

Proper keyboarding technique is an essential 21st Century skill that is found in all aspects of life from social media to professions. Want to be a doctor or lawyer some day? Want to write for a newspaper or just for fun? Just want to send a few long emails to your family across the country? Better know how to type quickly and accurately!

To top it off, keyboarding is a skill that is becoming more of a requirement for younger students due to shifts in technology resources coming down to elementary schools and with a lot of standardized tests being online (MCAS for example).

In the Middleboro Public Schools, we at the elementary level are preparing the doctors, lawyers, journalists, bloggers, and emailers of the future with a rigorous typing program that will have them typing with speed and accuracy in no time. Using a handful of websites, students from 1st to 5th grade will be learning and growing their skills from day one. Here’s how:

**Dance Mat Typing** – grades 1 and 2 students start here learning the basics of hand, finger, and body position, letter memorization, and typing routines. Students learn along with fun and catchy songs and characters while they push themselves through a demanding set of levels that keep adding letters to their typing repertoire until they’ve become exposed to the whole keyboard.

**Typing.com** – grades 3-5 students start here (with grade 2 going on at the end of the year) learning the basics mentioned above but with more sophisticated and individualized practice regimens. The website requires a login (provided by MPS) and tracks student progress from the very first key stroke. In addition, fun typing games are included on this website that help strengthen typing skills while also being entertaining.

By the end of each grade, students are expected to reach certain typing goals. This chart illustrates those goals as set out by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Ed:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | Typing Speed (Words Per Minute – WPM) | Typing Accuracy | Test Length |
| 1 | 5 | 90% | 1 minute |
| 2 | 10 | 92% | 1 minute |
| 3 | 15 | 95% | 3 minute |
| 4 | 20 | 96% | 3 minute |
| 5 | 25 | 97% | 5 minute |

It should be noted that while some time is carved out each week for typing practice at school, students who wish to achieve these goals need to be practicing every day for at least 10-15 minutes. Please make an effort to have your students type with proper technique a little bit each day. Practice makes perfect!