

Implementation Strategies

Serrano Intermediate School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District
Lake Forest, CA

Grade(s): 7 – 8

Scenario: Computer Lab

Purpose: Intervention, After-School, Improve State Test Scores

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 100%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 3 hours per week, 36 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Pre-Algebra, High School Preparation for Algebra 1

Bob Presby, Principal

We use ALEKS as an afterschool program to assist our students at the basic level to reach proficiency on the California Standards Test (CST). With regular attendance, over 60 percent of our students have reached the proficient level. We only ran the class for three hours a week for nine weeks. We have increased the time this year and have already noticed an improvement in their grades and assessments.

Scenario

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

We did not have an organized afterschool program designed for the high basic student.

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

3 days per week.

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

60 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

After school in the computer lab.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

No, it is self-directed. The teachers may change this for next year to closer align with what is being taught.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Students were selected based on their CST scores from the previous year and invited to participate in the afterschool program.

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

The regular program is the same. ALEKS provides the prerequisite support many of these students lack.

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

We encourage students to use ALEKS every night. This is a struggle. The more parents understand and support this, the more likely the student will complete the assignments at home.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

We explain the benefits of the program. We encourage them to go online and check out the program. Next year, we are planning a parent night to ensure they understand the login procedure and other aspects of the program.

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.

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

No. This is another topic we are looking into for next year. Due to the limited budget, we cannot offer this program to all students. If we make a minimum progress goal, we can ensure we are addressing the needs of more students.

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

We have noticed an improvement in our students' arithmetic abilities. They enjoy the self-paced aspect and the ability to continue the work from home. Many were excited to complete their pie.

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

Choose the students carefully and have a clear goal that the teachers, students, and parents understand. For example, have the goal to move from one performance band to another, reach a minimum score on all in-class assessments, or reduce the number of D's and F's in math. Also, involve the parents in the use of ALEKS. Finally, provide targeted lessons for cluster areas that all students are struggling with, and then use ALEKS to support the topic.