



Education through Chess in School

Magdalena Zielińska
Polish Chess Federation

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- Coordinator of the Project 'Education through Chess in School' of the Polish Chess Federation
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International research (PIRLS & TIMSS) 2011 - 2012 have shown serious lack of mathematic competence of Polish children. The Polish Chess Federation wants to change that.

Our main inspiration is the Written Declaration of the EU Parliament issued on 15.03.2012 and concerning introduction of the program 'Chess in School' in the educational system of the Member States (0050/2011).



Goal of the Project of the Polish Chess Federation

The main goal is improvement of mathematic competence of Polish students, especially regarding:

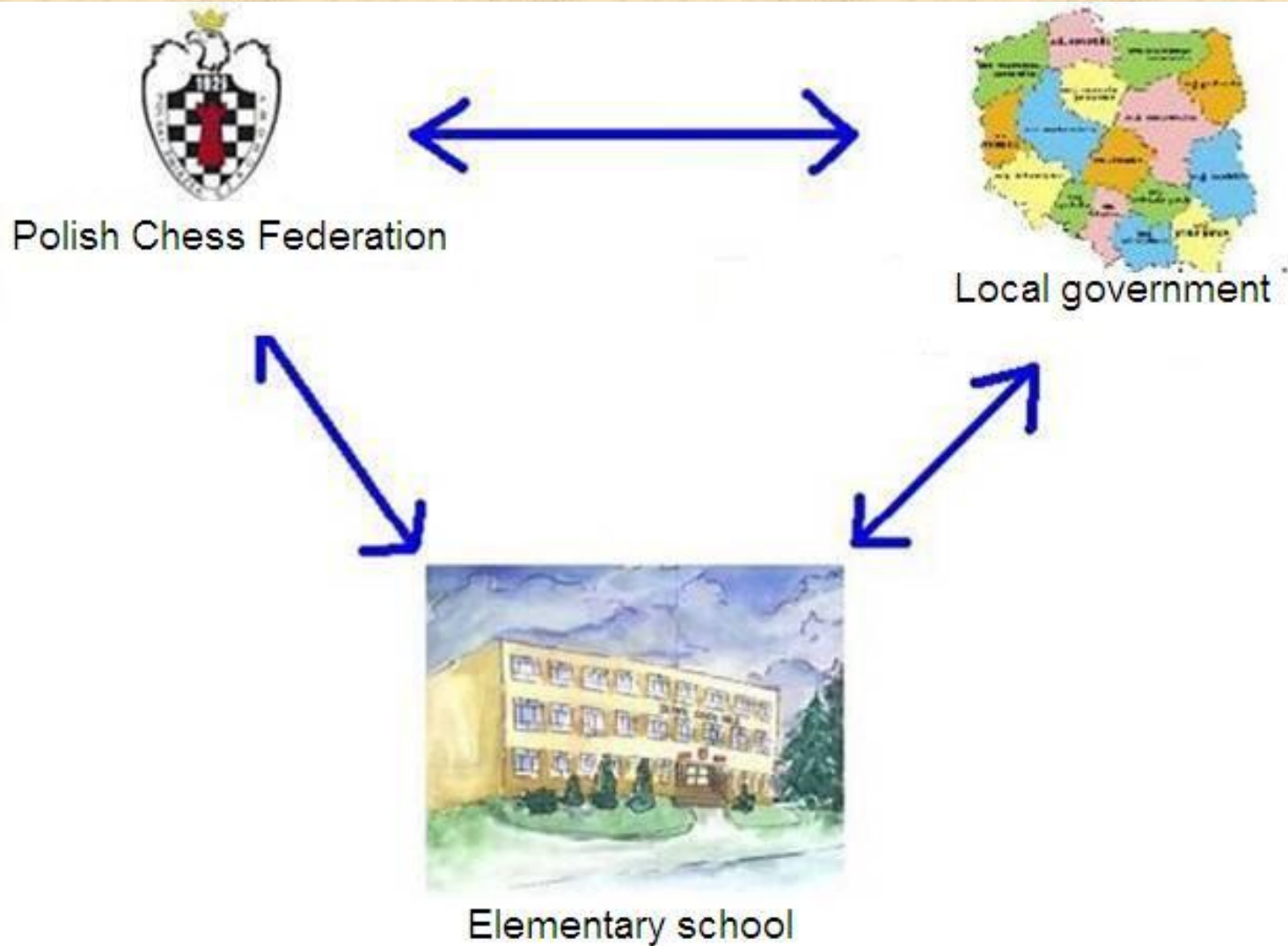
- logic,
- spatial orientation
- analitical thinking
- problem solving
- developing such positive characteristics as responsibility, concentration, intuition, courage

How to do that?

