"Making my school a better and safer environment is one of my biggest priorities. Giving students a voice on campus through this team is an honor that I am very happy to be a part of."

-Student
ABOUT OUR WORK

Challenge Success is a non-profit school reform organization that works to improve K-12 student well-being, engagement, and belonging through our School Program, Research and Surveys, and Workshops.

Our unique approach is grounded in research about effective education and healthy child and adolescent development, engages and educates all stakeholders in the school community, and elevates the voice and perspective of all students. While many other organizations address student needs after problems arise, we offer upstream solutions that help to create systems within schools where students are engaged, healthy, and thriving.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We know from our research that well-being, belonging, and engagement are intrinsically connected and critical for student success.

- We recognize that schools have the potential to play a major role in youth mental health by providing a positive, safe, and affirming environment for students.

- We seek transformational, systems-level change in schools.

- We are committed to continuing our efforts to center equity in our work.

- We seek a broader impact on the PK-12 education system beyond our direct work with schools.

- We value partnerships and collaborating with like-minded organizations.
OUR KEY STRENGTHS

STUDENTS AT THE CENTER
We center the student experience in the change process and engage students as co-designers.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
We partner with all stakeholder groups to redefine student success and focus on well-being, belonging, and engagement.

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES
We ground our work in data and research-based practices to support continuous learning and improvement.
20 YEARS OF IMPACT

Challenge Success is at a pivotal point in our organizational development. Now, as we enter the next phase, we are committed to building on our success by expanding our reach and continuing to evolve our content and service offerings to ensure we provide the highest quality, most effective support to school communities.

DEEPEN IMPACT

With the Strategic Plan in place, we are ready to expand our reach, influence the national narrative, and yield more impact in each school engagement.

STARTUP MODE

Research sparks the idea for Challenge Success; convening of experts gets it off the ground. Early years are spent testing and refining our programs.

GROWTH PHASE

We become a 501c3 nonprofit in 2012 as interest in our work steadily grows.

COVID YEARS

Covid changes everything we know about school, work, and family life. We adapt to meet the emerging needs of schools and receive crucial philanthropic support to sustain us.

In 2015, we publish our book of best practices for schools, Overloaded & Underprepared.

Mental health becomes a central societal focus in the aftermath of the pandemic. In 2021, we publish the Kids Under Pressure report with NBC, and in 2022 we are invited to join the US Surgeon General’s Call to Action on Youth Mental Health.

2003

2023

www.challengesuccess.org
THE NEXT CHAPTER

Since our inception, we have partnered with over 650 schools nationwide and surveyed over 350,000 individuals. It is time for our message to be heard by many more schools, families, and students across the country.

We are ready for our next chapter and grateful to have so many partners joining us on this journey!

THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

EQUITY & ACCESS AT THE CORE OF OUR WORK

Expand our reach to include all types of schools across the country and meet the needs of more diverse school communities.

ENDURING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT & IMPACT

Deepen the impact we have on school systems and demonstrate proof points to increase adoption of our services.

IMPACTFUL THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Influence the national narrative through thought leadership and research efforts to achieve widespread and systemic impact.

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL

Build on our strong market position and improve operating performance to become even more financially self-reliant.
THE 2022-23 YEAR IN REVIEW

"I have two high school teenagers, and the perspective and data that you offer in the Healthier Approach to College Admissions workshop is priceless! THANK YOU!! This is just what I needed to hear at this moment, as my son (and first born) is traversing his junior year, and we’re both learning about the college admissions process. I appreciate ALL of you!"
- High School Parent

614 supporters from 18 states made financial contributions totaling $845,500 to help fund our work with schools and families.

Students completed our survey in the 2022-2023 school year; Top sources of stress include workload, grades/assessments, lack of sleep, time management/procrastination, and future plans.

People registered for our events; Topics included restoring youth mental health, college admissions, pedagogy, and parenting.
In our surveys of 65,000 students this year, we saw increasing diversity in terms of race/ethnicity and gender identity. The pandemic has brought attention to the adolescent mental health crisis and lack of belonging and engagement for students, and we recognize that these issues span all demographics and are particularly acute for historically marginalized groups.

We believe that all students have assets to build on and sustain, and that when we center design on those most marginalized by the current system, all students benefit.

"This is so helpful and so powerful. Thank you so much. [In the Challenge Success survey] we can really see significant differences between these groups and now we can take some concrete action to improve things. This work is really going to make a tangible difference for our students and staff. I’m so grateful for your partnership."

