

Implementation Strategies

Laie Elementary School, Hawaii Public Schools District
Laie, HI

Grade(s): K – 6

Scenario: Computer Lab, Computers in Classroom

Purpose: Intervention, After-School, Improve State Test Scores, At-Risk Students

Time Spent in ALEKS: 2–4 hours per week, 30 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 3 (with QuickTables)

Cindy Betham, Teacher

ALEKS has been an asset to supplement what is taught in the classroom. I can honestly say that my students who faithfully use the program have made gains in their classroom assessment scores. Report card marks and cumulative record entries show a pattern of consistent achievement. In our school, there are not enough computers for everyone to use whenever they want to, so the focus of the ALEKS program in our school is on under achievers. All of the under achievers who used the program made gains. The students that were not consistent in working on the program showed some gains, but not as drastic as those who used the program daily. I think if we had the opportunity to allow all of our students, no matter what academic level they are at, to use the program we would have seen some really high achievers make amazing gains. After seeing how well my students at school were doing, I went home and paid for my own children to do the program at their math level for high school. This is an excellent program! Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your successes.

Scenario

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

A lot of the students lacked basic math skills which prevented them from achieving success with concepts that required them to have basic skills already.

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

3–5 days per week.

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

30–45 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

Our ALEKS coordinator helped set up a time schedule in order to get as many students on the program as possible with our limited resources.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

If there is something that goes hand-in-hand with what I am teaching, those are the topics I have them work on the next week.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Since our lab is small, we send only the low achievers to the lab to work on ALEKS.

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

I still teach as I always have. ALEKS just gives students an extra boost to prepare them for what is being done in the classroom.

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

I don't make it mandatory, but I reward those who do it all the time. I hang a chart in the room which motivates them to show how much they have done.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

I let the parents know how much their student has done by sending home monthly progress reports. The parents get after their kids to do more on their own.

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?

It is not assigned. I encourage them to work on the program by showing them how much better they are doing overall. This makes them self-motivated to do it regularly. I think 15–30 minutes is a good amount of time per day because they have work for other subjects to complete as well.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

I have a separate report that I include along with the report card that I give to parents. Having it separate catches the parents' attention easier than if it was blended in with the rest of the grades.

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

My students know that the program is all about doing better each time, so they automatically strive to do their best and more. I keep track by recording their scores daily.

Learning Outcomes

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

My students have expressed a desire to achieve at a higher level in all academic areas because of the gains they have made through using the program. The students are always excited to see their improvement. It challenges them to try even harder.

Best Practices

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

Being consistent is the best way to make gains! Make it exciting so the kids don't think it is just another assignment that they have to do.