

**Prepared for
Dr. Rogers
Seminar in Elementary Keyboarding/Research Project
University of Wisconsin
Whitewater, WI**

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History of the Research Project:

This research project represents the second follow-up to Dr. Harriet Rogers' 1993 and 1996 surveys of 428 school districts in Wisconsin. The purpose of these surveys was to determine the status of elementary keyboarding in the State of Wisconsin and to make comparisons in the data from 1993 and 1996. The hypothesis for these surveys was that there would be no significant difference in the number of school districts introducing keyboarding at the elementary level in 1996 compared to 1993. In "A Longitudinal Study of Elementary Keyboarding Computer Skills," Dr. Rogers details her findings. She found a significant difference in the number of school districts that introduced the "touch" method of keyboarding at the elementary level in 1996 as compared to 1993. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

The first follow-up to Dr. Rogers' 1993 and 1996 surveys of Wisconsin elementary keyboarding programs was conducted in the summer of 1999 by Debi O'Leary, a University of Wisconsin-Whitewater graduate student seeking elementary keyboarding certification. The follow-up was not comprehensive, though, in that Ms. O'Leary surveyed the Wisconsin school districts within a 50 mile radius of Janesville rather than within the entire state. The number of Wisconsin school districts within this radius numbered 55 versus the 428 school districts in Wisconsin. Of the 55 school districts surveyed, she received 38 responses for a 69% response rate. Of the 38 responses, 31 school districts reported offering elementary keyboarding. In "Keyboarding Survey," Ms. O'Leary details her findings.

The second follow-up detailed in this report was conducted in the fall of 1999. Again, the follow-up was not comprehensive to Dr. Rogers' 1993 and 1996 surveys. All of the Wisconsin school districts within the next 25 mile radius of Janesville rather than the balance of the entire state were surveyed. Therefore, the findings from the two follow-up surveys to Dr. Rogers' surveys represent the school districts within a 75 mile radius of Janesville. The number of Wisconsin school districts within the radius of the fall 1999 survey is 79 versus the 428 school districts in Wisconsin and the 55 school districts within a 50 mile radius of Janesville. Consequently, 134 (55 + 79) of the 428 school districts in Wisconsin have again been surveyed since 1996 regarding the status of their elementary keyboarding programs. Of the 79 school districts surveyed in the fall of 1999, 47 responses were received for a 59% response rate. Attached are a copy of the survey and a list of the schools surveyed with the responding schools noted by a check mark.

Findings of the Research Project:

Of the 47 responses, 31 school districts reported offering elementary keyboarding. Fourteen school districts reported not offering elementary keyboarding. Two school districts reported not offering elementary keyboarding when in fact they do offer elementary keyboarding. It is taught by the elementary classroom teachers; therefore, the responding business education teacher did not officially consider it an elementary keyboarding program, but they were counted as such.

Not all of the 14 schools responding to not offering elementary keyboarding cited a reason for this void in their curriculum. Seven of the fourteen responding schools did cite a reason, though. Their reasons for not offering elementary keyboarding were varied: 1) teacher left to become a computer consultant; 2) no budget for a certified teacher; 3) high school business teachers do not have time to teach it; 4) do not have the proper equipment; 5) elementary teachers say that there is no time in their curriculum for keyboarding; 6) elementary teachers teach it; and 7) budget for the program was cut.

Eight of the fourteen schools responding to not offering elementary keyboarding did note that an elementary keyboarding program was being developed.

The length of time that elementary keyboarding has been offered in the 31 responding schools also varied. Many responding schools did not know the age of their program, but for those that did, the oldest program was started in 1988. Two programs each were started in 1989 and 1990. Five programs were started in 1991. One, zero, and five programs were started in 1992, 1993, and 1994, respectively. One, one and three programs were started in 1995, 1996, and 1997, respectively. One program was in its first year.

The grade levels at which elementary keyboarding was offered also varied. Most school districts offered the program in more than one grade, such as 4-6 and 8. Interestingly enough, if a grade was skipped, it was usually seventh grade. Five schools reported that their elementary keyboarding program consisted of instruction in only one grade, two in third grade only and three in fourth grade only. Perhaps in keeping with the research that the best grade in which to start elementary keyboarding instruction is fourth grade, fourth grade had the highest number of responses at twenty. Third grade had

thirteen responses. Fifth and sixth grade each had sixteen responses. Seventh, eighth, and ninth grades each had twelve, ten, and eight responses, respectively. Other, which meant keyboarding was offered in high school, had five responses.

With twenty responses, five times per week was the most frequent response for the number of times per week that elementary keyboarding class met. One time had four responses; two times had five responses, and three and four times each had three responses. The times per week responses may be deceiving in that not every grade of elementary keyboarding met five times per week. The responses indicated a myriad of combinations of grade levels and number of times per week meetings.

