

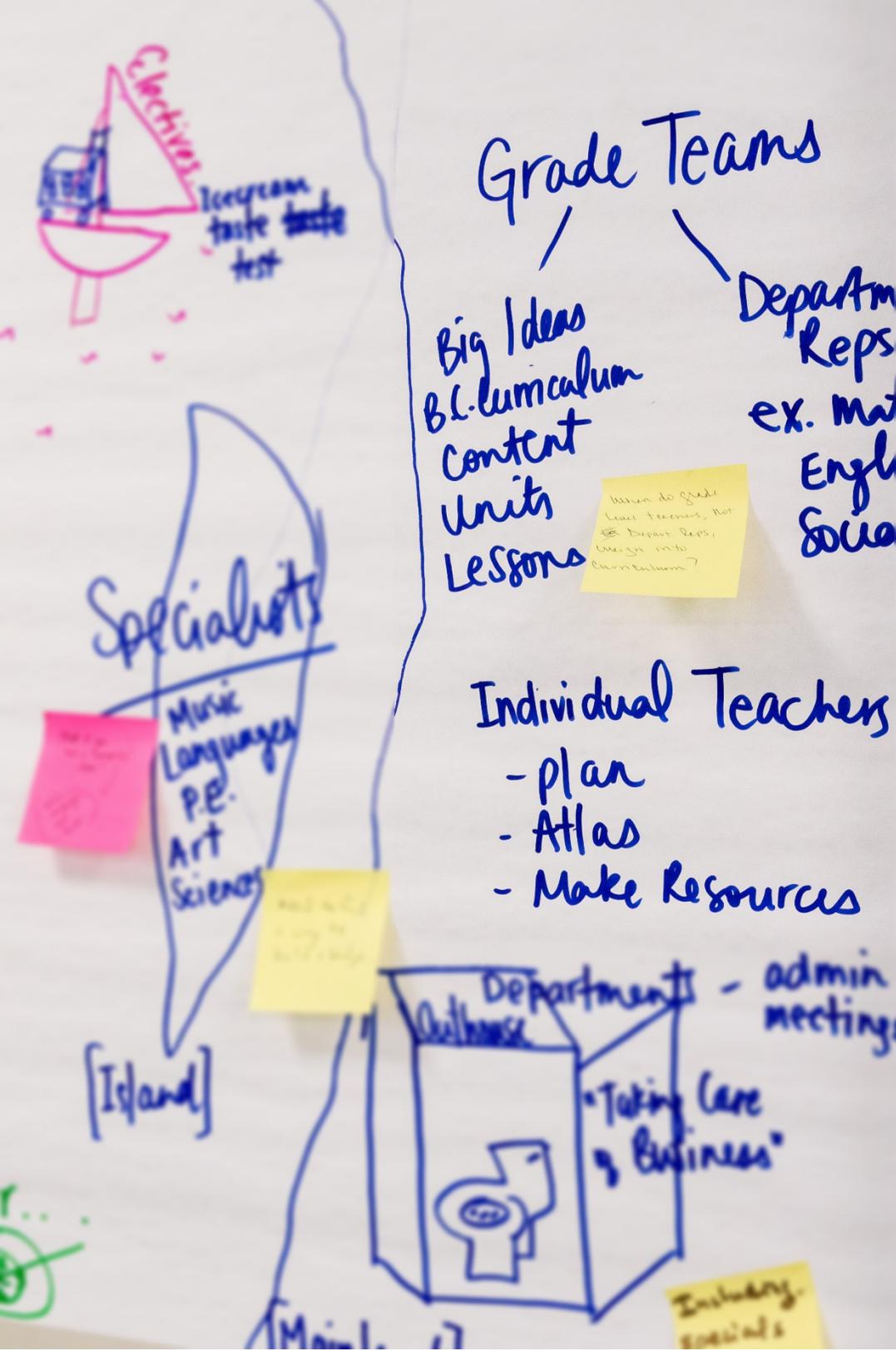
Rubicon

USER GUIDE

Building Institutional Memory with Atlas

With meeting templates, departmental resource pages, and personalized dashboards, the American International School in Kuwait (AISK) turned Atlas into a hub for all teachers' needs—curricular and beyond. In this guide, walk through AISK's documentation process for storing its collective memories and how this has a direct impact on the way school faculty engages with that information.

