



K-12 Program

Background Information

Institution: Russian Maryland Cultural Center: Matryoshka

Program address: 12101 Linden Linthicum Lane, Clarksville, MD 21029

Telephone: 443-527-4375

Web address: <http://www.myrmcc.com/>

Contact person

Name: Tatyana Baytler

Title: Director/Founder

Address: 12101 Linden Linthicum Lane, Clarksville, MD 21029

Email: RussianCenter@verizon.net

Telephone: 443-527-4375

Languages/dialects taught: Russian

Grades taught: PreK-12 and adults

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: Our program provides an enriched educational experience through the study of the Russian language, traditions, history, and through performance of choral music and national folk dance that we present to the Maryland community. We have different programs and language classes for adults and children. For example, we provide an enrichment experience for Russian children who have been adopted into American families, and to children who were born in the US and whose parents want to preserve their Russian heritage, language, and culture. We operate exclusively for charitable and educational purposes.

Our major subject is Russian language and literature (reading). We also offer a wide selection of extra curriculum such as

- Russian History
- Amazing Math
- Russian Literature
- Art
- Theater Studio
- Folk Dance
- Russian Music

Program origin: The program was founded in September 2008.

Parents

Parents' expectations for the program: Parents' expectations are that students will

- Be exposed to the Russian language
- Learn to read, write, and understand Russian
- Learn Russian traditions and history

Staff

Instructors' and administration's expectations for the program: Teachers and program staff would like the students to successfully learn Russian language skills.

Students

Students: There are 30 students in the program. The majority are first-generation immigrants. We also have children of mixed marriages, where one spouse is American-born and the other spouse is Russian-born. We also have a group of adult students who are American-born English speakers.

How the program identifies heritage speakers: Beginner students are identified through informal interviews. Intermediate and Advanced students are identified by standardized tests from Russia called *Buneeza*, which are administered to students at the beginning of the year.

Students' expectations of the program: Students expect to have fun.

Instructors

Number of instructors in the program: 5

Languages in which instructors are proficient: Russian, English

Proficiency level: Beginner level to proficient

Credentials: 1 teacher has a PhD, another is a medical doctor, and a 3rd teacher has a masters in Psychology.

Professional development opportunities instructors need: Instructors need professional development materials.

Instruction

Total contact hours per week: Students usually attend classes for 1 hour on Tuesdays or 1 hour on Saturdays. Some students attend both.

Student grouping: Students are grouped by age and skill level.

Language skills

Heritage language skills: Students gain listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

Culture

Aspects of culture taught: History, festivals, customs, arts, dance, and traditions

Kind of student identity program fosters: Students enjoy the program, and it helps build their identity as Russian speakers.

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program: Language is taught half of the time and culture the other half.

Assessment

Assessments used to evaluate students' progress: Chapter tests, final exams, and teacher observations

Articulation

Opportunities for using the heritage language and developing cultural knowledge outside the program: Students use the heritage language and develop cultural knowledge during the Russian New Year and other Russian cultural events.

What the program has in place

Financial support the program receives: Tuition and parent contributions

Assistance the program would like to receive: We would like help with textbooks and other books, rental obligations, and finding good teachers.

Special challenges

Challenges the program has experienced: Our major problem is that we have a lack of funding. Self-sufficiency (tuition and parent contributions) is not working. We should get support from the government and other support mechanisms.

We also need teachers. There is a lack of local professionals who can teach at our school.

We do not have books in the public library. There are a total of 10 books in Russian available at the library. There are also no textbooks on Russian language in the library.

We need a resource center for programs like ours, from which we can receive resources and guidance. Such a resource center can help us organize events and provide the resources we need.

Insights the program would like to share: We are planning to grow and provide a learning experience for every person who is interested in the study of Russian language and culture.