



2023-24
Parent/Scholar Handbook

GRADES 6-8

1520 CENTRAL AVENUE

FAR ROCKAWAY, NY 11691

(347) 699-7602

WWW.CHALLENGECHARTERSCHOOLS.ORG

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Founder/CEO's Welcome

Dear Middle School Scholars and Families,

On behalf of our Board of Trustees, Leadership Team, Staff and Teachers, welcome to the 2023-24 school year!

Parents & guardians, we understand how hard the middle school years can be. I encourage you as family members to stay involved even as your student gains more independence. When you show up and support your child, it boosts their success.

Scholars, please carefully read this handbook. We expect you to maintain attention to academics and good citizenship throughout the school year. The policies set forth help to protect you, your fellow scholars, our teachers, and staff.

Families, thank you for helping us in the great endeavor of preparing your child for the future. Scholars, remember you have the power to help make this year great.

Sincerely,



Rev. Dr. Les Mullings
Founder/CEO

#CheetahFierce!

Principal's Welcome

Dear Parents/Guardians and Scholars,

My name is Gasner Vil, and I am greatly pleased to be part of the Challenge Charter School family and serve as the Middle School Principal. Our school community is recognized for its dedicated and talented staff members, who are committed to doing what is best for our scholars. We will continue to put scholars first at CCMS and work diligently to ensure their success.

My professional background is rooted in education and leadership. I was born and raised on the beautiful Island of Haiti, where I taught Mathematics for over ten years. In December 2017, I accepted a Math Teaching Assistant position at Challenge Charter Middle School, beginning my teaching career here in 8th grade Mathematics and Algebra. Since then, I have been in love with the organization and the community.

In the 2021-2022 school year, I served as the Math Instructional Coach for grades 6-10, freshly minted as a credentialed Certified Masters Math Education Teacher from New York Institute of Technology (NYIT). That same year, I was afforded the opportunity by Challenge to undergo training and professional development as a cohort member of TNTP Leaders--a national organization known for developing upcoming leaders in education with a focus on Charter School Leadership. Currently, I am working on the completion of a dual masters and advanced certificate in school leadership at the building and district level at St. John's University. Last year, I served as the Assistant Principal for grades 6-8 and Math Coach for 6-11.

Aside from my professional achievements, my family is my greatest accomplishment. Thank you for the love and support of my wife, who is a medical provider and a mother of two amazing boys, Jason (11) and Shiloh (3). As a parent, I always want what is best for my children and I will work tirelessly to ensure that *your* children have the best possible experience at Challenge Charter Middle School.

This summer I work closely with Principal Gordon, Dr. Lyle, and the leadership team to ensure our smooth transition and I will continue to work under Principal Gordon's leadership to ensure our school's success. I am committed to embracing the positive traditions and practices that are already in place at CCMS and I believe all children at CCMS will continue to receive a first class education as our mission statement states. As a team, we can help our children excel and provide them with an education that is second to none.

Having understood the work and the mandate of this work from Ms. Gordon. As the Principal and the Senior Director for Secondary Teaching and Learning, she has invited the leadership team and now our scholars and parents to journey under this banner: **Upholding the tenets of Authentic Compliance to continue developing Student Agency and promote College and Career Readiness.** This theme encompasses our past work and continuing efforts to serve our scholars, families, and the Far Rockaway

community at large.

I am honored and humbled to serve as the new principal for Challenge Charter Middle School and look forward to meeting our children, teachers, parents, and the community members. Challenge Charter School has an open door policy, and I will continue in the same way. My door will always be opened to you, and I sincerely welcome your support. I am excited about all we will accomplish together for our children in Far Rockaway and look forward to celebrating our collective success this school year. Let Challenge Charter Middle School reflect the vision of our CEO Dr. Mullings for the community.

Though heavy is the responsibility, we know that the task remains achievable when we have our scholars repeat the mantra: **Teach Me. Prepare Me. Challenge Me.**

In Authentic Compliance,

Gasner A. Vil

Principal 6-8

WHAT IS A CHARTER SCHOOL?

Charter schools are public schools that operate independently according to the terms of a five-year performance contract or “charter.” Charter schools commit to meet specific goals for academic performance and their charter can be revoked if agreed-upon results are not attained.

Like all publicly funded schools, charter schools must meet Regents requirements and state laws for health, safety, civil rights and scholar assessment. In addition, charter schools must accept all scholars through a lottery process and cannot discriminate in their admission policy.

Charter schools can be started by educators, parents, community leaders and not-for-profit organizations, and are approved only after a rigorous review process. Once schools open, they are governed by a not-for-profit board of trustees. They are exempt from some state and local regulations regarding curriculum development, personnel hiring and financial management, but must succeed in meeting or exceeding the goals established for their academic programs.

Charter schools receive state funding (PPA) for each scholar. Along with the PPA, several state and federal grants are available, and charter schools are welcome to fundraise from private sources as well.

MISSION

The mission of Challenge Preparatory Charter School (Challenge) is to prepare students from the greater Far Rockaway community to excel academically, to demonstrate mastery of the NYS and Common Core Learning Standards and to achieve their career aspirations. Challenge will cultivate and support the intellectual, aesthetic, social, emotional and ethical development of its students and prepare them to be responsible 21st century citizens. To accomplish its mission, Challenge will offer a rigorous instructional program in a safe, supportive, technology-infused and data-enriched school environment.

EDUCATOR’S PLEDGE

“As Educators, we have a responsibility to provide scholars with a 21st century education that ensures they are resilient and set on a path to succeed to and through college as empathetic global citizens.” ~ CCMS Leadership Team

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Daily In-person Schedule: School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. daily and ends at 4:00 p.m. Periods are 45 minutes long and the first period of the day is instructional. Scholars are considered late after 8:05 a.m. Breakfast is served directly after Period 1, from 8:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. When school is in session at our buildings, scholars arriving early, between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. will have a staff member present to greet them. Dismissal is promptly at 4:00 p.m. If a scholar must be picked up prior to the regular dismissal time, the staff must be notified via a note or by calling the Main Office before 3:00 p.m.

In the case of an unexpected delay, parents must notify the school immediately by calling the Main Office at 347-699-7602. Visitors will not be admitted between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. **At dismissal, parents are expected to receive their children no later than 4:00 p.m.** Caregivers arriving late to pick up their scholars will need to sign them out in the late book in the main office when the DOE's yellow school buses are not in service. When yellow school buses are in service, the same dismissal procedure will apply. Repeated lateness will result in lunch reflections. Three consecutive late arrivals equate to one unexcused absence.

Hybrid or Remote Learning Schedule: Should a Hybrid or Remote Learning Schedule be needed due to any special health cases in our community, we will notify families of those changes as quickly as possible using various methods of communication.

New York State Compulsory Attendance Law: Under New York State, Compulsory education law students must attend school regularly for the entire period that school and classes are in attendance. While scholars are attending school remotely, once a student exits a class without notification of their absence by a parent or guardian, scholars can face disciplinary action. Challenge Charter School's Comprehensive Attendance Policy adequately tracks verification of attendance each period. Scholars who demonstrate adequate attendance will be recognized during school award ceremonies. Regular attendance is necessary to permit scholars to succeed at meeting the state learning standards.

Dropping Off Items for Scholars: Scholars need to be responsible. They must remember their **charged** Chromebook, notebooks, homework, glasses, MetroCards, lunch, etc. If your child forgets their lunch at home, lunch from SchoolFoods will be provided. We ask that you call to schedule an appointment for assistance. Most items generally requested can also be provided either via mail, email or by fax.

