Our Vision

The Challenger Middle School community educates and empowers every child to excel academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. We model integrity, persistence, critical thinking, reflection, and communication. We accept individual differences to cultivate a sense of belonging. We rise to every challenge as we prepare for high school and beyond.

Challenger Middle School
10810 Parkdale Ave
San Diego, CA 92126
858-302-3000
challenger.sandiegounified.org

SDUSD Non-Discrimination Statement
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**History**
Challenger Middle School is named in honor of the space shuttle Challenger and her courageous crew which included the first “Teacher in Space”, Christa McAuliffe. The space shuttle crew perished on January 28, 1986 when the shuttle exploded during lift-off. The name “Challenger” captures the energy and the inspiration associated with a commitment to success. **It dares one to go beyond one’s limits, to have high expectations, and to touch the future.**

**Bell Schedule**
- Monday 8:15AM-2:05PM
- Tuesday-Friday 8:15 AM-3:05PM
- Minimum Days 8:15AM-1:15PM

**Backpacks and Lockers**
We do not have lockers for your books or personal belongings, so you will probably need something to carry your belongings like a backpack or rolling backpack. Gym lockers are available when you change clothes for physical education.

**Classes/Teachers**
You will have a different period and classroom for each subject. Between each period, you will have a 5 minute passing period to get to your next class. Don’t worry about finding your classes. We will have an orientation day before school starts where you will become more familiar with the campus.

**Counselors**
Just as your teachers are here to help you learn new information and to assist you in using that new knowledge, your counselors are here to provide you with added support. They will work with you in planning your school program and will assist you with problems if they arise during the school year. Parents/guardians may contact the counselors by emailing the counselor or calling the school.

**Library Media Center**
Challenger’s Library Media Center is open to all students for a variety of activities including borrowing books for reading and research. It usually opens for student use after textbook distribution is complete.

**Lunch**
You will get a new PIN on the first day of school. Challenger has two lunches. You will find out which lunch you will have when you receive your schedule. When you have eaten your lunch, you may sit with your friends, play basketball, or go to the library.

**PowerSchool Accounts**
Each student and parent/guardian will use the same account they used in elementary. Parents/guardians who need new accounts will be sent information about the second week of school. Please sign in regularly to check grades and attendance.

**Standardized Grading**
The San Diego Unified School District is transitioning to standards-based grading at the secondary level. More information will be provided in Challenger’s grading policy and in each teacher’s syllabi.

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Course Catalog - The purpose of this catalog is to provide students and parents with information needed to develop an appropriate educational plan. Please review this information and make course selections carefully since it may not be possible to change your schedule in the fall. The counselors will make every effort to place students in the courses selected on the program card, however, appropriate placement in core classes, balancing class size, and course eligibility will also be determining factors. All courses are subject to change without notice.

Challenger Middle School is organized under a middle school configuration. Content and performance standards will be planned, aligned, and implemented within courses and content areas. All students are required to take the classes listed at the right for the school year.

Advisory
Advisory class is a fifteen minute class where students can participate in school spirit activities, build a school community, learn self-management and study habits skills, academic and citizenship progress checks, and provide an opportunity for the school to distribute flyers and watch Challenger Television (CTV) to learn about school news, upcoming events, and CATS awards.

Science 6th – One Semester
This course is based on the CA NGSS and incorporates Earth Science, Life Science, Physical Science, and Engineering topics blended together within the school year. The course is phenomenon based and focuses on building students skills in the Science and Engineering Practices along with the Crosscutting Concepts of Systems and System Models, Patterns, and Cause and Effect.

Mathematics - While we ask for your placement preference on the course selection survey, other data such as grades, test scores, and teacher recommendations are also considered when determining placement.

• Math 6th
Math 6th is the first middle-level core math course that addresses the Common Core State Standards. Instruction focuses on (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole-number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing an understanding of division and fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, including negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing an understanding of statistical thinking.

• Accelerated Math 6th
Accelerated Math 6th is the first of two courses that begins an accelerated pathway that allows students to complete a three-year sequence of grade-level curriculum in two years. The course differs from the standard grade 6 math course (Math 6th) in that it addresses all of the grade 6 standards plus half of those from grade 7 (Math 7th) as outlined below, which demands a faster pace for instruction and learning.
\textbf{Physical Education 6th}

This course is intended to help students meet or exceed grade 6 physical education content standards 1–5 and the corresponding performance standards 1.1–5.5.

