


DC STATE CHAPTER APPLICANT EVALUATIONS

Report to the US Chess Executive Board

Prepared by
States and Affiliates Committee (SAC)
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INTRODUCTION

The States and Affiliates Committee (SAC) reviewed the 2024 applications of three local affiliates expressing interest in serving as the District of Columbia State Chapter.

- DC Chess Association (DCCA)
- DC State Chess Federation (DCSCF)
- Howard University Chess Club (HUCC)

This report by SAC summarizes our review process of these applications and our recommendation of DCCA for the DC State Chapter. While all three organizations are solid chess organizations benefiting the DC chess community, we believe that DCCA is best positioned to conduct all of the expressed duties US Chess expects of a State Chapter.

BACKGROUND

Every state (the District of Columbia is treated as a state for all Federation purposes) is entitled to have an affiliate designated as the State Chapter. In 2023, the leadership of the current State Chapter, the DC Chess League (DCCL), petitioned US Chess to be removed as the state chapter. That request was granted on condition of staying in place until the naming of a replacement at the 2023 National Delegates meeting.

Three affiliates applied for the D.C. State chapter:

- DC Chess Association (DCCA)
- DC State Chess Federation (DCSCF)
- DMV Chess (DMV)

SAC reviewed the applications in 2023 and was unable to recommend any of the three to the US Chess Executive Board. The decision then moved to the delegates where none were chosen during the 2023 Delegates meeting. Instead, the Delegates passed a motion to create an ad hoc D.C. Committee to oversee the creation of a new D.C. State Chapter (Delegate Appointed Committee.) The Delegate Appointed Committee was charged to “involve players and other organizations in an effort to improve the overall quality and quantity of chess activities and services in DC, and heal the chess community through cooperation, promotion and activity.”

The Delegate Appointed Committee facilitated the efforts of the interim organization, known as the DC Interim Board (DCIB), to establish bylaws and elect officers for a new State Chapter. The DCCA application is the outcome of these efforts. For further information on the detailed activities and work of the DCIB, SAC refers to the two published reports, one prepared by the Delegate Appointed Committee and one by the DCIB.

EVALUATION SUMMARY

SAC first reviewed the applications for conformance to the DACI 1992-27. SAC also elaborated upon the following criteria inherent within the DACI 1992-27 Requirements and Recommendations that stand out among high performing state chapters.

- Representation of the District of Columbia (DC)
- Business Process
- Chess Tournament Experience and Knowledge
- [REDACTED]
- Communications with the State's Chess Players

SAC concluded that both DCCA and DCSCF meet the minimum requirements of the DACI 1992-27. While the HUCC is a fine organization, it is established as a college chess club and SAC did not find any information on how they would approach expanding their charter to serve all chess players of the DC area. Therefore, SAC concludes that HUCC does not meet the requirements for a State Chapter. As such, this report focuses primarily on the DCCA and DCSCF applications.

Of the remaining two candidates, SAC determined that DCCA was the best equipped to execute the full duties of a State Chapter based on our review of the applications as defined in the DACI 1992-27 and therefore is our recommended choice to the US Chess Executive Board and US Chess Delegates. The differentiation is based on DCCA's ability to:

- Provide a more inclusive approach to membership and inclusion of the chess community in their governance (See Appendix A, DACI No. 4 & 9).
- A stronger demonstrated commitment to DC Girls Chess.
- An expanded representation on the DCCA Board and thereby the most able to collaborate with the entire DC chess community.

EVALUATION OF APPLICANTS

In support of our findings and recommendations, SAC provides the following analysis of the applications.

Conformance with the DACI 1992-27 Requirements and Recommendations

The DACI specifies four required and six recommended duties of a State Chapter. SAC first evaluated the three applicants' submittals to determine how well they complied with the DACI. SAC members were asked to review the three applications for conformance to DACI 1992-27.

Each member scored the applications for each of the duties on a scale from 0 to 3 as shown below:

- 0 - No evidence
- 1 - Some evidence and shows ability to comply fully
- 2 - Sufficient evidence to fully comply
- 3 - Evidence exceeds DACI requirement or recommendation

Individual scores were total for the required duties and the recommended duties as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1
Scoring Summary of DC State Chapter Applicants**

	DACI 1992-27		
	Requirements	Recommendations	Total
Affiliate	Duties 1 - 4	Duties 5 - 10	Duties 1 - 10
DCCA	8.44	11.89	20.33
DCSCF	7.33	8.44	15.78
HUCC	2.00	1.67	3.67

For a breakdown of the evaluation by individual DACI elements, see Appendix A.

