

Implementation Strategies

Charter School of Morgan Hill, Morgan Hill Unified School District
Morgan Hill, CA

Grade(s): K – 8

Scenario: Computers in Classroom, Home Access

Purpose: Intervention, College and Career Readiness, Enrichment/Gifted and Talented, At-Risk Students

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 25%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1 hour per week, 12 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Pre-Algebra, High School Preparation for Algebra 1, Algebra 1

Debi Hughes, Teacher

I am thrilled with the response to and the results of using ALEKS! I have seen our students gain confidence, share excitement about math, and ultimately perform better with the addition of ALEKS to our standards-based instruction. Many of our students enjoy the opportunity to work at a more challenging level on some topics, while solidifying concepts in other areas as well. It is the ideal way for a classroom teacher to differentiate instruction. It provides remediation for the struggling student and at the same time, enrichment for the advanced student, while filling gaps for all those students in between!

Scenario

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

We found that our incoming middle school students had many gaps in their foundational understanding of mathematics concepts. We were looking for ways to be able to individualize instruction, or certainly differentiate at some level.

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

4 days per week.

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

10–15 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

Our use of ALEKS is two-fold: As a supplement to what I am teaching in the classroom as well as an individualized program for either remediation or enrichment (and sometimes it is both for a student)!

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

I have found ALEKS to be of particular advantage in two instances: when students work in a clockwise manner on their individual pie, and also when a student works on the same topic on ALEKS as we have covered in class.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

ALEKS is used at home as half of the homework requirement, allowing 10–15 minutes of individualized work four days per week, and an additional 10–15 minutes focused on the specific topic of instruction from the curriculum.

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

The main modification I have made, besides mention of it to keep drawing the students to see the correlation, is in the amount of homework. I depend heavily on the access they take advantage of with ALEKS for their spaced repetition.

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

Students are required to complete 10–15 minutes of ALEKS work every Monday through Thursday.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

I have taken advantage of our Back-to-School night in the Fall to inform parents of this wonderful opportunity to bring one-on-one instruction to their child!

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?

ALEKS work is assigned as 50 percent of the homework responsibilities.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

I have altered my incorporation of ALEKS into the student grades as the year has progressed. It will now serve as 50 percent of the homework grade and approximately 20 percent of the overall grade.

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

The number of topics combined with the amount of time spent has been the criteria for measuring progress through ALEKS. More topics were required in the earlier part of the year, which has changed twice now, as most students are nearing the completion of their program.

Learning Outcomes

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

I have seen our students gain confidence, share excitement about math, and ultimately perform better with the addition of ALEKS to our standards-based instruction. Many of our students enjoy the opportunity to work at a more challenging level on some topics, while solidifying concepts in other areas as well.

Best Practices

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

Acknowledging student success and excitement for the program has spread like wildfire!