



FIDE EDU Report April - July 2023

[New Preparation of Teachers Course](#)

The International Advisory Board of the EDU Commission undertook the task of reviewing the old PoT course. Rita Atkins, Anzel Laubscher, Tamara Sargsyan and Boris Bruhn were members of the team that revised the old course to bring it in line with the concept of educational chess: using chess as an educational tool to teach academic and 21st century skills. The course aims to equip educators with the necessary skills to teach educational chess effectively. The target audience includes teachers and trainers with some understanding of chess and experience working with children.

While still covering the introduction of chess rules and development of basic chess skills through playing chess, also incorporated in the new course are chess-like minigames and exercises as well as important pedagogic elements, such as classroom management, teaching to different learning styles, differentiation techniques, safeguarding, and lesson planning. Examples of chess used as an interdisciplinary or as a transversal tool are also discussed. [Transversal tool: when it is used in a field that cuts across all subjects, such as for developing emotional intelligence. Interdisciplinary tool: when it is used to facilitate the learning of a specific subject, such as mathematics or languages.]

The revised course was delivered online four times in the past three months, with a total of 97 participants, of whom 85 people passed the exam and received the School Instructor title. The in-person course was presented in Africa in two places: in Harare, Zimbabwe and in Lagos, Nigeria. There were 95 participants altogether, with 85 exam passes.

[Conferences in Astana, Chicago, and Bologna](#)

A “Chess in Education” conference was sponsored by FIDE - International Chess Federation and Kazakhstan Chess Federation in Astana on April 20th.

Experts from the EDU Commission that included Chairman Jerry Nash from the USA, Secretary Rita Atkins from Hungary, Senior Adviser Leontxo Garcia from Spain, and Member of the EDU Commission Vahan Sargsyan from Armenia, shared their insights. Educators from all over Kazakhstan learned how to use the game for teaching children mathematics, problem solving, creativity and other important skills. A few days later Leontxo Garcia and Rita Atkins represented FIDE EDU at a press conference, where they talked about the benefits of chess in education and answered questions from the audience.

On April 25th Rita Atkins held a hands-on workshop for fifteen local teachers. Together they solved mathematical problems on the chessboard and played chess-like games, all of which were suitable for use in primary schools.

The “Chess for Freedom” Conference in Chicago, USA, May 18-20 was organized by the FIDE Social Commission and the Cook County Sheriff’s Office (Chicago, USA). More than 40 participants, including FIDE officials, representatives of national chess federations and experts involved in

programs that introduce chess to inmates went to Chicago to discuss concepts and approaches to using chess as a rehabilitation tool for incarcerated people. The conference included representatives from the Education Commission. Chairman Jerry Nash and Member Boris Bruhn attended, and Mr. Nash delivered a presentation on chess as a diversionary strategy for juvenile offenders. Both commissions are in discussions on how to collaborate on the project going forward.

Chairman Jerry Nash also represented FIDE EDU at the “Chess: A Game to be Spread in Schools” (CGS) conference in Bologna, Italy, May 27-28. The presentation provided an overview of the activities and vision of the Education Commission.

Chairman’s visit to Qatar

Qatar Chess Association organized a "Chess in Schools" seminar in cooperation with FIDE EDU. The event was held on 3-4 of May 2023 in Doha as the first step of an implementation agreement between the Ministry of Sports and Youth and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Participating In the project are 10 Qatari primary public schools.

The lecture was presented both in Arabic and English by the Chairman of FIDE EDU and his assistant, IM Ismail Karim, newly enrolled coach of Qatar Chess Association. The project will be implemented in schools with the start of the academic year 2023-2024 next September.

Chairman’s visit to India

Organized by the All India Chess Federation (AICF), the 10-day visit from May 30 – June 11 included the cities of Delhi, Bikaner, Ahmedabad, Indore, Nagpur, and Bhubaneswar. The schedule was a combination of presentations to educators and chess trainers as well as meetings that included participation from the highest levels of government, sport, and education in each state. The FIDE brand is strong in India. One reason for the visibility of the visit and the extent of the welcomes and meetings is due to the fact that FIDE is a global organization that carries credibility within the Indian culture.

The visit revealed the deep interest in both competitive and educational chess that currently exists. Their chess trainers are as interested in EDU training as they are in sportive chess training. An initiative announced during the visit was a sport university that plans to offer a specialty area for chess.

The Indian culture has inherent ties to the origins of chess and now chess as a means of teaching academic and 21st century skills is a logical next step in the future of the game in the country. The realization of this potential will be determined both by finding creative solutions to training teachers and chess trainers as well as identifying the human and financial resources needed for a project of this scope. Discussions are already underway to determine the next steps for project development.

The long-term benefits for FIDE (and FIDE EDU) for a partnership with AICF in a Chess in Education initiative cannot be overstated. The numbers are overwhelming. For just one state in India the leaders set their minimum goal for the number of teachers to be trained at 10,000. The Chairman for Chess in Schools for the AICF, Adjeet Verma, stated that to achieve a significant presence for chess and CIE in India, they needed to reach “a million teachers.” Of course, the realization of this potential will be determined both by finding creative solutions to training this many participants as well as locating the funding sources which can support the project. Discussions are already

underway to determine the project details and how AICF and FIDE can establish a mutually beneficial partnership.

