

Tesoro High School Choral Department Handbook

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Dear Choir Students and Parents,

It is my pleasure to serve you again as your choral music teacher at Tesoro High School for my 15th year. I look forward to making great music with you this year. I congratulate you on your decision to join one of the fine choirs we have at Tesoro. Tesoro has a reputation as being one of the top choral programs in California, and I look forward to another year of continuing that tradition of excellence! I know it is a decision that you will find very rewarding and a great deal of fun! Choir allows you to develop a love for music that will offer an opportunity to develop your own musicianship as well as offering a chance for social and personal development based on teamwork and professionalism. It is up to each individual student to bring their personal best to each ensemble to create a tradition of excellence at Tesoro.

The following handbook outlines and presents the objectives, expectations, content, grading, schedules and rules of the Tesoro Choral Department. **Please read all information carefully!** Please fill out and return all forms by Friday, August 26. Welcome to the Tesoro Choral Family!

Sing-cerely,

Mr. Keith Hancock
Choral Director

CHORAL SINGING BENEFITS

Singing in choir not only teaches students basic musical skills, concepts and vocal production technique, but also develops professionalism, self-discipline, teamwork and an appreciation for the arts. The disciplines learned in a singing group will enable the student to participate in life long musical activities including many collegiate and adult choral organizations. Singing offers a great physical and emotional outlet for young people, cultivating the expressive part of their personality in a positive manner which will carry over into adulthood.

MADRIGALS

Madrigals is a **year-long course** open to advanced singers by audition only in grades 10-12. Students are expected to be the top musicians at Tesoro while continuing to develop advanced vocal and musicianship skills. Students study and perform advanced literature for mixed ensembles, with an emphasis on large choir music from all periods of history. They perform at all school concerts, local festivals, community events, annual tours, and school events.

ADVANCED WOMEN'S ENSEMBLE

This course is a **year-long course** open by audition only to women grades 9-12. This is an advanced course focusing on SSA literature from all periods of music. Students develop advanced vocal and musicianship skills, as well as sight-reading and history training. They perform at all school concerts, local festivals, and annual tours.

A CAPPELLA

This course is a **year-long course** open by audition only to women grades 9-12. This is an intermediate course focusing on SSA literature from all periods of music. Students develop advanced vocal and musicianship skills, as well as sight-reading and history training. They perform at all school concerts.

CONCERT CHOIR

This course is a **year-long course** open to any female singer in grades 9-12 with the consent of the director. This is a year-long course in basic vocal techniques, music theory, sight reading and SSA choral literature for the beginning/intermediate women's ensemble. Concert Choir performs at all school concerts.

MEN'S CHOIR

This course is a **year-long course** open to any male singer in grades 9-12 with the consent of the director. This is a course in basic vocal techniques, music theory, sight reading, and TBB choral literature for the beginning/intermediate men's ensemble. Men's Choir performs at all school concerts.

CHAMBER SINGERS

Chamber Singers is a small ensemble comprised of 16-32 singers that will meet once a week during tutorial for the entire year. Students must be in another choir to be in this group. They should be leaders for the other ensembles, and their attitudes and dedication should be exceptional. Students will study advanced literature for a cappella, chamber, and jazz ensembles. They will perform at the school concerts, CUSD honor choir, community events, school events, and district events.

BARBERSHOP/BEAUTYSHOP

Tesoro HS has a barbershop and a beautyshop quartet that meets at least once a week during tutorial or lunch. Students must be in another choir to be in this group. Students will study music of the barbershop genre, and will perform at all school concerts and compete in an annual competition.

CHOIR AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

High school students need the opportunity to explore and experience a wide variety of activities. At Tesoro, we have a number of students in many school activities and teams. In order to accommodate personal schedules, I will give as much advanced notice as possible and expect the same courtesy. For the student who wishes to be involved in other activities, you must prioritize. The following guidelines have been established to help students when conflicts between activities occur. A performance or game takes priority over a rehearsal or practice. I expect that doctor and dental appointments and other such dates will be coordinated with our choir rehearsals in mind. All other conflicts will be handled individually on their own merit and must be cleared with Mr. Hancock PRIOR to the performance or rehearsal. If a conflict should arise, it is the responsibility of the STUDENT to inform the parties involved and arrange for any concessions.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE STANDARDS

It is understood that a unity of appearance must be attained when appearing with high quality performing ensembles. These policies ensure a sense of professionalism when appearing in public and representing Tesoro. It shall be the responsibility of each member to appear in proper performance attire for each occasion. Members may not appear with the choir until the uniform standards are met.

- Performance attire is complete, clean, neatly pressed and in good repair
- Each choir member will be neatly groomed
- Long hair will be pulled up to maintain a professional, formal look, and hair will be natural colors only
- Any visible jewelry, body piercings or tattoos are not appropriate performance attire
- All ladies will wear **black** closed-toed shoes, and men are to wear **black** shoes and **black** socks.

