How can my child attend?

- At Turnagain Elementary, the program runs kindergarten through sixth grade. The entry level is from kindergarten through the first semester of first grade. When space is available, Russian-speaking students may enter the program at any grade if they meet certain Russian literacy criteria.
- Parent permission is required and enrollment is determined by the Anchorage School District lottery system. There are currently two lotteries a year held in March and August. For more information please visit: www.asdk12.org/choices/lottery.
- Once students are admitted into the program, there is no need to re-apply in the lottery each year. However, if a student exits the program, there is no guarantee that they will be readmitted at a later date.
- Students tend to achieve the most when families make a minimum seven year commitment to the program. This duration ensures full development of both English and Russian literacy skills.

Benefits of being bilingual

- Improves a child's understanding of his/her native language
- Increases understanding and appreciation of other cultures
- Promotes critical and creative thinking
- Increases job opportunities in many careers due to an increasing demand for bilingual skills
- Knowing two languages facilitates learning subsequent languages
- Immersion students at or beyond the 7th grade often outperform other students on standardized tests
- Gives students a head start in high school and college language requirements
- Knowing two languages facilitates learning subsequent languages
- Immersion students at or beyond the 7th grade often outperform other students on standardized tests
- Gives students a head start in high school and college language requirements

For more information please contact:
Turnagain Elementary School: (907) 742-7200
Romig Middle School: (907) 742-5200
West High School: (907) 742-3050

Brandon Locke, Director of World Languages
Tel. (907) 742-4848 • Email: locke_brandon@asdk12.org
5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd., Anchorage, AK 99504

www.asdk12.org/worldlanguages

MIR - Mission is Russian Parent Group
http://mirparents.org

Revised May 2014
Questions frequently asked

Program History
The Russian partial immersion program began at Turnagain Elementary in 2004 and is the newest immersion program in the ASD – and one of the first Russian immersion programs in the nation. The program continues through Romig Middle School and West High School. The first group to graduate from this K-12 program will be the senior class of 2016. The program has a current K-10 enrollment over approximately 350 students.

What is Immersion?
Since the inception of French language immersion programs in Canada close to 50 years ago, countless research has been conducted showing the success and benefits of immersion education. Immersion differs from traditional instructional approaches in which second languages are taught as separate subjects, in isolation from core content. Immersion refers to learning core content through a second language. As a result, students not only master subject area content, but also become bilingual when doing so. The Turnagain program is a Partial Immersion Program, where students are immersed in Russian for half of the school day at the elementary level, and for one or two class periods at the secondary level.

What are the goals of an Immersion Program?
• Developing a high level of proficiency in the target language
• Developing positive attitudes toward those who speak the target language and their culture(s)
• Developing English language skills commensurate with expectations for students’ ages and abilities
• Gaining skills and knowledge in the content areas of the curriculum in keeping with stated objectives in these areas

To ensure student success, parental support is a key element. Because this is a K-12 program and involves the unique challenges of learning in two languages, it is critical that parents understand the program, support its goals, and make a long-term commitment to its philosophy.

Curriculum
Students in the Turnagain Russian Immersion Program learn the same ASD adopted curriculum as students in the English-only programs. At the elementary level students have two teachers; one for each language. They work as a team to integrate the required subjects: math, science, social studies, and English language arts. In addition, students also learn Russian (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). For example, the Russian teacher may teach science, social studies, and Russian language arts while the English partner teacher teaches English language arts and math. Subjects taught in one language are not repeated in the other language; however, teachers are able to complement what each other is teaching, showing connections and providing clarification when necessary.

At the middle school level (grades 7-8), students attend two classes daily: a Russian language arts class and social studies. The curriculum is integrated and students learn social studies themes while reading authentic Russian texts and refine their writing and grammar skills. The content of the social studies classes mirrors that of traditional, non-immersion social studies content. At the high school level students attend one class per day.

What is the ASD Language Immersion Completion Cord?
Students who complete the immersion program in their senior year earn the ASD “Language Immersion Completion Cord” to wear at the West High School graduation ceremony. Our first graduating group will be West’s Class of 2016.

Benefits of learning Russian
• Russian ranks among the world’s 10 most widely spoken languages. Russian is not only the primary tongue of Russia itself, but also numerous former Soviet republics. Learning Russian opens the door to understanding and communicating with citizens of other nations and cultures.
• Russian is considered a “critical need foreign language” by the National Security Language Initiative, a plan set in place by the U.S. government to expand language education in K-16 educational institutions.
• Russian is a world business language that few Americans speak. In the world, Russian is spoken by over 275 million people as a native or second language. Russian will continue to be a valuable language skill in the ever-expanding global marketplace.
• Learning the Russian language gives insight into Russian and other Eastern European cultures.
• Russian is one of the six official languages of the United Nations.

Course descriptions

Russian Immersion Language 7
Students will increase and refine their communication skills in Russian through conversation, vocabulary building, grammar, composition, and appropriate Russian literature and related authentic texts.

7th Grade World Geography
Students will learn the same content as the ASD seventh grade social studies program, which includes Alaska and world, physical and political geography, and people and their relationship to their environment.

Russian Immersion Language 8
Students will increase and refine their communication skills in Russian through conversation, vocabulary building, grammar, composition, and appropriate Russian literature and related authentic texts.

8th Grade U.S. History
Students will learn the same content as the ASD eighth grade social studies program, which includes historiography and American history themes.

9th Grade: Sovremennaya Molodyoj’ i kul’tura (Contemporary Youth and Culture)
The focus is to advance students’ language skills and content knowledge through themes of interest to young people. Through in-depth thematic study, students will compare and contrast various aspects of the Russian-speaking world with their own, and in turn, gain a better understanding of themselves and the world in which they live. Themes include family life, youth cultures, leaders and heroes, and multiculturalism and society.

10th Grade: Vzgla’d na Rossiju cherez literaturu i SMI
(Perpectives on Russia through Literature and Media)
The study of Russia and its people, improving Russian language skills and content knowledge through themes that are aligned with Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate. Students will further develop their Russian literacy skills using authentic literary works and media to include advertising, magazines, newspapers, and film.

11th Grade: AP Russian Language
The goal of this course is to prepare each student to take the annual AP Russian Language Exam. Designed to provide students with an opportunity to develop their proficiency skills in comprehension, reading, writing and speaking at a much higher level, students will be challenged with written essays, impromptu and planned oral presentations, readings of a variety of texts and listening and viewing comprehension of oral texts.

12th Grade: Rossia i Alyska: Istoricheskiye syvazy (Russia and Alaska: Historical Connections)
Through advanced study of Russian, students will explore three unique aspects of history, and examine the similarities and connections of the lives, customs, and cultures of northern peoples. The focus is to improve language skills and content knowledge through themes that are aligned with AP and IB courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>11th Grade</th>
<th>12th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Youth and Culture</td>
<td>Perspectives on Russia through Literature and Media</td>
<td>AP Russian Language</td>
<td>Russia and Alaska: Historical Connections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>