Academic guidance

Teachers undertake the academic guidance of students. Their work also includes teaching, educating and schooling their students.

The coordinators of educational work are in charge of the scientific and educational guidance of teachers per region. They co-operate with school heads and school teachers’ boards.

At all levels of school education, the main issues of concern for the school teachers’ board is among other things:

- The academic progress of students
- The guidance of students
- Learning difficulties.

Guidance in pre-primary school

In pre-primary school (nipiagogeio [1]), the teacher’s role is decisive. The teacher intervenes and facilitates the learning procedure. At this level, there is no standard pathway toward learning. Emphasis is given on:

1. Processes of acquiring knowledge within creative learning conditions
2. Development of communication skills
3. Promotion of individual accountability through group work, research and critical thinking
4. Promotion of the development of self-esteem and co-operation skills, an understanding of the value of team work and shared discovery.

The teaching environment fosters reflection, experimentation, concept-building approaches and attractive activities. Pre-primary school gives the possibility to identify and tackle potential special educational needs. Meanwhile, it also considers:

- The characteristics of each student
- Differences in the way and progress of learning
- Personal skills
- Learning opportunities within the social and family environment.

Guidance in primary school

In primary school (dimotiko [2]), the teacher contributes towards:

- The building of key concepts and principles
- Development of positive attitudes toward lifelong learning
- Co-operation
Individual accountability.

Evaluation offers valuable feedback in the whole education process. It helps to identify learning deficiencies and assists students’ progress.

**Guidance in secondary education**

In lower secondary school (gymnasio [3]) and upper secondary school (lykeio [4]), education is based on the studying of autonomous subject modules through a cross-thematic approach. In this way, students follow the holistic approach to knowledge. They learn things through suitable interconnections.

Teachers apply modern and apt teaching methods based on:

- Students’ needs
- The specificities of each subject.

**Guidance in special education**

The aim of the reforms in education seen in the last few years is to improve the quality of education provided to all students, including students with disabilities and special educational needs by giving priority to inclusive policies and practices.

Inclusive education (law 4547/2018) is the educational approach which takes into account the needs of heterogeneity in the student population and intends to lift learning obstacles and assure equal access to educational goods for all, including disabled students.

Recommendations for the enrollment, classification and attendance of students in the appropriate school framework are performed by the Centers of Educational and Counselling Support (KESYs). According to law 4547/2018, the objective of KESYs is to support school units and Special Workshop Centres of the area of their competency so as to assure equal access to education of all students and to endorse their harmonious psychosocial development and progress.

KESYs active domain is to look into educational and psychosocial needs, to perform evaluations, to plan and implement educational and psychosocial interventions, as well as actions of vocational guidance, to support the entire work of school units or Workshop Centers, to conduct continuous information towards professional development and to raise social awareness.

**Psychological counselling**

Within the school, the psychological counselling of students depends on the teachers themselves who must support the progress of all students by offering a comprehensive education.

**Psychologists and social workers**

According to ministerial decision 142628/ΓΔ4/2017, the members of the special education staff belonging to the specialisation PE23 Psychologists and the specialisation PE30 Social Workers may exercise duties in specific general education and vocational education school units, which are defined in accordance with the current provisions, provided there is a particular need for supporting vulnerable social groups or the implementation of psychosocial and emotional support programmes for students is deemed necessary.

**Officers for health education/school activities**

The main support for school units, teachers and students on health education issues are the officers for health education and school activities, who belong to the Primary and Secondary Education Diectorates.
More generally, the implementation of health education programmes contribute to the promotion of mental and physical health, as well as students’ social and emotional well-being.

Officers for health education/school activities support the health education programmes implemented in the school units of their respective Primary/Secondary Education Directorates. Within their responsibilities, and among other things, they visit school units and attend school classes and also supervise the progress of school programmes. Moreover, they encourage and support students in the process of discovering knowledge through research, data analysis-synthesis and the experiential approach.

**Action: "A new start for EPAL"**

The Action "A New Start for EPAL" aims to support students in a smooth transition from lower secondary to vocational education and upgrade the quality of education provided to upper secondary vocational schools. Among the key actions of the programme are:

- The staffing of EPALs with psychologists with the purpose to support socially and psychologically students and the building of networks of schools with supporting structures for social and psychological health
- To reactivate and promote the institution of the teacher as advisor and the students’ council so as to bridge communication between students and the school teachers' board, to tackle conflicts and improve the climate of the school community and to detect problems which inhibit the learning progress.

**Diagnostic, evaluative and supportive bodies**

The mission of KESYs is to support the school units and the workshop centres in their area of responsibility to ensure equal access to education for all students without any discriminations and to protect their harmonious psychosocial development and progress.

