

WELCOME TO SOUTH DAKOTA DI!

Affiliate Tournament: March 28, 2026

Georgia Morse Middle School
309 E Capitol Ave, Pierre, SD

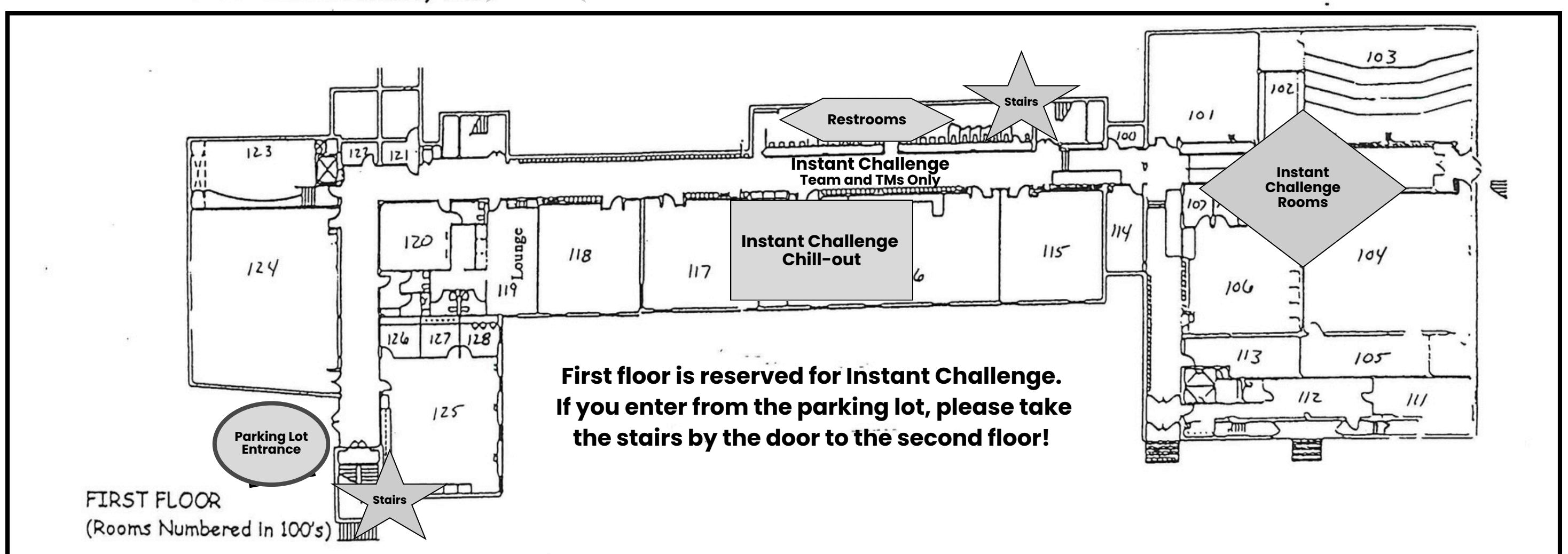
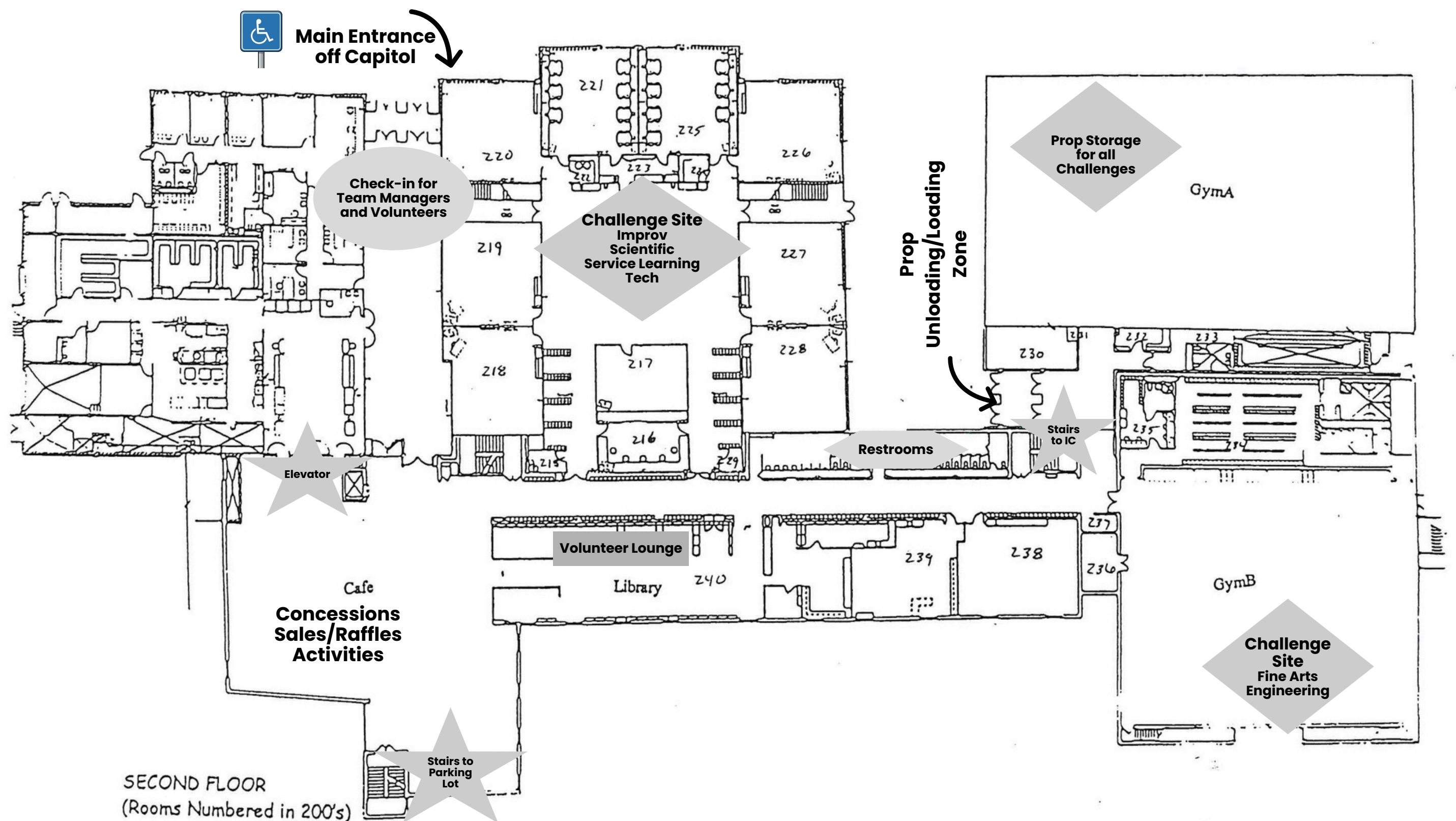
Handicap Accessible parking in the front of the building off Capitol Ave.

