



MAJURO COOPERATIVE SCHOOL

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**Accredited by the Western
Association of Schools and Colleges**

Staff Handbook

2011-2012

Majuro Co-operative School strives
to provide an environment that
encourages each student
to reach his/her potential
in the academic, artistic, and social disciplines.
Co-op School prepares students
for higher education,
and for assuming their roles in society as responsible and
productive citizens.
Life long learning, respect for self and others,
cooperation,
self-reliance, and appreciation of the Marshallese

culture
are promoted and encouraged.

“What would you do if you knew you could not fail?”

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- All subheadings marked with astericks correspond to forms. Copies of these forms are found in the orientation packets.

MAJURO COOPEATIVE SCHOOL CALENDAR 2011-2012

School Hours:

3 Year Old Preschool 12:30-3:00

Four Year old Prekindergarten 8:00-11:30

Kindergarten through 6th grade 8:00-3:00

Middle (7th and 8th) and High School 8:00-3:20

August 1	New Teacher Orientation
August 4-10	Full staff Orientation and Work Days
August 11	First day of school, Half Day
August 18,19	High School Retreat
August 23	PTA General Meeting
August 30	Senior Parent Meeting
September 2	Dri-Jerbal Day, No school
September 9	Half day for teacher inservice*
September 16	Progress reports home
September 13	PTA General meeting
September 26-30	Manit Week
October 11	PTA General Meeting
October 12	End first quarter (45 days)
October 14	No school for grading and teacher inservice day *
October 20, 21	Half days for parent teacher conferences and report cards
October 31	School wide Halloween party, 4-6 p.m.
November 11	Half day for teacher inservice*
November 17	Presidents Day, no school
November 23	Progress reports home
November 24	Thanksgiving meal
November 25	No school
December 2	Gospel Day, No School
December 9	Holiday Show
December 15-20	High school final exams
December 20	End second quarter (90 days) Christmas break begins
January 11	School resumes
January 20	Honor Roll Assembly, Report Cards
January 24,25	College Night for High School students and parents
February 17	Progress reports home, Half day teacher inservice*
February 24	Bring Your Parents to School Day
February 27	LAS Testing
February 28	General PTA meeting
March 1	No School, Nuclear Victims and Survivors Remembrance Day
March 2	No school
March 10	Tentative date for carnival and health fair
March 15	End 3rd quarter (135 days)
March 22 and 23	Student Parent Teacher Conference and report cards days, (regular classes cancelled)
April 6	Good Friday, no school
April 9-13	Spring break
April 16	School resumes SAT practice week
April 23-27	SAT Week
April 27	Half day inservice*, Progress reports home
May 1	Constitution Day – pupil contact day
May	Staff Appreciation Week
May 11	Talent Show
May 25	Half day, teacher work day

May 28
May 31
June 2
June 5

Final exam week for High School
Last day of school 180 days, 8th grade promotion
High school graduation
Last day of teacher contracts

*Teacher inservice days are scheduled once a month to allow for teacher professional development.

Majuro Cooperative School 2011-2012 Staff

Administrative/Office Staff

Superintendent and P-8 Principal Kathy Stratte
High School Principal Becky Lathrop
Special Education and Learning Resource Jennifer Bristow and Sara Collings
Financial Officer Manny Mercado
Administrator/Substitute Teacher James West

Teaching Staff

Elementary

Preschool Robin Seru
Kindergarten Mere Tamanisau
1st Bonnie Schultz-Lorentzen
2nd Kim Blanton
3rd Jeff Clark
4th Waisake Savu
5th Krista Howell
6th Alex Bellissimo

Middle and High School

Science ,10th Grade Advisor Adam Smearman
Social Studies , 11th grade advisor. Brian Sarkozy
MSHS Language Arts, 8th Grade Advisor. Keith Soltman
7th Grade Language Arts, LRC, 7th grade advisor Sara Collings
HS English Language Arts, 12th Grade Advisor. David Applebaum
Health and Multiple Subjects, 9th Grade Advisor. Katie Finberg
12th grade Literature and Composition. Raychelle Heath
Math. all Middle School and High School teachers
Japanese Language, 12th Grade co-advisor. Maki Tsunamoto

Related Arts and Student Support

Marshallese Studies Jennifer Elcar

Music and Art..... Yoorra Lee
PE Mack Peter

Guiding Principles of the Institution

- Provide a school environment that is safe and conducive to learning for all students.
- Promote self-esteem and respect of self, others and the environment, coupled with a positive attitude.
- Promote awareness and respect for cultural diversity.
- Develop responsible and productive citizens.

STATEMENT OF EXPECTED SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING RESULTS

The Expected School-Wide Learning Results are reflective of the mission, philosophy and guiding principles of the Majuro Cooperative School. All staff, students, and parents should be aware of the ESLRS and how these principles guide instruction, learning, and behavior.

Students at the Majuro Cooperative School will demonstrate:

1. Proficient written and oral communication skills and comprehension in English

MCS students will acquire sufficient proficiency in English so that they will be capable of choosing to continue with their education in accredited schools either within or outside of the Marshall Islands.

2. Effective problem solving, critical thinking, and mathematical skills

Students will demonstrate effective problem solving and critical thinking skills that will assist them in identifying and confronting problems that

face them as students and as community members. Proficient and flexible mathematical skills are an important component of this ESLR.

3. Strong social skills to be contributing, respectful and responsible members of society

The school will foster the development of strong social and personal skills so that all children will grow to be contributing, respectful, and responsible members of their school community, their country, and the global community.

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Our goal is for the ESLRs to be an integral part of our instructional program. We have an "ESLR focus of the Month" (actually about 6 weeks) and during this time, the entire school reinforces instruction and activities related to the designated ESLR. Each TPT team is responsible for decorating bulletin boards in the cafeteria to reinforce the ESLR focus. As a part of our action plan, we will to develop specific activities and assessment materials for ESLR 3 during 2011-2012.

