

MEMORANDUM



SCAN OF STATES' WRITING STANDARDS FOR REFERENCE TO CURSIVE WRITING

September 22, 2015

"How is cursive writing incorporated into states' English language arts standards?"

This memorandum presents results from a scan of states' English language arts (ELA) standards for writing, with specific attention to references of cursive writing. This work was conducted by researchers from WestEd's Center for Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI) on behalf of the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE). Using information posted on public web sites for each state and the District of Columbia, the following data were collected:

- the type of ELA standards currently adopted in that state of jurisdiction (i.e., full adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), partial adoption of the CCSS, or state-specific standards);
- whether cursive writing was included anywhere in the ELA standards;
- whether it serves as a requirement or is optional (and hence open to local decision-making); and
- relevant notes.

Summary of Findings

Overall, 14 states include cursive as part of their writing or ELA standards. These include AL, CA, FL, GA, ID, IN, MA, MD, NC, NE, OK, SC, TX, and VA. Of these, four (CA, IN, NE, and OK) indicate that the standard is optional.

- As the MDE knows, the original CCSS do not include cursive writing as a standard, so the 28 states/ jurisdictions that indicated that they have fully adopted the CCSS ("full adopters") and did not elect to add additional standards do *not* include cursive writing as a standard. Five of these states (CA, GA, ID, MD, and NC) identify themselves as "full adopters" but have added one or more state-specific standards that refer to cursive writing.
- Another eight states identify themselves as "partial adopters," and researchers found that two of these states (AL and MA) added one or more state-specific standards that refer to cursive writing.

- Finally, a set of nine states have adopted state-specific standards. These include AK, FL, IN, MO, NE, OK, SC, TX, and VA. Of these, all except AK and MO added a standard for cursive writing.

State	CCSS Status	Cursive Included	Cursive Optional	Standards	Notes
Alabama	CCSS Partial Adoption	X		36.e, 38.g	
Alaska	State Standards				
Arizona	CCSS Partial Adoption				
Arkansas	CCSS Full Adoption				
California	CCSS Full Adoption	X	X	L.3.1.j, L4.1.h	Standards indicate that cursive or joined italics are appropriate for these standards.
Colorado	CCSS Partial Adoption				
Connecticut	CCSS Full Adoption				
Delaware	CCSS Full Adoption				
District of Columbia	CCSS Full Adoption				
Florida	State Standards	X		LA.3.4.1.1, LA.4.5.1.1, LA.5.5.1.1, LAFS.3.L.1.1, LAFS.4.L.1.1, LAFS.5.L.1.1	
Georgia	CCSS Full Adoption	X		ELAGSE3L1	
Hawaii	CCSS Full Adoption				
Idaho	CCSS Full Adoption	X		HW—3rd and 4th Grade	This is an additional standard that has been added onto the CCSS by the state.
Illinois	CCSS Full Adoption				
Indiana	State Standards	X	X	3.W.2.1, 4.W.2.1	The standards indicate that the State Department of Education encourages the teaching of cursive, though it is optional.
Iowa	CCSS Full Adoption				
Kansas	CCSS Full Adoption				
Kentucky	CCSS Full Adoption				

State	CCSS Status	Cursive Included	Cursive Optional	Standards	Notes
Louisiana	CCSS Full Adoption				
Maine	CCSS Full Adoption				
Maryland	CCSS Full Adoption	X		W1—Grade 2 (formation of cursive letters—p. 2), W2—Grade 3 (cursive handwriting skills—p. 7)	
Massachusetts	CCSS Partial Adoption	X		MA.1.h.	
Michigan	CCSS Full Adoption				
Minnesota	CCSS Partial Adoption				
Missouri	State Standards				
Montana	CCSS Full Adoption				
Nebraska	State Standards	X	X	LA 3.2.1.j	Grade 3 Writing: Publish a legible document in manuscript, cursive, or digital format, and apply formatting techniques (e.g., indenting paragraphs, title).
Nevada	CCSS Full Adoption				A state lawmaker wants to make cursive a state requirement: http://www.rgj.com/story/news/politics/2015/03/20/bill-require-nevada-students-learn-cursive/25083917/
New Hampshire	CCSS Full Adoption				Bill passed 3/2015 to encourage cursive instruction, not require it: http://www.wmur.com/news/lawmakers-change-bill-to-encourage-t-require-cursive-in-schools/31910926
New Jersey	CCSS Full Adoption				

State	CCSS Status	Cursive Included	Cursive Optional	Standards	Notes
New Mexico	CCSS Partial Adoption				
New York	CCSS Partial Adoption				Phased out under CCSS standards.
North Carolina	CCSS Full Adoption	X		Cursive writing standard: grades 3, 4, and 5	Legislatively imposed.
North Dakota	CCSS Full Adoption				
Ohio	CCSS Full Adoption				
Oklahoma	State Standards	X	X	2.3.W.2, 2.4.W.2	Cursive or print; no preference indicated.
Oregon	CCSS Full Adoption				
Pennsylvania	CCSS Full Adoption				
Rhode Island	CCSS Full Adoption				
South Carolina	State Standards	X		6.5	
South Dakota	CCSS Full Adoption				Districts can choose to include cursive instruction: http://articles.aberdeennews.com/2012-10-14/news/34453860_1_cursive-common-core-standards-sixth-grade
Tennessee	CCSS Full Adoption				State legislature and state board of education taking preliminary steps to include cursive.
Texas	State Standards	X		Section 110.14. 23.A., Section 110.15. 21.A.	
Utah	CCSS Full Adoption				
Vermont	CCSS Full Adoption				

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Virginia	State Standards	X		2.11 (Grade 2), 3.8 (Grade 3)	Grade 2: The student will maintain legible printing and begin to make the transition to cursive. Grade 3: The student will write legibly in cursive.
Washington	CCSS Full Adoption				
West Virginia	CCSS Partial Adoption				
Wisconsin	CCSS Full Adoption				
Wyoming	CCSS Full Adoption				

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