

EDUCATION IN RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES

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Russia and the United States of America have several similarities when it comes to educational policies. Both countries' systems are based on the German system of education but there are some variations made by both countries. Russia has a nine year compulsory education. Students start at age six and are finished at age fifteen. The United States requires twelve years of education beginning at age six and ending at age eighteen.

This nine year Russian education is called Basic Education and is taught in a Basic School. This is not the same in the United States. Russia's Basic School could be thought of as an Elementary School, a Junior High, and the lower level of High School combined into one school. After nine years of required education students can go to Complete Secondary schools or Professional Schools called Technikums. These schools are very similar to High School in the United States. Complete Secondary schooling lasts two years and Professional schooling lasts four years after completion of Basic School.

After Complete Secondary schooling students can enter vocational or non- university level schools. These schools provide the education to become a skilled worker at several different levels. Several careers that would be fulfilled through this level would be nurses and technicians. Non- university level schooling lasts about four years after Basic School and about two years after Secondary School.

Higher education is very important in Russia. In fact, the Russian educational system was founded with the universities in Moscow and St. Petersburg in the eighteenth century. The current universities are both public and private, as it is here in the United States. The difference between the Russian and U.S. higher education system comes with the governing body. In Russia the federal government has jurisdiction over the universities. In the United States there

are six accreditation bodies. Laws, in the United States are set forth by the federal government but they are enforced by state and local bodies.

In Russia there are four levels of universities. The first is incomplete and lasts at least two years. This occurs in the non-university setting. The second level is called Basic and leads to a Bachelor's degree after four years. The only field not included in this type of schooling is medicine. Post graduate education lasts for five or six years after secondary. This leads to a Master's or Specialist's degree. A Master's or Specialist's degree would be required for an engineer or a lawyer. The final level is the Doctoral level which lasts three years after a Master's. This degree is considered a professional research degree. This system is very similar to that of the United States with the exception of the amount of time spent at each level. Another difference is that in Russia students can not apply for advanced degrees in a certain field if their prior degree is not in the same field.

The school year in Russia begins in September and ends at the end of June. This is similar to the United States. The grading system in Russia is a system of numbers ranging from a two to a five. A five is similar to an A in the United States. The grading system is as follows: five is excellent, four is good, three is satisfactory, and two is unsatisfactory. The language used to educate Russian students is strictly Russian. This is different from the United States where there are many different languages used in some areas. Throughout Russia there are six hundred and nine public and two hundred and six private learning institutions. The Ministry of Education of The Russian Federation funds three hundred and sixteen of these institutions. The number of schools in Russia is very small considering that there are eight hundred and thirty one

schools, colleges, and universities within a fifty mile radius of downtown Los Angeles, California.

Teacher education in Russia is not very different from that of the United States. A pre-primary and basic education teacher simply has to have a non- university level education and sometimes a year at the university level. A Secondary education teacher has to have at least five years post secondary education at the University level. A higher education teacher must have post-graduate training. A specific degree is required at this level. The teachers at the higher education level are appointed by contract to their department. Tenured teachers are appointed by the University.

Throughout the past four or five years there has been a push for educational reform in Russia. This reform includes diversification, humanization, decentralization of management, and the creation of a non public sector of education. The reform is pushing the Russian education system to be similar to that of the United States and Great Britain. This reform is still in progress.

RESOURCES

<http://www.euroeducation.net/prof/russco.htm>

<http://www.euroeducation.net/prof/usa.htm>

<http://www.jamenair.com/html/USC-Info/USC.html>

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