We believe the best way to achieve this goal is to teach as many children as possible playing chess. The game itself together with chess training will support their general development as well as their educational career. ->

-> For this purpose we've initiated a project of introducing teaching chess as a regular subject to official school agenda in elementary schools throughout the country.

Three pillars of the Project



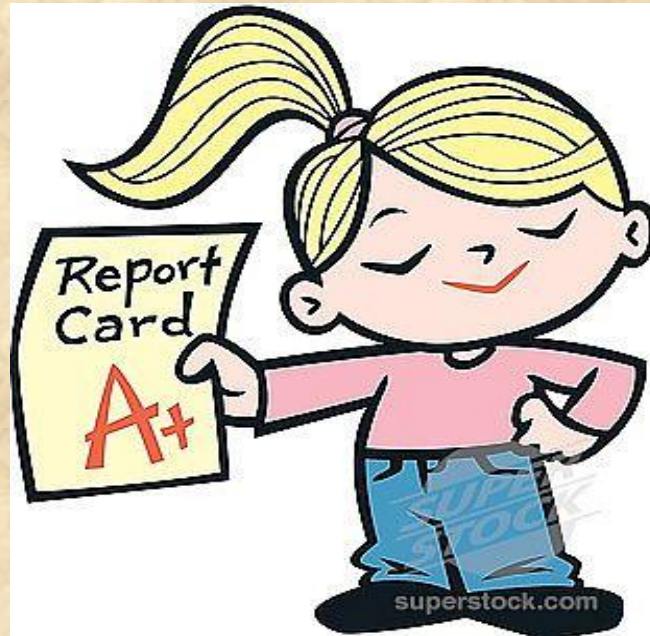
Five main rules of the Project

1. Introducing chess as obligatory lessons (at least one per week) for all the children in at least one class per school for a period of at least two schoolyears



