

Implementation Strategies

Ossining High School, Ossining Union Free School District
Ossining, NY

Grade(s): 9 – 12

Scenario: Laptop Carts

Purpose: Special Education, Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 50%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 25 hours per week, 250 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Pre–Algebra

Jeff Neubauer, Special Education Teacher

To date, my experience with ALEKS has been great. The ability to diversify my instruction has helped to close the learning gap. Students have a renewed interest in math, and they like the independent quality of ALEKS. I have seen students more engaged and steadily increase their share of the pie. Furthermore, ALEKS gives the special education students an outlet. They can now learn at their own pace and on their own material. Additionally, ALEKS made sure my classes were all set up, and I was ready to hit the ground running. With great support and excellent online access, I am able to easily navigate and use the more advanced features.

Scenario

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

The challenges included meeting the needs of a wide variety of students, making students feel like they are more a part of their learning, and tailoring lesson plans for different learning styles and rates.

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

5 days per week.

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

40 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

Since ALEKS is correlated to the state standards, I use it as a supplement to instruction and for homework, quizzes, and tests.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

I do cover ALEKS topics in an order. I follow our school's curriculum and use the state's topics to teach in a certain order. However, some students find it helpful to jump around once in a while.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

I have block periods, so I use the assessment information in ALEKS from the previous day to teach a lesson on a topic that the whole class is having trouble with. In the second period, I assign a topic that in ALEKS that goes along with the lesson; the students use ALEKS for reinforcement.

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

ALEKS provides me with a wealth of knowledge at my fingertips. I also use the assessment features to monitor and diversify.

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

I like to have the students do their homework on ALEKS, and I alert them to it via email. I use it two times a week in that way.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

It promotes parent involvement because it allows them to see their child's progress.

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?

Yes, most of their homework is on ALEKS.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

Right now, ALEKS is incorporated into my grading. Homework from ALEKS is worth ten percent, all quizzes and tests are worth 50 percent, and time spent on ALEKS is worth five percent. Outside of that, group projects are 30 percent and participation is ten percent of their grade.

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

No.

Learning Outcomes

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

The ability to diversify my instruction has helped to close the learning gap. Students have a renewed interest in math, and they like the independent quality of ALEKS. I have seen students more engaged and steadily increase their share of the pie. Furthermore, ALEKS gives the special education students an outlet. They can now learn at their own pace and on their own material.

Best Practices

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

I think the assessment tools in ALEKS are unmatched. It does work in minutes that would usually take hours. I use the results to design my lessons, and then use ALEKS to reinforce the lessons.