

PRESS RELEASE

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Eight Schools to Showcase Strategy and Skill at 2025 Inter-Secondary School Chess Tournament

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The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports will host its annual Inter-Secondary School Chess Tournament on December 12th and 13th at the Multi-Purpose Sports Complex, bringing together young thinkers from across the Territory for two days of competition, strategy, and academic enrichment.

Eight secondary schools are participating in this year's tournament: Cedar International School, Claudia Creque Educational Centre, Elmore Stoutt High School, St. George's Secondary School, Imagination Academy VI, Virgin Islands School of Technical Studies, Ciboney School of Excellence, and Bregado Flax Educational Centre. The event forms part of the Ministry's Full S.T.E.A.M. Ahead initiative, which highlights chess as a powerful tool for strengthening logic, emotional discipline, and strategic decision-making among students.

Last year's tournament produced an impressive display of student talent, with Elmore Stoutt High School emerging as the reigning champions in both junior and senior categories. Their achievement helped set the tone for this year's competition, where teams across the Territory have been practicing with renewed focus and enthusiasm.

Ahead of the competition, the Ministry received several team profiles, offering insight into how some schools have been preparing for the upcoming tournament. These reflections reveal a Territory unified by a shared commitment to growth, discipline, and academic enrichment.

Elmore Stoutt High School shared that their Chess Club remains a vibrant force on campus. Their daily Chess at Lunch programme provides structured opportunities for students to strengthen critical thinking, collaboration, and strategic decision-making. Coaches Mr. Alandell Williams, Mr. Dennis Gill, and Mrs. Careen L. Cuffy-Jules continue to guide students in both skill and confidence, while friendly competition among members keeps the atmosphere energetic and student-led. The team enters this year's tournament with strong momentum and a deep sense of unity.

St. George's Secondary School also reflected on their preparations. Last year, they earned top placements despite competing without a coach, demonstrating

resilience and natural analytical strengths. This year, with new coaches Michel Gamboa and Rey Escobar, the team has added structure, discipline, and focused training. Their lunchtime study sessions, peer-led strategy talks, and commitment to improving their tactical play have strengthened both their confidence and their cohesion.

Imagination Academy VI shared that their chess journey began with last year's introductory experience, where primary-level students first tasted the excitement of competitive play. That exposure ignited a love for the game, inspiring the school to enter this year's full tournament with a junior team of eager and dedicated Grade 7 students. Practicing twice weekly, they've built strategy, teamwork, and camaraderie. And, in a delightful fun fact, the team also bonds through baking, creating everything from blueberry muffins to coconut drops alongside their chess training.

The Claudia Creque Educational Centre highlighted growing enthusiasm across their junior and senior teams. Formed in 2024, their Chess Club has evolved from casual play to structured learning under the guidance of coaches Mrs. Kirton-Francis and Mr. Henderson. Their young players, many of whom are new to competitive chess, have shown discipline and determination, strengthening their defensive and offensive skills ahead of this year's tournament.

The Virgin Islands School of Technical Studies shared that their growing chess programme is being led by coaches Kevin Donovan and Mr. Humphrey, who noted that their students have shown strong enthusiasm for chess this year. Players meet three times per week for focused practice sessions, where they work on strengthening strategy, discipline, and confidence on the board.

On Virgin Gorda, Bregado Flax Educational Centre – Secondary Division returns with junior and senior teams coached by Glenford Smith and Julien David. Their preparations have focused on improving confidence, tempo control, and mental endurance. Many of their students discovered a deeper appreciation for chess during last year's tournament and now approach the game with renewed seriousness and ambition.

As the Inter-Secondary School Chess Tournament draws near, excitement continues to build across schools, families, and communities. The Ministry commends all participating students for their dedication, sportsmanship, and curiosity, qualities at the heart of both chess and learning. This year's tournament promises focused competition, strong camaraderie, and yet another opportunity for students to showcase the intellectual brilliance that enriches the Virgin Islands.

The tournament begins December 12th and 13th at 10:00 a.m. daily at the Multi-Purpose Sports Complex. The public is warmly invited to attend and support the Territory's emerging chess talent.

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