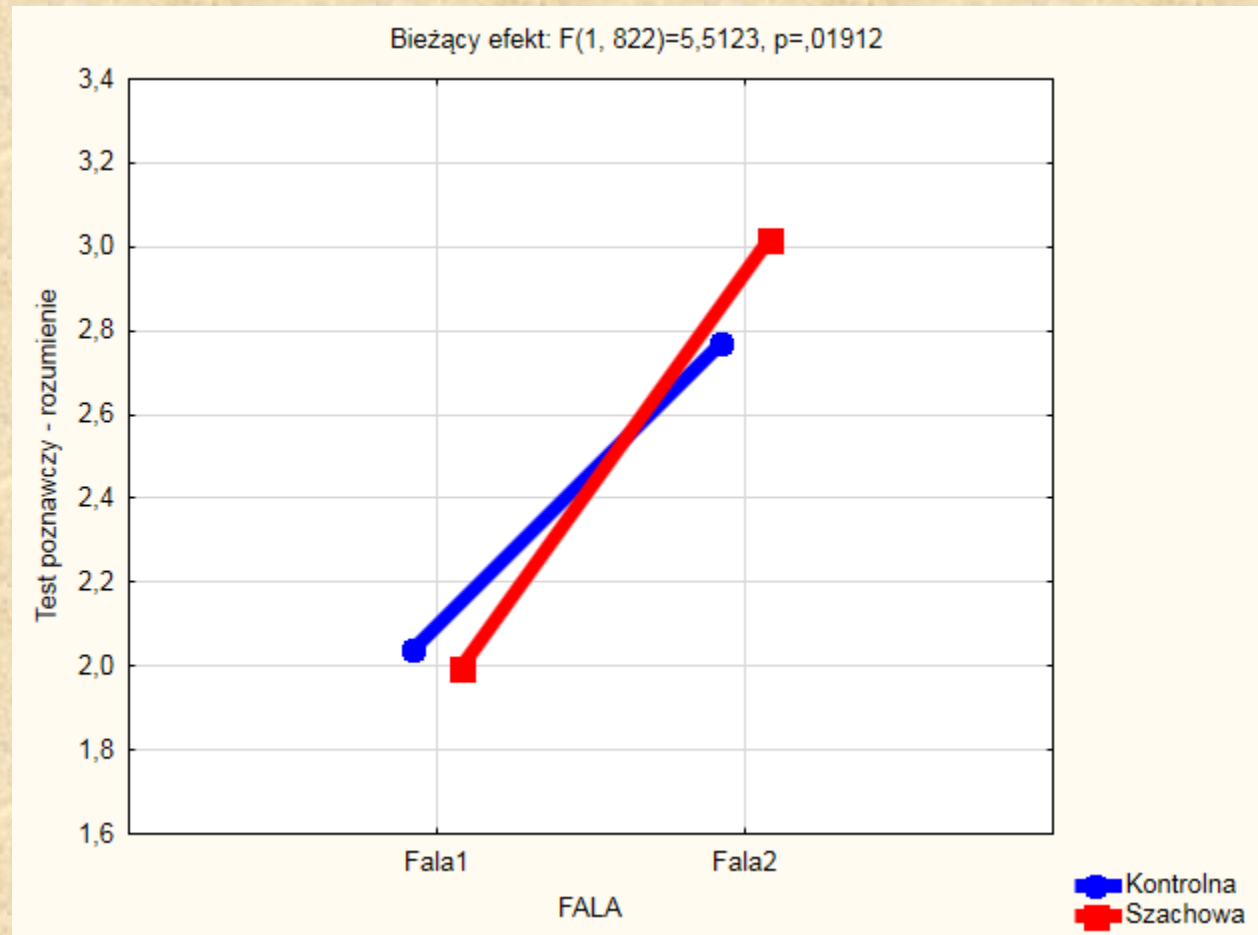
Five main rules of the Project

2. school certificates include grade from chess lessons



Five main rules of the Project

3. An important part of the Project is research on the influence of chess on kids' general development



Research of Mr Krzysztof
Przybyszewski, PhD,
Academy of Leon Koźmiński,
www.kozminski.edu.pl

Five main rules of the Project

4. extra chess tournaments are organized for kids taking part in the Project



Photo by Sylwia Rudolf

Five main rules of the Project

5. Lessons in schools are conducted by a teacher of that particular school. The Polish Chess Federation trains all the teachers involved in the Project



Photo by Dorian John

Role of The Polish Chess Federation

- preparing teachers to teach chess
- providing schools with free chess equipment
- organization of annual national conference on Chess in School
- providing methodological support for teachers
- providing textbooks in preferential price for kids participating in the Project
- helping schools in organization of chess tournaments and events
- running an informational and promotional website:

www.szachywszkole.pl

International Cooperation

We are open to ideas and proposals for international cooperation, sharing of information and experience, and looking for potential partners, especially from fellow European Union Members.

Since the EU Parliament has issued the Written Declaration on chess in schools, let's try together to use the EU structures (and funds) for the benefit of our respected countries' school - chess projects and programs.

Advantages of using teachers in the Project

- Teacher knows best how to work with a large (up to 30) group of young children (age 6-7)
- A small child who has just come to school needs a patient and creative teacher more than a professional sport trainer
- Teachers already have developed professional and individual pedagogical skills, competence and experience
- Teachers know how to work with children of diversified abilities, levels of progress, speed of work, problems and difficulties
- Main goal of our Project is education rather than sport

Teachers' training program

- The training is especially designed for teachers
- The first level of training takes 72 hours, there are extra courses and conferences later on
- It's financed mostly by the local government
- It consists of 3 parts

Three parts of teachers' training program

1. basic and intermediate chess training

- With a very practical demonstration of methods and methodics used, allowing teachers to built their teachers' work system right away
- Teachers are getting the students experience