SCHOOL-WIDE ACTION PLAN

The Majuro Cooperative School has identified the following goals for our "Action Plan" for 2010-2012.

- 1) Improve student achievement in reading and writing through staff development, modification of instruction, adoption of a writing curriculum, and correlation with content standards.
- 2) Continue to address the needs of English Language Learners through activities and programming founded on the language needs of our student population.
- 3) Develop and implement a WASC accredited four year high school program with curricular, instructional, and co-curricular standards equivalent to standards at high schools internationally.
- 4) Develop and implement curriculum maps for all grades and core content areas integrating content standards and available resources.
- 5) Engage students in development of a value system that encourages leadership, respect, social and personal responsibility, and global citizenship.
- 6) Increase student and faculty access to internet, computers, and technology.

2011-2012 PRIORITIES

In addition to the goals listed above, the administration and Board of Directors have identified the following priorities for improvement in the 2011-2012 school year.

- 1) Identify and implement activities designed to improve parent-school communication and family engagement.

- 2) Identify strategies for increasing involvement of certified teaching staff in after school academic support opportunities for students.

Absence/Tardiness of Students*

(see also: student handbook for information and grading policies relating to attendance)

Homeroom teachers are required to keep attendance records every day. This information is recorded quarterly on report cards. Teachers record their own attendance. Children who arrive at school after 8:15 are considered tardy. (High school students are marked absent if more than 15 minutes late.) If a child misses three or more days of school in a row, please inform the office and we will make a call home to inquire about the absences.

Teachers will keep a written record of absences and tardiness. More than five days of absence per term will be brought to the Principal's attention.

Instruction begins at 8:00 a.m. every day. Students who are frequently tardy miss a significant amount of their first period class and may not be able to master the material. Students must be in school in order to learn. Therefore, absences (including tardies) in excess of 25% per quarter may constitute failure for that quarter. (There are 45 days per quarter, thus 11 days absent or more may constitute failure). Absences in observance of religious holidays will be excused, provided parents notify the school in writing.

Students may not leave the school campus while school is in session. This includes going to the shops across the road. If a student must leave school during the school day for an appointment or emergency, a parent/guardian must sign him/her out with the office. Homeroom teachers, please help students gather missed assignments and check back with them on progress of this missed work.

Absence/Hours of Staff*

Contract hours for teachers are 7:45 a.m. until 3:45 p.m., with a 30 minute duty free lunch. Teachers are expected to be on campus (not housing) during contract hours. If a teacher needs to leave campus during contract hours (except during duty-free lunch), they should inform the office and sign out. Teachers will be available after school until 3:45 to answer questions for students and parents; to work cooperatively with colleagues; and to prepare for the next school day, unless they are involved in a school sanctioned after-

school activity. From 7:45-8:00, teachers should be in classrooms or in the cafeteria, not in the library checking e-mail. The idea is to be accessible to other staff, parents, and administration.

Teachers have 7 sick days and 3 personal days. If teachers are sick, they must provide detailed lessons plans for the substitute. It is a good idea to have a sub folder ready in

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the event of an emergency illness, but in general specific and detailed lesson plans should be prepared for any days of absence. Emergency plans are kept in the office. Detailed date-specific plans should be given to substitute or left on teacher desk.

Teachers and assistants should call Kathy's home or cell phone by 6:30 a.m. if they will not be coming in due to illness. (247-8207 or 456-SCHL) Please do not wait until 7:00 to call in your absence. Upon return to class, staff will complete a sick leave form.

Teachers must request personal days one week in advance of the planned personal day. Personal days must be approved by Principal, and cannot be approved if too many other staff will be out on the same day. *Personal leave requests for leave during the last two weeks of school will not be approved except under special circumstances.*

We do not allow staff to take extra personal days except in cases of emergency or by prenegotiated contract.

In addition to regular hours, all staff members will attend all staff meetings and Team Planning meetings. These meetings are generally held on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, begin at 3:15 and last no later than 4:00. Principal must be informed in advance if a teacher will not attend a staff or Team Planning meeting.

Staff presence is required at PTA meetings, Open Houses, parent-teacher conferences, Talent/Variety Shows, school wide Halloween parties, carnivals, field day and other school-wide events as scheduled by PTA. High school teachers also attend the high school retreat and assist in weekend activities for students. (All other teachers are invited to participate and/or plan weekend activities for students.)

Two RMI holidays, Mani Day and Constitution Day, are school attendance days. Students and staff participate in national events on these days. If a teacher chooses not to attend, she or he must request use of a personal day.

Accidents/Injuries/Emergencies/Student Illness*

(see student handbook)

First Aid

Bandages, gloves, and ice are available in the office. Tylenol may be dispensed in the office, unless parents have requested otherwise. All other medications are distributed only with written consent of parent/guardian. If you notice the first aid supply is getting low, please inform the office assistant.

Accident Reports

Accident reports must be completed for all significant accidents or incidences that result in injury to any student. (Not necessary for minor cuts, scrapes, band-aids, but required for all head injuries or when making a hospital referral) There is an accident/illness report binder in the office next to the medical/first aid kit. Directions are on the cover of the binder. This is required of any teacher who witnesses an accident or who has a student in their class in an accident.

1. Fill out report for every accident/incident that occurs. (Exceptions would include minor cuts and scrapes.)
2. Make a copy to send home and make sure it goes home with the student.
3. Put the original the report binder and return binder to office.
4. Notify parents if the situation is serious, or ask administration to notify parents.
5. Any head injury should be reported to parents.

Student Illness

Children who are ill can be sent to the office with a note from a teacher, where they will rest and be monitored for a few minutes. Children will be sent back to class if office staff feels they are well enough to participate.

Students must go through the proper procedures in the office before they will be allowed to go home. Office must authorize phone calls and parents/guardians need to sign students out. **Teachers should not give students permission to go home. Teachers should not send students to the office without a note, and students are not allowed to use the phone without first making a request of the office staff.**

Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drugs

No student or school employee shall possess or consume alcohol and/or other drugs on school grounds. Consumption of alcohol, kava, and tobacco at school functions is not allowed as students look to staff to provide behavior role models. See also "Code of Conduct" and student handbooks.

