

BUILDING THINKERS, LEADERS, & CHAMPIONS ACROSS THE CITY

ACADEMIC CHESS PROGRAM 2025-2026

Seminar for New Coaches & Schools



PRESENTED BY

David Heiser

**CHIEF CHESS OFFICER
CPS ACADEMIC CHESS**

daheiser@cps.edu

- FIDE School Instructor
- FIDE National Instructor
- FIDE National Arbiter
- USCF National Tournament Director

**CEO & CO-FOUNDER RENAISSANCE
KNIGHTS CHESS FOUNDATION**

"Life is like a game of chess. I cannot undo the move but I can make the next step better." - Edwin Tan





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Open to all CPS schools (K–12)
- Two divisions:
 - High School (9–12)
 - Elementary/Middle School (K–8)
- High School Season runs October–February
- Elementary/Middle School Season runs October–March
- 2025 – 2026 Rules & Regulations:
www.cpschess.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/AC-Rules-2025-26.pdf

CPS CHESS WEBSITE

WWW.CPSCHESS.ORG

NEWS & UPDATES

Where we post important announcements to ensure that everyone stays informed and connected throughout the season.

RESOURCES

Where we provide helpful resources and support for the leaders behind the boards so that they can have a positively impact on their students' chess journey.

EVENT CALENDAR

Where we keeps coaches, schools, and families up to date with all upcoming meetings, workshops, and tournaments. And where we highlight past events and student achievements.

SEASON ACTIVITIES

1

Conditioning & Practice
sessions

2

City-wide in-person & online
competitions

3

Sanctioned CPS tournaments
& National Championships

COPS & KIDS PROGRAM

Building trust, respect, and community—one move at a time

INTEGRATED INTO ACADEMIC CHESS

The program promotes peace at home, in schools, and in communities by fostering positive relationships between students and police. Chess serves as the vehicle for engagement, helping young people and officers connect in meaningful ways

CPD OFFICERS PARTICIPATES IN THE WEEKLY CLASSES

The initiative empowers students with respect, responsibility, and relationship-building skills while teaching conflict resolution through cooperation and constructive problem-solving.



ADMINISTRATION



ACADEMIC COMPETITION

Manages the Academic Chess Program in partnership with Renaissance Knights



INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS

Principals are responsible for all matters related to their school's chess program, ensuring effective implementation and student participation



COACHES

Coaches work under their school administration

COACHING PAY

Starter equipment for new schools

BUSING TO EVENTS

Meals for students at CPS Tournaments

US CHESS MEMBERSHIPS

ChessKid Gold memberships

ACADEMIC CHESS SUPPORTS



SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Hold Weekly chess classes
- Attend at least 2 in-person tournaments + Playoffs/ Championship
- Cover additional program costs
- Record attendance in ASPEN
- Provide chaperones at events
- Follow the Chess Rules & Regulations

Students must turn in the follow to their chess coaches:

- Parental Permission Form & Data Sheet
[English Version](#) [Spanish Version](#)
- CPS Media Release Form
[English Version](#) [Spanish Version](#)



COACHES COMPENSATION

- 39 hours per school (split up to 2 coaches)
- 2 hrs – Annual Coaches Meeting
- 21 hrs – Up to 3 tournaments (7 hrs each)
- 16 hrs – Weekly chess classes
- +7 hrs for IHSA Sectionals or K–8 Championship
- Must be CPS Teacher, ESP, or Misc employee
- 2024–25 hourly rate: \$30.68/hr
- 2025–26 rate: pending CTU contract update

PROCESS

- Stipends No longer allowed (CTU contract)
- Coaches must clock in/out using CPS timekeeping system
- Complete online Academic Chess timesheet (December & March)
- Verified by Academic Competitions staff
- Payments in January & April
- Will be covered in-depth at the Annual Coaches Meeting

MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

ONLINE VIA ZOOM, STARTS AT 5:30 PM

ANNUAL COACHES MEETING REQUIRED TO ATTEND

Thursday, September 18 or Wednesday, September 24

WORKSHOP WEDNESDAYS

- Oct 01 – Tournament 101: Basics & Registration
- Oct 08 – Coaching & Chaperoning at Tournaments 101
- Oct 15 – Aspen 101: Navigating Student Data & Attendance
- Oct 22 – ChessKid 101: Getting Started Online
- Oct 29 – Beyond the Board 101: Social-Emotional Learning
- Nov 05 – Coaching 101: Foundations for a Chess Club
- Nov 12 – Coaching 101: Building Chess Culture at School
- Nov 19 – Coaching 101: Lesson Planning

CHESSKID OVERVIEW

1

Safe, child-friendly environment

2

Interactive lessons, puzzles, videos, and game analysis tools

3

CPS online tournament platform

Gold Memberships provided for all Academic Chess students

www.cpschess.org/chesskid



ONLINE TOURNAMENTS

- Prepares students for in-person events
- Must use a browser on a desktop/laptop – no phones or tablets!
- Students must have their ChessKid account connected to the CPS Enterprise account at least 3 days before the tournament
- Coaches should encourage students to participation

WEEKLY TUESDAY KNIGHTS RAPID

- October - April
- Individual Swiss
- 5 Rounds | G/10 time control
- One Open Section for all grades
- Round 1 Begins: 6:00 PM (Rounds start ASAP after that)

MONTHLY TOURNAMENTS ON NON STUDENT ATTENDANCE DAY

Elementary Open [Grades K–6]

- 5-Round Individual Swiss
- Time Control: G/15;+5

MS/HS Open [Grades 7–12]

- 4-Round Individual Swiss
- Time Control: G/40;+5

Round 1 Begins: 10:00 AM

(Rounds start ASAP after that)



IN-PERSON TOURNAMENTS

- City-Wide Competitions for only Academic Chess schools
- Conference Playoffs (K–8)
- City-Wide Championship (HS & K-8)
- CPS-Sanctioned tournaments
- Busing available
- Meals for students & Chaperones
- Schools •provide CPS staff/approved volunteers as chaperones
- Parents may only attend the awards ceremony

Guide to registering for in-person tournaments: www.cpschess.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Guide-to-Registering-for-In-Person-Tournamnets.pdf

TOURNAMENT LOGISTICS & EXPECTATIONS

- Coaches must register students by deadlines
- Chaperones & coaches must:
- Supervise their students throughout the event
- Promote sportsmanship and good behavior
- Students should wear school shirts/uniforms
- Schools are required to play in minimum 2 CPS in-person tournaments + Playoffs/Championship
- High schools may substitute one non-CPS tournament
- Full calendar of CPS tournaments listed on website



STUDENT BEHAVIOR AT TOURNAMENTS

All students are expected to comply with the Chicago Public Schools' Student Code Conduct at school and during every chess competition.

- Guide to student behavior & chaperone responsibilities at tournaments: <https://cpschess.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Student-conduct-chaperone-responsibility.pdf>
- Guide to the rules & etiquette of chess tournaments: www.cpschess.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Guide-to-the-Rules-and-Etiquette-of-chess-competition.pdf



SAMPLE TOURNAMENT DAY SCHEDULE

- Check-In: 8:30–9:00 AM
- Round 1: 10:00 AM
- Round 2: 11:30 AM
- Lunch: 12:00–12:45 PM
- Round 3: 1:00 PM
- Round 4: 2:30 PM
- Awards: 4:00 PM
- Departure: 4:30 PM

Playoffs and Championships have an additional round/longer time controls with departure set at 6:30 pm

SECTIONS

- Primary: Grades K–4
- Intermediate: Grades K–6
- Junior High: Grades K–8
- High School: Grades 9–12

NEXT STEPS

- Complete and submit MOU by Sept. 30, 2025
- Schedule your weekly chess classes
- Attend Coaches Meeting (Sept. 18 or 24)
- Prepare for October season launch
- and have fun

CLOSING / Q&A

Thank you for being a part of
Academic Chess!

Please take a few minutes to complete our survey — your feedback is essential in helping us improve the Academic Chess Program.

<https://forms.gle/pixKvkFHGGGoWEUbR8>

