



Manitoba Parents *for* Ukrainian Education

Англо-Українська Двомовна Програма
English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program
30 Year Anniversary
1979-2009

Did you know that in 1979, the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program (EUBP) began in Manitoba in 5 schools and has now expanded to 12 schools in 6 school divisions from grades K to 9?

Our Ukrainian community is very fortunate to have schools located in Winnipeg, Oakbank, East Selkirk and Dauphin, teaching our youth the Ukrainian language, culture, the arts and traditions along with the regular public school system curriculum.

It all started back in 1978 when some parents decided to petition the government to develop a heritage language bilingual program. There was a lot of hard work in order to make their dream of an English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program come to life. In the spring of 1979 a small group of educators, six teachers, two who continue to teach in the program today, and a Ukrainian language consultant met for the first time in an office at the Department of Education Building on Portage Avenue to prepare for the first English-Ukrainian Bilingual teaching year.

The pilot program of 1979 to 1982 was a success and the program grew to where it is today, which include the following schools:

- Ralph Brown Elementary School, R.F. Morrison Elementary School, Springfield Heights Elementary School, Bernie Wolfe Community School, H.C. Avery Middle School, Chief Peguis Junior High School, in Winnipeg,
- Oak Bank Elementary School and Springfield Middle School in Oakbank,
- Smith-Jackson Elementary and Mackenzie Middle School in Dauphin, and
- Happy Thought and East Selkirk Middle School in East Selkirk.

The EUBP is more than a language program with the following characteristics:

- This program is open to everyone. Students are not required to come from a Ukrainian background to enrol.
- The program is approved and monitored by the Manitoba Department of education.
- It brings together children and their families in a unique community setting.

The Program offers:

- an energetic and talented school staff
- an active and involved parent body
- development of an appreciation for cultural diversity in Canada
- exciting cultural experiences including Pysanka workshops, St. Nicholas concerts, Christmas Eve dinners, Koliada, Malanka, Hahilky, Easter Breakfasts, Camp, inter-English-Ukrainian Bilingual school field trips

Another interesting aspect of this program is how it allows children who have recently immigrated to Manitoba, to integrate into Canadian society. EUBP classrooms provide an environment:

- which allows children who are new to Canada to thrive,
- where they learn English quickly while having the comfort of a common cultural environment within the classroom, and
- where non-English speaking parents can communicate with the teachers in Ukrainian.

Without a doubt this is a special educational environment, where children have the chance to thrive in the public school system while extending their language capabilities and cultural awareness. Even French is a component of the learning! The result of this heritage language program is that it:

- promotes self-esteem
- enhances personal and cultural identity
- provides for better communication and problem-solving skills
- expands cultural, economic, educational and professional opportunities
- prepares for living and working in cross-cultural environments
- provides the opportunity for Manitoba students to study other languages in addition to English and French
- has been proven by research to stimulate the brain and has been linked to stronger Math and Science scores in later grades

We are truly indebted to the parents and educators who had the dream to begin the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program here in Manitoba. It has provided thousands of children in this province with a truly unique opportunity to learn and grow.

We are looking for all EUBP alumni, students, teachers, administrators and educational assistants, to invite them to our upcoming celebrations. If you know of a past graduate, please provide us with their contact information. Please call Manitoba Parents for Ukrainian Education at 942-5405 or email us at mpueinc@mpue.ca. Check out our website for more information about our 30th Anniversary Celebrations!



*Taken during President Yushchenko's visit in May 2008 showing hundreds of our EUBP students.
Photographed by A. Sikorsky*