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## **School: Council of Europe, “education response to COVID-19 pandemic”. “Listen to families and civil society”**

“Times of crisis make safeguarding democracy particularly important and challenging. We reaffirm the importance of education to developing the culture of democracy”. This is an excerpt from the Political Declaration on the “education response to the COVID crisis” approved today by the Ministers of Education of States parties to the European Cultural Convention, who attended the online meeting organised by the Greek Chairmanship of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers. The Declaration highlights a number of sensitive issues, starting with the “education response to the pandemic”, in the awareness that “in times of crisis, it is particularly important and challenging” to ensure the right to education. We need to “integrate the lessons” we have learned from this time “in the pre- and in-service education of our teachers, taking into consideration the voice of parents and families as well as of civil society”. Our response should encompass “whole school, whole institution, and whole system approaches”. Indeed, just as teachers play a “crucial role”, “private providers”, too, make an important contribution, in particular the business community that develops platforms for online teaching and learning. We call on these providers to “help transform online education from experimental crisis mode to stable online and hybrid learning which respects the privacy of users”.

Valentina Bombelli