



School District 150

Handwriting K-8

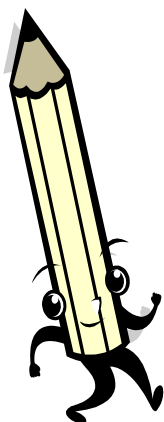
Rationale:



Our goal is to create fluent writers who can express themselves well because their handwriting has become automatic to them. Knowing how to write legibly with ease and fluency allows students to record and communicate ideas rapidly and understandably.

- Students still need to know how to write by hand. *There are times when this is unavoidable.*
- Good handwriting makes a good impression. *Evaluators score higher on neat, legible papers.*
- Teaching handwriting boosts proficiency. *This allows students to concentrate more on content.*

Research Says:



Legible handwriting is important in today's curriculum. Its benefits are well documented in sources ranging from handwriting research to current news stories and the work of educational leaders.

Emily Knapton, Director of Program Development at Handwriting Without Tears, believes that "when kids struggle with handwriting, it filters into all their academics. Spelling becomes a problem; math becomes a problem because they reverse their numbers. All of these subjects would be much easier for these kids to learn if handwriting was an automatic process."

Steve Graham, Ph.D., Senior Consultant for Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, discusses his research which indicates that developmentally appropriate handwriting instruction supports literacy development.

Karin Harman James, an assistant professor in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Indiana University, says: "For children, handwriting is extremely important. Not how well they do it, but that they do it and practice it. Typing does not do the same thing. "When I.U. researchers did brain scans on children who wrote letters and those who simply identified them, they found that the kids who practiced writing showed brain activation similar to an adult's.

<http://bigthink.com/ideas/38937>



Appearance:

Legibility comprises several components that can be assessed in a writing sample, including slant, letter formation, spacing, alignment and size. Adequate handwriting legibility is vital to the academic success of the student.



School District 150

Handwriting K-8

Expectations:



Cursive handwriting is required to be taught as well as modeled in grades 3-8. Cursive handwriting will be introduced in grade 2 through formal handwriting instruction and will be continued along with manuscript handwriting in grades 3-8. Students in middle grades will begin to manifest their own individual styles in both manuscript and cursive; however, the expectation of legible handwriting will remain a minimal standard throughout middle grades.

- All children will receive handwriting instruction in all elementary grade levels.
- Teachers will begin ***cursive*** instruction in grade three.
- Cursive should be the expected form of writing in grades four and five.

Kindergarten.....the student is expected to:

- Write his/her own name and other important words
- Write each letter of the alphabet, both capital and lower case
- Write messages that move left-to-right and top-to-bottom on the page
- Gain increasing control of penmanship such as pencil grip, paper position, and beginning stroke

First Grade.....the student is expected to:

- Write each letter of the alphabet, both capital and lower case, using correct formation, appropriate size, spacing and alignment.
- Write messages that move left-to-right and top-to-bottom on the page
- Gain increasing control of penmanship such as pencil grip, paper position, posture

Second grade.....the student is expected to:

- Gain increasing control of penmanship such as pencil grip, paper position, stroke and posture, and using correct letter formation, appropriate size, spacing and alignment
- Use word and letter spacing and margins to make letters readable

Third grade.....the student is expected to:

- Gain more proficient control of all aspects of penmanship

Fourth through Eighth Grades.....the student is expected to:

- write legibly by selecting cursive or manuscript as appropriate

Grading:



- Students should exhibit their best handwriting to be used for grading purposes.
- A handwriting grade (E, S or U) will be given and recorded on the grade card.
E=Excellent S=Satisfactory U=Unsatisfactory
- Handwriting grades are not calculated in a students' GPA.
- A Handwriting grade will be given each quarter.



School District 150

Handwriting K-8

Support:



Teachers will promote handwriting development by

- making sure that students—left-handed and right-handed—employs proper sitting, paper, and pencil positions for writing.
- monitoring students' handwriting, paying special attention to their instructional needs in letter formation, spacing, slant, alignment, size, and line quality.
- helping students develop a positive attitude about handwriting.

Teachers will teach students how to write each letter by

- encouraging them to correct or rewrite poorly formed letters.
- reinforcing their successful efforts and providing corrective feedback as needed.

Teachers will help students become more fluent in handwriting by

- providing them with plenty of opportunities to write.
- encouraging them to make all final drafts of papers neat and legible.

Teachers will assist students who are experiencing difficulty by

- providing additional handwriting instruction to students who need it.
- identifying and addressing roadblocks that may impede a student's success in handwriting.

Time:



Sufficient time should be devoted to instruction and practice so that children develop fluent and legible handwriting. In general, students k-3 should spend 15-20 minutes with handwriting instruction or practice. By grade 4, time should be spent developing and practicing skills, with the amount of time guided by the student needs.

Other Notes:



Handwriting may be assessed through a variety of writing activities, in addition to or other than, a traditional handwriting book or worksheet. Activities may include writing lists, writing letters, essays, book reports, writing picture stories, etc.

It is expected that students write an approved heading on assignments.