



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Michael Sentance
State Superintendent of Education

January 5, 2017

REVISED—RETURN DATE

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education
FROM: Michael Sentance
State Superintendent of Education
RE: Alabama Chess in Schools Initiative

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) and the Alabama Chess Federation (ACF) are proud to announce the third year of the Alabama Chess in Schools (ACIS) Initiative, an exciting and unique pilot program. This initiative offers opportunities for students to participate in chess as an integral part of the school curriculum; and it is among the nation's first teacher-driven chess in schools programs aligned to the Alabama College- and Career-Ready Standards (ACCRS).

We are pleased to report that most of the ACIS Initiative Pilot Schools and districts from Cohort 1 have expanded their ACIS Initiative programs and we have added Cohort 2 schools this year. The number of participating schools has grown from 13 to 29. In 2017-2018 we expect that number to grow to 40.

Research suggests that chess benefits students both cognitively and affectively, increasing abilities such as focusing, strategizing, problem solving, critical thinking, perseverance, and self-confidence—all necessary to increase school performance. When integrated into standardized curriculum through literature, math, social studies, and even science, it has also proven to be extremely motivating and engaging. Read more about the ACIS Initiative at alabamachess.org. Click on the ACIS Initiative link.

At the elementary level, the program requires at least two general education teachers and one ancillary teacher (such as a counselor, gifted specialist, media specialist, or technology specialist) per pilot school to attend professional development. This training will acquaint them with chess basics and the chess curriculum. Classroom instructors will teach one to two chess lessons weekly, linked to the ACCRS. In addition, pilot schools will establish, or continue already established, before and after school chess programs and may offer chess electives at middle and high schools. The required professional development will be provided, along with supplementary interest-based centers, basic chess tools for

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use in chess classrooms and an internet-based chess learning system with licenses for individual student use with tools that allow teachers to easily monitor progress.

Operational support for the ACIS Initiative is provided by an ALSDE partnering agency which is the Chess in Schools LLC, a unit of the Alabama Chess Federation organized specifically to support the ACIS Initiative.

Grants will be awarded to LEAs for use in each participating school to cover the cost of materials and equipment, professional development, and other related expenses. Participating schools will be required to commit to pilot the program for a three-year period. Additional candidate selection considerations and requirements are located on the application pages. Interested applicants must complete and return the application form to Mrs. Nancy Johnson at nancy@chessinschools.us, no later than **January 31, 2017**.

MS:CAM:SMR

Attachment

cc: Dr. Barbara J. Cooper
Mrs. Shanthia M. Washington
Mrs. Robin A. Nelson
Mr. Andy Meadows

FY17-2026

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**ALABAMA CHESS IN SCHOOLS (ACIS)
PILOT SCHOOLS APPLICATION**

Eligibility Considerations	Schools that either have no chess program, an after-school only program, or a chess in school program taught by a teacher.
A. Classroom Commitment	One to two class periods per week (for Elementary schools), plus a before- or after-school program, or chess elective (required of all participating schools).
B. General Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Three-year commitment● Participation by all schools within a feeder pattern.● Interest and enthusiasm for this effort.● Elementary schools in the feeder pattern will provide direct instruction in chess aligned to Alabama College- and Career-Ready Standards (ACCRS). This training may be any grades but must include at least one class in grade levels 3-6. <u>Additional grade levels may be added for direct instruction chess classes in each subsequent year.</u>● Middle and high schools may offer either the direct instruction (see above) or before- or after-school chess programs, chess clubs, and/or chess electives. High schools may defer startup until there is a rising class entering with prior ACIS training.● Submit this application by January 31, 2017. If accepted, participate in a follow-up conference call interview in February 2017.
C. Personnel Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. School personnel:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. A minimum of two chess teachers at the elementary level and an ancillary teacher such as a counselor, gifted, media, or technology specialist must participate.b. Chess teachers must attend one week of professional development during June of 2017. Classes will be offered the weeks of June 12, June 19, and June 26, 2017.c. Each school must assign a “Chess Lead” from among the participating teachers/administrators whose responsibility will be:<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. To act as the liaison between the school and the ACIS state support team.ii. To attend a mandatory one-day ACIS orientation/training session on how to prepare for your school’s Fall ACIS implementation.iii. To plan the local ACIS implementation (per training to be received at the March (8th or 15th), 2017 orientation session.2. Local Education Agency (LEA)<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Assign an ACIS LEA Coordinator whose responsibility will be:<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. To act as the liaison between the LEA and the ACIS support team with respect to grant administration, purchasing, teacher reimbursement related to stipends, professional development, travel reimbursement, or other ACIS related financial matters.ii. To allocate ACIS funding between schools; intra-LEA ACIS priorities.iii. To address issues escalated by schools and/or the ACIS leadership team.

