

Greek Education in the United States

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ABSTRACT

This detailed portrait of the American situation presents the poignant history of Greek immigration. The author focuses on various community efforts to sustain language and culture among the children of immigrants and subsequent generations. He underscores the level of organization involved in the early years as well as the perceived role of the Orthodox church. Overall the article presents well-documented figures and points to a hopeful future for Greek language learning despite a decrease in student populations.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce portrait détaillé de la situation américaine présente l'histoire poignante de l'immigration grecque. L'auteur se concentre sur divers efforts déployés par la communauté afin de soutenir l'enseignement de la langue et de la culture parmi les enfants des immigrants et des générations subséquentes. Il souligne le niveau d'organisation impliqué au début aussi bien que le rôle joué par l'église Orthodoxe. Dans l'ensemble l'article présente des statistiques bien documentées et se termine sur une note optimiste quant à l'avenir de l'apprentissage de la langue grecque en dépit d'une diminution de la population étudiante.

1. A brief history

The first Greek settlement in America was in Florida, in 1768, when approximately five hundred Greek immigrants from Coron (Κορώνη), Peloponnesus, arrived as colonists under the aegis of the Scottish Dr Andrew Turnbull and his Greek wife Maria. The colonists (Greeks, Corsicans and Mallorcans) arrived at the northeast part of the state of Florida. They named their colony New Smyrna. Many other Greek merchants, traders and refugees from the Turkish persecution came the next decades to US and were found everywhere from New Orleans to Boston and from New York to San Francisco.

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It should be noted that for research purposes, Greek immigration to the United States is divided into "old immigrants," who arrived in US between 1880 and 1920, and two waves of "new immigrants." Before 1880, there had been only about 1,000 Greek immigrants in America, and the only communities were merchants found in port cities.

The first official reference to organized Greeks in the United States is in an article from *New York Daily Times* (1856), with the title "*The Great National Agricultural Fair at Philadelphia.*" The reporter in this article states that "*Here at this exhibition in the few hours I have seen it, Irish, French, German, Italians, Spaniards, Greeks, Negroes-free and runaway of every variety of color, from the dull black of Africa to the light copper of Alabama, come thick on each other and surpass in strange material the witches' caldron in "Macbeth."*"

Also, the first report about the immigration to the USA comes from the *New York Times*, (1873) with huge information under the title "GREEK SAILORS-THE PRINCIPAL GREEK COLONIES-THEIR LOVE FOR THEIR NATIVE LAND.". Among other information the reporter informs the New Yorkers about the cities in which the Greeks live, their jobs, their plans, and the strength of family ties:

"Comparatively little is known about the Greeks in America. Reference is made occasionally in the daily Press to the Greek merchants of this City, whose enormous transactions in cotton and grain form an important item in the exports of the country; but beyond that we seldom see a Greek name coming before the public in the daily incidents of this cosmopolitan City."

The article gives also information regarding their hopes, objectives and family ties. "...*Their first care is to send the little which they can spare to their families in Greece... The love of their country is one of the strong characteristics of the Greeks; they emigrate under compulsion to better their condition, but the hope to return one day to their country under more comfortable circumstances is always strong and paramount.*"

The first difficult years

From 1880 to 1890, there would be an increase of 20,000 Greek immigrants, and from 1900 to 1924, approximately 520,000 Greeks immigrated to United States. They would be joined by an additional 30,000 from 1924 to 1946.¹ One can estimate that probably 100,000 more arrived illegally or on passports

not indicating their Greek nationality. There are hundreds of immigrants of Crete from 1880 to 1910 whose names appear in the Ellis Island Web Site's list and they are registered as coming from Crete/Turkey!

