



CHALLENGER ELEMENTARY

601 County Road 61 * Thief River Falls MN 56701
218-681-2345 * fax 218-681-2905



Patrick Marolt, Principal

Mike Wiene, Assistant Principal

August 11, 2025

Dear Challenger Students & Parents,

I hope this letter finds everyone safe, healthy, and enjoying the final days of summer. Our entire Challenger staff is so excited to welcome you back for the 2025–2026 school year! Whether this is your first year or you're a returning family, we want to sincerely thank you for your continued support and partnership. We've missed our students and can't wait to greet them with big smiles and open hearts.

Below you will find important information about what's new, what's changed, and what remains the same at Challenger:

SCHOOL HOURS: School starts at 8:15 a.m. and the children will be dismissed at 2:55 p.m. Children may enter the building at 7:50 a.m. On the **first day only**, parents may walk their child to their classroom. After that, students will enter the building independently, and staff will help guide them to their classrooms or to the café for breakfast.

If your child needs to be here earlier than 7:50 a.m. you will need to enroll in Latchkey. If your student is being picked up after school he/she needs to be picked up no later than 3:00 p.m., staff will be with the kids watching for their ride. After 3:00 there is no supervision and your student will be enrolled in Latchkey. Latchkey Registration is available online on the District website under 'Department' >> Community Ed and at the district office through Community Ed. Our office hours at Challenger Elementary School will be 7:45 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

MORNING DROP-OFF PROCEDURES FOR CHALLENGER ELEMENTARY PARKING LOT: To ensure a smooth and safe morning drop-off process, please follow these updated procedures (and map) for entering the parking lot:

LANE 1: DROP-OFF ONLY

- Entry Point: Enter Lane 1.
- Drop-Off: Quickly drop off your child at the **designated drop-off area** (see map).
- Exit: Continue driving and exit the parking lot via the west driveway following the painted arrows.

LANE 2A : DROP-OFF ONLY

- Entry Point: Enter Lane 2.
- Drop-Off: Quickly drop off your child at the **designated drop-off area** (see map).
- Exit: Continue driving and exit the parking lot via the middle driveway.

LANE 2B: PARK AND WALK

- Entry Point: Enter Lane 2.
- Parking: Park your vehicle in the designated parking area (first lot).
- Escort: Walk your child to the front main door of the school.
- Exit: Return to your vehicle and exit the parking lot via the middle driveway.

****TRAFFIC SAFETY Stopping in the front of the building creates a backup.** After the first day, parents can walk their kids to the entrance and we will have staff there to meet students and walk them to their classroom, or to the café for breakfast. (The first day parents can walk to their child's classroom.) **To ensure the safety of everyone, parents/visitors will not be allowed to come into the building unless approved by administration.** There is no traffic allowed on the north side of the building, this is for bus traffic only.

***OPEN HOUSE:** We are planning to have an Open House. It is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 27th** from 3:15-5:30 pm. If your (student's) last name starts with A-L, you are invited to come from 3:15-4:15, M-Z is invited from 4:30-5:30 pm.

***ABSENCES:** Please call the Attendance Line/24-hour messaging system at **681-2095** whenever your child will be late or absent from school. If you forget to call the Attendance Line before 9:00 a.m. please call our office at 681-2345 to report your child's absence. If you know your child will be out of school for more than a day or two please contact your child's teacher to arrange for homework. Please see our Attendance Policy in the Challenger Student & Family Handbook available on our website.

***DAYCARE TRANSPORTATION: Request for Transportation to/from a Childcare Provider** form is required each year if your child is riding to and/or from school to an address other than your home, even if the information is the same as last year. You can find this form, as well as a change of address form for transportation, on our district website. Return the completed form to the Transportation Department as soon as possible if you haven't done so already, there is a turn in date of **August 15, 2025** indicated on the form. Our concern is getting your children to their destination safely, and with as little confusion as possible. We need to start the school year with the correct transportation directions. Any time the directions on this initial form changes, the Transportation Dept. needs **WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION** to make the adjustment. Please allow a minimum of five days to complete a change. Please contact the Transportation Department if you have any questions or to verify and confirm your child's transportation needs.

TRANSPORTATION NOTES: Challenger Elementary School is no longer writing bus passes. School transportation is responsible for getting our kids home or to daycare after school (not to a friend's house, a birthday party, or to any address not provided to the school at the start of the year). If your student will not be riding his/her scheduled bus please call the transportation dept at **681-7077**. Contact the school if your child will be picked up rather than riding the bus after school; we also need to know who will be picking up your child. If your child is normally picked up after school but someone different will be picking them up; we need your written authorization before we can let them go with someone different. **All changes must be received by 1:30 p.m.** It is for the safety and well-being of your kids! They get confused and anxious when their plans change often and at the last minute. We appreciate your help.

***SECURITY:** The main entrance will be the only door open to Challenger Elementary School. After 8:25 a.m. the interior doors will be locked and there will not be access to the classroom areas of the building. The double doors between the preschool area and the kindergarten hallway will also be locked. If a student needs to leave early for any reason they will be held in the office until the parent/guardian calls to notify the office that they are out front to pick up the child. The student will then be sent out or brought out to the waiting vehicle. All parents/visitors need to enter the main door.

***1:1 TECHNOLOGY:** The Technology Department implemented a few changes for the iPads at Challenger. The 1:1 forms and payment will be online on ParentVue. **NO CASH** will be collected at Open House.

***Online Registration (OLR)/ParentVue:** This is our process to enroll/register new students and for our existing families to verify and edit their file information. To activate your ParentVue account; go under the Families tab on the district's web site click on ParentVue and follow the prompts. This page will allow you to view and make changes on your student's profile, it is also how you will schedule your Parent/Teacher conferences. We understand that this is fairly new and confusing, we are all learning together. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

***CLASS LISTS:** The class lists for 2025–2026 will be available on ParentVue the morning of August 18th. These lists may change after the initial posting, depending on different situations. We will do our best to keep you updated.

We are excited for the new school year to begin and we look forward to seeing you at our Open House on Wednesday, August 27th.

Sincerely,



Patrick Marolt
Principal

Lane 1: Drop off only and exit via the west driveway

Lane 2 A: Drop off only and exit via the middle driveway

Lane 2 B: Park and walk your child to the front main door and exit via the middle driveway.

