



TOTEM

correspondence



An Alaska statewide correspondence program for K-12
that is as unique as your family.

Policies & Procedures Handbook

Hydaburg City School District



TOTEM

correspondence

Greetings Totem Families!

At Totem Correspondence, we believe the family is the primary unit of instruction in all aspects of life, and our goal is to support you to the best of our ability.

Family learning provides strong modeling in education while providing your child with memorable learning experiences.

We strive to be the most flexible correspondence program so that each family may create and implement the type of home education that they envision and deem best for their family. Our policies are set to be beneficial and sustainable to all stakeholders. We follow the State statutes and regulations, as required, while working hard to help you and your students on your homeschooling journey.

Totem Correspondence operated as a traditional correspondence type of program when it began. However, our vision has evolved to be more in line with the typical homeschool program set-up. However, it was decided to keep “Correspondence” in our name because we are more than willing to actively assist you as much as possible and as much as you need in your homeschool journey.

There are different methods, modes, and curriculum the homeschool community uses or refers to. Totem Correspondence can point you towards a variety of resources. Sometimes there are so many resources available, it is overwhelming and difficult to choose. We can help with that. If you don't know what choices you have, or if you don't know what to choose, we are here to help show you the choices, narrow them down, and try them out until you find one that fits you, your family, and your student. More seasoned families might have their minds made up; we will support your choices. We will never make you use a curriculum or resource that does not fit you, your family, or your students.

Totem Correspondence is here to help you, your family, and your student, with your student's education. To provide excellent support for our families, Totem maintains an intentionally small enrollment so we can better focus on the needs of our families. Our goal is to provide quality service that supports you.

At Totem, we ensure choice!

Choices include:

- Your student's educational needs and goals.
- The methods to achieve your student's success.
- How you determine success for your student.

Totem Correspondence will help you navigate it all. We're excited to have you join us!

Sincerely,

The Totem Correspondence Staff

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Students & Parents

Home Educator

Totem students need at least one designated Home Educator (usually a parent, guardian, or other primary caregiver). The Parent/Home Educator will:

- Help create their student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and attend the initial learning Advisory Meeting.
- Submit all required paperwork by due dates (ILP, Progress Reports, Samples, Conferences, etc.).
- Maintain monthly contact with the school and Contact Teacher (email, phone, etc.)
- Attend a Graduation Advisory meeting on a yearly basis for High School students (grades 9-12).

The Parent/Home Educators are the student's primary, daily educational point of contact. Parents/Home Educators need to teach, facilitate, monitor, assess, and report. Parents/Home Educators work with their Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher as needed and required. Families may also choose to "outsource": find tutors, teachers, Vendors, classes, pods, resources, etc. to teacher various subjects or skills for your student.

It is essential that parents have a current email address and telephone number on record at Totem Correspondence as well as reliable access to the Internet.

Students

Students throughout the State of Alaska may enroll. Totem Correspondence is a K-12th grade program. Alaska State age requirements are that students must be at least 5 years old, and under 20 years old, by September 1 of that school year.

Grade Levels

Grade levels must be used for recording and reporting purposes. Usually, the grade level is indicated as consecutive years in school (Kindergarten-12th grade), with Kindergarten being when the student first attends school, usually at the age of 5 years old before September 1 of a school year.

If your student has a different situation, simply reach out to us and we will assist you for your specific situation.

Non-Discrimination

Totem Correspondence does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to designated youth groups. The following representative has been designated to address inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Bart Mwarey, Superintendent, PO Box 109, Hydaburg, AK 99922, (907) 825-3491.

Totem Correspondence Services

Professional Staff

Each student is assigned to a Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher. All Contact Teachers are Alaska Certified with a Type A teaching credential. The Contact Teacher will be the family's primary point of contact. They will provide guidance on enrollment, designing the learning plan, and selecting learning resources. The Contact Teacher also reviews progress reports, grades, and work samples. Direct all inquiries about the program to your Contact Teacher.

Totem Correspondence operates under Hydaburg City School District. The District may employ other support staff for Totem in the form of Administration, accounting staff, special education representatives, Grant oversight, etc.

The Totem Correspondence Director is responsible for administrative decisions that impact the Totem Correspondence program. If there is no written policy for a specific academic or financial situation, the Totem Correspondence Director will make the appropriate determination.

Office Locations

Totem Correspondence is a state-wide program so anyone residing in the State of Alaska with access to internet may enroll. Totem Correspondence has families from several Alaska regional areas. Totem currently operates remotely.

Parent Educator Cards

Totem Correspondence will provide you with a Parent Educator Card upon completed enrollment. This card will have the Parent/Home Educator and student names, and the current school year on it. This card can be used for educator discounts at participating stores (JOANNs, Michaels, Barnes & Noble, etc.)

PowerSchool

Totem Correspondence utilizes PowerSchool as the official Student Information System. All demographic information is stored here for State and Federal reporting requirements. All information and data for ILPs and Progress Reports are entered here, and final reports of Report Cards and Transcripts are subsequently generated from PowerSchool.

e-Portfolios via BaseCamp

Totem Correspondence values student work and progress, and utilizes a management platform called BaseCamp to support student centered electronic portfolios.



BaseCamp is a resource where all stakeholders may share (view and upload) information pertaining to student work. BaseCamp is where your student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), quarterly Progress Reports and work samples will be stored for easy access for all stakeholders.

Families can also access your student's Allotment Tracking Form via Basecamp. The form itself is housed in our Google Drive. This interactive form will illustrate your allotment running balance, and when a reimbursement or direct pay was approved and paid.

BaseCamp is web-based so it may be accessed from your computer, smartphone or tablet device. BaseCamp is similar to Google Drive, but amped up and very user friendly. You will automatically be enrolled in BaseCamp upon completing your student enrollment. You will receive an email from BaseCamp with directions about how to access the account and file. If needed, Totem will supply further instructions on how to access and utilize BaseCamp.

Every year you are enrolled with Totem Correspondence is stored in Basecamp. We ask that you do not delete anything in your Basecamp account as it is not recoverable, or move anything as it is organized specifically.

Anyone who is participating in a student's education may have access to parts of the student folder. This is at the parent's discretion. Let your Contact Teacher know if you would like others added to your student's account. The benefit is that others (a grandma/grandpa, a tutor, or older sibling) may easily upload work samples. So, for example, if a grandparent takes a student ice skating, or to a museum, they may upload some pictures of the experiences directly into BaseCamp from their smartphone. The possibilities are many, and we look forward to working with our families to personalize this portfolio.

Communication

Totem Correspondence will communicate and work with Parents/Home Educators as much as you need, or as little as you want, within our parameters. Your Contact Teacher will send out a Monthly Newsletter via email. These are important to stay abreast of dates and deadlines, opportunities, and information. Your Contact Teacher will also reach out to you monthly for a personal check-in via phone or email. Feel free to reach out to your Contact Teacher as much as you need!

It is important that monthly contact occurs. Correspondence programming as supported homeschool must embrace accountability both from our staff and our families. We are working hard to serve our students and remain accountable for continued success. Only regular family contact helps us to be accountable. See Non-Compliance.

Social Media

Totem Correspondence maintains a Facebook page. Totem Correspondence uses Facebook as a medium to post specific events, meet-ups, opportunities, news and information. Families are welcome to share photos, questions, and support each other in that space.

Special Education

Totem Correspondence enrolls students with special education needs on the same basis as any other student. Totem Correspondence works in collaboration with the Hydaburg City School District Special Education Specialist and Department regarding accommodations and services. Eligible students receive special education services through a "consultation" model with Totem. Each eligible student's curriculum is modified to meet needs individually based on their IEP.