Only 7.7 percent of all the Greeks admitted to the United States between 1898 and 1910 were identified as being in skilled occupations. For the first Greek immigrants, the American West, that region of free land and free labour, had become instead a mocking backdrop to their suffering, a place whose oppressions seemed even worse than what they had recently escaped from their motherland. As we read in *New York Times* (1873) they did not find in the new country what they were expecting by traveling to the New World: *Gold in the streets of California !*

“The Greek colony in San Francisco numbers about 300 members, and is the best organized of all the Greek colonies in the States of the Union. They maintain a little chapel of their own, and have established a benevolent society. This hitter was rendered necessary from the quantity of new-comers of their countrymen to the Golden State, with the hope of finding gold in abundance. It is strange with what great expectations these children of Hellas go to California, and their disappointment in not finding gold in the streets of San Francisco can be better imagined than described. They seem utterly astonished when they are told that they must work in San Francisco, as everywhere else, to gain their living, and the idea of gold is so deeply rooted in them, that many go to the mines of California and Oregon with the hope of enriching themselves one day by some sudden smile of fortune.”

Their suffering is also known from the ways padrones controlled immigrant workers with contracts and a legal system to create coercive labor relations. In the spring of 1911, these methods incited 50 Greek copper miners from Bingham Canyon, Utah, to write an angry letter to the governor of Utah, William S. Spry, demanding his intervention against their padrones, Leon Skliris, nicknamed *Czar of the Greeks*:

“...Do you think this is right for Skliris to sell livelihoods to the poor workman at extortion 20 dollars and to thus suck the blood of the poor laborer? Where are we? In the free country of America or in a country dominated by a despotic form of government.”

Their questions to Governor Spry underscore just how padrones had turned their expectations of free labor in "America" into a nightmare : In

signing work contracts, Greek workers found, instead of freedom, endless deductions from their wages.

The two Waves of Greek Immigration

The First Wave of new immigrants, approximately 150,000 in number-half of them illegal- arrived between 1947 and 1965. The Second Wave, totaling 160,000, arrived after the Immigration Act of 1965 (Georgakas, 1994).

The First Wave that arrived after World War II to the mid-1960s, consisted of permanent settlers. The immigrants who left Greece after the destruction and poverty resulting from World War II and the years of devastating civil war that followed, were composed of families and sailors who jumped from the ships. This group arrived with scarce financial resources, little or no education, and few skills (Moskos, 1980).

The Second Wave of new immigrants, arriving after 1965, was better educated and more skilled than the immigrants of the first wave. Nonetheless, they shared the dream of their predecessors: earn money and return to Greece. They had also the hope that their children would graduate from the best American universities and also 'return' to Greece as highly educated professionals.

2. Community Organization

There is an old saying among Greeks that when three of them get together and begin to talk they form a society. Wherever Greek immigrants were located their first priority was to establish a community, to build a church and operate a Greek school. In a very flattering article the *New York Times* (1932) under the title "*Greeks' Cathedral draws new colony*", we are informed about the progress and success that the Greek community in New York achieved, during the first decades of the twentieth century, and most important that they have very early established their own educational and cultural institutions.

"A majority of them settle in cities. Wherever a Greek community is established there are to be found its churches, its educational, social and civic institutions. The percentage of Greeks owning their own businesses is unusually high. They are engaged in almost every conceivable business, wholesale and retail. Of late years many of them have embarked successfully in restaurant, confectionery, ice cream, nuts and fruit and similar enterprises."

The earliest Greek Orthodox parish in the United States was established in 1862 in the seaport city of Galveston, Texas, and was named after Saints Constantine and Helen. Even though the church was founded by Greeks, it served the spiritual needs of other Orthodox Christians, such as Russians, Serbians and Syrians. Knowledge of the Galveston Greek Orthodox community is very limited regarding the number of parishioners and the name of the first priest (Constantelos, 1984). The second Greek Orthodox community (it is considered officially as the first) was organized in 1864 in the port city of New Orleans, Louisiana, which like the first parish, was founded by merchants. Between 1892 and 1894, Greek church communities were established: Holy Trinity, New York, (1891); Holy Trinity, Chicago; Illinois (1892); Annunciation; New York, (1893); and Holy Trinity, Lowell, Massachusetts (1894) (Zoustis, 1954).