School Closings and Emergencies: CCMS will follow the lead of New York City's Department of Education regarding decisions about the opening and closing of school due to weather and other emergencies. School closings or emergencies will be announced on NY1 and 1010 WINS. In addition, a message will be sent via ParentSquare and on the School website – www.challengecharterschools.org as well as Social Media pages.

Health Records: All new scholars must provide the school with a copy of completed vaccinations including DPT, Hepatitis B and boosters, Meningococcal 1st dose (2nd dose

in high school) certificate. Each scholar should have a complete physical/medical examination before entering the school. The school nurse will notify parents of any missing or incomplete medical information. An emergency card must be kept on file in our main office at all times. Emergency and home numbers are very important. Please notify the main office of any changes with contact numbers immediately.

Accidents: Minor accidents are reported to the office and treated by the school nurse. If a child is seriously injured or ill, the school will follow the directions indicated on the emergency contact form and parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

Illness: CCMS will follow CDC guidelines as related to site specific health and safety. CCMS holds true to safety beginning at home. All parents/ guardians are asked to ensure that scholars maintain safe practices during non-school hours. Should scholars display signs of COVID-19 infection, CCMS will immediately contact the corresponding parent/guardian and follow protocols to keep our scholars and staff safe and healthy. While isolated social distancing will continue to be enforced with general care being provided.

Childhood Disease: A child may return to his/her class with written permission from a medical practitioner after being treated for any childhood diseases (measles, whooping cough, strep throat, etc.).

Trip Policy: Throughout each academic school year, the Challenge Charter Middle School plans trips and other excursions to enrich the lives and educational experience of scholars. Some of these events celebrate end-of-year achievements, while others parallel and reinforce concepts in the curricula. Whether the events are within the five boroughs or out of city and state, **they are privileges, not mandatory or obligatory.** While on a trip, scholars must still adhere to the Challenge Charter Middle School discipline policy. Any scholar who does not demonstrate consistent, appropriate behavior or character expected of a Challenge Charter Middle School scholar violates and surrenders a necessary level of trust.

If a scholar demonstrates a pattern of negative behavior or engages in serious violations or cannot be trusted to follow attendance and behavioral expectations and policies in the school building, trip privileges may be revoked. The school nurse, prior to any trip, will assess scholars with medical conditions or injuries. Documentation of medical approval will be required of you as a parent for your scholar to attend if they have a medical situation requiring a doctor's release to participate.

During the remote learning period, scholars will have the opportunity to participate in virtual field trips. Scholars will accompany their supervised classes on regularly scheduled field trips to a plethora of places in the digital arena.

Busing: Challenge provides transportation services through the NYC Department of Education via the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT).

Eligible grade 6 scholars will receive busing information during the first week of school. Please note that busing begins on September 6, 2023. All scholars will be dropped off at 1520 Central Avenue Campus. For private bus service please refer to the following companies:

Local

Future Generation Bus Company
 Inc. 461 Beach 67th Street
 Arverne, NY 11692
 347-992-0191
 Owner: Winston Mendez

Queens

Amboy Bus Company Inc. 107-10 180th
 Street
 Jamaica, NY 11433
 718-298-6000
Amboy.jm@aetg.net
 Owner: Domenic Gatto

Little Richie Bus Service
 97-14 Atlantic Avenue
 Ozone Park, NY 11416
 718-738-7373
joejr@nyc.rr.com
 Owner: Richie Logan Jr.

Logan Bus Company Inc.
 97-14 Atlantic Avenue
 Ozone Park, NY 11416
 718-738-7373
joejr@nyc.rr.com
 Owner: Lorinda Logan

Safety:

Please remind your child/children to buckle their seat belts while riding the school bus. Scholars are also to follow school safety rules. This includes Fire Drills and all building codes for crises. Additionally, scholars must follow safety during Science Laboratory investigations and all educational assignments and pursuits. See Consequences on page 11 for scholars who do not follow safety rules.

Walkers and Scholars Taking Public Transportation:

Walkers are dismissed promptly at 4:00 p.m. Any scholar who engages in behavior that deems them to be a public nuisance while in the CCMS uniform will be subjected to the discipline as outlined in the CCMS Cheetah Code of Conduct.

Before and After School:

Scholars will arrive at and depart from the school in a safe and orderly manner. Abusive, bullying, or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated during arrival and dismissal. This especially applies to those scholars riding the school bus—such behavior on a moving vehicle endangers the lives of scholars and drivers alike. If a scholar cannot show he or she can behave responsibly on the bus, the privilege of riding the bus will be suspended and may, in some cases, be denied completely.

Enrichment Clusters:

The last period of the school day is dedicated to Enrichment Clusters (7:45a.m.-8:30a.m.). Enrichment clusters will allow scholars the opportunity to be engaged and enthusiastic as they explore their individualized interest through real world investigative problem-solving.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

When a scholar will be absent from school, the parent/guardian must call the Main Office on the morning of the absence or the day before if possible. During remote learning days, all absences can be reported via phone or email to the main office at 347-699-7602 or 1520mainoffice@challengecharterschools.org.

The school officials at CCMS take our program attendance and punctuality very seriously. CCMS recognizes that attendance and punctuality are key to scholar success. All scholars are required daily to check their assigned schedules in PowerSchool to ensure that they are in class at the start time of each period. During Remote Learning scholars are expected to sign in daily upon entering class in the message box, i.e. salutation, first and last name, along with the word present. Any scholar who is more than 10 minutes late will be marked as absent. We encourage parents/ guardians to contact the school personnel regarding absences and lateness. This contact can be facilitated through either email or phone. CCMS will address concerns of attendance and lateness on a case-by-case basis as per New York State Department of Education guidelines.

- An absence NOTE signed by the parent/guardian must be brought in/or sent in during Remote Learning days on the day of return.
 - The absence note must be used every time there is an absence. If there is documentation for an absence (ex. a doctor's note), then you must attach the doctor's note to the absence note.
 - All absence notes must be delivered to the Main office immediately upon returning to school, or emailed to 1520mainoffice@challengecharterschools.org.
- Any parent/caregiver who knows his/her child will be absent for an extended length of time must notify the school, in writing, in advance. The scholar must meet with the grade level Assistant Principal as soon as they know that they will be absent for an extended period of time.
- Scholars who are absent more than 10% of the school year may be subject to retention in the present grade, as per the Chancellor's Promotion Standards, at the end of the school year.
- Unexcused absences may be considered educational neglect. With reporting of absences mandated by New York State, the interventions below will take place.

There is a difference between an excused and an unexcused absence.

- Excused absences happen in the event of a doctor's appointment, a death in the family, or the observation of a religious holiday. Special circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; it is important to note that a parent phone call or absence note does not qualify as an excused absence.

- After 5 unexcused absences from school (absences that do not fall within the excused absence categories), the following interventions will take place:
- After 3 unexcused absences from school (absences that do not fall within the excused absence categories), the following interventions will take place:
 - 3+ unexcused absence = meeting with scholar and counselor.
 - 8+ unexcused absences = meeting with scholar, Social Worker, School Counselor, Dean of Culture, and/or Family Engagement Coordinator, parent/guardian and Assistant Principal.
- Scholars who are signed out and leave school before 12 noon will be marked absent for half a day in compliance with the Chancellor's Regulations.
- Have your child select a "homework buddy," who will collect work assignments for you to pick up during your child's absence; teachers' Google Classroom pages should also be referred to for daily assignments.

BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE POLICY

"At Challenge Charter Middle School, we recognize that the path toward a fulfilling and happy school life requires the steady practice of enduring CORE VALUES."

- CCMS Leadership Team

RESPECT: Appreciation of and esteem for oneself, for others and for the diversity of opinions and backgrounds at CCMS and in the larger community.

HONESTY: A high regard for truth, sincerity in action and genuine concern for honor and integrity.