Substance-free weekend activities are scheduled monthly for high school students.

Assemblies

Morning assemblies are held every Monday (8:00-8:10) and Friday (8-8:20.) This is a time for announcements and for singing the national anthem. Friday assemblies are class-led with assignments scheduled and circulated at the beginning of the school year. Awards assemblies will be twice a year, in January and May.

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Assessments

Ongoing assessment is important to insure that students make adequate progress, are meeting the ESLRS, and are provided with the support they need. Assessment "windows" are listed on the academic calendar, which will be distributed at orientation. Required assessments include Fontas and Pinell Reading (K-8), BRI assessments or other reading assessments for high school (TBD), all Saxon Math assessments, English Language Assessments (currently LAS), and scored writing samples. In addition, regular assessments will include observation, use of teacher and student generated rubrics, unit assessments, projects, and behavioral assessments (to be developed to help evaluate behaviors required for success with our third ESLR.) Assessment information should be referred to in lesson plans. An assessment calendar will be provided at orientation. (see also "Standardized Assesements)

After-School Activities*

(see student handbook)

Staff members offer after-school opportunities to students from 3:15-4:15 (or later, if staff is interested in doing so.) Contract language for middle and high school staff states that involvement in after school activities with students is expected by teachers at this level. Possible activities may include Drama Club, Chorus, Dance Club, Art, SADD, High School Honors, Sports Clubs and coaching, Chess Club, Homework Club, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, yearbook, etc. We are able to charge a small fee to students for their participation in the activities, or clubs may choose to do their own fundraising. The fee may cover materials, uniforms, and snack. Staff may discuss After-School Club proposals with the principals. We recommend waiting until the end of first quarter for most after school activities.

Substance-free weekend activities are scheduled monthly and often funded through SAPT grant monies. High school and middle school staff take turns chaperoning and coordinating these events.

Book Room

The school is fortunate to have a book room with guided reading texts available for

teacher check out. We have guided reading texts for Fontas and Pinell levels A through Z. These books support guided reading instruction for students in kindergarten through 8th grade. We also have several sets of whole class literature texts for students in grades 6-12. Professional resource materials are also available for check out.

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We will review book room use and check out procedures at orientation in August. Teachers are responsible for returning books properly and keeping the book room tidy.

The book room is often used for small group work and may be needed for classroom space during the first month of school, because the new classroom building will not be finished by start of school.

Breakfast

Breakfast items will be available for sale daily from 7:30-7:50. Students are expected to be in class by 8:00. Breakfast is \$1.00.

Bulletin Board and Display Case

The bulletin board in the cafeteria is a place to display evidence of "ESLRS in Action." Each bulletin board is assigned to a TPT team. The display case is for photos, announcements, showcase pieces, and news articles. There is also a display case used by PTA for their calendars and announcements.

Cafeteria

Students are expected to clean up after themselves in the cafeteria. This includes throwing away garbage, sorting recyclables, cleaning up spills, and throwing away food/beverage wrappers. Teaching assistants are assigned to supervise students in the cafeteria, but it is very important that teachers also remind students of cafeteria expectations. Teaching assistants and cafeteria staff need "back up!"

Calendar

Please record important events and reminders on the school calendar in the office. Check the calendar daily so you know what's going on at the school. All staff has copies of the academic calendar. (Academic calendars are distributed at orientation in August.) Reminders and changes will be posted on the office calendar.

Campus Clean Up

Teachers and students are responsible for their own classroom clean up and garbage. In addition, each classroom is responsible for cleaning the area immediately surrounding the classroom, including hallways, staircases, and cubbies. Please set aside time each day for

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students to assist with these tasks. **Classes will also be assigned to sharing responsibility for daily cleaning of playgrounds and common areas. Please mark your assigned weeks on your calendars.** Garbage should be placed in trash cans outside of the classrooms. Recycled materials should be taken to the cafeteria and placed in the proper containers. Maintenance/security will remove trash bags from cans, take the bags to the dumpsters, and wash out the trashcans. Bags and gloves are available in the office.

Canteen Cards

Staff and students may purchase canteen cards for \$5.00-\$20.00. The cards may be used to pay for breakfast and snack items.

Cell Phones and iPods

Students are not allowed to use cell phones and iPods during school hours. If students are found using these items, they will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the day/week. Second offenses will result in holding the phones in the office until the parents have been notified and come to pick them up. If a student is caught using a friend's cell phone, we will confiscate that phone. We ask staff to follow the same rules as students concerning use of iPods and cell phones during school hours.

Child Protection Policy

If any kind of child abuse is suspected, teachers must inform the principal of the situation. See Appendix A for complete Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Child Study Team*

Staff with concerns about a child's academic, emotional, social, or behavioral well-being may bring the concerns to a Child Study Team meeting. Referral forms are available in the office. The Special Education teacher coordinates Child Study Team meetings, which are attended by the principal, classroom teacher, previous classroom teacher (if possible,) Special Education teacher, and other staff as relevant. A CST meeting will not always lead

to a Special Education referral, but will result in suggestions for additional ways to support a struggling student.

Prior to a CST request, teachers should discuss student concerns at TPTs. The CST and at-risk student support process will be discussed at orientation.

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Students at risk for failure will need to be discussed at TPT and/or CST, and processes implemented for making sure that parents have received notice. Parents shall be notified by phone call or e-mail.

Class Meetings/Talk-Ins

Early in the school year, teachers should schedule class meetings so that parents can be informed about homework policies, your expectations, communication, and class needs. We attempt to schedule class meetings after most general PTA meetings. We will discuss ways to use class meetings and talk-ins to improve family engagement and school-home connections.

Classroom Supplies and Class Fees

Each student pays a \$30 class fee at registration. Class fees are deposited into grade level accounts. This account is used to purchase supplies, materials, and support class activities. A portion from each student's class fees is also distributed to non-classroom teacher budgets (Music, Art, Marshallese, Learning Resource.)