Written by Eliza Rothstein, Account Manager at Rubicon | 2018



When they began preparing for a reaccreditation review in 2013, AISK reflected on their then current school process by considering these questions:

- To what extent is our teaching staff involved in our school-wide decision-making process?
- How does our documentation process affect the ways in which our staff engages with institutional memory?
- How do we hold our team accountable for following through on meeting action items?
- How do we ensure that we repeat what works and adjust what doesn't?
- Are we providing adequate knowledge transfers for new hires?
- How accessible are our school-wide documents, resources, and best practice reports?

Although the school had a strong decision making-process in place, it lacked transparency and collaboration. The process also included a number of outdated resources, including hard-copy reports stored in file cabinets and old policy handbooks kept in various divisional offices.

AISK realized that their process was not operationally efficient. Using an *Excellence by Design* model, AISK created a future-focused goal: **By 2020, demonstrate a more collaborative and transparent process for developing, implementing, communicating, and monitoring organizational and long-range strategic plans.**

AISK determined that an improved strategic planning process would only come with an improved documentation system. In this guide, read three steps AISK took to build institutional memory – a collection of the lessons, units, encouraging moments, success stories, faculty meetings, and the shared experiences of those who work hard each day to meet the needs of students – in their Atlas site.

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1. Move Beyond Courses

Creating courses for different departmental and administrative groups will give Atlas users easy access to shared material. With a "course" built for each, schools can centralize material with "units" that house meetings minutes, shared resources, helpful curriculum examples, and more. AISK uses a creative method for organizing these "courses." Take a look at the various school types, schools, and map types AISK uses to organize its administrative courses.

One of these administrative templates is used for what AISK calls "Action Notes." All AISK teams use a streamlined template to document what was presented at meetings, and how action will be taken to address each agenda item.

With this streamlined documentation policy, translating meetings into action has become AISK common practice.

✉ Collaboration	
AIS Action Notes	
AIS Mission	
AIS Kuwait inspires students to become critical thinkers and contributing world citizens through rigor and balance in a nurturing educational environment.	
▼ Meeting Date, Time, and Location	Pre-Meeting Preparation Resources
▼ Attendance Roles (Chair, Recorder, Timer)	Members Present
▼ Agenda Items	Action(s)
▼ IB/MSA Standard	...
▼ Next Meeting Specifics	...

2. Invite People to the Conversation

When a school uses Atlas as a platform for school-wide strategic planning conversations, Administrative teams have reason to expand Atlas usage to teaching assistants, business staff, and operational staff. By expanding the scope of Atlas, schools encourage new and old users to more frequently access the system in order to gain familiarity with its many benefits.

At AISK, Atlas users can access meeting agendas, see which decisions were made, and view who is responsible for carrying out different tasks. With its Administrative Council Reports, AISK created a way for staff members to stay abreast of significant changes in the school.

This sample report (on the following page) outlines the Administrative Council plans to amend a meeting process. Though the report is only editable by members of a core administrative team, it is viewable on Atlas by all members of the school faculty and staff. Through Atlas, AISK personnel can leave notes and engage in discussion about the plan. By giving voice to each member of its community, the AISK administration encourages communication within these groups to share ideas, best practices, and get their questions answered.

AIS Mission

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Administrative Council Report Cover Sheet

^ Title ⓘ

Tuesday Meeting Structure

Author

Curriculum Committee

^ Purpose ⓘ

Due to changes in divisional structures and a greater focus on a variety of collaborative teams, Tuesday meeting structure is being examined and re-thought. Moving forward the Curriculum Committee would like to move forward with an updated structure to better support the needs of professional development through collaboration.

