



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Extended Day Program at Most Holy Trinity Fosters Intellectual Growth through Chess

**ST. LOUIS, MO. February 12, 2016** – For the past three years, Mr. Don Cherry, an Academy teacher at Most Holy Trinity School & Academy, has taught chess to middle school students as part of ACCESS’s extended school day enrichment program.

“Chess is an interest of mine, and I think it is a great mind-expanding activity for the students. It makes them plan ahead versus taking just their next step,” said Cherry.

The benefits of chess in education are widely-noted, including enhanced critical thinking and complex reasoning skills as well as heightened problem solving and decision making skills. In fact, the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis commissioned a [Literature Review](#) in 2014 that “examined the degree to which existing empirical evidence supports the theory that participation in chess programs, whether designed as in-school or after-school programs, resulted in improved academic, cognitive, and/or behavioral outcomes for school-aged children.” The findings of the review found that both the after-school and in-school chess programs had a “positive and statistically significant impact on student mathematics outcomes,” and the in-school chess programs had a “positive and statistically significant impact on student cognitive outcomes.”

At Most Holy Trinity, student gather in the school’s science lab every Monday to hone their skills by playing two to three matches.

“I taught an introduction to chess at the beginning of the year where students learned the various moves for each piece, but the real learning comes by playing. It is an excellent way to challenge them individually,” he notes.

This semester, several students will be stepping outside of the classroom and entering tournaments, with two students, Eric G. and Ian B., having signed up for the qualifying tournament at Loyola Academy this Saturday, February 13, to earn a spot at the CYC Championship Meet on March 12, 2016.

For more information regarding this release, please contact Julie Linder, Public Relations for ACCESS Academies, by calling (573) 268-0639.

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*About: Founded in 2005, ACCESS (Academies Creating Challenging Education for St. Louis Students) transforms the challenging middle school years into a launching pad for high school success for socially/economically disadvantaged students in faith-based schools in St. Louis. Using the proven NativityMiguel model of education, which includes an extended school day and mandatory summer school, 98% of ACCESS graduates are accepted into college-prep high schools. After leaving middle school, the ACCESS Graduate Support Program provides tutoring, mentoring, tuition assistance, counseling and other forms of assistance to graduates through their high school years. As a result, 99% of ACCESS students graduate from high school on-time and 94% are admitted to college or other post-secondary institution.*

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