



Makassed Ali Bin Abi Taleb College



Overview

Country or Region: Lebanon

Industry: Education

School Profile

Ali Bin Abi Taleb College is one member out of many schools in the bigger family of the Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association in Beirut. It has been providing K-12 education to the Beirut community since 1951.

Number of Students: 879

Gender: Mixed

Age Range: 3-18

School Leader: [Ghina Albadawi](#)

School Website:

www.abat.almakassed.edu.lb

School Blog:

almakassedabat.wordpress.com

Makassed Ali Bin Abi Taleb College has been selected to participate as part of the Microsoft Innovative Schools World Tour for being a showcase example of the following Innovation Topics:

- 1. Project-based learning environments.** Students work in groups to solve problems, make decisions, and go on knowledge quests, while the teacher acts as facilitator.
- 2. Student-influenced learning environments.** Involving students in decisions around curriculum and culture.
- 3. 1:1 learning environments.** Students work on their own devices and can use technology at any time to access educational tools.





“The Microsoft Innovative Schools Program gave me the chance to be the leader who drives his own innovation journey through discovering and sharing best practices to a place with better communication and collaboration between students, teachers, and leaders. In fact, Microsoft technologies were a catalyst in driving the change in our classrooms and transforming it into an untraditional learning environment where the impact of our curriculum has increased.”

Dounia Badereddine, Head of Primary Division, Makassed Ali Bin Abi Taleb College

Project-based learning environments

Makassed Ali Bin Abi Taleb College (ABAT College) structures curriculum and school work so that students can use advanced technology within their projects, for collaboration with each other and with schools around the world. There is a strong focus on becoming a global citizen and students participate in various dynamic projects on the school level, the Makassed association level, and the international level.

Interdisciplinary projects are frequently created. For example, students may learn about environmental problems in Social Science Class. In Geography Class, they then compare environments from around the world. In Math Class, they analyze statistics around this topic. In English Class, they write an essay on solving environmental problems.

Lessons are extended outside the classroom by working with others on environmental projects. The students create a brochure to spread the news on the topic, work with the international community like ENO together with the World Forum Foundation in the United States. They organize environmental activities and launch awareness campaigns through projects such as Going Green, Nutrition, and Kids Read. The students found a mascot to promote environmental well-being and recorded a song which they uploaded on YouTube.

The school is part of many global projects shaping them into global twenty-first-century citizens, like the British Council's Connecting Classrooms project which offers a golden opportunity for students to interact with peers from around the world.

Also, the school is linked with St. Thomas More Catholic High School in the United Kingdom. It arranged exchange visits to plan joint activities. The result was that educators engage in projects, like the Outside my Classroom Window project, with other educators from specific countries, providing students with the opportunity to focus on descriptive writing techniques, learn to compromise, and produce work of real value for a wide audience.

Students develop life and career skills through projects such as the BBC School News Reporters, where students make their own news report for a real audience.

Students also participate in many entrepreneurship competitions nationwide, in addition to tolerance and acceptance projects, where students meet students of different religious beliefs and learn the importance of accepting others.

Key Technology

Microsoft Lync is used as the virtual classroom—to communicate within the 40 schools at the association level and to do trainings. Lync is also used to connect with peers worldwide. In addition to Lync, the school uses:

- *SharePoint for collaboration on projects in all classes.*
- *Online searching, Microsoft Word, Lync, Mouse Mischief, Windows Movie Maker, and Microsoft Publisher.*
- *Online tools such as Vimeo, Picture Trail, YouTube, Skype, Animoto, voice thread, e-books, Web 2.0 tools, wikis, social media sites, and Microsoft Photostory.*
- *Promethean technology in all classrooms, such as the interactive boards, ActivSlate, and ActivExpression.*



Many decisions are made after discussions with the students; for example, the distribution of subjects over days in first term exams. Student leadership is also encouraged through authoring of school blogs.