Eligible students receive instruction in the homeschool setting from their Parent/Home Educator. The Parent/Home Educator receives appropriate consultative support from their Contact Teacher as well as from the district Special Education Department.

It is important to realize that not all students' needs can be appropriately served through a correspondence program. With consultative support, we will help you make a solid decision for your family and eligible child in relation to enrollment with Totem Correspondence.

Tutoring

Totem Correspondence may provide some tutoring in person, via video conferencing, phone, email, or other medium. However, if the need for academic tutoring is ongoing throughout the school year, it is best to engage an outside tutor resource. There are numerous in-person or online, private persons or vendors to choose from. We can help you find resources for this to best meet all your needs.

If the tutoring is needed for a course listed on the student's ILP, student allotment can be used. Direct Pay for tutoring is available only if the tutor is set up as a Vendor. See Direct Pay to Vendors below.

You may use a tutor who is not set up as a Vendor. You will need to pay for those services upfront and submit for reimbursement if you wish- following all reimbursement guidelines.

Direct Pay to Vendors

Totem Correspondence operates primarily on a Reimbursement status. However, we do understand that is not always preferable or possible for families, so we will make every effort to do Direct Pay to Vendors when we can.

Direct Pay to Vendors is instead of a family paying out of pocket and requesting reimbursement. It is when a family has submitted a Vendor Direct Pay Request, the Vendor has completed a Vendor Application, and they will accept a Purchase Order (PO) from our school/District to render items or services, and then invoice our school for payment.

All of our Vendors need to be by family request. Totem will only process new Vendor applications if a Totem Family is requesting to work with the Vendor and for us to Direct Pay the Vendor on the family's behalf using their student allotment monies.

If this is the case, families need to submit a Vendor Direct Payment Request Form to Totem. Prior approval is required. This request also requires Educational and Administrative approval so this form should be completed (with approvals) prior to accumulating any fees with the Vendor. To use allotment monies, the service or items being provided by Vendors must align with a course listed on the student's ILP. The information in each column is needed. We use it to give Educational Approval- align it to your student's ILP and verify that allotment monies are available. The amounts you enter should match as closely as possible to what the Vendor will bill. The form is also you giving us your permission to deduct that amount of allotment monies from your student's allotment account. Without this form from you, we will not pay the Vendor.

Vendors who are to be direct paid are required to fill out a one-page Vendor Application and submit the required business documents (Business License and W9, etc.). By doing so, the Vendor will accept a Purchase Order from Totem Correspondence/Hydaburg City School District in order to release products or services to the student. The Vendor will bill Totem Correspondence preferably within a 30-day time period. Once the application process is completed, Totem Correspondence will then be able to provide Direct Payments to Vendors on behalf of our families.

If approved, the amount you put on the Vendor Direct Payment Request form will be noted in your Allotment Tracking Form (accessible via Basecamp) and reflected in the running balance amount. Once the Vendor has invoiced us, the amount will be finalized in the running balance.

If the Vendor will be billing us on a quarter or semester basis for services, it all needs to be on one VDPR form, or you will need to submit separate VDPR forms.

The only time a VDPR is not currently needed is if you order items from Learning Essentials or Just Imagine Toys. This is because their Order, which you sign, serves as your VDPR form permission.

Once a Vendor is a Vendor with Totem, there is no need to renew yearly, unless if the Vendor Business License or information needs to be updated.

Totem maintains a Vendor List that shows which Vendors have already completed the required paperwork so that you may more easily use them as a Direct Pay Vendor.

We do not maintain an Approved Vendor List. Totem Correspondence will work with any vendor you choose (within reason and legal limits).

Direct Deposit

Totem Correspondence offers direct deposit for reimbursements to families. Each family may complete a Direct Deposit form and provide evidence of account (such as a voided check). Once entered into the Totem Correspondence accounting system, all subsequent reimbursement payments will be provided through direct deposit. This substantially shortens the reimbursement turn-around time.

Technology & Internet Access

Technology Equipment

Technology needs and preferences differ. If your student needs a device, you will have a choice on what computer/laptop/tablet + necessary equipment + warranty you purchase for the student.

- You will be reimbursed for these purchases up to 75% of your total student allotment.
- These purchases must be deducted entirely out of the student's allotment for the school year you purchase the item in. There is no splitting the cost between years.

- Equipment must be entirely purchased/reimbursed with allotment monies.
 - There can be no co-ownership of non-consumable items purchased with state monies.
- A new technology device should not have to be purchased every year for a student. Please plan to purchase a device that will last 3 or more years. Work with your Contact Teacher for specific instances and/or approvals of more often.
- Of course you do not need to use allotment monies for your technology needs.

It is highly recommended that you purchase a warranty for any products (these are also reimbursable).

- If any problems arise, your device will not be repaired or replaced by Totem Correspondence; that is the responsibility of the Parent/Home Educator.
- Additionally, Totem Correspondence does not offer or provide technical support for family purchased computers.

Internet

Internet needs can be different due to location throughout our state and services available and needed. For this reason, we work with our Totem Correspondence families individually to get you the internet access your student needs.

An option we provide our families is Unlimited MiFi through AT&T. If you choose this option, you choose and pay for the device from options provided to us by AT&T, and the monthly internet charge adjusts yearly. All charges will be deducted upfront from the designated student's allotment. To calculate months, the school year months are used (July – June), or starting with your first month of usage through June of that school year. If the device is returned before the end of the year, the unused monthly fees will be credited back to the designated student allotment account.

The MiFi device works like a cell phone for internet. It is not like a cable, modem, router, etc. Therefore, the speed, quality, or service will act at a lesser level than a specific cable, modem, or router. This is offered as an educational resource and there are some restrictions to make it CIPA compliant. It is offered at an unlimited usage amount. It is offered at a reduced price. We are aware that it is at times used as the only home internet, and we allow, and do not restrict, video streaming, gaming, etc. However, again, it is a MiFi device that is essentially cell phone internet. It may not support multiple devices operating at high speed or usage.

If you have a different internet choice that works for your family, you may submit reimbursements for your monthly fees. The only fees that are reimbursable are the ones directly related to internet- no cell phone charges may be reimbursed. These fees need to be easily distinguishable on receipts submitted.

Note that if you do not wish to use allotment monies for your internet service, you are not required to do so.

Enrollment

All the information and forms for enrollment may be found on our website under the Enrollment tab. The Checklist offers detailed information for each form. Please use this form to work through the Enrollment Process. If you need any help from Totem Correspondence, just let us know and we would be happy to help.

The Enrollment Packet consists of the following:

1. A one-page Enrollment document. This is needed on a yearly basis.
2. A Student's Records Release form. This is for new students, 1st grade or up.
3. The Parent Language Questionnaire. This is required each year by the State of Alaska.
4. A copy of the student's Birth Certificate. This is required the first enrollment year.
5. If your student plans on attending any Totem Correspondence events, they will either need a Vaccination Record on file, or a Medical or Religious Exemption form on file per State requirements. Both may need renewal on a yearly basis.
6. The Media Permission form is for permission to use (or not) your child's name, their picture (face), or work samples with name removed. This is needed on a yearly basis.

Optional/Special Population Enrollment Forms

7. If you use subsistence to support your family, then you might be eligible for additional support by filling out the Migrant Education Survey. This is needed on a yearly basis.
8. If your student is Alaska Native or American Indian, then you might be eligible for additional support by filling out the Title VII Student Eligibility Certification. This is needed on a yearly basis.

