



Optimal Learning Program

Handbook

The Optimal Learning Program (OLP) offers students with learning differences an opportunity to fully participate, contribute and excel in the classroom. Students who receive Optimal Learning (OL) services are provided with the necessary accommodations to be empowered and reach their fullest academic potential. OLP realizes the importance of addressing each student's needs in the classroom, and supports faculty with Differentiated Instruction strategies and content delivery.

The Optimal Learning Program provides three levels of support:

1. OLP Classroom,
2. OLP Consultation, and
3. OLP Support Plan for Instruction, Assessment and Accessibility (SPIAA).

For new students: enrollment in OLP Classroom, OLP Consultation or OLP SPIAA is determined by the OLP Coordinator and OLP Specialist and recommended through the Admissions letter.

For returning students: enrollment in OLP Classroom, OLP Consultation or OLP SPIAA is determined by CST and recommended to parents.

The process begins with a student's referral by a classroom teacher or parent. The Child Study Team (CST), consisting of the school's Principal, the K-12 Counseling-Psychologist, the Counselor(s), the OLP Specialist and the OLP Coordinator, determines which programs offered by the school will most effectively meet the student's needs and provide opportunities for him/her to reach his/her potential. The OLP Specialist works closely with teachers to differentiate the student's curriculum and adjust his/her learning experience to suit his/her individual needs.

A full battery of psycho-educational assessments, which are administered by in-house, or non ACS Athens based psychologists, must be completed prior to enrollment in OL. Based on their findings and subsequent report, standards are set according to the individual needs of the referred student. Effective strategies are developed by the OLP Specialist and are then shared with all teachers working with each particular student. Small group instruction and cooperative learning activities are incorporated within the student's curriculum in order to complement various learning abilities.



OLP Class

The Optimal Learning Program Classroom is a 'pull out' support service for students who require the attainment of academic skills so as to better perform in the educational setting. Small group classroom instruction and cooperative learning activities are incorporated within the student's curriculum to complement various learning abilities. OLP Classroom takes place on the OLP floor in the designated Elementary, Middle School or Academy OLP classes.

1. This class takes place during a specific block of time and meets regularly (3 times a week). In Middle School and Academy it takes the place of a Block (course). In Elementary OLP is scheduled throughout the week and goals are targeted through 1-1 or small group instruction.
2. During OLP class, students work on areas of identified weakness by utilizing their strengths and learning strategies, which are modeled, practiced and eventually generalized throughout all mainstream classroom settings.
3. Students receive an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), which is based on their psycho-educational report, and are provided accommodations that cater to their learning needs.
4. The OLP Specialist is in close collaboration with teachers and parents to ensure that progress in OLP class is transferred to the regular classroom. This process involves identifying limitations and difficulties the student may experience in being successful in the regular classroom.
5. Formal communication with parents takes place at the end of the school year, when the ILP is reviewed, progress is discussed and new goals for the following school year are set. The parents of the newly enrolled students meet with the OLP team in the beginning of the school year. The OLP Specialists also participate in the Parent-Teacher Conferences that take place across all schools (Elementary, Middle and Academy). In addition, communication between the professionals of the OLP and parents is continuous and ongoing throughout the year via phone calls or emails as often as necessary.

OLP Consultation

The Optimal Learning Program Consultation is a support service for students who need support as well as testing accommodations to help them succeed in the regular class; however, these students have achieved higher levels of independence and do not require OLP Classroom time. Consultation lasts between 15 and 20 minutes and takes place once a week.

1. The Optimal Learning Program specialist meets with the student on a brief pull-out basis during a scheduled and convenient time for both. The OLP Specialist is responsible for contacting the student in the beginning of the school year and arranging and maintaining the regular weekly meeting.
2. Students in OLP Consultation benefit from additional time to their 20 minute weekly meetings, when they take tests in the OLP setting.
3. OLP Consultation students receive an ILP, as described above, and are entitled to accommodations, which are specific to each student's needs and stem from the psycho-educational report. Accommodations are stated within



the ILP as guidelines for teachers to follow so that individual student needs are met.