OTHER ATTIRE INFORMATION

Choir t-shirts and sweatshirts may be ordered and will be available for interested students. More information will be announced later. All women will be wearing the Tesoro choir formal dresses and men will wear full tuxedos. No student will be excluded from choir if they are financially unable to pay for their choir outfit.

ATTENDANCE

Student attendance is important to a fine ensemble. A student must be IN CLASS in order to contribute to the ensemble. Students with excessive absences lower the overall group potential. Absences and tardies have a strong impact on your performance ability because it is impossible for us to be at our best as a choral ensemble when people are absent or late. So please be punctual and prepared to sing. Students are expected to be in their assigned seats when the bell rings, with music folder, notebook, pencil and any other required materials in hand.

I expect that all choir members will be at each rehearsal and concert. Missing these events will lower each student's grade. The concerts are our way to showing our families and friends, as well as the community, what choir is all about at Tesoro. The after school rehearsals (which are few) are required for all choir members. I realize that emergencies occur, and have developed the following procedures for concert or rehearsal absences.

1. You all have a choir calendar with concerts and rehearsals identified. Updated calendars will be readily available. I expect that you will put these on your personal calendars and will make every effort to see that your student is present.
2. The following are excused absences for choir rehearsals and concerts:
 - Sudden severe illness (not a cold!)
 - Death in family or funeral
 - Court appearances
 - Religious holidaysStudents who miss rehearsals or concerts for these reasons will need to complete a 4 page paper if a performance is missed and a 3 page paper if a rehearsal is missed (as assigned by Mr. Hancock).

3. The following are some examples of unexcused absences:
 - Transportation problems
 - Religious youth group, service or event
 - Family plans, vacations, parties, reunions
 - Minor illness
 - Athletic or cheer games or practices
 - Other group's rehearsals or concerts
 - Voice or dance lesson
 - Suspension from school or other disciplineStudents absent from rehearsal or concert for any of the above reasons or any other unexcused absence will need to submit a 5 page paper if a performance is missed or a 4 page paper if a rehearsal is missed (as assigned by Mr. Hancock).

****Students who do not receive credit for performances and rehearsals have semester grades lowered up to 30%.***

STUDENT HEALTH ISSUES

If you have any health problem that could affect your performance in the Choral Music Department, you should inform Mr. Hancock immediately. This information is kept in confidence with the school health office.

If you have a sore throat and should not sing, tell Mr. Hancock **BEFORE** class begins. If you are sick and present in class, you are expected to actively participate in the rehearsal by being actively engaged in the music by singing mentally with the choir and taking notes critiquing the choir that will be turned into Mr. Hancock

VOICE LESSONS

All students in choir are **strongly** encouraged to take private voice lessons. There is only so much that can be done in the choral rehearsal to enhance one's instrument. Good private voice instructors can prove an invaluable tool to achieve greater self-confidence and enhanced vocal ability. Please talk to Mr. Hancock for a voice teacher recommendation.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND PROCEDURES

Singing should be fun and enjoyable for the singer and the listener! Much of the satisfaction comes from working together as a team. Your attention to all instructions and activities is required--no exceptions! Complaining openly in class negatively affects the progress of the group. If you have issues to discuss, please see Mr. Hancock privately. **You are expected to be in your assigned seat with your music, notebook, and pencil when the bell rings.** Prepare to do the assigned listening work.

There will be no cell phones, iPods, food, soft drinks or gum allowed in the choral music classroom. Bottled water is strongly encouraged, though. A singer must keep his/her vocal cords properly hydrated. There will be no chewing of anything at any time during choir rehearsal. There will be no makeup applied or taken out in class.

Students will be expected to:

1. Come to class on time and be in their seat before the tardy bell rings
2. Be attentive and follow all directions the first time they are given
3. Be respectful of others, including the teacher and fellow students
4. Participate willingly in every activity
5. AGMNTWASP (A good musician never travels without a sharpened pencil)

Students who choose not to adhere to the above will earn...

- 1st offense- warning by teacher/peers
- 2nd offense- conference with teacher
- 3rd offense- 15 min. teacher detention, lowered citizenship
- 4th offense- 30 min. teacher detention and parent contact, lowered citizenship
- 5th offense- 30 min. teacher detention, parent contact, and referral

These consequences are earned on a daily basis, with the exception of the tardy and cheating policies of Tesoro. In addition to the tardy policy in effect at Tesoro, there will be consequences for repeated tardies. After the second tardy, each unexcused tardy will result in a 2% deduction from the participation grade. In addition to the above, the following **Severe Clause** will be enforced on the first violation to any of the following offenses:

1. Any student who willingly participates in an activity that could injure themselves or others will be immediately referred to their counselor and parents will be contacted
2. Any student who violates the cheating policy (cheating or helping another cheat on any test or homework item) or the sexual harassment policy of Tesoro will be immediately referred to their counselor and parents will be contacted.

