

2024 DEI Committee Report

We are pleased to bring the 2024 DEI Committee Report for US Chess. We were founded with the core belief that chess belongs to everyone, irrespective of race, gender, religion, or creed, and that it is our duty to serve the US Chess Community to uphold these standards. While US Chess has not always met this goal in the past, we are optimistic that we will be able to drive lasting change.

The committee started in the Fall of 2023 under the leadership of former Executive Director Carol Meyer and President Randy Bauer. The charter states that our purpose is to provide guidance and advice to the Board on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We aim to identify areas where access to US chess resources are limiting these efforts, and in the future, aim to draft annual reports and work plans. The committee selected Abhinav Suresh and Robin Ramson as co-chairs of the DEI committee in winter 2023. Our work has been focused on reviewing the eligibility of transgender women to play in US Chess women's events that are also FIDE rated, and also aimed at boosting underrepresented groups turnout and membership in US Chess, primarily women and those who identify as transgender. In this regard, we have discussed several initiatives that we aim to pursue with other committees, including the women's committee, such as the inclusion of a Women's National Master ("WNM") title. Our rationale is as follows: as becoming a National Master "NM" represents the achievement of the top 1% of all USCF chess players, so too can the WNM title reflect the accomplishment of women in the United States, who face a more difficult path. This goal is not without precedent, as some other countries, including the Philippines, have adopted a WNM title. It is our aim that this title will give women and girls incentives to stay in a game where their achievement can be recognized in equal steps to men.

The DEI committee has completed initial review of the Safe Play Policy and requires further discussion on the scope of the policy and its application to all activities conducted by US Chess affiliates, not all of which involve rated tournament play (e.g. classes, clubs, camps). The committee is opposed to current attempts to roll back the required training for tournament directors via ADM at the 2024 Delegates meeting. The ADM proposes making the training a requirement only for tournament directors working US Chess National events. The scope of this policy, however, is broader – it requires its Affiliates and State Chapters to comply for any chess activity. Removing the training requirements for TDs working affiliate events appears to imply that the policy should not apply to affiliates or their events. Because the majority of potential violations are likely to occur in a club setting, the DEI committee supports the current language. While remaining committed to our core belief stated in this report, the authority of US Chess vs that of a local affiliate, as pertaining to non-rated chess activity, must be studied further.

The DEI Committee is aware that a working group has been formed to revamp the US Chess coach certification system. We strongly encourage the working group to add US Chess Certified Coaches to the personnel required to complete the training for safe play. The working group should consider making coach certification, and requisite safe play training, beneficial enough that the individuals will choose to become certified, rather than operate independently.

We suggest to the Executive Board and Executive Director to abide by the gender identity in regard to players who have indicated Non-Binary or Prefer "Not to Say" as their publicly disclosed gender

on their US Chess Record. In regard to their participation in certain women's only or other events, we suggest to permit competition in cases where the gender identity matches the restrictions of the event. For example, we aim to permit transgender women to play in women's events, but for transgender men, who do not identify as women, to not play in women's events.

The DEI Committee was asked to consider whether transgender women should be permitted to play in FIDE rated national women's events in the United States. Our understanding of FIDE's current policy on transgender women is that it only applies to official FIDE events, which appears to include the following:

- FIDE Women's World Cup
- FIDE Women's Grand Prix Series
- FIDE Women's Grand Swiss
- FIDE Women's Candidates Tournament
- FIDE Women's World Championship Match
- Women's National Teams
- FIDE World Women's Team Championship

Thus, the US Chess Federation should continue to allow trans women to play in national women's events such as the Haring, Junior Girls', Senior Women's, and Women's Championships, and should be able to continue to make these events FIDE rated

We plan to review all 2024 ADM's for potential disparaging impact in advance of the delegate's meeting in early August, to contribute to the discussion or make revision to any motions.