

Implementation Strategies

Georgia Wheeler Elementary School, Millard Public Schools
Omaha, NE

Grade(s): K – 5

Scenario: Computer Lab, Laptop Carts, Home Access

Purpose: Enrichment/Gifted and Talented, Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 20%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 5 hours per week, 300 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 3 (with QuickTables), Mathematics – LV 4 (with QuickTables), Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables), Pre–Algebra

Kate Hough, High Ability Learner Facilitator

We began using ALEKS as a trial to provide extension opportunities for gifted learners. We were very pleased with the program and adopted it for our gifted students in second through fifth grade. In a six-month time period, students spent an average of 300 hours in the program, with one student using it for over 900 hours. That's an amazing amount of additional math instruction! We love that it's an individualized program that teaches and ensures mastery.

Scenario

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

Teachers wanted an additional extension program for gifted learners.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

ALEKS is used when students test out of units.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

No.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Some teachers utilize ALEKS on Fridays during a re-teaching/extension math time. Other teachers use it when students test out of units they are working on with the rest of the class.

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

I discussed my results in my Professional Learning Community (PLC).

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

Using ALEKS at home is optional.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

ALEKS is highlighted in parent newsletters. Parents are encouraged to help students with questions as needed, but never on a test.

Learning Outcomes

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

In an informal comparison within our building of students participating in the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) two separate times in math, those who utilized ALEKS achieved four points higher on average than those students who did not. This difference equated to qualification for the gifted program for some students. The visual pie chart is very motivating for many students. They really enjoy the competition of seeing who can complete it first!

Best Practices

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

We allow for flexibility in implementation, so different grade levels embrace ALEKS in new ways. This way, the program is used for individual student needs. We then share the ideas from each grade level amongst each other.