SCHOLARSHIP: Intellectual curiosity, active engagement in learning, and a foundation in the academic disciplines.

BALANCE: Time for work and play, a mix of mastery and experiment, and a foundation in the academic disciplines.

COURAGE: The quality that enables scholars to explore new ideas, to create imaginative solutions, to give and accept help, to make difficult decisions, and to grow into confident, compassionate adults.

Cooperative behavior, respect of others and of school materials and politeness in school and play are an integral part of CCMS. Teachers emphasize positive behavior and help each scholar understand their emotions, actions and consequences of acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

When discipline is needed, teachers talk with the scholar about what has happened and what is expected. In accordance with restorative discipline practices, the scholar may be asked to independently reflect on their actions before returning to the learning environment. CCMS will have continuous discussions with scholars about building relationships and consequences throughout the school year. If a scholar exhibits continued aggressive/seriously disruptive behavior, the Principal will make every effort to speak to the scholar and his/her parents.

In addition, consequences for each offense can be determined based on the school Principal's discretion according to the CCMS Cheetah Code of Conduct.

The Behavioral Contract on the next page must be signed and submitted to the school during the first week of classes of the current school year.

2023-24 CCMS SCHOLAR/PARENT BEHAVIORAL CONTRACT

I _____ a scholar of Challenge Charter Middle School, will follow our Core Values academically and behaviorally in effort to be successful as I develop into a world class citizen. I understand that my education is paramount.

Academically, I understand that I will work with my teacher, staff support and parents to guide me for assignment completion both in school and homework. I understand that if my grades are dropping and/or if I am struggling with concepts continually, I may be selected for Tier II or Tier III interventions for several weeks so that I may be back on track. I will do my personal best to improve my work and complete assignments. My parents will be involved in the process.

I am also aware that if I am failing my courses that I will not be allowed to participate in after school clubs until my assignments are turned in and I am passing my subject area courses.

Behaviorally, I understand: I will be given a warning. The second offense warrants my parent(s) to be contacted and guided intervention. This means that I may meet with the Dean of Culture, Social Worker, Counselor, Dignity Act Coordinator, Assistant Principal and/or Principal. Detentions will be warranted, and I may be on a behavioral plan. I may be invited to a Child Study Team Meeting to get me back on track with follow up work. My parents will be involved in the process. Should I continue to violate school rules, I will be suspended.

As a parent/guardian I commit to supporting the Challenge Charter Middle School academic program that demands high standards of conduct throughout the school day, extended activities and year. I support the CCMS Core Values and School Wide Discipline policy.

As a parent/guardian, I commit to adhering to and supporting CCMS's culture of academic excellence. In order to fully support the school's mission, parent participation at CCMS's Orientation Meeting is required. We want parents to understand and support the mission of Challenge Preparatory Charter School by signing an acknowledgment agreement.

Scholar Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Your CCMS scholar is required to have a Behavioral Contract on file for the 2023-24 school year.

DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

School uniforms are mandatory Monday through Friday. Yellow CCMS gym t-shirts and burgundy CCMS sweat suits are permitted for only on gym days. On Remote Learning days a complete CCMS uniform is REQUIRED.

- On every Monday, and Assembly days **ALL** scholars will be required to wear the CCMS uniform—white buttoned-down shirt/blouse; khaki slacks/skirts; burgundy blazer; plaid tie; burgundy socks/tights; and black shoes/sneakers.
- **ALL** POLOS MUST HAVE CCMS LOGO and scholars' uniform polos by grade are as follows:
 - Grade 6: Yellow
 - Grade 7: Burgundy
 - Grade 8: Gray
- Boys may wear earrings (Studs), girls hoops no bigger than a dime.
- No headbands that are not of culture or religious purposes. No fashion headbands.
- **ALL:** shorts and skirts no shorter than knee length.
- Girls' socks/tights should be burgundy, and shoes should be black.
- Scholars may wear body piercing, but NO bigger than a dime.
- Skinny jeans, leggings, ripped jeans, joggers, and cargo pants are **NOT** permitted for any scholar.
- Belts should be solid black and no wider than two inches.
- Scholars are only allowed to wear spirit day shirts to class only on designated on spirit days.

Scholars arriving at school without the required uniform will not be admitted to class and the parent will be contacted immediately. Parents must bring a uniform or pick up their scholar to go home. Scholars are allowed to wear Spirit Day shirts to class if it is a designated Spirit Day. Scholars not adhering to the uniform policy will not be admitted to class until a parent/guardian brings the appropriate attire. During Remote Learning days scholars will be dismissed from class until they are in appropriate attire. Scholars are encouraged to rejoin the class once they have adhered to the CCMS uniform requirements.

[CCMS Uniform Guide](#)

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES & BACKPACKS/BAGS

Please be reminded that scholars are **not** permitted to use electronic devices in the school building. This includes the following items:

- Cell phones and smart watches
- Bluetooth speakers
- Cameras, digital or film

- iPods or mp3 players
- Portable game consoles (Gameboy, PSP, etc.)
- Toys – (ex. Fidget spinners, balls, or other small handheld items)

All cell phones and smart watches must be turned off and given to the Dean of Culture or homeroom teachers immediately upon arrival. All devices will be returned promptly prior to dismissal.

Any scholar caught in possession of a cell phone during the school day on school premises will be subjected to consequences as outlined in the CCMS Cheetah Code of Conduct.

All bags (backpacks, book bags, etc.) that are brought to school are to be placed in lockers.

During remote learning days, the use of cell phones and personal electronics is not allowed during school hours. All devices must be turned off and out of reach.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

Breakfast and lunch will be provided by the Office of NYC SchoolFoods. Scholars are permitted to bring a bagged lunch for consumption as well. Supervising staff will ensure that all desk surfaces have been sanitized and that all scholars wash their hands prior to and after each meal.

Breakfast will be held directly after period 1 for all cohorts. Lunch will be held in periods 6 and 7. Scholars will either go to lunch or Specials class, depending on the grade level. Grade 6 scholars go to lunch at 11:27 p.m. Grades 7 and 8 scholars have lunch at 12:15 p.m.. Those scholars who are not in attendance can retrieve a grab and go breakfast and lunch at sites designated by the DOE. Please preview the school website for updated information regarding grab and go site www.challengecharterschools.org/family-resources.

FREE & REDUCED RATES: Special lunch rates are available to children in need. Parents will be mailed information for the meal program by School Foods NYC. Applications will be completed online. At which time a lunch status will be determined. This online application must be completed for each scholar, regardless of participation..

BEHAVIOR IN THE CAFETERIA

Middle school scholars must sit at their designated grade and homeroom class tables. Scholars are not permitted to switch their table without the consent of the cafeteria staff. All trash at each table must be cleaned up upon completion of meals. Scholars may, at any time, be asked to assist with the post-lunch cleanup. Scholars are expected to be “proactive” and to remind friends to pick up after themselves or simply pick up and throw out trash if they see that someone has forgotten to do so. Any scholar that is unable to adhere to the Dining Room procedures will be suspended from the

communal dining room.

BIRTHDAY PARTY POLICY

Birthday parties may be permitted if they are not in conflict with other school activities. Please consult the Operations Manager at 1520mainoffice@challengecharterschools.org for approval and coordination. All requests need to be submitted in writing two weeks prior to the party. **Scholars are allowed to dress down on their birthday.**

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conference Meetings

Conferences will be held in person during the school year. Parents will be provided a choice of meeting time via ParentSquare. Parent Conferences are held in November and to facilitate open communication between the teacher and parent. Additional individual family meetings are scheduled as needed to address any concerns regarding scholars' progress. Please see the [School Calendar](#) for details.

