

MASON-DIXON HOMESCHOOLERS ASSOCIATION

CO-OP WEST OPERATING GUIDELINES

I. ACCOUNTABILITY

- a. MDHSA Co-op West will uphold the Lord Jesus Christ first and foremost.
- b. MDHSA Co-op West will abide by the MDHSA By-Laws and Constitution.

II. PURPOSE

- a. MDHSA Co-op West exists solely because of the active volunteer participation of homeschooling parents
- b. MDHSA Co-op West exists to support parents by providing supplementary educational experiences for their children.
- c. MDHSA Co-op West exists to provide encouragement for homeschooling parents and children.

III. STRUCTURE

- a. The Co-op
 - i. MDHSA Co-op West is comprised of families from among the MDHSA members who choose to participate each semester. Participating families register and pay a registration fee for each semester in which they choose to participate. Because there is a changing group of participants each semester, continuity and organization of the Co-op is provided by the Co-op Committee
 - ii. The Co-op will consist of two nine-week semesters (Fall and Spring), with a Showcase closing for a total of ten weeks per semester. Co-op will meet one day a week.
 - iii. Notification and details of upcoming semesters will be made to MDHSA members by means of the MDHSA Newsletter and the Parent Registration Form. After the committee has arranged the semester class schedule from the submitted Parent Registration Forms, parents will receive a Student Registration Form to register their children for specific classes. Class schedules will be mailed for each child within a minimum of one week before the semester begins.
 - iv. Each family attending Co-op must be an MDHSA member whose dues must be paid before the co-op semester begins in order to be sure all participants are MDHSA members.
 - v. A *non-refundable* registration fee will be required with the Parent Registration Form. Classes will be filled by the committee on a first-come-first-served basis, by postmark date. Students may not switch classes after the second week of Co-op. Unless prior arrangements have been made, Parent Registration payment must be made before the first week of Co-op or family may not attend.
 - vi. Only children whose parents or legal guardians are MDHSA members may register for Co-op. Other children (such as daycare children) may attend at the discretion of the committee and an additional fee may be required. Each parent whose child is registered is expected to actively participate in the session, except for unavoidable circumstances for which the parent may be excused by the committee.
 - vii. Each Co-op day will consist of an opening, three one-hour classes, a parents' meeting, and a brief dismissal. Parents' Meeting is necessary in order to relay

- pertinent information pertaining to Co-op. Every participating parent will be required to attend the parents' meeting except when excused by the committee.
- viii. Any teacher who teaches alone must be a full MDHSA member. Associate member teachers must have a full member present in their class. Only full MDHSA members can conduct the openings and lead the parents' meetings.
 - ix. Each teacher should develop class goals and objectives. These should include spiritual/character building goals. They should be distributed to the student or be part of the class description booklet and a copy should be given to the committee for reference purposes only.
 - x. By committing to participate in the Co-op it is understood that each participant is agreeing to abide by these operating guidelines of the Co-op.
 - xi. It is the responsibility of the parent of a special needs child to determine if the child is benefiting from a class. While a teacher is not responsible to plan for the child's special needs, both the parent and the teacher are encouraged to be in communication about the child's special needs. Many parents are not experienced in this area. The committee may assign a helper to the child.
- b. THE COMMITTEE
- i. The committee exists to organize and facilitate the Co-op.
 - ii. The committee will consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of seven members. A committee member must be a full member of MDHSA. Committee members will actively participate in each Co-op session of his/her term, except for unavoidable circumstances for which the committee may excuse the member's Co-op participation.
 - iii. The committee reflects the cooperative nature of the Co-op and will operate without a chairperson. All committee decisions will be made by a majority vote of the full committee as its composition changes from year to year.
 - iv. One member of the committee must be elected by the committee members to attend the MDHSA Executive Committee meetings as a representative of the MDHSA Co-op West.
 - v. Members of the committee will serve terms of four, or if the member is willing to serve and there are no other Co-op participants willing to take their place, up to six semesters. When a member's term expires, that member must be off the committee for at least two consecutive semesters before being considered to serve again. Notice of the committee vacancies that occur because of the rotation of its members will be given to Co-op participants for two consecutive semesters prior to such vacancies. Any interested participants may submit their names in writing to the committee.
 - vi. Committee appointments will be made by the Co-op West committee. The committee will communicate their decision in writing to all those whom expressed interest in serving on the committee and to the MDHSA Activity Director.
 - vii. The committee will appoint one treasurer for the Co-op.
 - viii. The committee may appoint any qualified participant to any position as the need arises.
 - ix. The committee will meet when the need arises and on a regular basis to deal with ongoing activities of the Co-op. Any participant of the co-op may submit agenda items to any committee member at any time. Such agenda items must be submitted

in writing in order for the committee to consider them. Written agenda items will be addressed at the next committee meeting.

