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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All courses are subject to change without notice. Student’s first choice of elective is not guaranteed.

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.

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.

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 8th
Math 8th is the third and culminating middle-level core math course. Instruction focuses on the study of expressions and equations, functions, and two- and three-dimensional figures. Students apply concepts they have learned previously to increasingly complex and abstract problems that model real-world math challenges. The course lays the groundwork for students to master higher-level high school mathematics.
**Integrated Math I Advanced** - Integrated Math I Advanced is the first course in the accelerated integrated math pathway. The course includes the content of the standard Integrated Math I course (see below for Integrated Math I A-B) plus an additional two units that will provide opportunities for students to begin working with the + (plus) Common Core State Standards.

Integrated Math I A-B is the first of three high school-level courses that integrate the content of algebra, geometry, and intermediate algebra, as defined by the Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools, under the Common Core State Standards. This course formalizes and extends the mathematics that students learned in middle school.

**Science**
Eighth grade science is a year-long course that is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). It is an integrated course which includes topics such as energy and waves, astronomy, the history of life on Earth, heredity, human impacts on the Earth, and forces & motion. Engineering design and practice is a large part of the curriculum with an emphasis of inquiry- and project-based instruction. Students will complete several engineering projects (STEM) in which they will explore, apply, and expand upon their knowledge of the concepts learned in class.

**Physical Education**
This course is intended to help students meet or exceed grade 8 physical education content standards 1–5 and the corresponding performance standards 1.1–5.7.

**Movement Focus**
- Rhythmic skills: identify and demonstrate square dance steps, positions, and patterns to music; create and perform a square dance.
- Combinations of movement patterns and skills: demonstrate basic offensive and defensive skills and strategies in team activities; apply locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills to team activities; demonstrate fundamental gymnastic/tumbling skills; create and perform a routine using speed, direction and level.
- Movement concepts: explain transfer of learning, rotation principles, and human growth factors.

**Fitness Focus**
- Assess the five health-related components of fitness using state fitness assessment tools; refine fitness goals; develop a two-week fitness plan including five components of fitness, warm-up, cool-down and principles of exercise; participate in moderate to vigorous activity four days per week; identify and perform (1) appropriate activities for inclement weather, (2) ways to increase daily physical activity, (3) basic weight/resistance training principles, and (4) safety practices; explain effects of nutrition and physical activity on weight control, self-concept, and physical performance; explain different types of conditioning.

**Social Focus**
- Self-responsibility: respect officials; appreciate opponents; organize and work cooperatively in a group; identify preferences for lifelong physical activity.
- Social interaction: identify group contributions; reward team members.
- Group dynamics: accept roles of group members; describe leadership roles; support all ability levels.

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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, U.S. History**

- 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, U.S. History**

- 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 8th**
This course consists of instruction in reading literature, writing essays, and completing research projects and oral presentations. Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and critical thinking skills are taught throughout the units of study. Students will read a variety of short stories, novels, drama, poetry, informational, and argumentative texts. Comprehension and critical thinking skills are modeled in class and students engage in literary analysis throughout the year. Students are expected to participate daily in classroom discussions. This program is aligned with the Common Core State Standards and prepares students for the rigors of high school.

**Advanced English 8th**
This course focuses on teaching highly motivated students the skills and strategies of becoming proficient and thoughtful readers and writers. Instruction includes reading, writing, oral communication, and language study through the use of standards-based lessons. Advanced classes will cover the core curriculum and provide opportunities for differentiated study in literature and writing, in-depth research, student inquiry and class discussions. Students will have increased opportunities for creativity and independence in assignment choices. Students are expected to produce high quality work that reflects critical and abstract thinking and a deeper, insightful understanding of texts.

**U.S. History and Geography 8th**
This required course examines the sequence of historical and geographic developments in the United States from 1789 - 1914. Students examine important periods of United States history, such as the forming of the nation's identity and the development of the Constitution, westward expansion, the rising conflict and consequences of the Civil War, and the industrialization of the United States. Students research the issues, attitudes, points of view, and motives that helped shape the United States and define American citizenship.

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 U.S. History and Geography 8th**
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. Advanced History-Social Studies 8 provides an opportunity for students to explore, with depth and intensity, the process of nation building, encompassing the major ideas, issues and events, and their respective consequences. In their study of this era, students will view American history through the lens of people who were trying—and are still trying—to fulfill the promise of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Students will confront differing perspectives on freedom, equality, and liberty in addition to identifying how those definitions have changed over time. This course will analyze the conflicts that developed during the founding, growth, and expansion of the nation; including the examination of influential people and their lasting impressions.

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**Elective Courses**

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*Student’s first choice of elective is not guaranteed.*

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**Art 8th**

In the course, students synthesize their knowledge of the elements of art and principles of design to expand their personal expression and visual communication skills in drawing, painting, sculpture, and electronic media (where available). Students are encouraged to take risks by exploring works of contemporary art, identifying issues of importance, and creating original works of art that express their ideas and feelings on the issue. Students collaborate on at least one artistic investigation that communicates a theme and is designed for the public. Individual sketchbook/journals document research and planning of a series of works of art based on a single theme. As students explore contemporary art in the neighborhood or city, they are introduced to regional careers in visual art.

**(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.

**GTT: Engineering II**

Gateway to Technology (GTT) Engineering II is a year-long course and is part of the middle school program for Project Lead the Way (PLTW). This year-long course is designed to build upon the knowledge and skills gained from Intro. to Engineering and/or GTT Engineering I and to further prepare those who are planning to enroll in PLTW engineering courses in high school. It is a problem-solving, project-based class designed to nurture skills in collaboration, communication, critical thinking, the iterative design process, and STEM.