Additional Conferences

The Principal has an open-door policy. Throughout the school year, she is available for appointments via Google Meet. If you wish to schedule a conference with a teacher or the Principal, please contact the main office to request a meeting time or phone call.

Progress Reports and Report Card Dates

Families will be notified of these dates via school communications.

Grading

The following is the grading system:

A+	97-100	4
A	93-96	4
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.5
B	83-86	3.2
B-	80-82	3.0
C+	77-79	2.7
C	73-76	2.5
C-	70-72	2.0
F	69-BELOW	1

PROMOTION/RETENTION/AWARDS

1. Parents will be notified by ParentSquare, Google Classroom, phone, and/or email, if teachers are concerned about your scholar's academic progress.
2. Promotion in Doubt (PID) letters will be sent in February if a scholar is failing to make normal grade level progress. Scholars may be required to repeat their current grade level and/or attend summer school (if offered). *All 8th Grade scholars **MUST** pass all core subjects (Humanities, Math, and Science) to

- graduate from middle school and enter high school.
3. Factors affecting promotion include but are not limited to results on standardized tests that are below grade level; scores at Level 1 and/or 2 on the NYS English Language Arts and Math Exams; poor scholar attendance and poor academic results in two or more subjects — Humanities, Math, and Science.
 4. The school will meet with parents to discuss progress being made by the scholar.
 5. If the school decides scholar retention and/or summer school attendance is necessary, a notice will be sent out to parents to disclose the steps that must be taken.
 6. Decisions on scholar retention or required summer school attendance are the final determination of the school's administration.

We will hold an Honors & Awards Assembly Quarterly. Awards Criteria - per GPA and/or grades at 3.0 or "B" average and higher, attendance, effort, citizenship and/or teacher/staff recommendations. All awards programs will be held in-person as allowed by the current state and local health guidelines. Virtual viewing options will be available when possible for families who cannot attend due to restrictions.

CCMS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

As you know, we value academic integrity very highly and do not permit any forms of dishonesty or deception that unfairly, improperly, or illegally enhance a grade on an individual assignment or a course grade. The following is a list of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty. New forms of cheating, plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty may arise and therefore, we expect every scholar to interpret the requirements of academic honesty and integrity broadly and in good faith. If scholars have any doubt as to whether a particular act constitutes academic honesty, he/she should ask a teacher before they do it.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following scenarios.

Cheating on Exams:

- Copying from others, including homework.
- Talking or any non-verbal communication, such as sign language will be considered cheating. Scholars must direct questions to the proctor only.
- Writing, drawing or scribbling on folder dividers may be considered cheating.
- Having or using notes, formulas, or other information in a programmable calculator or other electronic device without explicit teacher review and permission.
- Having or using a communication device such as a cell phone, PDA or electronic translator to send or obtain unauthorized information.
- Taking an exam for another scholar or permitting someone to take an exam for you.
- Asking another to give you improper assistance, including offering money or other benefits.
- Asking for or accepting money or any other benefit in return for giving another improper assistance.

- Providing or receiving information about all or part of an exam, including answers (e.g., telling someone in a subsequent period what was on your exam, or being told this information).
- Having or using a “cheat sheet” (a piece of paper with answers, formulas, information or notes of any kind) that is not specifically authorized by the teacher.
- Altering a graded exam and resubmitting it for a better grade.
- Working together on a take home exam, unless specifically authorized by a teacher.
- Gaining or providing unauthorized access to examination materials.

Note: Simply having possession during an exam of any prohibited or unauthorized information or device, whether or not it is actually used, is an act of academic dishonesty and will be dealt with as such.

Plagiarism in Papers and Assignments

- Giving or receiving assistance on an assignment meant to be individual work (when in doubt, ask).
- Including in any assignment turned in for credit any materials not based on your own research and writing. This includes:
 - Using the services of a commercial term paper company
 - Using the services of another scholar
 - Copying part or all of another person’s paper and submitting it as your own for an assignment
- Acting as a provider of paper(s) for a scholar or scholars.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting both teachers (self-plagiarism).
- Failing to use quotation marks where appropriate.
- Failing to properly acknowledge paraphrased materials via textual attribution, footnotes, endnotes, and/or a bibliography.
- Making up data for an experiment (falsifying data).
- Citing nonexistent sources (articles, books, etc.).

Other

- Misrepresenting your academic accomplishments, such as by tampering with computer records.
- Deceiving a teacher or making up a false reason or excuse to get a special consideration on an exam or an extension on an exam or paper.
- Failing to promptly stop work on an exam when the time allocated has elapsed.
- Forging a signature.
- Hoarding or damaging library materials and Chromebooks.

Note: Attempted academic dishonesty, even if unsuccessful, will be treated as academic dishonesty.

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

In the event it is established that a scholar has engaged in academic dishonesty:

All assignments must be resubmitted, and if the assignment is not submitted, the scholar will receive a zero on the assignment.

SUPPORT SERVICES

At-risk Counseling:

CCMS acknowledges the importance of providing support for children. Scholars entering the school with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), or a 504, will be reviewed individually to determine a path for their success at CCMS.

Response to Intervention:

(RTI) Practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to important educational decisions. It is the protocol used to address the needs of at-risk students. It is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. Parents will be notified of scholars selected to receive additional academic and behavioral support services and can opt out of services.

Academic Recovery: Scholar Progress Monitoring

Is offered when scholars are not performing well in two or more core subjects. Any scholar in danger of not passing two or more core courses of study will be scheduled weekly to meet with school officials, etc. guidance counselor, assistant principal, and social worker accompanied by a parent to track the scholar's academic progress. During the process of tracking progress, academic staff will attend to talk about how improvement can be achieved. A specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-orientated timeline will be set for the scholar to finalize incomplete work thus closing the achievement gap. Data of this attainment will be monitored, tracked, and documented weekly.

Alternate Instruction:

The alternative instructional (AI) program will be offered to scholars who do not comply academically or behaviorally with school protocol. While in AI scholars are in a small learning pod where their work is tracked each period by an instructional staff member. Scholars remain in the AI pod throughout the instructional day. The AI program director is responsible for parent outreach to communicate academic assignments and to monitor the completion of such assignments at the mastery level. Once scholars' performance improves they will be reintroduced to the general education classroom.

Child Study Team:

(CST) – a school-based system that consists of a student's teachers, Principal, Assistant Principal, Special Education Teachers, Intervention teachers, Guidance Counselor/Social Worker, Parent/Guardian, and Student that meet to review student's needs and offer strategies and recommendations for academic/behavior interventions. Parents will be notified of the date for a Child Study Team meeting.

Related Services:

If a scholar is not succeeding or progressing within his/her class, shows signs of anxiety or the teacher suspects an area of learning difficulty, then tests can be used that are

diagnostic rather than achievement oriented. Testing results and adult reflections help to align any need for intervention services. Response to Intervention (RTI) services are designed to help prevent scholar failure and to keep scholars functioning at their very best. RTI can be used to remediate as well as enrich. The RTI team comprises the following: Principal, Assistant Principal, School Counselor, Social Worker, English as a New Language (ENL), Director of Intervention and Special Education Services, and Dean of Culture.

Special Education:

Challenge Middle's Special Education program serves scholars who have an Individual Education Program (IEP), which mandates: SETSS (Special Education Teacher Support Services, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and/or counseling. Challenge Charter Middle School does **NOT** have the more restrictive 12-1-1 or 8-1-1 self-contained special education classes. Some scholars may also have push-in service in which the special education teacher works with the child in his or her classroom.