And finally, to support our programs

9. The Family Income Survey for Title 1 and E-Rate form is requested. It is related to state and federal programs that can provide additional supports and resources to HCSD, Totem Correspondence, and your student. This is needed on a yearly basis.

Enrollment Submission:

- Email: totem@hydaburg.k12.ak.us

Once your Enrollment packet is received and approved, Totem Correspondence will send an email verifying your student's enrollment and providing you with additional information. You will also receive an email from your Contact Teacher to set up an ILP Advisory Meeting. While you wait for this meeting, you may work on a Family Draft ILP if you wish.

Student Records and Transcripts

In compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, Totem Correspondence will obtain a signed release of records for the enrollment of students. Only required information will be included in any records request. Transcripts from previous educational institutions are necessary:

- to provide the contact teacher with information to enable quality support
- to place students in high school classes

- to ensure that dual-enrolled high school students are taking substantively different courses in each educational program

At Totem Correspondence, official and unofficial transcripts can be obtained by filling out the Transcript Request form on our website under Forms.

Enrollment Status

Totem Correspondence prefers Full-time enrollment. To be considered Full-time with Totem Correspondence, students must be enrolled in at least four core courses each semester. *See Core Courses*. Exceptions may be made for Seniors who have completed most of their coursework. The intent of this requirement is to ensure all students are being exposed to a well-rounded schedule and to help ensure our high school (9-12) students are aligned with graduation requirements.

Special Circumstances

Often, homeschool creates opportunities that are not otherwise available to students who are constrained by daily school schedules. The following are opportunities that are available.

Private Schools

Your student may concurrently enroll in Totem Correspondence as well as in a local private school and receive full funding. This type of Dual Enrollment requires that the student meet Totem Correspondence enrollment and reporting requirements.

Allotment funds may not be paid directly to the private school, but some costs can be reimbursed from your student's allotment.

Dual Enrollment

If your student would like to attend a course or two with your local public school, this is called Dual Enrollment. Dual Enrollment with another school/district is on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Totem Correspondence so we may assist you with this decision.

This usually means a shared enrollment status between schools; designated at a percentage. This will mean a reduced student allotment for the Totem student based on the enrollment percentage. This is not determined by Totem Correspondence; this depends on the other school's 'fee' for your student's enrollment with them.

The process for Dual Enrollment

1. Complete Enrollment Packet submitted with Totem.
2. Parents need to indicate and/or inform Totem of their desire for Dual Enrollment and provide a Statement of Intent.
 - a. At a minimum this should state: what classes being taken at the other school, which school, and who to contact at that school.
3. Administrative approval is needed to move forward.
4. Once initial approval is received, parents need to complete an ILP and Advisory Meeting with their Totem Contact Teacher.
5. Administrative Approval is needed for this to be finalized.

6. After this is done, the family is responsible to inform their Totem Contact Teacher of the classes/time the student is at the other school, and the other school is responsible to reach out to Totem Correspondence to make arrangements required by the State.
*Failure to do so will result in Totem claiming the student 100%.

*The Approval process for high school students may need a more detailed discussion with Totem Administration regarding credits, etc.

Recognizing the scope of opportunities available, Totem will work with you to support your family’s learning needs to the extent appropriate.

College Credit Courses

On a case-by-case basis, students may participate in college level classes and earn both high school and college credit. Reach out to your Totem Contact Teacher for specifics. Fees directly related to the course are reimbursable with allotment monies. Prior approval from Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher and Administration is required. If the student is under 18 years of age, the student’s parent or guardian must also sign the request.

Instruction

Totem Correspondence values many different learning modes and methods. To help our families with Instruction, from planning through assessment, we have provided some basic designations that can be useful as a guide. Additionally, it helps Totem Correspondence staff to know what to reimburse for, and what to expect as samples each quarter. Lastly, it is a great resource for our accountability to the State- showing the types of purposeful learning your student is involved in. You may utilize as many as applicable.

Instructional Methods

(Please see extended descriptions of each in Forms and on the Website.)

Traditional	Has defined objectives, standards, etc., incorporates presented lessons, exams, worksheets, etc. and utilizes workbooks, textbooks, etc.
Non-traditional	Has flexible guidelines, is interest based and led, and utilizes a variety of resources such as material to read, watch, listen to, etc.
Mixed	A combination of Traditional and Non-traditional.
Online	Uses technology mediums for online learning programs, classes, etc.
Print-based	Resources that are print-based, non-online.
Blended	A mixture of online and print-based learning.
PBLs	Project-based learning, Problem-based learning, Place-based learning, Play-based learning.
Project-based	Students acquire content knowledge and skills by investigating a topic in response to an authentic question or challenge. There is usually a result produced; a tangible ‘project.’

Problem-based	Students learn about subjects or topics by working to solve open-ended, real-world problems which do not have a set, defined solution.
Place-based	Students are immersed in local heritage, culture, landscape, opportunities and experiences as a foundation to their study and is done at a specific site or location.
Play-based	It is simply to learn through play. Free play is child-led, open-ended, internally motivated. Guided play- has adult involvement to embed or extend the additional learning opportunities within the play itself. Both can be to develop social skills and content area skills.

On your ILP, you will note which you will predominately use for each course on the ILP. Since this is the guide to the type of instruction you will provide, it also reflects the type of work samples you will provide quarterly.

For examples: If you mark Traditional only; then you need to provide proof of bookwork, writing, tests and quizzes. If you mark Place-based, then you can provide fieldtrip pictures, drawings, tracings of local flora, etc. Remember, this is a tool that is meant to be helpful to our families, and as always, reach out to your Contact Teacher for any additional guidance needed.

Individual Learning Plans (ILP)

An ILP is an educational learning plan for your student. It states what courses they will be involved in learning, length of learning, and what resources will be used. There is a comprehensive ILP form for grades K-12 on our website. Your Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher will assist you in completing this during the ILP Advisory Meeting. There is a Family Draft version you may work on prior to the Advisory Meeting with your Contact Teacher to finalize the ILP. There are detailed ILP Design Directions available as well.

- If you will want something ‘funded’, an item or service that will use State-funded allotment monies, it must be connected to a course listed on the ILP.
- If a course is listed on the ILP, it is expected that the student work towards that course on a consistent basis.
- If a course is listed on the ILP, the Parent/Home Educator will need to provide a grade, comment, and work sample for it on the Quarterly Progress Reports.

ILP Form

- a) This document covers K-12. Therefore, some elements will not apply to K-8.
- b) A minimum of 4 core courses/subjects needs to be attempted each semester.
- c) Course Name/Section gets determined with Totem Correspondence. (See Course Name/Section Determination, p 13)
- d) Code is determined by Totem Correspondence. (See Course Name/Section Column Determination, p 13)
- e) Credit is for High School grades 9-12 only.
 - i. If you want a full 1.0 credit earned all year, you put 1.0 and mark both semesters.
 - ii. If you want a half .5 credit earned all year, you enter .5 and choose one semester to report on that course.
 - iii. A full credit is considered a minimum of 120 hours of work, and a half credit is therefore a minimum of 60 hours of work. You do not need to track this specifically. It is an understanding, and many things can count towards work time.