Representation of the District of Columbia (DC)

We examined how each organization has and will represent the interests of all chess players in the DC Area. Both DCCA and DCSCF have an open general membership to DC residents upon payment of annual dues. HUCC, however, seems to be limited to the Howard University students, faculty, and staff. All organizations have an annual membership meeting where membership input is received and acted up.

As a by-product of the historical competitive interests between DCCA and DCSCF, both have a limited history of inclusion from the other group and therefore protective of their organization’s governance. Within the bylaws, the DCCA Board includes three new members from the DCIB who were interested in serving. Additionally the Board has committed to add one or more members who shall be elected by the members of the organization should they be accepted by US Chess as the State Chapter. DCSCF states that a Chair and other members of the board are elected by “Members of the Corporation” - the only time this phrase is used in the bylaws leaving it unclear if this only means members listed the documentation for incorporation. Both the DCCA and the DCSCF bylaws also go on to state that the Board may change the bylaws by a two-thirds vote.

In summary, it is the finding of SAC that DCCA has been more open to inclusion by all DC residents. Leadership of DCSCF were included in the selection of the DCIB. However, these

individuals were uncooperative and at times abusive in their language toward the other DCIB members for which they were dismissed by the Delegate Appointed Committee. As DCCA is a work product of the DCIB's full-faith effort at inclusion, we find that DCCA will best represent the interest of the DC chess community.

Business Processes

It is vital that a successful state chapter have a properly functioning organization to administer the business processes to support their mission and strategies to promote chess within the community.

All three organizations had a Board of Directors and governing documents including bylaws. All three organizations provided proof of their 501(c)3 status with the IRS and each are licensed to do business in DC. HUCC also provided tax returns as part of the university's overall non-profit status. Robin Ramson, DCCA President, has served as the DC delegate to the US Chess Delegate's meeting in past years and is the founder of the Chess Girls DC nonprofit.

Chess Tournament Experience and Knowledge

We evaluated the applicants' experience running tournaments and whether they have access to qualified staff including organizers and certified staff.

DCCA recently formed and ran the 2024 DC Girls and the 2024 DC HS and MS Championships. In April, DCCA also organized the DC Open State Championship. Robin Ramson is the DCCA President and founder of the Chess Girls Non-profit organization, which hosted the 2024 K-5 DC Scholastic Championship.

DCSCF has run over 18 tournaments in the last year ranging from 20 to 80 players per year. However, most if not all of these tournaments are scholastic tournaments.

Both DCCA and DCSCF have US Chess Certified Tournament Directors on their Board. HUCC is not on record for running any US Chess rated tournaments.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Communications with the State's Chess Players

Finally, we examined how the organizations propose (or actually) communicate with its members and chess players in the state.

We found that all organizations understood the importance of communicating with their membership. While the DCCA website was the best, SAC finds that all organizations have an opportunity to improve in this area. Outside of a blog or instagram feed, we saw no evidence of promoting and publicizing chess activities through other various media.

DCCA has launched a new website and blog, dcchessassociation.org, that included current content and was outwardly focused on the chess community as a whole.

- A listing of all DC clubs (including DCSCF and DMV) with links to their website.
- A history of DC chess champions (Barber, Rockefeller, Denker, Haring, Irwin, and State Champions)
- Frequent posting of news articles on current chess events in the community.
- A contact form for the DCCA.
- Links to US Chess and FIDE.
- DCCA has even created a new logo and new slogan – “U knighting the community.”

DCSCF bylaws call for the appointment of a Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, Scholastic Coordinator, and Women's Chess Coordinator. DCSCF does have a presence on Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/dcstatechess/>) but the website that we found was <https://linktr.ee/dcstatechess> and only includes a link to its store and chess classes. The DCSCF tournament it promoted on its website was played in January.

APPENDIX A

DACI 1992-27 Expanded Scoring

DACI 1992-27	Affiliate	
	DCCA	DCSCF
Requirements		
1 - Pay Dues	2.00	2.00
2 - Appoint Delegates	1.78	1.22
3 - State Championship	2.11	2.11
4 - Formal Organization laid out in By-Laws	2.56	2.00
Subtotal	8.44	7.33
Recommendations		
5 - Scholastic Championships	2.56	2.11
6 - Tournament Promotion	2.22	2.11
7 - State Chess Journal	0.78	0.56
8 - Publicize through various media	1.33	1.22
9 - Act in best interest of entire state	2.56	1.11
10- Designate Coordinator for women and girls	2.44	1.33
Subtotal	11.89	8.44
Total	20.33	15.78