

Implementation Strategies

Bourne Middle School, Bourne Public Schools
Bourne, MA

Grade(s): 5 – 8

Scenario: Computer Lab

Purpose: RtI, Intervention, Improve State Test Scores, At-Risk Students

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 50–75%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1.25 hours per week, 37.5 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables), Middle School Math Course 2

Betsey Brosnan, Teacher

I have found the ALEKS program to be a huge asset to my remedial math program. The Initial Assessment determines what the student needs to learn, and reassessments keep the student and the teacher abreast of the student's progress. The "explain" feature is excellent; when my students discovered how helpful the explanations are, they became more independent. Detailed graphs keep the students apprised of their progress, and various reports are available and printable for sharing and analyzing data. In addition, the program is aligned with state and common core standards. Best of all, the kids enjoy using it.

Scenario

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

We had low Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores, low math grades, and learning gaps.

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?

45 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

I created a remedial program for students scoring "Needs Improvement" or "Warning/Failing" on the MCAS test.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

No.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

We alternate a full period of ALEKS with an individualized portfolio program.

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

The program is personalized for each student. I do fewer whole class lessons and mostly one-on-one instruction.

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

I always encourage them.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

Parents have access to the same data the students do.

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 base the grade on whether the student is making steady progress, making progress with support, or making little progress.

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

No. This is individualized instruction and students progress at their own pace. I adjust extra support accordingly.

Learning Outcomes

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

Over the last three years, I have seen improvement in every student's performance. Students appreciate being able to monitor their own progress, and they are vocal about their progress and how it affects their test scores and supplements class work.

Best Practices

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

I spend a lot of time teaching strategies. We use white boards instead of paper and pencil to show computations. Students sit a seat apart so that I can sit down with my own white board to offer suggestions on strategy, clarify explanations of errors made, and explain concepts.