Twenty responses for 25-30 minutes made it the most frequent response for length of elementary keyboarding class period. This length of class period was most often for third and fourth graders. With nine responses, 40-45 minutes was the second most frequent length of class period. This length of class period was most often for fifth and sixth graders. Respondents noted 41-49 minutes and 50-60 minutes each one time. The longer class periods of 40-45 minutes and 41-49 minutes were most often for seventh, and eighth graders. Four respondents noted Other with two of the four clarifying their responses to 20 minutes and up to the teacher.

Nine weeks was the most frequent response for elementary keyboarding course length with thirteen responses. Four weeks had five responses; six weeks had eight responses; one semester had five responses; two semesters had five responses; and Other had two responses. One of the two other responses noted that the course length was three weeks. As with times per week responses, course length responses also varied depending upon grade level. Again, the responses indicated a myriad of combinations of grade levels and course length.

Business teachers are the favored staff members to teach elementary keyboarding with 23 responses. Computer teachers had two responses. Math teachers had two responses. Classroom teachers had ten responses. Other had two responses. One of the two other responses noted that elementary keyboarding was taught by a teacher's aid. The responses also noted that while business teachers might be the primary teacher of elementary keyboarding, responsibilities are shared in some cases with the classroom teacher.

Of the 23 responding business teachers primarily responsible for teaching elementary keyboarding, 21 noted one business staff member as conducting the teaching. Only one other respondent noted two business staff members as conducting the teaching. One respondent noted four business staff members as conducting the teaching, but these teachers divided the grade levels. Therefore, the elementary keyboarding program was not as large in this school district as an initial interpretation of the responses may indicate.

Several different texts and software were indicated as being used to teach elementary keyboarding:

Name of Text	Number of Responses	Name of Software	Number of Responses
Keyboarding and Applications (Glencoe)	1	MS Word	7
Computer Applications and Keyboarding (Glencoe)	2	Clarisworks	1
Paws Presents Computer Keyboarding	11	Appleworks	1
Old typing texts	1	Paws Micro Type	8
Computer Keyboarding: An Elementary Course	1	Paws in Typing Town	1
I Can Keyboard	2	Hertzog Method	1
Hertzog Method	1	Type to Learn/Type for Fun	4
No texts	3	Dreamwriter	2
Dreamwriter	1	Jump Start Typing	1
Century 21Keyboarding	3	Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing	4
Gregg Typing	1	MS Works	1
Information Processing	1	Multi Media	1

Ainsworth	2	Micro Pace Pro	1
EMC Keyboarding	1	Key Champs	1
		Slam Dunk	1
		Typing Tutor	1
		Mario Teaches	1
		Typing	

The PC was the most frequent response for the type of computer used to teach elementary keyboarding with 15 responses. Mac had seven responses and Word Processor/AlphaSmarts had five responses. Of the three Other responses, two noted their type of computer. One was E-mate and the other was Apple IIs.

Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory and ABCDF were the most frequent responses for type of assessment method for elementary keyboarding. Each had ten responses. Other had nine responses, but only three of the other responses clarified their response. No grade was the response of two of the three, with the third responding with certificate as the type of assessment for elementary keyboarding. Pass or Fail had three responses.

Homework is definitely not given in the majority of elementary keyboarding programs with twenty respondents noting that they do not give homework. Only three of the respondents noted that they give homework. Two of the three clarified their homework. One respondent gives homework only to the sixth graders. The other of the clarifying respondent gives 30 minute practice drills to fifth graders.

Twenty three of the thirty one respondents with an elementary keyboarding program noted that the program has had and/or will have an affect upon the high school keyboarding program. They detailed a wide variety of ways, in which it has and/or will affect the high school program: ((#) indicates the number of respondents)

- High School students are choosing keyboarding basics less. (3)
- The emphasis in high school keyboarding classes is on computer applications vs. speed development. (1)
- The content of high school keyboarding classes has changed to computer applications. (4)
- Much less time is spent on touch typing in the high school keyboarding classes. (3)
- Providing a keyboarding “test-out” option is a possibility due to the elementary keyboarding program. (3)
- Fewer numbers of sections of keyboarding are being offered. (3)
- The focus is upon skill development since correct skills are not taught very well in the elementary program, especially when they have not been taught by business teachers. (2)
- Two semesters of computer concepts is now offered; whereas, two semesters of keyboarding used to be required. (1)
- Eliminating keyboarding is a possibility due to low enrollments and lack of perceived need. (2)
- The course title has been changed from Keyboarding to Computer Applications with a strong Internet component. (1)

Some respondents noted that they were not adept at the Internet and wanted to learn more about how to use it in the classroom. From the 47 respondents, only 6 Internet sites were recommended:

Course	Internet Site Recommended
accounting	accountingstudents.com
business law	usatoday.com/educate/ednews.htm
computer applications	microsoft.com
computer applications	scseries.com
other	www.angelfire.com/ks/tonyaskinner
other/investing	quicken.com

Summary of the Research Project:

Overall, the status of elementary keyboarding in 47 of the 79 schools within the next 25 mile radius of Janesville appears to be excellent. It certainly is positive to find that 23 of the 47 programs from which responses were received are being taught by business teachers.