



**GENS UNA SUMUS**

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**FIDE**  
**GENS UNA SUMUS**



**CHESS IN SCHOOLS**  
**OUR GLOBAL FUTURE**





# CHESS IN SCHOOLS

## OUR GLOBAL FUTURE

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# Kirsan Nikolayevich Ilyumzhinov

b. 1962



1

«Since the Republic of Kalmykia, Russian Federation implemented chess in the curriculum ...

children have shown a considerable improvement in their studies ...

That was the very first decree I signed as President of Kalmykia.”

“100% of Kalmykia school children can play chess. This has played well for their school results. According to the Russian Ministry of Education, for the last two years we have been keeping 1st place in school results of children among 85 Russian regions.

Andrey Fursenko, Russian Minister of Education became interested in our phenomenon and sent specialists to Kalmykia to find out the key to this success. They stated in the end, that it was the introduction of chess in schools that had brought such good results.”

“My main goal – chess in every school and one billion chess players on the planet.”

President of FIDE  
**1995 - ...**

President of Kalmykia,  
Russian Federation  
1993 - 2010



**“My main goal – chess in every school and one billion chess players on the planet.”**



«Gens Una Sumus»  
(We are One Family)  
«Our children are our future»

# EDUCATIONAL CUTLERY

«Schools and educators need a simple and direct way to teach process standards (“thinking skills”)»

The plates of both children and teachers are full to overflowing with content. How and why should schools find a place for chess?

Schools and educators need a simple and direct way to teach process standards (“thinking skills”). It is important that the content should not keep expanding every day. The main challenge for children should be to explore and develop the way that we think. If it could be fun as well, that would be ideal.


Chess provides the perfect educational cutlery or chopsticks to achieve that.

«The main challenge for children should be to explore and develop the way that we think.»



# CHESS AS A TEACHING TOOL

Chess has all the qualities needed to be an excellent teaching tool.



For maximum benefit, it should be introduced in schools not to develop chess players but to further a child's development.

Chess can be used to solve educational problems, especially when used to teach process standards, the 'thinking skills.'

Chess used, not for the sake of teaching chess, not to create better chess players, but to create more intelligent school leavers, better adapted to our knowledge-based world; a brighter future for our global society.



# Mikhail Gorbachev, b. 1931

## Honorary Patron of Chess in Schools

M. Gorbachev with Women World  
Champion Hou Yifan

"When I was young, I used to like this game, but then politics has not left any space for other things, chess included. This wonderful game is a real feast of intellect and great achievement of our mankind."



**GENS UNA SUMUS**

"During many centuries chess is a part of human heritage and the names of great chess players... have become part and parcel of the... history of great achievements of a human mind."



## CIS – FIDE's CHESS IN SCHOOLS COMMISSION

Mikhail Gorbachev became Honorary Patron of Chess in Schools in 2011.



FIDE's Commission for Chess in Schools was founded in 1984. Initially, teaching chess in schools was regarded as a way of creating club and tournament players, who would join their national chess federations. The schools were to be the source of future masters, grandmasters and champions.

Gradually, the focus shifted towards using chess as a useful tool, helping children learn other subjects, to better prepare them for their future life. That has been especially true in the last five or six years. The proof of the change can be seen in the

vision of the Commission Chairman and his implementation of that vision within Turkey.

The Commission's web site ([cis.fide.com](http://cis.fide.com)) is an important source of information for anyone with an interest in chess in schools. It provides support for the enormous efforts of the FIDE President in his role as a global ambassador.

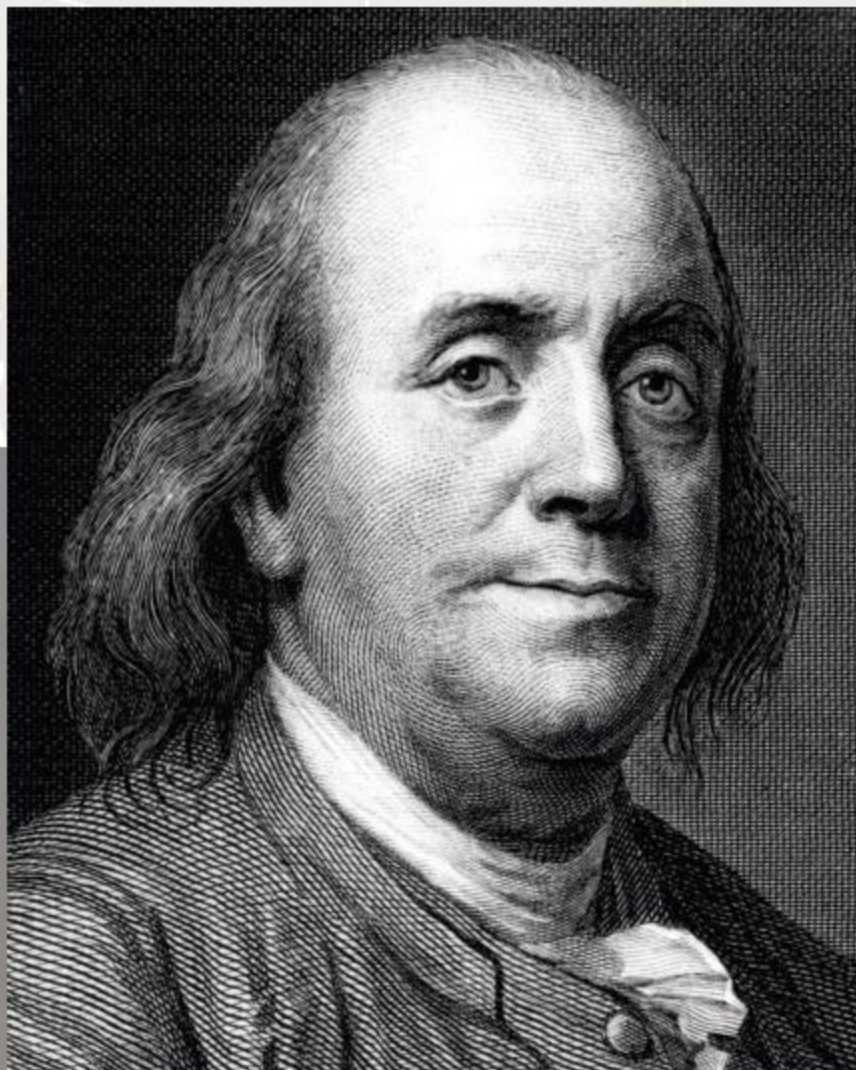
The Commission, and FIDE as a whole, is immensely proud to have our new Honorary Patron. Mikhail Gorbachev accepted that position at the end of September 2011.