English as a New Language:

English as a New Language (ENL) is taught by certified instructors to eligible scholars based on their results on the LAB (R) test. Scholars are pulled out to meet with the ESL teacher for either one or two periods each day. The amount of time each scholar spends in ENL classes each day is determined by the score they receive on the LAB(R). Scholars must pass both NYSESLAT and the NYS English Language Arts exams to exit the ENL program.

Social Worker:

The school social worker collaborates with the School Counselor, Family Engagement Director, and other faculty members on the social, emotional, and academic functioning of all scholars. The social worker:

- o Provides At Risk counseling to scholars who are experiencing difficulty in academics, attendance, or have behavioral or mental health concerns.
- o Works with Administration, parents, scholars, and teachers around issues of child abuse and neglect
- o Facilitates crisis intervention and home visits
- o Runs affinity groups for scholars experiencing chronic problems and difficult issues
- o Monitors attendance and intervenes to support scholars and families with issues of truancy

School Counselors:

The guidance program assists faculty and staff in providing individual scholars with the skills necessary to reason, communicate, understand themselves and what lies ahead, and to find their way into the most favorable areas of activity for growth and development. Guidance department provides:

- Mandated IEP counseling
- Individual and group counseling
- Ongoing communication with parents

- Facilitates crisis intervention and home visits
- Monitoring of academic grades and behavior throughout the year
- Provides scholars with career choices and placement to high schools
- Teaches a Careers course to help with scholar work habits including study skills, college readiness, academic support, life skills, etc.

SCHOLAR LIFE

School Readiness is very important. Children need to learn to get along with other children, obey rules, share, and take turns. To prepare your child socially you should:

- Provide a supportive home setting where education is a priority. This includes an appropriate area to complete both daily instruction (when remote) and homework.
- Reinforce the importance of acquiring the knowledge, skills and values needed to function effectively in society.
- Volunteer time, skills, or resources in the school.
- Take part in school and community programs that empower parents to participate in educational decision-making.
- Become active members of the school's Parent Association.
- Question your child about schoolwork, attendance, and behavior and discuss what is expected by the school.
- Teach your child to respect the property, safety, and rights of others and the importance of refraining from intimidating, harassing or discriminatory behavior.

Academic Readiness – Have your child read each day and ask them questions about what was in the story (characters, beginning, middle, end, where and when the story takes place, and how the problem was solved). Visit the library and check out books together.

Trips – Living in New York City with its rich cultural heritage makes local visits to various museums and parks an important aspect of study. Free or low cost field trips will occur throughout the school year and parent chaperones may be asked to travel with their children. All children must have a signed permission slip in place at the school building before leaving for any field trip.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Parent/Teacher Communication is vital at CCMS. Communication with your child's teacher can be a daily activity. Our modes of communication are via phone, email, Google Classroom, ParentSquare.

CCMS Parent Association - Our parents will elect the 2022-23 officers to organize and collaborate on engaging our Middle School parents in our school community.

CCMS CURRICULUM

Description of Curriculum

Challenge Charter Middle School utilizes the workshop model to deliver NYS-aligned curricula in all subject areas with the integration of technology. Its educational philosophy of a balanced curricular and instructional approach is evident in each subject area. Consistent with its philosophical approach to instruction, the School has chosen digital textbooks that are not only aligned with NYS learning/Common Core standards and core curriculum but support this balanced philosophy.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Scholars will explicitly receive instruction in the following 5 Core Social-Emotional Competency areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. SEL is a multi-tiered system of student support that ensures scholars acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, as well as achieve positive goals. Research has shown that scholars that participate in SEL will demonstrate improvement academically and behaviorally. Of course, these findings are based on scholar level of involvement and time engaged in the SEL program.

Humanities

Mastery of the written and spoken language is critical to success in all subject areas. Consistent with the above-discussed balanced approach, Challenge Middle uses elements of both phonics-based and whole language instruction. Challenge Middle scholars receive 360 minutes a week of ELA instruction along with additional work on reading, writing, listening and oral communication skills throughout the instructional day. Consistent with the workshop model, teachers plan lessons based on their assessments of scholars' reading and writing abilities. There are Readers Workshops and Writers Workshops, in which the teachers alternate, as appropriate, between whole class mini-lessons including shared reading and shared writing, read-aloud, interactive writing, small group guided reading and writing lessons, and focused independent reading and writing. The Lavinia Humanities Curriculum is highly engaging, culturally relevant and hosts authentic learning tasks that build transferable habits in reading, writing, and thinking that are both rigorous literacy standards and National Standards for History (<https://laviniagroup.org/> 2022). Lavinia Curriculum values scholar choice, inspires scholars to do their best work, and facilitates critical thinking through the art of high-level shared inquiry discussions. (I would move this as the introduction in this section).

Read180

Teachers will employ Read180, a universal educational tool for intervention. As a tier 3 specialized intervention method, Read180 is employed for specific struggling readers who have exhausted other intervention methods.

Sound Reading

Teachers will employ Sound Reading to provide additional support in reading to scholars that are well below their targeted grade level in reading. Sound Reading uses a three-pronged approach to address reading deficiencies. Sound Reading focuses on support in the following areas of reading: accuracy, automaticity, and comprehension.

Mathematics

There are 360 minutes a week of Math. Consistent with its balanced educational philosophy, the School reconciles two often erroneously competing mathematical approaches—basic skills versus conceptual understanding. Challenge Charter Middle School believes that scholars have to possess facility with basic skills, knowledge of standard algorithms and mastery and automaticity of math facts. Scholars cannot achieve this without a conceptual understanding of why these facts are so. Our program balances conceptual and problem-solving instruction with appropriate drill and practice to achieve both fluency and automaticity (use of basic arithmetic facts with ease and from memory). Facility and automaticity with numbers, algorithms and math facts are necessary precursors to scholars' ability to engage in higher order critical thinking and analytical skills.

Challenge Charter Middle School believes that a structured approach to Mathematics—where concepts are presented in a logical fashion and complicated concepts are not introduced until children have been given the fundamental tools to master them—allow scholars to perform math at extremely high levels. The School's goal is for scholars to be able to progress to Algebra by the time they reach high school because of the solid foundations in arithmetic skills and concepts that they developed and mastered in elementary school. By providing scholars with a strong mathematical foundation, the School expects to lay the groundwork for its graduates to pursue advanced mathematics in high school and college; thus, opening the door to a wide array of careers that have math as their foundation.

8th Grade Algebra I is a high school course offered at our middle school that prepares scholars for not only solving mathematical problems, but prepares them for logical reasoning and rationale that can be applied to real life multiple step problems in authentic experiences. Based on NCTM Standards, Common Core Standards and Engage New York Curriculum Framework. Scholars will receive credit for Algebra I in high school and be enrolled into Algebra II after passing the Algebra I Regents Exam. Selected scholars will be enrolled in this class.

Science

Science is taught for 240 minutes each week for grades 6 through 8. Challenge Charter Middle's approach to science instruction includes Inquiry-Based learning experiences to motivate scholars and illustrate real-life applications and hands-on learning experiences to promote understanding of scientific concepts. It incorporates investigation-based learning experiences. Instruction, especially in early grades, balances these different types of learning experiences with the objective of building skills, content fluency and confidence.

Challenge Charter Middle's ultimate goal is to provide scholars with the essential skills and knowledge that they will need to undertake advanced science coursework in high school and college. The School's science curriculum provides the skills and knowledge its scholars need to become scientifically literate citizens of the 21st century. The science curriculum integrates technology and health standards as scholars explore issues related to community health, population, natural resources, environmental quality, natural and human-induced hazards, and other societal and global challenges. The School uses AmplifyScience as the primary curriculum

science text and Engineering & Chemistry kits to supplement this series and provide hands-on opportunities to explore the scientific principles.

