Then there will be time to ask your question.

Some questions you cannot really word them in Creole so you have to ask in French. Even though French is our second language, not every student were able to speak French all the time. It's on you if you want to speak French, you speak French. If you want to speak Creole, you speak Creole. Most of the time, some students would do the back and forth. French and Creole.

Some teachers had us read out loud to repeat something five, ten times like that you would get it stuck on your head. The biology teachers would draw something on the board to help us visualize what they're trying to explain.

Tell us about your teachers.

I had pretty great teachers. They don't just teach you what you need to know at school but also give you parental advice. My history teacher in 11th grade was one of the best teachers that I had. My Spanish teacher in 8th grade also was great. I get close to the teacher just because I like the subject. So. it was those two teachers…thinking about them till today.