

Computer Newsletter

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I have really enjoyed your children in computer classes this year! I am so pleased with their accomplishments in keyboarding, web research, and various Microsoft Office products.

Experts in internet safety recommend that children and youth be supervised on the Internet. Some of their tips include:

- Know what sites your child visits.
- Have regular discussions about privacy (don't reveal name, address, phone, school, etc.) and ethics (copyright issues, cyber bullying, and netiquette).
- Discuss handling of inappropriate pop-ups and web sites.
- Define what game sites they are allowed to play on.
- Establish family rules and guidelines for computer usage including downloading games/music and social websites.

EC, EP and P1: Computer class for the younger students was really fun this year! We focused on mouse-based, educational sites that were brightly colored, interesting, and entertaining. There are many sites that you and your child can visit this summer; PBS and Sesame Street both offer age and skill appropriate games. Please try to help your child minimize hunt-and-peck keyboarding – it can start some bad habits!!

P2: The P2 students have started keyboarding lessons. This summer, please encourage proper keyboarding. Ensure that your child is aligning his or her fingers on the home row keys (ASDF for the left hand and JKL; for the right hand). Fingers should be gently curved and lightly resting on the keys. The space bar should only be tapped by the thumbs. A great website to practice keyboarding is the BBC Dance Mat program: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing/>

P3, I-1 and I-2: These students have really grown in their use of *Microsoft Word* and *Excel*. I1 and I2 just completed PowerPoint assignments as well. Developing strong keyboarding skills continues to be the primary focus. As students gain experience with accurate keying, their speed will naturally pick up. See the above comments for the P2 class concerning keyboarding form and a practice website.

OI-5 and OI-6: Students have been intensely focused on Type III reports for the last 6-8 weeks. We have wrapped up the semester with a fun PowerPoint project. During the summer, please have your student practice keyboarding by typing paragraphs from favorite books or keeping an online journal. By now, students should be typing with accurate fingering. I look for OI5 to be typing about 25 wpm and OI6 about 30-35 wpm. Help your child to type without looking at his or her hands. You can purchase a keyboard mask or simply tape a piece of paper onto the monitor that they can put their hands under. Next year, OI7 students will need to achieve 90% accuracy and 40 wpm at the end of "Typing Boot Camp." If they are not at this level, they will have mandatory typing homework.

OI-7: The OI7 students completed a unit on *Excel* data analysis. Don't let keyboarding skills lag this summer. Have your child practice keyboarding by typing paragraphs from a favorite book. Remind students to not look at their hands. Next year, OI8 students will need to achieve 90% accuracy and 50 wpm or they will have mandatory typing homework.

OI-8: OI8 students have met the goal of achieving strong computer skills. They have demonstrated proficiency in *Word*, *Excel*, *Publisher*, and *PowerPoint*. An introduction unit to databases and *Access* was completed as well. The students confidently use the Internet as a source of research information and online tools. All OI8 students achieved our minimum keyboarding standard of 90% accuracy and 50 wpm. Parents, don't let your child stop there! Remind them that ultimately a speed of 70-80 wpm is desirable. That is the speed at which you can type as fast as you formulate your thoughts. Best of luck to all graduates!!!