



Dear Chorus Parents and Students, -

WELCOME to the grand opening of Desana Middle School! ***cue incoherent excited noises***
I am beyond excited to have you on board as we embark on the grand adventure of starting a brand spankin' new chorus program!

Many students discover that being in a choral group is like having an extended family, as there is a special bond that is created among people who make music together. Singing in chorus also helps improve mental discipline, enhance social interaction, as well as develop teamwork and pride in one's work. Hopefully you (and parent/guardian volunteers!) will remain in chorus your entire middle school career and gain a lifelong interest in singing and an appreciation of music as an art form.

Students who are involved in the chorus program should be aware that being a member of chorus is different from being in any other class. We perform. That being the case, your work is evaluated on two levels: the *process* (rehearsal) and the *product* (performances). As we grow together in our rehearsal *process*, please remember that having a safe, supportive, and fun learning environment is our goal as we prepare the *product*— a wonderful performance for an appreciative audience.

There are three ensembles that make up the DMS Chorus Department:

6th Grade Chorus

6th Grade Chorus is the beginning-level chorus at Desana Middle School. Students are introduced to the basics of healthy singing, vocal improvisation, and reading music/music theory. 6th Grade Chorus repertoire is unison or 2-part and is chosen to help ease students into singing with a large ensemble while providing opportunities for solo and small group performances.

7th Grade Chorus

7th Grade Chorus picks up where 6th Grade Chorus left off. Students are introduced to more challenging music and a greater emphasis is placed on vocal improvisation, music reading, and music theory. Students begin to listen to and analyze their own performances as well as the performances of other ensembles. Students are also expected to dissect and analyze their own repertoire and explain the significance of the text and its relationship to the musical elements and the cultural and historical significance of the works being performed.

8th Grade Chorus

This is the highest level chorus at Desana Middle School. Emphasis is placed on continuing to develop vocal confidence, improvisation, and music reading abilities. This ensemble is also instrumental in helping prepare students to continue with music in high school.

Each chorus member will be required to have a concert uniform. All chorus members will wear their concert uniform with black close-toed dress shoes. Information regarding uniform rental will be sent out next week. In May, all chorus members will participate in our annual Super Spring Showcase. For this performance, we will have special t-shirts that will be worn with blue denim jeans.

While we do receive instructional monies to help purchase choral music and other classroom supplies, it is never enough as we work to build our brand new chorus program from scratch. **In short, we need your help.**

Since Desana is brand new, we have a limited budget in order to purchase what we need to get the chorus program up and running. Our biggest ticket item is a piano for our classroom. We are currently using my personal electric piano from home to get us started, but hopefully together we can reach a goal of raising enough money to buy an acoustic piano for our classroom.

I am asking for chorus parents to consider donating something of themselves to improve their child's brand new chorus program. A donation of \$75 per family would go a very long way to help us purchase a piano for our classroom, among other things such as sheet music, sound equipment for concerts, risers, etc. If you are able to donate more, please do so. If you need to donate less, please do so. This is not a requirement in order to participate in chorus, however any and all donations are very much appreciated. If you write a check, please make it out to Desana Middle School.

If a donation of time suits you best, please consider donating some of your time this year. There will be several opportunities to chaperone chorus trips/concerts and help in the chorus room during the day. We also need parents to help apply for grants and seek corporate sponsorship. For information regarding student fees and parent volunteer opportunities, please keep a look out for the Information/Parent Volunteer Opportunities/Chorus Fees information sheets, which will be sent home with your student next week.

We have a lot of work to do to get this chorus program on its feet and I hope you're as eager as I am to get started! Let's build the Desana Middle School Chorus program to be the best it can be together! You are very important to the success of our DMS Choral Program. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

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