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D. Other Year One Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. At the start of the new school year, sign a Memorandum of Agreement formalizing the ACIS responsibilities of the LEA and Chess in Schools LLC.2. Compensate teachers for their professional development and associate travel expense using ACIS funds provided for that purpose in accordance with the above Memorandum of Agreement.3. Participate in inter-school chess competitions and tournament play.4. Sponsor a "Parent Night" during second semester involving chess.
E. Subsequent Years	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Participate in and host competitive chess tournaments.2. Expand the number of classrooms teaching chess through direct instruction at the elementary level.3. Attend professional development sessions.

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Complete the application form in conjunction with other schools within your feeder pattern, providing the information for all schools within that pattern. Use multiple sheets if necessary.

1) School System Name _____

2) Pilot Nominees [List all schools within the feeder pattern.]

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
School Name			
Number of Students (total school)			
Estimated Number of Students Who Will Participate in Chess During School			
Estimated Number of Students Who Will Participate in Chess <u>Only</u> in Before/After School. (Do not include students counted in row above.)			
Geographic Profile: (Rural, Metro, or Suburban?)			
Racial Make-up, Title One or Non-Title One	Black	Black	Black
	White	White	White
	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic
	Other	Other	Other
School Address			
Phone			

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Implementation Approach [Check 1 box in each]	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement in Year One (2017-2018)	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement in Year One (2017-2018)	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement in Year One (2017-2018) <input type="checkbox"/> Implement in Year Two (2018-2019)
Principal Name			
Principal Phone			
Principal E-mail			

In a few words, describe support systems, if any, already in place to augment this program. For example, is there any teacher in your school who is already teaching chess as part of the core curriculum? (Already established chess mentorships of before- or after-school chess programs are not necessary to the selection process, but nice to know.)

State in 100 words or less why you think the nominated schools would benefit from Chess in Schools.

You may be contacted to participate in a brief Webinar or phone conference as part of this application process. Administrators and interested chess participants should plan to attend if contacted by the Chess in Schools Facilitator.

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**ALABAMA CHESS IN SCHOOLS (ACIS)
PILOT SCHOOLS APPLICATION**

Assurances: Checking the statements below constitutes an assurance that your school and its feeder pattern agrees to the terms (Signatures of administrators from all schools within the feeder pattern and the Local Education Agency (LEA) Superintendent are required.)

- At least two teachers at each elementary and middle school will teach chess during the school day.
- At least two teachers at each high school will act as chess coaches for before- and/or after-school chess clubs.
- At least one teacher to be designated as the school chess lead will attend the March 2017 one-day ACIS orientation meeting.
- Chess in Schools teachers with a GT specialist/administrator/counselor will attend a week of June ACIS professional development.
- Teachers will be allowed to use the chess curriculum provided in their classrooms at least one to two times per week.
- All schools in the feeder pattern are willing to participate.
- The school will host a before- or after-school chess club*.
- Nominated schools will commit to at least three years of full participation in the program.*

*High schools may postpone participation until an upcoming ACIS-trained grade reaches their school.

Principal Signatures:

_____	Date _____	_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____	_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____	_____	Date _____

Superintendent Assurance: I am aware and approve of the participation of the schools listed above in the Chess in Schools Initiative Pilot Program and agree to abide by the terms set forth.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

LEA: _____