



chessfor
success

Annual Report

July 2024 - June 2025



FY 2025

CHESS FOR SUCCESS

Meet Our Team



with CFS
since '22

Eric Polgar

Executive Director



with CFS
since '22

Anne Clingon

Development Director



with CFS
since '19

Patty Deshano

Regional Coordinator



with CFS
since '05

Michael Malone

Regional Coordinator



with CFS
since '23

Daniel Valdes

Regional Coordinator



with CFS
since '23

Stephen Owens

Regional Coordinator



Beyond our core “office” staff (we don’t have a real office) we also have about 80 paid and 20 volunteer coaches who are integral to the operations of Chess for Success!

Meet Our Board: Here's some of our board members favorite things about CFS!



Charles Engelberg **Board President**

I love that we are getting kids to use their brains, and learn analytics and impulse control. It gives them a better chance for success.

James Lu **Vice President**

Seeing students develop the critical thinking skills/ lightbulb moment when they realize they've had it in them the whole time. Growth from struggles. Little wins!

Barbara Fisher

We just put a lot of time into the kids. Week after week they practice, learn sportsmanship. And the leveling that comes across too - 8 and 16 year olds can play each other!

Martin Ashley

"My ability to bring hands-on coaching experience as well as passion for the game of chess to the board"

Anne Ndunda

We have our mission and vision- they are in line and being achieved. Every year despite the financial difficulties we still are doing that.

Kasey Sanchez

That we use a game to instill confidence in young people, it's an effective vehicle for tricking them into being more prepared for life.

Ryan Richardson

We're providing a valuable education to students that is needed in today's economic climate.

Lauren Benton

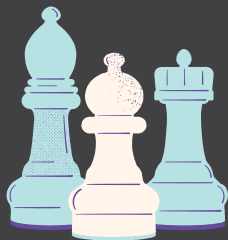
We're doing good things for Portland youth and the DBT aspect is exciting. I have a personal passion for this and am excited to develop this aspect more.

Mission, Vision & Values



Mission

To **develop community, connection, and confidence** by learning and playing chess, helping students build the academic, social, and emotional skills necessary for future success.



Values

Chess for Success is a youth development program dedicated to empowering K-12 students in Oregon, Southwest Washington, and Hawaii to reach their full potential. We focus on mitigating the educational gap in Title 1 schools, with particular emphasis on supporting low-income, rural, and BIPOC communities. Our values are rooted in personal growth, educational advancement, and community development.

Vision

Helping kids develop the skills they need for a successful life through equitable and supportive programming.

We are for **FOCUS**... on education and growth in the communities we serve.

We are for **FRIENDSHIP**... through inclusivity, accessibility, and confidence building.

We are for **FUN**... at the center of what we do!

Year in numbers

2024-25 at a glance

In the 2024-2025 school year we had a privilege of serving 2717 students across 12 school districts and 3 states!

This is a reflection of growth! We are happy to say despite a decreased budget we were able to expand by 10 programs and add nearly 350 participants!



T-Shirts ordered +14%

2,717



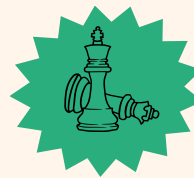
Clubs Run +11%

105



Tournaments Held

20



Total tournament players

1,307



Teams Qualified for state

75



Chess Nights Held at Lazy Days

5



Individual state tournament players

261

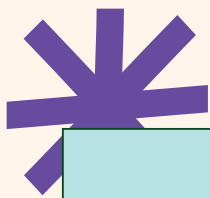


Tournaments

While we spend lots of time running our chess clubs we also spend a LOT of time running tournaments. December and January are full of practice tournaments and then we hold regional and for fun tournaments throughout the late winter and early spring! Here's a glance at all of the regional and for-fun tournaments that we held this year:

Region 1,2&6	Chief Joseph Elementary March 15 th 2025	102 Participants Boys 71 Girls 19 N/a 12	1st 4 2nd 9 3rd 17 4th 15 5th 34 6th 15 7th 3 8th 5
Region 3	Marysville Elementary March 2 nd 2025	48 Participants Boys 29 Girls 9 N/a 10	1st 1 2nd 3 3rd 8 4th 14 5th 22
Region 4	Marysville Elementary March 2 nd 2025	45 Participants Boys 32 Girls 8 N/a 5	K 1 1st 2 2nd 5 3rd 6 4th 6 5th 25
Region 5 &8	Centennial Middle School March 15 th 2025	34 Participants Boys 20 Girls 11 N/a 3	2nd 2 3rd 4 4th 11 5th 17
Region 6	Centennial Middle School March 15 th 2025	12 Participants Boys 9 Girls 1 N/a 2	9th 5 10th 4 11th 1 12th 2
Region 7	Centennial Middle School March 15 th 2025	56 Participants Boys 46 Girls 5 N/a 5	6th 28 7th 15 8th 13
Region 9 &10	W.L. Henry Elementary February 22 nd 2025	113 Participants Boys 88 Girls 16 N/a 9	1st 3 2nd 10 3rd 21 4th 23 5th 52 6th 1 7th 1 8th 2
Region 11	W.L. Henry Elementary April 8 th 2025	189 Participants Boys 125 Girls 57 N/a 7	1st 3 2nd 11 3rd 58 4th 56 5th 61

