



Update on Cursive Writing Instruction

Lake Forest School District 67 students are introduced to and practice cursive writing of all lower and uppercase letters in second grade. We still believe that:

- ✓ Students should learn to write their signatures in cursive as a basic life skill.
- ✓ Students need to learn the ability to read cursive writing when they encounter it.
- ✓ Once mastered, cursive writing can often be faster and more efficient than printing.
- ✓ An additional bonus of continuing to teach cursive writing is that due to the fluidity of the cursive writing process, it may be easier for some students to write legibly and it reduces the risk of letter reversals for those who have those challenges.

A change that has occurred, however, is that the need for complete mastery of cursive writing and the desire to utilize class time for developing these skills has diminished due to some of the following reasons:

- ✓ More instructional time is devoted to learning keyboarding skills. Formal keyboarding training begins in grade 3 with KeyWords (a typing program within the Neo2s) and younger children are given regular opportunities to acquaint themselves with the keyboard (e.g., using the programs *Dance Mat Typing* and *ABCya!*).
- ✓ In the higher grades, formal papers are always word-processed.
- ✓ As peoples' modes of communication become increasingly electronic, they will be reading and writing more printed material (e.g., texts, e-mails, webpages, etc.), thus reducing the need to generate handwritten material.
- ✓ As we integrate more 21st Century learning skills into our curricula, we need to make decisions about what demands can be lessened in order to accommodate these changes.
- ✓ In college and in the professional world, handwritten work is unacceptable.

The most important aspects of handwriting are **legibility**, **ease**, and **speed**. We are confident that our students will develop effective ways of communicating in writing, regardless of the mode they utilize. They will be well prepared for what lies ahead.