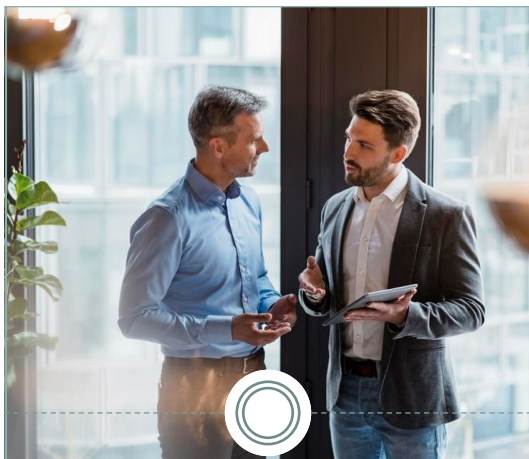


Teacher Induction Policies and Mentoring in Greek Primary and Secondary Education

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The Pedagogical Guidance Counselor-Mentor

- is a recently introduced educational institution in Greek primary and secondary education to provide assistance to *newly appointed teachers during their induction phase*;
- is a professional figure capable of *inspiring, guiding and supporting* any newly appointed or recently assigned permanent or substitute teacher or hourly-paid teacher with up to five (5) years of experience, with the aim of *improving the quality of their teaching* and, in general, *of the educational work they perform*;
- comes from the *same school* with the mentee;
- has the mission to to act as a *role model* and *develop* the trainee's *professional skills*, to guide, inform, explain, encourage, advise, provide stimuli and support their new colleague.

CONTRADICTIONS DERIVING FROM GREEK LEGISLATION HINDERING ITS EFFECTIVENESS

Ellipsis of Formal Preparation Training Programs

Mentors had not previously attended any formal academic preparation courses. They were not qualified in the fields of mentoring, guidance, counseling and coaching, nor were they certified by an accredited body.

Ellipsis of a Qualitative Assessment and Monitor System

The Greek state uses only quantitative criteria for the appointment (degrees, certificates, experience, etc.) for professional mentors, experienced and well versed in their subject, without emphasizing their qualitative characteristics, which are essential for the success.

Potential Ellipsis of Professional Mentors - Agents of Change

Mentors in schools may not meet some or even all of the quantitative criteria set out in the legislation, since the possession of the requisite degrees and certifications is not obligatory or binding and Mentors may act with conservatism.

Potential Ellipsis of Optimal Matching of Actors and Commitments

Mentors come from the available school staff. Mentees don't choose their mentors and vice versa. Challenges, incompatibilities, conflicts and lack of interest in mentoring relationship may arise.

Potential Ellipsis of Mutual Voluntary Participation, Willingness & Trust

Mentees may be less experienced in the teaching profession, but they may be no less equal to their mentor, since many veteran Greek teachers have a low profile in the field of teaching. Before 2010, according to a European Commission report (2019), specialized teachers were not required to have a pedagogical and teaching competence certificate.

Potential Divergence in Academic Fields of Expertise among Educators

Especially in small schools facing staff shortages mentors may not become from the same field of expertise or specialty, which can hinder the motivation and success of the mentorship process.

Potential Ellipsis of Mentor's Authentic Interest

Staff may be motivated to assume a mentor role primarily by the incentive of receiving 0.5 points per year toward future positions of responsibility.

CONCLUSION

Greek policy should focus on a **sustainable formal mentorship ecosystem**, an **effective mentoring school culture** and a **high-quality mentoring experience** for newly appointed educators, as it is the cornerstone of a successful induction and early career development process. This way, all those involved in mentorship will be able to adequately meet the expected challenges with creative and innovative ways, and offer mentees a meaningful, positive and beneficial orientation experience at the beginning of their professional career.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A **holistic culture** & the establishment of **coherent professional support systems** for new teachers, mentors and school leaders, together with **strategic, goal-oriented modifications** to the Greek educational policy framework for mentoring & guidance, will lead to (a) well-organized, effective and **coherent formal professional training programs**, (b) **optimal selection, training and most effective pairing**, (c) **harmonious relationships & well-being**.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- **The Practical Value of Mentoring in Induction:** Perspectives of Mentees and School Leaders
- **Navigating the Role of mentors:** Conservatism or progression?
- **Opportunities, needs, problems & challenges in mentorship:** A SWOT Analysis.

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