Implementation Strategies

Washington Elementary School, Plainfield School District
Plainfield, NJ

Grade(s): K – 5
Scenario: Computer Lab
Purpose: After–School, Improve State Test Scores, ESL Students
ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 10%
Time Spent in ALEKS: 3.5 hours per week, 45 hours per term
ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 3 (with QuickTables), Mathematics – LV 4 (with QuickTables), Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables)

Frederick Cesareo, Teacher
It has been a great experience for the students and me. I like the idea that the students are able to ask questions and receive the answers instantly. I am able to see the students' progress in each of the areas, including Geometry, fractions, addition, etc. I am able to suggest areas that they need to concentrate on. My students are able to use the skills learned in the lab using ALEKS and apply them to the material covered in class. They are able to see their own progress as they complete the areas presented. They show excitement once they complete an area. It seems to serve as a form of competition when one student completes an area before another.

Scenario

What challenges did the class or school face in math prior to using ALEKS?
It was not clear what types of problems they were having difficulty with. With ALEKS, I can tell what types of problems they are having difficulty with and address them.

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

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

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?
I have students that stay in the afterschool program. I would like to implement this for the entire class but it is not possible due to the lack of computers for all of my students.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?
I start with the basic program. Students work on all the areas in order to complete the circle. If they are bored in an area, they are able to switch to another. I did see that most of the students were avoiding the area of Geometry, so I directed them to that area for a specific time.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?
We meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00–4:30 PM.

How did you modify your regular teaching approach as a result of ALEKS?
Did not have to since ALEKS is used after school.

How often are students required or encouraged to work on ALEKS at home?
I encourage them but very few of them have computers.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?
I have them come to the computer lab to observe their son or daughter.

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?
I do not, since it is an afterschool program. I do see that their grades have improved as a consequence of using the system.

Do you require students to make regular amounts of progress in ALEKS?
I have them go on the computer for a certain amount of time before taking a break. Since it is a small group, I am able to monitor them individually.

Learning Outcomes

Since using ALEKS, please describe the learning outcomes or progress you have seen.
I am able to see the students' progress in each of the areas, including Geometry, fractions, addition, etc. I am able to suggest areas that they need to concentrate on. My students are able to use the skills learned in the lab using ALEKS and apply them to the material covered in class. They are able to see their own progress as they complete the areas presented. They show excitement once they complete an area. It seems to serve as a form of competition when one student completes an area before another.

Best Practices

Are there any best practices you would like to share with other teachers implementing ALEKS?
If you have a lab and can take all of your students, this would be a great program for the whole class. It is fantastic for bilingual students since it is available in Spanish.