\textbf{Movement Focus}

- Manipulative skills: volley an object using a forearm pass; strike a ball with a paddle using a forehand and backhand movement; strike an object using a body part or implement in the intended direction; dribble/pass while guarded; throw an object with force using underhand, overhand and sidearm movements.
- Rhythmic skills: perform a folk and line dance; develop routines to music; identify rhythm patterns; explain aesthetic qualities of movement.
- Combinations of movement patterns and skills: combine all movement concepts in complex individual and group activities; combine motor skills to play lead-up or modified games; design and perform stunts, tumbling, and rhythmic patterns that utilize movement concepts.
- Movement concepts: explain biomechanical principles of force/angle; detect/correct movement errors; provide feedback to a partner; identify safe practices.

\textbf{Fitness Focus}

- Assess the 5 health-related components of fitness using state assessment tools; compare individual results; develop individual goals; participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity; measure and evaluate changes in physical fitness; monitor heart rate during activity; know effective warm-up and cool-down techniques; create a one-day fitness plan; identify contraindicated exercises; understand aerobic vs. anaerobic; know benefits of physical activity; maintain a food log.

\textbf{Social Focus}

- Self-responsibility: participate productively in group activities; evaluate individual responsibilities in group efforts.
- Social interaction: identify and define roles in cooperative activities.
- Group dynamics: identify and agree on a common goal; analyze possible solutions to movement problems and come to consensus.

\textbf{CMS Physical Education General Information -} Our goal is to enhance the quality and productivity of each student’s life through participation in our physical education program.

For the success and safety of your child, students are required to change into a physical education uniform to participate in daily class activities. Uniforms may be purchased at school or a store of your choice. The Challenger Physical Education uniform consists of a gray T-shirt, navy shorts, socks, and lace up athletic shoes.

We also encourage students to have a “subset” or “back-up” set of PE clothing, comparable to the PE uniform. This set consists of a gray t-shirt and navy blue shorts, or sweats. There should be no logos, hoods, zippers, pockets, or buttons. This set is used in the event the PE uniform is misplaced or forgotten.

If you choose to purchase the clothing and/or lock at Challenger, the information for purchasing items for the new school year will be posted on the school’s website. Students may also purchase the clothing during the first week of school and throughout the school year if needed.

Students will be assigned a basket in the locker section to store uniforms and towels. Students are encouraged to bring combination lock to secure their belongings. All students are encouraged to shower after activities. Private showers are available for those with special needs. We are looking forward to working as a team with you and your student.
Placement Guide: Common Core or Advanced

At Challenger Middle School, we have two levels of classes in English and history (social sciences): Common Core and Advanced. Common Core classes provide a rigorous curriculum that meet the needs of the majority of students. Students who are very interested in or excel in one or more of these subjects, are encouraged to select Advanced. Both levels will prepare students for an opportunity to participate in Honors/AP at the high school.

Parents have often asked which placement is best for their student. This guide is meant to help direct you to make the best choice to support your student. Middle school represents foundational skill building and appropriate placement is essential.

Please take the time to review the following descriptions with your student to make an informed decision about placement. As a reminder, Common Core and Advanced classes are not whole programs - it is likely your child will consider an Advanced class the appropriate placement for one subject, but not another subject. Rarely are students passionate about all subject areas. Your student’s counselor is available to help guide your decision-making around Common Core and Advanced classes. In addition, your student’s current teacher is a resource to help guide your thinking. Changes to placement after the school year begins is dependent on space and might not be possible.

### English, Social Studies

- Reads outside of school with the prompting of a parent
- Does writing assignments when assigned in class
- May take notes on a consistent basis in the classroom
- Has emerging organizational skills
- Talks casually about literature/history/science outside of the classroom
- Appreciates a moderate pace that allows for review
- Enjoys teacher-facilitated discussion in the classroom
- Is directed learners who find joy in exploring inside of the classroom

### Advanced English, Advanced Social Studies

- Reads for enjoyment often outside of school.
- Writes in their free time as a form of recreation
- Understands how to take notes and follow directions without prompting
- Has well developed organizational skills.
- Talks analytically about literature/history/science outside of the classroom
- Appreciates an accelerated pace and workload in and outside of the classroom
- Enjoys leading discussions within the classroom
- Is a self-directed learner who finds joy in exploring more outside of the classroom

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**English 6th**
Instruction in each unit of study integrates reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language study. Students are provided with multiple opportunities to engage in academic discourse as they question, interpret, analyze, extend, and evaluate others’ ideas. The goal of instruction is to support students in becoming independent, strategic, critical readers, writers, listeners, and speakers who communicate effectively in various forms, for various purposes, and for various audiences. Students engage in standards-based lessons that are scaffolded to support a range of reading/writing levels.