The first permanent Greek community was founded in New York City in 1892, today's Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity of the Archbishop of America.³ By 1917, there were twenty established Greek church communities in the United States. Five years later, when the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America was incorporated, 141 Greek orthodox churches had been founded in the USA. During the reign of Archbishop Athenagoras (1930-1948), the Greek communities in America were united under a centralized agency called the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

Archbishop Athenagoras set the groundwork for Greek Orthodoxy in North and South America. From 1949-1958, Archbishop Michael not only consolidated the work of his predecessor, but also strengthened the Greek Orthodox Church in America. Since 1959, Archbishop Iakovos reinvigorated Greek Orthodoxy by creating greater unity and purposeful understanding among the family, community, and Archdiocese of the Greek Orthodox Church in America. Today, there are 540 parishes, 800 priests and approximately 1.5 million faithful in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.⁴

3. Establishing Educational and Cultural Organizations

Wherever Greeks migrated, they remained fiercely determined to establish their own identity as a people in the new world. In order to

accomplish this goal, Greeks who arrived in the USA recognized the need to establish social organizations, churches, and schools for the continuation of the life they had known in Greece. The most important thing for them was to preserve the uniqueness of their culture wherever they settled, and they saw nothing inconsistent or contradictory between establishing Greek schools and accepting the ideals of the United States. (Diameanos, 1937)

As the first born Greek-American generation began to make its appearance, so did Greek-language schools in the United States. These schools were often an adjunct to the parish church as well as a mean of maintaining communication between parent and child. Lessons usually took place in a church basement, rented hall or vacant store. Students would come every afternoon to Greek schools right after they finished their public-school program.

The first school that appears in bibliography related to Greece, operated in St. Augustine, Florida and is known as the "*Oldest School House, St. Augustine, Fla.*" The Building belonged to *Juan Genobly (Ioannis Giannakopoulos)*, who was known at first as a carpenter and then as a teacher. His educational activities are not clear, although there exist receipts of tuition (dated September 1st 1811) paid by his students indicating that he might have had a suitable income from it (Panagopoulos, 1978).

More informations about this school are provided by the Web site of the St. Augustine library: "*...Surely no house could be that weathered and still stand! But records show that the tiny house is the oldest wooden school building in the United States....The house first appears on St. Augustine's tax rolls in 1716, but it was constructed before then. By 1788, the building was only "in fair condition," according to a Spanish map of that time. Originally, the building was a small homestead belonging to Juan Genobly. Juan Genobly later married and the house became a school, so he added an extra room. The schoolmaster lived upstairs with his family and used the first floor as a classroom. Boys and girls shared the same classroom, making the St. Augustine school the first in the young nation to go "co-ed."*"⁵

The first Greek schools in USA incorporated not from the church communities but from other Greek associations, fraternities, regional brotherhoods and labour unions. The Greek newspaper Atlantis (1912),

describes the struggle of two Greek labour associations seeking to establish the first Greek-American school in New York. The unions were the Greek Florist Association and the Greek Confectionary Association. Those two worker unions strained in order to collect money to buy the property in Bronx, New York, where the first parochial school was established under the name Greek-American Institute, and opened its doors as a day Greek School and as an orphanage in September 1912 (Nikolidakis, 2005).

The Greek Community of Chicago would be the first to incorporate as the first Greek American school in the USA, in 1908 (Lagios, 1976). This school operated as a Greek School up to 1917 with (and) after this year as a Greek-American School.

The first Greek American school in new England founded in Lowell, Massachussets, in 1909. In the year 1910, the first school established by church community in the central states, was the School “ΚΟΡΑΗΣ» (KORAES), which is operating to this day with the same name and under the auspices of the same community, the Greek Orthodox Church of Constantine and Helen in Chicago.

The importance of education for Greeks in maintaining and transmitting Greek culture has been articulated in the English language writings of Panayiotou (1979), and Scourby (1984).

According to their writings many Greek-Americans have experienced either day schools, afternoon schools, Sundays schools, and public schools with bilingual classes but the majority attended classes in Greek afternoon programs. With the increase in immigration, by 1935 there were 414 afternoon schools and five day schools in America. From their inception the Greek American schools had an interdependent relationship with the local parish and a very closed relationship with the educational representatives of the Archdiocese.

In most of these schools the Greek parish priest did the teaching and usually he was the director of the school. In most cases his educational training was limited.

In 1931, Archbishop Athenagoras, consistent with his policy of centralization had recognized the need for a uniformity among the schools. He founded the Higher Educational Council as a central office to unify the program, the curriculum and the administration of the schools.

