



GREEK PRIMARY TEACHERS' FEDERATION

D.O.E.

15a XENOPHONTOS str., 105 57, ATHENS, GREECE

Tel.: +302103236547 - +302103245375

Athens, April 21, 2020

Ref. No. 540

To:

ETUCE

E.I.

Protest against the forthcoming submission of a bill by the Ministry of Education

Dear Colleagues,

We would like to let you know that it was only after the unacceptable phenomenon of leaks in the media, that the Executive Board of DOE was informed through a telephone call by The Minister of Education, Mrs. Niki Kerameos, that a draft law on public education issues for which there has been no previous dialogue with the educational trade unions, would be submitted for public consultation next week.

The Board of DOE considers that the government's decision to legislate in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, on issues that bear not, in any case, the nature of the emergency but are deliberately mixed with regulations of an urgent nature, is highly problematic and intentional.

Despite the clearly stated opposition of the whole of the educational movement, the leadership of Ministry of Education, in the middle of the ongoing restrictions owing to the covid-19 pandemic and the consequent lack of dialogue with the unions, insists on launching immediate public consultation on issues that in the past, caused strong controversies between governments and education unions, such as the evaluation of school units and then the evaluation of teachers. Our firm belief is that for such serious issues a preceding the public consultation wide ranged dialogue with the Educational Federations was more than necessary. This, never happened, not only because of the pandemic restrictions but due to the lasting political choice of this government to ignore

the dialogue with the social partners before proceeding to the next steps of a legislation!

Greek teachers have fought hard in the very recent past and thwarted governments' efforts to impose evaluation systems that categorized school units, contained punitive provisions and even paved the way for the dismissal of teachers, and also would likely privatize certain aspects of the public school.

The public announcement-consultation and then the legislation on this issue alongside other crucial but not necessarily urgent ones that require the prior consent of the trade unions, meaning substantial dialogue before made public, reveals the intention of the current government to legislate against the stands of the educational movement by taking advantage of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

At this juncture of pandemic, Greek primary school teachers give a titanic fight to keep students in touch with learning through live distance education, although there is no practical support from the government, that is state funding of the public education and support of especially the financially weakest families who do not have the necessary means to meet their children's needs, like computer and internet connection in order to attend the distance education. Teachers have exceeded their limits and as individuals they also face all the problems that the society, as a whole, experiences. The real need for the teachers is much more than the communicative statements of recognition of their work by the government. In fact, what is needed is practical support, encouragement and trust.

The start, at this juncture, of the legislative process, which certainly will generate tough ideological controversies and create various tensions and phobic phenomena among the teachers, is not only untimely but also potentially endangers the unprecedented in the educational history of the country, and under difficult conditions to a significant degree already constructed, substantial relationship of communication and trust among students, teachers, and families.

The issue, especially, of the evaluation of school units and / or teachers is not the most important for the time being and requires clear-headed approaches under normal circumstances, and not under extraordinary ones. We have expressed our concerns to the political leadership of the Ministry of Education, as well as in public, without receiving so far, a positive response from the Ministry.

That is why we ask for your written intervention to the Greek Prime Minister asking to demonstrate prudent policy and put off the discussion and legislation on crucial issues of education to the next most appropriate time under positive conditions and with the certainty that will not create tensions between the Ministry of Education and the teachers.

We look forward to hearing from you.

The President
Kikinis Thanasis



The General Secretary
Petrakis Stavros