Holy Metropolis of Atlanta (Clergy–Laity 2023)

PRESENTATION ON GREEK EDUCATION & CULTURE BY:
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Suggestions and Ideas

How do we make our Greek Schools more active and attractive?

- More Conversation Classes
  - Based on Greek Orthodox Faith, History, civilization, culture, and tradition.
    - Greek Orthodox Faith – Lives of Saints (Synaxaria), Daily Prayers (Trisagion Prayer, Lord’s Prayer, “Heavenly king, Comforter…”, Creed, Small Compline prayers (“It is truly right to bless You, Theotokos”, “Theotoke Parthen…”), Salutations (O Champion General…), Etc.
    - Greek History – to make our children aware and proud of their great ancestors profound achievements.
    - Civilization – Minoan, Mycenaean, Classical and Byzantine Eras of Greece.
    - Culture and local traditions – Exploring the unique cultures of the various regions of Greece (i.e. Crete, Eptanisa, Dodecanese, Pontian, Cyclades, Peloponnesian, Etc.)
Suggestions and Ideas

Class times and days in which we hold classes

- Adding Classes on Saturdays
  - The benefit to this is that everything will be taught on one day
  - It’s also more beneficial because the students are more likely to be less tired from their weekday school activities and extracurricular programs
  - It also, allows for more class time, since the students are more free on Saturdays
Suggestions and Ideas

Adult Classes

- This allows for parents to set the example for their kids
  - For example, some parents, who don’t speak Greek, take their children to Greek School. Their children, being hesitant, might refuse to go. If they see their parents attending, interested, and enthusiastic about Greek School, they may be more inclined to learn and more willing to attend.

- There are adults who are interested in learning Greek, not only in the Parish level, but our local communities at large.

- Our own parishioners are often times interested in learning the original language of the Holy Gospel.
Suggestions and Ideas
Chanting and Music

From my personal experience as a former Co-Chair of the Metropolis of Boston Saint John of Damascus School of Byzantine Music and Adjunct Professor of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, I noticed:

That students of all ages, and all ethnicities, were more easily able to learn our Greek Language through the chanting of our unique and God-Inspired Orthodox Hymnography.

I knew students who didn’t know anything about the Modern Greek Language, however, they chanted so wonderfully in Greek, thanks to the Holy Hymnography of the Orthodox Church.

Therefore, we should, at least before the three major Greek School Feasts (i.e. OXI DAY, Three Hierarchs, and March 25th), incorporate within our curriculums some of the hymnography associated with the aforementioned feasts

Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Ti Ipermaho (National Anthem of Orthodoxy)
- Se gnorizo apo tin kopsi (National Anthem of Greece)
- Ti Skepi Sou Parthene
- Simeron tis Sotirias
- Tous Treis Megistous Fostiras ....
In addition to the previous topic (i.e. Chanting), we should also include within our curriculums, various folk music which identifies the historical aspects of the important feast days.

Some examples include but are not limited to:

- 12 Evzonakia...
- Souliotisses...
- Tis Dikaiosinis Ilie Noite...
- Thourio tou Riga .....
Suggestions and Ideas

**Hands On Activities**

- **Baking**
  - Twice a year, on a Saturday, with Yiayia’s famous recipes,
    - Proosphoro
    - Artoklasia
    - Koulourakia
    - Vasilopita
  - We did this last year at my Parish (Annunciation Winston – Salem, NC), and our students really enjoyed it!
Suggestions and Ideas

Greek Parades

- We might not be able to have large parades such as in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, or Chicago, but we can have small ones within our local Parishes on an annual basis.

- Through this we instill in our students the feeling of being thrilled with their ancestors' accomplishments and their Greek Heritage.
Suggestions and Ideas
Greek Dance

- Everybody Loves to Dance!
  - Our Greek Schools can establish a separate day throughout the week to teach Greek Dance and Singing.
  - This certainly can go hand in hand with your parish HDF Dance Program, since the end goal is the same, i.e. learning dances, music, and ultimately through the music and songs, the Greek Language.
Suggestions and Ideas
Seminars and Guest Speakers

- We can encourage our Greek School Principals and Teachers to attend seminars throughout our Holy Metropolis and Archdiocese.
  - This can allow them to grow the local program at your respective parish
- We can also invite official personnel, which are appointed by our Holy Archdiocese, to come to our Parishes and give a lecture, presentation etc. in front of the entire congregation, ideally at one of the three major feasts, which the Greek School celebrates.
Suggestions and Ideas

How to strengthen our relationships with our nearby Greek Schools

- We can plan and coordinate to celebrate, at least one feast day, throughout the year with the surrounding Greek Schools.

- In cities that have neighboring Parishes of smaller family size, we can extend the invitation that our Greek Schools are open for all.

- If there is a deficiency of teachers in a neighboring city or town, we can work out a plan to allow our local teachers to help our sister Parishes.
Suggestions and Ideas

How to strengthen our relationships with our nearby Greek Schools

► To coordinate a common March 25th Parade
► To plan a yearly “meet and greet” day with our nearby Greek Schools;
  ► This allows the students, teachers and parents, to get to know each other, and even exchange various ideas on how to even better our Greek School Programs
  ► This can even lead to a possible yearly event with our other ministries such as GOYA, Hope and Joy etc.
Thank You for your time and participation!

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