- iv. A student may not earn a total of a .25 credit. If a .5 half credit is not achieved, it will become a 0 credit or the ILP may need to be amended if possible.
 - v. Any course on the ILP will have to be on the Progress Report for any Quarter or Semester designated
- f) Curriculum/Resource. It is recommended that you list the main resource (referred to as a core or a spine) that you will be using. You do not need to list all items you will be using throughout the year. The curriculum you list on your ILP are not the only sources you can use. You can always expand on those throughout the year. Adding “variety of resources as needed” with some examples like books, manipulatives, games, kits, memberships, field trips is also helpful.
- g) Instruction & Assessment (IA): See the full Instruction & Assessment table. There are 3 reasons for this area on the ILP: It is to serve as a guide for families, to help the school know what to reimburse for, and what to expect as samples each quarter, and for the State to have an idea of what type of learning your student is involved in. Use the codes provided on the ILP form. You may choose as many as applicable.
- *Note: Since this is the guide to what type of samples you will provide, if you mark Traditional only, then you need to provide proof of tests, etc. If you mark Place-based, then fieldtrip pictures suffice, etc.

ILP Amendments

We recognize that sometimes the best laid plans go awry. Student interest may wane, or a new interest may crop up. We want to honor those learning situations. However, we also must keep in mind the issue of accountability. ILP’s may be amended at the following times.

Elementary/Middle School (Grades K-8)	High School (Grades 9-12)
At the end of Quarters 1, 2 and 3.	End of Quarter 1 for Semester 1. Start of Semester 2 for Semester2. No ILP revisions can be made after the start of Semester 2.

- Amendments to an ILP must be approved by your Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher.
- Amendments usually cannot happen if a student has already used allotment monies (direct pay or reimbursement) towards a course. If allotment money has been spent on a course, it should remain on the ILP. This applies to grades K-12. Speak with your Contact Teacher for case-by-case situations.
- Amendments only need to be made if you are adding a course or dropping a course or changing credit units- not if you are changing resources.

Core Courses

As per State of Alaska Correspondence Regulations ([4 AAC 33.426](#)):

(a) A student enrolled in a correspondence study program, whether full-time or part-time, must take at least 50 percent of the student's coursework that the student takes through the correspondence study program in core courses. A student enrolled in more than two correspondence classes must take core courses in at least two different subject areas.

(b) A district may waive the requirement of (a) of this section if the district determines that the student is a senior and needs less than 50 percent of the student's curriculum in core courses to qualify for high school graduation from the correspondence study program in which the student is enrolled. A district shall waive the requirement of (a) of this section if the student obtained achievement levels that met standards in English language arts and mathematics as set out in 4 AAC 06.739(b) during the previous academic year. Revised 2/19/21

(c) Core course work performed outside the student's correspondence study program may not count towards the requirements set out under (a) of this section.

(d) In this section, "core course" means:

(1) A course of study in

(A) English;

(B) Mathematics;

(C) Social Studies;

(D) Science;

(E) Technology;

(F) World Languages; or

(2) A course required by a student's IEP if the student is receiving special education and related services under 4 AAC 52.

Dates and Timeframes

Students may enroll with Totem Correspondence at any point in the school year. However, to receive a full allotment, students must enroll with Totem Correspondence before October 1st of the current school year. The State sets the cut-off date each year. After that date, Totem Correspondence offers partial allotments. This is on a case-by case basis, depending on the exact date of completed enrollment. Typically, the available allotment monies decrease by ¼ each week after October 1st. See Allotment & Reimbursement table below. If you enroll at a time when there are no monies available, Totem Correspondence will certainly work with you to obtain educational resources.

- As a homeschool family, you can 'school' any time you want. However, the official correspondence school year is from July 1 – June 30.
- Totem Correspondence has a yearly calendar posted to their website.
- District Office at Hydaburg City School District is closed during the months of June and July.
- Your Totem Contact Teacher is available on a consistent basis all year.
- July 1st or later is the date needed on receipts for purchases for the upcoming/current school year. See the website for updated information.
- September 1st is when allotment reimbursements may begin being submitted and processed at the school and District Office level.
- There are other dated requirements: receipt submissions per semester, quarterly progress reports, etc. See the website for updated information.
- Enrollment may begin in March (at the start of the 4th quarter) for the upcoming school year.
- Totem Correspondence holds graduations and end-of-year events about the middle to end of May.

Specials

For grades K-8, non-core courses are referred to as Specials. A K-8 student may take up to 4 Specials each semester; none are required. There are no hour requirements for Specials. Specials are for your student to explore a range of interests. Possible Specials are: Art, Music, Cooking, Life Skills, Mechanics, basically anything that is not a core course. The intent of specials designation, without hourly requirements, is to help ensure students explore interests and skills beyond the core requirements.

Electives

For high school grades 9-12, Electives are anything that is outside of core courses and the required PE/Health and Technology (see Graduation Requirements). A high school (grade 9-12) student may take 2 electives per semester if the electives are for a full (1.0) credit each during the school year. Or, students may take up to 4 electives per semester if the electives are a half (.5) credit each during the school year. There may be a combination of half and full credit electives. See your Contact Teacher to work something out with approval; especially if you have an older high school student transferring in and need to account for graduation requirement differences. Totem Correspondence will always work with a student and family to best meet their needs. The intent of this requirement is to make sure students have enough time to do their studies and live life too.

Course Name/Section Determination

See your Contact Teacher or the Course Name/Section Determination document to determine the official course name that will be applied to your student's ILP, Report Cards, and Transcript.

Some Course Names can only be stated as such if a "canon" is being used as the main curriculum. A "canon" is not parent-designed, or a combination of a variety of supplemental resources. You can combine "canons", or use other resources to supplement the canon curriculum you choose.

Canon defined: An organizationally developed curriculum/program, accepted in the education field as comprehensive for that course.

The intent of our course naming structure is that when an educational institution sees the labels "British Literature", "Geometry", "Biology", "Psychology", etc. on a transcript, there is a certain content (knowledge base and skills set) that is assumed the student engaged in. This is what we want to uphold. Additionally, the structure helps provide a clearer, brief description of what was studied for students of all ages, which is especially important when transferring schools and during state audits.

- Which "canon" curriculum you choose is up to you.
- You do not have to use a canon; there are other Course Names that can be used.
- Or, if the course is fully unique, for example, a Totem approved, family designed course might be called, "Place-Based Biology in the Cook Inlet Basin".

See your Contact Teacher for as much assistance with this as you need; they are here to help!

Assessment & Evaluation

Totem Correspondence believes that assessment and evaluation are an important part of education. We also believe that there are many different types of valid assessments, and different ways to utilize them. Totem Correspondence can help you find assessments that fit your preference and family needs and that help measure and showcase your student's learning and progress over the year. Totem will always work with you to find what fits best for your family and student. Totem Correspondence does not require specific tests for grade level advancement.

Testing

The State of Alaska offers yearly assessments. We are required to offer, and provide or arrange, the testing for our students. Per State regulations, parents also have the option to opt out of testing. Assessment choice forms are available at enrollment and we may contact you regarding testing options during the school year as well.

There are many assessment options you may choose to use to meet your evaluation needs. Your Contact Teacher can support you in that effort. Some options that Totem offers and supports, and will contact you regarding, are: Kinder ADP, mClass, AK STAR and Science, STAR Renaissance, and MAPS Growth. More information on each of these can be found on our website under Resources.

Progress Reports

We strive to have Totem Progress Reports be simple documents, but also useful for you. Your Contact Teacher can help walk you through these! However, the Progress Reports do need to be generated and submitted by the Parent/Home Educator.

