

Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Chess League Charter and Rules [revised 8/22/2024]
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1. **Purpose:** The purpose of the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Chess League (WPICL) is to provide a mutually beneficial structure whereby schools in the Pittsburgh area may meet, compete, learn, and promote chess in a friendly manner and atmosphere.
2. **Role of director:** The league director tracks results, settles disputes, etc.
3. **Mode of play:** Matches may be played in person, or online. If a match is in person, the home team must designate the location, and the away team must travel to that location. If the match is online, captains must designate an online platform, such as chess.com.
4. **Number of games:** Each team will play each other team twice*, once home and once away (*once if the league is large).
5. **Number of boards:** Teams consist of five boards each. A win counts as 1, a draw as $\frac{1}{2}$, and a loss as 0. If the match ends up $2\frac{1}{2} - 2\frac{1}{2}$, it is a tie. A forfeit loss counts as 0. Teams with fewer than five players forfeit on the lowest boards. To enable teams to play in person even if their only transportation is a sedan car with a non-playing driver, the following exception is noted: the captain of the away team may designate a match as being on only four boards. The match will be scored as if there were a fifth board on which the game was a draw.
6. **Color:** The home team has White on boards 2 and 4; the visitors White on boards 1, 3, and 5.
7. **Schedule:** There will be one scheduled match per week. Scheduling of the day, time, and location of the match is done by the captains, who must contact each other, possibly by telephone or email. If both captains (sponsors) agree, a match can be played on a different week, so long as it is played as soon as possible. The overall league schedule (including entry fee and prizes) will be determined each year by email among the director and all captains.
8. **Reporting results:** Both captains should report all board results and any problems directly to the league director, either by phone (412-561-3972 h, 412-328-4107 c) or e-mail (e-mail address omitted from website) within 48 hours of the end of the match. This dual reporting prevents errors and helps ensure that matches will be reported in a timely manner. The director will post all results to the league website.
9. **Playing rules:** Unless otherwise noted below, the WPICL will use all official US Chess Federation (USCF) rules of play (note: the rulebook can be obtained from USCF at (888) 512-4377 or online at <https://new.uschess.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/us-chess-rule-book-online-only-edition-chapters-1-2-10-11-9-1-20.pdf>). If a match is in person, the two exceptions to the USCF rules are: 1) *a player does not have to keep score* (although players are encouraged to do so), and 2) *The “insufficient losing chances” rule will only be enforced if a USCF TD is present*. For example, all games are touch-move, and no spectator, teammate, nor captain (sponsor) can interfere with a game (call illegal moves, flag falling, etc.) without a player initiating a rules request. If there is any dispute that cannot be resolved by the captains, the league director will make a ruling based on the USCF rules and this charter. Players in the league do not have to be USCF members and games will not be rated.
10. **Use of clock:** When possible, games should be played with time limits for both players. If the match is in person, players should use a chess clock. If the match is online, the online platform’s

timing should be used. Time control should be agreed upon by the captains, depending on the circumstances. For example, if the match starts at 4:30 and captains would like the match to finish by 5:30, then each player should have a half hour for all his moves.

11. **Board order:** The home team should announce their lineup first if there is a dispute. There may be no “stacking” of boards: teams should play in approximate order of strength. If the coach wishes to move a player one board to get a color, that *may* be allowed, except as follows: for players with established USCF ratings (>19 USCF-rated games), a player rated more than 100 points over another **must** play a higher board (i.e. moving a board to get a color is not allowed). Provisional (<20 USCF-rated games) and unrated players may play any board, so long as they are in approximate order of strength compared to other players. It is suggested that coaches use one of the following criteria to help determine the order for provisional or unrated players: a club ladder, a challenge system, or informal ratings from Internet play.
12. **Forfeited and Late Matches:** Captains should use common sense to avoid forfeited matches. If the captains have agreed on a match schedule, but then one team must reschedule, that team’s captain must make every effort to contact the other captain as soon as possible to reschedule. If the away team does not call or show up at all (or shows up more than 75 minutes late), the home team will be designated the winner by a score of 5-0. If either team cancels a match on the day of the match, or after the end of school on the day before, the other team is designated the winner by a score of 5-0.
13. **Eligibility:** The league *will allow* any K-12 student in a district to play on a team. It is up to each school to decide if they wish to allow students in their district, but not in the school (e.g. talented middle school players) to play. Non-HS teams may join. The league encourages any policy that promotes chess and helps a team avoid forfeit losses.
14. **Sections and Playoffs:** If the league has many teams, it may be divided into multiple sections. If there are multiple sections, the director and the captains of the leading teams may schedule playoffs, to enable teams from different sections to play each other.
15. **Coordinate!:** *Please return all calls or e-mail in a timely manner!* Please honor your commitment to play. Thanks!