

Implementation Strategies

Sun Prairie High School, Sun Prairie Area School District
Sun Prairie, WI

Grade(s): 9 – 12

Scenario: Computer Lab

Purpose: Credit Recovery, Summer School

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 100%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 12 hours per week, 72 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Algebra 1, High School Geometry, Algebra 2

Jessica Kachur, Teacher

ALEKS has been an overwhelming success with our summer school students. The classroom has six different levels of students in it: those in first or second semester Algebra 1, first or second semester Geometry, and first or second semester Algebra 2. Students are so excited about the program that several arrive to class early, stay over breaks, and work for three straight hours a day because they see their progress on the pie chart and feel a sense of accomplishment. Students who previously struggled with math concepts are now mastering them and building self-confidence. One student said, "I finally like math!"

Scenario

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

The students in summer school are those who failed their previous math classes. ALEKS allows them to recover their credits and also does a wonderful job of preparing them for their next math classes.

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?

180 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

We customize the ALEKS courses to correspond to the semester material each student needs to master. Each student is assigned to the semester they specifically need to make up.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

We allow students to choose the topic they want to address based on their assessment results.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Students work on ALEKS at their computers, and small groups are pulled out for targeted instruction.

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

We do much more small group work and target instruction specifically to what EACH student needs.

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

Because of the intense nature of their in-school use of ALEKS, we do not expect students to do work outside of school.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

Parents are not a major part of our program because this is our first summer using ALEKS.

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?

If a student completes their pie (i.e. masters 100 percent of the topics) prior to the end of the summer, they are given an A in the class and are allowed to take the rest of the summer off. Students who do not complete their pie will be graded based on individual progress and percentage of topics completed (a 90 percent and above is an A-, 80–89 percent is a B, 70–79 percent is a C, 60–69 percent is a D).

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

I check their progress and encourage them to make adequate progress each day. If they are completing less than five topics a day, I have a serious discussion with them.

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

Students love ALEKS and love seeing their progress on the pie chart. Students who previously struggled with math concepts are now mastering them and building self-confidence. One student said, "I finally like math!" They actually LIKE learning.