Chess as an Integral Part of School Culture

Broad Acres Elementary School
Silver Spring, MD

Fernando Moreno, Counselor
Eric Henderson, Media Specialist
Chess as an Integral Part of School Culture

Our school population is socioeconomically marginalized.

- Poverty rate: 91%
- ESOL rate: 67%
- Mobility rate: 28%

Data for school year 2010-11
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Our school population is socioeconomically marginalized.

• Opportunity: Chess is not just one activity among many as in middle class households

• Tangible rewards:
  – Tournament awards: PlayStation Portable, trophies, T-shirts, computer programs
  – Giveaways: Chess sets and books
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Our program is big and varied.

• After-school clubs
• Interscholastic competition
• Intramural tournament
• Counseling instruction
• Other opportunities, as available

Key funding: three-year grant from Maryland State Department of Education
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Chess insinuates itself *naturally* into certain aspects of student life. Students:

- **Socialize** over chess
- **Receive recognition** through chess
- **Expand their background knowledge** through chess
- **Take chess** **home** with them
- **Bolster their self-esteem** through chess
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Results

• Chess is now as integral part of our school culture
• Chess benefits more students than just those who play on a regular basis
  – Those who know all the rules but don’t play regularly
  – Those who know only some of the rules
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Sources:

School Characteristics, 2010/11:

Washington Post Coverage, January 18, 2009:

Kimberly Oliver, National Teacher of the Year, 2006:
- http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/kimoliver/

School Restructuring, 2001/02-2003/04:
- http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/broadacreses/restructuring/