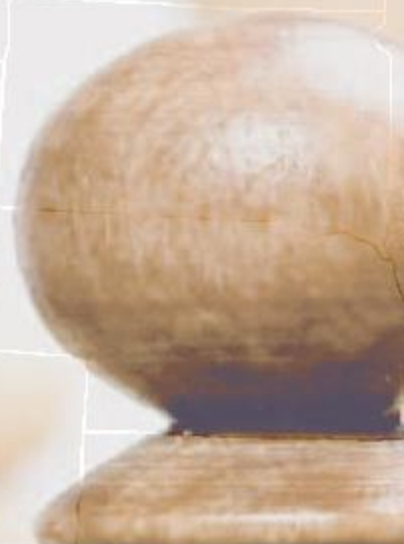
# Benjamin Franklin

(1706-1790)

A Founding Father of the United States



In his article, *The Morals of Chess*, published in 1786, Franklin was perhaps the first to link chess and education, writing that "life is a kind of chess" and that by playing chess, we may learn foresight, circumspection and caution and also "the habit of not being discouraged by present bad appearances in the state of our affairs ... persevering in the search of resources".



# William Jefferson Clinton, b. 1946, 42nd U.S. President.

He played for the Georgetown University chess team in 1968.  
He is a supporter of the Chess-in-the-Schools program.



"Playing chess helps students develop thinking and analyzing skills, concentration, greater self-control and self-confidence ... We have hard evidence that chess in the schools works."





# UNESCO



FIDE works both directly and indirectly with many other organizations. FIDE's presentation to UNESCO of the educational benefits of chess has been followed up by the European Chess Union and the 2014 European Individual Women's Championship is the first chess event to be held under UNESCO patronage.

FIDE has begun discussions with UNESCO's International Bureau of Education, with a view to establishing recommended syllabuses for chess in schools programs. UNESCO is also considering accepting the proposal that chess should be declared an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, a proposal that originated in FIDE's CiS Commission.



In 2013 FIDE and ACES signed an agreement for the promotion of chess in schools in Europe as part of the European Towns of Sport award. The project is building to a participation of 400 schools across Europe.





His Excellency

# Jacob Zuma, b.1942

## President of South Africa



"In summary, the benefits that accumulate from the teaching and promotion of chess in schools include the following:

1.The game teaches patience. You have to give the opponent time and space to think and make his or her own move.

2.It teaches that a decision must be an outcome of a serious thought process.

3.Chess teaches discipline, for example as chess players would know, "touch is a move". When you touch, you must move, you have to be disciplined.

"the main benefit [of chess] being that it contributes to the development of strategic thinking as well as concentration, analytical skills and problem solving."

4.Chess teaches fairness. You alert the opponent before you strike, and keep them informed of your moves and intentions."



# Viswanathan Anand, b.1969

World Chess Champion 2000-2002 & 2007-2013



«The strategies from the game of chess can be used effectively and innovatively to create the great leaders tomorrow.»

"I have always said that chess should be promoted at the school level, so that we have many more young players ready to take the game forward! And it is really satisfying that my home state has taken this step, which will go a long way in taking chess to a higher level in India.

I really want to thank Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa for taking this decision, which ought to be emulated by other states. States like Gujarat are already promoting chess at school level and it has started showing results. But, when something is made compulsory, people generally tend to balk at it...



# Magnus Carlsen, b. 1990

World Chess Champion 2013- ... . Triple Crown 2014



Carlsen explained some of his views about chess in schools at an event in Silicon Valley, California to promote the First Move chess program for elementary school classrooms as a tool for enhancing critical and creative thinking skills.

He described the role chess can play in stimulating and promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) interest among students.

Carlsen pointed out that chess teaches pattern recognition and analysis ability, key skills in the information and knowledge economy and especially important for learning STEM.

Magnus also noted that learning to analyze and make decisions in response to actions taken by your opponent is key to success in chess, as it is in business.



# Educational benefits of chess

Chess teaches children to think analytically, logically and on more than one level.

The educational benefits of chess are many and varied.

They are well documented by a large body of research papers from around the world. There is so much evidence, that it is easy to miss the wood for the trees, therefore this document is intentionally brief.

If detailed evidence is required, please refer to the sources and links in the Bibliography.

