

Plans for Standardized History Text Mulled

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Russian Historical Society has met with authors to listen to their proposals for the creation of a standardized Russian history textbook for secondary schools, a news report said Tuesday.

The Education and Science Ministry is planning to stage a competition in October, with the winner being commissioned to write the textbook, Vedomosti said.

In addition to the textbook, a standard methodology for teaching Russian history to school students will also be determined.

A preliminary list of "difficult" subjects that teachers struggle to teach includes 31 points in time spanning from Ancient Rus to the presidencies of Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin.

The new concept does not mention the Stalinist repressions of the 1930s, and recommends

that teachers interpret Stalin's role in the context of "establishing a one-party dictatorship and authoritarian rule."

The document's authors also suggest presenting the leaderships of Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev from the point of view of the reforms undertaken during that period in history.

While Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin are not specifically mentioned among the controversial subjects, the concept's authors think the current period should be explained as years of "economic and political stabilization."

Yuri Petrov, head of the Institute of Russian History, said the new concept's authors want students to form an "inner conviction" that various events in Russia's history transpired exactly as written.

Sergei Karpov, dean of the history department at Moscow State University, says history teachers should "not be afraid" to present points of view coinciding with Russia's current geopolitical interests.

But political analyst Alexei Makarkin disagrees, citing changeability of geopolitical interests and the principle of teaching Russia's history as part of global history, as supported by Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky.

The final decision on the new approach to teaching history in Russian schools will be made by the presidium of the Russian Historical Society, which is chaired by the State Duma Speaker Sergei Naryshkin. It will then be submitted to a work group for discussion, before being finalized in the course of the competition.

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