

Russian Schoolchildren Forced to Send Putin Birthday Wishes On-Camera

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Social media

Children in schools and kindergartens across Russia appear to have been forced to wish President Vladimir Putin a happy 72nd birthday Monday in closely matching videos, media outlets [reported](#).

The opposition Telegram channel Mozhem Obyasnit said it found similar flash mobs on social media posts in at least 11 Russian regions. The independent news website Vyorstka [said](#) at least 30 schools posted congratulatory videos on their VKontakte social media pages.

Children were lined up to spell out the word “Putin” at a school in southern Russia’s Rostov region.

“We’re proud that the best president in the world rules over our country,” the school said.

Embed:

At least one kindergarten in the Far East Primorye region held a [lesson](#) on the president's role.

Russian schools have undergone a series of transformations since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 including through militarizing education.

Putin [urged](#) educators last week to expand weekly classes that aim to instill patriotic values amid Russia's war in Ukraine — which are called “Important Conversations” — to kindergarteners.

The Putin birthday flash mobs also come as pro-Kremlin media reported that federal lawmakers were planning to [criminalize](#) “insulting” educators with heavy fines.

Outside schools, university students in the North Caucasus republic of Dagestan marked Putin's birthday by lining up to form the word “Power.”

Pro-war bloggers [shared](#) a video of Russian soldiers loading up a multiple-rocket launcher with missiles inscribed with the phrase “For Putin.”

And around 5,000 people were [reported](#) to have stood in a formation reading “Happy Birthday, President” with red umbrellas at the VDNKh exhibition center in Moscow.

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