Chess helps promote intellectual growth and has been shown to improve academic performance.

Chess is a powerful tool for developing thinking and memory in children.

It teaches children to think analytically, logically and on more than one level.

It also helps them build up their decision-making tools. It educates them to be responsible for their decisions and the consequences of those decisions.

The most frequently cited general benefits include the development of:

- Cognitive abilities, such as attention, memory, and logical thinking.
- Essential skills for the development of the individual.
- Increased creativity, through problem solving.
- Critical thinking is developed, improving the ability to assess strengths and weaknesses, establish value judgments and make decisions.
- Ethical sense. Improvements in attitude and general behaviour are often noted.





## Process skills / executive functions

Chess makes an excellent teaching tool (p3). Dr Alexey Root has demonstrated, in a series of books, how chess can be used to link with and support all the core curriculum subjects. A million dollar research project funded by the US Government is examining the value of chess for developing Executive Function (Process) skills :

- Planning
- Sustained attention
- Working memory
- Organization
- Time management
- Metacognition

## Special education

Chess is a great pedagogical tool in this area.

After a year of playing chess, 'children with learning disorders have shown an improvement in their cognitive skills' – Dr Veena Doss, Head, Dept. Of Psychology, Warren's Christian College, India.

'I've used chess as therapy, even for mentally retarded children who have very low cognitive scores' – Sharon Dominica,





## Social benefits

Closely allied to the educational benefits, these include:

- reduced delinquency
- reduced drug use
- improved ethical sense
- improved discipline
- improved sense of fairness
- integration of minorities
- improved social mobility

Reductions in delinquency and in drug use have been noted particularly by the Chess-in-the-Schools program (mostly in The Bronx and Harlem) and by Orrin Hudson's "Be Someone" program, with its emphasis on learning "life lessons", both in the USA.

## Research

A 2005 study, sponsored by the Scottish Executive Education Department, concluded that "the group of pupils who participated in 'chess coaching' stood out on improvements in 'social adjustment'."

## Minorities

Two projects in Denmark have the goal of creating lasting change and improvement in the lives of youngsters with a minority background or who live in the "ghetto."



## Schools



Schools chess programs in many countries have reported improvements in attitude and general behaviour ("ethical sense"). In the schools, chess often serves as a bridge, bringing together children of different ages, races and genders in an activity they can all enjoy.

Chess helps build individual friendships and also school spirit when children compete together as teams against other schools. Chess also teaches children about sportsmanship - how to win graciously and not give up when encountering defeat.

For children with adjustment issues, there are many examples where chess has led to increased motivation, improved behaviour, better self-image, and even improved attendance. Chess provides a positive social outlet, a wholesome recreational activity that can be easily learned and enjoyed at any age.

## Testimonials

"The effects have been remarkable," Brown says. "Not only have the reading and math skills of these children soared, their ability to socialize has increased substantially, too. Our studies have shown that incidents of suspension and outside altercations have decreased by at least 60% since these children became interested in chess." Joyce Brown, an assistant principal and supervisor - Roberto Clemente school's Special Education department - NY.

"Whenever we get a child transferred from another school who may have maladaptive behavior, our principal suggests chess as a way of helping him find his niche." Jerome Fishman, Guidance Counselor, C.J.H.S 231, Queens, NY.

Chess has a reputation as a catalyst of social mobility. For me (Kevin O'Connell) it was a case of "seeing is believing." In 1988 a ten-year-old boy I was coaching was functionally illiterate. His family had a very low income, they lived in social housing and he attended the local "sink" school. His future was not bright, but he loved chess and wanted to play in tournaments, so he needed to be able to notate his games. He wanted to push for a place in the National Junior Squad, so he needed to read chess literature. Therefore, he taught himself to read and write. His school work improved so much that he gained a place at the best secondary school in the area. The last I heard, he had passed his final school exams with flying colours and was off to university.



An increasing amount of attention is being paid to the health benefits of chess. These are mostly quite recent discoveries and point to the great value of learning chess during childhood since it seems to confer health benefits almost from the cradle to the grave. They can be summarized as:

Chess leads to an improvement in cognitive functioning and has been cited as a significant tool in the fight against Alzheimer's.

Chess can help patients who have suffered from stroke to recover.

Chess assists recovery in people suffering from physical and emotional disability.

## Health benefits



Chess helps to prevent anxiety and depression by encouraging self improvement, improving self esteem and self confidence. By contrast, excessive time spent on activities that do not challenge the brain, particularly watching television, has been linked to an increased incidence of depression.

Chess (as recreational therapy) helps prevent or reduce non-adaptive or inappropriate behaviour.

It has long been known that chess improves attention, memory, organization skills and perception. It improves the ability of cognitive-impaired individuals to work on issues related to orientation, sensory stimulation and environmental awareness.





## Valencia, Spain

In 2006 a team from Valencia University Hospital, led by Dr. José Miguel Lainez Andrés, reported some very impressive results concerning the value of chess as an intervention therapy against cognitive decline. The authors pointed out that chess is a complete mental training; in addition to sports and psychological factors, the player is forced to be highly accurate in this complex and elaborate mental process. The object of the study was to examine whether the mental exercise performed during the learning and practice of chess has an impact on improving the performance of some cognitive abilities in older subjects.

Their hypothesis was that "Learning to play chess at the cognitive level is beneficial in older people".

