

Challenger News

Keeping Parents and Campuses Connected

February 2012



February at a Glance

- **February 13–14 (PS–5)**
Valentine Parties
- **February 17**
Founders' Day Assembly
- **February 20**
Presidents' Day—No School
- **February 21 (K–8)**
Science Fairs Begin *
- **February 23–24 (PS)**
Reports of Progress Sent Home



CHALLENGER
SCHOOL

* Parents may attend

Sureness and Good Behavior

In order to achieve good behavior, we must first recognize bad behavior.

A child is mismanaging when he hurts himself or others. When children strike out at others with anger, ridicule, or jealousy; when they hit, shove, grab, or spread rumors; or when they refuse to do homework or participate well in class, they are destructive to others, themselves, or both.

Study the Situation—Is the Child to Blame?

Although we must correct children when they mismanage, before blaming poor behavior on children, the adult in charge needs to evaluate his own consistency and management practices. Sometimes the adult in charge is inconsistent or unprepared.

Nevertheless, while we work on our techniques, we must insist that children manage themselves well. When a child bites a sibling or a friend, the parent or teacher must correct the behavior. Even if we are learning as we go, *we must insist* on positive behavior.

Expectations

When we expect some children to behave well, but do not expect it of a certain child, we deliver a clear, though unstated, message that he or she is incapable.

Unintentionally, by lowering expectations, we allow excuses to weaken a child's ability to manage and may inflict permanent damage to his future self-worth!

Sureness

Sureness is the key to discipline and maintaining consistent guidelines.

Children respond to parents, teachers, and supervisors who are **sure of their guidelines**. Teach the behavior that you expect—firmly, kindly, and with **sureness**. Be decisive. "I'm sorry that you did that. You must apologize to your friend for hurting him. You will not do that again."

If you are not sure about your requirements, children will not believe you. They will feel more powerful than you are in determining what is best for them. Think, "What if this child were about to put his fingers in the electric socket—or throw a rock through the window—or bite another child? Would I stop her?" Of course.

We are comfortable about stopping immediate danger. Then, why wouldn't we care about future damage?



Make sure your expectations are consistent for all children.

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Thinking Time

If **sureness** doesn't work (which rarely happens), you may want to use Thinking Time.

Set NO time limit. A time limit is a punishment.

Thinking Time teaches people how to manage. It's essential to follow the steps precisely.

Separate the child from the action or activity. Move him four to five feet away from the activity but still in close proximity. Say, "I'm sorry, Billy, but you have a problem, and you need to take time to think about it. You must decide what you are going to do about your problem."

1. The child must acknowledge the problem.

Be sure the child maintains eye contact with you all the while. Say, "What were you doing that is not appropriate (harmful—poor—bad—hurtful)?" Or, "Tell me what you think your problem is."

Your whole effort will fail unless the child keeps sustained eye contact with you.

2. The child must accept responsibility and determine that he will manage.

You may need to encourage and remind the child to maintain focus while thinking. Watch for any subtle changes that the child makes, such as looking sad, forlorn, serious, or sorry. Don't appear overly concerned or unsure. Appear confident and expect the child to understand. It may take a while for the child to stop being rebellious and to become resolute.

3. The child must make a verbal commitment.

The child must tell you how she will change her behavior. Say, "You have said that your problem was putting your hands on other people when they don't want you to. What are you going to do instead?"

Insist at this point that the child talk to you. You can help, but don't answer for the child. If the child is able to talk, an answer of "yes" or "no" to a question like "Are you going to keep your hands to yourself?" is not acceptable. The child must answer something like, "I'm going to keep my hands to myself."

End Thinking Time as soon as the child makes a commitment to manage behavior better, and acknowledge her as soon as she manages well.

Spring Break

Though winter may have a firm grip this time of year, spring is coming! In March and April, Challenger campuses will take time off for Spring Break. Please make arrangements for child care during this time. Here are the dates to keep in mind for each region:

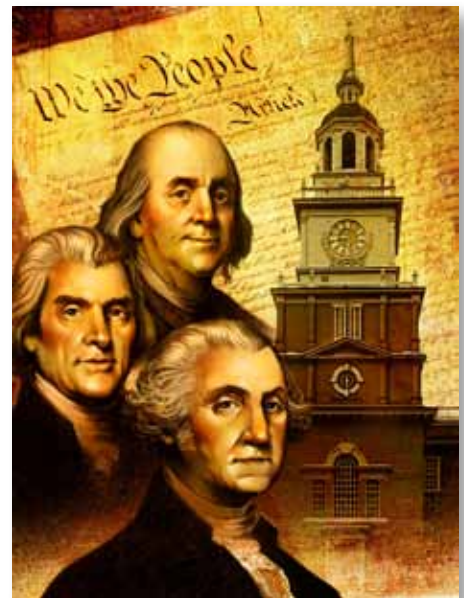
Texas	March 12–16
Idaho	March 26–30
Nevada	April 2–6
California and Utah	April 9–13



Spring break is coming soon!

