

Implementation Strategies

Cisco Jr. High School, Cisco Independent School District
Cisco, TX

Grade(s): 6 – 7

Scenario: Computers in Classroom, Computer Lab

Purpose: Exit Exam

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 10–15%

ALEKS Course: Middle School Math Course 2, Middle School Math Course 3

Jean Stroebe, Math Teacher

ALEKS has been a big help in my math remediation classes. It also helps to reinforce skills in my regular math classes.

Scenario

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

In junior high, the math Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is a struggle for many students. We are using ALEKS mainly for our remediation for the TAKS.

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

1 day per week.

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

35 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

A representative introduced the program to our math teachers. We use the program by the TAKS objective we are studying in class.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

I follow the regular classroom curriculum.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Lab classes go twice a week, and regular math classes go twice a month.

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

I have not modified my regular math class teaching. My lab classes were using another computer math program twice a week last year. We have just changed to ALEKS.

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

I encourage them to work at home as often as they like, but it is not required.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

We notify the parents about ALEKS, specifically that it is Web-based.

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 is not assigned as homework.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

I do not use ALEKS as a grade in my regular math classes. However, it is 50 percent of the grade in my lab classes.

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

I do require students to show progress in ALEKS, but I do not require a specific amount. If progress is not being made, the student is required to stay after school to improve progress and get extra help.

Learning Outcomes

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

When students see something they have not learned in class, they try to complete the problem. When we get to this concept in class, they feel very excited. Students are more pro-active and try to complete problems, even if we have not learned it in class. When we do get to the concepts in class, they are extremely excited to know them already. They are very pleased with their pie charts filling up.

Best Practices

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

It is important to keep in frequent contact and communication with the students while they work, as some can lose focus.