The study population consisted of users of specialized centres for the care of the elderly in four locations around Spain. The chess group attended a weekly chess class for seven months, while the control group attended other courses. Standard tests (including Raven's Matrices, Stroop Test and others) were used to assess changes in cognitive abilities. The tests were performed both at the beginning and the end of the study period.

The researchers discovered that, broadly speaking, approximately two thirds of the entire experimental group of subjects experienced an improvement in neuropsychological test performance, usually progressive.

## Alzheimer's disease

Some aspects of age-related cognitive decline begin in healthy educated adults when they are in their 20s and 30s (Salthouse 2009). These declines may seem relatively minor compared with problems that may appear later in life such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia, but just as it's never too early to adopt a healthy lifestyle, it makes sense to take care of our brains now rather than waiting until there has been a serious decline.

Most attention is being paid to the value of chess in the fight against Alzheimer's which blights the lives of 35 million people and their families.

Research among those over the age of 60 strongly suggests that chess is valuable in combating Alzheimer's.



A collaborative Franco-Russian research effort began recently (December 2010) between the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire of Nice, led by Professor Philippe Robert and Prof. Vladimir Zakharov's team from the Moscow State Medical University.



Dr David Shenk, author of *The Forgetting*, the definitive work on Alzheimer's, commented on the value of chess as an Alzheimer antidote in a 2006 interview: "You need to exercise your brain. Chess is a particularly good brain builder. It's quite easy to learn, but the possibilities are endless - you never run out of a challenge."

Asked when it is best to learn, he answered "the earlier the better. Particularly for young kids, chess is like a Stairmaster for logical thinking."

The World Alzheimer Report 2010 stated that "dementia is significantly affecting every health and social care system in the world and costs of dementia are set to soar." Estimated worldwide costs of dementia are, according to the Alzheimer's Association, US\$604 billion.

Prevention is better than cure and teaching chess in schools is a cheap way to implement something of known value to reduce those costs and greatly improve the lives of those affected.



Research among those over the age of 60 strongly suggests that chess is valuable in combating Alzheimer's.

## Chess as sport

Mens sana in corpore sano

Chess was recognised as a sport by the International Olympic Committee in 1999. FIDE is a member of ARISF (Association of IOC Recognised International Sports Federations), SportAccord and other international sport organizations. Chess is an affiliate member, or fully recognized by, National Olympic Committees in 115 countries, and chess as a sport is recognized in 105 countries. These numbers are constantly being revised upwards.



With more than 180 member federations, FIDE is among the biggest sports organizations in the world, very proud of over forty official championships for youngsters, men, women and seniors.





# Sponsorship

Global sponsor

# ROSNEFT



Rosneft, the giant Russian oil and gas company, became FIDE's first ever global sponsor. It funded our chess in schools program under its social responsibility scheme.

That funding enabled us to provide chess materials – boards, sets, demonstration boards, class books and teacher guides to many countries.

It also enabled us to stage promotional events to bring the benefits of chess in schools to a wider audience through events such as the Chess and Education conference in Istanbul in 2012, children's camps and workshops and this booklet.

That sponsorship resulted in a great deal of publicity for our chess in schools programs in all kinds of media – TV, print and social media alike. The estimate for one year was 5,000,000+ page views by 620,000+ unique visitors.

РОСНЕФТ





# BNP PARIBAS

Many federations have acquired their own national sponsorship, often specifically for chess in schools.

Chess in schools is very attractive to many sponsors. There are several reasons for this:

- Chess has an excellent image – intelligence, seriousness, responsibility. This makes it especially relevant to companies with social responsibility sponsorship programs.
- Groups of happy, smiling, enthusiastic children make for excellent photo opportunities and wonderful publicity for both chess and the sponsor.
- Each child who learns chess in school usually has two parents and four grandparents, all of whom are adult consumers and voters.



OPEL



SUZUKI



MetLife

АЭРОФЛОТ  
Российские авиалинии





# Heads of state

Many heads of state are supportive of chess in general and chess in schools in particular. We know that most, if not all of them play chess themselves, even if only occasionally. A number have already been featured, here are some more.



HRH Queen Elizabeth II with President Zuma and a South African chess set presented to her by Nelson Mandela.



Queen Elizabeth I reportedly loved chess. In more modern times, Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, King George V and King Edward VIII all played regularly.





President Putin spoke at the Belaya Ladya (White Rook) chess tournament for school children in Sochi in June 2014, noting that 'chess used to be taught in each school, in each region.' He continued by saying, 'it is great and pleasant that today this tradition is being revived.'

He concluded 'it is indeed the most intellectual sport which helps to develop



mind and intellect, and we have always been at the top of the international ratings. It is a great pleasure for me to note that school chess specifically is being revived.'



President Putin greets Champion and Challenger after the 2012 World Championship.

Several US Presidents were strong players, especially Jefferson, Hayes and Garfield.

Several also collected chess sets and some Presidents who we do not know played chess had sets, including Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy.



President Obama mentions chess in his autobiography. Michelle Obama also plays.



Many US Presidents have played chess, including at least John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S Grant, Rutherford Hayes, James Garfield, Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama.





EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# European parliament

On 13 March 2012, Mr Martin Schulz, President of the EU Parliament announced that the Written Declaration 50/2011 had been endorsed – 415 members had added their endorsement, far exceeding the 369 needed.

A. whereas the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in Article 6 provides that sport is among the areas, 'where the Union shall have competences to carry out actions to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States'.

