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Church of Greece's Holy Synod members consider issue of religious lessons, curriculum in public schools



Members of the Church of Greece's permanent Holy Synod convened on Tuesday in Athens, for a second consecutive day this week, with the issue of religious classes in public schools dominating the agenda.

Discussion over the matter comes in the wake of a majority high court ruling in Greece last month, whereby the previous Greek education ministry leadership's decisions on religious classes and the curriculum were thrown as unconstitutional, and in contravention with the European Convention on Human Rights.

The new minister that was appointed by the center-right government after July, Niki Kerameos, has promised to study the high court ruling in order to reorganize the curriculum in religion classes, as well as to modify the framework by which a pupil's parents or guardians can request an exemption from the class.

The Church of Greece is expected to issue an official statement regarding the matter, while the Athonite Brotherhood of Mt. Athos has already sent a letter to Kerameos, expressing satisfaction over the recent Council of State ruling.

The Mt. Athos elders called on the minister to revoke the curriculum inherited by the previous ministry's leadership.

Finally, a national association representing theologians in the country has also asked for a meeting with Kerameos to discuss the issue, while at the same time proposing the immediate reprinting of textbooks that were used for classroom instruction prior to 2016.