- x. MDHSA Chairman is a member of the Co-op West committee and will be invited to attend all meetings.
- xi. Minutes of Co-op West committee meetings must be forwarded to MDHSA Executive Committee following the meeting.

IV. CHANGES TO THE GUIDELINES

- a. Changes to these guidelines can be made at any time by the majority of the committee agreeing after receiving or soliciting input from the current Co-op participants. The committee will respond in writing to any input received from the Co-op participants within ten days after the next committee meeting. After any changes to these guidelines are made, revised copies will be given to the current Co-op participants and to the MDHSA Executive Committee, along with a cover letter drawing attention to the changes.

V. CHILD SUPERVISION POLICY

- a. Children arrive with a parent and attend opening exercises with that parent. Both children and adults are dismissed at the same time to go to their classrooms. Therefore, adults will oversee children during transit to their first period class.
- b. Children in the 6-8 year-old classes and younger will be escorted to their next class by their teachers.
- c. A minimum of two adults are to be present in each and every elementary class. No exceptions are to be made.
- d. No children are to be left unsupervised in the classrooms at any time.
- e. At the end of third period, an adult accompanies their class to the dismissal. All parents are to attend dismissal to ensure that no children leave without their parent or designated adult.

VI. CO-OP JOB DESCRIPTIONS

- a. Opening Coordinator – responsible for the fifteen minute opening session, including singing, prayer, reciting the pledge, and announcements.
- b. Parents' Meeting Facilitator – a member of the committee who conducts all three (if possible) periods of Parents' Meeting, plans weekly outlines, coordinates any guest speakers and topics to be discussed.
- c. Dismissal Monitors – are at the exit at dismissal and do not allow the children to leave without a parent or designated adult.
- d. Clean Up Coordinator – verifies that all classroom trash has been emptied and the rooms have been cleaned and vacuumed if needed. Teachers are responsible for cleaning their rooms before leaving them.

MDHSA Co-op West School Policies

Absence

In case of absence, please do one of the following as soon as possible:

- Teacher: Contact your helper with your lesson plan & supply any materials needed. Remind your helper to contact the Committee to supply additional help.
- Helper: Contact the teacher. The teacher should contact the Committee to supply additional help.

Cancellations

- Cancellations are based upon the Fulton County and Tuscarora school districts. If either of the districts are closed or delayed due to bad weather, then Co-op is cancelled.
- Co-op will be extended by one week to make up for any and all cancellations.

Clean-up

- Teachers and helpers will return their classrooms to its original condition by the end of the morning.

Commitment

- The success of Co-op depends upon the active and committed involvement of all the families who register. Your registration is a sign that you are committed to faithfully attending the weekly sessions, unless you are prohibited by circumstances beyond your control.

Daycare Children

- Daycare children are welcome at Co-op. Each member of Co-op bringing daycare children pays a flat rate of \$25.00 for all the daycare children in their care participating in Co-op to be paid by the 2nd week of Co-op. The Committee may decide to waive this fee semester by semester.

Dismissal Procedures

- All children should be escorted to the Dining Hall at the end of 3rd period. We will have a very brief closing and group dismissal in the dining hall at 12:30. Please everyone attend punctually. If you will not be able to attend for any reason, please let a committee member know.

Fees

- Co-op is one of the benefits of membership in MDHSA. Your dues in MDHSA must be current to participate.
- A family registration is paid for each semester that you attend Co-op. The bulk of this fee is used to pay rental to Cove Valley Camp.
- Class fees may be charged to cover the cost of the individual instructor's materials used for the class.
- A default on payment for any of these fees constitutes a default in the right to participate in any Co-op activity until payment is received in full.

Goals & Objectives

- Please keep a copy of the class description for each course your child attends so that it can be included in your portfolio as a record of work done.

Showcase

- Showcase is the culmination of each Co-op semester. It is held on the last week and is a time to invite friends and family. Each class is asked to participate in the event by either doing a table display or making a brief presentation for the audience.
- Additional performances by students are welcome.