

# Grade 4 Keyboarding

**Department of Curriculum,  
Assessment, Instruction,  
and Technology**

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In the Grosse Pointe Schools, fourth graders resume building their touch-typing skills in September. As third graders, students used the *Typin's Cool* Keyboarding system, an extensive training program that provides students with the tools to memorize the keyboard in a very short time. *Typin's Cool* was selected following research conducted by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and approved by the Board of Education in July 1999.

Initially, students learned eight key phrases to help them memorize the keyboard. While practicing touch-typing, students' keyboards remain covered to prevent them from reverting to the two-fingered "hunt and peck" method.

In fourth grade, a pre-assessment is conducted in September to determine students' accuracy and speed. Students

continue to develop their skills by typing sections of the "Typin' Write" booklet and by typing "timed" passages, using the software. Teachers review keyboarding and posture guidelines with students and provide time for keyboarding practice in the lab or in the classroom. Students track their accuracy and speed by filling in individual progress charts.

In May, a post-assessment is given to determine students' keyboarding skills by the last part of fourth grade. The district and state's keyboarding standards by the end of fifth grade are 20 words per minute with 90% accuracy. The goals for 4th grade students are to be able to type 14 words per minute with 85% accuracy by the end of the school year.

Learning to keyboard correctly requires effort, practice, and ongoing support.



## Keyboarding Timeline

**September:** Fourth grade students review keyboarding.

**October-April:** Students continue to build keyboarding skills.

**May:** Assessment of students' keyboarding skills.



**The Grosse Pointe Schools Elementary Keyboarding Page can be found on the District webpage at [www.gpschools.org](http://www.gpschools.org) Choose the "Parents" tab and then "Keyboarding Resources."**

**Typin's Cool Home Page: <http://www.typins-cool.com/>**

## How Parents Can Help

1. When your child begins keyboarding at school, please ensure that he or she completes the practice sheets sent home during the training.
2. Your child will need to touch-type a short paragraph or two for at least 15 minutes every other day to maintain the skill level acquired during the training.
3. If there is a computer at home, please keep the keyboard covered.
4. If there is a computer at home, parents may acquire a copy of the *Typin' Time* program for home use. [Check with your child's school regarding how to obtain a copy.]
5. If there is no computer at home, your child can use a "paper" keyboard to simulate the computer keyboard. Ask your child to close his eyes and practice finger exercises to memorize the layout of the keyboard.
6. Monitor your child's progress. After a period of time, your child should be making fewer errors and very gradually building speed.
7. Praise your child when she uses correct keyboarding techniques.



In our technical society, keyboarding has become a vital skill. Increased computer use in our daily life has made it essential that all students, regardless of their desired career goals, receive instruction in keyboarding.

## Why Keyboarding is Important

Digital skills are part of the set of 21st Century skills identified by the U.S. Department of Labor, SCANS 2002, and similar organizations. "It is clear that, in today's Digital Age, students must be technologically literate to live, learn, and work successfully." [Source: <http://www.ncrel.org/engage/skills/techlit.htm>]

Keyboarding is a useful and necessary skill that extends the ability to write into word processing, electronic communication, desktop publishing, and other software applications used in higher education and the work place.

## Posture Counts

Correct typing posture allows greater freedom of movement for the hands, elbows, and arms, promoting accuracy and development of speed.

1. Students should have both feet flat on the floor.
2. The keyboard should be on a surface approximately 3 inches above each student's lap.
3. Students should sit upright about 8 inches away from the keyboard. Their wrists should be lifted off the keyboard, and their eyes should be on the screen.
4. Initially, the fingers should be on the home keys with both thumbs on the space bar.