-School Leader
ELEVATED CONCERN FOR GIRLS AND STUDENTS WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

We are particularly concerned about the higher rates of poor mental health and stress-related health symptoms for girls and students who identify as non-binary, transgender, unsure, or genderqueer / gender non-conforming. While many boys are also experiencing high levels of mental health issues, there may be reasons such as societal gender norms that makes it less likely for them to report their experiences (Arcand, M., Bilodeau-Houle, A., Juster, R. P., & Marin, M. F., 2023). By focusing our efforts on those students who are reporting the highest levels of challenges, we can improve conditions in schools for students of all genders.

GENDER IDENTITY OF STUDENTS SURVEYED IN 2022-2023

We are particularly concerned about the higher rates of poor mental health and stress-related health symptoms for girls and students who identify as non-binary, transgender, unsure, or genderqueer / gender non-conforming. While many boys are also experiencing high levels of mental health issues, there may be reasons such as societal gender norms that makes it less likely for them to report their experiences (Arcand, M., Bilodeau-Houle, A., Juster, R. P., & Marin, M. F., 2023). By focusing our efforts on those students who are reporting the highest levels of challenges, we can improve conditions in schools for students of all genders.

STUDENTS WHO REPORTED THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCES IN THE PAST MONTH | BY GENDER IDENTITY

*Includes Transgender, Genderqueer, Gender non-conforming, Unsure, and Non-binary

**Such as anxiety or depression
THANK YOU TO OUR SCHOOL & DISTRICT PARTNERS

Through our School Program, Workshops, Surveys, and SPACE Camp Professional Development, we worked with a total of 149 schools, districts, and school groups during the 2022-23 school year. Our work reached at least 28 states and 4 countries outside the US, in addition to virtual attendees from far and wide.

"Working with Challenge Success keeps getting better every year. Connecting with other schools is very valuable."
- School Leader
2022-2023 PARTNER SCHOOLS & DISTRICTS

Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School - MA
American College of Sofia - Bulgaria
Appleby College - Ontario
Archbishop Mitty High School - CA
Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts - AR
Avenues: The World School - NY
Beaver Country Day School - MA
Bedford High School - MA
Bellarmine College Preparatory - CA
Bennett Day School - IL
Blach Intermediate School - CA
Brooks School - MA
Brownell Talbot School - NE
Byram Hills High School - NY
Campbell Hall Episcopal School - CA
Cascades Academy - OR
Castilleja School - CA
Cathedral Catholic High School - CA
Chaminade College Preparatory School (Middle School) - CA
Chaminade College Preparatory School (Upper School) - CA
Chandler School - CA
Christian Brothers High School - CA
Columbus Tustin Middle School - CA
Commonwealth School - MA
Concord Middle School - MA
Concord-Carlisle Regional High School - MA
Crescent School - Ontario
Davidson Young Scholars for the Highly Gifted - NV
Davis Joint Unified School District - CA
De La Salle High School - CA
Dover-Sherborn High School - MA
École Jeannine Manuel - France
Fountain Valley School of Colorado - CO
George Washington High School - CA
Georgetown Day School - DC
Grace Church School - NY
Graland Country Day School - CO
Gulliver Preparatory School - FL
Hackley School - NY
Head-Royce School - CA
Henry M. Gunn High School - CA
Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy - FL
Homestead High School - CA
Hopkinton High School - MA
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy - IL
Imago Dei Middle School - AZ
Incarnate Word Academy - Corpus Christi - TX
Iolani School - HI
iQ Academy California - Los Angeles - CA
John F. Kennedy High School - CA

"Our work with Challenge Success is the exact work that the world of education needs!!"
-School Leader
"I really appreciate the expertise and support from our coaches to walk the students through the framework of idea generation, evaluation, and then moving forward. Their advice is invaluable."

-School Leader
Saratoga High School - CA
Saratoga Union School District - CA
Seabury Hall - HI
Sequoyah School - CA
Shady Hill School - MA
Shady Side Academy - PA
Shanghai American School - China
South Carolina Governor’s School of Science and Math - SC
South Pasadena High School - CA
St. Andrew’s Schools (Hawaii) - HI
St. Michael’s Catholic Academy - TX
Stratford School - CA
Tampa Preparatory School - FL
Thayer Academy - MA
The Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering - AL
The Alexander Dawson School - CO
The Alexander Dawson School - NV
The Bishop Strachan School - Ontario
The Bolles School - FL
The College Preparatory School - CA
The Grauer School - CA
The Harker School - CA
The Kinkaid School - TX
The Lovett School - GA
The Miami Valley School - OH
The Mississippi School for Math and Science - MS
The Northwest School - WA
The Potomac School - VA
The Quarry Lane School - CA
The Rashi School - MA
The Thacher School - CA
Thornton Junior High - CA
Thurston Middle School - Laguna Beach - CA
Trinity College School - Ontario
United Nations International School - Manhattan Campus - NY
University High School - Tucson - AZ
University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy - MI
Viewpoint School - CA

Walker Junior High School (CA) - CA
Washtenaw Community College - MI
Wellesley High School - MA
Westborough High School - MA
Windward School - CA
Xavier College Preparatory High School - CA

"Challenge Success serves as a great outside metric that allows us to measure our progress while also holding us accountable to do the work, which is sometimes difficult with competing priorities."