4. The OLP Specialist communicates regularly with members of the faculty to monitor each student's progress.
5. Formal communication with parents takes place at the end of the school year, when the ILP is reviewed, progress is discussed and new goals for the following school year are set. The parents of the newly enrolled students meet with the OLP team in the beginning of the school year. The OLP Specialists also participate in the Parent-Teacher Conferences that take place across all schools (Elementary, Middle and Academy). In addition, communication between the professionals of the Optimal Learning Program and parents is continuous and ongoing throughout the year via phone calls or emails as often as necessary.

OLP Support Plan for Instruction, Assessment and Accessibility (SPIAA)

The Optimal Learning Program Support Plan for Instruction, Assessment and Accessibility (SPIAA) is a support service for students who need accommodations to help them succeed in the classroom. This service does not involve classroom instruction, person-to-person consultation or monitoring. It is a minimal support service for students in the OLP who have progressed as independent learners.

1. The OLP Specialist meets with the student once in the beginning of the academic year to review his/her support plan. The student, parent or faculty member is then responsible for contacting the OLP Specialist if and when assistance is needed. It is the responsibility of the student, parent or faculty member to contact the OLP Specialist.
2. Students in OLP SPIAA are entitled to accommodations, which are specific to each student's needs and are stated in the psycho-educational assessment provided. Accommodations are specific guidelines for teachers to follow so that individual student needs are met. These guidelines are presented in the student's SPIAA. Faculty members are responsible for implementing/providing these accommodations. For example, if a student's accommodation requires a quiet space and/or additional time for test-taking, the accommodation will be arranged by the OLP Specialist for the student to either take the test in the regular classroom or in the designated OLP classrooms.
3. The OLP Specialist may communicate with members of the faculty which helps regulate the progress of a SPIAA student.



Optimal Learning Program Fees

- Full Program (class): 1,500 €

- Consultation: 500 €

- SPIAA: 200 €

Students receiving **Shadow Teacher Support** must be enrolled in either the Full Program, or in Consultation of OLP. There is an additional fee for receiving Shadow Teacher support.

- Shadow Teacher Administrative/Training Fee: 500 € *
- Shadow Teacher monthly payment As agreed upon

Occupational Therapy (OT) & Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)

- OT & SLT Screening Free of charge
- OT & SLT Evaluation 35 € per session
- OT & SLT 35 € per session

***Shadow Teacher Training Fee:**

Orientation
Friday Morning Meetings
Individual Meetings
Participation in ACS Athens Professional Development opportunities
Access to ACS Athens best practices



ILP/SPIAA Document Templates

The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a formal, comprehensive document that outlines each student's profile. It indicates the student's learning difference, preferred learning style, strengths and areas of difficulty. It also states the accommodations students are eligible for and lists the goals the OLP Specialist has set, based on her review of the psycho-educational assessment and the feedback provided by faculty members.

The ILP is reviewed and renewed at the end of the school year during a scheduled parent meeting. New goals are set for the next school year. These meetings take place every school year during May and June.

For new students, the ILP meetings take place by the end of September or in the first few weeks upon a student's enrollment to OLP.



Please see the following samples of the ILP and SPIAA documents.