In the same direction, in his keynote address at the Twentieth Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress in 1970, Archbishop Iakovos, revealed his concern regarding the present educational system and the methods being employed to accomplish Greek ethnic religious preparation.

“Our Greek schools, day schools, and even our higher institutions of learning...I have not concerned themselves seriously....neither with a study of the present, nor for the purpose of defining the goal for which they existupon the teaching methods used thirty years ago, without taking into account, that teaching methods today as well as curricula undergo change from year to year. Because our great problems must be the concern of all (religious and secular) of us ... (it) is imperative to bring our entire educational system up to date.”⁶

4. Establishing Educational Institutions

Greek Theological School

On November 7, 1921, the first theological school (Seminary) was instituted at St. Athanasios Seminary in Brooklyn, New York, for the purpose of educating candidates for the Greek Orthodox Churches. However, two years later, the Seminary failed due to lack of funds (Constantelos, 1984).

Archdiocesan Educational Board

In 1931, Archbishop Athenagoras made the defunct Archdiocesan Educational Board as the Higher or Supreme Educational Council, an operable and effective organization at the Fourth Clergy-Laity Congress in New York City.

Greek Theological School (Pomfret/Brookline)

In 1937, the Holy Cross Greek Theological School at Pomfret, Connecticut, opened its doors to students preparing to serve in the Greek Archdiocese. The Holy Cross Greek Theological School was relocated from Pomfret to Brookline, Massachusetts, in 1947, becoming the parent institution of the Hellenic College there. In March 1968, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education recognized the Hellenic College as an institution with the authority to grant the Bachelor of Arts degree upon completion of its Liberal Arts program.

St. Basil's Academy at Garrison, New York

Archbishop Athenagoras had a vision for the establishment of a teacher education institution. In 1931 He asked Professor Asterios Asteriou for an introductory report to The Second Convention of the Greek Teachers of America. According to this report, there were Greek teachers available in America, but they were leaving the Greek schools because of the low salaries.

The preparatory institution for educators would be a combination school-orphanage known as St. Basil's Academy. Located in Garrison, New York, it was to educate both orphans and the children of more affluent Greeks. On July 24, 1944, Archbishop Athenagoras' letter to the clergy, parish councils and Philoptochos Societies of the Greek Archdiocese announced the opening of St. Basil's Academy in September. In October 1944, the office of the Philoptochos Society (church benevolent society) announced that its organizations had accepted the challenge of establishing St. Basil's Academy with great enthusiasm. The press wrote laudatory articles about the Academy and the State of New York recognized the Academy by granting it permission to operate as both orphanage and school.⁷

The Educational and philanthropic goals of Saint Basil's Academy were:

- (1) to serve orphans;
- (2) to provide the children with an American education, a Greek education, and religious enlightenment;
- (3) to educate future teachers from among the new generations. St. Basil's Academy became a new hope for Greek education in the United states. This institution was the first and only Greek -Teacher Preparatory College outside Greece (Nikolidakis, 2004).

As Metropolitan Germanos Polyzoides, proclaimed in his speech in 1944: *"We hope for better days to come ... Through the Philoptochos Societies, the Archbishop, the press and other sources the facilities for St. Basil's Academy, Garrison, New York, were secured whereupon the Greek American youths would be prepared to be the future teachers . . . let us wish the New Year to be a year of real freedom, joy, and health for all humanity."*⁸ The program of teacher preparation was similar to that used in normal schools in Greece with modifications designed to prepare the students to be as leaders in the Greek

parishes, as teachers, Sunday and religious school directors or administrative secretaries for the parish councils.

5. Schools for Basic Greek education

The main concern of Greek immigrants was the education of their children. This was fulfilled through educational and religious programs. It should be noted that for many Greek-Americans, the socialization experience of the Greek school, especially in parochial schools are second only to that of the family.

There are basically three types of schools organized diachronically by the Greek communities.

- a. The Greek day (parochial) school , offering the program that the City Board of Education requires and a supplementary Greek language program.
- b. The afternoon language/heritage/cultural school.

In addition, a large number of parishes offer Greek language evening courses to adults offered in the afternoon school's classes.

