



Department of Counseling and Psycho-educational Services

POLICIES

At Costeas-Geitonas School the aim of the Department of Counseling and Psycho-educational Services is to provide psycho-educational support to the student, in collaboration with the teachers and the parents, in order to ensure the best possible inclusion of the student in his/her class group and in the school. In our school, the School Psychologists' work expands across the following guidelines:

1. STUDENTS

In the beginning of the school year, the psychologists assume responsibility for the students of specific classrooms. They collaborate for issues that arise on a daily basis and they also hold a formal weekly meeting.

In order to ensure the students' normal integration and support within the school, the psychologists follow these steps:

- Psychologists' participation in the classroom

Each psychologist implements a monthly class group participation schedule aiming towards:

1. Observing the educational level of the class group and its group dynamics.
2. Actively participating and intervening in the way the class functions as a group, in order to promote collaboration between its members.
3. Organizing various activities of psychosocial interest (ex. Diversity and respect, Friendship, Family) in order to help students express and release feelings and ask questions.

- Student's integration and adaptation in the school and in his/her class group

Psychologists participate in the admission and integration of the new students in the school by:

1. Implementing a personal meeting with every single new student, in order to promote his/her normal adaptation in the school.
2. Communicating with the new students' parents in order to exchange information regarding the students' needs.
3. Organizing seminars and speech for the parents, which provide guidance on how to prepare their child for Kindergarten or 1st Elementary Grade.
4. Participating in the organization and the implementation of a student meeting program, ("Buddy System") where 1st Graders meet 6th Graders.

- Educational Support-Students with Learning Difficulties and Special Educational Needs

Regarding the students that present learning and/or behavioral difficulties psychologists:

1. Collaborate with the student's teacher
2. Observe the student in the classroom
3. Assess the student individually
4. Inform the parents for possible learning difficulties

5. Refer students in KEDDY (State Centers for Assessment and Support of Students with SEN), in Medical-Educational State Centers and in private SEN centers and follow up with the centers that provide any kind of intervention to the students, regarding the students' progress.
6. Finally, collaborate with the student's teacher and develop an individualized learning support plan for the student.

During the academic year 2010-11, our school has implemented a student support program for children with learning difficulties. The program offers prevention, assessment and intervention services administered by a scientific team of various specialists (psychologists, special education teachers, speech therapists, play therapists) that provide their services as external consultants.

Aim of this program is to provide:

- ❖ Instructional sessions on an individual or group basis in a resource room.
- ❖ Student support within the class, in order to ensure their inclusion
- ❖ Psychological and emotional support to the student, taking into account the psychological challenges that students with learning difficulties face.
- ❖ Counseling services to the parents, in order to discuss ways to support the student and actions to be taken.
- ❖ Collaboration with the students' homeroom teachers

- Psychological and emotional student support

Psychologists collaborating with principals, teachers and parents identify students that need emotional support and they offer:

1. Individual or group counseling to the student, depending on the problem. Supportive services are provided to children facing family, emotional, behavioral problems, as well as any problem occurring in relationships with classmates.
2. Collaboration with the parents and consultation.
3. Referral to external institutions outside the school, if problem is considered severe.
4. Regarding cases of physical, sexual abuse, neglect, abandonment and domestic violence, psychologists inform the principal, who, in collaboration with the Department, then decides upon steps to be taken.

2. TEACHERS

- **Collaboration with teachers consists of:**

1. Informing teachers and head teachers regarding students with learning difficulties, psychological-emotional and behavioral problems.
2. Informing teachers for assessment outcomes of students with difficulties and by providing advice on ways to support these students within the class.
3. Working together with kindergarten teachers at the end of each academic year in order to divide students to 1st Grade classes for the following year.
4. Working together with teachers in order to decide upon changing class groups, if considered necessary.

- **Consultation to teachers is offered by:**

1. Organizing seminars and workshops.
2. Presenting to teachers various psycho-educational themes and discussing them together.
3. Providing informative reading material.

Examples of themes undertaken are:

- Communication with parents
- Essential agreements and class management
- Specific learning difficulties
- Approaches towards confronting learning difficulties in the class.
- Assessment tools
- Intervention strategies proposed by KEDDY
- Social, emotional and cognitive child development
- Team-teaching learning and strategies used within the school.

3. PARENTS

Psychologists offer to parents the following services:

- Collaboration and counseling services, in response to their own request, or to the school's request, regarding any issue that influence the student (ex. learning difficulties, behavioral, emotional problems, divorce, grief, chronic illness).
- Participation in the afternoon teacher-parent semester conferences, in order to facilitate communication with parents.
- Organization of speeches and workshops, regarding various psycho-educational themes such as "Preparing my child for the 1st Grade", "Sex education", "Art's contribution towards children's mental health", "Learning difficulties and ways of confronting them", "Discipline and Independence".
- Communication with parents by providing reading material and writing articles in the school newsletter and newspaper.

