



**ACS Athens**  
American Community Schools

## Message from the President



Greetings ACS Athens Community Members!

The school year ended in June with the Commencement Ceremony being the culminating event that sent off our graduates to the next phase of their lives. Immediately thereafter, we began the ACS Athens Summer Camp and the first ever Basketball Camp, which were both very successful. In early July we received the great news that our IB seniors, despite the challenges, received excellent IB Program final

results and college acceptances. We are so proud of what they accomplished! Though, no doubt, we have continued challenges, we are better able to navigate whatever changes come our way by the pandemic.

All our students have much to celebrate and be proud of as we move forward in our vision of "Empowering Individuals to be Architects of their own Learning". The lessons learned from a year gone awry will no doubt be etched in their and our memories for years to come. Hats off to students for their resilience and ability to pivot and get the most out of the online educational experience. Kudos to the faculty for their commitment to educating students holistically. Together, we are ACS Athens, and we continue to move with confidence knowing all that was accomplished and knowing which way we are heading.

We plan to come together in September for the new academic year face to face unless otherwise indicated by the authorities. I look forward to seeing our students then!

Best wishes for a beautiful summer!

Peggy Pelonis, Ed.D.  
ACS Athens President

## Message from our Board Member

On June 16th, I had the pleasure and opportunity to be present in the Annual Commencement Ceremony of the 2021 graduating class. In one short sentence - what a beautiful evening it was!

On one hand the inspiring speeches of the guests of honor and our teachers saluting our new graduates as citizens of the world; and on the other hand the amusing speeches of the Salutatorian and Valedictorian with the call to respond to the new challenges before us. Both speeches being good examples of the strong characters, wholesome personalities and talents of the entire class!

The epitome of an almost endless list of successes were the achievement of the highest ever IB scores thus providing multiple university opportunities for our graduates to study abroad.

In closing, I should not forget to mention the professional appearance and live performance of the student jazz band that really took our hearts with their melodies!

On behalf of the ACS Board of Trustees, I would like to add my congratulations and wish our 2021 graduates the best in their personal and professional lives.

Pascal Apostolides  
ACS Athens Board of Trustee member  
Secretary of Executive Committee



## News & Events

### IB RESULTS 2021

Congratulations the Class of 2021 for an excellent performance in their IB scores:

- 100% success (all students passed)
- Highest diploma score 45 (two students)
- 100% of our students scored above 30
- 47% scored above 40
- Average ACS Athens score was 38 with the Median being 39

Congratulations are also extended to the faculty, for their commitment and diligence in teaching and guiding the students. Kudos also to the entire support team of professionals and staff. The worldwide average has risen this past year due to the dual route option. Our students met and surpassed the worldwide scores and we are extremely proud of each and every one of them.

### 2021 Senior Class Commencement and Middle School Graduation

The 2021 Senior Class Commencement speakers and honored guests were: Geoffrey J. Pyatt, US Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic and Sebastian Bellin, Athlete/Entrepreneur. Mr. Demetri Paneras, parent and US Board of Trustees member was the Middle School graduation speaker.

### Enrollment

New student enrollment is continuing as students seek admission from many countries across the globe.

### New Faculty Orientation Program

The New Faculty Orientation Program has been revised and upgraded, with the goal being to help new hires transition smoothly to ACS Athens.

### New Members in the ACS Athens Family

A new Middle School principal and three faculty members were recruited and hired from the U.S., as well as the new IB/AP Director.

## College Acceptances

The college/university acceptances for the 2020-2021 academic year are noteworthy. Early decision acceptances to institutions in the United States include: Brown University, Georgetown University, New York University, Northeastern University, Roger Williams University, Seton Hall University and Stanford University.

We are proud to announce that a total of \$916,000 in college/university scholarship funds were granted to graduating seniors.

## President Collaborations

### President collaborations with leaders from the following organizations:

- The Educational Collaborative for International Schools (ECIS)
- Near East South Asia (NESA)
- Mediterranean Association of International Schools (MAIS)
- National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)
- Academy for International School Heads (AISH)
- The Advancement of International Education (AAIE)

Other USA acceptances include: Colorado State University, Dartmouth College, Drexel University, Florida Atlantic University, Rutgers University - New Brunswick, San Diego State University, University of California Santa Barbara, University of Massachusetts Boston, and more.