Founders' Day

There will be no school on Presidents' Day, Monday, February 20. In conjunction with the occasion, Challenger campuses will hold spirit assemblies the previous week to remember American heritage and our nation's founders.



Challenger School will hold special Founders' Day assemblies on February 17.

The commemoration which Challenger recognizes as Founders' Day evolved primarily from the national celebration of George Washington's birthday.

The Founding Fathers, including Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and James Madison, fought for freedom and independence and worked tirelessly to create an innovative form of government—a constitutional republic.

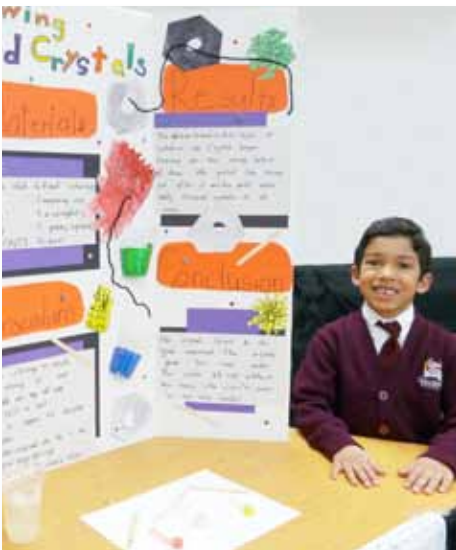
We honor the lives and the work of these patriots by dedicating ourselves to the preservation of freedom and liberty.



Science Fair (K-8)

Students have been using the scientific method to conduct experiments and complete projects for the Science Fair to be held in late February. Students will be explaining their knowledge and discoveries to visitors.

In years past, many Challenger students have gone on to win regional and state awards for their intriguing and innovative projects.



The Science Fair will feature student displays and demonstrations explaining the projects.

Check with your school for the specific dates and times the Science Fair exhibits will be on display. Challenger students will be pleased to show you what they've learned.

Valentine Parties (PS-5)

Valentine's Day is recognized as a day to send tokens of appreciation to those who are important to us. At Challenger, we have Valentine parties with activities to celebrate the day. Students may bring valentines for their classmates if they wish.

Note: Please do not send food or toys with your child. Treats will be furnished by Challenger.



Challenger students will learn about the origin of Valentine's Day customs this month.



Standardized Testing (K-8)



Challenger students will take the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills in March.

Challenger School will be conducting standardized testing the latter part of March.

Our students have a history of performing very well on national tests, and we are confident that this year they will continue to prove the benefit of a Challenger education!

Tax Number

For those who need it for their tax returns, Challenger's tax ID is **94-1709563.**

Heard It in the Halls

Sunnyvale (CA) campus—When asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, a second grader responded confidently, “A farmer, because George Washington said that farming was ‘most delectable’ . . . especially seeing ‘plants rise from the ground and flourish.’”

Newark (CA) campus—During departure time, a kindergarten student looked intently at his Program Director and then at the portrait of John Adams on the hallway wall. Finally, he asked very seriously, “Is that your father?”

Before the Program Director could respond, a four-year-old preschooler piped up, “No way! He was a president!”



Challenger preschoolers will have in-class Valentine's Day parties this month.

Learning Curve



Open Houses for Prospective Challenger Parents

Prospective Challenger parents will continue to have opportunities to visit Challenger campuses this month. Please tell friends interested in enrolling their children at Challenger about upcoming Open Houses.

All Challenger campuses will host Open Houses on the following February dates:

Saturday, Feb. 4	9 a.m.–Noon
Tuesday, Feb. 7	9 a.m.–6 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 16	9 a.m.–6 p.m.



Preschool



Enrollment Considerations

In Challenger's all-day preschool, your children are in a stimulating learning environment. Our program is fun-filled, with more phonics, math, science, activities, music, and thinking skills than in half-day programs.

Teachers and students are excited to come to school each day. Consider our all-day program to maximize your child's preschool experience!



Be sure that your child comes to school in clothing appropriate for the weather. He needs a coat, hat, gloves, and boots to play outside on cold or wintry days.