^ Summary ⓘ

Professional Development Objectives inform PD opportunities (Tuesdays and full days); however, IB Self-Study and MSA Mid-Point review will guide work to be done during Tuesday meetings (and PD days). With the move of the Grade 5 team to MS, accommodating divisional and programme needs is essential. Additionally, honoring departmental time (6 - 12 and K - 12) for full benefit.

^ Cost ⓘ

NA

Timeline ⓘ

September 2016

Appendices ⓘ

^ Recommendations ⓘ

Monthly Rotation of Tuesday meetings 2016 - 2017:

1. Divisional (ES, MS, HS)
2. PYP/MYP focused meeting
3. Departments, led by HoDs / PYP Grade Level Teams, led by GLLs
4. Grade Level Teams and Approaches to Teaching

*Self-Study focus as needed

Divisions will determine which positions are responsible for planning and leading meetings.

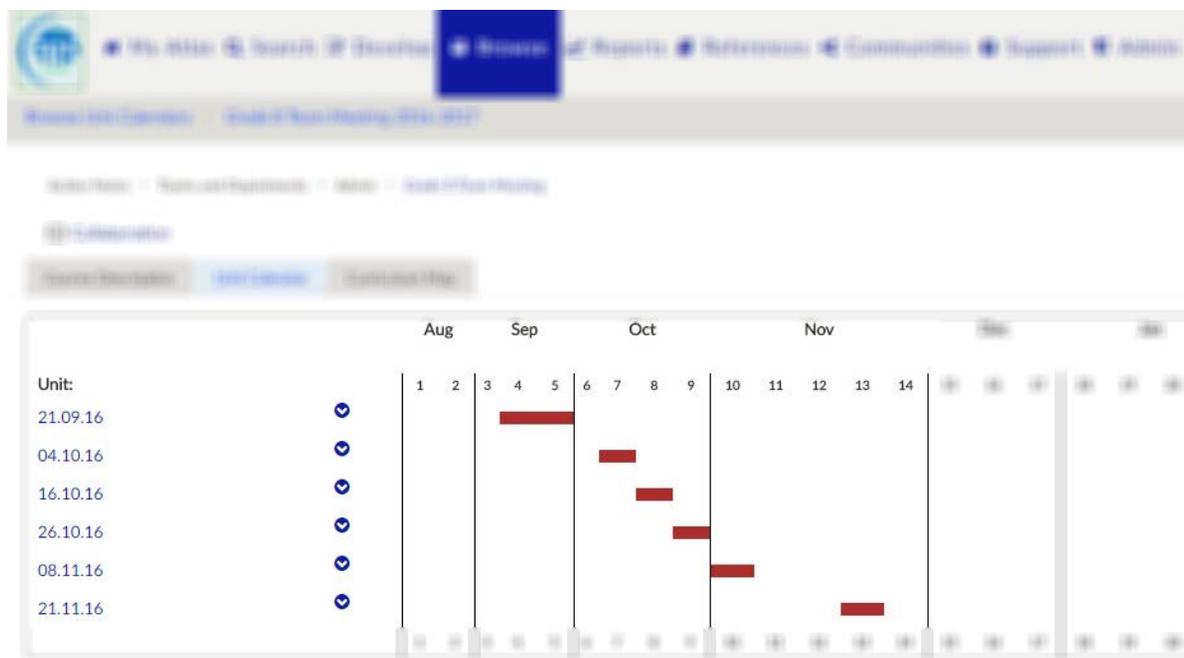
^ Communications / Follow-up ⓘ

^ Update ⓘ

3. Rejuvenate and Streamline Your Units

Update your units to capture information that will be helpful for your school's growth and curricular process moving forward. Examples might include revising the checkable options in checkbox categories to reflect new school goals and objectives or adding a new free text box to gain teacher reflections on academic units, departmental processes, or new policies. Encourage teachers to follow a "Style Guide" to ensure that the data going into Atlas is uniform across courses and units.

Consider implementing a new method for titling units that share a component in common. For Meeting Minutes, AISK follows a numbering system to title each with the date on which it occurred. This Grade 8 Team Meeting course from AISK is a great example of uniform unit titling, and creative use of the curriculum map to document department meetings.