Three parts of teachers' training program

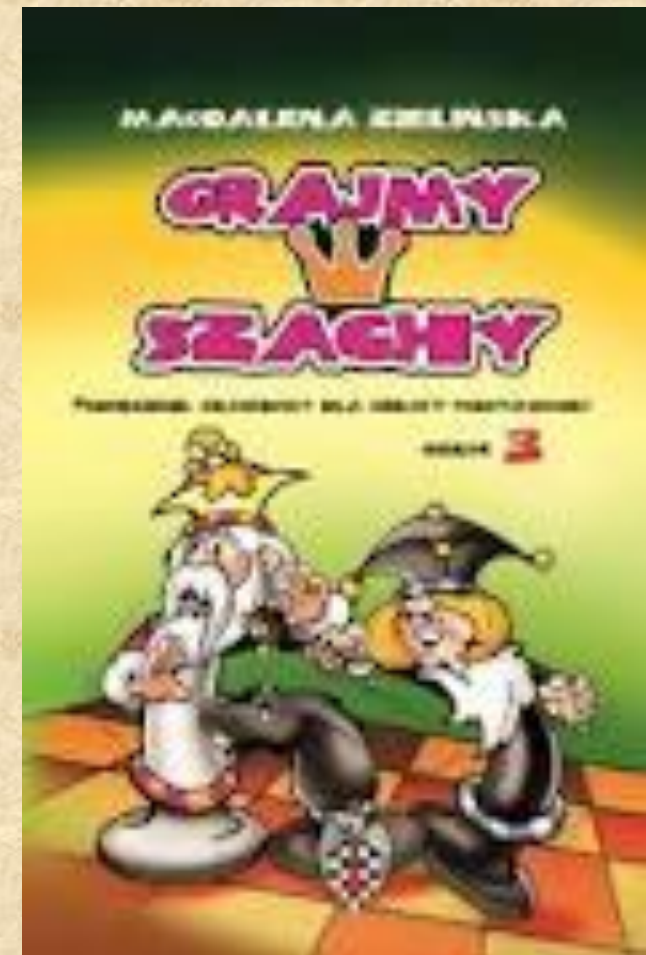
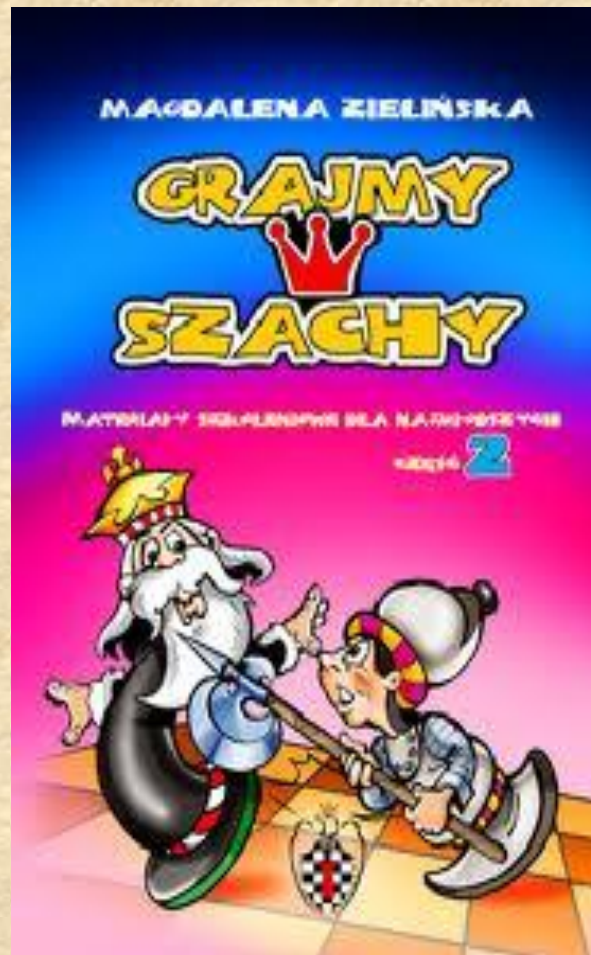
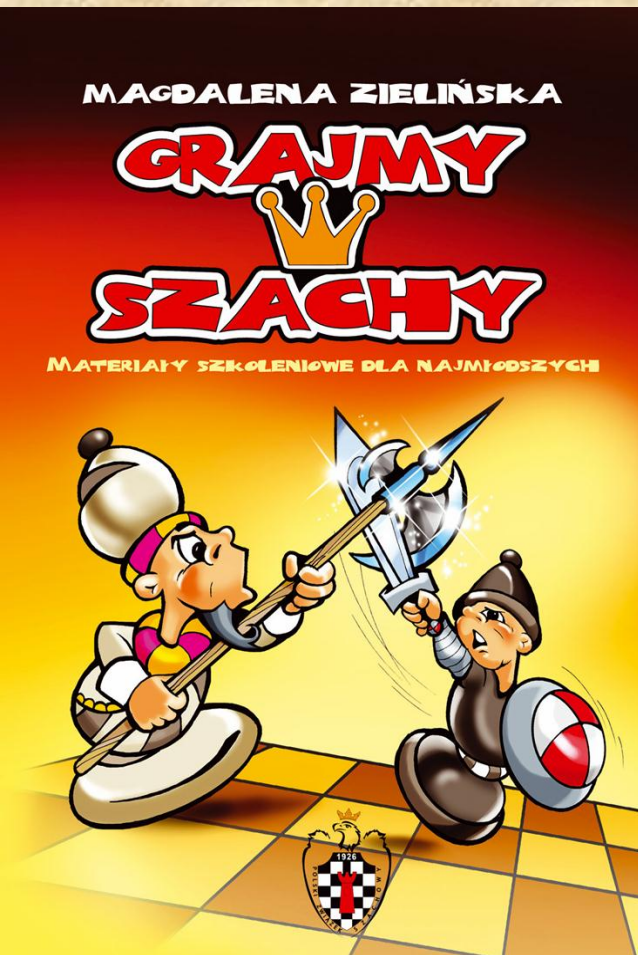
2. methodics