**Advanced English 6th**
Advanced English in the 6th grade guides students to engage in a critical study of their identity as readers and writers and how their literacy based experiences have shaped them as a community. They will also read widely to learn how to critique society and to use writing as a tool for entering the world of reflection, storytelling, argument, poetry, and the essay. Additionally, students will study the etymology of English as it appears in today’s words and the ways that authors develop a command of grammar to better articulate their meaning and to reach their intended audience. The ultimate goal being to challenge and encourage each student to develop a passion for learning.

The Common Core State Standards for ELA in CA are used in planning as well as the Social Justice Standards from Teaching Tolerance and The CA Department of Education’s Technology Standards. Students who choose to take the advanced course should be prepared to be challenged by reading widely and thoroughly as well as contributing critical thinking through writing.

**Social Studies 6th** – One Semester
World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations – Students learn about early humankind and the development of human Societies, the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush, the ancient Israelites (Hebrews), ancient Greece, the early civilizations of India and China, and the development of Rome. Students grapple with geography, environmental issues, political systems and power structures, and civic engagement with fundamental ideas about citizenship, freedom, morality, and law.

Students practice history as an interpretative discipline. They read written primary and secondary sources, investigate visual primary sources, and learn how to analyze multiple points of view, cite evidence from sources, and make claims based on that evidence in writing and speaking.

**Advanced Social Studies 6th** – One Semester
Advanced History-Social Studies 6 is a rigorous course that has students explore in-depth case studies of different ancient societies to identify patterns that span the scope of time and region. Students will work with abstract and complex themes. Discussions will center around the various ancient civilizations and how their society was structured, diffusion of ideas, and changes and continuities still observed in today’s world. Students will articulate their learning in a range of diverse and innovative assignments assuming different mediums. This course studies ancient times to classical antiquity. Instruction for advanced learners will have greater depth and complexity. Opportunities to engage with appropriately challenging text and content, problem-solving, conduct research, use technology creatively, and write regularly on topics that interest them can be especially valuable for advanced learners. Strategic thinking and extended learning allow students to engage more deeply with content and may lead to global citizenship.

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Elective Courses

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Art Grade 6
In this course, all elements of art are identified in relationship to the principles of design (especially balance), theme, genre, style, and chosen media to analyze and interpret works of art. This course offers opportunities to practice and refine acquired observational drawing skills (gesture, contour, and rendering), painting, printmaking, fiber, and sculptural skills. Experience in single-point perspective is refined and extended when two-point perspective is introduced. The use of individual sketchbook/journals continues as students solve-art making problems, including visual metaphors. Researching visual art and its role in ancient cultures provides students an opportunity to share representative images, symbols, unique use of the elements of art, and their own reflective works of art in a portfolio, exhibition, or presentation.

(ASB) Associated Student Body/Student Government
(Application with teacher recommendation is required. On the course selection survey, make this class your #1 choice if you really would like to take this course.) This course affords student body members experience as student leaders. Through guidance, training, experience planning, organizing, and executing a variety of school activities, community service projects, and practical experiences in student leadership, these students will grow as leaders of their school and community. Selected students must maintain high academic and citizenship grades. ASB Application: https://bit.ly/3xmj1CS

Chorus
Students will be placed by the Choir teacher in one of the two levels based on the student’s experience.
- **Beginning Chorus** - This standards-based course provides instruction in the basic principles of musicianship and promotes familiarity with standard vocal literature. Students will learn musical notation and terminology and develop proper singing tone and vocal technique in an ensemble setting while performing a variety of choral repertoire.
- **Intermediate Chorus** - This standards-based course is offered to students who have completed Beginning Chorus or who have equivalent study and experience. Students will learn more complex musical notation and terminology and develop increased expertise in proper singing tone and vocal technique in an ensemble setting while performing a variety of choral repertoire.

Exploratory Wheel
The Exploratory Wheel is designed to give sixth grade students the opportunity to sample a variety of course contents and experiences. Students will spend a few weeks on one topic then rotate on the Exploratory Wheel to the next subject.

Yearbook (Publications)
(Application with teacher recommendation is required. On the course selection survey, make this class your #1 choice if you really would like to take this course.) This course provides specialized training in production work associated with publishing the school yearbook. Students plan, produce and handle all of the projects necessary for the school yearbook. Students will take pictures and edit pictures on the computer. Students will design layouts, produce copy, and proofread the pages of the yearbook using an online website. Yearbook Application: https://bit.ly/3EcfyBc

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Instrumental Music Program

Music is for every student! Challenger Middle School is a strong supporter of music in the schools. Courses in Orchestra and Band are offered contingent primarily upon student enrollment, and secondarily upon ability level, as determined by the Director. Challenger will include as many students as have signed up for music classes, but as with other electives, students may not receive their first choice.

