Now Available for Schools in the Archdiocese of America for children of the Greek diaspora



Another online initiative of the General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad

ATHENS – The GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR GREEKS ABROAD (GSGA) at the MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS is pleased to announce the launch of StaEllinika, a Greek language learning platform available, as a pilot in select schools of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, the SNF CENTRE FOR HELLENIC STUDIES at SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY (SFU) and supported by the STAVROS NIARCHOS FOUNDATION (SNF).

The pilot will be implemented in select US schools, in states including California, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey, under the supervision of Dr. Anastasios Koularmanis, Director of the Department of Education of the Archdiocese of America.

The StaEllinika platform was recently adopted as the official tool of the GSGA for learning and teaching the Greek language, mythology and elements of Greek culture in the Greek Diaspora. A beta version was released at the end of April, targeting individual students and reaching today an impressive 7,000 registered students from 106 countries in just four weeks. The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs embraced the effort, ensuring the full alignment of the platform with the approved curriculum of the Greek state.

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overflow: hidden; line-height: 0;" class="mce_SELRES_start">

The series of educational applications is the fruit of collaboration between the General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad led by Mr. Ioannis Chrysoulakis on the one hand and an interdisciplinary team led by members of the New Media Lab at the SNF Centre for Hellenic Studies on the other. It is worth noting that the majority of the team members are talented young people, living in Greece, to whom the program offered the opportunity to work and stay in their place.

The pilot application will provide additional teaching resources and support to teachers who work exclusively in an online environment. The syllabus, developed and followed through this collaboration, will be fully compatible with the new school conditions, as set out in the new public health protocols due to COVID-19, preparing our communities for a possible new resurgence of the pandemic. in the fall of 2020.

Taking into account the results of the pilot application that starts immediately, the final version of the platform will be available in the fall of 2020, to support

communities, schools and individual students throughout the Greek Diaspora, thanks to the generous support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation who funded the apps development by the SNF New Media Lab.

The Deputy Minister for Diaspora Greeks, Mr. Kostas Vlasis, stated: "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recognizing the special conditions created due to the coronavirus pandemic, made a great effort to make many of the specific applications of the platform www.staellinika.com accessible soon. Today, with great satisfaction, we are now delivering the platform for pilot implementation in the schools of our Greek community in America. The Greek language is one of the key elements that unite ecumenical Hellenism and this platform will be an important investment for its preservation, dissemination and promotion."

Rev. The Archbishop of America, Mr. Elpidoforos, stated: "Technology solutions like this will contribute to the effort we are making as the Archdiocese of America in the rebirth of the Greek language and the spread of the Greek language to new generations. I am sure that our little friends will love this innovative application, with which they will be able to have contact with our beautiful language in a pleasant way ".

The Deputy Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, Ms. Sofia Zacharaki, Responsible for Primary, Secondary and Special Education, stated: "The ties between Greece and Greeks Abroad were and remain very close. They are supported systematically and over time, inspiring us to constantly explore new ways to empower them. The "StaEllinika" platform is an important initiative, in the middle of a pandemic, that supports the promotion and dissemination of the Greek language and our culture more widely in the schools of the Greek Diaspora. It is an important milestone for the plans that will be developed in the near future in order to spread our cultural heritage. We thank the General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this initiative."

Dr. Anastasios Koularmanis, Director of the Education Department of the Archdiocese of America, states that he is "excited by this innovative action to support Greek schools in the Diaspora, especially under the current difficult conditions." Many thanks to the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and congratulations to our partners, the General Secretariat of Greeks Abroad and the SNF Centre for Hellenic Studies for this initiative and I hope that through this cooperation new opportunities will arise to expand such actions in the future."

Director of the SNF Centre for Hellenic Studies, Dr. Dimitris Krallis, noted: "Thanks to the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and two years of intensive work by a truly talented and motivated team will soon find their natural audience, the youth of the

Diaspora. It has been an honour to collaborate by way of a completely distributed work environment – adapted in advance to the new emergency conditions we experience at the moment – with talented Greeks from all around Greece and across the world. In a way, a dispersed – you could say diasporic – team came together and put its heart, mind, and soul into a project that seeks to bring together communities in the Diaspora through the Greek language."