* N/a represents either non-binary or no information provided. Our tournament system is not able to distinguish.

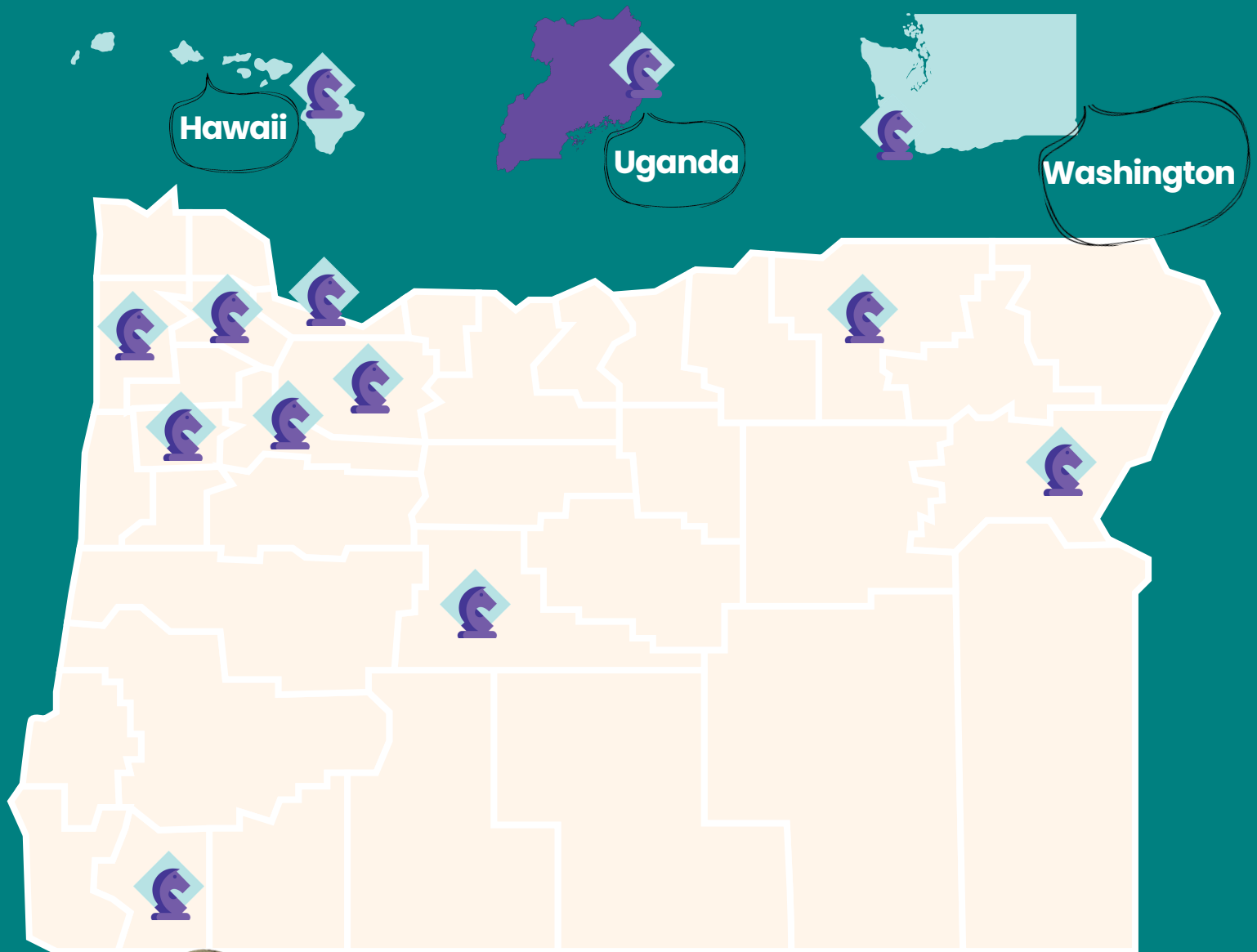


Region 12	W.L. Henry Elementary February 22 nd 2025	115 Participants Boys 81 Girls 17 N/a 17	6th 59 7th 16 8th 26 9th 6 10th 5 11th 1 12th 2
Region 13	Talmadge Middle School March 1 st 2025	82 Participants Boys 31 Girls 13 N/a 38	1st 5 2nd 6 3rd 10 4th 18 5th 27 6th 5 7th 10 8th 1
Region 14 & 16	Talmadge Middle School March 1 st 2025	66 Participants Boys 35 Girls 9 N/a 22	3rd 5 4th 11 5th 11 6th 14 7th 8 8th 17
Region 15	Neah Kah Nie High School February 8 th 2025	41 Participants Boys 33 Girls 8	K 1 1st 4 2nd 5 3rd 2 4th 3 5th 5 6th 3 7th 13 8th 3 10th 1 11th 1
Region 17	Willamette High School March 8 th 2025	61 Participants Boys 9 Girls 1 N/a 2	K 2 1st 3 2nd 7 3rd 8 4th 11 5th 10 6th 8 7th 6 8th 4 9th 1 10th 1
Region 21	Ridgeview High School February 8 th 2025	64 Participants Boys 42 Girls 8 N/a 14	1st 2 2nd 1 3rd 7 4th 19 5th 19 6th 3 7th 8 8th 5
Region 23	Hermiston High School March 22 nd 2025	45 Participants Boys 40 Girls 5	3rd 2 4th 3 5th 15 6th 7 7th 7 8th 5 9th 2 10th 1 11th 2 12th 1
