

Implementation Strategies

Syracuse Arts Academy, Charter
Syracuse, UT

Grade(s): K – 6

Scenario: Computer Lab, Home Access

Purpose: Intervention, Special Education, At-Risk Students

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 5%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 3 hours per week, 21 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 4 (with QuickTables), Middle School Math Course 2, Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1

Julie Neilson, Assistant Principal

We were first introduced to ALEKS when we used the program with two students who had illnesses that prevented them from attending school. ALEKS provided a way for those students to retain mastered concepts from previous school years, as well as learn new concepts needed for the next grade. After seeing the progress of these two students, the school decided to implement the program in special education services, as well as with students needing Tier Two intervention. The program is easy to use for both the teacher and the student. The program provides regular feedback that encourages students to do their very best. Students' grades and confidence have improved through the support of ALEKS.

Scenario

What challenges did the class or school face in math prior to using ALEKS?

Number Sense and Operations was the area that needed the most improvement.

How many days per week is class time dedicated to ALEKS?

2–4 days per week.

What is the average length of a class period when ALEKS is used?

45 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

Students in grades 7–9 use ALEKS during their math class time in order to have their individual needs met. Students in grades 5–6 receive ALEKS through a pull-out math program that takes place every morning.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

All the students are learning standard by standard. Students are currently focusing on the area of Numbers and Operations.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

ALEKS is used during the classroom period. Students in grades 5–6 work on ALEKS for 45 minutes, Monday through Thursday. Students in grades 7–9 work on ALEKS for 45 minutes, 2–3 times a week, depending on the week.

How did you modify your regular teaching approach as a result of ALEKS?

The teacher running the ALEKS program not only monitors the program daily, but also pulls students into small groups and teaches them new concepts prior to learning from ALEKS.

How often are students required or encouraged to work on ALEKS at home?

Students are asked to go onto ALEKS for at least 20 minutes every night.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

Parents are asked to assist their students when they work on ALEKS at home.

Grading

Is ALEKS assigned to your students as all or part of their homework responsibilities? If so, what part of the total homework load is it?

No.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

It is not part of their grade but is something that is used to provide extra assistance for students.

Do you require students to make regular amounts of progress in ALEKS?

Weekly quizzes are given to help track progress.

Learning Outcomes

Since using ALEKS, please describe the learning outcomes or progress you have seen.

Students are very technology-driven at Syracuse Arts Academy. They find the program easy to use and fun. The students feel very driven to meet their goals and make progress. Students seemed to struggle most in the area of Numbers and Operations; the ability to use basic math facts in a variety of operations has proven difficult for struggling students. While we focus on all mathematical areas, we place a heavy focus on Numbers and Operations. Overall, students' classroom test scores have improved due to the use of ALEKS.

Best Practices

Are there any best practices you would like to share with other teachers implementing ALEKS?

If working with a group of 15 or more students at one time, keep them working on the same standard. This will allow the teacher to pull kids into small groups and pre-teach a concept to all the students, since all the students are on the same standard, even if they are struggling with different objectives within that standard.