Strategy Workshop

The EDU Commission hosted its first Strategy Workshop online on July 8th, 2023. Over sixty representatives from twenty African Chess Federations participated, each bringing their expertise to the table. Senior FIDE officials and EDU Commission members were also present. The aim of the workshop was to promote chess as an educational tool. Commission Councilor Mr. Thabano Mothokomedi took care of the organisation.

EDU Commission Secretary Rita Atkins hosted the workshop, highlighting the vision of educational chess and aiming to make it an essential tool for educating students worldwide. Differentiating between educational chess and competitive chess, the Secretary pointed out that the ideal CIE program would be inclusive of all students and not just a few who play in chess tournaments. Coping with defeats and analytical thinking would help improve future competencies in the youth worldwide. It is the vision of the EDU Commission to make FIDE the global leader in CIE. The goal is to double the number of educators and the number of students involved in CIE in the next three years. The International Advisory Board and the CIE Development team are established within the EDU Commission to drive progress towards this ambitious goal.

GM Abhijit Kunte, Member of EDU Commission, encouraged all federations to introduce CIE in their countries, stating the importance of formulating strategies that individual countries can target. He moderated a discussion in which participants recognized the need to engage policymakers and ministers to advocate for chess in primary education, and to secure financial support from multinational companies and social entrepreneurs. Providing chess equipment, training educators, establishing chess clubs and coaches in schools to promote competitiveness and active association with media are key points that were discussed.

The workshop then unveiled the new Preparation of Teachers course. Esteban Jaureguizar, Councilor of the EDU Commission together with Leontxo Garcia, Senior Advisor of the EDU Commission emphasized the potential of chess being a therapeutic and social tool in education. They advocated for engaging governments, influential journalists, and research groups to promote CIE, stressing the need to integrate chess into the curriculum and make it an interdisciplinary tool or a standalone subject.

Adriana Salazar, Member of EDU Commission, showcased successful examples of teaching mathematics through chess, illustrating its effectiveness in engaging students and enhancing learning outcomes. Dr. Uvencio Blanco, Member of EDU Commission, introduced a collection of books that could be used in a curriculum for a CIE program.

Concluding the workshop, WGM Dana Reizniece-Ozola, Managing Director of FIDE, repeated and further emphasized the goal of the EDU Commission to double the number of teachers and children engaged in educational chess worldwide. In her opinion the workshop was a testament to the immense potential of CIE. The interest we see globally towards the game is at its peak. With continued efforts and collaboration, chess can truly unlock the potential of young minds across the globe.

The IOC Africa Project

FIDE EDU, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and the national federations of Zimbabwe and Nigeria organized an initiative to introduce chess in education to those countries. The visit in

July 2023 of FIDE EDU Commission Chairman Jerry Nash and Commission member Anzel Laubscher represents a collaborative opportunity to establish a strong foundation for chess in education in the countries and to assist the national federations in building upon that foundation.

The schedule of activities in each country included presentations to stakeholders and potential sponsors as well as a Preparation of Teachers (PoT) course for the School Instructor (SI) title. This course not only trained teachers and chess coaches, but also provided a concrete demonstration of the ideas and values of chess as an educational tool to existing and potential stakeholders.

The course and the other activities encouraged media attention. This allowed potential sponsors to recognize the power of being a partner in education. The visit also helped the federation to generate new ideas in their context of how the organization could grow, create new leadership, and to establish lasting relationships with business, government, and education leaders. The combined presence of the national federation and FIDE generated both visibility and credibility for both organizations.

Immediate follow-up includes the following:

- Scheduling requests for more PoT and PoL courses in the host country.
- Scheduling requests from nearby countries which observed the benefits.
- Collaboration with the Nigerian Chess Federation in creating an MoA with the Lagos Department of Education
- Collaboration with the Nigerian Chess Federation in creating an MoA with Sterling Bank (9th largest bank in Nigeria by assets) as a sponsor.

This project lays the groundwork for extensive work in both countries as well as in neighboring countries. A special thanks is due to the leadership of FIDE, the IOC, and the national federations for their support in this project. In addition, EDU Commission Secretary Rita Atkins and Commission member Anzel Laubscher are to be commended for their detailed work to accomplish the needed logistics for the two-country tour. GM Nigel Short played a valuable role in the promotion of both FIDE and Chess in Education in Zimbabwe.

Work in Progress

FIDE EDU is looking to introduce the FIDE Chess School Award. In general, schools that involve many students and reach out to many people in activities related to chess as a tool for education have a good chance of receiving the award. As a counter example, a school that hires a single trainer to coach a handful of children who may win some trophies is unlikely to qualify. In their applications, schools will submit information together with supportive documentation about their school chess activities. They will be assessed on criteria such as student involvement, facilities and teaching materials, social commitment, and their use of chess as an educational tool amongst others. We are planning to roll out the FIDE Chess School Award in the autumn.

FIDE EDU seeks to facilitate the presentation of the PoT course in most major languages around the world. Organisers wishing to present in another language must find suitable lecturers in that language. We are in the process of setting up details about outsourcing the PoT course organization and selecting suitable lecturers for these courses.

A new website is under development for FIDE EDU and is expected to replace the old one in the autumn of 2023.

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