Region A	Felida Elementary April 12 th 2025	75 Participants Boys 46 Girls 22 N/a 7	2nd 1 3rd 12 4th 27 5th 35
Girls Play Chess	Rowe Middle School February 1 st 2025	71 Participants Girls 69 N/a 2	K 1 1st 2 2nd 6 3rd 16 4th 9 5th 23 6th 10 7th 2 8th 1 9th 1
City of Portland	Daimler Trucks May 24 th 2025	88 Participants Boys 60 Girls 17 N/a 11	1st 3 2nd 7 3rd 14 4th 15 5th 27 6th 13 7th 3 8th 3 9th 2 10th 1

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Where Was CFS?

We operated 105 clubs in the 24-25 school year! To give you a better idea of where all those programs were, we mapped it out!



Baker County, OR (3)
Clackamas County, OR (2)
Clark County, WA (13)
Deschutes County, OR (6)
Josephine County, OR (2)
Multnomah County, OR (26)
Marion County, OR (15)

Polk County, OR (3)
Tillamook County, OR (4)
Umatilla County, OR (5)
Washington County, OR (20)
Hawaii (2)
Online, OR&WA (2)
Uganda (2)

Financial Summary

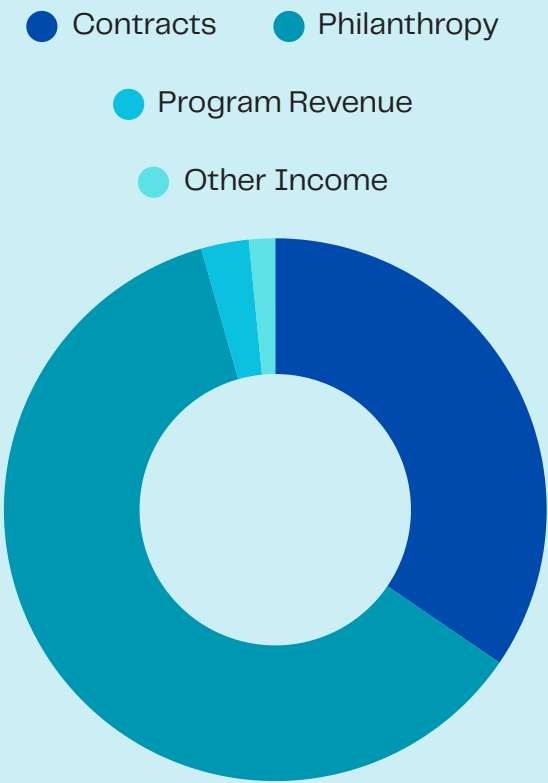
Despite having a net loss in revenue this year, Chess for Success is proud to have both reduced operational expenses and increased our number of programs run.