Code of Conduct

We try to respect personal choices of staff. However, this is a small island, and people notice and talk. They especially like to talk about Co-op teachers and others of the expatriot community. We are very visible here! Be aware of your activities and the fact that your actions are likely being noted by parents and community members. Be respectful of the culture in dress and behavior. In the Marshall Islands, adults dress modestly and public display of affection is frowned upon. If concerns are reported to the principals, these will be shared with the staff member involved.

Communication

Staff Communication

Please check mailboxes and white board in the office twice a day (morning and afternoon) for messages and announcements. This is important since we do not have classroom internet or phones. "E-newsletters" with announcements and reminders are sent to staff

most weeks.

Parent Communication

Parent communication is very important. Please do not rely on students if it is urgent that parents receive a message. This is especially important to keep in mind for students in 6th grade and up. Phone calls and e-mails are more reliable than notes home.

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Students in 4th grade through high school have planners for recording homework and communicating with parents. These planners should go home daily and parent signatures are required. Teachers should check to make sure that student planners are completed correctly and parents are checking the planners. Teachers in the primary grades design take home folder procedures as a consistent method of communicating with families.

Finding ways to improve communication between the school and the home is a priority for 2011-2012. We will address this priority as a staff at orientation.

Confidentiality

On a small island such as Majuro, it is important to be aware of the need for confidentiality. All written and oral information about a child is considered confidential.

Care should be taken when discussing students in public places, the office, and anywhere off campus. A parent or an aunty of the child you are telling stories about may be sitting at the next table in the restaurant, so be careful!

Student files are kept in the cabinet in the office and should not be removed from the office under any circumstances. Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) for Special Education students are kept in the locked file cabinet in the Learning Resource Center. If you would like to review a student's IEP, please arrange with the Special Education teacher working with your student.

Counseling

When there are concerns about a student's well-being, behavior, academic progress, or outside events, the student may be referred to one of the school counselors. Please discuss concerns with the principal prior to making a referral. It is also helpful to discuss concerns at TPT meetings to see if team members have similar concerns or insights. Referral forms are housed in the principals' office.

Copy Machine

The copy machine is in the office. Please be respectful of the needs of all in regards to

use of the copy machine. Monday morning at 7:45 is not a great time to do your copying for the week- others are probably waiting. Big jobs should be done during non-busy times, and if you are working on a big copy job, please move over briefly for someone who comes in to make one or two quick copies. Teachers have access to the copy machine on week-ends. Be gentle with the machine- parts are hard to find on the island. If the machine

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jams while you are working, please clear the jam for the next person, or let the office staff know about the problem. It is important to be aware of the amount of copying you are doing, as paper and toner is costly.

Curriculum

Although there is a lot of room for creativity and innovation at Co-op, teachers are expected to follow the school's curriculum standards for the assigned grade or subject level. Teachers are also responsible for completing required assessments by assigned deadlines, to maintain assessment records, and to maintain a pass-on portfolio for each student. Each teacher is provided with a binder with grade level standards and curriculum maps (curriculum maps are under development.) Full sets of standards, K-12, are available in the office. English language development, including listening, speaking, grammar, and writing is a required component of all subject areas. The Saxon Math Curriculum has been adopted by the school board for all grade levels at the Co-op School.

A balanced literacy approach is used for teaching literacy. Literacy binders and guided reading materials are offered in the Reading Resource Room. Science kits are available for teaching Science at the elementary level. Each grade level should plan to use at least two kits a year, as determined at Team Planning Time meetings early in the school year.

Lesson plans are required and reviewed by the principals and resource staff. Plans should be kept in a binder in the classroom. The submitted plans provide evidence of attention to standards, use of assessments to guide instruction, and teacher reflection. They also help resource staff provides useful suggestions relating to content resources.

Discipline Procedures and Behavior Expectations*

Teachers should review the "School Discipline Policies, Rules, and Expectations" (in student handbook) with students during the first week of school. Classroom rules and student-friendly ESLRS should be posted and reviewed as well. It is essential that teachers discuss early and frequently the expectations of respect and obedience towards all adults working on campus, including special class teachers, cafeteria workers, and teaching assistants. Please make sure that students understand that respect includes behaviors toward adults, one another, and the school environment. Discrimination, racism, classism

and sexual harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Students need guidance in this area, as these are not topics widely discussed at home.

No staff member may use any form of corporal punishment with students under any circumstances. This includes teachers, teaching assistants, volunteers, security and cafeteria staff, maintenance staff, and office staff.

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Please discuss problems with the principal if there are recurrent disciplinary issues that you are having difficulty handling. Also, if you have concerns about any staff member's behaviors toward any students, please talk to the principal about your concerns.

The principals have authority to intervene in disciplinary actions.

English Language Learners

With the exception of the Marshallese Studies and Japanese classes, all instruction at Co-op is in English. Nearly all children who attend MCS are English Language Learners. Difficulties with English impact their achievement in reading, writing, and the content areas. The impact of English language issues should not be underestimated. We have many materials to support English language development available for check out in the ELL room. Professional development throughout the school year will focus on supporting the English language needs of our students. The students with extremely low English proficiency should be discussed at CST meetings so that additional support may be arranged.

Evaluation of Staff

Three-month evaluations will be completed for all teaching staff at the end of the probationary period. Evaluation and goal setting conferences for long term staff are scheduled annually.

Teaching assistant evaluations will be completed by an administrator and a teacher every two years.

Expected School Wide Learning Results (ESLRs)

As a part of our accreditation work, the school community (staff, board, parents) developed ESLRs. Integration of the ESLRs into daily instruction is a requirement of our accreditation and helps insure student progress and integrity to school mission. ESLRs are so important at Co-op that they are included in this handbook twice!

The ESLRS are that students will demonstrate:

- 1) Proficient written and oral communication skills in English
- 2) Effective problem solving, critical thinking and mathematical skills
- 3) Strong social skills to enable students to be contributing, respectful, and responsible members of society.