Additional parking in the lower lot off Highland Street.

Volunteers and Team Managers: Check in near the main entrance on Capitol Ave.

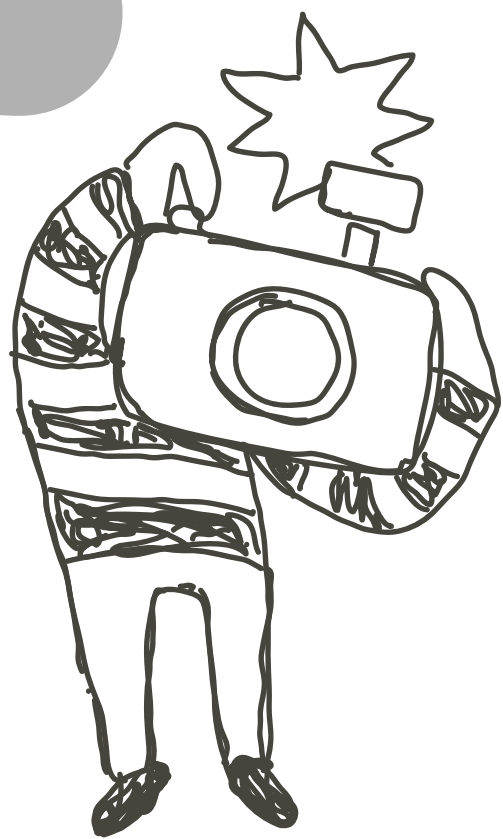
Concessions available on-site.

All main challenges will take place on the second floor. Instant Challenges are located on the first floor and are accessible only to team members and managers.