-School Leader
THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD & ADVISORS FOR THEIR VISION & LEADERSHIP

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*Outgoing member
WELCOME TO OUR 2023-24 INCOMING BOARD MEMBERS & ADVISORS

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"Challenge Success has brought me a voice and power, and I hope to keep making changes to better the student body."
-Student
THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF FOR THEIR DEDICATION & BRIGHT SPIRITS

Lindsay Baerg*
Kimberly Cawkwell
Caitlin Ciannella
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Megan Pacheco
Denise Pope
Drew Schrader
Samantha Selby
Eric Spaly

"We love the work, and feel strongly about using the SPACE framework to make intentional changes to make the school community better. We've greatly appreciated the teamwork and the collaboration- our Coach was great."

-School Leader

*Not pictured
THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS FOR THEIR COLLABORATION

MTC
MASTERY TRANSCRIPT CONSORTIUM

NCSSS
National Consortium of Secondary STEM Schools

Reach
Student Life Management

Stanford
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS FOR THEIR CARE & GENEROUS SUPPORT

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Our definition of success is:
How whole you feel.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Millie Gong</td>
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<td>Martha Jones</td>
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Stacy & Forrest North  
Kristine Nyhus  
Maisie O’Flanagan  
Elizabeth O’Malley

To us, well-being means:

Having the space for authentic emotions
We are here today because we believe:

You are the seeds of the greatest generation!
Barbara & Greg Rosston
William Rouse
Nicole & Amir Rubin
Lureen Ruiz
Trish Russell
Marla Rutenberg
Susan Saal
Rebecca & Tod Sacerdoti
Sacred Heart Schools Atherton
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Jocelyn Saiki
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Heather Spain
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Janelle Spanier
Marissa Spencer
Kristen Speth
Chris Spetzler
Penelope Spilios
John Spitters

We wish the teens in our lives could:
- Share their feelings with us
- Tell us what would help them trust us more
This report includes donor recognition from January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, reflecting our shift to a July-June fiscal year. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of names. If you have any questions or feedback, please reach out to giving@challengesuccess.org.
2022-23 FINANCES
JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023

REVENUE

Earned Revenue $1,143,300
Donations $835,500

EXPENSES

Wages & Benefits $1,697,560
Admin/General/Development $166,655
Direct Program Expense $109,255

SUMMARY

Total Revenue $1,978,800
Total Expenses $1,973,470

Converted from cash to accrual basis as of July 1, 2022.
SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 2023-24 FUNDRAISERS

2023 FALL ANNUAL FUND

Last year, you helped to raise over $300,000 in our Annual Fund drive! Stay tuned for events and updates coming this fall to kick off our fundraising for the year.

October-November, 2023

2024 WINTER FUNDRAISER LUNCHEON

We can’t wait to see you in-person again at our winter luncheon! We are thrilled to welcome bestselling author, Lisa Damour, Ph.D., to share insights from her latest book.

February 7, 2024 | Palo Alto, CA

READY TO MAKE A GIFT TODAY?

Scan the code to visit our website and learn about all of the ways you can support Challenge Success, including gifts through Donor Advised Funds, corporate matching, and more.
OUR MISSION

Challenge Success partners with school communities to elevate student voice and implement research-based, equity-centered strategies that improve student well-being, belonging, and engagement.

OUR VISION

Our vision is that educational systems value each student for their unique identities, assets, and individual definitions of success and effectively prepare them for the variety of opportunities and challenges they will encounter in school and beyond.

OUR EQUITY COMMITMENT

Challenge Success continuously examines and revises our work and seeks to disrupt patterns of inequity to further well-being, belonging, and engagement for each student, especially those for whom identity, culture, or socioeconomic status has resulted in barriers to access and success. We believe:

- Change starts with self, including active self-reflection to notice our own implicit biases and recognize how our lived experiences influence our perspectives and decision-making.
- All students, families, and communities have assets to build on and sustain.
- Centering design on those most marginalized by the current system benefits all students.
- Approaches to change must be systemic, context-based, and targeted at policies and practices.