At the heart of these ESLRs lies the guiding principle that upon leaving the MCS, students will be prepared to be successful students and concerned citizens not only in the Marshall

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Islands, but also in the international community. ESLRs are reviewed annually with new and returning staff and Board members, parents, and students. Evidence of student understanding of ESLRS should be posted in classrooms and on the ESLR board in the cafeteria.

Field Trips*

Field trips are an important extension of an educational program. Teachers are encouraged to use field trips throughout the year to enhance units of study. Field trip plans should be noted on the calendar in the office.

Field trips and field trip notices should be cleared with the principal before notes go home. Middle and high school field trip plans should be filed with principal at least one week in advance. Elementary field trips should be filed no less than three days in advance.

Field trip plans should include destination, educational objectives, cost, time and date, chaperone requests, and mode of transportation. Most often, we rely on parents to provide transportation for field trips.

Field trip permission slips are required except in the case of walking field trips. Walking field trip forms should be completed at the beginning of the school year and will cover all walking trips during the school year.

Fire Drills and Emergency Evacuation

We practice emergency evacuations quarterly. Students should meet in the road in front of the school unless notified otherwise.

Forms

All items marked with * have forms. Copies of forms are located in the registration office and in the Orientation packet.

Fundraising

Because of the limited budget for supplies, classes sometimes decide to do fundraising for special needs or special activities. These fundraising activities should be discussed with the principals. The Board of Directors must approve any fundraising aimed to raise \$1000 or more.

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Grading and Assessments*

(see also assessment in this handbook and the student handbook)

Report cards are distributed quarterly. Teachers are responsible for maintaining records to justify grades and attendance data. Teachers are also responsible for completing required assessments and maintaining student portfolios. In elementary school, mid-quarter reports are sent home for all students who are having difficulty with grade level work. In the case of middle and high school students, progress reports are sent home for all students. Copies of progress reports and report cards are kept in the office. Principals must be provided with a list of all progress reports for students who are not successfully completing grade level work. It is very important that parents are kept informed of student progress and academic concerns on a regular basis. Report cards are released only to parents. Teachers are responsible for checking to make sure report cards are picked up and should call or e-mail parents if report cards and progress reports are not picked up in a timely manner.

Middle school students are placed on Academic Probation if their GPA falls below 1.7. High school students must earn a 2.0 to remain in good standing. Students who fall below the required GPA will be placed on academic probation. Students who earn less than 1.5 may be expelled.

Placement on Academic Probation means mandatory Homework Club participation and non-eligibility for extra-curricular activities.

A high school committee will work to develop a new and improved report card for high school students in 2011. Teachers are invited to share resources from other school districts.

Graduation and Promotion

8th grade promotion is coordinated by the 8th grade advisor, ES Principal, and the 8th grade parent representatives. Samples of prior programs for graduation are available to assist in planning.

May 2012 will mark our first high school graduation ceremony. It will be a landmark event

for the school. The HS Principal, 12th grade advisors, and all high school staff are expected to work together with parents and students in the planning and presentation of the graduation ceremony. Plans will need to begin early in the school year.

Grievance Procedures

A grievance procedure was drafted in early 2011 and will need revisions and additions, as it is really only a first attempt at insuring that procedures are in place to protect and respond to staff concerns. We hope to establish a committee to revise the process. In addition, TPT meetings are an excellent way to raise common concerns and questions.

Health and Guidance

Health classes are offered to students from 7th through high school. Teachers in grades P-6 will be provided with curriculum support for health and guidance units. We have applied for funding for an elementary school guidance and health teacher for the 2011-2012 school year and hope to know if funding will be available by August or September.

The principals are available to provide guidance and counseling for students. Students may be referred by teachers if there are concerns about behavior, academic progress, and emotional issues.

Public Health nurses visit the school frequently to provide immunizations, vitamins, fluoride treatments, de-worming treatments, and dental screenings. Vision and hearing screenings are scheduled every two years.

The Wellness Center, located at the hospital and an easy walk from Co-op, is an excellent resource for students and staff in designing healthy meals and exercise programs.

Inadequate nutrition, poor hygiene, and lack of exercise are serious health concerns in the Marshall Islands. These concerns should be addressed in health classes.

See hygiene. Hygiene and prevention of the spread of communicable disease are part of each class' health curriculum.

Homework*

Homework is assigned so that students have additional opportunities to practice skills learned in class. Children should not be learning new skills with homework assignments.

Homework is a useful way for parents to stay involved with their child's educational program and progress.

Middle and high school teachers should coordinate with one another on large project assignments. Homework is mandatory at this level, and should be assigned almost every day. A guideline for assignment of homework through middle school is 10 minutes per

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evening per grade level. Thus, a student in 7th grade should have no more than a total of approximately 70 minutes of homework each night.

Students in 4th grade through high school have planners for recording assignments and communicating with parents. Teachers and parents should check the planners every day. Students need guidance in the use of the planners and daily homework sheets. (see Student Handbook, Parent-Teacher Communication.)

Teachers should post homework assignments for all classes in a designated place in the class. All classrooms have whiteboards for posting of homework assignments.

If students are getting seriously behind with homework, please call or e-mail parents and confirm that they received your message.

Homeroom Teachers and Class Advisors

A homeroom teacher for preschool through sixth grade is the regular classroom teacher. For middle and high school classes, a class advisor is assigned to each class/grade. The homeroom teacher or class advisor is responsible for keeping attendance records, coordinating grades for progress reports and report cards, monitoring student needs and concerns, initiating Child Study Team, student support, and counseling referrals, organizing class activities and fundraising, serving as the primary contact person for parents, managing the administration of standardized tests, and managing other class related duties as may arise.

Housing

See housing guidelines, Appendix B. It is very important that trash is not left outside of houses, as this attracts rodents. Please take your personal garbage to the dumpster near the hospital or take it to the road for trash pick up on Thursdays.

