

30th JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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FROM SOCIETY TO COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

No matter how strange may seem, the first "challenge" someone has to face in his contact with the 30th, Thessaloniki's Gymnasium is the negative stereotype he has formed by the wider society regarding the specific school unit.

Violence, delinquency, unjustified conflicts with teachers and much more, low performance of students are the first images that form in your mind mind.

But is that the case? So let's start from the beginning.

Spatially, the school is located after the western entrance of the city but also at the same time

very close to the center between two districts Xyladika-Lachanokipoi areas strongly degraded, mainly because of the state itself which did not take care for basic infrastructure projects. The social-residential fabric is sparse (areas large unused) and the composition of the population – which is also reflected in the student body of the school- highly multinational and multicultural and socio-economically vulnerable. In regards to this "delinquency", it

is found at night, almost exclusively in organized or disorganized prostitution.

As a consequence of the above, the student body consists of immigrants and refugees, Kurds, Chinese, Nigerians, Georgians, Albanians, etc. Roma (Christians and Muslims) and clearly fewer native Greeks. The total of 82, is shared in the 3 classes of the Junior High School.

Starting the daily contact with the students but also studying the official books of the past years that which is easily established is that the specific school from the point of view of "delinquent" behaviors does not differ in any way from the

other schools in the city (with a much larger homogeneous composition of the student body population) and the "reprehensible" behaviors mainly came from students with psycho-intellectual problems diagnosed by competent public bodies with an unsupportive family environment. Along the way, as we will see below it was found that another source of dystopian attitudes were students who were subsequently diagnosed with psychological problems.

Certainly a large share of this achievement has to do with sensibilities as well as the abilities of the educational staff to date. Regarding the children's performance in these subjects it is indeed recorded as lower than the average but definitely it has to do with the objective conditions that were mentioned above and will be shown in more detail below.

THE PROBLEMS

1. The lack of sufficient knowledge of the Greek language by many children.
2. The low performance in the courses, which is directly connected with the first problem.
3. Misunderstandings and sometimes conflicts, controlled however, between the students which to a certain extent are also caused by multicultural coexistence.

METHODS OF INCORPORATION

FIRST PHASE

RECEPTION-ACCEPTANCE

1. Intensive modern Greek language courses.
2. Personal interview with each student individually and meeting-discussion with her his family if deemed necessary and whenever it is needed, a repetition of the specific action to form a specific image for each child separately.
3. Lessons and showing videos to native students about the Greek nation as a refugee – immigrant in recent history and the problems that it faced in host countries. (This specific action aims to create favorable reception and acceptance conditions for foreigners)
4. Joint watching of films - documentaries and discussion on the topic of racism, the

school violence and bullying.

5. Organized psychological support two days a week in collaboration with a psychologist of the Directorate of Education and the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Athens.

6. Close cooperation with the person in charge of Refugee Education of the Directorate of Education and as an intermediary, cooperation with the UN High Commission for Refugees and related N.G.O.

7. Financial support of the weaker immigrant-refugee families with discretion.

8. Acquaintance with the main administrative centers of the city and its main data cultural environment.

9. Brief lessons for all students on basic historical, geographical and cultural characteristics of the countries of origin of the refugees and immigrants. The specific action has been deemed particularly useful by our experience so far and effective as it was found to raise morale and psychology of foreign students and a clear sign that there is an interest in them.

They even informed us about some other characteristic elements of their their areas. (e.g. multilingualism, multi-religiousness, armed paramilitary groups etc.)

SECOND PHASE

COOPERATION- SELF-ENERGY

1. Formation of ethnically mixed groups and team sports

2. Participation in the institution of School Mediation

3. On the basis of organized trips to other schools in areas inside and outside the prefecture and

with a different social profile each time, joint actions of the children anti-racist, sports, cultural.

4. Role-playing participation in all established school holidays and events.

5. Teaching the rest of the students dances from the countries of origin from

the children themselves as well as Greek traditional dances.

6. In collaboration with their parents, tasting meetings with food and sweets from their countries.

THIRD PHASE

THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY

1. Assignment of specific roles within the school, such as distribution officers of breakfast, of course taking turns with the natives, "responsible" for keeping sports equipment, etc

2. In every basically cultural group of the school (e.g. Kurds – Roma Muslims) responsibility for the beautification and improvement of specific school premises such as garden, painting, graffiti, etc. of course with any other children who wish.

3. Protection of their classmates with the participation of course of all the children in any "provocations and attacks" by third party offenders, of course not in terms of violence but with vigilance, pacifying intervention and informing the teacher personnel.

One final note:

In the above actions, the chronological order is not strict - closed but to the same time to coincide actions from several stages. What matters is what each one is for.

Certainly not all goals were achieved to the extent we desired. We are sure though that we have taken the first decisive steps with tangible results. Learning from others and from our mistakes along the way we will enrich our experiences since this year was the first year of systematic activity of our school unit in the specific sector.

With respect to every person regardless of gender, race, color, religion, etc

The Headmaster,

GOUMAS IOANNIS