TODAY'S SCHEDULE

	Organization	Team Name	Level	Main Challenge	Instant Challenge
Room 226					
Technical: Win It Big	Watertown School District	Space Nuts	EL	9:00 AM	2:30 PM
	Tri-Valley	Teal Phoenixes	EL	9:20 AM	2:00 PM
	Eagle Butte School District 20-1	Mini Game Kids	EL	9:40 AM	1:30 PM
	West Central School District	The Return of Destiny Awaits	EL	10:00 AM	11:15 AM
	Rapid City Catholic Schools	Juicy Salty Axolotl	EL	10:40 AM	1:00 PM
	Pierre Indian Learning Center	The Starshow Warriors	EL	11:00 AM	12:45 PM
	Spearfish School District	The 'Lucky' Peeps	EL	11:20 AM	10:15 AM
	Groton Area DI	The Seven Sassy Pickles	EL	11:40 AM	2:45 PM
	Groton Area DI	5 Chicken Jockeys	EL	1:00 PM	11:30 AM
	Zion Lutheran School	The Magic Magicians	EL	1:20 PM	3:15 PM
	Groton Area	Crazy Coconuts	EL	1:40 PM	3:00 PM
	Spearfish School District	The Game Show Gangstas	EL	2:20 PM	1:15 PM
	Pierre School District	Intimidating Bubbles	ML	2:40 PM	10:30 AM
	Chrysalis Collective	Mysterious Society	ML	3:00 PM	11:00 AM
	Huron Destination Imagination	Bobbie and the Bobettes	ML	3:20 PM	10:00 AM
	Groton Area DI	We Who Must Not Be Named	ML	4:20 PM	3:00 PM
Rapid City Catholic Schools	The Spiky Balloons	SL	4:40 PM	9:15 AM	



Let's see the spirit of DI!

Use the QR code to share your photos and videos!

Watch for your photos to be displayed at tournament and on South Dakota DI Social Media!

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

	Organization	Team Name	Level	Main Challenge	Instant Challenge
Gym B					
Fine Arts: Becoming Super	Pierre School District	The Pierre Girlys	EL	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
	Huron Destination Imagination	The Cooking Gamers	EL	9:40 AM	12:30 PM
	Tri-Valley	6 Doomanators	EL	10:00 AM	12:45 PM
	Rapid City Catholic Schools	Surfing Bobinators Surf Again	EL	10:20 AM	12:15 PM
	Pierre School District	The Crazy Cats	EL	11:40 AM	10:00 AM
	Rapid City Catholic Schools	The Page Turners	EL	12:00 PM	10:30 AM
	Watertown School District	Enchanted	EL	12:20 PM	9:15 AM
	Rapid City Catholic Schools	Disney - (minus)	ML	12:40 PM	10:45 AM
	Huron Destination Imagination	Mystery Ink	SL	1:00 PM	9:45 AM
Engineering: Above and Beyond					
Engineering: Above and Beyond	Huron Destination Imagination	Top Secret Heroes	EL	2:20 PM	11:45 AM
	Eagle Butte School District 20-1	Pop Builds Structure	EL	2:40 PM	11:00 AM
	Zion Lutheran School	S.A.R. (Scientists and Robbers)	EL	3:00 PM	10:30 AM
	Pierre School District	Sinking Survivors	ML	3:40 PM	2:30 PM
	Rapid City Christian School	Simply Too Addicted to Dr Pepper	ML	4:00 PM	1:00 PM
Room 220					
Improv: Casting Shadows	Pierre School District	Da Improv People + 1 Character	EL	10:40 AM	9:30 AM
	Huron Destination Imagination	5 Musketeers	EL	11:00 AM	9:45 AM
	Huron Destination Imagination	4 Elemental Ghosts	SL	11:20 AM	9:00 AM
Scientific: Unforgettable					
Scientific: Unforgettable	Eagle Butte School District 20-1	C-EB Takis	ML	1:00 PM	9:00 AM
	Spearfish School District	Spearfish Memory Menders	ML	1:20 PM	9:15 AM
	Rapid City Catholic Schools	Orange Ducks!!!	ML	1:40 PM	9:30 AM
	Pierre Indian Learning Center	Memory Weavers	ML	2:00 PM	9:45 AM
Service Learning					
Service Learning	Huron Destination Imagination	Pretty Penguins	EL	4:20 PM	11:00 AM
	Watertown School District	Trial and Error	SL	4:40 PM	9:30 AM

Teams should check in for Main Challenge with all props 30 minutes prior to performance time.

