

Implementation Strategies

Florence High School, Florence Unified School District
Florence, AZ

Grade(s): 9 – 12

Scenario: One-to-One Laptop Program

Purpose: Improve State Test Scores, At-Risk Students

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 75%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 4 hours per week, 60 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1

Deanna Potter, Teacher

I have used ALEKS for the last two years, mainly with students who have not passed Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) test. It has been a great program to help those kids. Our AIMS scores were higher this last year than they were the year before! Kids told me that they felt more comfortable on the AIMS test because of ALEKS. They feel like they are getting something out of the program.

Scenario

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

While you can try to differentiate teaching, it is hard to meet the needs of all the students in your class. ALEKS does this with ease!

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?

45 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

They have to meet a minimum of minutes per day and topics mastered per week in order to receive full points.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

No.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

We do bellwork in the beginning of class. Then, students get started on ALEKS. I try to meet with about four kids per day individually to go over their progress. While I do that, all other students are working quietly with paper and pencil in order to show their work. No music is allowed since that can be a distraction.

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

This is a "catch up" class.

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

They are encouraged to work on ALEKS a lot before we take the AIMS test in October. It is tough for those students who do not have Internet.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

We talk to the parents, but they aren't really into online programs until they see how it helps their kid.

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?

Tests and quizzes, some given by me and some given by ALEKS, are 50 percent. I just let the program create the assessments as needed. Classwork which is based on their time spent and topics mastered is 30 percent.

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

Yes, I require them to complete ten topics a week and to move around the pie so that they are working on all areas. When they take the assessments, if they don't improve from the last assessment, they don't receive points.

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

Our AIMS scores were higher this last year than they were the year before! Kids told me that they felt more comfortable on the AIMS test because of ALEKS. They feel like they are getting something out of the program.

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

Set standards and stick to them. Consistently consult with the students to show them where they have been and where they should aim to go. Help them set goals for themselves.