Individual Learning Plan (ILP) CONFIDENTIAL

Student Name:	Grade:
Date of Birth:	Name of School/ Schools Attended:
Date of Issue:	Parent/ Guardian Email address:
Parent/Guardian Name:	Parent/ Guardian Telephone #:
Date of entry at ACS Athens:	Date of entry to Optimal Learning Program:



Student Name:		Grade:	
Diagnosis:			
Date of last psycho-educational testing:		Projected re-evaluation date:	
Languages Native Language: 2 nd : 3 rd : 4 th :		ESL support (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Intensive <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exited	
Learning Support Programs <input type="checkbox"/> OLP Class (3 blocks/ week plus testing accommodations as needed) <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation (20' week plus testing accommodations as needed) <input type="checkbox"/> Shadow Teacher (support as recommended by CST)			Medical needs: (allergies, medication etc...)
Additional external services the child is participating in:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech Language Therapy		<input type="checkbox"/> Music/ Art and Play Therapy	
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapy		<input type="checkbox"/> Homework Support	
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Therapy		<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling			
<input type="checkbox"/> Vision Therapy			



Student Name:	Grade:
Performance in Educational Setting	
A description of the student's learning difference and its impact on educational performance:	
Strengths: <i>(academic, social/emotional, dispositional, extracurricular)</i>	
Areas to develop: <i>(what he/she does least well, what is most difficult for him/her)</i>	
Student interests and preferred learning style: <i>(what does he/she do for fun? strongest abilities?)</i>	



Student Name:

Grade:

<u>Classroom Accommodations</u>	
<u>Area of Concern</u>	<u>Accommodations</u>

For optimal results it is recommended that the following accommodations are implemented in the regular classroom environment.

Testing:

- Allow extra/extended time **25%**
- Oral Testing (oral responses with prompting)
- Tests questions read aloud to student
- Adjusted setting for test-taking (small group or individual)
- Break test into shorter chunks and testing periods (within the same school day or separate test into sections)
- Grade test for content, not handwriting, spelling, or mechanics
- Word processor **without** spell-check
- Word processor **with** spell-check
- Assistive Support (calculator, notes, open book)
- Scribe (no prompting given)
- Reader
- Enlarged font
- Uncluttered worksheets
- Rest Breaks
- Accommodated written test format
- Alternative Test Format (short answer, multiple choice etc)

Formal Standardized Testing (SAT, ACT, IB, MAP)

- Extra time (specify amount)
- Word processor **without** spell-check
- Word processor **with** spell-check
- Scribe
- Reader
- Own Room
- Sit at front of room
- Allow calculator
- Supervised rest breaks

the above accommodations for standardizing testing are recommendations that apply **only if approved by the external examiners.*



<p><u>Classroom</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide information regarding accessing books on audio and other materials</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Allow access to spell checkers and / or word processor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Alternatives to note taking (use device to take picture, print teacher notes from moodle)</p> <p><i>Directions:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Written directions in addition to oral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate/ Model</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Repeat and check for understanding</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual or non-verbal signals cues to check for understanding (specify)</p> <p><i>Instruction:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual graphs / charts / organizers / diagrams to support instruction</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Multi-sensory instructional methods / differentiated instruction specific to this student</p> <p><i>Peer Involvement:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Peer tutor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative learning opportunities</p>
<p><u>Classroom Assignments / Homework:</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Frequent work breaks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Word processor with spell-check</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Word processor without spell-check</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Calculator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Extended time to complete long term assignments (must be arranged with the classroom teacher and OLP Specialist three days before deadline with a specific and up to three days extension due date)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Allow extended time for in class assignments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Simplify complex directions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pair written instructions with oral instructions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Develop private signal so that student can let teacher know if repetition of instruction is needed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Subject matter in smaller chunks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prioritize tasks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Shortened assignments without compromising skill development</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grade written work on content, not spelling, handwriting, or mechanics</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide distributed review and drill</p>
<p><u>Attention:</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to stand at times during seatwork</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide short break between assignments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide fidget object for manual activity (eg. stress ball, clay, worry beads, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Preferential seating</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Positive reinforcement for short periods of on-task behavior</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Build in opportunities for movement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Self talk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual or non-verbal cues to redirect attention</p>
<p><u>Organizational Skills</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individualized schedule written for student</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reminder to submit homework</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assignment/notebook check</p>