- Progress reports need to be filled out 4 times a year, based on Quarters (1, 2, 3, and 4).
 - Due dates will be posted on the website and calendar on a yearly basis.
 - Late Progress Reports are not accepted after a cut-off date. This is usually when Report Cards have been posted for that Quarter (typically about a week after the final due date). Your Contact Teacher will provide you with ample notification.
- Each course on your ILP needs to be accounted for on the Progress Report.
- Parents/Home Educators submit a recommended grade, a comment, and a work sample for each course on the ILP.
- If you want to write more comments than space allows for on the regular Progress Report document, there is another document you may use: PR Extended Comments.

Samples

At least one work sample needs to be provided for each course on your ILP and Progress Report each Quarter. Use your ILP for guidance. The description of what you are using as learning resources and what you listed as your instruction and assessment methods will guide the type of samples required. The options are endless! Remember, you are your student's primary educator. You know what they learned or did, and how best to showcase that.

Some Sample ideas: printed out summaries, vendor reports, quizzes/tests, worksheets/lessons, projects, photos, videos, portfolios, PowerPoints, podcasts, digital stories, essays, journal entries, drawings, paintings, completed crafts, slideshows, student created websites or blogs...there are so many cool options!

Only one sample is needed per course per quarter, however, many of our parents see the value of more and Totem Correspondence can provide our families with portfolio training or assistance. (That is a value of BaseCamp as well; it serves as a great electronic portfolio.)

Conferences

Parents/Home Educators also need to have quarterly conferences with your Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher. During this, the progress report and samples will be briefly discussed along with anything else you wish to discuss.

- Conferences can be via: Phone, Video conference (Zoom), or in person when possible.
- Due Dates for these conferences will be provided on our website and calendar on a yearly basis.

Non-compliance

Due to regulations placed on the school, it is imperative that you meet the required progress report due dates and requirements and that you communicate with your Contact Teacher in a timely manner.

Non-compliance of Progress Reports, Samples, or Conferences results in no grade being entered for grades K-8, or a Failing grade for high school grades 9-12, into the official database:

- If a grade or work sample is missing for a course on a Progress Report
- If a grade is submitted, but no work sample for it
- If a Parent/Home Educator does not participate in a quarterly conference

Depending on the situation, lack of meeting requirements may result in Administrative Withdrawal or denial of reimbursement or Vendor Direct Pay.

Totem Correspondence documents all contact attempts. If no contact with parents or student is documented after a quarter has passed, and no work samples or progress have been documented, Totem Correspondence reserves the right to send parents a letter stating that they have 10 days to comply with the requirements or they will be Administratively Withdrawn from the program.

If you are struggling in any way, please reach out to your Contact Teacher and they will assist you as much as they can.

Report Cards

Report Cards are generated each quarter. For K-8, all Report Cards will show each Quarter grade. For High School grades 9-12, Report Cards will show both Quarter grades, and then a Semester grade. A copy of the report card is kept in the student's digital BaseCamp file for families to access as needed.

Transcripts

Transcripts are pulled directly from the official database- PowerSchool.

For high school grades 9-12, it is important that Totem has all your transfer documents and requests completed at registration. There is a transcript for high school grades 9-12 that includes a chart of graduation requirements and progress.

Totem Correspondence also provides a historical records type of transcript for students in grades K-8.

Parents, or adult aged students, may request an official transcript and the form for that is available on our website.

Grading Scales

Grading can be a complex topic.

Sometimes, the data is easy to work with when there are strict, objective numbers such as a 9/10 = 90% = A.

However, there are also times when learning is more subjective in nature. Rubrics can greatly help with grading subjective assignments. Your Contact Teacher can help you with grading Rubrics.

Or, if a variety of resources are being utilized for a content area, combining them for an overall grade can be a challenge.

Grading can be based on what the student was exposed to and attempted during that period, not all of what may be thought they should know for their grade.

Again, your Contact Teacher can help you with this grading.

For Progress Reports, reference the charts below for Quarterly grades.

Required Grading K – 5	Required Grading 6-12+
A = Advanced P = Proficient D = Developing E = Emerging	A = 90-100% (Advanced) B = 80-89% (Proficient) C = 70-79% (Developing) D = 60-69% (Emerging) F = 0-59% I = Incomplete (finish within 30 days) WD = Withdrawal (no longer taking)

The information below is provided as guidance for overall grading. Feel free to reach out to your Contact Teacher for more assistance.

Grade	In the grading period time frame, a student has:
Advanced	Acquired almost all knowledge and skills that they were exposed to.
	Would be considered as Mastery.
	Would be able to teach content to others.
Proficient	Acquired majority of knowledge and skills that they were exposed to.
	Has achieved independent proficiency.
	Needs no further assistance.
Developing	Acquired some of knowledge and skills that they were exposed to.
	Is still working towards independent proficiency.

	Periodically needs assistance or review.
Emergent	Acquired minimal knowledge and skills that they were exposed to
	Just beginning to work towards independent proficiency
	Still needs consistent assistance and review.

For High School grades 9-12:

Withdraw, Incomplete or Failing grades are defined by progress and required reporting dates.

- A “W” is used if the student withdraws from a class before the end of that beginning quarter, and is still enrolled in school.
- A “W” is also used if the student withdraws from school before the end of the first quarter.
- An “F” is used if the student has not completed or reported on the required work.
- An “I” for incomplete work will be reported temporarily, but will turn to an “F” if the student withdraws or doesn’t complete the required work within the agreed upon time frame.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Totem Correspondence uses a 4.0 GPA scale.

- A = 4
- B = 3
- C = 2
- D = 1
- F = 0 (no credit awarded)
- P = 0 (no GPA points but does receive credit still)
- NP = 0 (no GPA point loss/no credit awarded)

High School Graduation Requirements

High School Credit

Students may earn more than the minimum credits needed to graduate. For example: they may earn more than 3 credits in Math or other topics. Once a student has earned the required credits in the 7 required areas, or is on track to do so, the student may also earn more than the minimum electives.

A student younger than 9th grade may be able to earn High School credit if they are taking a High School level course with an approved High School level canon curriculum. See your Contact Teacher for assistance and prior approval.

Graduation Requirements

Course	Credits
English	3
Math	4
Social Studies	2.5
Alaska Studies	0.5
Science	3



Health/Physical Education	2
Technology	2
Electives	5
Total	22

Graduation Progress Chart (9-12)

A personalized form to help plan and stay on track for high school and graduation is available from Totem Correspondence. It showcases the graduation requirements and enables Parents/Home Educators to track where the student is on the path to graduation. The form is available on the Totem website or from your Contact Teacher.

Graduation

Upon meeting the graduation requirements, your Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher will help set-up your student’s graduation event. An official diploma will be presented by a Totem Correspondence representative to your graduating student. Totem Correspondence makes every effort to do this in-person.

See your Contact Teacher for cap, gown, and tassel options.

Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS)

Please check the APS website [APS](#) for specific information. If your student is interested in the scholarship, they are required to take an assessment such as SAT, ACT, and/or WorkKeys. These tests are not always available through Totem Correspondence on site but there are other options available. There are very specific credit and course requirements that differ slightly from Totem Correspondence’s outlined Graduation Requirements. Totem Correspondence will help you navigate and plan for this scholarship if you wish.