We remind you that there should be no smoking inside the houses. **Pets are not allowed, and any long term guests must be cleared with the principal.** (A long term guest would be someone staying longer than a week.) **Guests should not stay in the school housing if the assigned teacher-tenant is gone.** We have had some difficult situations with this in the past, and found it is best to follow the policy strictly.

Please be careful with use of water and power in the houses. The only available water is the water in the catchments, and this must be shared by everyone. Utilities are very expensive. The school only pays for the first \$120 of power use each month and we are working towards getting prepaid meters in all units. The \$120 allowance will cover your costs if you are careful about the use of air conditioners, ovens, and televisions.

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Hygiene

Students should be instructed in proper use of bathrooms, hand washing, garbage disposal, and ways to prevent the spread of communicable disease. (No dry cool-aid, use and disposal of Kleenex, covering mouth to cough and sneeze, no spitting.)

Internet

Our internet is dial-up in the office (we pay by the minute), "high speed" (not) in the computer lab, and wireless in the cafeteria. We pay by the month for the internet in the computer lab, and hope that teachers will take advantage of this benefit to look for resources. It is very slow and you have to be very patient. The computer lab must be available for students and classes during school hours. Staff use of facebook, personal e-mail, etc. should only take place before 7:45 and after 3:45.

Please do not use the wireless internet during staff meetings.

Job Descriptions

See Appendix C.

Laptops, Printers and Projectors

The school has five laptops/netbooks for student use. These must be scheduled and checked out. We hope you will set up learning stations in your classrooms or make assignments that require students to use the laptops for reports and power-point presentations. There are also six computers with internet access for student use in the library. You may sign up to use the computer lab for your classes as well. A "staff use" printer is in the library. Color printers are available in the office and may be used by arrangement. We have one projector and several overhead projectors for classroom use.

Please remember to reserve and sign out the laptops and projectors, and sign them back in upon return. If there are any problems with the computers, projectors, printers or laptops, we ask that you report these problems promptly. **LAPTOPS CANNOT BE CHECKED OUT OVERNIGHT AND SHOULD NOT LEAVE CAMPUS.**

Please monitor student use of computers and laptops to be sure they are not using

inappropriate websites, screensavers, and language. Computer use is a privilege.

Lesson Plans*

Careful planning is necessary for effective teaching. All teachers are expected to write weekly lesson plans. Lessons to be taught, assignments, and schedules should be explicitly noted. It is critical that lesson plans be left on the desk at the end of each day in the event that a teacher has an unplanned absence. Grade level standards must be referenced when making lesson plans.

Lesson plans are reviewed by lesson plan buddies and supervisors.

Library

Staff is welcome to use the school library, and may schedule student groups to use the library on a regular or as-needed basis. Most materials in the library have been donated, and library resources are limited. A recent grant allowed us to purchase some additional resource materials. We do not have a full time librarian. Therefore, students must be supervised in the library at all times. Teachers are responsible for re-shelving books used by their students and making sure that the space is kept clean and welcoming for other groups. Procedures for check out and return of library materials will be reviewed at orientation.

We do not allow any food or drinks, by students or staff, in the library or computer lab.

Encyclopedias should not, under any circumstances, leave the library.

Lunch and Snack Program

Lunch is provided to students and is included in their monthly tuition. Snacks are available for sale in the kitchen. Students are not allowed to leave campus during the school day to go to the store. Soda, gum and candy should not be eaten on campus except under special circumstances. Dry Kool-aid is banned from the campus.

Teachers and staff are welcome to eat school lunch at no charge. Guests are \$3.00. Breakfast and snack items are available for purchase.

Maintenance

Currently, the school does not employ full-time maintenance staff. With old buildings and trailers, the maintenance demands are many. Procedures for requesting maintenance will be reviewed at orientation. **Maintenance requests should be approved by James, the**

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office assistant, so that requests can be prioritized. Please do not speak directly to Savu or other maintenance staff with your maintenance needs.

Marshallese Studies

Co-op offers a program in Marshallese Studies. This is mandated for all schools in the Marshall Islands. The teacher instructs the students in culture and history of the Marshall Islands, as well as in reading and writing Marshallese. There is no formal teacher training program for Marshallese Studies, and sufficient teaching materials are not available. Our Marshallese instructor, Jennifer Elcar is happy to discuss units with teachers, so that units may be integrated with content in other classes. "Ms. Jennifer" also appreciates assistance and support with discipline problems and in some cases, the assignment of a teaching assistant.

For lower grades, Marshallese speaking teaching assistants may assume responsibility for planning and teaching Marshallese classes. This allows for integration of programming, and is also necessary because the teaching load is too heavy for Jennifer to handle alone.

Math

MCS uses the Saxon Math program for all grades and levels except preschool. All teachers are required to implement the Saxon Math curriculum. Leveled math groups are provided for upper elementary, middle and high school students. Math teachers for the leveled math classes need to remain in close communication in order to monitor student progress. Teachers should plan to "finish the book" each year.

Office Passes*

It is important to the people in the office if, when teachers send students to the office, they always send them with a pass and written explanation. Please let us know if the child is sick, needs the phone, has been creating problems, etc. Don't just send the child to the office with verbal instructions. Written passes with specific explanations (i.e. "hitting other student, needs a time-out" or "headache", "refusing to follow directions" are required.

Parent Communication*

Planners and communication journals or folders have been successful methods of communicating with parents. Teachers are asked to meet with parents after school or during planning periods, but not during class periods. Class newsletters are encouraged.

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Copies of written correspondence and class newsletters will be filed in the office. Please inform the principal if you find yourself in an uncomfortable situation/conversation with a parent. Teachers inform parents of difficulties a child is experiencing and offer suggestions on how parents can better follow up at home. As mentioned earlier, teachers should check planners and folders every day, and students should copy daily assignments into their planners.