Teams should check in for IC 20 minutes prior to competition time.

No phones, devices, bags, etc. allowed in IC.

Engineering Teams Weight Check-in Times

Huron- 9:00

Eagle Butte-9:30

Pierre- 10:00

RCC- 11:00

Zion-11:30

CHECK OUT OUR CHALLENGES!

Technical
Win It Big
Head Appraiser:
Tom Brist

- Create and present a game show.
- Include a host character and at least one contestant.
- Build tension with a raising-the-stakes event.
- Design and create a gimmick, a reveal, and a razzle-dazzle effect for your game show.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements

Scientific
Unforgettable
Head Appraiser:
Jessica Simmons

- Create and present a story about how a character recalling a memory leads to a realization.
- Integrate your team's research about the science of human memory into the Presentation.
- Create and present a memory depiction. Enhance the memory depiction with a special effect.
- Include a misdirection in your Presentation.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements

Fine Arts
Becoming Super
Head Appraiser:
Laurel McNickle

- Create and present an origin story that shows how one character becomes a superhero and a different character becomes a supervillain.
- Use theatrical methods to portray a difficult decision, situation, and/or event.
- Use stage makeup on at least one team member.
- Design and create one technical costume.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements

Improv
Casting Shadows
Head Appraiser:
Katie Groeblichhoff

- Create and present an improvisational skit based on an inciting incident.
- Research pairs of opposing themes and incorporate a pair into the skit.
- Include a randomly selected setting.
- Research resolution tropes and incorporate one of them into the skit.
- Use a shadow screen and a box of materials to enhance the skit.

Engineering
Above & Beyond
Head Appraiser:
Parker Rieffenberger

- Test how much weight a team-created structure can hold by placing weights onto the Structure as far from the center as possible.
- Create and present a story in which something important expands, extends, or goes above and beyond.
- Begin the Presentation with an in medias res scene.
- Include an expansion effect.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements

Service Learning
Give & Take
Head Appraiser:
Arlinda Gylfe

- Identify, design, carry out, and evaluate a project that addresses a need in a real community.
- Create and present a story about at least two conflicting characters who have to work together to address or resolve a dispute.
- Include a misunderstanding and at least two different viewpoints.
- Enhance your Presentation with a dispute depiction.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements

- Rapid-fire, surprise creative problem-solving challenge.
- Teams must solve the problem in 5-10 minutes.
- May be a task-based, performance-based, or combination challenge.
- IC is designed to test quick thinking, teamwork, and the ability to innovate under pressure.

Instant Challenge

Head Appraiser:
Briley Weidner

We encourage you to go watch team performances!
Each team has worked hard and deserves a great audience.
A closed door means a performance is in progress.
Please wait until the door is opened to avoid disrupting a team!

Score Room
Ashley Baird

NOTES FOR TEAM MANAGERS AND TEAM MEMBERS

Challenge Check-in

Main Challenge: Your whole team and all your props should be at prep appraisal **30 minutes** before your performance time.

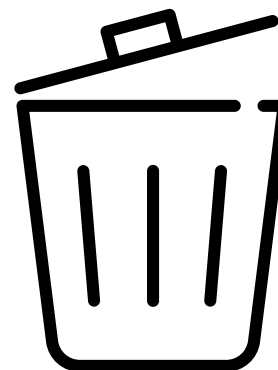
Family members and fans should go in the audience entrance and get ready to cheer on the team!

Instant Challenge: Only the team and one team manager can go to IC. No phones, watches, or bags are allowed. It's OK if you are wearing your costumes when you go to IC, as long as they won't interfere with your work.

Check in at the IC Prep Area 20 minutes before your IC time.

Please take your props home!

Rather than filling the school's dumpster, please take your props home and have a prop destruction party!



Engineering Challenge

Structure and Weight Check-in

Please arrive on time for your scheduled structure and weight check-in. Your team cannot compete if this is not done, and it's important to stay on schedule so that all teams have their scheduled check-in time.

Because the scales weigh to such a precise weight, they are VERY sensitive. Be aware that weather changes and other factors can cause slight weight variations. The scales used in SDDI are the same types that will be used at Globals.