GRADING POLICY

1. The grading policy for the Choral Music Department is based on percentage (no curve)
90-100 A 80-89 B 70-79 C 60-69 D 59-0 F
2. 50% of semester grade based on class participation
--Madrigals is 40% in-class participation, 10% sectional attendance/participation
30% of semester grade based on performance/rehearsal attendance
10% of semester grade based on homework/notebook
10% of semester grade based on final exam
3. Academic progress will be posted on School Loop. In addition, progress reports will be sent home with each student detailing the grade and any additional comments. However, at any time parents or students may contact Mr. Hancock requesting grade info.
4. Make-up work will be assigned only to those who, ONLY in special circumstances, cannot attend concerts or outside rehearsals or participate in class. Extra credit in any other case will not be given unless student has completed all required work. All extra work is under discretion of teacher.
5. Late work will be accepted with a penalty of a grade per day late. Absent students must turn in work on the day they return to class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION RUBRIC

A (90-100%)-Attends almost all classes and is on time; listens attentively and follows instructions the first time; quiet, courteous, and prepared; works on improving, never chews gum, eats, or misuses cell phone policy; takes responsibility; respects peers and director; never leaves class

B (80-89%)-Occasionally misses class; listens to directions and usually follows them; quiet and prepared; hardly ever chews gum, eats, or uses cell phone; 3 or fewer tardies; rarely leaves class to use restroom; no discipline problems

C (70-79%)-Frequently misses class; talks too much for positive rehearsal etiquette; demonstrates some effort but no desire to improve; chews gum, eats, and/or uses cell phone in class regularly; frequently uses restroom in class; 5 or more tardies; frequent discipline problems

ATTENDANCE RUBRIC

A (90-100%)-Attends rehearsal and concert; arrives early, leaves late; arrives in concert dress; professional behavior backstage

B (80-89%)-Attends rehearsal and concert; arrives a little late; not dressed appropriately; some disrespectful behavior backstage

C (70-79%)-Attends rehearsal and concert; arrives late; does not arrive in concert attire; disrespectful behavior backstage

REMOVAL FROM CLASS/PERFORMANCES

At the discretion of Mr. Hancock, students may be removed from performances or from the class should there be any severe behavior issues.

Choir Calendar (updated 7-27-16)

August 1-August 4-Madrigals Retreat-9:00 am-11:00 pm

August 22-Chamber Singers/Barbershop Auditions 3:00-6:00

August 26-All choir forms must be turned in

September 17-Choir Kickoff Party 4:00-7:00pm

September 26-Fall Concert Solo Auditions 3:00-4:00

October 3-Fall Concert Rehearsal 3:00-5:00, 7:00 Concert #1

October 4-Fall Concert #2 7:00, 5:30 call time

October 17-Tribute Concert Solo Auditions 3:00-6:00

October 21-Friends Festival 10:00-3:00pm (Madrigals only)

October 27-Tribute Concert Rehearsal 3:00-6:00, 7:00 Concert #1

October 28-Tribute Concert #2 7:00, 5:30 call time, 4:00 soloists call time

TBA-San Diego Women's Festival 7:00am-7:00pm (Advanced Women's Ensemble only)

November 4-BIOLA Festival 9:00am-3:15pm (Madrigals only)

November 28-Winter Concert Solo Auditions 3:00-6:00

December 5-8-Spring Musical auditions (optional)

Dec. 15-Winter Concert Rehearsal 3:00-5:00, 7:00 Concert #1

Dec. 16-Winter Concert #2 7:00, 5:30 call time

February 10-Chapman University Invitational Festival 12:15-9:00pm

February 21-Spring Solo Auditions 3:00-4:00

February 27-Spring Concert Rehearsal 3:00-5:00, 7:00 Concert #1

February 28-Spring Concert #2 7:00, 5:30 call time

March 2-CUSD Honor Choir (Chamber Singers only)

March 20-Solo Concert Auditions 3:00-6:00pm

March 28-Solo Concert 7:00pm, 4:00 call time

April 1-April 9-OCYC France/Germany/Luxembourg Tour, info at tesorochoir.com/tour

April 20-22 & April 27-29-Spring Musical (optional)

May 8-Pops Solo Auditions 3:00-7:00

May 19-Pops Concert Rehearsal 3-6, Concert #1 7:00 (Friday)

May 20-Pops Concert #2 7:00, 5:30 call time, 4:00 soloists call time (Saturday)

May 22-26-Choir Auditions for 2017-2018

May 23-Executive Board Elections for 2017-2018 (tutorial)

May 26-Choir Banquet 6:00-9:00pm (this is the Friday before Memorial Day)

June 1-Graduation (Madrigals only)

****This is only a general calendar of the dates that we know are on the Master Calendar. More detailed information will be given at a later date. Please refer to handouts for updates. Calendar subject to change, and students are responsible for changes when given advance notice.**