United Kingdom offers: Imperial College London, Kingston University, London School of Economics (LSE), Manchester Metropolitan University, King's College London, Royal Holloway, University College London (UCL), University of Bath and more.

Other countries: Bocconi University/Italy, Delft University of Technology/Netherlands, IE University/Spain, St. Louis University, Madrid/Spain, University of British Columbia/Canada, University of Hong Kong, University of Toronto/Canada, and more.

[https://www.acs.gr/existing\\_students\\_college\\_guidance\\_college\\_acceptances/](https://www.acs.gr/existing_students_college_guidance_college_acceptances/)

## Fundraising

A fundraising strategy has been developed and a Committee consisting of Board of Trustees members, parents, and other ACS Athens community members has been put in place. We will be informing the ACS Athens community of the details in the weeks to come.

## Global Discussion Panel

ACS featured the first Global Discussion Panel: The Future of Education including university presidents and area leaders internationally.

[bit.ly/3BhDUjs](https://bit.ly/3BhDUjs)

## Re-Accreditation

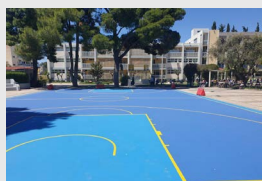
We have commenced to the next cycle for re-accreditation, using the "Sustaining Excellence Protocol". The ACS Athens Self-Study and approval of the Action Research proposal are currently being developed. The Standards review by MSA will take place in December of 2021.

## ACS Athens Virtual Courses

There are 28 ACS Athens virtual courses now available to ACS Athens students as well as students in the general public. Approximately 50 students have been enrolled this year in virtual courses. We have 3 virtual AP courses, AP Environmental Science, AP Calculus, and AP German. Four English language acquisition courses have been developed for students from abroad. We have developed the Greek language and culture program, consisting of five courses. The Summer Learning Enhancement program, includes IB prep courses (10th-11th grades).

## Facilities

- We collaborated with the local police department to install flashing lights and designate 'school' signs by the back entrance of the school (Garitou) for safety.
- A fake green leafy type curtain/cover was installed on the back gate by the soccer field to protect students from passersby.
- The newly purchased land was developed into a playground.
- The landscaping in the front of the Annex is in progress, including new playground equipment.
- The basketball area in front of the campus has been renovated and new basket ball courts installed.
- The volleyball courts in front of the campus are being renovated.



## Invitations to the President

- Chapman University to teach in the Education Master's program for teachers;
- To Join the Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce Education Committee;
- To Present at the ECIS Leadership Conference: Diversity and Inclusion;
- To be Country Chair of the Global Acceleration Summit (Ideagen and LinkedIn TV);
- To join the Office of Overseas Schools task force for a social emotional school curriculum;
- To present a workshop on Leadership in a Conference for professionals in Bratislava Slovakia;
- To lead and participate in the following panels: Cloud, AI and Innovation, Sustainable Development Goals, A Red & Blue Discussion on Democracy, Dynamic Resiliency Summit, Sustainability Summit.

## President Focus Groups

President focus groups with faculty, parents and students took place throughout the year, providing valuable information regarding programs.

## Alumni

Several meetings with alumni took place this year to connect and invite alumni to participate in a variety of projects. The current alumni platform is being evaluated and will be upgraded in the very near future.

## PTO

The PTO, in collaboration with the ACS Athens President developed a Buddy Program to connect incoming families with veteran families.

## President in the News

### Interviews with:

- Education Weekly, USA
- National Herald, USA
- Hellenic News of America, USA
- Greek of the Week interview, USA
- New Greek TV, USA



## President Recent Publications

- **Fall 2020** - International School Journal. Article: "Four Pillars Suggested as Necessary to Develop Conscious Young World Citizens" [bit.ly/3zfVwKO](https://bit.ly/3zfVwKO)
- **April 2021** - authored book chapter: "A Holistic Educational Philosophy embodying Conscious Citizenship; Transforming Mindsets from Action to Being" [bit.ly/2VPPrejp](https://bit.ly/2VPPrejp)
- **April 2021** - authored book chapter: "Courageous Leadership; Transitions to Sustainability by Empowering Institutional Excellence" [bit.ly/2VPPrejp](https://bit.ly/2VPPrejp)
- **April 2021**: Co-authored book chapter: "One School's Transition to Online Teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic; A Pre-Planned Necessity and Lessons Learned" [bit.ly/2VPPrejp](https://bit.ly/2VPPrejp)