Don't forget to bring a container to store your checked-in weights and structures.

Weight Check-in Times

Huron- 9:00
Pierre- 10:00
Zion- 11:30

Eagle Butte-9:30
RCC- 11:00

Learn more about your team scores

The team manager and one team member can discuss scores with the head appraiser approximately 30 minutes after their main challenge. Team managers will also receive the team's raw scores through email.

This is a great opportunity to talk about any confusing rules that may have affected your team. Head appraisers can give your team important feedback that is not interference.

Before your main challenge

The team manager and some or all of the team members should check out the performance site. Make sure they notice the launch line. Team managers can ask the team if they have decided how and where they want to set up. You may remind them to perform to the audience seats, not the appraiser tables (the appraisers will move around to see what they need to view).

The team members must discuss and decide how they will use their space.

Telling the team **how** to set up is interference.

We want you to remember . . .

Things go wrong—props break, backdrops collapse, lines are forgotten, solutions don't work, time runs out.

And that's the point.

DI teaches you how to recover, adjust, and keep going.

DI isn't about having the "best" idea—it's about the process, the teamwork, and the resilience. The brainstorming sessions, disagreements, pivots, and last-minute fixes are where the real learning (and fun) happens.

So give each other a high-five and ENJOY the day!

UNDERSTANDING DI . . .

Instant Challenge (IC)

Each team will be asked to solve an Instant Challenge for their DI tournament. The team must think on their feet by applying appropriate skills to produce a solution in a short period of time.

Instant Challenges are performance-based, task-based, or a combination of the two. Although each IC has different requirements, all ICs reward teams for their teamwork. Instant Challenges are kept confidential until it is time for teams to solve them.

Spectators are not allowed in IC (except Team Managers), and teams may not talk about their Instant Challenge.

Why so secretive?

Each team in the same level will complete the same IC, and we don't want anyone to have an unfair advantage by hearing about the challenge before their competition! The same challenges are used in tournaments all over the US and across the world!

Appraisers

Appraisers are the judges for each challenge. Each part of the challenge is scored by two or more appraisers, and those scores are combined. Appraisers are volunteers!

Head Appraisers

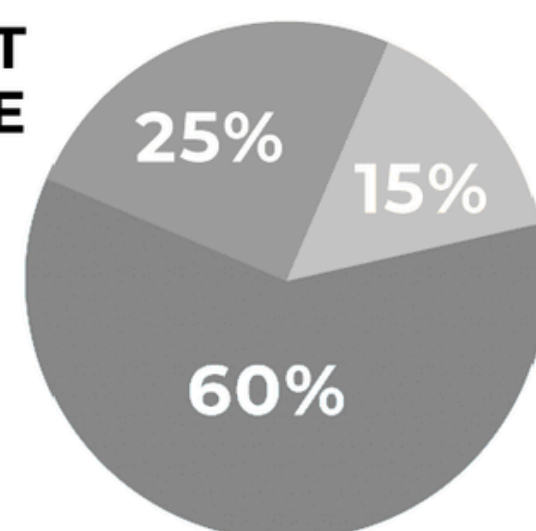
Head appraisers know their specific challenge well and work to make sure everything runs smoothly. The Head Appraiser makes sure the appraisers can score teams fairly and that teams follow the rules.

Team Scores

The team manager and one team member can discuss scores with the head appraiser approximately 30 minutes after their main challenge. Team managers will receive the team's raw scores through email.

Once Raw Scores for every team have been compiled, the scores are scaled. This means that the team with the highest total Raw Score in each area is given the total possible points for that area. This sets the curve for all of the other scores. All other teams then receive a scaled score based on comparing their Raw Score to the top Raw Score.

INSTANT CHALLENGE



TEAM CHOICE ELEMENTS

CENTRAL CHALLENGE

IC Scores

Instant Challenge scores are not released until the final tournament results are published, within 24 hours of the tournament on our website: disouthdakota.com

What is Interference?

DI is all about trying new things and taking risks - and sometimes failing! Every solution must belong to the team alone - no ideas or work from others. Teams can ask someone to teach them a skill, but they must do all the work themselves.

At tournament, **you CAN help the team move their props** into the building and to the performance prep area. Once the team has all their props to the prep area, everyone but the team and the team manager should go join the audience.

You CANNOT help the team assemble or fix any props, costumes, make-up, hair, etc.