Behavior Management

- Behavior chart/contract
- Wait time for compliance
- Positive reinforcement
- Choices/alternatives
- Movement opportunities
- Proximity control
- Advantageous seating location
- Definition of limits/ Clear expectations
- Cooling off opportunities

Comments:



Student Name:			Grade:	PROGRESS		
GOAL What is the impact on learning?	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	STRATEGIES What techniques will be implemented to reach the goal?	ASSESSMENT How will progress be measured?	1 = NOT EVIDENT 2 = EMERGING 3 = MAKING PROGRESS 4 = DEVELOPING 5 = ACHIEVED		
<i>One:</i>						
<i>Two:</i>						
<i>Three:</i>						



Student Name:			Grade:	PROGRESS		
GOAL What is the impact on learning?	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	STRATEGIES What techniques will be implemented to reach the goal?	ASSESSMENT How will progress be measured?	1 = NOT EVIDENT 2 = EMERGING 3 = MAKING PROGRESS 4 = DEVELOPING 5 = ACHIEVED		
<i>Four:</i>						
<i>Five:</i>						
<i>Six:</i>						



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Peggy Pelonis, Ed.D, MS, MBA, L.F.T.
President

Student Name:

Grade:

Student short term goals and vision of the student's future:

Parent/ Guardian short term goals and vision of the student's future:

Short term goals (2019-2020 school year):

Vision of his/her future:

Short term goals (2019-2020 school year):

Vision of my future:



Student Name:

Grade:

The below parties have reviewed and agreed on the contents of this ILP:

Person	Printed Name	Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian			
Parent/Guardian			
Student			
Optimal Learning Program Specialist			

The following parties may have access to this ILP:

President	
Dean of Academic Affairs and Services	
Principal	
OLP Coordinator	
Counselor	
School Psychologist	
Speech Therapist	
Occupational Therapist	
Shadow Teacher	
Educational and Diagnostic Testing Center Coordinator (in case of Shadow Teacher)	
Director of IB (in case of participation in IB courses)	
Classroom Teachers	



CONFIDENTIAL

Support Plan for
Instruction, Assessment and Accessibility
SPIAA

Student Name:	Grade:
Date of Birth:	Name of School/ Schools Attended:
Date of Issue:	Parent/ Guardian Email address:
Parent/Guardian Name:	Parent/ Guardian Telephone #:



Student Name:	Grade:
Diagnosis:	
Date of last psycho-educational testing:	Projected re-evaluation date:
Languages Native Language: 2nd : 3rd : 4th :	ESL support (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Intensive <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exited



Student Name:	Grade:
Performance in Educational Setting	
A description of the student's learning difference and its impact on educational performance:	
Strengths: <i>(academic, social/emotional, dispositional, extracurricular)</i>	
Areas to develop: <i>(what he/she does least well, what is most difficult for him/her)</i>	
Student interests and preferred learning style: <i>(what does he/she do for fun? strongest abilities?)</i>	



<u>Classroom Accommodations</u>	
<u>Area of Concern</u>	<u>Accommodations</u>

Student Name:

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- Scribe
- Reader
- Own Room
- Sit at front of room
- Allow calculator



Supervised rest breaks

the above accommodations for standardizing testing are recommendations that apply **only if approved by the external examiners.*

Classroom

- Provide information regarding accessing books on audio and other materials
- Allow access to spell checkers and / or word processor
- Alternatives to note taking (use device to take picture, print teacher notes from moodle)

Directions:

- Written directions in addition to oral
- Demonstrate/ Model
- Repeat and check for understanding
- Visual or non-verbal signals cues to check for understanding (specify)

Instruction:

- Visual graphs / charts / organizers / diagrams to support instruction
- Multi-sensory instructional methods / differentiated instruction specific to this student

Peer Involvement:

- Peer tutor
- Cooperative learning opportunities

Classroom Assignments / Homework:

- Frequent work breaks
- Word processor with spell-check
- Word processor without spell-check
- Calculator
- Extended time to complete long term assignments (**must be arranged with the classroom teacher and OLP Specialist three days before deadline with a specific and up to three days extension due date**)
- Allow extended time for in class assignments
- Simplify complex directions
- Pair written instructions with oral instructions
- Develop private signal so that student can let teacher know if repetition of instruction is needed
- Subject matter in smaller chunks
- Prioritize tasks
- Shortened assignments without compromising skill development
- Grade written work on content, not spelling, handwriting, or mechanics
- Provide distributed review and drill

Attention:

- Allow student to stand at times during seatwork
- Provide short break between assignments
- Provide fidget object for manual activity (eg. stress ball, clay, worry beads, etc.)
- Preferential seating
- Positive reinforcement for short periods of on-task behavior
- Build in opportunities for movement
- Self talk
- Visual or non-verbal cues to redirect attention



Organizational Skills

- Individualized schedule written for student
- Reminder to submit homework
- Assignment/notebook check

Behavior Management

- Behavior chart/contract
- Wait time for compliance
- Positive reinforcement
- Choices/alternatives
- Movement opportunities
- Proximity control
- Advantageous seating location
- Definition of limits/ Clear expectations
- Cooling off opportunities

Comments:



Student Name:

Grade:

The below parties have reviewed and agreed on the contents of this ILP:

Person	Printed Name	Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian			
Parent/Guardian			
Student			
Optimal Learning Program Specialist			

The following parties may have access to this ILP:

Acting President	
Dean of Academic Affairs and Services	
Principal	
OLP Coordinator	
Counselor	
School Psychologist	
Speech Therapist	
Occupational Therapist	
Shadow Teacher	
Educational and Diagnostic Testing Center Coordinator (in case of Shadow Teacher)	
Director of IB (in case of participation in IB courses)	
Classroom Teachers	



Shadow Teachers

Shadow teaching is a professional service offered to the school and family to better manage the needs of students who have more demanding learning and behavioral needs. ACS Athens facilitates the process of helping parents find the right Shadow Teacher who is knowledgeable in the specific needs of the student and provides support in the inclusive classroom environment. Shadow Teaching is a progressive form of assistance that acts as a resource for the school and the parent. Shadow Teachers are employed by the families and assist in the communication and collaboration between all parties involved. The ultimate goal of the Shadow Teacher is to guide the student towards independence in school. The Shadow Teacher helps provide the students with continuity in their classes, instills responsibility, fosters independence and encourages learning. Students who receive Shadow Teacher support are enrolled either in Full OLP or in OLP Consultation, so that accommodations and consistency is effective, efficient and well maintained by the OLP Specialist and CST.

The [Institute for Innovation and Creativity \(IIC\): Learning Enhancement Programs \(LEP\)](#), and the OLP Coordinator assist the parents in the selection process by recommending Shadow Teachers. Once these Shadow Teachers have been screened and interviewed by ACS Athens, the parents will then interview the recommended Shadow Teachers and select the one they wish to work with their child.

Education, previous classroom experience and personality traits of the Shadow Teacher are criteria which are considered. Shadow teachers are expected to continue their learning by attending workshops and seminars that focus on students with learning differences.

Shadow teachers work very closely with the Optimal Learning Specialists, as well as, with the Counselors, educators and administrators of ACS Athens.

Students requiring the level of support provided by a Shadow Teacher, must be enrolled in either OLP Class, or OLP Consultation so that close monitoring of all facets of the child's needs are ensured.

The Role of the Shadow Teacher

The role of a Shadow Teacher is to support the student in his/her school academics by facilitating the learning process, helping the student build self-confidence as well as promoting positive interaction in the classroom. Prompting the student to engage meaningfully in important concepts, and developing academic and social skills is a key area in the Shadow Teacher's aim.

