

Ms. Luisa Santos, Board Member

SUBJECT: INTEGRATING KEYBOARDING INSTRUCTION INTO THE CURRICULUM

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, & INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS

At the School Board Meeting of October 20, 2021, the School Board unanimously approved School Board Agenda Item H-8 (Revised), *Addressing the Digital Divide through the Equitable Digital Experience Framework*. The *Equitable Digital Experience Framework* has four pillars:

1. **Reliable Internet Connectivity:** Students and staff must have access to fast and reliable wireless internet connection throughout the community and at school.
2. **Capable Devices and Technology:** Devices and technology must be able to handle the modern student and workforce workload.
3. **Digital Literacy:** A curriculum embedded throughout grades K- 12 that prepares students, teachers, and families to actively interact with and ultimately create digital texts, tools, and spaces to facilitate 21st century learning.
4. **Establishing Technology Career Pathways:** Accessible industry partnerships, career focused curriculum, and workplace opportunities with the tech industry in our county.

As a national leader in education, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) continually seeks innovative ways to enhance teaching and learning through the relevant use of technology. Keyboarding proficiency is a foundational digital literacy skill—essential for academic achievement, career readiness, and effective participation in the modern workforce. As early as kindergarten, students begin navigating digital platforms, logging into software tools, and engaging with technology as part of their daily learning. Digital literacy becomes even more critical as they progress, with key progress monitoring assessments such as i-Ready and the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) including typed responses. Our state-mandated FAST assessments are now fully computerized, and by fourth grade, students must compose their first major essay digitally. Students may struggle to fully convey their ideas without sufficient typing speed and accuracy, potentially impacting their performance and overall academic development.

Research by the Institute of Educational Sciences has shown that prior computer exposure (e.g., having access to the Internet at home) is associated with the following: (a) text length (which is related to keyboarding skills), (b) uses of editing tools such as the spellcheck and backspace keys (which are related to editing words and sentences), and others—all of which are related to writing performance. Furthermore, the data shows that prior exposure to writing on the computer is itself associated with writing performance.¹ Just as literacy once meant mastering reading and writing with pen and paper, modern literacy now demands fluency in typing. Ineffective keyboarding skills slow students down and overload their cognitive capacity, forcing them to divide attention between key location, sentence formulation, and content development. This cognitive strain disrupts the writing process and hinders students' ability to express complex ideas efficiently.² Research on the pedagogy of writing underscores the importance of mastering mechanics so that students can focus on thought, expression, and creativity—an argument that now extends to keyboarding.³

¹ White, Sheida, et al. "Performance of fourth-grade students in the 2012 NAEP computer-based writing pilot assessment." *Institute of Education Sciences*, October 2015, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED562627.pdf>. Accessed 24 February 2025.

² Parr JM 1995. When pens are passe: students reflect on written composition. *Journal of Research on Computing in Education*, 27:221-227.

³ Thompson ME 1911. *Psychology and pedagogy of writing: a resume of the research and experiments bearing on the history and pedagogy of writing*. Baltimore: Warwick and York.

Without proficiency in typing, students risk losing valuable time, struggling to communicate effectively, and facing barriers to success in academics and future careers.

In an increasingly digital world, where students rely on computers for standardized testing, research assignments, coding, and online communication, proficient typing skills are essential for access to learning and opportunity. M-DCPS has taken significant steps toward enhancing digital literacy through initiatives like the Equitable Digital Experience Framework and investments in AI-driven learning tools. By incorporating structured keyboarding instruction into digital literacy initiatives, M-DCPS can empower students with critical 21st-century skills, improve digital equity, and ensure that all learners are prepared to thrive in an evolving academic and professional landscape.

This item has been approved by the Office of General Counsel as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. LUISA SANTOS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, reaffirm its commitment to addressing the digital divide and implementing the “Equitable Digital Experience Framework” with a focus on digital literacy by requesting the Superintendent to:

1. Review the current level of keyboarding proficiency among students at various grade levels and identify disparities in access to formal keyboarding instruction; and
2. Identify the instructional tools, digital platforms, staffing, and professional development needed to implement a keyboarding curriculum district-wide successfully; and
3. Explore partnerships to provide keyboarding instruction and/or tools at a low cost and/or no cost to all students; and
4. Provide information on various implementation models, including integration within existing coursework, stand-alone programs, or extracurricular offerings; and
5. Include the implementation of formal keyboarding instruction as a component of digital literacy education in the Board’s M-DCPS 2025 Legislative Program Priority; and
6. Provide a report to the board on the feasibility of implementing keyboarding instruction no later than May 7, 2025, at the academics, innovation, evaluation & technology committee including programs in existence, recommendations for phased implementation, and potential pilot programs.