Living Environment for the Grade 8 Honors Class

The course emphasizes an in-depth understanding of major concepts rather than memorization of science facts. Key topics covered include: Characteristics of Living Systems, Human Structure and Function, Genetics and Mechanism of Inheritance, Genetic Engineering, Variation Adaptation Evolution, Reproduction and Development, Energy Pathways, Disease and Homeostasis, Interdependence, Biotic and Abiotic Interactions, and Technology and the Environment. The course culminates with a Regents exam. Students must successfully complete 1,200 minutes of NY State mandated hands-on laboratory exercises in order to be eligible to sit for the exam. The laboratory time is in addition to the normal instructional time compared to the other core courses. A satisfactory laboratory write-up is the criteria for successful completion of the lab exercise.

Social Studies

Scholars receive 240 minutes of Social Studies instruction weekly for grades 6 and 7. Through the Social Studies curriculum of which the study of History is its integral component, the School seeks to give scholars the knowledge, intellectual skills, civic understanding and disposition toward democratic values that are necessary to function effectively in American society. The Grade 6 program focuses on both ancient civilizations and modern global nations. In a world of global interdependence, it is imperative that scholars not only are knowledgeable about American History and the fundamental concepts of our democracy but are also knowledgeable about the histories of countries and civilizations throughout the world. In doing so, Challenge Charter Middle School seeks to graduate scholars who understand their rights and responsibilities not only as citizens of our country but citizens of our increasingly globally interdependent world.

Challenge Charter Middle's social studies curriculum is designed to provide instruction in and build knowledge of historical and geographic facts, concepts, and terminology. It focuses on fostering understanding of the connections between geography, history, economics and civics. It includes chronological and spatial thinking (i.e. chronology, sequence, location) and supports scholars in performing research (i.e. finding and showing evidence and display a point of view), in appreciating the past and the vital connections between the past, the present and universal historical themes, and in understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Scholars learn to understand and make connections between critical concepts in various areas of social studies—i.e. history, geography, economics and civics. Challenge Charter Middle School encourages scholars to ask questions for clarification, pose questions for appropriate research, describe differing opinions, identify cause and effect, analyze and evaluate historical events, make inferences about the cultural/historical significance of artifacts, and recognize that interpretations of history are subject to change. Scholars are actively engaged in learning about the range of human experience and concepts of courage, justice, heroism, leadership, deliberation and individual responsibility. Challenge Middle intends to prepare its scholars, through its Social Studies instruction, to have greater acceptance and empathy for people from other backgrounds and/or with other

points of view. In the process, Challenge Middle scholars will become engaged, active and informed citizens.

Family and Consumer Science offers scholars a course to help them understand and be better able to manage personal resources of talent, time, energy and money and make effective decisions in order to balance their obligations to work, family and self. They will learn to nurture and support positive relationships in their homes, workplaces and communities. They will develop and use their abilities to contribute to society through pursuit of a career and commitment to long-range planning for their personal, professional, and academic futures. They will learn about and know how to access community resources.

Physical Education

There is no shortage of headlines in newspapers and on news programs about how Many Americans have a higher than average Body Mass Index (BMI). Sedentary lives combined with poor nutritional habits foster this rampant problem in our country which is contributing to all sorts of physical and medical problems in our citizenry. In the changing environment where children live in homes where parents are sanctioning sedentary activities for their children versus vigorous physical activity, Challenge Middle is committed to ensuring that our children develop sound bodies as well as sound minds. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the goal for middle school children should be a total of 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity each day and preferably more. Challenge Middle's extended school day allows the School to incorporate daily physical education time, 4 times a week. Related topics of fitness and health are a part of our program. Scholars may not opt out unless the school receives medical notification from a NYS licensed medical doctor.

Health Education

Every day, scholars make decisions affecting their health and well-being. These decisions often lead to lifelong habits. The standards for health education, combined with those discussed earlier for physical education, can help scholars make better decisions about their health. They learn that their decisions can affect their health and set a pattern for their lives. Scholars learn to protect their health by acquiring and using good information, by seeking good advice and friendships, and by taking responsibility for their own health.

Technology

Challenge Charter Middle School scholars must be technologically literate; therefore, they must have opportunities to use computers, appropriately navigate the Internet, learn keyboarding skills and gain facility with business applications such as word processing, spreadsheet, database and desktop publishing programs. In addition, scholars will explore the evolution of technology, engineering design and technology management across appropriate curricular areas such as math, science and humanities.

Technology is also used to support curriculum and support scholar academic achievement through the use of educational software in the classroom that directly connects computer activities with subject specific learning standards. Technology is used in the classroom (including Smart Boards, document cameras, laptops and appropriate instructional software) as effective and efficient tools for instruction. The

use of such technology also increases scholars' awareness of and engagement in technology and its importance. Each scholar is provided a Chromebook for daily in-class use. Finally, all CCMS technology engagement will follow the New York State Computer Science and Digital Fluency Learning Standards.

The Art of Music

Challenge Charter Middle School is committed to imparting to our scholars a love of music. The music curriculum nurtures their innate musical skills and abilities across various cultures and eras. The music program allows scholars the opportunity to explore, pursue, and perfect their musical talents.

Homework

Homework is given every day, including weekends and holidays. *Homework and school official notices are to be read, checked and signed by parents/guardians daily.*

Academic Integrity

Throughout the year CCMS will inform scholars regarding the topic of academic integrity. Academic integrity information sessions are embedded in the Social-Emotional Learning Advisory Curriculum, during Digital Citizenship Coursework, and in CCMS Town Halls. Scholars are informed that they are not permitted to utilize any work that is not their own without giving proper credit to that person. Scholars are not permitted to use any other scholar's work to submit as their own. Scholars are encouraged to abide by our CCMS Core value of scholarship and take responsibility for their work. Any scholar who fails to do so will encounter consequences aligned to the measure of the infraction as imposed in the CCMS Cheetah Code of Conduct.

MINIMUM TIME ALLOTMENTS

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>MINIMUM DAILY TOTAL</u>
Grade 6	Daily	50-90 minutes
Grade 7	Daily	120 minutes
Grade 8	Daily	150 minutes

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT/ROLE AT HOME

Families can provide very valuable assistance in the area of homework through the following:

- Show an interest in your child's work by making yourself available and listening.
- Encourage your child's best efforts as often as possible.

- Check for completion, accuracy and neatness when your child finishes an assignment.
- Provide a suitable **time and place** for your child to study.
- Check your child's work and play times so that there is enough time for each activity.
- Check your child's book bag for information. Read all notices and newsletters that come home with your child.
- Parents/guardians must sign the reading log nightly.
- Request homework assignments for short term absences and, if possible, home instruction for extended absences.
- Attend parent teacher conferences and meetings when scheduled.
- Contact the school to see your child's teachers, School Counselor or grade level Assistant Principal or Dean of Culture when a homework issue arises.
- Take your child to the public library. It can provide resources that will enrich your child's homework assignment.

ADDRESSING BULLYING AND BIAS-BASED BEHAVIOR

Challenge Charter Middle School has zero tolerance for Bullying and Bias Based Behavior. We follow protocols for the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) and our protocols and report form are posted on our website. Our Guidance Counselors serve as Dignity Act Coordinators and are available for all scholars to talk to in addition to the Social Worker. The DACs will aim to resolve issues and oversee preventative measures to bully and violence including Social Emotional Learning Advisory Curriculum. Scholars will have a meaningful healthy positive educational rapport with the Dignity Act Coordinators.