- c. Sunday school and religious classes imparted the Orthodox faith, religious practices and traditions.

Second and third generation of Greeks did not provide motivation nor assistance for the preservation or continuance of language or heritage through these formal and informal educational programs. In effect, religious education was viewed as the basic means by which the new generations of American Greeks would maintain their Greek Orthodoxy.

Discussing community life in early Greek American settlements Saloutos (1980), writes: *“As the first American-born generation began to make its appearance, so did the Greek-language school. These schools were often an adjunct to the parish church and were a means both of maintaining communication between parent and child and of preserving the Greek heritage in the new land ... Classes usually were held in an improvised classroom in a church basement, rented hall, or vacant store after public-school day had ended.”*

From their inception the Greek American schools had an interdependent relationship with the local parish and a perfunctory relationship with varied representatives of the Archdiocese. As a rule, the Greek parish priest did the teaching, sometimes he had been the classroom teacher in his native village or town. His educational training was probably limited, however, and his new teaching assignment could be a burdensome chore. Learning was by rote, the disciplinary methods stern, and the climate for learning stultifying (Saloutos, 1980).

With the increase in immigration, by 1935 there were 414 afternoon schools and five day schools in America (Lagios, 1977).

Greek language programs in public schools

With the continued influx of Greek immigrants, pressure was placed on local school boards, as early as the 1930s, for the teaching of Greek in public schools. As a result of the Immigration Act of 1965, which spurred the entry of 86,344 Greeks into the United States from 1966 to 1971, Greek bilingual programs were set up in Chicago and New York, funded by federal grants from Title VII-The Bilingual Education Act of 1967. Prior to this period, the options for parents interested in teaching their children the Greek language and culture were limited to the afternoon schools and the day schools (Saloutos, 1980). Today there are nine public schools in the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut), offering Greek as a foreign language to 644 students (See Table I).

6. Greek Schools Today

The aims and goals of Greek education today, as they appear in the 2005 Year Book of the Greek Archdiocese, are to “Instill in the minds and hearts of our youth the spiritual, moral, and cultural values of our Greek Orthodox heritage. By helping our young people understand and appreciate the values and traditions underlying Greek Orthodoxy, Greek Education contributes greatly to the development of well informed, responsible, and progressive members of our Greek Orthodox Church.” The steady increase in the number of Greek American day schools was a result of the discriminatory education policies of the major cities which Greek immigrants lived. Sarason and Doris (1979) describe the difficulties

that immigrant children experienced during the early part of the century in the American public schools. Lack of English language skills caused many of these children to be systematically judged as intellectually deficient and placed in classes for the mentally retarded. Nicholas Gage, the well known Greek-American writer and journalist, in a personal message to students in Greek Schools, appearing in the textbook “The history of the Greeks in America”, (EDIAMME, 2004), describes his and his sister's personal experiences from their first year in public school, in Massachusetts, where they had been sent to a class for retarded students because of their language limitations!

A similar fate befell Greek immigrant children whose numbers in public schools increased after World War I (Kopan, 1981). With the continued influx of Greek immigrants, pressure was placed on local school boards, as early as the 1930s, for the teaching of Greek in public schools.

For the academic years 1985-1986 the Department of Education (formerly the Supreme Education Council) of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America listed 406 afternoon schools and 23 day schools (Yearbook, 1986). The total enrollment in the fall of 1985 was 7,260 pupils in day schools and approximately 27.000 students in day and afternoon schools. Of the day schools, eleven were in New York City, two in Chicago, seven in other parts of the United States, two in Canada, and one in South America. Two of the schools located in New York City offered high school programs. There were 3,381 students reportedly enrolled in the eleven day schools in New York City. In a study of 160 first, second and third-generation Greek Americans in the New York City metropolitan area, Scourby (1980) found a significant decrease in Greek school attendance. Twenty-three parochial day schools and 324 afternoon schools were reported in operation during the school year (2003-2004) in the United States with an estimated enrollment of 15,000 students, ages 4-16. (Appendix 1)

The parochial day schools are located as follows: 1 in Alabama; 2 in California; 1 in Florida; 3 in Illinois; 1 in Massachusetts; 11 in New York; 1 in Pennsylvania; 2 in Texas; and 1 in Utah (Makedon, 2004). The average population of these day schools is about 200 students, 90% of whom are born in the United States of Greek parents. Instruction is available from kindergarten to the eighth grade with an average of 20 to 25 students per

class for the day schools and from kindergarten to the seventh grade for the afternoon schools with an average of fifteen students per class with an exception for 5-8 big afternoon schools in the New York metropolitan area, where classes with 30 and 40 students may be found.

