SUCCESS ACADEMY CHESS PROGRAM

Vision Statement

The Success Academy Chess Program provides rigorous, engaging, and hands-on Chess instruction that gets kids to fall in love with thinking. Teachers, scholars, school leaders and families come together to form a chess culture that is in constant pursuit of intellectual and creative excellence. Guided by teachers who are committed to consistent growth, both pedagogically as well as over the chess board, our scholars learn to think critically, to control their impulses, to make better decisions, and to compete, in chess and in life, with confidence.

Elements of a Successful Chess Program

A world-class chess program involves many components – rigorous and engaging classroom instruction, after-school clubs, and local and national tournaments – and it requires the deep investment by many constituencies, including Network leaders, school leaders, parents, chess teachers, and scholars. Each constituency has a role to play in achieving a high quality program.

Network Leadership and Program Management:

The Network team provides instructional, programmatic, and operational leadership and support of the chess program.

To ensure the highest quality of chess instruction in the classroom, the Senior Manager of Chess and his team are focused on:

1) Supporting Talent in the hiring of chess teachers.
2) Training our chess teachers. Network Leadership will deliver T-School sessions for teachers, create training materials, and schedule leader and teacher lab site visits with a focus on content knowledge, active learning, and progressive pedagogy and press in the classroom.
3) Building out a progressive chess curriculum, with revisions for continuous improvement, and creating assessments to drive scholars toward mastery. Network leadership will collaborate with teachers on curriculum development for top-level players.
4) Working with other departments at the Network, such as Finance, Talent, Communications, and Development, to ensure the sustainability and visibility of the program.

Network leaders will ensure a true partnership with school leadership. Communications will be clear and regular. All deadlines and Chess teacher deliverables (such as assessment data entry, permission slips, and attendance for clubs and tournaments) will be communicated in an effective and timely manner one month in advance of each respective event.
due date. A leader and teacher facing Chess Report Card, which will include stats on USCF chess ratings, Chess Kid study habits, tournament results, and in Elementary School, SMS data reports, will be available to all schools so that leaders know exactly how scholars are performing at their school.

Network leadership is also responsible for organizing stellar club and tournament experiences for our scholars as well as providing schools with operational support for these events. Saturday Tournaments and Chess clubs will begin and end on time and the tournament hall will be equipped with all the necessary supplies, including Chess sets, clocks and score sheets. Chess travel planning will include a clear communication plan for senior leaders, families, and scholars. The plan will set forth clear expectations for all involved in the tournaments (teachers, chaperones, and scholars) and will also include a clear scholar safety and medication plan to be implemented by chess teachers, with the support of school operations teams of participating schools. The Chess travel trips will include morning and evening chess teacher debriefs, as well as parent chaperone check-ins

**Leader Investment:**

As the leaders of their school communities, Senior Leaders are responsible for high quality chess instruction at their schools. School leaders must develop their chess teachers as they do any other teacher on staff, focusing on classroom management, progressive pedagogy, and press.

School leadership must be familiar with Chess curriculum and understand the significance of their Chess assessment data. The Senior Leader and/or direct manager of the Chess teacher should regularly assess teacher performance and provide feedback (specifically around classroom management and the 3Ps).

Leaders foster the chess culture in their buildings. Leaders drive consistent chess instruction at least once a week over the course of the entire school year. They understand that consistent opportunities to practice and receive instruction are keys to developing understanding and mastery and set up their schedules accordingly. Leaders attend tournaments and celebrate the successes of the chess team through community circle, cheer tunnels for kids leaving for nationals, weekly staff announcements and more.

**Parent Investment:**

Parents play a huge role in ensuring the SA Chess Program is a success and that scholars are learning, competing, and achieving at the highest levels.

When parents are engaged...
- Scholars complete all assigned tactics work.
- Scholars will arrive at competitions on time and in uniform
- Parents know the chess tournament schedule, how the ratings work, and their child’s rating
• Parents volunteer to support in team rooms or as chaperones for travel
tournaments.
• Parents understand that we are driving scholars to become critical thinkers and
excellent decision makers.
• There is an open line of communication and trusted relationship between the parent
and the chess teacher.

**Teaching and Learning:**

Kids should be excited to come to chess class, lining up for chess club, and filling the chess
room at every available moment. To achieve this, our chess teachers will work to make
chess class magical and rigorous as well as provide other opportunities for kids to learn
and excel at the game.

For in class instruction, chess teachers will constantly strive to achieve high levels of active
learning and be intellectually prepared for classes, having studied the curriculum materials
and achieved a deep understanding of the content. Chess teachers will lead classes in a
progressive way so that scholars are constantly learning by doing. Every Chess session
must include a “targeted teaching time,” when scholars apply the teaching point or explore
a Chess idea during a hands-on Chess activity. Teachers are aware of the student data and
use it to make instructional decisions so that assessment data demonstrates scholar
growth. Informal assessments are constantly being made and Systems of Daily Mastery are
evident in the classroom. Chess teachers will constantly press scholars, putting the onus of
the heavy thinking work on scholars so they to develop in their chess ability and achieve
mastery over the content.

Chess teachers will put parent engagement front and center and own communication with
families around the Saturday schedule, travel tournaments and work requirements of
Chess club scholars. Parents will receive a monthly e-newsletter from coaches that will
include information on upcoming tournament dates, along with statistics on how their
child’s club is performing at tournaments and how its Chess Kid effort compares to other
SA Chess clubs.

At Saturday tournaments the teacher should run a well organized and disciplined team
room, providing targeted teaching time through Chess analysis while simultaneously
managing the behavior of the room. Chess analysis can happen in small groups or with the
entire room. Teachers should use the mistakes made in the game to delve into a scholar’s
understanding of Chess and their competitive psyche in order to press the scholar closer to
mastery.