Challenge Charter Middle School is a nurturing school culture that promotes positive interpersonal and intergroup relations and respect for diversity among scholars and between scholars and staff, providing all scholars with a supportive and safe environment to grow and thrive academically and socially. The ability of scholars to learn and meet high academic standards and a school's ability to educate its scholars are compromised when scholars engage in discrimination or harassment, bullying, or intimidating behavior toward other scholars. Bullying and harassment can take many forms and includes behavior that targets scholars because of their actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, citizenship/immigration status, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or weight.

These behaviors pose a serious threat to all scholars, and it is a school's responsibility to eliminate the hostile environment created by such harassment, address its effects, and take steps to ensure that harassment does not recur.

Challenge Charter Middle School understands what bullying is and prohibits such behavior. Clarifying school-wide rules that prohibit bullying and discrimination and discouraging bystander behavior (on-looker) is important to helping scholars play a pivotal role in bullying prevention. Integral to preventing scholar-to-scholar bullying and/or bias-based behavior is effective social-emotional learning that helps scholars develop social-emotional core competencies.

These fundamental life skills are: recognizing and managing their own emotions, developing caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically. Scholars who are able to recognize and manage their own emotions are better able to be assertive rather than aggressive or passive when they interact with their peers. Scholars who develop caring and concern for others and establish positive relationships are less likely to engage in bullying or discriminatory behavior. Additionally, scholars who have learned how to make responsible decisions and handle challenging situations ethically and constructively are less likely to be bystanders and more likely to act as allies if a peer is the target of harassment of any kind. To help scholars learn how to be allies, the Challenge Charter Middle School trains teachers and counselors in using the curriculum module *Fostering Respect for All: Empowering Scholars to Move from Bystanders to Allies* as well as other Respect for All professional development opportunities.

What is Bullying? Bullying is behavior that is intended to cause some kind of harm. The person doing the bullying purposely says or does something to hurt the target of his/her behavior. Bullying behavior always involves an imbalance of power (physical or social) or strength between the person doing the bullying and the target of the behavior. The person doing the bullying may be physically bigger or stronger or may be older or have greater social status or social power than the person being targeted. It is a pattern of behavior usually repeated over time and can take many forms. Bullying is aggressive behavior by one individual (or group) that is directed at a particular person (or group). The aggressive behavior is unwanted and negative. It is deliberate and unprovoked. The targeted person is harmed by what is purposely being said or done.

Bullying is NOT natural conflict. Conflict is a struggle between two or more people who perceive they have incompatible goals or desires. Conflict occurs naturally as we interact with one another. It is a normal part of life that we will not always agree with other people about the things we want, what we think, or what we want to do. Most conflicts between scholars arise when scholars see the same situation from two different points of view.

Bullying can take the form of physical bullying, verbal bullying, social bullying, as well as Cyber bullying. If as a parent you have concerns that your scholar is the target of bullying behavior, please report your concerns immediately to any teacher, support staff member, Assistant Principal and or the Principal. Please note that the school encourages parents to monitor or eliminate the use of social media e.g., Discord, Snapchat etc. as it often negates negative emotional feelings and behavior which interfere with learning. The school does not monitor or supervise any non-Challenge Charter Middle School platforms. CCMS asks scholars to “be your best self while online.”

If, after reporting to Challenge, you require additional assistance, please contact CSD 27 school’s District Family Advocate (elementary, middle, and high schools) or email RespectforAll@schools.nyc.gov. Any scholar who believes that he/she has been the victim of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by another scholar should report the incident to the RFA liaison(s) or to any Challenge employee. If a scholar feels uncomfortable making a report to a Challenge staff member, a scholar

may contact the Office of School and Youth Development (OSYD) by emailing the report to RespectforAll@schools.nyc.gov.

TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR CCMS SCHOLARS

Challenge Charter Middle School in accordance with NYCDOE Internet Acceptable Use Policy found at:

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/policies-for-all/internet-acceptable-use-policy>

supports the use of the Internet and other technologies in order to facilitate learning and teaching through interpersonal communications, access to information, research, and collaboration. It is intended that Internet access will improve the processes of teaching and learning as well as facilitate improvements in communication between all members of the learning community. Scholars attending Challenge Charter Middle School will be provided access to the Internet in classrooms, Library Media Centers, and the Computer Lab for educational purposes. Our goal is to teach scholars to utilize these electronic resources to enhance our school's instructional goals. Scholars must follow the established guidelines for acceptable use of technology in order to maintain the privilege of access to technology. The following acceptable use guidelines have been established for all scholars in Challenge Charter Middle School.

Equipment Use

CCMS staff will review all protocols regarding acceptable usage of Chromebooks. During the beginning of each class session staff will clearly communicate acceptable standards for remote learning. All scholars will be held by these standards.

Scholars are expected to be careful when using computer equipment and follow all directions for proper use. Any scholar who does not use the computer equipment properly or deliberately damages the computer equipment will receive consequences to be determined by Challenge Charter Middle School.

Scholars will use their assigned Challenge Chromebooks for instruction. No other devices are permitted in the classroom virtual environment. You may contact the Dean of Culture if further clarification is needed.

Go Guardian

Challenge Charter School has selected the GoGuardian Platform as a tool to monitor Scholar progress during instructional and non-instructional hours. GoGuardian eliminates distractions in the classroom allowing for optimal learning. The teacher will utilize the GoGuardian feature to message and call scholars who need support. The GoGuardian System sends an immediate alert to staff when there is an elicit threat detected which may include internet searches of inappropriate content or any websites suggestive of self-harm. This allows us to keep our scholars safe as per the New York State's Dignity of All Students Act.

Equipment Repair

Scholars are expected to notify staff when there are technology issues. Staff will then complete a technology support form regarding the issue. Parents may receive a personal phone call to gather more detailed information regarding the issue. The staff will follow up as the issue has been diagnosed until there is a resolution. All technology

issues will be logged and tracked digitally. CCMS does offer insurance for general usage. Any damage that exceeds general usage guidelines will be considered the responsibility of the user. CCMS Chromebooks are strictly assigned to scholars for educational purposes. Scholars are advised not to use CCMS Chromebooks for other usage such as, social media, music etc. as our devices are monitored 24/7.

Internet Use

In accordance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), passed by the US Legislature in January 2001 (Public Law 106-554), the NYCDOE has employed filtering software to block access to inappropriate content on all computers with Internet access. However, it is important to understand that Challenge Charter Middle School cannot guarantee that scholars will refrain from locating inappropriate sources. Scholars are expected to respect and not attempt to bypass security in place on computers. Changing or attempting to change a computer’s settings is a violation of acceptable use of our equipment. In Middle School, scholars are limited to sites selected by school staff that are of educational value and support the curriculum and are allowed the extra privilege of conducting supervised research on classroom assignments. If, at any time, a scholar accesses or attempts to access unacceptable materials, he/she will receive consequences to be determined by Challenge Charter Middle School.

Consequences of Misuse

Scholars who misuse the school’s technology will receive consequences according to the nature and severity of the misuse. Consequences will be derived from the Cheetah Code of Conduct upon adoption until such time we will follow the NYCDOE Student Disciplinary Code found at:

<https://cdn-blob-prd.azureedge.net/prd-pws/docs/default-source/default-document-library/discipline-code-grade-6-12-english.pdf> and may include being given limited or no access to technology for a specified amount of time.

Parent Policy: Remote Learning Disruptions

CCMS offers a safe and respectful environment. Parents are not permitted to interrupt the classroom in any manner in in-person and/or Remote Learning, including: speaking into the classroom through the scholar’s device while class is in session, writing in the message box during the instructional block, or intentionally appearing on camera. In order to ensure school safety, this protocol must be adhered to. At any time there is a classroom disruption, the scholar will be removed from the class immediately, the scholar’s devices will be deactivated and consequences aligned to the measure of the infraction will be imposed based on the CCMS Cheetah Code of Conduct.

