

## **Help Sheet to Design a Tour for a Group Interested in Education**

### **The basics:**

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have only been independent since 1991. Before that time, they were under the Soviet Union and subjected to a Soviet style of education. Russian was the main language of instruction, and the Kazakh and Uzbek languages (both Turkic languages) were written in a form of the Cyrillic alphabet used in the Russian language.

Since 1991, there have been great changes in the official languages of each country – as well as the language of instruction in schools. In addition, both Central Asian countries have become directly involved in world trade and ties to the West and China. This situation has caused great changes in the school systems of both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

### **How to research the topic:**

Look up education and schooling in each country – and look up changes in language of instruction as well. Consider what the languages are used (in which alphabets) for which subjects, how many years of schooling is required, what subjects students study at different grade levels, and how students get into/funded to attend universities. Consider what changes have occurred since the fall of the Soviet Union.

### **Planning your itinerary:**

Plan your program for the school year, so that you can visit schools that are in session – but find a time that is good for travel. (You might not want to visit Nur-Sultan in January – check out the average temperatures during the winter!) Avoid any major holiday that would cause schools to be closed for some weeks. (Include in your presentation information on why you chose your dates of travel.) Plan to visit schools at different levels (primary, secondary) – and state what you would like to see/do there. Maybe find a university with English as a language of instruction and visit that too. Look into any historical museum or cultural museum that could give you perspective – or any children's center that would be of interest.

### **Travel from place to place:**

In planning your itinerary, you can take short regional flights to get to or from big cities that are far apart (e.g. from Nur-Sultan to Almaty or Tashkent). Be sure to check on Kayak.com or some other site to see if there are flights between cities that you want to visit. You don't want to waste time on travel from place to place, so find direct flights. You must somehow strike a balance in your itinerary so that your travelers can see as many places as possible but not so many places that they spend all their time traveling without enough time to see things.