You CAN help the team pack up their props after their performance.

Audience members and team managers **MAY NOT communicate with the team** in any way during their performance. Doing so may result in a team deduction.

LOOKING AHEAD . . .



What's Next?

Winning teams in each challenge and level will be invited to compete at Global Finals, May 21-24 in Kansas City. Team managers of qualifying teams are invited to a brief meeting about Globals following today's award ceremony.

Last year, over 600 teams from nearly every US state and from around the world gathered in KC to celebrate creativity and problem solving!

Registration per team is \$5,500. We are always in need of sponsors to make Globals financially possible for more teams. If you or your organization would be interested in sponsoring a team, please talk to any board member, school district DI coordinator, or DI team manager.

Not Going to Globals?

We hope your team gets together to celebrate your accomplishments! DI is a unique opportunity to take risks and try new things. No matter how your scores turned out, your team learned and grew together this season!

Take your props home with you today (please don't fill the school's dumpster). Have a prop destruction party - it's really satisfying! If you have storage space, you can keep parts of your props to be reused. Keep in mind that anything your team created belongs to your team's solution. It would be interference for another team to reuse your team's props without re-imagining them.

Ready for Next Year?

Look for challenge previews at destinationimagination.org

The new season can begin anytime between August and January, so start recruiting your friends! DI Teams can be sponsored by a school or any educational organization.

Interested in starting a new DI opportunity?

Please reach out to Merrie Atherton, South Dakota Affiliate Director or any SDDI Board member!

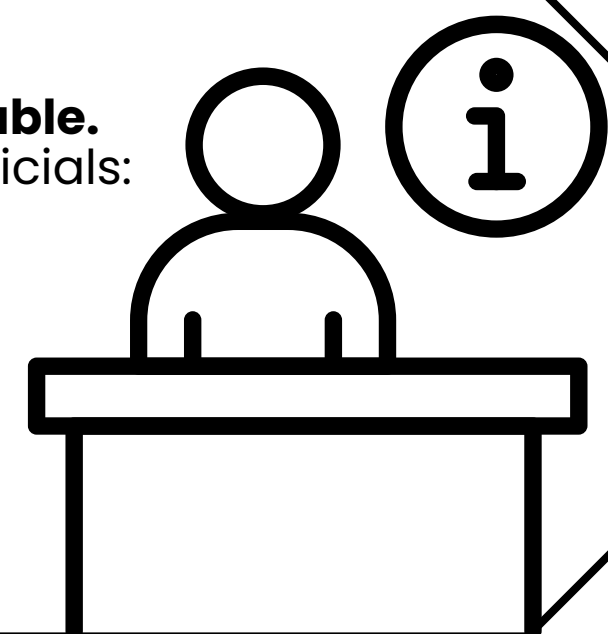
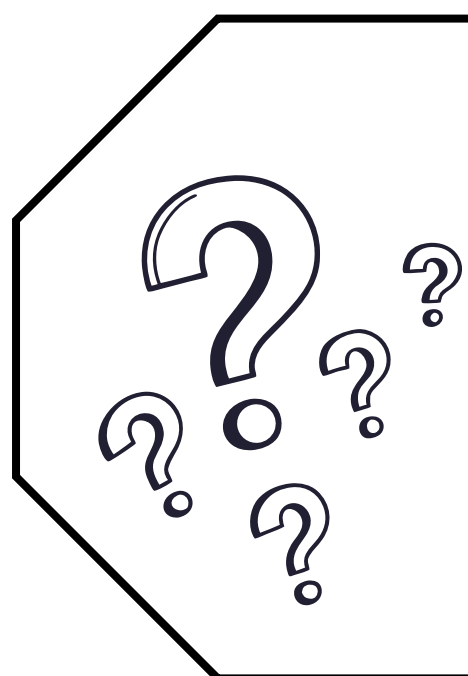
Tournament Questions?

During the tournament, stop by the registration table.
Before or after the tournament, reach out to these officials:

Merrie Atherton, Affiliate Director
merrieandjosh@gmail.com; 605-590-9008

Hannah Carda, Tournament Director
Hcarda7723@gmail.com; 605-222-7723

Ashley Baird, Volunteers and Scheduling
Ashley@disouthdakota.com



Would you like to get more involved in South Dakota Destination Imagination?

Reach out to anyone on the SDDI Board!

