



The Intergenerational School

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am very pleased to write this letter in support of the grant application from Michael Joelson, Executive Director of the Progress with Chess organization.

During the spring and summer of 2008, all of our students (K-8) participated in this chess program. This culminated in a school chess tournament in July. As I walked into the multi-purpose room where nearly 50 students were playing chess, I was amazed. Every student was intent on the game before them. Some students were patiently waiting for their next game to begin. The room was nearly silent! Each student, including some who were highly distractible and sometimes disruptive in the classroom, was totally engaged in playing chess. For some students, chess has proven to be the vehicle for them to excel.

The Intergenerational School serves Cleveland families. Approximately 95% of our students are African-American, and about 70% of our families live in poverty as defined by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program criteria. Our students and families face the usual challenges that poverty presents. Many of the children come from unstable or disrupted home situations. Many enter school already far behind academically

Education is the lifeline for our children to a better future for themselves and their families. ANY activity that engages children productively in school is beneficial to long term educational success, including high school and college graduation, and life success. Chess has already proven to be one of those activities. Chess teaches and reinforces concentration, strategic thinking, following rules and many other critical thinking skills that are so important to school success.

I urge you to strongly consider funding this project request so that Progress with Chess can continue to offer this outstanding program to our (and other) urban schools.

Sincerely,

Catherine C. Whitehouse

Catherine C Whitehouse, PhD
Principal and Chief Educator