**Russia**

**COUNTRY OVERVIEW**
CAPITAL: Moscow
POPULATION: 140,041,247
ETHNIC GROUPS: Russian (79.8%), Tatar (3.8%), Ukrainian (2%), Bashkir (1.2%), Chuvash (1.1%), other/unspecified (12.1%)
LOCATION: Northern Asia (the area west of the Urals is considered part of Europe), bordering the Arctic Ocean
CLIMATE: Ranges from steppes in the south through humid continental in much of European Russia; subarctic in Siberia to tundra climate in the polar north; winters vary from cool along the Black Sea coast to frigid in Siberia; summers vary from warm in the steppes to cool along the Arctic Coast
RELIGIONS: Russian Orthodox (15‐20%), Muslim (10‐15%), Other Christian (2%)
LANGUAGES: Russian; many minority languages

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**
TEACHING STYLES - Teachers often lecture and are strict, while classes are teacher-fronted with high levels of formality. It is often required for students to give oral presentations.

LEARNING STYLES - Many changes to the overall learning system have begun to abolish the customary rote learning style. Asking questions of teachers was traditionally discouraged, but that is changing. Oral exams and presentations are heavily emphasized, and there is occasional group work.

**INSTRUCTIONAL SETTING** - In the past, classrooms were characterized by formality, limited self-expression, and the pressure to do well on both children and parents. Today, innovation, experimentation, and openness are advocated in Russian classrooms.

**DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT** - Students highly respect their teachers. They may not talk while the teacher is talking, therefore they will raise their hands when they have questions.

**EDUCATOR-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP** - Relationships are cordial but formal. Teachers are respected in their authority and tend to be strict. Some younger teachers encourage students to think for themselves and encourage discussion.

**STUDENT-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS** - Students form very close relationships that will often remain throughout their school years.

**POLITE/IMPOLITE TOPICS/BEHAVIORS** - Russian history, politics, culture, society, traditions, and accomplishments of Russians are all welcomed topics. Russian hosts are likely to make a toast, and may expect their guests to do the same. If a guest were to refuse or fail to attempt a toast without trying, it would be considered rude.

**All information from the “CIA World Factbook” and “Understanding Your International Students: An Educational, Cultural, and Linguistic Guide” (October, 2010)**