Curriculum & Resources

Curriculum/Resources

Any curriculum that is aligned to a student’s ILP may be used. Faith-based materials may be used as well, however, they cannot be reimbursed by Totem Correspondence. Totem Correspondence does not have a list of approved curriculum; there are just too many good options available and every student is unique. Totem Correspondence strives to honor your wishes regarding the curriculum and resources you chose to use to support your student’s education. Totem Correspondence will help you as much as you need in finding curriculum and resources that empower the uniqueness of your student and family’s learning program. Curriculum or resources do not need to be at the same grade level your student is enrolled in. Resources can and should be based on ability level. This may affect the course title assigned.

Our website has a list of what Totem Correspondence families, in all their diversity, have chosen to use. Facebook has many support groups for finding curriculum. Cathy Duffy offers extensive curriculum reviews. Your Contact Teacher is always available to assist.

A basic list of resource examples: textbooks, workbooks, books, educational games, board games, manipulatives, courses, magazines, subscriptions, kits, units, art supplies/courses/lessons, music equipment/courses/lessons, physical education equipment/courses/lessons, technology equipment/supplies/apps, educational toys, movies, documentaries, videos, field trips, memberships, educational events, conferences, zoos, museums, testing fees and more.

Allotment & Reimbursement

Allotment

The allotment per student in grades K-12 is \$2,500 per school year. This is if enrollment is complete before the State cut-off date of October 1st each year. See the chart below for partial allotments.

Allotment	Before Oct. 1	1 week after	2 weeks after	3 weeks after
Amount	\$2500.00	\$1875.00	\$1250.00	\$625.00

This funding is managed for you by Totem Correspondence. You can withdraw it in the form of reimbursement for educational resources or services aligned to your student’s ILP that you already purchased, or by direct pay to approved Vendors for educational resources or services aligned to your student’s ILP. The primary requirement with allotment is that it must be aligned with the student’s educational plan listed on their ILP, and meet State requirements.

The allotment is available for use after the following criteria have been met:

- Completed Enrollment Packet for the appropriate school year
- Completed ILP & Advisory meeting with your Totem Correspondence Contact Teacher.
- It is after July 1st in the appropriate school year

We have several families with multiple children enrolled with Totem. However, Totem still tracks allotment monies on an individual student basis. The intent of allotment requirements is to ensure that each student has use of their allotted monies for their own education within that given school year. Each student has an Allotment Tracking Form.

Dates and Amounts

Our goal is also for your student’s allotment monies to benefit their education throughout the school year, for that given school year. With this in mind, there are some specific date and amount requirements we have, and also preferences we ask.

(Amounts provided are assuming your student has the full allotment amount.)

It is Totem’s preference that no single course utilize more than half of the overall allotment. If your student has the full allotment monies available, this means a single course would utilize up to \$1,250.00 of the overall allotment monies. Our goal is to help ensure that allotment monies are used to help with all aspects of a student’s education.

However, Totem Correspondence recognizes that extra-curricular courses can at times be more expensive than some curriculum, so we always consider requests on a case-by-case basis. Please contact your Totem Contact Teacher for written approval.

It is also Totem's preference that at least half of the overall allotment (\$1250.00) be used within the first semester, between July 1- December 31, and that the majority, if not all of it, be used by the end of March. Again, our goal is for your student's allotment to benefit their education throughout the school year, for that given school year.

Again, we only state this as a preference and ask for you to try to plan accordingly. To be sustainable, our program needs to be able to plan and budget accordingly. It is of course acceptable if you want to school during the summer; it simply requiring pre-planning. We can assist you with planning and budgeting, etc. at any time

Reimbursement Dates

Receipts dated from July 1 through December 31 need to be submitted by January 1st of the school year.

Receipts dated from January 1 through May 1 need to be submitted by May 15th of the school year.

Receipts with dates between May 2 and June 30 will not be reimbursed.

*Services (camps, lessons, etc.) can be pre-registered and paid for and submitted for reimbursement before the accounting deadlines.

*All services need to be completed by June 30. Services that are done in July will need to go under the next school year and follow those reimbursement requirements. (Mainly, receipt paid dates after July 1.)

You may begin submitting reimbursements to your Contact Teacher in August. Reimbursements begin being processed by Accounting after September 1 of a school year.

Totem Correspondence is not financially responsible for those unaware of the final dates for submitting reimbursement requests.

Non-Reimbursable Items

Per State regulations, there are types of resources that are unable to be purchased or reimbursed with state-funded monies. These are any resources that are "partisan, sectarian, or denominational doctrines", faith-based, or any materials deemed "discriminatory". Also, out-of-state and out-of-country travel or expenses are not reimbursable. (If a trip is planned, sponsored, and attended with the District or School, then parts of the trip can be reimbursable. See travel/Trip Expenses below.) Items that are shipped to an out-of-state address are not reimbursable.

Reimbursable Items

Anything that is aligned to a course on the student's ILP is reimbursable (if it is not excluded by the State; see above). Regulations specifically mention the following as reimbursable curriculum: "Textbooks, curriculum materials, school supplies, tutoring services, athletic equipment, and technology expenses." All materials purchased with allotment are the property of Totem Correspondence/HCSO and the State. If an item is purchased and reimbursed and then subsequently returned to the vendor/manufacturer, Totem Correspondence must be informed.

Travel/Trip Expenses

Totem Correspondence values learning experiences and opportunities of all kinds. We recognize that not all opportunities are available near a family's home, within local driving distance of our great State, or even within its boundaries! Many of our Totem families travel out of state and country for a variety of reasons. Totem supports the educational opportunities this can present. Totem Correspondence bears no liability for accident or injury during travel.

However, we do have to follow State regulations, have sustainable policies, and keep in line with our educational vision. The sole purpose and goal of any educational trip that may use allotment monies needs to be specifically for an educational event which is supported by a course described on the student's ILP. Always work with your Contact Teacher to help plan how requirements may be best met if allotment monies wish to be used for the trip.

Educational Trip Pre-Approval Form

All trips that reimbursements will be requested for need to have an Educational Trip Pre-Approval Form completed and approved Prior to the trip taking place or accumulating costs. This is submitted to your Contact Teacher to have a conversation regarding the trip. This is to make sure it is exactly understood what can be reimbursed, and what cannot.

The amount listed for the trip on your approval form will NOT be listed on your Allotment Tracking Form or be reflected in your running balance until you submit for Reimbursement. Only when you submit for reimbursement will the trip costs be reflected in your Allotment Tracking Forms running balance. Please budget and track accordingly on your end. The Approval form is only approving that you may submit those costs for reimbursement.

Out-of-state or out-of-country

If the trip is planned, sponsored, and attended with the District or School, then parts of the trip expenses may be reimbursable as determined by District Office. Chaperones, and their funding, are determined by the District.

If it is a trip with family or student only, not with the District or School, no part of the out-of-state or out-of-country trip expenses themselves are reimbursable.

Only Associated Fees may be reimbursable.

In-state

Trip expenses for in-state travel whose sole purpose and goal is for the educational event, and that supports a course on an ILP, may be reimbursable. Examples of trips could be: field trips to museums, zoos, etc., conferences, workshops, seminars, etc.

- If it is a multi- day event away from home base, then lodging expenses may be reimbursable.
 - Multi- day is determined on the events attending. One ‘major’ event equals one overnight. Work with your Contact Teacher for approvals.
 - Away from home-base is defined as 100 road miles away from home, or if need other transportation to get to the destination (fly, ferry, etc.)
- Airfare may be reimbursable for the student first, and then may be for an attending parent/guardian.
- Transportation/Gas and food costs are not reimbursable.
- Please remember as you budget, costs for any single course are preferred to only be a total maximum of half of the total allotment (\$1250).