- How to teach chess in full schoolclass
- What methods & exercises to use
- How to work with able students and how to support the weaker or disabled ones*
- How to use the tools we give them: school teaching programs, textbooks, computer programs etc.

*the disabled ones...

- we don't leave any child behind
- 'Promotion of a Pawn' → special program of teaching mentally disabled, retarded kids chess as a therapeutical feature
- autistic kids, children with FAS and other difficulties and special educational needs in general

The Polish Chess Federation prepared special textbooks for the youngest students



Three parts of teachers' training program

3. organizational aspects of introducing chess to school:

- How to organize a school chess tournament
- How to set up a youth chess club
- How to work with kids' parents
- How to promote the idea of 'chess in school'
- A tournament for teachers

About 500 teachers have been trained so far and more than 300 of them have already been teaching (with good results!)



Photo by Dorian John

The Project of the Polish Chess Federation has started in 2012 in 3 provinces.



Photo by Sylwia Rudolf

Capital City of Warsaw is a very special place in the Project:

- support of Departament of Education of Warsaw
- 72 of Warsaw schools participating and many more still applying
- it's representative, Mrs Krystyna Kozak came here with our delegation



Elementary School No 210 in Warsaw participates in our Project **and** runs a program of teaching children of Armenian descent their language, history, culture and heritage.

The school would like to get in touch and cooperate on the field of teaching chess with some Armenian elementary school.

You can contact the school by the Polish Chess Federation.

In September 2014 the Project has encompassed 12 of Poland's 16 provinces, with almost 300 schools, 600 teachers and about 9000 children.



Photo by Sylwia Rudolf

In June 2014 about 500 children (age 6, 7, 8) took part in the first Final Tournament of the Project.



Photo by Sylwia Rudolf

The Project of the Polish Chess Federation obtained approval of The Ministry of Education.

Consultations are on the way considering introducing the Project to all Polish elementary schools.



Children on Chess

- *Chess is such a cool game and fun. (Mikołaj, age 6)*
- *You can learn a lot while playing chess: how to think well, how to concentrate and how to plan things. (Mati, age 10)*
- *Chess teach us how to win and how to lose. (Zosia, age 8)*
- *Playing chess stimulates imagination, teaches patience and dealing with stress. (Oskar, age 11)*
- *Chess is not only learning, it's great fun too!!! (Zuzia, age 7)*
- *Game of chess is a real art because it's not easy to play it. But it's a good hobby. (Magda, age 9)*
- *You have to think during chess game. Thinking like that inspires you a lot. (Tosia, age 8)*
- *Chess teach us to think what can happen later. (Ala, age 6)*
- *Every game is different, like a new adventure. You have to be careful, so you train your concentration. (Grześ, age 7)*
- *Chess taught me to respect other kids. Because even when I play with someone weak, I will lose if I make a mistake. (Krzyś, age 6)*
- *Since I've started playing chess I'm calmer and I don't get so many reprimands. (Maks, age 8)*
- *I tend to give up when something goes wrong. But in chess we have to fight to the end, so I also try to do that. (Julka, age 7)*
- *I don't have to become a grandmaster to love chess. (Anna, age 9)*

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