

Implementation Strategies

Carlisle School, Carlisle Public Schools
Carlisle, MA

Grade(s): K – 8

Scenario: Laptop Carts, Home Access

Purpose: Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 10%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1–2 hours per week

ALEKS Course: Middle School Math Course 2, Middle School Math Course 3, Pre–Algebra, Algebra 1, High School Geometry

Rob Quaden, Teacher

ALEKS is a very good match for my classroom. My class emphasizes problem solving and team work, and ALEKS provides practice and individual accountability for students. Generally speaking, many students benefit from the review provided by ALEKS.

Scenario

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

Our weakest area has been mastery of skills.

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?

ALEKS is a regular homework assignment for students, as well as weekly practice in class.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

No.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Students work individually, and the teacher helps students with processing information.

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

I have been able to address some skills that are in my core curriculum packet.

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

ALEKS is assigned as homework about 2–3 times per week.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

I provide an explanation during parent night and also send emails to parents when students fall behind on their ALEKS work.

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, it is about 20 percent.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

ALEKS work counts as one or two test grades per semester, so the grade counts for about 20 percent. The student's ALEKS grade is based on amount of time spent and progress made.

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

I require a set amount of time spent on ALEKS. Students are in different ALEKS classes, so I set goals for students in each ALEKS class. For example, to get a "B," they need to be at 60 percent mastery by a specific date.

Learning Outcomes

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

We have had very good results in helping students review material. Students generally master the Pre–Algebra course at 85 percent mastery and then move to Algebra 1. In my honors–level classes, most students are able to get to 90 percent mastery in Algebra 1. In my standard–level classes, there is a wider range. The students love the rate of progress that they make. Most students master Pre–Algebra and Algebra 1. In addition, some higher–level students go through all of High School Geometry and start Algebra 2, all in three months' time.

Best Practices

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

For grading, look at the time spent, percentage improved, and percent mastered.