In order to fulfill its mission, KESYs are active in the areas of research of educational and psychosocial needs, assessments, design and implementation of educational and psychosocial interventions, as well as vocational guidance activities, support of the overall work of school units or workshop centers, carrying out updates and trainings and raising the awareness of the community as a whole.

Also, by the decision of the Regional Director of Education, School Networks for Educational Support are established, consisting of primary and secondary school units and workshop centres of general and vocational education, special education and training, with the aim of strengthening and promoting cooperation, as well as the coordination of the work of the school units and workshop centres, so as to ensure equal access to education for all students without any discriminations, and the promotion of their overall mental health. The same decision defines one (1) special education school unit that functions as the support centre of each School Network for Educational Support.

According to law 3699/2008 as amended by law 4547/2018 [5], the special educational needs of disabled students are examined and determined by the Centres of Educational and Counselling Support (KESYs), Interdisciplinary, Educational, Evaluation and Support Committees (EDEAYs) and the Community Centres for the Mental Health of Children and Adolescents of other Ministries which are certified by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

KESYs as competent bodies of educational direction, act on the level of:

- Exploring and evaluating educational and psychosocial needs
- Focused educational and psychosocial interventions and actions of vocational guidance
- Supporting school work in total
- Informing and training
• Raising social awareness.

EDEAYs have the following competences:

1. To evaluate the difficulties and possible educational or psychological and/or social obstacles in learning faced by students and refer them to KESYs, when after the application of a short support programme inside school, it is judged that an evaluation-diagnosis is still necessary
2. To support teachers of school units in issues like pedagogical response to the heterogeneity of the student population
3. To form programmes of early intervention in cooperation with KESYs or the competent municipal bodies and organise informative/educational seminars for parents
4. To specify the basic lines of the personalised educational programmes into short-term and long-term targets, as determined by the competent KESY and monitor its implementation together with class teachers
5. To support the educational community in issues of equal access to education and the confrontation of early school leaving and school violence
6. To work together with KESYs for issues of mutual competences
7. To co-ordinate and follow up actions of social support of students, in co-operation with social services in municipalities and other public services of the area in which they offer medical or psychological support, and in co-operation with the competent judicial authorities when there is clear evidence of issues of mental health, child abuse or parental neglect.

Career guidance

The implementation of programmes of career guidance is the competence of the Educational and Counselling Centres (KESYs).

KESYs provide services related to vocational guidance to:

1. Students, as well as to their parents or guardians
   • This is carried out on a team level with planning and implementation of career guidance programmes inside school units and workshops, the provision of information on issues related to the labour market, the study programmes of upper secondary and tertiary education and the paths leading to HE. Information also includes actions for raising awareness and the smooth transition to adulthood and the labour market
   • On an individual level, counselling relates to career guidance and forming and developing, in the best possible way, of a personal and professional identity for students of grades B and C of upper secondary education. Counselling also helps students in finding ways to relate decision-making with elements of their personality.
2. Teachers, by providing services related to raising awareness and support on issues of career guidance.

In vocational education, the curriculum of grade A of day vocational upper secondary school includes the subject "School Career Guidance – Security & Health in the workplace". The subject aims to supply students with the necessary information, knowledge and skills that will allow their gradual integration in:

• A dynamically changing labour market
• An active social life.

In special education, the subject of School Career Guidance is taught in:

1. All grades of lower secondary school of the single special vocational lower and upper secondary school
2. Grade B of the upper secondary school of the single special vocational lower and upper secondary school.

**Internet portals**

Through the Internet interactive port of the National Organisation for Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) “Teens Gate [6]”, lower and upper secondary students are able to:

- Choose careers that match their interests
- Watch videos on the world job market
- Take career guidance tests
- Prepare a file with their individual skills (e-portfolio).

Teachers may also use the material in the Internet portal of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs e-vliko.gr [7]. It offers information on:

- Activities
- New projects
- Educational material on school career guidance.

The educational portal of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs [8] can be used by teachers in order to draw information on:

- Approved educational/actions (bodies, organisations, services, HEIs, NGOs, scientific associations, municipalities, ministries, hospitals, museums, etc.)
- Approved training material
- Student competitions
- Activities
- Innovative actions.

There is also the youth creation platform that can be accessed on www.i-create.gr [9].

Using digital tools, digital communities and social networks, the Educational Radio-Television connects with the young audience by moving from traditional media into the digital age.

The youth creation platform offers an environment for collaborating, sharing ideas and implementing digital learning creations: videos, interactive educational games, blogs, social neworking services and Web 2.0 applications in general. These projects are developed and submitted through video contests, campaigns and partnerships with schools, universitites and other organisations, at national, locak or international level.