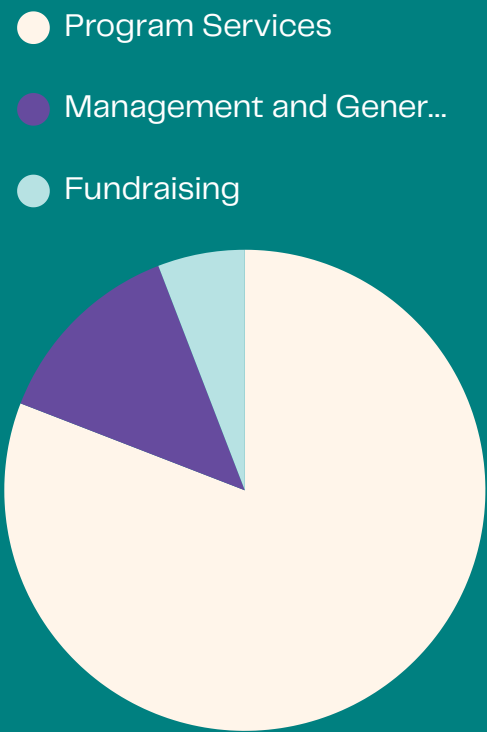
Total Revenue	\$692,162
Total Expenditures	\$729,677
Net Revenue	-\$37,515



Revenue



Expenditures



Foundation Support



Chess for Success extends our heartfelt gratitude to the generous funders and dedicated partners who made our work possible this year. Your unwavering support allows us to continue empowering students through the game of chess, fostering critical thinking, resilience, and emotional well-being. Together, we are creating opportunities for growth and success in the lives of countless young people. Thank you for being a vital part of our mission!



JOSEPH E. WESTON PUBLIC FOUNDATION
A Supporting Foundation of the Oregon Community Foundation



Juliet Ashby Hillman
Foundation

Larry & Jeanette
Epping Family
Foundation



Larry E Tokarski
Charitable Trust



Edna E. Harrell, Chintimini Fund, Wintz Family Foundation, Franklin Conklin

Corporate Support



Partners and Major Donors

Programming Partners

Portland Public Schools
Neah-Kah-Nie School District
Hillsboro School District
Boys and Girls Club of SW Washington
SUN (Schools Uniting Neighborhoods)
IRCO Immigrant and Refuge Community Organization
Latino Network
Metropolitan Family Services
SEI (Self Enhancement Inc)
Impact NW
Portland Parks and Rec.



Major Donors

Phillip Margolin
Melanie Nelson
Truman Collins Jr. and Nancy Ives
John Dozier
Becky and Ron Eiseman
Barb Fisher
Fletcher Ray and Alyssa Aaby
Vivian Rappleyea
Charles and Shawn Engelberg



Word from the ED

When I first took over as the Executive Director in October 2022, the organization was facing significant challenges. We took out loans to survive the pandemic, the number of programs we operated was down and our budget was under water but the board directive was clear... reach as many students as possible!

Thanks to the generosity of Melanie Nelson and Phil Margolin who provided a significant donation in January 2023, we stabilized our finances and I began making hard decisions to improve our sustainability. Over the last three years we have had to cut positions and look for ways to reduce expenses without impacting programs...Every year, I've challenged staff to do more with less and each year staff responded.

Over the last three years, while facing increasing challenges and uncertainty, we have served nearly 8,000 students and more than 100 sites! I have heard from families about the big impact we make and I have seen first hand what our clubs mean to students, families and school communities. Our programs provide a safe and accepting place for students during the critical hours after school and we teach kids essential life skills through the game of chess. Yet even as we have grown, there is significantly more demand for programming than we can handle.

Across Oregon for every student in an after school program 3 more are waiting for a spot. Simply put, we don't have the resources to help everyone. A single 26 week program costs about \$7,700 to operate. Direct expenses like paying for a coach and a regional coordinator, providing T-shirts and chess sets, facility rentals and mileage for site visits make up about 70% of the cost of the program. On top of that there are all the indirect costs like liability insurance, applying for grants, administrative costs, accounting fees, storage fees and phone service. Having free programs is important to the families we serve, but it costs money, which has to come from somewhere.

As I pull out my crystal ball and look forward to the 2026-2027 school year I see a concerning funding picture developing. Schools are faced with huge budget deficits, foundations are focused more on basic needs and individual donors are facing uncertainty in the financial markets; all of these factors likely mean less money for us which will continue to put pressure on our budget and mean that once again we will have to figure out how to do more with less. If we can't figure out ways to close the expected budget gap with more revenue, we likely have to make significant changes like eliminating t-shirts and chess boards, sunseting programs that don't have dedicated funding, or cutting staff which would impact the number of students we serve. I know we have come a long way, but I also know we still have further to go and I need your help to get there.

So what can you do to help? Become a volunteer coach, help us get a corporate sponsor, ask your school district to protect money for after school programs or make a contribution to support our programs. Every dollar helps us reach more students so please support our mission of building community, confidence and connection through chess and teach a student how to take life one move at a time.



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photos to share?
Use this QR
code**