## Faculty Development

- This year faculty development continued and reached an all-time high;
- A Professional Development committee to coordinate PD was assigned;
- Faculty JK-12 were continuously trained in developing synchronous and asynchronous teaching methods;
- Elementary school faculty was trained to teach online;
- Faculty K-12 continues to be trained to conduct Action Research and on being Reflective Practitioners;
- Thirty-five ACS Athens faculty/administrators/professionals authored chapters in a premier reference book, Handbook of Research on K-12 Blended and Virtual Learning Through the i2Flex Classroom Model. The book was launched in April 2021 and is included in many libraries across the globe, including Stanford University;
- Numerous faculty and professionals participate(d) in conferences including: NESA, MAIS, NAIS, ECIS;
- Administrative Assistants were trained in the latest technology tool use;
- Six faculty authored articles in professional journals.

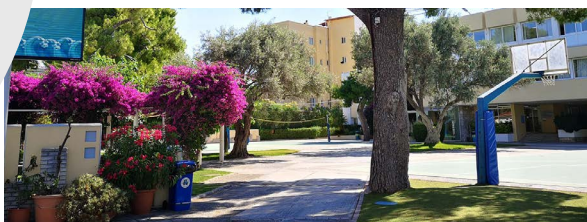
## Media Program

The new Media program curriculum includes a Film/Journalism class. Students have the opportunity to learn journalism, production, editing and publishing. For the first time ever, we have entered a media competition.

<https://www.studenttelevision.com/convention.html>

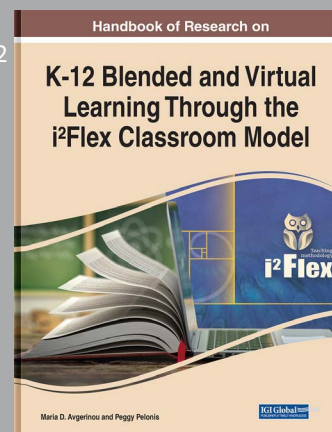
## Expansion of Library Resources

Approximately 2000 books and magazines are now available online and accessible for free to Middle School and Academy students, faculty and staff. As for magazines, we have all the issues published in 2019, 2020 and 2021 (to date) of National Geographic, New Scientist, Harvard Business Review, Time Magazine USA and International, The New Yorker, The New York Review of Books, The Smithsonian Magazine and the Economist.



## School Wide Faculty/ Administration Publication

Handbook of Research on K-12 Blended and Virtual Learning through the i2Flex Classroom Model. A premier reference book published by IGI Global and housed in libraries across the world.



## Education of Purpose Framework

- Understanding the 'why' of education and developing purposeful living that encourages ethical decision making, intentional living practice and action for social impact is in process.
- Students, through continuous self reflection, inquiry and ethical decision making, determine their own purpose and make decisions that ultimately impact society positively and contribute to the sustainability of the planet.

## Student Research, Development and Publications

### Development of a Research Lab for Students.

Following are some of the developments to date: teachers-supervisors meet with the spACS students virtually every week since the school's closure (separately for spACS 1 and spACS 2). They are working on a few articles (spACS 1 physics, spACS 2 physics, spACS 2 chemistry, spACS 2 educational, spACS 1 & 2 engineering) and plan to begin working on at least two more articles on spACS 1 educational, spACS 2 educational. There are also two alumni from the Class of 2019 working with the group. Articles will be published in professional journals.

## Strengthening the Math Curriculum and Math Experience

A framework to strengthen math skills is being developed across the schools. Students will be encouraged to take part in national and international math competitions, such as the Kangaroo competition for ES students, where a number of our students were awarded.

## Acceleration Summit 2021

A panel discussion on how Cities and Countries across the world are addressing sustainability

**Peggy Pelonis**, ACS Athens President  
**Sofia Kouvelaki**, CEO of the HOME Project  
**Jeff Levett**, Gusi Peace Prize recipient  
**T.S. Powdyel**, Former Minister of Education, Bhutan  
**Sebastien Bellin**, Entrepreneur

## ACS Athens Summer Camp

The ACS Athens Summer Camp, after a year's absence due to COVID-19, took place and once again our campus was full of energetic young participants! For two weeks we hosted more than 375 young children in total (4 - 14 years of age) and many activities were offered for various interests!