Students who wish to begin instruction, or whose experience in music may be limited, will likely be placed in Beginning-level classes. Students with prior experience in music at the Elementary level, or who last year completed a Beginning-level class at the Middle School level, will likely be placed in Intermediate-level classes. Students with extensive prior experience in music, including completion of an Intermediate-level class at the Middle School level, will likely be placed in Advanced-level classes.

Emphasis of instruction is placed on developing expression through body and instrument (where applicable), producing a superior tone on the instrument or voice, developing aural skills such as intonation and balance within the ensemble, reading and performing music notation, acquiring confidence in sight-reading, and, if applicable, learning new skills with other instruments of the string orchestra or concert band. Each ensemble will participate in at least four school concerts throughout the year, and Advanced-level ensembles may participate in Performance Trips as well.

Advanced ensembles will also prepare for frequent performances of the most challenging musical repertoire at the middle school level. Selected wind, brass, and percussion students may be called upon to supplement the string orchestra, creating a full orchestra experience for all involved. Advanced musicians are also eligible to participate in the after-school Jazz Band.

The Instrumental Music Director will determine the correct course placement for students in one of the following classes:

- **Beginning Band** - This course provides instruction in the basic principles of musicianship and familiarity with standard band literature. Students will learn to play a standard band instrument in an ensemble setting. The focus will be to learn to read and understand the language of music.

- **Intermediate Band** - This course is offered to students who have completed Band 5th–8th Beginning or who have had equivalent study and experience. Students will further their expertise on their chosen band instrument in an ensemble setting, learning more complex musical notation, rhythms, and terminology.

- **Advanced Band** - This course is offered to students who have completed Band 6th–8th Intermediate or who have had equivalent study and experience. Students will learn and play advanced band literature in an ensemble setting with technical skill and musical knowledge and sensitivity. Students in this course will present more frequent public performances.

- **Beginning Band** - This course provides instruction in the basic principles of musicianship and promotes familiarity with standard orchestral literature. Students will learn to play a standard instrument of the orchestra in an ensemble setting and to read and understand the language of music.

- **Intermediate Band** - This course is offered to students who have completed Orchestra 5th–8th Beginning or who have equivalent study and experience. Students will further their expertise on their chosen instrument in an ensemble setting, learning more complex musical notation, rhythms, and terminology.

- **Advanced Band** - This course is offered to students who have completed Orchestra 5th–8th Intermediate or who have equivalent study and experience. Students will learn and play advanced orchestra literature in an ensemble setting with technical skill and musical knowledge and sensitivity. Students in this course will present more frequent public performances.

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Educational Support Programs

English Language Development - All English Learners enrolled in secondary schools are placed into a designated ELD (dELD) course, either ELD or ELD/ALD, in addition to a grade-level English course. Course placement is based on each student’s English proficiency level as determined by the Initial or Summative ELPAC (English Language Proficiency Assessment for California) and the number of years enrolled in a U.S. school.

- The English Language Development (ELD) course sequence (which includes ELD w/(ALD) is designed to develop academic language proficiency in English while simultaneously mastering grade level academic content in order to reclassify. It also attends to the particular English development language needs of At Risk or Long Term English Learners to promote high levels of English language proficiency. ELD instruction supports students as they progress through the levels of language proficiency: emerging, expanding, and bridging.

The English language proficiency assessment for California is the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). At the middle and high school levels (Grades 6-12), English learners are assessed to determine their levels of English language proficiency and placed in ELD courses designed to help them develop grade level academic language.

- (ELD w/ ALD) English Language Development with Academic Language Development - This course is a two semester elective course that targets the linguistic and academic needs of English Learners, At Risk English Learners (ARELs) or Long-Term English Learners (LTELS) who have not attained the levels of English and academic proficiency necessary to succeed in standards-based coursework and meet the criteria towards reclassification. This course addresses the CA English Language Development Standards in tandem with the Common Core English Language Arts Standards for reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language, with the predominant focus being on academic oral language development, accelerated academic vocabulary acquisition, expository writing and reading comprehension.

Special Education Program (IEP Required) - Support-service courses assist students in the functional-skills, applied-skills, multilevel, and general curricula. Each student’s needs, as indicated on his or her IEP, determine that student’s placement in support-service courses. Mastery of support-service course content is assessed through standards or outcomes and/or the IEP process.

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