



# Mastering High School Math with IXL

Logan View Jr./Sr. High School, Hooper, Nebraska



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"IXL has been great because it provides unlimited practice problems for students. Students are always looking for more practice and more examples, especially in Algebra II and Calculus. I could never provide this many problems without it"

*Alicia Granger,  
High School Math Teacher*

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When Alicia Granger's high school math students started the 2021-22 school year, many of them were starting from behind after two interrupted school years. To help them succeed in Algebra II, Statistics, Pre-Calculus, and Calculus, she turned to IXL Math. IXL gives Alicia's students the targeted instruction and practice they need to fill in skill gaps and tackle higher-level math concepts. Some students jumped a full grade level in the first semester.

## The Challenge: Making Up for Lost Time

Logan View Public Schools is a small rural district in Nebraska. With just 300 students across grades 7-12, Logan View Junior/Senior High School is a tight-knit community. In the spring of 2019, the region was hit with catastrophic flooding, closing schools for much of the semester. Then, in the spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused another round of unforeseen disruptions. Like students across the country, many of Alicia's high school math students started the 2021-22 school year with significant skill gaps. Alicia explains, "They lost about 1,000 minutes of direct instruction last year. We had to figure out what we were going to do to raise them back to grade level."

Alicia, who is the chair for the math department, had used and loved IXL math at another district prior to coming to Logan View. She and another teacher brought the program to their principal for consideration after a trial with 7th- and 8th-graders demonstrated positive results during hybrid learning. Alicia says, "Once we showed how the IXL Diagnostic lets us pinpoint the needs of every student, it was a no-brainer. She approved it right away for all of our students, 7 through 12."

## Targeted Support for Standards-Based Instruction

IXL Math gives Alicia's students the targeted support they need to catch up on missing skills and to succeed in higher-level math courses. She teaches two sections of Algebra II, which all students must take to graduate. She also has one class each for Statistics, Pre-calculus, and Calculus.



All of Alicia's students took the IXL Real-Time Diagnostic at the beginning of the school year. The diagnostic allowed Alicia to pinpoint exactly where students were in their skill development. In her Algebra II courses, only a handful of students were at grade level at the beginning of the year; many students were two or more grade levels behind.

With IXL, Alicia can assign skills directly aligned to her standards-based instruction. She spends two to three days on each topic. On day one, she introduces the topic through direct instruction and assigns IXL skills aligned with the standards she is teaching for homework. She often uses Group Jam in class, which allows all students to work on the same problem at the same time. Alicia says, "I love the Group Jams because I can see instantly who is getting it and who is struggling. I can also put the problem up on the board for the class to work together. I always give them the option of working either in IXL or in pencil-and-paper, and I'm amazed at how many choose IXL."

She has noticed a direct correlation between students' SmartScores (IXL's proprietary measure of how well students understand a skill) and test grades. "I tell students that the scores they get in IXL are what they can expect to get on the test. It's very helpful for students. They can aim for the SmartScore they want based on the test grade they want."

Students also work individually in IXL one day each week to update their Real-Time Diagnostic levels. Then, they work on their personalized action plan of skills that are recommended by the diagnostic. Many students continue working on recommended skills at home, too. The individualized practice and instruction help them fill in skill gaps from prior grades and reinforce grade-level skills. Alicia encourages her students to find time to work in IXL outside of class, even if it's 10 minutes on their phone on the bus ride home.

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"IXL makes teaching easier. It allows me to differentiate instruction, which is really important, especially right now. And I love IXL Analytics. I love to see the growth and be able to share that data with my students and their parents."

*Alicia Granger*

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## The IXL Effect: Accelerating Achievement

Alicia's students demonstrated strong progress in the first semester, with some showing Real-Time Diagnostic growth of 100 points or more (equivalent to a full grade level of growth) as of February 2022. One student grew a full 300 points. Alicia says that growth rates are directly tied to the time students spend in IXL. "Those who spend more time on IXL outside of class and are really going above and beyond have made the greatest gains. They are also getting higher test scores," she says.

IXL makes life a lot easier for Alicia as a teacher. She doesn't have homework to grade, and it's easy to assign skills in IXL directly aligned to the standards she is teaching. IXL also facilitates conversations with parents because she has the data in IXL Analytics to show exactly what students are learning, where they could use some extra help and practice, and what they are ready to learn next.

Students have responded positively, too. Alicia uses contests and incentives to get students excited about their progress in IXL. When a student reaches 100 points of growth, they get a certificate and a candy bar. Her juniors are now using IXL Math to prepare for the ACT; using IXL's personalized ACT study plans, they can easily see exactly which skills they need to work on to improve their scores. "My students are really seeing the benefits of IXL," Alicia says. "It's well worth it. It makes things easy for the kids and for me."



## A Model for Success at Logan View Jr./Sr. High School

Here's how Alicia Granger is using IXL Math with her Algebra II, Statistics, Pre-Calculus, and Calculus students:

- Students take the IXL Real-Time Diagnostic at the beginning of the year to get baseline data.
- Alicia uses IXL in class to support her teaching and assigns work on IXL as homework to reinforce the skills students are learning.
- Group Jams allow all students to be working on the same problem at the same time in class. IXL Live Classroom lets Alicia monitor everyone's work in real-time and see who is struggling.
- She assigns skills on IXL aligned to the standards she is teaching as homework, and students must reach a SmartScore of 40 or higher to get credit for completion.
- Once a week, they have "Diagnostic Days," when students update their IXL Real-Time Diagnostic and work on individualized skill recommendations.
- Students are rewarded with a certificate and a candy bar when they reach 100 points of diagnostic growth for the year. She also has weekly class contests for the number of questions completed in IXL skills.
- Juniors are using IXL's personalized study plans to prepare for the ACT.
- Alicia uses IXL Analytics to monitor growth and adjust her instruction.