

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**Building
Minds,
One Game
at a Time**



Chess in the Schools fosters the intellectual and social development of low-income youth through chess education.

Chess Instruction in Public Schools:

Creating Brighter Paths:
Offering Free, High-Quality Chess
Education for Lasting Success



6,300
students

in 44 schools learned chess with a CIS instructor during classroom sessions and in after-school clubs.

3,149
students

in 12 schools participated in the Digital Chess Program.

7,366
players

competed in 21 day-long citywide tournaments.

Teachers from 10 schools

across NYC participated in comprehensive training on innovative digital learning curricula and tools.

60

schools

enrolled in in-person and digital learning programs, including 4 that offered chess instruction twice a week.

Unlocking Potential through Chess: Educators Share CIS's Impact



Findings from the 2023-2024 teacher survey

We surveyed 132 teachers from the academic school year from partner schools to evaluate the impact of CIS's chess program on their students. Below are the percentages of teachers who "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the following statements.

- Most students actively participated in the chess class: **98%**
- Boys and girls were equally interested in chess: **97%**
- Chess had a meaningful positive influence on my students: **95%**

- Learning and practicing chess enhanced my students' cooperation skills: **94%**
- Most students could play a legal game of chess by the end of the semester: **91%**
- Learning and practicing chess helped my students concentrate better: **88%**
- Learning and practicing chess improved my students' behavior: **87%**
- Most students applied the lessons of chess beyond the chessboard: **84%**

- Learning and practicing chess enhanced my students' analytic and logical reasoning skills: **84%**
- Learning and practicing chess enhanced my students' understanding of math concepts: **81%**
- My students worked well with peers: **76%**
- My students understood the feelings of her/his own peers: **75%**
- Since my students started learning chess, they are more interested in school: **71%**

"The chess program develops students' creativity and builds their confidence."

Teachers Say...

"My students had a great interest in learning different strategies each week during chess."

"Students were happy to learn chess and took pride in showing their skills."

"The chess program allowed me the opportunity to see my students working cooperatively and solving disagreements when they were in class. They also really looked forward to the program."

"The chess program helps the students strengthen friendships and also teaches students about sportsmanship."

"The chess class helps students to build their stamina so that they can stay focused on one task for a longer time. I think the long process of playing chess contributes to this impact."

College Bound / College Success: Building Strong Foundations for Greater Success and Lifelong Growth



Program in Numbers

100

high-school students

75

college students

Up to
400
hours

of individualized
scholastic and academic
programming, chess
learning, and social-
emotional support

Program Impact

100% of seniors
graduated
high school on time.

100% of seniors
were
accepted to colleges
and matriculated to
college in the fall.

100% of college
freshmen
stayed in school and
continued their studies.

95% of College
Success
participants graduate
within 4 years.



Venturing Beyond New York City

Exploring College Opportunities

CIS's College Bound students traveled to Boston University, Clark University, Columbia University, Cooper Union, Harvard University, John Jay College, and Princeton University to experience student life and see different learning environments firsthand before applying to college.

Competing in Tournaments

Chess in the Schools brought over 100 students and alumni to regional and national US chess-rated tournaments.

**US Amateur
East Team Chess
Tournament,**
Parsippany NJ
(February 2024)

**US Amateur
East Individual Chess
Tournament,**
New Brunswick,
NJ (May 2024)



“Every year I look forward to going to Amateurs with CIS as it is a time to both reconnect and play chess with friends. I am grateful that CIS continues to make going to Amateurs an easy experience and provides support despite the fact I am no longer in high school.”

— Alex Paiva



Alex Paiva, Partho Nath
(from left to right)

College Success / Community Success

Chess in the Schools is more than just a chess organization—it's a lifelong community. Many of our students cultivate lasting friendships that start in elementary school and grow throughout college, united by their shared experiences in the School Program and College Bound. One of the highlights of this bond is the United States Amateurs East Tournament (USATE) in Parsippany, NJ, where students form teams, strengthen

relationships, and experience the teamwork that chess fosters.

This year, 26 College Success Alumni reunited at USATE, blending competition with camaraderie. Just like in past CIS tournaments, it was a powerful reminder that success in college—and life—thrives with a strong support system. At Chess in the Schools, that sense of community never fades.

The College Success Program ensures that our College Bound alumni continue to grow academically and

personally throughout their college years. Students receive ongoing mentorship and encouragement from peers and CIS staff. Additionally, community is sustained through workshops, panels, and in-person activities. The transition to college can be challenging, but with CIS, students don't navigate it alone. They gain a lasting network of peers, mentors, and staff, equipping them with the relationships and resources to succeed beyond the chessboard.