Do not assume students are delivering your written communications to their parents. Follow up with parents regularly. **Improvement of communication is a priority for 2011, and staff will work together to identify methods to do so**

Parent Teacher Association and Board of Directors

All teachers are members of the PTA and attendance at PTA meetings is required. Classes/groups will from time to time be called upon to do performances/presentations at PTA meetings. PTA meetings are held about six times a year and are usually scheduled around fundraisers and school wide events. Each class has a PTA representative, and this group forms the PTA Board. One teacher serves on this Board as a representative for the teachers. Teachers all support PTA-sponsored events.

In addition to the Parent Teacher Association, a Board of Directors meets once a month to set policy, review Action Plan progress, advise principals, and monitor budget and activities. Staff members are welcome but not required to attend Board meetings. The Board of Directors is not involved in the day to day decisions and operations of the school. Members request that concerns are raised with administrators rather than through direct contact with the Board.

Pass-On Portfolios

Pass on portfolios were initiated at the end of 2007. Please review the portfolios for your students and keep up to date with work sample requirements. These are listed on stickers on the front of each student portfolio. Teachers are responsible for including these specific items, but may include others items as well.

Private Tutoring and Outside Employment

Teachers may offer private tutoring services for a fee to students as long as it is clearly communicated to families that this is a private arrangement, not provided by Co-op. When considering your fee for tutoring, please keep in mind that monthly tuition is \$200 per student. Most teachers charge in the range of \$7.50 an hour for tutoring. Tutoring arrangements should be after 3:45 or before 7:45 a.m. and should not interfere with

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teachers' availability to answer student questions, provide short term assistance, and attend required meetings.

Staff contracts state that teachers may seek outside employment, provided that this employment does not interfere with contract hours and other contract requirements. Many teachers enjoy working at the college, wellness center, and other agencies. The contract also states that outside employment should be discussed with and approved by the principal prior to acceptance. We strongly discourage teachers from seeking outside employment during the first semester of the first year of employment at Co-op, as stated in teacher contracts.

Professional Development and Professional Development Plan*

Professional development is provided during staff meetings, in-service days, team planning time, and through implementation of professional development plans. Periodically, we are able to take advantage of professional development opportunities through the College of the Marshall Islands, University of the South Pacific, or Ministry of Education. Each teacher develops his or her own "Professional Development Plan" to ensure professional growth and development. The Professional Development Plans are due between October 1 and November 1 for all educational staff. A self-evaluation of progress with the professional development plan is due on May 1.

Teachers may form professional development teams to work on common goals. More information on professional development plan will be discussed at a staff meeting early in the school year. All staff members are encouraged to facilitate or co-facilitate Professional Development opportunities for others.

Reading

Reading instruction at Co-op utilizes a Balanced Literacy model. Differentiation of instruction according to each child's "instructional" reading level is implemented through flexible Guided Reading Groups for all students in kindergarten through 8th grade. There is a Reading Resource Room with leveled reading materials, resource and professional development materials, and balanced literacy binders. Teachers may check out appropriate materials for each student or group of students. Reading assessment is ongoing, using

running records and comprehension assessments. All teachers, including content teachers, are responsible for providing reading instruction and support.

We currently have support staff that help provide reading support and leveled reading groups. Children who are below grade level should be referred for additional support.

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Provision of guided reading instruction is required for all grade levels through 8th grade. Teachers in middle school will do 1-2 whole class books during the school year, but the majority of reading texts should be using instructional levels of guided reading books.

Recess Supervision

Students are supervised on the playground and in the cafeteria by our teaching assistants. Too often, students do not follow directions given by teaching assistants. We rely on teachers to support teaching assistants and confront students in these situations.

All of us need to be aware of student safety. If you cross the playground and notice that there are no or too few playground supervisors, please try to find someone to cover- or help cover it yourself if no one is available! Tell the principal or office assistant if you see a problem with supervision or safety.

Please remind students that they are not to use the playground before school because there is no supervision.

Special Education and Support for At-Risk Students

Students with IEPs will receive support through the Special Education program. At-risk students who do not qualify for Special Education may receive support through the At-Risk teacher. (See "Student Support.") Students with significant English language deficiency will receive English language support. Teachers will be provided with copies of students' IEPs and will participate in development of English language Support Plans.

Staff Meetings and Committees

Wednesdays after school are set aside for staff meetings and committee work. Committee work may include work on curriculum and instruction, assessment, student support, parent involvement, school climate, professional development, meeting the needs of ELLs, or other topics of teacher concern. If teachers have ideas about needs that may be addressed in staff meetings, please bring these ideas to a principal.

Standards

The Majuro Cooperative School is using U.S content standards to guide instruction. Teachers are provided with grade level (elementary) and subject standards (middle -high school) that should be kept in each classroom. A project for 2010-2012 will be the

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identification and adoption of culturally relevant standards for students at the Majuro Cooperative School.

Standardized Testing and Assessments

Students in grade K-11 takes the SAT-10 every spring. These tests help us measure our students' achievement against students in the United States. In addition, students in grades 3, 6, 8 and 10 take MI-SATs (Marshall Islands SATs.) All students in grades K-8 are assessed by teachers three times a year using Fontas and Pinnell Reading benchmarks. LAS Links assessments are used to screen students with English Language needs. Pass -on portfolios for all students help us assess individual student growth over time. Math progress is monitored with weekly Saxon tests, as well as pre/post tests and final exams for upper grades. Teachers use a variety of in-class assessments, which may include tests, projects, observations, reports, and presentations. Assessments are an important part of our educational program and are used to help guide our instruction. Teachers interested in seeing past SAT and Reading Assessment results for your students, class, and the school as a whole may find assessment binders in the office.

Student Support*

If teachers are concerned about a student's academic progress, behavior, or emotional or social well-being, they should first discuss these concerns with their team and principal. They may request a **Child Support Team meeting (CST.)** Participants at the meeting may include: classroom teacher, Special Education teacher, principal, former teachers, team members, and sometimes a parent. Referral forms for Special Education, At-Risk Student Support, English Language Support, and Counseling may be completed at the meeting. The Director of Special Education coordinates Child Support Team meetings. Team Planning meetings times are often used for Child Support Team meetings for the middle and high school students.