B. whereas chess could help social cohesion and could contribute to policy objectives, such as social integration, combating discrimination, reducing crime rates and even fight

with various addictions;

C. whereas no matter of the age of the child, chess can improve his/her concentration, patience and persistence, and can develop sense of creativity, intuition and memory of the children;

D. whereas, chess helps the development of children's ability to analyze, to take difficult decisions, and to flexibly solve problems; it teaches determination, motivation and sportsmanship;

E. whereas, chess is accessible sport for children from every social group, which does not require financial resources for infrastructure and organization,



1. Calls on the European Commission and the Member States to encourage the introduction of the program 'Chess in School' in the educational systems of the EU Member States;
2. Calls on the Member States to ensure adequate funding for the sport, without using significant budgetary cuts, even in times of financial crisis;
3. Calls on the European Commission in its forthcoming Communication on Sport to pay proper attention to the program 'Chess in School' and to ensure sufficient funding for it from 2012 onwards;
4. Calls on the Commission to take into consideration the results of the studies on the effect of the program on children's development;

The full text is available in the Documents section of our Chess in Schools web site ([cis.fide.com](http://cis.fide.com)).



# ★ Europe

Almost all European countries now have chess in schools projects. They cover a wide range. Russia, Armenia and Turkey are notable for the way they have incorporated chess education into the curriculum.

In some countries, like Denmark and England, projects do not involve the national chess

## AZERBAIJAN

In August 2012 President Ilyumzhinov met H.E. Ilham Aliyev, president of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

They discussed the agreement between FIDE and Azerbaijan ministry of Education, signed earlier and stipulating the inclusion of chess into the educational curriculum of Azerbaijan schools.

## GREECE

In 2014 the Greek Ministry of Education approved the inclusion of a nationwide chess in schools program. This new move, based on FIDE's Chess in Schools program, makes chess an official part of the morning program of all primary schools. The President of Greece, Karlos Papoulias and the Prime Minister, Antonis Samaras were personally involved and asked the Ministry of Education to move in this direction.

## FRANCE

The French Ministry of Education recognizes the educational and social benefits of chess in schools and has a convention to work with the French Chess Federation first signed in 2007.

The Ministry's objectives, stated on its éducol web site, include: contribute to the development of intellectual attitudes and skills conducive to acquiring the common core skills, including math and science literacy.

## GEORGIA

The chess federation works with Judit Polgar and with the Kasparov Chess Foundation Europe on several initiatives.



### HUNGARY

Chess introduced to the curriculum in 2014. Judit Polgar's method is one of several. Like the FIDE system, there are courses to train the teachers who do not have to be chess players.

### ROMANIA

Chess introduced to the primary school curriculum in 2014.

Dansk Skoleskak uses school chess clubs as a gateway to community activities for children and their parents, especially those from immigrant minorities, and also as a stepping stone towards involvement in other kinds of social activities.

### ENGLAND

Chess in Schools and Communities is a private charity set up to introduce chess to primary schools in the state sector. Mike Basman's UK Chess Challenge, another private organization, involves 60-80,000 children from schools all over the country.

MARK



# Russia

In Russia, the Palaces of Young Pioneers and then the annual Belaya Ladya tournament introduced chess to hundreds of thousands of children. But it was only in the 1990s that any systematic introduction of chess in schools began to develop.

The Russian Education Ministry recommended «Шахматы-школе» ('Chess to School') by Igor Sukhin and textbooks for the first three



consolidated across the whole country in 2004 by the decree from the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation On the development of chess education in educational system of the Russian Federation (О развитии шахматного образования в системе образования Российской Федерации).

years of primary school, together with teacher materials were produced.

The decree of the Republic of Kalmykia, establishing chess as a compulsory part of the curriculum was soon followed by a similar decree in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). These efforts were

President of Russia Vladimir Putin has expressed great interest in FIDE's Chess inSchools program.



# Armenia

This is the timeline of Armenia's successful implementation of chess in the compulsory curriculum of all primary schools:

- 2008: Preparatory work, needs assessment and resource inventory re: chess teachers, chess players, printed material, chess sets, et al.
- 2009: Material preparation
  - Textbook, workbook, teacher's guide, psychologist's guide
  - Inclusion of puzzles, games,

- Most difficult task
- Identify teachers across the country
- Hundreds of simultaneous displays to determine candidates
- 2011: Start teaching chess to every Year 2 child in the country
- 2012: Add new Year 2 intake, continue with Year 3
- 2013: Add new Year 2, continue with Year 3 + Year 4

- 2014: First full cycle completed. Benefits reported at Yerevan Conference in October
- 2015... Ongoing process. Continual state of improvement
  - Pedagogical
  - Psychological
  - ID of metrics to best quantify benefit
  - Expansion, e.g. virtual classroom
 Advice from Grandmaster Lputian, head of the Academy – do not hurry!

pedagogical variety

- 2010: Pilot with trainers/psychologists; further development of materials
- 2011: Coordination with Education Ministry, with Chess Academy at nerve centre
- 2011: Teacher selection and training - preparation of teachers drawing greatly upon pilot work from previous year







## ITALY

### Psychomotricity & research

Italy has become a hotbed of research into the benefits of chess in schools. See the Romano and Trichero references in the Bibliography.

This is also the country where



psychomotricity is being developed as a chess teaching methodology. The basic idea of psychomotricity is to internalize concepts by using a giant chessboard. As children, move around the board, tracing the moves of the chessmen, so they truly understand those moves and internalize concepts that are used in maths, geometry, history, geography and physical education.