MEET THE SOUTH DAKOTA DESTINATION IMAGINATION BOARD

Merrie Atherton, Affiliate Director

Homebase: Webster

Reach Merrie at: merrieandjosh@gmail.com

Merrie has been involved in DI since she was in elementary school and DI was still Odyssey of the Mind. Since then, Merrie has been a team member, team manager, team parent, program coordinator, tournament appraiser, tournament director, state board member, and now serves as our fearless leader! Affiliate Director is a volunteer position, and we appreciate Merrie's time and energy to South Dakota DI!

Why Merrie loves DI:

"I love the program and the life skills it teaches all of us. I find myself using my DI skills more often than one would think! I also love to see the connections everyone makes through DI!"

Maria Kendle, Board President

Homebase: Crooks

Reach Maria at:

Maria.Kendle@k12.sd.us

Maria was first hired as the school coordinator for the Odyssey of the Mind program 28 years ago, and has been instrumental in growing SDDI. She's served as a team manager, program coordinator, tournament director, tournament appraiser, and team parent.

Why Maria loves DI:

"I love to watch the growth in students as they work through the year. It teaches teamwork, perseverance, creative problem-solving, time management all while building confidence and enhancing beyond school knowledge and experiences."

Kristie Erickson, Board Vice-President

Homebase: Aberdeen

Reach

Kristie at: ericksong@nrctv.com

Kristie first got involved in Odyssey of the Mind as a gifted education teacher. She's been part of South Dakota DI since it began in the 1999-2000 school year. Kristie has served as a team manager, program coordinator, tournament director, tournament appraiser, and a parent.

Why Kristie loves DI:

"I love to see the teamwork and how the team members are excited about their solutions. I also love to see former team members, now adults and have them share what DI and teams meant to them."

Paul Kosel, Board Secretary

Homebase: Groton

Reach Paul at: paperpaule@grotonsd.net

Paul has been part of South Dakota DI since his kids first joined a team 15 years ago. As a DI parent and a board member, Paul appreciates that DI is a unique program that encourages kids to think!

Why Paul loves DI:

"Our oldest daughter was in Project Outreach (now called Service Learning). They saw a need to help kids with food after school. The BAGS Ladies did a project called the BAGS program for the school. That program is still going today. Proof that DI makes a difference in a community."

Arlinda Gylfe, Board Member

Homebase: Elk Point

Reach Arlinda at: arlinda.gylfe89@gmail.com

Arlinda has been part of South Dakota DI for the past 22 years, first as a manager for her daughter's team. Arlinda has not only served as a tournament appraiser, she is a faithful challenge master and head appraiser. Arlinda also volunteers as an appraiser at Global Finals, so she is definitely one of our in-house experts!

Why Arlinda loves DI:

"I love what DI teaches and how kids love to learn, and the excitement and energy the kids bring to DI."

Amanda Witt, Board Member

Homebase: Hartford

Reach Amanda at: Ajwitt123@yahoo.com

Amanda's DI journey started 22 years ago as a team manager for her son's team. All three of her children participated in DI, and are now grown - but Amanda is still pouring her heart into SDDI. Amanda has served as a team manager, program coordinator, and tournament appraiser/volunteer.

Why Amanda loves DI:

"What makes DI so special to me is the way it builds confidence, creativity, and problem-solving skills in kids. I've seen students who were once quiet and unsure find their voice, take risks, and grow into confident leaders. It's not just about solving challenges—it's about learning how to think, collaborate, and persevere. As a parent, it's been especially rewarding to watch all three of my kids participate in DI. I've seen firsthand how the program has shaped their growth, resilience, and ability to work as part of a team."

MEET THE SOUTH DAKOTA DESTINATION IMAGINATION BOARD

Ashley Baird, Alumni Rep

Homebase: Harrisburg

Reach Ashley at: Ashley@disouthdakota.com

Ashley's DI journey began in 2003 thanks to a neighbor encouraging her to join a team. Ashley has also served as a team manager, tournament appraiser (including at Global finals), and is an International Challenge Master. Ashley handles all the tournament scheduling, scoring coordination, and is our technical trouble-shooter. SDDI is grateful for Ashley's expertise, enthusiasm, and commitment!