Associated Fees

Fees associated with the trip that are always reimbursable are: registration, attendance, entrance fees, short term passes, etc.

Participants

For multi-family groups, where not all students have a parent/guardian attending: reimbursements of a parent/chaperone are at a ratio of 1 adult : 5 students.

All adults/chaperones to be funded/reimbursed by Totem Correspondence must be listed as a parent or guardian on student enrollment documentation.

Allotment reimbursements are usually for One attending adult per One student. If a family has two students enrolled, then we can reimburse for two adults- one adult for each student. If a family has one student enrolled, and two adults attend the trip, Totem will automatically reimburse for the one student and one attending adult

Reimbursement Submission Examples

If 2 students and 2 adults are on a receipt:

We can reimburse one student and one adult from one student’s allotment, and the other student and adult from the other allotment. These can all be on the same receipt.

To submit for reimbursement, you will need to fill out a separate Allotment Reimbursement Form for each student, submit the receipt, and submit in one email.

If 1 student and 2 adults are on a receipt:

We can reimburse the one student and one adult (even if the other adult is on the same receipt).

To submit for reimbursement, fill out an Allotment Reimbursement Form for the student, on the form put the amount for one student and one adult only, submit the full receipt, and submit in one email.

Reimbursement

If you have purchased a resource or service to help instruct a course on a student’s ILP, you may submit for reimbursement from the student’s allotment monies. There is an Allotment Reimbursement Form on our website. It is the parent’s responsibility to fill this out and submit it

with receipts. Totem Correspondence can help you do this the first time if you would like support.

All columns need to be completed. This form is for the Educational Approval. For the ILP course column, decide which course on your student's ILP it aligns too most. If it applies to all courses (internet, tech device, supplies, etc.), you may put "All." If there are several items on a receipt and it applies to several courses, please choose one.

The forms are limited to 5 different receipts. You may submit multiple forms but each form can only have five receipts. Please submit a form only if/when the total amount is above \$100.00. This does not apply if you are meeting submission deadlines. Please submit only one form and connected receipts in one email per student. If you have two forms for a student, submit in separate emails.

Receipts

Legible receipts are required to be submitted with the Allotment Reimbursement form to be eligible for reimbursement.

Receipt requirements:

- Vendor Name (purchased from/service provided by)
- Date of order/transaction
- Transaction/Invoice Number
- Amount Paid
 - All receipts need to be paid in US Dollars. If you paid in any other currency, it is not reimbursable.
- All invoices/receipts need to show Paid and by what method (cash, check, card).
- Receipts need to show that the items were: Purchased, Shipped, or Payment processed.
 - Order confirmations do not qualify as a receipt.
 - Curb side pickup paperwork does not qualify as a receipt.
- Receipts cannot be submitted in screenshot mode from a phone.
- Please save receipt files (as a pdf, etc.) and submit the entire document as a receipt.
- Receipts need to be clearly legible and/or copied or scanned in entirety- unclear or partial images will not be accepted.
- If a receipt is handwritten, the Vendor needs to sign the receipt and provide a contact phone number, and the other receipt requirements still apply.
- There needs to be a clear description of what was purchased (itemized, specific).
 - A code or unclear shorthand is not acceptable.
 - If a receipt is not clear on what the items were, then submit a picture of the items as well.
- Resources shipped to an out of state address cannot be reimbursed.
- Resources purchased out of state while on a pre-approved Educational Trip may be submitted for reimbursement.
- Avoid including personal items on the receipt or any other items that are not related to the reimbursement request because the entire receipt will not be reimbursable.

NOTE: Receipt issues will significantly hold up the reimbursement and prolong the time frame for payment.

NOTE: You will sometimes need to work with Vendors to ensure a receipt is produced that complies with Totem Correspondence guidelines. We cannot accept, “This is what the vendor gave me,” as a reason for receipt that does not meet guidelines.

Your Contact Teacher can help show you how to get the correct type of receipts (from Amazon, etc.).

Shared Receipts

If you have more than one student enrolled at Totem Correspondence, students may share a receipt with educational items on it.

Parents may mark on the receipt to indicate which items belong to which student. The receipt will need to be copied, because each student still needs their own Allotment Reimbursement Form submitted with their own receipt copy. All other receipt requirements still apply.

Or, parents may designate an even split of the receipt. Examples: in the case of a shared experience where there is no price difference for participants, or a shared resource, as long as students can equally use the items/experience. The receipt will need to be copied, because each student still needs their own Allotment Reimbursement Form submitted with their own receipt copy. All other receipt requirements still apply.

Shared Resources

Since we strive to have a family-based approach whenever possible, students and families can share the cost of family/joint resources more easily. Prior approval from your Contact Teacher is needed before making a Shared Resource purchase.

Items anticipated to be shared resources:

Mifi device and annual cost, monthly internet costs, shared technology devices such as Ipad, laptops, desktop computers, printers, whole school/bulk supplies like paper, ink, art, etc., some physical education equipment like trampoline, weights, etc.

This policy is not intended to apply to all resources. Prior approval from your Contact Teacher is needed before making a Shared Resource purchase.

If you wish students to share the cost of a shared resource, that receipt will need to be on its own Allotment Reimbursement Form. It cannot have other non-shared items on the Form with it. The cost will be divided and shared equally between all students in your family. Totem has the final decision on this. All shared resources still need to be aligned to each student’s ILP and students should be able to equally share the resource.

Receipt Copies

All receipts should be submitted electronically with the Allotment Reimbursement Form for faster processing.

Electronic receipts are the exact same when printed out as is the e-copy. (Example: Amazon). You do Not need to submit an additional copy after your original Allotment Reimbursement Form. You may simply submit it electronically with the Allotment Reimbursement Form. Remember, these need to be Invoices/Receipts/Orders showing Paid.

Personal receipts are from another person and is usually handwritten by them. (This is usually the case of buying used resources from other local homeschoolers.) The original receipt needs to be mailed to Totem Correspondence at some point before the end of the school year in May. First submit a copy of it electronically with the Allotment Reimbursement Form for faster processing. Additionally, a photograph of these items purchased personally from another person needs to be submitted with the Allotment Reimbursement Form. This may be submitted electronically and no additional copies need to be submitted. Each item does not have to be in its own image. (Example: a picture of the stack of books should suffice.)

Reimbursement Procedure

Email the completed form and receipts/receipt copies to: totem@hydaburg.k12.ak.us. Please remember to send one email per student with one Allotment Reimbursement Form and the corresponding receipts. Please remember the following:

- The Allotment Reimbursement Forms are limited to 5 receipts.
- You may submit multiple forms on the same day- in separate emails.
- You may submit a Form with only one receipt.
- Please submit a form only if/when the total amount is close to or above \$100.00.
- Please submit only one form and connected receipts in one email. If you have two forms- submit in separate emails.

Step	Description	Responsible	Process	Time
1	Form Submission	Parent	Parent fills out and submits Allotment Reimbursement form following all requirements.	
2	Educational Approval	Contact Teacher	Contact Teacher checks all items to ensure alignment with ILP. Allotment balance is reviewed to determine funding.	1 week
3	Allotment Tracking Updated	Contact Teacher	Allotment tracking form is updated to show Educational Approval and affect running balance.	
4	Notification	Contact Teacher	Parent notified that reimbursement request has been reviewed and approved or denied. Contact Teacher sends all files to Accounting.	
5	District Processing	Accounting	Accounting enters into the accounting system and notifies Contact Teacher.	1-2 weeks
6	Administrative Approval	Administration	Administration approves or denies, and signs.	