Finally, take advantage of the Attachment capabilities of Atlas by attaching files from your computer, Google Drive, and links from the internet. Gone are the days when important resources could be found only by visiting various departmental offices and searching through file cabinets. When stored in one place, teachers will have no trouble accessing material from various individuals.

Through this AIS Tech Integration Resources course, any staff member with Atlas access can navigate to this page and take advantage of the many links and attachments related to technology integration in the classroom.

Attendance Roles (Chair, Recorder, Timer)

[Google Classroom](#)

Join the best practices sharing group:

- see Classroom from a student perspective
- ask questions of other staff members using Classroom
- share best practices
- Join code: dxw4bl

- 🔗 [Getting started with Google Classroom](#)
- 🔗 [Google Classroom Overview](#)
- 🔗 [Invite students to your class](#)
- 🔗 [Shared AIS Teacher Resources](#)
- 🔗 [Need a password reset? Contact one of these teachers!](#)
- 🔗 [Google Classroom Independent Training Lessons](#)
- 🔗 [Share Webpage to Google Classroom \(Extension\)](#)
- 🔗 [Google for Education Blog: Classroom Posts](#)
- 🔗 [Resources from Alice Keeler](#)
- 🔗 [Integration of Classroom + Doctopus + Goobric](#)
- 🔗 [Doctopus & Goobric Add-on Details](#)
- 🔗 [Google Classroom iOS app](#)
- 🔗 [Getting started with Microsoft Classroom](#)

Agenda Items

[Elementary Resources](#)

- 🔗 [Share your blog](#)
- 🔗 [ES blog directory](#)
- 🔗 [Bulk edit your blog posts from last year](#)
- 🔗 [Unfollowing a blog: Directions for parents](#)
- 🔗 [Remove followers \(parents from previous years\)](#)
- 🔗 [Seesaw Professional Development \(recorded webinars\)](#)

Members Present

[Digital Citizenship](#)

- 🔗 [Common Sense Media Curriculum](#)
- 🔗 [Dig Cit resources blog](#)
- 🔗 [Google Curriculum](#)
- 🔗 [Intro for educators](#)
- 🔗 [Secondary Curriculum: DigCit & Youtube](#)
- 🔗 [Cybersmart resources for schools](#)
- 🔗 [DigCit #whatisschool chat](#)
- 🔗 [21 Things for Students](#)
- 🔗 [ISTE Standards for Students](#)
- 🔗 [ISTE Standards for Teachers](#)
- 🔗 [ISTE Standards for Admin](#)
- 🔗 [ISTE Standards for Coaches](#)
- 🔗 [Digital Citizenship Week @ AIS](#)

Action(s)

[Training & Networking Opportunities](#)

- 🔗 [Microsoft Education Home](#)
- 🔗 [Learning Paths](#)
- 🔗 [Microsoft Education Get Trained](#)
- 🔗 [Google Apps for Education Training](#)
- 🔗 [Google Apps for Education Certification](#)
- 🔗 [Google Educator Group Kuwait](#)
- 🔗 [#AISQ8 staff on Twitter](#)

4. Provide Professional Development

In order to create a sustainable process for documenting institutional memory, schools need a supportive administrative team. Conversations around strategic planning and institutional memory are only possible when everyone speaks a common language. For AISK, that language was Atlas. [Through workshopping with the Rubicon team](#), AISK was able to provide PD to ensure that all members of the faculty and staff were fluent.

This professional development work is valuable for returning Atlas users and new users alike. In addition to PD sessions on deepening skills in Atlas, school administration can put in place easy onboarding processes for introducing new hires into the system. One way that AISK does this is by pushing custom dashboards to new users' systems. New PYP teachers receive a dashboard with quick links to PYP resources, Units of Inquiry, and departmental meeting notes. New administrators receive a dashboard with helpful reports and links to the Administrative Council shared course. In any school, but especially for international schools with high turnover rates, plans and processes must be documented to ensure that they “endure beyond the tenure of their members.”

We encourage all of our partner schools to think about ways in which you could use Atlas to support Institutional memory moving forward!