## Andorra and Jersey

have led the way showing what can be done, achieving large chess in schools programs in countries with tiny populations.



**Israel** has begun a program with 49 schools,



**Moldova** with an initial 72 schools,



**Slovakia** and **Slovenia** each have more than 200 schools involved, all within the last 3 years.







# TURKEY

In 2005 the Turkish Ministry of Education decided to introduce chess in schools as an elective subject with the principal objective of increasing the intelligence of Turkish children.

The Turkish Chess Federation was given the job of training the teachers. A 'snowball' system was used. A single trainer trained 100 trainers and they then trained groups of 30 teachers at a time.

This has been adopted as the FIDE recommended system and has now been employed by many other countries. The teachers are not chess players but they are good teachers and you don't have to be an Einstein to teach physics

nor a Grandmaster to teach chess in a school.

Between 2005 and January 2014, the Sponsor of Turkish Chess Federation, Türkiye İş Bankası opened more than 12,000 chess classrooms.

The project has no end and continues to evolve, with 60,000 trained teachers and 4,000,000 'chess children.' Many of those children have become members of the Turkish Chess Federation which is now the biggest sport federation in Turkey with more than 400,000 members.



# AFRICA

President Zuma has been vocal in his support for chess in schools and **South Africa** has been one of the leading countries of the continent in this area.



**Algeria** was another early adopter of a major chess in schools project. Following preparatory work, they began in 2011 and, with help from FIDE, have trained almost 1,000 teachers and have the support of both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports.





FIDE-CiS has also assisted with support, materials, teacher training and the implementation of projects in the following countries:

Burkina Faso,  
Cameroon,  
Burundi,  
Comoros,  
Ethiopia,  
Lesotho,  
Malawi,  
Mali,  
Mauritania,  
Mauritius,  
Morocco,  
Rwanda,  
Senegal,  
Somalia,  
Sudan,  
Tanzania,  
Tunisia,  
Uganda,  
Zambia.





One of the first Asian countries to adopt a program was the UAE when the Asian Chess Federation President Sheikh Sultan bin Khalifah Al Nahyan signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Ministry of Education for the introduction of chess in schools in Al-Ain in 2008.

A cooperation agreement between Ministry of Education of the Republic

# ASIA



Minister of Education. Now 1,000 schools in Vietnam have a CiS program.

Iran has a flourishing chess in schools program.

Nepal is the latest Asian country to implement a program.

of Lebanon, Lebanese Chess Federation (with its President Nabil Bader) and FIDE was signed in 2012. The project is now in full flow.

The President of Vietnam visited City Chess in Elista and was impressed by Kalmykia's CiS program. When he returned to Vietnam, he spoke to his





# China

The school program was adopted by the Chinese National People's Congress. There is an obligatory program and an extra, elective program; a special directive from the Ministry of Education and Sport states that chess may be chosen as a part of the extra program.

Millions of children are involved in chess in schools programs throughout the country, with many centres of excellence.

Chongqing is one of those centres. It hosts the annual

Shenzhen is another - they have created a special presentation for the deputies of the Shenzhen Parliament, so that all of them can learn about chess and understand



why it is so good for children.

China and the Chinese Chess Association is a flagship in FIDE's navy and will surely help us to sail chess in schools projects into education systems worldwide.



National Chess in Schools Conference. Jiangnan Primary School Chongqing has a whole floor of their building devoted to chess.





# India

States are hurrying to introduce chess in schools programs, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu leading the way.

## TAMIL NADU

The Honourable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Selvi J Jayalithaa, made the announcement of the introduction of a state wide chess



they then trained 54,000 more - 7192 from higher education and 46,840 teachers from elementary and middle schools. In 2013, 1,125,628 children, a quarter of them from primary schools, took part in a competition on one single day in schools across the state.

in schools program in 2011. The program is for all children aged 7-17 in all state schools.

The program began with 'train the trainer' sessions in 2012, using the 'snowball' technique: 128 teachers from all over Tamil Nadu were given training and

'Chess makes  
children  
smarter.'

J. Jayalithaa



## NIIT

NIIT Mind Champions' Academy, a joint non-profit initiative between Grand Master Viswanathan Anand and NIIT Ltd., promotes Chess in schools across India. The Academy has so far reached more than 10,000 schools and about 1,000,000 students. Chess inculcates the critical skills of logical thinking and analysis amongst children and moulds them into true champions. The positive effects of chess on the behaviour and academic performance of students is well documented.

Recent studies and surveys amongst students have shown that chess playing improves behavioural traits as well as academic performance. It hones their problem solving and decision making skills while also inculcating patience and concentration. Students also tended to be more confident, developed self regulated learning and displayed greater motivation to perform in academic disciplines.

A Pan-India study (11,000 students) on

the impact of this program on children - 'Developing Mind Champions through Chess', showed that playing chess regularly has led to behavioural improvement as well as improvement in



academic performance. The study also showed that students who regularly play chess have developed self-regulated learning, better concentration, problem solving and decision making skills. Also, in response to an online survey, over 6000 children have mentioned that chess has helped them to perform better in science and mathematics. Students also mentioned that they have developed patience.







# AMERICAS



## Mexico

In 2014 a decree made the teaching of chess in schools mandatory. 200,000 schools are involved.



## Trinidad & Tobago

A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2012 between FIDE, the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education and the national chess federation. Chess is due to be incorporated into the teacher training system. In the interim, teachers have been trained to introduce chess into the schools of San Fernando, Trinidad and all across Tobago. It is expected that a standardized CAPE (Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination) module, being developed by FIDE, for use in Trinidad & Tobago will be accepted for use in all 16 English speaking Commonwealth Caribbean countries.



