

MEET OUR YOUNG CHESS PLAYERS



In-person chess tournaments are here! With safety precautions, masks, social distancing and plenty of hand sanitizer, we are so excited to offer our chess players “real” chessboards again.

Our season started with a big bang. The city-wide Chess in the Park Rapid Open always invites chess aficionados of all ages, a once-in-a-year opportunity. More than 500 players gathered around the famous Bethesda Fountain in Central Park. Check out [New York Magazine's Look Book](#) feature! You can meet some of the players from that special day.

The September tournament at P.S. 11 in Manhattan brought together students from many different communities. The members of the P.S./M.S. 279 chess team are from the Bronx:



Kaileen is one of the 7th-graders in the chess club. She's been playing chess since 3rd grade and enjoys the game. She is excited about being back in school in person. “It's good to meet your friends and new people. You cannot just stay home. You are alone.”

Kaileen's friend **Carolyn** is also an experienced player. “I've been playing in tournaments for a while. Now it's my third or fourth year. And this is not my first in-person tournament this year. I went to Chess in the Park and the tournament in Queens.” Carolyn agrees that in-person tournaments are more helpful. “I have to get used to play on the board for the future when I go to high school,” - she shares.



Scroll down to meet more inspiring players.

FREDDY, P.S. 180, BROOKLYN



Tell us about yourself.

My name is Freddy. I am thirteen years old. I've been with Chess in the Schools since 2nd grade.

How many years have you been in the program?

Five years.

Why do you like chess?

I like chess because it improves how we analyze and how we think. In general chess helps with the brain. You can use analyzing and thinking in the real-life world. You can think of the decisions you want to make and analyze them to see if they're good for you.

Do you prefer in-person activities or online?

I like in-person better because you can actually touch your pieces. You can see the board better; you can see it online too, but I really prefer seeing my opponent.

Are you already thinking about high school and college?

Yes, I am.

Are you planning to join CIS's College Bound Program?

Yes, I have a few friends that are in College Bound already and yes, I'm thinking about joining.

How do you feel about today's tournament?

I didn't do as well as last tournament, but it was okay. It was pretty good.

Is this your first in-person tournament?

This is my second in-person tournament.

Was your first Chess in the Park or in Queens?

Oh no, this will be my third tournament, Chess in the Park and Queens.

So, you don't miss any of them?

No, I don't.

We will be seeing you every week throughout the year, right?

Yes!

ASHLEY, P.S./M.S. 279, BRONX



Hi Ashley, where are you from?

Hi! I am from the Dominican Republic but I was raised here, in the United States.

What school are you attending?

P.S./M.S. 279.

How did you learn about the game of chess?

At the school we have a chess club. I first got into chess because I was bored, and I did not really like my afterschool program at my school. After a while, I started getting into it. I started learning from [chess], getting so much smarter and I really started to like it. Now I want to be in chess because I

really enjoy it. We also have chess classes at the school [during the school day]. Our teacher [CIS instructor] Mr. Stovall gives us lessons, and we learn a lot from them.

Are you excited to be back in-person at school?

Yes, I am! Last year, I had to miss a year because we had a virtual school, and it was really hard. Now, I am very excited to be back! I missed my friends last year. I did not get to see them much or play much chess with them. But now we are all back together... We are meeting once a week [at the chess club]. We have about twelve players at the club.

Do you like the tournament?

Yes!

Is this your first tournament in person this year?

No, I also went to the tournament in Queens last week.

How is it going at the tournament for you so far?

I learned. We don't say "we lose," we say "we learned." So, I have learned so far.

Ashley won her next round at the tournament.

ISKANDER, P.S. 180, BROOKLYN



How many years have you been playing chess?

About two years.

Why do you like chess?

It's just a fun game that you can play. It doesn't matter who wins at all. It's just for fun and entertainment.

Do you like going to tournaments?

Yes.

Why?

If I win anything it goes into my collection. I've won a few [things]: seven medals and one trophy. Every time I win another one my parents get proud.

Is this your first in-person tournament today?

No. I had one a week ago.

So, you went to the Queen's tournament?

Yes.

Do you have chess in your school?

Yes.

Who is your teacher?

Mr. Moy and Mr. Lapshun [CIS's instructor].

Last year the chess club was online, do you like it online?

No.

Why don't like the club online?

People can just search up the best moves online, so it is not going to be fun. They'll just get stuff they don't deserve.

Why?

Yes. I like it. I can actually physically touch [the chess pieces] and they're not going to cheat at all.

You want to have a fair competition?

Yes