Detailed information about procedures for requesting student support and a CST meeting will be provided at orientation.

Summer School

Co-op does offer summer school to students who struggle and to students who are identified as likely to lose progress over the summer, perhaps due to limited English exposure at home. Teachers who are interested in teaching summer school receive extra pay.

Teaching Assistants and Related Arts Staff

We have been blessed with many dedicated and committed teaching assistants. They work in classrooms, on the playground, and with students who need extra support. Many of the teaching assistants have been here for several years and have seen a lot of teacher turnover. It can be challenging to work under brand new sets of expectations, teaching styles, and with cultures different than their own. Most teaching assistants speak English as a second language themselves, and can provide assistance in working with and understanding the needs of English Language Learners. Most are high school graduates and some have enrolled in classes at the Community College. They appreciate very specific directions, respect for their culture and prior experiences, and that teachers check with them for understanding. Please remember to compliment your teaching assistants frequently and be vigilant about hurt feelings and misunderstandings.

Many teachers build strong relationships with teaching assistants and extend their relationships outside of school. This can be a great way to learn more about Marshallese culture and traditions.

Teaching assistants greatly appreciate in-service opportunities geared to their needs. If you have suggestions for appropriate trainings, please share these ideas.

Related Arts staff teach Marshallese, PE, Music, and Art. Teaching assistants and Related Arts staff appreciate classroom teacher support with difficult student behaviors. Please check in with them frequently.

Primary classrooms (P-3) have full time teaching assistants. Preschool and kindergarten classrooms have two teaching assistants, with the expectation that children with special needs will benefit from an additional teaching assistant. Upper grades do not have full time teaching assistants. We try to schedule teaching assistant support during literacy blocks and in classrooms where students with special needs are included.

Team Planning Times*

Teachers meet with grade level similar teams once a week for planning, professional support and training, and resource sharing. Resource staff and principal are scheduled to

attend TPT meetings. TPT's minutes are turned in and filed in the office.

Telephone use for students

It gets crowded and busy in the office, so we try to limit student use of the telephone. If you are sending a student to use the phone, she or he should come with a pass explaining that. Remind students that they are not allowed to use the phone without permission, and there is a charge for non-emergency use.

After 3:30, students may use the phone to call for rides. There is a 25 cent charge for this.

Textbooks*

Teachers must keep track of textbooks when they are issued to students. Teachers should keep accurate records of textbook numbers and condition of textbooks. Students are responsible for returning textbooks in reasonable condition or they will be required to pay replacement costs.

Upper grade teachers should do "textbook" checks every few months.

Uniforms and Dress Code

All students wear school uniforms every day. If a student is not wearing a uniform, or if the uniform is torn or written on, the student must come to the office and buy a new uniform. We will charge the uniform to the parent's account if a student does not have cash. Teachers may dress casually and neatly, with respect to the culture and values of the Marshall Islands. This means women do not wear shorts (long shorts and capris pants are okay) and revealing clothing. Men dress neatly and wear shirts on school grounds. **Men must wear long pants and women must wear dresses/skirts anytime you visit the Capital, International Convention Center, or Nitijela. This includes field trips.**

Vehicle

The school has one vehicle. It is old and we would like it to last another year, if possible. It is "designated" for use for **school business only during school hours** and is assigned to the superintendent. We use the car to get drinking water, food for the cafeteria, office supplies, maintenance supplies, and for attending meetings. If you are using the car for

business, please check first with the principals, Manny, James, and the kitchen staff before you go anywhere. After hours, Kathy often leaves the car on campus to save on gas and to allow others to use it for shopping, laundry, and other daily living errands. Gas is very expensive, and use of the car is a privilege not a "guaranteed benefit." The vehicle must be signed out whenever it is used, and reimbursement for personal use is expected.

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Please be respectful of others when using the car, clean out after use, report maintenance problems, and return keys to the office as soon as you return. Do not keep the car for more than two hours on weekends unless you are sure that no one else is waiting.

If we are able to purchase a second vehicle in 2011, vehicle use policies will be revised.

Volunteers

The use of parent and community volunteers is encouraged. Staff is encouraged to invite guest speakers, guest readers, and others to visit class, in addition to inviting parents to help in the classroom or school.

WASC

WASC stands for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. We are an accredited school through WASC. Accreditation is very important for our students, teachers and to the families who spend a great deal of money to send their children here. It means our credits are transferable, and that teaching here "counts" on salary scales internationally. It means that we hold our teachers and students to a set of standards and we are accountable to those students. The WASC process helps us identify areas of needed growth and ensures that we are always working to be a better school. All staff will be involved in tasks relating to accreditation work. In-service on WASC requirements and activities will be provided. Teachers will have the opportunity to review the most recent WASC visiting team report, our Action Plan, Community Profile, and the Focus on Learning Report.

Writing

In 2009, we identified writing as an area needing improvement at Co-op. Students at all grade levels are significantly behind as writers. According to our action plan, we will focus on improving writing instruction for students through professional development, co-planning and sharing of resources and ideas. Elementary teachers are required to schedule no less than 40 minutes a day for writing instruction.

What To Do When You Have Questions or Concerns

There will obviously be many questions about procedures, how things have been done in the past, expectations, resources, getting help, and much more. Please don't hesitate to ask questions, and please go directly to the source if you have questions. If you rely on students to answer your questions, (middle and high school students are especially anxious to tell you things are done around here!) or even another teacher, this can often lead to

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misunderstandings. When in doubt, please ask Kathy or Becky and we will be happy to direct you to the right person, help you interpret a response, or answer the question directly. Keep this handbook handy and many questions will be answered here.

We Are Guests Here

Please remember that most of us are guests in this country. Try to act the way you would if you were a guest in someone's home. You would respect their values, dress codes, and ways of interacting, even though these expectations are quite different than in our own home. As long as we do our best to respect the customs without being judgmental, we will get along fine, even if we make mistakes. When in doubt- please ask!

