

# Totem Middle School Choir

Mr. Chris de Leon, Director  
Choir Handbook

*The purpose of this handbook is to inform choir students and parents of the procedures and policies of the Totem Choir Program. I appreciate you taking time to read this information and returning the back page by **Friday September 7, 2007.***

WELCOME!!! I am very excited to work with you and personally getting to know you and your fellow classmates throughout the year. We are going to immediately dive in and start singing, reading music, exploring music from other cultures, performing, and learning the joys of singing in vocal ensemble! Whether you have never sung in your life or you sing all the time, we will aim in creating an environment that you WILL feel comfortable to experiment with your voice and be expressive in your singing. Remember, this is a performing class and everybody will learn how to sing. This is my second year at Totem and after a successful year filled with lively concerts and performances along with an "Excellent" rating at the West Valley Choir Competition we going to start the year with the same energy and achieve even more this year. So, START learning and understanding this year's rules and procedures for class would be chaos without them.

*"LET'S MAKE SOME BEAUTIFUL MUSIC"*

## **Choir student Expectations:**

- 1) Show up on time. NO TARDIES
- 2) Do what is right, NOT what is popular or because other people are doing it.
- 3) Follow directions the FIRST TIME.
- 4) Show and practice self discipline. Control your urge to do something that may seem out of place or disrespectful to others.
- 5) Respect others and the property of others.
- 6) Practice Self-organization with materials and work.

## **Citizenship and Behavior Expectations**

Because the goals for the students involve assisting them in developing productive habit in the classroom and choir rehearsal that will have positive results for them throughout their lives, we have an emphasis on:

- 1 Choose to do what is right (which may not be what is popular)
- 2 Develop a strong work ethic through self-discipline and self-management
- 3 Build strong working relationships with others through emphasizing teamwork and leadership skills.
- 4 Use goal setting and problem solving strategies in order to meeting challenges and handle disruptions to the learning process.
- 5 Self-organization: time management, organization of materials, etc.

### **National Standards for Music Education (Graded Material):**

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

### **Contact Information**

Mr. Chris de Leon, Director

Email: [cdeleon@fwps.org](mailto:cdeleon@fwps.org) (most preferred)

Phone: 253-945-5158

Office Hours: 7:00am to 8:45am, 11:45am to 12:10pm, 2:45pm to 3:30pm.

Leave a clear and detailed message with phone number if transferred to voicemail.

### **Fees:**

Binder package (binder, pencil, dividers)                    **\$3.00 to \$5.00 TBA**  
EMP field trip (spring)    **\$20** (who do not fundraiser)

### **Supplies List (Kept in the classroom and used for choir ONLY)**

3-ring binder

Pencil (left inside binder and only used for choir class) NO PENS

Dividers (4 minimum)

Students are able (and recommended) to purchase these items all together from the school since we will be getting a discounted bulk order price. The price for these materials is around \$3.00 to \$5.00 and should last the whole year.

Students are to use the "Choir Binder" for choir class ONLY. Please contact Mr. de Leon ASAP if there are any concerns with the fee.

### **Choir Uniforms**

This is a performance class and the student will need to have "concert black" attire.

Boys Concert Black:

- 1 Ironed solid white long sleeve collared shirt, black slacks, black socks, black shoes, and black shoelaces. (NO sagging pants or jeans)
- 2 Dark Suit also acceptable (if already have one)

Girls Concert Black:

- 1 Black Dress, black hosiery, black shoes OR
- 2 White collared shirt, black skirt (at the knees length), black shoes

\*No low cut tops, or short skirts

## **Grading**

### **Formative Assessment**

Collaborative Work (Daily Ensemble Points (SEE National Standard 1))      **50%**  
SEE “Daily Ensemble Points” for point break down

Independent Work (Organized Binder with completed required materials)      **10%**  
\*Binders are considered your music portfolio that shows you demonstrating the district and national music standards SEE “Music Standards”

### **Summative Assessment**

On Demand Work (singing and written tests)      **20%**  
\*Both tests are prepared well in advance, no surprises on material tested.

Project Based Work (concerts and music projects)      **20%**  
Barring circumstances beyond control, **failure to participate in any required event such as CONCERTS will result in the lowering of the student’s grade by one to two letter grades.** Because of the unique learning circumstances provided by the performance situation, make-up assignments for performances **ARE NOT POSSIBLE.**

### **Repertoire:**

Mr. de Leon has TOTAL control over what is presented to the choir classes; suggestions are welcomed but are to Mr. de Leon’s discretion. I am very willing to use folk songs from different cultures or languages so if have any PLEASE talk to me! The music we will perform is carefully picked and based on the students’ musical level and ability but also meet district, state, and national standards. DO NOT EXPECT to sing anything from the radio in choir class. You WILL be welcomed to use popular music for various independent writing assignments.

### **Note about musical material referencing religious icons:**

I am very careful when presenting material with the use of religious references but strongly support the MUSICAL ideas as a reason to present the music rather than religious context. Federal Way Public School also defines their view of presenting religion in class as, “it is permissible to consider religious influences on art, music, literature, and social studies. Although public schools may teach about religious holidays, including their religious aspects, and may celebrate the secular aspects of holidays, schools may not observe holidays as religious events or promote such observance by students.” <<http://www.fwps.org/info/policies/2000/2340p.htm>

### **Extra Credit SEE “Extra Credit Points”**

Students will be able to earn extra credit points by doing showing leadership,

taking positive initiative in class such as voluntarily singing a solo, helping passing out papers or with classroom décor, presenting or singing work from their favorite artist, and many more. **SEE “Extra Credit Points”**

### **Concert Attendance**

As mentioned, concerts cannot be made up thus lowering of one or two letter grades. Only emergency situations with note from parents can the lowering grade be negotiated with possible make up work.

### **Concert Etiquette**

During concerts, choir students are required to be at the school at least 30 minutes before concert time with proper concert attire. Family may find a seat while students are working up. Classroom rules still apply at concerts meaning, NO booing, talking during performances, or any such disruption or disrespect. Students are also REQUIRED to stay until the whole performance is finished NOT after we are done singing.

### **Fundraising**

Throughout the year, the choirs will be going on various field trips and will be required to fundraise for these trips. If the student raises enough money, they are eligible to not have to pay the trip fee.

### **Choir Calendar**

See Totem Middle School Website ([www.fwps.org/tot](http://www.fwps.org/tot)) or detailed handouts given to the student a couple weeks before performance.

Thank you,

Mr. Chris de Leon  
Director of Choirs

Student's last name \_\_\_\_\_

# Totem Middle School

## Choir Contract 2007-2008

I \_\_\_\_\_ (student's full name) understand and agree to follow the responsibilities and expectations for choir. I understand that daily ensemble participation and concert participation is part of my grade.

STUDENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the choir handbook, understand and agree to all the responsibilities, expectations, supplies, and grading criteria for my student's choir class.

PARENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

I need volunteer to help chaperone concerts and/or field trips! ☺

I would like to volunteer [ ]

Concerts            Y    N

Field Trips        Y    N

Contact Information

Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Work \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