## Uruguay

The Uruguayan Chess Federation began a CiS project in 2010. 10% of all schools in the country are involved. An innovation in 2012 and 2013 was that the Institute for the Improvement of Higher Education trained both schoolteachers in chess and also chess players in teaching techniques.



## Paraguay

Both Houses passed a bill to introduce chess into the curriculum but it has not been signed into law by the President of the country.



## Puerto Rico

Has a thriving chess in schools program.





# USA

## CHESS-IN-THE-SCHOOLS

The New York not-for-profit organization Chess-in-the-Schools does great work in that city, especially among the underprivileged children. Noted for its achievements in raising educational standards and improving socialization in inner-city schools in the



Bronx and in Harlem, Chess-in-the-Schools has an annual budget of more than \$3,000,000. They currently bring chess to 13,000 students in 50 schools throughout New York City. Every child in the classes concerned is included, it is not an elective program.



Some of those achievements have given rise to popular movies. The first was *Knights of the South Bronx* (2005) about schoolteacher David MacEnulty and his chess team of underprivileged children. MacEnulty showed that chess confers a set of mind skills that enable children to face real life challenges. The team triumphed, against all the odds, beating teams from private schools across the country.

In 2012, *Brooklyn Castle* was released. It is the improbable story of I.S.318 in Brooklyn. Almost two thirds of the students are from families living below the poverty line. Last year, this Middle School of under-14s were runners-up in the US National High School (under-18) Championships. This year, they became the first Middle School ever to win the event.





# CHESS & EDUCATION CONFERENCES

A very important conference "Chess and Education" took place in Istanbul on the 30th of August 2012.

This initiative, sponsored by Rosneft, the global sponsor of FIDE Chess in Schools, will be followed by a series of such conferences in the future.

The conference was opened by FIDE President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov who addressed the capacity audience with his speech on the enormous importance of teaching children to play chess and the interest of

Ministers of Education in various countries in the Chess in Schools movement.

The chairman of CiS, Ali Nihat Yazici, took the floor and welcomed everybody to the conference.

The keynote presentation "Chess as a Sport" rounded off the opening session. It was given by Professor Dr. Caner Açıkada, Dean of the School of Sport Science, Hacettepe University, Ankara.





The ICCS (International Conference Chess in Schools) in Yerevan, Armenia (16-18 October 2014) is organized by the Armenian Ministry of Education and Science, FIDE, the Armenian Chess Federation and the Chess Academy of Armenia in cooperation with the Armenian State Pedagogical University.

Chess has become a mandatory subject in the primary schools of Armenia since 2011. Armenia was the first country in the world that embarked on the realization of such a project. During these three years significant work has been accomplished, such as psychological

research to assess the effectiveness of teaching chess and the influence of chess as a school subject on the development of children's logic, creative thinking, intellect and other qualities. Thus, this Conference will be an excellent occasion for participants and attendees to share experience and best practices to promote further development and to enhance the role and importance of Chess in educational systems. During the Conference, Panel Discussions in different thematic directions (organizational, methodological, psychological, sociological) will take place as well.







## CONFERENCES

Recent years have seen many academic conferences on the subject of chess in schools and chess in education generally. The most important ones have been :

2013 London, Successes and Challenges; Improving School Chess Practice, Research and Strategy.

2013 Chongqing, Onsite Promotion for Building up National Chess Tradition Schools.

2013 Khanty-Mansiysk, Chess Education – an Important Resource of the World System of Education.

2013 Bucharest, Simpozionul Educatie prin sah.

2013 Madrid - 1st International Conference on the Applications of Chess and Education - Chess Helps You Think (in Spanish).

2012 Turin, Chess and Mathematics: Learning by Playing.

2011 Dallas, 2nd George Koltanowski Memorial Conference on Chess and Education.

2011 Satka, Problems of teaching chess in schools and kindergartens in Russia and other countries around the world.

2010 Mexico City, El ajedrez, es una herramienta fundamental.

2010 Khanty-Mansiysk, Chess as a subject in an innovative educational system.

2009 Turin, Chess a game to grow up with.

2009 Moscow, Chess in Russia's education system and the world.

2008 Tomsk, Problems and prospects of the development of chess education in Russia.

2007 Aberdeen, Chess in the Schools and Communities Conference.

2004 Menorca, 1er Congreso Internacional De La Enseñanza Del Ajedrez.

2001 Dallas, George Koltanowski Memorial Conference on Chess and Education.

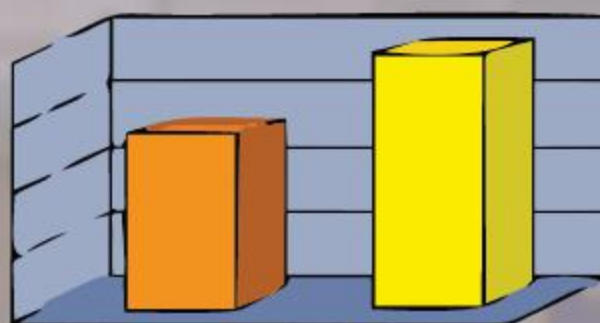
The next major conference will be the International Conference Chess in Schools (ICCS) in Yerevan, Armenia 16-18 October 2014.



