

Russian Schoolchildren to Learn 2 Foreign Languages

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All Russian students will be required to learn two foreign languages before graduation, Education and Science Minister Dmitry Livanov was cited as saying by the government daily Rossiiskaya Gazeta on Tuesday.

The new mandatory education program came into effect in all Russian schools at the start of the new school year on Tuesday.

“Starting on Sept. 1, Year-Five students will switch to a new education standard where a second foreign language will feature as a mandatory element of the school program,” said Livanov.

“[Foreign language] is not simply a communication tool, it also develops children's memory and intellect,” he said.

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This is not the first time Livanov has emphasized the importance of language study. Back in 2013 he announced that starting in 2020, a state English language examination will be mandatory for all Russian school graduates.

Fifty-seven percent of Russians believe that students are overloaded with schoolwork, according to a survey published by the independent Levada Center pollster on Monday. Twenty-nine percent said that foreign languages are the top priority of Russian schools, while 51 percent said schools preferred to focus on Russian language studies.

The poll was conducted among 800 people with the margin of error not exceeding 4.1 percent.

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