Additionally, the Shadow Teacher provides additional support throughout the school day, academically, behaviorally and emotionally, to students enrolled in the OLP. The Shadow Teacher also helps the student be prepared and organized for class, helps the student with the approaches to learning and reminds him/her to be a responsible and committed student.



The student benefits from the shadow teacher because

- the student follows regular classroom instruction and interaction with his/her peers.
- the student learns to build on his/her strengths and not his/her weaknesses.
- the student receives educational enrichment.

The school also benefits by the Shadow Teacher, because there is a collaborative effort to meet the individual learning and behavioral needs of the particular student. Shadow Teachers complete Log Notes each week to address concerns and showcase progress made (see template attached). The Log Notes are shared with all members of the student's support plan and with all teachers working with him/her.

The parents benefit because they have daily communication with a professional who observes their child's educational and social experience in school and who can offer strategies on how to maintain consistency between home and school.

The role of the Shadow Teacher in the classroom is to help his/her student:

- stay focused;
- participate appropriately and meaningfully in class;
- notify the teacher if he/she does not understand the material;
- function in an environment where there are many distractions;
- provide 1-1 teaching time to ensure review and practice of concepts;
- be positive in his/her approach to new tasks; and helping him/her to gain self control;
- encouraging him/her to ask for help from his/her teachers;
- having him/her share special interests with peers;
- provide breaks during the day so that the student can regroup and concentrate better;
- helping him/her to respond appropriately to his/her classmates in social situations;
- seeing that he/she compliments his peers when appropriate;
- prompting him/her to initiate discussions with his/her peers;
- encouraging him/her to learn the interests of his/her classmates.

Every child is unique; therefore, the approach and teaching methods and techniques used by each Shadow Teacher with each specific student will differ. Shadow Teachers are not recommended, or provided, for students in the Academy.

Shadow Teachers are screened by the OLP Coordinator and the ACS Athens Diagnostic Center Coordinator. Parents are responsible for interviewing Shadow Teacher candidates and deciding best-fit support for their child. Shadow Teacher compensation is additional to OLP fees, and is agreed upon between the parents and the selected Shadow Teacher.



Consultants: Description of Services

ACS Athens cooperates closely with outside consultants to provide the absolute best support for our students.

Both the IIC:LEP /SNFLC and OLP departments work closely with Clinical Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and Behavioral Vision Care Optometrists who have been carefully selected for their expertise in their respective fields. These professionals are then recommended to families that require such services.

Clinical Psychologists: psycho-educational assessments

Psycho-educational assessments are regularly conducted for the purposes of screening for, and determining, learning challenges, placement into special education, additional need for services for students with educational or emotional difficulties, behavioral problems within the classroom, entrance into gifted or high performance programs, and interpersonal-communication difficulties.

A complete cognitive and educational assessment usually includes: interviews with student parent(s) / guardian(s) - teacher (s); a detailed report on the student's developmental history; observation of student's behavior at home/school with parent(s)-sibling(s)-peers; administering cognitive-ability functioning tests and aptitude/ achievement tests based on grade level performance; neuropsychological functioning tests; administering personality, self esteem, emotional functioning tests and student's self-report questionnaires.

Students are compared with their same culture peers as far as grade and age level performance. In addition, assessments are used for the purposes of placement decisions, intervention planning, and evaluating progress and outcomes throughout the school year.

The administration of a complete cognitive and educational assessment is conducted by an expert school psychologist and requires 4-6 hours of direct face to face testing. In addition, another 6-7 hours are required to critically evaluate, analyze, integrate, and interpret the findings, compose a comprehensive report with a diagnosis and recommendations, and give feedback to the parents and student. Potential coordination of school interventions is also offered. ACS Athens provides families with recommendations of on-site and external assessment centers.

To review, psycho-educational testing consists of a full battery of:

- A) Cognitive, such as the WISC-IV, or WJ- IV COG
- B) Achievement, such as WJ-IV ACH, or GORT, TOWL, KeyMath
- C) Supplemental tests (Conners or Achenbach for attention concerns) and Clinical Interviews the examiners use to support the above (A, B) in order to identify symptoms of possible, anxiety, depression, or other concerns.