**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.

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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.

**Introduction to Video Production & GTT: Engineering I**

Students will have one semester of Introduction to Video Production and one semester of GTT: Engineering I.

- Introduction to Video Production introduces students to the operation of video and computer equipment and program production. Instruction emphasizes scriptwriting, equipment operation, and production techniques. Career orientation is also emphasized. The course serves as an orientation and introduction to the high school video production courses.

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• Gateway to Technology (GTT) Engineering I is part of the middle school program for Project Lead the Way (PLTW). It is designed to introduce middle school students to the field of engineering and provide a foundation for students who plan to enroll in PLTW engineering courses in high school. This semester-long course engages students in a project-based STEM curriculum to not only build knowledge, but also empower students to develop essential skills such as problem solving, critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and perseverance.

Design and Modeling is part of the Gateway to Technology (GTT) middle school program for Project Lead the Way (PLTW) which is designed to introduce middle school students to the field of engineering and provide a foundation for students who plan to enroll in PLTW engineering courses in high school. It is a project-oriented class designed to nurture skills in collaboration, team work, while applying math, science, and technology. Students discover the design process and develop an understanding of the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives.

**Introduction to Video Production: Broadcasting**
This year-long course takes the next step in introducing students to the operation of video and computer equipment and program production. Instruction emphasizes scriptwriting, equipment operation, and production techniques with the goal of preparing and presenting reports in a broadcast environment. Career orientation is also emphasized. The course serves as an orientation and introduction to the high school video production courses (Teacher approval required: Put this course as your first choice. The teacher will receive a list of student names to approve.)

**World Language Courses**
The courses described in this section are designed to help students learn to communicate effectively in a world language. Major emphasis is placed on developing students’ ability to comprehend what they hear and read and to express their thoughts orally and in writing. In addition to developing their communication skills, students will develop an awareness of and appreciation for other cultures.

The world languages instructional program is designed to help students:

- Understand an educated fluent speaker conversing about topics of general interest and speaking in such media as news broadcasts, plays, movies, and telecasts.
- Speak fluently and comprehensibly on a range of topics.
- Understand directly, without translating, the content of nontechnical writing, selected works of literature, and articles of general interest from periodicals.
- Write comprehensibly for formal and informal purposes.
- Develop awareness of the cultures of people speaking the world languages.

Each of the world language courses is a high school level academic course designed to fulfill the one year of the two year world language requirement for high school graduation. Each course will also fulfill one year of the two year world language requirement for a four-year California public university. Students must complete and earn a “C” grade in a 1-2 class before taking a 3-4 class.

**Filipino 1-2**
This functions-based, introductory course is open to all students who wish to begin the study of Filipino language and cultures. It is intended to develop novice to mid-novice oral-language proficiency as well as limited facility in reading and writing. Major emphasis is on the development of listening and speaking abilities at the novice level with reasonably accurate pronunciation and intonation. Programmed instruction and technology, under the direction of the Filipino teacher, may be used to facilitate instruction and language practice. The course is not designed for students who are fluent or nearly fluent in Filipino as evidenced by an informal primary language assessment or other language assessments. It is recommended that fluent or nearly fluent students enroll in a higher-level Filipino course.

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• **Filipino 3-4**
  (Requires "C" grade or better in Filipino 1-2 or a score of proficiency on the Filipino language placement exam. and/or recommendation of teacher and/or counselor.) - This functions-based course is designed for students who have successfully completed Filipino 1-2. It is a continuation of the introductory course and is intended to consolidate students’ listening and speaking skills at the mid-novice level, with bridging opportunities to high novice. Reading receives increased attention, although the primary emphasis remains the development of oral-language proficiency. Programmed instruction and technology, under the direction of the Filipino teacher, may be used to facilitate instruction and language practice. The course is not designed for students who are fluent or nearly fluent in Filipino as evidenced by an informal primary language assessment or other language assessments. It is recommended that fluent or nearly fluent students enroll in a higher-level Filipino course if offered.

• **Spanish 1-2**
  This functions-based, introductory course is open to all students who wish to begin the study of Spanish language and cultures. It is intended to develop novice to mid-novice oral-language proficiency as well as limited facility in reading and writing. Major emphasis is on the development of listening and speaking abilities at the novice level with reasonably accurate pronunciation and intonation. Programmed instruction and technology, under the direction of the Spanish teacher, may be used to facilitate instruction and language practice. The course is not designed for students who are fluent or nearly fluent in Spanish. It is recommended that fluent or nearly fluent students enroll in a Spanish for Spanish Speakers course or a higher-level Spanish course. Students will receive credit towards their foreign language high school graduation requirement.

• **Spanish 3-4**
  (Requires "C" grade or better in Spanish 1-2 or a score of proficiency on the Spanish language placement exam. and/or recommendation of teacher and/or counselor.) - This functions-based course is designed for students who have successfully completed Spanish 1-2. It is a continuation of the introductory course and is intended to consolidate students’ listening and speaking skills at the mid-novice level, with bridging opportunities to high novice. Reading receives increased attention, although the primary emphasis remains the development of oral-language proficiency. Programmed instruction and technology, under the direction of the Spanish teacher, may be used to facilitate instruction and language practice. The course is not designed for students who are fluent or nearly fluent in Spanish as evidenced by the Spanish I.P.T. or other language assessments. It is recommended that fluent or nearly fluent students enroll in a Spanish for Spanish Speakers course or a higher-level Spanish course.

**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/3EcYBc
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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.