



## Norway tests chess in schools program

by Albert Silver

3/26/2015 – In yet another example of chess being promoted as an educational tool, the Norwegian Parliament approved a trial to include a one-hour a week chess class in schools for third and fourth grade students. This initiative was presented and promoted by Garry Kasparov and Magnus Carlsen, in a high-profile event, joining similar efforts underway in the UK and Spain.



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Many nations already have chess programs appearing as integral parts of the curriculums, whether locally or nationally, and the number of converts continues to grow. This is not surprising, since although studies on the benefits have not always been conclusive, the overall results have largely been positive.

Hosted by the Norwegian Minister of Education, Torbjørn Røe Isaksen, the event with Magnus Carlsen and Garry Kasparov received considerable media attention as well as publicity thanks to the presence of Norway's star, who gave a simul while endorsing the project.



Parents and children teamed up in the simul, allowing both to enjoy the activities



It helped promote a positive atmosphere that would help assuage any doubts

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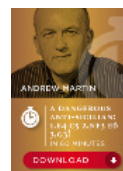
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The goal was to promote chess in schools in Norway. Specifically, the Norwegian Chess Federation intends to launch a trial where third- or fourth-graders get to have one hour of chess at school each week.



Garry Kasparov and Magnus Carlsen both provided the full weight of their support



It is no secret that Garry Kasparov sees Magnus Carlsen as a key piece to help make chess more popular, and chess in schools could expose the game even more. Nevertheless, as Kasparov explains, "What we are discussing now is not a program to find chess stars, although the chances of doing so will increase (...), but how chess serves as a tool in education."

"To all who are skeptical about chess in school I would like to say: You're wrong! There is nothing negative in having chess in schools", said Liberal politician Abid Raja.



Abid Raja also participated in the simul given by Carlsen

Also present was Malcolm Pein, who has spearheaded the Chess in Schools program in the UK, and that now has over 25 thousand students inscribed.



The purpose of the trial will be to carefully study the results of students subject to the program, and whether

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measurable academic benefits can be leveraged.

If a success then Norway may yet follow in the footsteps of Spain, which introduced chess as a compulsory subject in schools, in a rare show of unity among Spanish political parties. As reported by Leontxo Garcia:

"The Catalan government recently endorsed one of the most recent scientific studies on the educational benefits of chess. Designed by the universities of Girona and Lleida, the report concludes that students who learn chess at school develop their intellect significantly on several levels, and improve their math and reading scores – the two major weak points for Spanish school kids on the Pisa Report, an international student assessment program." - [El Pais](#)



A study in Spain linked chess education to improved mathematical and reading scores

Photos by [Sverre Chr. Jarild/Stortinget](#)



#### Albert Silver

Born in the US, he grew up in Paris, France, where he completed his Baccalaureat, and after college moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He was champion of Rio de Janeiro with a peak rating of 2240, and was a key designer of Chess Assistant 6. In 2010 he joined the ChessBase family as an editor and writer at ChessBase News.

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#### Why chess should be required in US schools

4/17/2013 – That is the banner headline of a lead story in the *Pacific Standard*, which tells, in a compelling video, how a three-million-soul nation like Armenia is using chess to teach children basic life skills. The same trend can be witnessed all over the world, including Britain, where thousands of pupils from inner-city primary schools are to receive lessons in chess in a [£700,000 taxpayer-funded programme](#). [\[Discuss\]](#)



#### Chess comes to East Village London

3/14/2013 – The UK registered charity [Chess in Schools and Communities](#) has announced a project to deliver chess to all 64 primary schools in Newham and teach 20,000 children how to play the game. This was celebrated with an educational morning of chess in a library in East Village – and then with a glamorous launch party at Morton's Club in Mayfair. [Take a look at who was there](#). [\[Discuss\]](#)

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