The combination of the results from these scales will provide a full picture of your child's cognitive abilities compared to their achievement performance in school.



Occupational Therapist

The Occupational Therapy (OT) sessions range from 30-45 minutes, depending on the needs of the students and the demands of the individual academic program. The OT Specialist works with the students on many areas. These areas include gross motor coordination, fine motor skills, organization and attention skills, visual perceptual skills, praxis, self-confidence and sensory integration, depending on the identified deficit areas. The OT sessions are held both outdoors and indoors. A playground area provides for a wonderful arena to address many of these issues, but a room for tabletop activities and the fine motor/cognitive/perceptual training is also required. Some of the support provided by the OT Specialist can be done in the classroom when there is a specific need that must be addressed, otherwise OT support is provided on a pull-out basis. The OT Therapist is an external Consultant, who provides these services to students at ACS Athens during the school day.

The Speech Language Therapist (SLT)

The ability of a child to communicate effectively is critical as it impacts all areas of learning. By the age of six, it is assumed that a child has fully developed receptive and expressive language and clear speech in their native language. Hence, it is no accident that all around the world, this is the age that formal schooling commences and a child acquires academic knowledge by using his/her communication as a tool.

The role of the SLT is to assess and diagnose difficulties in the areas of language, articulation, voice and fluency. When problems exist that are not appropriate to the child's age, intervention commences. This includes both direct speech therapy with the child and collaboration with parents and teachers so that a home program can be followed.

Early identification and intervention ensures that difficulties in language and speech will not directly affect a child's performance. The SLT Therapist is an external Consultant, who provides these services to students at ACS Athens during the school day.

Behavioral Vision Care Optometrist

ACS Athens was the first school in Greece that incorporated the Vision Care Philosophy into its services. The understanding of the relationship between vision and learning is very common in many countries including the US, Europe and Australia. There are many different vision problems that interfere with the child's ability to write, read, attend and even play. Having vision care as part of the child's assessment methodology and remediation plan upgrades the services provided. ACS Athens provides recommendations for off-site Vision Therapy.



TOP 10 Parent Agreements
For the Optimal Learning Program

1. Homework is not to be completed in OLP.
2. OLP Specialists and Aides can not recommend, or communicate directly with, tutors for homework support.
3. External therapists and psychologists may not observe your child in class.
4. To enter, or continue enrollment in, OLP your child must have updated psycho-educational assessments every three years. If your child is not enrolled in OLP he/she does not have access to accommodations within the classroom and testing settings.
5. To discontinue enrollment, or to refuse the Child Study Team recommendation of entering OLP, you must sign the Refusal of Services Form and take full responsibility for your child's progress from there on.
6. Students in grade levels K-2 who have not completed a full psycho-educational report, may enter the program based on other assessments (Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Developmental Pediatrician, Neurologist, Psychiatrist).
7. OLP support systems are in direct accordance with recommendations stated in Admissions letter.
8. You are requested to attend the annual ILP review meeting (May-June) if your child is enrolled in either OLP Class or OLP Consultation.
9. Accommodations provided in the ILP are as follows:
 - Elementary- as per recommendations of OLP Specialist, Homeroom teacher and psycho-educational report.
 - Middle School: as per psycho-educational report, OLP Specialist recommendations
 - Academy: as per psycho-educational report
10. Students who are supported by a Shadow Teacher will be given the opportunity to attend school on the first day of their Shadow Teacher's absence. Depending on faculty's observations during this day and your child's ability to follow the classroom pace and show appropriate school behavior he/she will be invited to attend a second or third day. Should a second day not be advised, your child is to remain home until the Shadow Teacher is able to return to school.

Parent Name: _____ Parent Signature of Agreement: _____