Selvin Ramirez, Shesit Moreno-Lopez, Richard Wang, Timur Turlov, Jeremiah Beckles, Emil Sutovsky, Weiye Mock, Jenny Ingber (left to right)

College Bound/ FIDE Corporate Blitz Tournament

Chess in the Schools was honored to be invited to attend the FIDE Corporate Blitz Tournament, an exciting event that brought together some of the world's top chess talent. Corporations such as Blackrock, CHESSIFY, Goldman Sachs, Google, and many more took part in this event. We were especially proud that Gary Li, one of our esteemed board members, competed in this event representing Blackrock.

The Opening Ceremony, held at NASDAQ, was a memorable moment for the CIS team, as we had the incredible opportunity to ring the iconic NASDAQ

bell. The ceremony set the tone for an unforgettable day, full of excitement and connection within the chess community.

At the reception following the ceremony, some of our College Bound students had the chance to participate in a fun chess variant called "hand and brain" with none other than the esteemed Grandmaster, Hikaru Nakamura. It was a truly unique experience for our students, who got to interact with one of the most celebrated figures in the chess world, gaining insight and learning from him in a relaxed and engaging setting.

Thanks to the generous support of

Freedom Holding Corp., Chess in the Schools was provided with tickets to attend the tournament and witness the action up close. Over 22 College Bound students and Alumni had the opportunity to meet and interact with some of the biggest names in chess, including Hikaru Nakamura, Levy Rozman, and Anna Cramling. The students were thrilled to network with these top players, gaining inspiration and valuable connections that will last far beyond the event. It was an unforgettable experience, strengthening the bond within our CIS community and fueling our students' passion for the game.

"What an incredible opportunity for CIS students to attend the FIDE World Corporate Chess tournament! Being lucky enough to play there, I was blown away by the venue, activities, and caliber and diversity of players from leading firms in finance and tech. These are the types of events that inspire students — just shows that opportunities in chess can be unlocked beyond 64 squares."

— Gary Li, CIS Board Member

The Lerner Award for Excellence in Chess Education

Chess in the Schools proudly presented the second annual Andy Lerner Award for Excellence in Chess Education, established in 2022 by Andrew Lerner, a distinguished member of the CIS Board of Directors. This prestigious nationwide award recognizes and celebrates the outstanding efforts of educators in public schools and non-commercial children's chess clubs across the country.

A panel of judges from the chess community carefully selected two winners and six finalists, evaluating the depth and impact of applicants' chess programs, innovative teaching methods, and measurable outcomes for students and the communities they serve.

The Award Ceremony took place at the Marshall Chess Club in New York, NY, a renowned institution that hosts players from around the globe. Eliot Weiss, coach of the Edward R. Murrow High School Chess Club in Brooklyn, NY, was announced as the winner in the Best Chess Coordinator category. Elizabeth Spiegel, a chess teacher at I.S. 318 in Brooklyn, NY, was recognized in the Best Chess Educator category.

Finalists in the Best Chess Coordinator category included Abel Talamantez, Chess Program Manager at Rise Hamilton Chess in Novato, California, and Judy Viertel, Teacher Librarian/Chess Coordinator at Marshall Elementary School in San Francisco, California. Finalists in the Best Chess Educator category included Lauren Jahn, English Teacher/Chess Club Advisor at Sturgis Brown High School in Sturgis, South Dakota, and Keyron Jarvis, Chess Lead at Bold Charter School, Bronx, NY.

Additionally, Margaret Russo and David MacEnulty were honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award. Margaret, the former principal of P.S. 160 in Brooklyn, was recognized for her pivotal role in launching the CIS chess program, while David, a former teacher at P.S. 70 in the Bronx, was celebrated for his groundbreaking teaching methods, which inspired the film *Knights of the South Bronx*.

Nominations and applications are annually announced in September.

"It is my hope that this award will highlight the invaluable work that chess educators are doing in underserved communities across the U.S."

— Andy Lerner,
CIS Board Member



Winner (left to right): Andy Lerner, Elizabeth Spiegel (New York, NY), Jenny Ingber.



Winner (left to right): Andy Lerner, Eliot Weiss (New York, NY), Ronald Boocock, Jenny Ingber.

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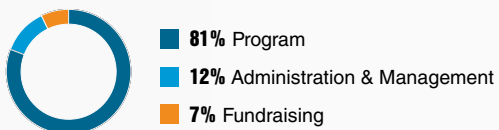
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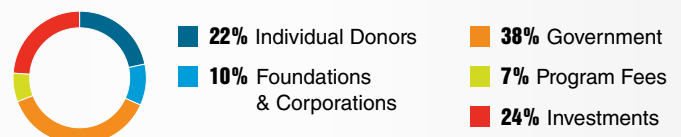
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2023-2024 Expenses



2023-2024 Revenue Sources



Chess in the Schools is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

All Chess in the Schools programs are always free of charge to all students. We can only do this with the support of CIS's donor community.

Thank You to Our Supporters!



To find out how you can help, contact development@chessintheschools.org

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