ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Name
Brazosport Independent School District

Location
Brazosport, Texas

Enrollment
12,000 (PreK–12)

Overview

Brazosport, Texas is located on the Gulf Coast just a short drive from Houston. The Brazosport Independent School District includes 21 schools that serve over 12,000 PreK–12 students in the communities of Clute, Freeport, Jones Creek, Lake Jackson, Oyster Creek, Quintana, Richwood, and Surfside Beach.

In the 2016–17 school year, Brazosport began its EmpowerED initiative, which provided all of its 5–12 grade students with a Chromebook. One of the programs many students use on that device is ALEKS®, an adaptive, online learning program that delivers a personalized learning path for math students.
Implementation

Initially, Brazosport Independent School District purchased Texas Math with ALEKS embedded for its high school Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2 students. Immediately, other campuses—and younger grades—began showing an interest in the program.

Rachel Seymour, Math Interventionist at Clute Intermediate, was among the first to use ALEKS with 5th through 8th grade students. “I’m at a campus that is unique, because we have both 5th and 8th grade students who must pass the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) test to be promoted,” said Ms. Seymour. “So, my principal purchased standalone ALEKS for me to work with kids who were struggling. Shortly after, the district purchased ALEKS for 7th and 8th grade. Now all of our secondary students have access to it, and we’ve seen major growth.”

Math Curriculum Coordinator, Sandra Consilio has not been surprised by the district-wide interest in ALEKS. “Teachers and students like ALEKS,” she says. “Students like the goal-setting in the program, and teachers like being able to set incentives.”

Student Engagement

One of the most popular features of ALEKS is a dynamic pie chart that graphically shows students exactly what they have learned and what they have left to learn. The program can also predict with 97% accuracy what students are ready to learn next. This type of personalized information is what makes ALEKS so engaging for students.

“The teachers make pie progress posters, and the students track their own progress. The students are competing against each other to see who can complete their pie first,” says Ms. Seymour. “Once a student reaches 100%, some of our teachers have agreed to let the students throw a pie in their face. I am not that brave, instead, I have agreed to purchase a pizza pie.”

Sandra Consilio believes that seeing progress happen in real time is motivating for students. “The kids are working with what they know and building up from there instead of jumping in and experiencing failure,” says Ms. Consilio. “They know where they are headed, what they’ve done, and what they haven’t done. Their teachers may set goals, but students can move to other parts of the pie chart, which gives them a little freedom.”

Ms. Seymour adds, “With some programs, if a student isn’t on level, it’s a struggle. With ALEKS,
any growth is positive. ALEKS truly does what it advertises—it let’s them grow on their level, and it fill in gaps in their learning along the way.”

Results

Ms. Seymour points out that even though ALEKS is highly engaging, it isn’t a game. “When they are using a computer program, kids always want to know where the game is, but ALEKS isn’t really a game. What they love is being able to monitor their progress, and they enjoy the tutorials when they don’t understand something. They love using ALEKS, and they are actually learning what they need to learn.”

Last semester, secondary math students at Clute Intermediate raised their average level of knowledge by 15 points, from an average 20% of beginning knowledge to an average of 35%.

“We’ve seen major growth,” says Ms. Seymour. “Not just in the students’ levels in ALEKS, but at every level, including screener tests and practice tests. Kids who truly use ALEKS three hours a week or more have the most success.”

Brazosport Independent School District saw significant gains for Algebra retesters after the implementation, including 11% gains at Brazoswood and 28% gains at Brazosport.

STAAR TESTING RESULTS FOR ALGEBRA 2015/2016 (Retesters only)

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pass Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazoswood</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Dec. 2015</td>
<td>11% GAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazosport</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Dec. 2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazoswood</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Dec. 2015</td>
<td>28% GAIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazosport</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Dec. 2016</td>
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Ms. Seymour points to the amazing gains made by 8th graders in three of the district’s schools: Freeport Intermediate School, Clute Intermediate School, and Lake Jackson Intermediate School.

“The scores from these 8th grade math classrooms are amazing,” she says. “I can honestly say these three schools are implementing ALEKS with fidelity to supplement their class instruction and address instructional gaps. Their commitment to the program is getting results.”

Impressive gains made in three of Brazosport’s 8th grade classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Admin %</th>
<th>1st Admin %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clute</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>65.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeport</td>
<td>54.36</td>
<td>74.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Jackson</td>
<td>64.19</td>
<td>84.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td><strong>55.12</strong></td>
<td><strong>77.18</strong></td>
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Because Brazosport is a 1:1 Chromebook district, many students work on ALEKS in school, but some are also given ALEKS as homework. Those who do not have WiFi have learned they can access it on their smartphones. Ms. Consilio notes that many students are now using ALEKS to accelerate, such as 8th graders who reach 100%, and then begin working on Algebra 1.

“I have not had to do a lot to support this implementation.” says Ms. Consilio. “The kids enjoy it, and once the teachers learn how to read the reports, they rarely have questions.”
The Future

The enthusiasm for ALEKS has been district-wide, and those students who still don’t have it are already asking to use it.

“We will continue to use ALEKS for 7th and 8th grade and for the high schools,” says Ms. Consilio. “And now grades 5 and 6 are asking for it, so we will probably expand our implementation of ALEKS to include them as well.”

About ALEKS®

ALEKS® is an adaptive, online learning program that delivers a personalized learning path for each student. This robust, digital resource adapts to each student’s level by delivering periodic assessments that determine what each student is most ready to learn. ALEKS challenges students while keeping them fully engaged, guiding students on their personalized learning path, while eliminating frustration and boredom. For complete details, visit aleks.com/k12