One school in New York has classes from pre-kindergarten to grade twelve and one has pre-kindergarten to grade nine.

Examining the number of students attending Greek Schools or any type of Greek language programs today, we find just as did Scurby (1984), a significant decrease between 1946 and 2004. According to the data, the official Greek population the year 1946 was 244.000 and the estimated student enrollment that time was 24.000 students (Malafouris , 1948). The report from the Department of Greek Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese shows that the student enrolment for the 2003-2004 school year was only 15.000 with a Greek population estimated at least 1.000.000 (The website of the Archdiocese gives an estimation for 1.500.000).

6.1 School Boards - Administration - Teachers

All parochial day schools are attached to the local church. The Archdiocese's Department of Education reports that the parishes contribute 25% to 30% of the annual school budgets. All schools are operated by a School Board elected from the Parish Council. The school boards usually consist of the principal, members of a parent's organization, and members of the parish council. Educational and administrative leadership and supervision is provided by the school administration , and the school boards, by the Archdioceses' Education Department and the Department of the Education from the local Greek Consulates.

The majority of the principals who work in the parochial schools are born in the United States of Greek parents and have completed graduate degrees in education. On the contrary, 95% of the principals working in the afternoon schools were born in Greece with a Greek degree or at least a Greek High School Diploma. The day school principals supervise an average of 15-20 teachers, two or three of whom are Greek language teachers, whereas the afternoon school principals supervise 4-6 teachers.

The Greek Language teachers in any type of school in USA are

indeterminable. Under the definition “Greek teacher” about eleven hundred (1,100) people are registered but not all of them have certification. It is estimated that, with the exception of the day schools, no more than 20% of these teachers hold a degree equivalent to the degree teachers in Greece require to teach in the school system (Table II).

Schools' goals are to provide students with basic knowledge of the major subject areas and to develop Greek American values. Curriculum and instruction for the day schools follows the guidelines established by each state's department of education for the major subject areas: language, arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. For the Greek program the schools follow the guidelines from the Archdioceses' Education Department and the guidelines from the Department of Education from the local Greek Consulates.

All schools devote at least 45 minutes of classroom instruction per day to the teaching of Greek language and culture. Greek language classes are conducted according to grade and age level. Over the past 15 years, schools with more than one class per grade employ a language-level system based on the individual student's proficiency. The afternoon schools operate two to four afternoons per week and one and a half to two hours per afternoon. In the afternoon schools, each student receives one and a half to three periods instruction per week, in Greek language, history and culture. In most schools Religion is usually taught by the parish priest one period per week, or religion is integrated in the Greek curriculum.

The schools use standardized tests to evaluate students' progress in reading and mathematics. An integral part of any school curriculum is the assessment of pupil performance. Parochial schools generally have reputations for higher academic standards and fewer discipline problems than public schools since they can choose their students (Wolfe, 1987).

The Archdiocese lacks the economic and educational leadership to engage in a centralization of the Greek American day schools, which contradicts the widely public belief that the schools are under the auspices of the Archdiocese, belong to its central educational system and are run by the Department of Education of the Archdiocese. The schools can be viewed as independent organizations controlled mainly by their respective communities. There is new movement to establish the new model of

charter schools by converting Greek parochial schools to charter schools⁹ or establish charter schools in the facilities of Greek Orthodox churches with as a core curriculum the Greek *Paideia*. This movement supports the view that these schools are private schools belonging to the community and its school board.