Why Ashley loves DI:

"Di brings out the absolute best in people! I love DI because it creates a space where creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving come together in the most wonderful way! It's not about performing or building - it's about watching individuals grow in confidence, learn to trust their ideas, and support one another! DI builds skills that last far beyond the Challenge, but more than that, it builds a connection and genuine love of learning!"

Betsy Sage, Board Member

Homebase: Rapid City

Reach

Betsy at: betsysage@yahoo.com

Betsy competed in Odyssey of the Mind as a student, but became involved in DI ten years ago as a manager for her son's team. Betsy is also a program coordinator, and has stepped in as a tournament appraiser and tournament director.

Why Betsy loves DI:

"I love Destination Imagination because it gives kids the courage to try, the freedom to fail, and the joy of discovering what they're truly capable of."

Jenn Brist, Board Member

Homebase: Watertown

Reach Jenn at: jennbrist@gmail.com

Jenn got involved with DI in 2010 when her kids signed up for DI and she found herself managing a team. Since then, she's managed many teams, and served as program coordinator and tournament appraiser.

Why Jenn loves DI:

"My senior level team in 2017 had an awesome skit and amazing props, but they were always changing things up slightly. At Global Finals in Knoxville, they literally said "Time" to end their skit at the exact moment the timekeeper said "Time!" WHEW! All three of my grown kids comment frequently that DI was good practice for the curveballs of real life."

Barb Baker, Board Member

Homebase: Spearfish

Reach Barb at: barb.baker1523@gmail.com

Barb got involved in DI nine years ago when her mom asked for help with the teams she was managing. But Barb's experience really goes way back to Odyssey of the Mind days when she competed as a team member. Since then, Barb has served as a tournament appraiser, team manager, program coordinator, tournament director, and team parent.

Why Barb loves DI:

"As a student I was in Odyssey of the Mind (decades and decades ago). My favorite memory from then was sewing 2 dinosaur costumes and making a gigantic dinosaur egg out of chicken wire and paper mache, that I could actually fit in!"

Hannah Carda, Board Member

Homebase: Pierre

Reach Hannah at: hcarda7723@gmail.com

Hannah was in Odyssey of the Mind as a student, but has been immersed in DI for the last eight years. She's served as a team manager, program coordinator, and tournament director.

Why Hannah loves DI:

"Getting inspired by the kids - they are creative and unique and so delightful. I have met great people as fellow managers, parents, and board members."

Dean Fenenga, Past Affiliate Director

Homebase: Watertown

Reach Dean at: di.soda.ad@gmail.com

Dean started his DI journey 23 years ago as a team manager for his son's team, and then coached his daughter as well. Dean has served as team manager, board member, tournament appraiser, Affiliate Director, and team parent!

Why Dean loves DI:

"It is one of the few educational programs that focuses on teaching team members, managers, and appraisers "how to learn" with application of different skills to accomplish a shared goal. I have watched many team members turn from shy, quiet kids, to leaders in their professional life."

To our incredible Team Managers,
Thank you for the endless
patience and guidance! You are
the behind-the-scenes champions!

**Your teams have
awesome team mangers!**

To our DI Families,
Your patience, schedule-
juggling and commitment
to driving everyone to all
the places is remarkable.
Thanks for being part of
something special.

Hey Teams!
We are really proud of your
creativity and risk-taking! Even if
your day isn't quite perfect, we
think you are amazing!

"Don't be afraid to fail.
Be afraid not to try."

Let's hear it for
Ashley Baird,
our logisitics wizard!

She creates schedules
from chaos, organizes
volunteers into teams,
and keeps all the tech
running smoothly!

SDDI couldn't do it
without you, Ashley!



A Little Note ...

When you see Merrie
Atherton today, take a
minute to thank her for
serving as our Affiliate
Director!

She graciously volunteers a
LOT of time and energy to
keep SDDI running smoothly!

THANK YOU

Dear Challenge Masters and Head Appraisers,
You guys are incredible.
Thanks for volunteering your time
and expertise to be sure our
challenges run smoothly and fairly!

Shoutout to all the volunteers!

Whether you are encouraging
teams as an appraiser,
or sharing your smile in
another volunteer role,
this tournament wouldn't
happen without you.

Thanks for giving
your time today!



**AND A BIG
HIGH-FIVE TO
PIERRE DI FOR
HOSTING OUR
TOURNAMENT TODAY!**

**Check out our website:
disouthdakota.com
Follow South Dakota DI
on Social Media!**