7	District Processing	Business Manager	The District Business Manager will review for correct coding and approve.	1-2 weeks
8	District Processing	District Accounting	District Accounting will print checks and mail, or if direct deposit, reimbursement will be posted to indicated bank account.	

If there are any issues with receipts, you will be notified to help resolve the situation. Note: receipt issues will significantly hold up the reimbursement and prolong the time frame. The reimbursement time frame is intended as a guide, what the District strives for. Unforeseen factors may affect this. If your reimbursement is taking longer, please contact your Contact Teacher. The majority of processing takes place by distance; occasional errors will be made. Totem Correspondence will work to correct the errors as quickly and efficiently as we are able.

Reimbursement Payment Options

Totem Correspondence families may elect to receive a check through the mail or direct deposit. Once a parent elects to use Direct Deposit form, all payments will be sent via this method. See Direct Deposit in Totem Services.

Printed checks: These take one week to be processed (printed and signed) and then are mailed out the following week. They are mailed to the address on file for you from the Enrollment Form and/or Allotment Reimbursement Form. In the accounting system, all subsequent payments will be sent to that address until you specifically indicate that it needs to be changed.

Direct Deposit: This method is recommended because it has a faster payment turn around period. The District makes every attempt to Direct Deposit for families who are set up this way. Follow the directions on the Direct Deposit Form. You will need to provide either a copy of a voided check (scanned copy acceptable), or provide a direct deposit print out from your bank. Deposit slips are not usable for this purpose.

Withdrawal

Students may withdraw from Totem Correspondence at any time during the school year by completing the Withdrawal Form found on our website. A withdrawal notification will be sent to the family. The withdrawal notification will indicate the following:

- Date of withdrawal.
- Date of last access to BaseCamp.
- List of non-consumable resources to be returned to Totem Correspondence. Parents might be financially liable for lost or damaged items.
- Notification that postage or shipping costs to return items to Totem Correspondence are the responsibility of the family.

- Notification that any reimbursement requests dated after the withdrawal date will not be reimbursed.
- Notification that final records will not be released until all obligations to Totem Correspondence are met.

A school/program you are transferring to will have you fill out a Records Request form of theirs. Please do so. They will submit this to Totem. We will fulfill this request when all Totem obligations regarding non-consumable items have been met.

Moving

If a student moves out of state or country, enrollment with Totem Correspondence will need to end.

If a student travels out of state or country during the school year for more than three months (1 quarter), it may constitute an official move out of Alaska. Speak with your Contact Teacher to discuss your individual situation.

Only Alaska residents are eligible to be enrolled in Totem Correspondence.

Keep in mind, resources shipped to an out of state address cannot be reimbursed. This includes online or vendor orders, etc. However, resources purchased out of state while on a pre-approved Educational Trip may be submitted for reimbursement.

Administrative Withdrawal

Students may be withdrawn administratively for lack of contact, progress, or failing to meet reporting requirements. Every effort is made by Totem to support our students and families as needed.

See non-compliance section.

Non re-enrollment

A student has until September 1 of a school year to re-enroll with Totem to maintain their enrollment status. If a student has not re-enrolled by that date, then the same policies as Withdrawal apply.

What happens to resources purchased or reimbursed with State monies when a student withdraws or does not re-enroll the next year with Totem?

Sometimes the answer depends on if the resource is considered a consumable or non-consumable.

Consumable means a resource is used and cannot be reused.

Non-consumable means a resource can be reused.

Consumable items do not have to be returned after one school year.

Examples of consumables are: workbooks, assembly kits, art supplies, classes, etc.

Non-consumable items that were purchased with state-funded allotment monies, or reimbursed from those monies, must be returned to, or bought back from, Totem Correspondence.

Examples of non-consumables are: textbooks, technology, computers, etc.

If you withdraw before October 1 of the same school year, all materials purchased or reimbursed with allotment monies (consumable or non-consumable) are required to be returned to Totem Correspondence. If a family wishes to keep materials, they are required to pay back the full expense of the materials to Totem Correspondence.

Only non-consumables purchased within a 3-school-year period must be returned. After the third full school year has passed, items do not have to be returned. Example: Purchased a curriculum set year in Year 1; after your third full year of enrollment with Totem Correspondence, that curriculum set does not have to be returned.

Non-consumable items may be assigned to another student within the family who is still enrolled with Totem Correspondence. If there is no student available, then revert to policy.

Totem Correspondence families do have a choice to purchase non-consumable materials back from Totem Correspondence if they wish to keep the materials instead of returning them. If this is the case, the following considerations apply:

- If withdrawal is at any point during the first year, then buy back is at the full expense of the material's reimbursed price.
- After each full school year, the buy-back price reduces by 33% of the reimbursed price.
- After the third full school year has passed, items do not have to be bought back.

Every student who withdraws, or does not re-enroll the next year by September 1, will receive a Non-Consumable Item Return form (NCIR form). This form will have the non-consumable items that allotment monies were used for within the past 3 year time frame. It will have the buy-back amount of these items. It will have a return or buy back deadline (typically 2-4 weeks).

Failure to return items or pay the buy back amount could result in: records not being released or further collection action deemed necessary by Administration at District Office.

Complaint Procedure

School board policy 1312 advises the public that the proper channeling of complaints involving personnel, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:

- 1) Teacher
- 2) Principal
- 3) Superintendent
- 4) School Board
- 5) Board of Education

To promote fair and constructive communication, the following procedures shall govern the resolution of complaints. Every effort should be made to resolve a complaint at the earliest possible stage. Complaints concerning school personnel should be made directly by the complainant to the person against whom the complaint is lodged. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attempt to orally resolve concerns with the staff member personally.

All written complaints regarding District personnel other than administrators shall be initially filed with the principal or immediate supervisor. If the complaint regards a principal or central office administrator, the written complaint shall be initially filed with the Superintendent or designee. If the written complaint concerns the Superintendent or designee, it shall be initially filed with the Board. If the complaint is also against the District, the principal or designee shall provide a copy of the complaint to the Superintendent, who is the designated District compliance officer, so that appropriate procedures may be followed. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally by the persons involved, the complainant may submit the complaint in writing to the school principal or immediate supervisor. When necessary, the District shall assist in the preparation of the written complaint so as to meet the requirements of this regulation. The administrative staff shall inform the complainant that such assistance is available if he/she is unable to prepare the written complaint without help. A written complaint must include the name of each employee involved and a brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it. It must also include a specific description of a prior attempt to discuss the complaint with the employee involved and the failure to resolve the matter.

The principal or immediate supervisor shall investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the person(s) involved. If the complaint is resolved, the principal will so advise all concerned parties, including the Superintendent or designee.

If the complaint remains unresolved after review by the principal or the immediate supervisor, the principal shall refer the written complaint, together with a report and analysis of the situation, to the Superintendent or designee. Complainants should consider and accept the Superintendent or designee's decision as final.

However, the complainant, the employee, or the Superintendent or designee may ask to address the School Board regarding the complaint. Except when a complaint is directed against the Superintendent, no party to a complaint may address the Board, either in closed or open session, unless the Board has received the Superintendent or designee's written report concerning the complaint.

Complaints before the Board concerning an employee that may tend to be prejudicial to the employee's reputation or character shall be addressed in executive session of the Board. All parties to a complaint, including the school administration, may be asked to attend a Board meeting or part of such meeting for the purpose of presenting all available evidence and allowing every opportunity for explaining and clarifying the issue. The decision of the Board following the hearing shall be final.