7. Books used for Greek Programs

Although there are many books used from the private sector three are mainly the series of books used for the Greek language programs in both parochial and afternoon schools. The following three books dominate:

a. *I Glossa mou* (My Mother Tongue) : They are the same books used in public schools in Greece. They were used up to 1988 as the only books distributed by the Greek Ministry of Education. Today only very few (three or five) schools with students from Greek-speaking families use these books.

b. *Mathaino Ellinika* (I am learning Greek) : These books were written in 1986, in co-operation of the Department of Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and the Pedagogical Institute aiming to meet the educational and instructional needs of the second, third and fourth generation Greek American students. They are written in a second language teaching didactic methodology. They are published by the Greek Ministry of Education and are distributed free to schools.

c. *Pragmata kai Grammata* (Effects and Letters). The University of Crete through the European Program *Paideia Omogenon* created various series of books based on the communicative approach in order to fulfill the instructional needs of the majority of students who are coming to Greek school with limited or no Greek. The books are written by level within a proficiency system and cover language instruction from kindergarten to the ninth grade. There are also textbooks written for teaching Greek as a foreign language as well as books for social studies (Greek mythology, history, geography and culture).

The basic characteristic of these books is that the Greek teachers were involved in their design. They made proposals for the methodology and

before the final publication they were 'field tested' by the teachers in the classroom. In many cases, teachers themselves wrote units and lessons which they considered appropriate for their students. The teachers participated also in seminars organized either in Crete or in USA and were trained by the Centre of Intercultural and Migration Studies, Department of Elementary Education of the University of Crete, in didactic methods for more effective use of the books.

8. Greek Language Skills Assessment

a. The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek

Since 1973, the Department of Greek Education develops and administers annually the Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek to students entering high school in New York State. Students who pass the Examination receive credits in foreign language study.

The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek is a foreign language achievement test that assesses student proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing Modern Greek, according to the specifications of the New York State Syllabus: Modern Languages for Communication. It is estimated that over 19,000 students have benefited from taking it. (Makedon,2004).

b. The Certificate of Attainment in Greek , by Κέντρο Ελληνικής Γλώσσας (The Center For The Greek Language).

The last five years students in any type of Greek language program or adults can participate in an examination in order to receive a formal certificate that would objectively demonstrate the level of their linguistic competence. This certificate provides unambiguous and easily recognizable proof of linguistic proficiency in four levels. With certification at Level D students can seek employment in the public or the private sector in Greece without further questions on their linguistic competence. The examination is mainly administered by the education departments at the local Greek consulates. It is estimated that over the last five years, at least one thousand students and adults have passed this examination and are awarded the certificate from The Centre for the Greek Language , Thessalonica, Greece.

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Appendix

TABLE 1: GREEK LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL

	GREEK LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL		Students	Teachers
Francis Lewis H.S.	Flushing,	NY	152	2
FORT HAMILTON H.S	Brooklyn	NY	95	2
BRYANT HS	Astoria	NY	140	1
LONG ISLAND CITY H.S	ASTORIA	NY	80	1
B.CARDOZO H.S	Flushing,	NY	25	1
Bronx Science H.S	Bronx	NY	57	2
NATHAN HALE MIDDLE SCOOOL	Norwalk	CT	44	1
WEST ROCKS MIDDLE SCHOOL	Norwalk	CT	27	1
FORT LEE	NEW JERSEY	NJ	24	1
TOTAL			644	12

TABLE 2: STUDENTS/TEACHERS IN THE EAST COAST GREEK SCHOOLS

A/A	STATE	STUDENTS	TEACHERS CERTIFIED**/NO CERT.
1.	CONNECTICUT (CT)	594	7/31
2.	MASSACHUSETTS(MA)	1397	14/67
3.	MAINE (ME)	28	8/26
4.	NEW HAMPSHIRE (NH)	132	1/5
5.	NEW JERSEY (NJ)	1629	17/92
6.	NEW YORK (NY)	6028	30/238
7.	OHIO (OH)	582	7/52
8.	PENNSYLVANIA (PA)	1204	21/97
9.	RHODE ISLAND (RI)	99	1/3
10.	WEST VIRGINIA (WV)	25	1/1
11.	TENNESSEE (TN)	72	1/2
12.	KENTUCKY (KY)		
	TOTAL	11790	104/614

** With a BA from a Pedagogic Academy or School of Education.

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