Key Technology

- Microsoft Publisher for brochures and newsletters
- Microsoft PowerPoint for presentations
- Windows Movie Maker for fundraising events and for use in community awareness campaigns
- Blogging is also used in addition to Web 2.0 tools

1:1 learning environments

Recently, ABAT College conducted various trainings to test the process of applying 1:1 learning throughout the school, the first of which covered Microsoft OneNote, Windows 8, SkyDrive, Kinect in the classroom, Windows in the classroom, and How to be an Expert Educator. ABAT College also plans to test Microsoft Office 365. As a result of these trainings, ABAT College will soon pilot 1:1 learning in grades 5 and 10. Moreover, the association's Educational Resources Center completed research on different published books that can be insured as soft copies and are suitable for download on students' tablets. In the next few months, there will also be workshops for other Makassed schools and different Lebanese schools to share the results of the pilot study of 1:1 computing with other colleagues in Lebanon.

Improving student outcomes

Students have greatly benefited from ABAT College's approach to innovative learning:

"Focus on student voice results in the assurance for students that school policy is a win-win policy and that their administration cares for them."

Ghina Al Badawi, Principal, Makassed Ali Bin Abi Taleb College

Student-influenced learning environments

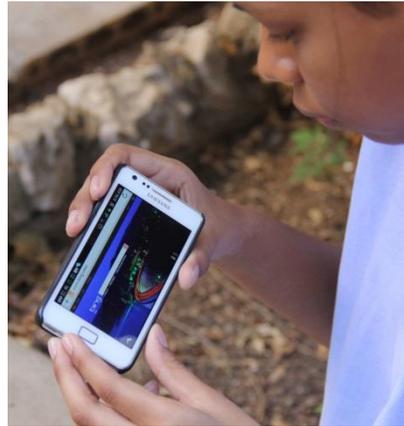
ABAT College has a deep belief in a student's right to have a voice in school life and has created various avenues for students to be involved and participate. There's a student council where students discuss their suggestions and share their concerns with the administration. Students focus on an issue that needs to be revised from the school council, build a survey around this topic, and distribute it to all school students to collect data.

Students run their international projects and programs like the "Model United Nations," a program to prepare students to become the leaders of tomorrow. They are encouraged to focus on their beliefs and drive change around topics by preparing brochures, raising awareness through social media, and distributing their brochures to other school students. Students also annually organize fundraising events to support people in need.



“It is the right of our teachers to join a comprehensive professional development program to match with this digital age, and to let them feel confident enough to use educational technology during the learning process.”

Adla Chatila, Information Technology Director, Almakassed Association



- Enhanced interpersonal skills and ability to debate; improved communication, teamwork, and sense of personal identity.
- Raised awareness to global issues and opportunity to interact with peers from around the world.
- Increased motivation to research, discuss, and share; students are more at ease using technological resources and have improved project management skills.
- Belief that they can bring about change in the world, leading to higher self-esteem.

Focus on student voice results in the assurance for students that school policy is a win-win policy and that their administration cares for them.

Driving leadership and a culture of innovation

School leaders practice transformational leadership to drive change and focus on the following:

- Seek opportunities where traditional teaching and learning can be replaced

with more modernized, interactive, and communicative interaction. They place the student at the center and use technology as a tool to achieve this goal.

- Provide the school staff with professional development centered on the most innovative teaching techniques complemented by up-to-date tools and software.
- Acknowledge positive attitude or behavior of teachers and staff members in meetings and work on promoting the core values of school.
- Create opportunities for teachers to share best practices with other teachers through assigned in-house trainings. Many teachers of ABAT College conduct workshops for teachers inside the school.

According to the school's future plan, there will be innovation in the technological infrastructure of the school and 1:1 computing in various parts of the school.





Microsoft Innovative Schools World Tour

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft in Education, visit:

www.microsoft.com/education/ww/solutions/Pages/index.aspx

For more information about Makassed Ali Bin Abi Taleb College, visit:

www.abat.almakassed.edu.lb

School Blog:

almakassedabat.wordpress.com

Technology Infrastructure

