

As National Handwriting Day Approaches, New Data Resource Challenges Classroom Myth

New interactive online resource reveals handwriting is a required part of public education in most U.S. states.

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Contrary to the common perception that handwriting has vanished from American classrooms, most U.S. states require handwriting instruction in public schools, according to a new nationwide online resource. The findings show that a majority of state education departments mandate handwriting instruction through at least third grade, with some extending requirements through sixth grade and beyond.



State education content standards directly affect student handwriting

The interactive resource, published by Handwriting Success, provides the first comprehensive, state-by-state overview of handwriting education standards and related legislative mandates across all 50 states. It arrives as public debate around handwriting instruction often resurfaces ahead of National Handwriting Day, observed annually on January 23, the birthday of John Hancock.

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The new database allows parents, educators, policymakers, and journalists to easily compare handwriting requirements across states. It is available at:

<https://handwritingsuccess.com/handwriting-standards/>

“Despite ongoing debate, there has never been a single, reliable online source that clearly showed where and how handwriting is addressed in state education standards,” said Jonathan Dubay, CEO of Handwriting Success. “Neither the U.S. Department of Education website nor

other national organizations had made this information readily available online. We reviewed every state department of education website, along with relevant legislative sources, to create an accurate, transparent, and easy-to-use reference.”

Unlike other websites that focus only on legislative mandates, the Handwriting Success resource includes both education content standards and laws, with direct citations and links to original sources. The interactive map makes it easy to see how individual states compare nationwide.

“This is priceless data for everyone who cares about the future of handwriting,” said Kate Gladstone, author of READ CURSIVE FAST and International Director of the World Handwriting Contest. “Handwriting Success has a strong reputation for providing objective, accurate, and up-to-date information.”

While the database documents what states require, it does not measure how handwriting is actually taught in classrooms or how effective current instruction may be. “That’s the missing piece,” Dubay said. “We look forward to the day when data on classroom practice and outcomes become widely available.” Research continues to explore best practices in handwriting instruction. [Recent validation](#) of a 1985 study suggests that instruction using an italic handwriting style may support stronger long-term retention than looped cursive styles. “We believe that current research supports handwriting instruction thought sixth grade. Some states are doing this, and others can learn from their example.”

“In today’s classrooms, written expression remains a cornerstone of student achievement,” said Kathleen Wright, Executive Director of The Handwriting Collaborative, a nonprofit organization focused on best practices in handwriting education. “Effective instruction depends on understanding how handwriting aligns with state standards. This interactive map gives educators across the country a valuable and practical curriculum resource.”

Handwriting Success publishes the Getty-Dubay® Italic Handwriting Series for grades K–6, created by educators and handwriting experts Barbara Getty and Inga Dubay. Developed in 1979, the curriculum is designed to promote early handwriting fluency and legibility while eliminating the need for students to relearn letterforms when transitioning from print to cursive. The Getty-Dubay® curriculum is available as physical workbooks and as an app for tablet and stylus.

Getty and Dubay have also applied their expertise beyond the classroom, training more than 4,500 physicians in improved handwriting during medical clinic visits across the United States. Their work has been featured nationally, including a 2009 [New York Times op-ed](#) that invited readers to practice handwriting directly on the page.

For more information and to explore the interactive handwriting standards map, visit <https://handwritingsuccess.com/handwriting-standards/>.

Jonathan Dubay
Handwriting Success, LLC
+1 971-254-8695
[email us here](#)

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