

Implementation Strategies

McGregor Center, MFL MarMac Community School District
McGregor, IA

Grade(s): 4 – 8

Scenario: Computer Lab, Laptop Carts, Home Access

Purpose: Improve State Test Scores, At-Risk Students, Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 25%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1 hour per week, 45 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 4 (with QuickTables), Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables), Pre-Algebra

Tracy Decker, Teacher

I have been using ALEKS now for many years, and I would never want to give it up. I love how the students can begin working on math from any ability level. My Talented and Gifted (TAG) students are challenged while my at-risk students can work in the same classroom and also be working on math that is appropriate for their level of math ability. This year we had more computers, and students had more time to use them in study hall. They are ready for Pre-Algebra next year!

Scenario

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

Trying to reach all the students in the classroom was a challenge.

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

1–2 days per week.

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

60 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

I set aside one day each week to implement ALEKS into my classroom.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

No, I do not.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

I teach math concepts the first part of each week, and the students do ALEKS at the end of the week in class. Many of them also do it at home or in study hall.

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

I sometimes use mini lessons to teach something quickly and then have the students go and practice it.

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

Students are encouraged to work in ALEKS at home once a week.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

All parents know students are supposed to work in ALEKS for homework, and they also know that I use it for a grade.

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?

Yes, ALEKS is about 20 percent of the homework.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

ALEKS is 20 percent.

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

Students that are not far in ALEKS have to complete ten topics a week. Others that are much further along only have to do five topics, since they are working on topics that are more difficult and take up much more time.

Learning Outcomes

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

Students are ready to tackle more difficult math problems. They are proud of the problems they can solve and solve them with more confidence.

Best Practices

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

Use the reports. They can tell you almost everything that you need to know to make students be successful in math.