More than 45 staff members and 25 student volunteers per week collaborated to provide a top quality summer program. All safety and COVID-19 protocols were followed, as safety is always of the utmost importance for us and our community!

We look forward to next year's summer camp!

Guest speakers, former and current professional and national team basketball players visited our camp to talk to the young participants, signed autographs and took photos with them! They were all inspirational and certainly made an impact on their young audience!

Experienced and known coaches were the driving force of the camp: Ms. Constantinides with Vaghelis Ziagkos, Dimos Dikoudis, Costas Telakis and Chris Stachikas joined forces in order to provide a quality program!

## Parent/Student Well-Being

The well-being of our community members is foremost on our mind; particularly our students. Please know that there are numerous support systems in place:

### For Students:

- Individual counseling/psychology sessions;
- Group counseling/psychology sessions;
- New student welcome meetings (ongoing);
- Monday counselor open spaces;

- Planned lunch meetings with Principal and Vice Principal.
- Clubs and activities;
- Child Study Team meetings (when there are concerns).

### For Parents:

- Partnership for Success Series;
- Wellness sessions;
- Consultation sessions with counselor/psychologist;
- ACS Athens CARES Newsletter.

## Our Mission Statement

ACS Athens is a student-centered international school, embracing American educational philosophy, principles and values. Through excellence in teaching and diverse educational experiences, ACS Athens challenges all students to realize their unique potential: academically, intellectually, socially and ethically — to thrive as responsible global citizens.

## Our Vision

Empowering individuals to transform the world as architects of their own learning

## Our Beliefs

We believe that:

- ACS Athens is a student-centered institution in

the pursuit of academic excellence, building upon each student's unique talents and abilities.

- Student learning is a shared responsibility of the student, the school and the family.
- Students learn and develop best in an environment of cooperation, belonging and trust.
- Diversity takes many forms and that respect for and acceptance of diversity is a source of richness in our community.
- Possessing a strong sense of civic responsibility and an ethic of service is fundamental to effective global citizenship.
- Education exists to promote intellectual, emotional and physical wholeness and ethical decision-making.
- Our community exists to provide opportunities for all of our students to reach their full potential.
- Learning is a life-long process.

## ACS Athens Tennis Camp

The ACS Athens Tennis Academy is hosting the "High Performance Tennis Camp" over a period of five weeks during the summer (June 22-July 23). This camp focuses on athletes participating in National Tournaments; they train and work intensively on individual technical and tactical aspects to improve their tennis game. Emphasis is also placed on the coordination, conditioning and psychological components of the athlete's profile. We have a total of 14 tennis players joining and the ACS Athens Tennis Academy coaches are responsible for the implementation of our "high performance" program.

## ACS Athens Basketball Camp

The ACS Athens Basketball Camp took place this year for the first time! Forty children aged 8-17 years old joined us to learn the basic fundamentals of the game, but also to have fun through the sport of basketball.

## Technology

- A new technologically advanced phone system has been installed (thank you to our Donor: Danaos).
- Online teaching practice has been improved by replacing the BBB with Zoom in Moodle.
- A new, more user-friendly website has been developed.
- A platform for donations has been developed.
- A new platform for alumni outreach is being researched.
- Each school now has its own server (expansion).
- The ES is now also supported by the SEESAW platform (child friendly).
- New subscriptions for educational technology tools include:
  - STARFALL – ES computer lab
  - CHOOSITO – ES computer lab/ MS EFL/ESL
  - SPLASH MATH- ES Computer lab Mathematics – ES computer lab
  - LEARNING A-Z (consists of reading A-Z, Raz kids, EII Edition) – ES
  - MOBY AX (ULTRA PACK)- grades 4 & 5
  - BRAINPOP- ES/MS
  - FLOCABLARY – MS
  - GLOGSTER – MS/Academy German
  - STORYBOARD- MS/Academy German
  - QUIZLET – MS/Academy Spanish
  - SENOR WOOLY –MS/Academy Spanish
  - INTHINKING – Academy Math
  - Theory of Knowledge – Academy-Psychology & Social Studies
  - DIGITAL Theater plus- Academy-Drama
  - LABSTER – Academy Science
  - EXPLORELEARNING (GIZMOS)- MS
  - LISTEN INNOVATION INC. – MS
  - NCTM – Academy Math
  - MANGAHIGH- Academy Math
  - KAHOOT – School wide
  - PADLET- School wide