

Atlas Case Study: Nazarbayev Intellectual School in Nur-Sultan, IB World School

Atlas Organizes Curriculum and Supports Collaboration

Nazarbayev Intellectual School

Nazarbayev Intellectual School in Nur-Sultan was founded as Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Chemistry and Biology on September 1, 2010. A year after, it decided to pursue authorisation for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. In order to reflect the multidisciplinary nature of the International Baccalaureate (IB), chemistry and biology were removed from the school's name, and the school was renamed Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Astana (NISA for short). NIS Astana is the only school in the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools network which offers IB programmes and qualifications. The mission of the school is to develop an intellectual community where all the members in the process of their development are motivated by ethical values, intercultural understanding, and appreciation of lifelong learning. We strive to provide teaching and learning, which allows for the holistic development of the student and aims at creating a tolerant world around us.



What was the problem?

Before applying Atlas, NIS Astana used Google Drive, Team Drive type system on the school server that all relevant individuals had full access to. This was backed up regularly on the school server. There were separate folders for different departments and the whole school. Teachers used to discuss the subject curriculum, and the last versions of them were saved in Microsoft Word documents. Some teachers used to create the curriculum on Excel spreadsheets, which meant redrafting the programme every year. Clearly, it was difficult to make or add changes into the curriculum in case teachers needed updating. Teachers consulted their curriculum every day; they printed it out making multiple copies and amendments in terms of their content, sometimes dates or appointed hours of lesson topics. In that case, they had to rewrite their documents. Moreover, old curriculum types looked very primitive of several columns divided into grids in which teachers showed the lesson topics, dates, and the names of resources. Those types of curriculum did not fully map the academic year programme.

How did Atlas help?

Eventually, the administration of NIS Astana decided to use Atlas, bearing in mind the complexity of the school and its size, variety of subjects, and storage management. A number of teachers have expressed that Atlas gives them opportunities to arrange a single, unique planning format of the teaching process. When colleagues create their lesson plans, they start working collaboratively in a team, both locally and internationally. They build equal requirements for education by differentiating students' learning styles. While using Atlas, teachers quickly identify planning needs and are able to keep an eye on timing over the year – it's easy for new staff to gain an overview of the situation. Kazakh language teachers have emphasized that Atlas is a very useful platform for sharing resources with relevant teachers as it links them directly with the curriculum and the area of teaching making the planning style similar.

How did Atlas help?

I appreciate every icon and chart on Atlas. It has many prompts to develop your planning. My Atlas platform is in three languages and helps me compare IB Concepts, Inquiry part, ATL skills page, and Reflection page divided into three teaching periods. Each section is significant for a teacher to keep records. In addition, Atlas helps schools transfer programmes on to following years, which is beneficial to set up relevant modification, updating and saving the content, and develop concepts of lifelong learning processes. It divides the curriculum in every possible way and encourages teachers to collaborate and unite.

Testimony

"Atlas develops teachers' responsibilities allowing quality and quantity control of the knowledge" - Gaukhar Khalyk