# RESEARCH

In order fully to appreciate the benefits of chess in schools, it is necessary to consult the detail in the references given in the bibliography, but here are a few impressive snippets.

The following charts are from Michel Noir's work. They compare the scholastic test results of children who have had the advantage of learning chess in school and those who have not.



Reasoning +32%

Concentration +50%

# CURRICULUM

Chess has a place in the school curriculum in some regions, if not all in the following countries:

Albania	Andorra	Armenia	Austria	Brazil
Bulgaria	China	Cyprus	France	Georgia
Greece	Hungary	India	Israel	Italy
Kyrgyzstan	Laos	Latvia	Lithuania	Moldova
Netherlands	Netherlands	Romania	Russia	San Marino
Singapore	Slovakia	Slovenia	Turkey	Vietnam

The number will soon be increased. Those currently planning to introduce chess to the curriculum include Algeria, Peru, Syria, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay.



# CiS COMMISSION MEETINGS

The CiS Commission meeting at the 2012 FIDE Congress had the highest attendance of any commission.

Commission meeting in Tallinn 2013 reaffirmed that FIDE's CiS program is a social project, not to generate Grandmasters but with a main focus on primary schools with the aim to introduce chess to young children to help their education.

Smaller meetings were held in Al-Ain in 2013 and in Ankara 2014 to prepare the future direction of the Commission.

Spanish chess journalist Leontxo Garcia gave an excellent presentation of "Chess: Best Gym for the Mind" with special emphasis on chess as an antidote to Alzheimer's disease.

"The day may be not far off when doctors recommend a game of chess and the daily crossword along with physical exercise and a healthy diet"

Dr. Joe Verghese  
Professor of Neurology



All the materials from the Commission meeting are to be found on the Commission's web site <http://cis.fide.com>.



# CİS TRAINING SEMINARS

As FIDE's Chess in Schools program is rolled out around the world, it is very important that we train the schoolteachers who are going to teach the children.

Training seminars, are being held in all partner countries. These seminars are mostly aimed at giving existing chess trainers the special skills and knowledge required so that they can then train the teachers.

The first of these seminars were held

in India and were followed up with seminars in Ethiopia and Malawi, to equip trainers from many African countries, including Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

More seminars and workshops have been held in Ireland, Mauritius and Trinidad & Tobago, via the Internet (Lebanon) and more are being arranged.



Algeria, India, Ireland, Lebanon, Moldova, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey now have more than 120,000 trained teachers.





# Rosneft Training Camps

FIDE's Chess in Schools program is organizing training camps for children in countries around the world.

The first in what is expected to be a long series of training days around the world, sponsored by our global sponsor Rosneft, took place in Isleworth, West London.

The training day was free for under-



11s who registered. Each trainee received a free T-shirt and cap and got to play in a simul against a master.

The second CiS Training Camp was in Geneva, supporting the introduction of Chess in Schools in Switzerland. It was attended by local authorities, city principals, many teachers (who participated in a seminar) and of course a large number of children who played in a specially organized tournament. The plan for Geneva for 2012-2013 is: 25 schools, 80 classes, 1500 children and over 1200 hours of school time for chess.

The third, in New York, just managed to beat Hurricane Sandy and benefited from a skilled face painter.





# CiS Promotion

FIDE's Chess in Schools Commission has produced books and magazines to help promote chess in education. This booklet is one example.

Teaching materials include class books for the children and guides for the teachers, all in English, French and Arabic with Spanish next on the list.

The web sites and free fortnightly electronic magazines for children are available in 11 languages with more to follow.

Our CiS stand at the 2012 Istanbul Olympiad was usually thronged with visitors. Representatives of national federations called by to sign agreements, to collect material or to discuss the way forward for chess in schools in their countries.

Rather than try to impose a one-size-fits-all version of development, CiS endeavours to tailor materials and programs to best fit the circumstances of each national federation.







# Bibliography

An annotated bibliography is being developed on FIDE'S Chess in Schools web site – [cis.fide.com](http://cis.fide.com).

Some of the most important studies can be downloaded direct from that site, including:

Romano, Barbara (2012), Does Playing Chess Improve Math Learning? Promising (And Inexpensive) Results From Italy. Yes, it does is the conclusion, especially if the child is foreign born or living in the disadvantaged South of Italy.

Trinchero, Roberto (2012), Chess as a cognitive training ground. Six years of trials in primary schools. This document presents the results of six years (from 2005 to 2011) of trials in primary schools of different chess training strategies and a study of the relationship between chess training and improved skills and abilities of children. The results, in line with other studies, demonstrated several benefits (see also Romano above).

McDonald, Patrick (2006?), The Benefits of Chess in Education, A Collection of Studies and Papers on Chess and Education. A very useful compilation of more than 20 papers and a guide to further resources.

Noir, Michel (2002), Le Développement des habiletés cognitives de l'enfant par la pratique du jeu d'échecs. Noir's doctoral thesis (University of Lyon). An important source for background, information and research in France.

In October 2014, the Chess Academy of Armenia will present the findings of their research into the educational, sociological and psychological results of their full-scale implementation of a chess in schools program for every primary school child in the country.



# "Learning is a lifelong experience"

Dr Karan Singh

Indian Ambassador to UNESCO  
Chancellor of NIIT University

Address to NIIT University, 12 November 2011, where he insisted that the concept of "world as one family" is the only way to go forward, which echoes FIDE's motto of Gens Una Sumus.



## "It always seems impossible, until it is done."

H.E. Nelson Mandela