Signature of acceptance parent/guardian and scholar signature will be required for technology usage at Challenge Charter Middle School. Scholars will not be permitted to use computers until the Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Challenge Charter Middle School Scholars is returned and signed by both scholar and parent/guardian.

Please sign and return the agreement on the following page to your child’s classroom teacher as soon as possible.

2023-24 TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

For the Scholar:

- My parent or legal guardian has reviewed the Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Challenge Charter Middle School Scholars with me.
- I understand the importance of following the rules for the use of the computer and the Internet.
- I understand the importance of not giving out personal information about myself or my family over the Internet.
- I understand that the computer, the Internet and other electronic information resources are to be used only for educational purposes.
- I understand that if I break the rules, my use of these educational tools may be taken away from me and that other disciplinary or legal action may be taken.
- I promise to follow the rules.

Your Name (please print): _____

Your Official Class: _____ Teacher: _____

Your Signature

Date

For the Parent or Legal Guardian:

- As the parent or legal guardian, I have read, and I have reviewed with my child the Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Challenge Charter Middle School Scholars.
- I understand that the use of these electronic information resources is for educational purposes.
- I recognize that the NYCDOE has initiated reasonable safeguards to filter and monitor inappropriate materials.
- I understand that while the NYCDOE has taken steps to restrict scholar access on the Internet to inappropriate information and sites, it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial materials.
- I further recognize that if my child does not abide by the rules of acceptable use, He / She will be disciplined.
- I will not hold Challenge Charter Middle School or the NYCDOE responsible for materials my child may acquire on the Internet.
- I hereby give permission to Challenge Charter Middle School to permit my child to have access to the Internet.

Print Name of Scholar: _____

Parent or Legal Guardian (please print): _____

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date

2023-24 MEDIA CONSENT FORM

Challenge Charter School believes in sharing the positive success of our scholars and their achievements and is a community school. Therefore, promotion of school activities or recognition of students is a regular occurrence, and staff members or the In addition, from time to time our school garners attention from news outlets and news media may photograph or video individual students or groups of students while they are engaged in school activities not normally open to the public.

To protect the identity of our scholars we use **first names only** on social media unless related to an award, recognition, or graduation events. An article, teacher/staff request may also warrant the inclusion of that information.

Please also understand that we cannot 100% guarantee that in group situations that your child will not be photographed or on video. Further, each public social platform (such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) has varying policies related to how the content uploaded to that site can be used by the company.

Please circle your preference in the following applicable statement:

I _____ am 18 years of age or older and **(circle one)**

CONSENT OR DO NOT CONSENT

to the release of photographs or videos of my child by school staff for the use of celebrating scholar achievement, for social media channels, website, and school promotion to various public outlets.

If you choose *not* to sign this agreement by the first week of the school year, it will be understood that you are providing permission for your child's image to be used in the above ways.

Scholar Name(s) (Print): _____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian (sign): _____ Date: _____

IMPORTANT SCHOOL INFORMATION

Main Office – 347-699-7602 - Fax – (718) 327-8500

Email – info@challengecharterschools.org

Rev. Dr. Les Mullings - CEO/Founder
Shanique McFarlane - CEO Chief of Staff

Gasner Vil – 6-8 Principal
(347) 990-1875 Ext. 4401 Office
Work Cell: (646) 919-7162

Dr. Sheila Lyle – 6-11 Assistant Principal
(347) 990-1875 Ext. 4107
Work Cell: (646) 919-7162

Jason Russell- 6-8 Dean of Culture
(347) 990 1875 Ext. 4411
Google Voice: (201) 523-5473

Kareen Armstrong – 6-8 School Counselor
(347) 900-1875 Ext. 4403
Google Voice: (201) 523-4089

Dannielle Colon-6-8 Family Engagement
Coordinator
(347) 900-1875 Ext. 5194
Google Voice: (201) 500-8766

School Nurse
(347) 900-1875 Ext. 4106

For the latest in school information, calendar updates, policies, and procedures contact the school office or visit the school website at:

www.challengecharterschools.org

More information, alerts, photos, news can be found on...

Instagram [@challengecharter](https://www.instagram.com/challengecharter) on Facebook at [@challengeprepcharter](https://www.facebook.com/challengeprepcharter)

Use **#ChallengeFierce** to spread our School Spirit!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The full board meets monthly in accordance with the bylaws of CPCS.

Meetings are held at the Challenge Charter School Offices, 1520 Central Avenue, Far Rockaway, NY 11691 unless notification of a different location is announced, or virtual meetings are required due to unforeseen circumstances. Dates and time can be found on our school calendar on our website at: www.challengecharterschools.org.

Current Board Chair, Frederica Jeffries - boardchair@challengecharterschools.org

CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Challenge Charter Middle School takes pride in its communications efforts with all stakeholders of the school. To ensure that your concerns or issues are heard by the appropriate individual who can provide you with a response, the Board of Trustees asks that you follow the school's Chain of Command outlined below.

Submitting a Concern

Step 1 - If a parent or community member would like to express a concern, they should contact the teacher, supervisor, coach, or staff member who is directly involved with the concern or situation.

Step 2 - If a parent or community member has discussed their concern with personnel referred to in Step 1, and the parent or community member feels the issue needs to be discussed further, they should next contact the building Principal or Assistant Principal.

Step 3 - If a parent or community member has followed Step 1 and Step 2 and feels the issue warrants yet further discussion, the parent or community member should then contact the CEO with the concern and they will be directed to the appropriate person to discuss the concern.

Step 4 - If the concerns still remains after completion of Steps 1, 2 and 3, the parent or community member should contact the Board Chair, who will then listen to the concerns and in consultation with the Board of Trustees will redirect the individual back to the appropriate level or request that the concern be placed on a Board of Trustees agenda for full Board discussion. It is the intent of the Chain of Command to resolve concerns and issues during the earliest steps with the individual(s) directly involved with the concerns. The Chain of Command was established to ensure a structured communications opportunity for stakeholders and decisions are made according to the school's Philosophy, Policies, and Procedures.

Submitting a Formal Complaint Against the School

Step 1 - Familiarize yourself with the school's guidelines and contact the school's leadership. Begin by contacting school leadership to try to resolve any violations, issues or complaints. Before doing so, we encourage you to familiarize yourself with the school's policies, guidelines, and reference materials. Such items include, but are not limited to, parent handbooks, student discipline policies related to your concern, dress code pamphlets, and school-issued memorandums. Determine whether the school's actions related to your complaint fall within the school's policies.

Step 2 - Appeal to the school's Board of Trustees. If after contacting the school's leadership you are not satisfied with the outcome or decision pertaining to the complaint, you may appeal to the school's Board of Trustees. The Board meets publicly on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to either contact the Board directly to schedule items on the meeting agenda or contact the school/parent committee that deals with such matters.

Step 3 - Appeal to the school's authorizer (the education organization in charge of your school). If after your appeal you are not satisfied with the Board of Trustees' decision, and if your complaint involves a violation of either the school's policies or its charter, you may submit a formal complaint to the school's authorizer (the education organization in charge of your school).

Charter Schools Authorized by the DOE

Contact 212-374-5419 or charteroversight@schools.nyc.gov

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Below is a listing of community support centers in the area for your continued support:

Catholic Charities Rockaway Mental Health Services
1847 Mott Ave.
Far Rockaway, NY 11691
718-337-6800

Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center
1288 Central Avenue
Far Rockaway, NY 11691
718-945-7150

Safe Space
16-00 Central Avenue
Far Rockaway, NY 11691
718-471-4160

St. John's Episcopal Hospital
327 Beach 19th Street
Far Rockaway, NY 11691
718-869-7000