Marshall Memo 537

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
May 19, 2014

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"To solve the problem of college completion, you first need to get inside the mind of a college student."

Paul Tough (see item #1)

"… 1:1 programs can be either a highly effective means of improving teaching and learning or a disastrous waste of money."

Doug Johnson (see item #7)

"We have seen many efforts evaporate in a year or two for lack of strong conspicuous support from the principal. We have seen initiatives undermined in a couple of hours simply because the principal did not show up at a key event."

David Perkins and James Reese in "When Change Has Legs" in *Educational Leadership*, May 2014 (Vol. 71, #8, p. 42-47), http://bit.ly/1j3sX40

"The most artfully designed curriculum means little to a student whose mind is fixed on last night's shooting outside or the scary, violent fight between parents that broke out in the kitchen. Brilliant teaching often can't compete with the sudden loss of a parent or a friend."

Laura Pappano (see item #5)

"[W]e are much clearer about the ways in which gender stereotypes and gender roles have hurt girls. I think we are less clear about how the same kind of gender roles and socialization related to masculinity may have hurt boys. That ambivalence is reflected in mixed messages boys are getting all the time about what it means to be a real man. Is a real man someone who listens and cooperates, or is a real man someone who is tough and gets things done on his own?"

Pedro Noguera in "Educating Boys of Color" in *Harvard Education Letter*, May/June 2014 (Vol. 30, #3, p. 8, 6-7), www.edletter.org

1. Bending the Bell Curve At the University of Texas/Austin

In this *New York Times Magazine* article, Paul Tough reports the latest statistics on college retention: fewer than 60 percent of American students who get into four-year colleges graduate within six years. But this figure disguises stark class disparities. Almost 90 percent of students from the top income quartile earn a diploma, whereas only 25 percent of students from the lower half of the income distribution earn a degree by age 24. And this disparity has little to do with academic achievement. Students with similar standardized-test scores do very differently in college depending on their socioeconomic status.

What's going on here? To find out, Tough profiles Vanessa Brewer, who earned a spot at the University of Texas and arrived on campus full of optimism and excitement: she was the first in her family to make it college, and she had her career trajectory all mapped out, including helping her mother, who never made it to college. When people warned her that U.T. was hard, she thought to herself, "Oh, I got this far, I'm smart. I'll be fine." In her high school, she aced all her math tests without studying. Her senior-year GPA was 3.50, and she placed 39th out of 559 seniors.

Then, a month into freshman year at U.T., Vanessa failed the first test in statistics – a course that was a prerequisite for the nursing program she hoped to enter. Crushed, she called home, and her mother's reaction made things worse: "Maybe you just weren't meant to be there. Maybe we should have sent you to a junior college first." Vanessa said she died inside when her mother said that. "You know, moms are usually right. I just started questioning everything: Am I supposed to be here? Am I good enough?"

"There are thousands of students like Vanessa at the University of Texas," says Tough, "and millions like her throughout the country – high-achieving students from low-income families who want desperately to earn a four-year degree but who run into trouble along the way… They get into a good college and encounter what should be a minor obstacle, and they freak out. They don't want to ask for help, or they don't know how. Things spiral, and before they know it, they're back at home, resentful, demoralized, and in debt… To solve the problem of college completion, you first need to get inside the mind of a college student."

The good news is that Vanessa enrolled in a pilot program at U.T. that addressed not just her academic and financial concerns, but also her doubts, misconceptions, and fears – and she is now earning top grades, networking among her friends, and gaining confidence every day. The program is the brainchild of David Laude, a former U.T. chemistry professor who is now a top administrator whose mission is to boost the university's graduation rate from 52 percent to 70 percent. He and his colleagues created a 14-item algorithm to identify incoming

freshmen with the lowest probability of graduating. These high-risk students are enrolled in TIP – the Texas Interdisciplinary Plan – which includes smaller classes, peer mentoring, extra tutoring help, engaged faculty advisors, and community-building exercises. There's also the University Leadership Network, a selective sub-program in which the most economically disadvantaged freshmen perform community service, take part in discussion groups, and attend weekly lectures on time management and teambuilding. ULN students wear business attire for these events, and later in their college careers they serve in internships on campus and serve as mentors or residence-hall advisors or student-government officials.

But these essential supports aren't the most important part of what U.T. is doing. Laude's guiding principle – the same one he used 15 years earlier in a highly successful program he devised to boost the achievement of his lowest-achieving/economically poorest chemistry students to comparable grades and graduation rates as their more-affluent classmates – was this: "Select the students who are least likely to do well, but in all your communications with them, convey the idea that you have selected them for this special program not because you fear they will fail, but because you are confident they can succeed." Basically, "no one will give them the chance to simply give up."

Laude has been heavily influenced by David Yeager, a young U.T. psychology professor who worked with Stanford professors Carol Dweck, Claude Steele, and Hazel Markus before coming to Texas. Laude and Yeager realized that two negative thoughts often overwhelm struggling students:

- Belonging – doubts that they are in the right university;
- Ability – doubts, especially after failing a test or getting a bad grade, that they are smart enough.

"Doubts about belonging and doubts about ability often fed on each other," says Tough, "and together they created a sense of helplessness. That helplessness dissuaded students from taking any steps to change things. Why study if I can't get smarter? Why go out and meet new friends if no one will want to talk to me anyway? Before long, the nagging doubts became self-fulfilling prophecies."

Yeager and Greg Walton, a U.T. colleague, experimented with different ways of counteracting this negative vortex. They found that three strategies worked:

- Appealing to social norms – for example, when students are told that most students don't engage in binge drinking, they're less likely to do so themselves.
- Allowing a degree of autonomy – in other words, not marching all students into a lecture hall and delivering a lecture, but instead giving them some choice.
- Engineering self-persuasion – students hear a message and then compose their own lecture or video and deliver it to other students.

The psychologists devised two experiments to put these insights to work. In the first, at an elite northeastern college, first-year students read brief essays by upperclassmen recalling their own experiences when they first arrived. The essays conveyed the same basic message: "When I got here, I thought I was the only one who felt left out. But then I found out that everyone feels that way at first, and everyone gets over it. I got over it, too." Students then wrote their own

essays and made videos for future students with the same message. The whole process took about an hour, but the results for African-American students were dramatic: compared to a control group, the experiment tripled the percentage of black students who earned GPAs in the top quarter of their class, and cut the black-white achievement gap in half. There was even a positive effect on black students' health. The intervention had no effect on white students.

The second experiment involved ninth graders at three high schools in Northern California. Students sat in front of computers and read scientific articles and testimonials from older students with this message: *People change. If someone is being mean to you or excluding you, it's mostly likely a temporary thing; it's not about you*. Remarkably, this 25-minute intervention virtually eliminated depressive symptoms that usually crop up with freshmen.

In these and other experiments, Yeager and Walton have found that although the same basic message works, it needs to be tailored to the culture and circumstances of every school and college. They customized the "belonging" and "mindset" messages for incoming U.T. freshmen in the fall of 2012, and by the end of the first semester, students who received those messages cut the traditional advantaged/disadvantaged achievement gap in half.

How can such brief interventions bring about such dramatic changes? Yeager and Walton believe it's because they keep students from over-interpreting discouraging events that might happen to them in the future – it acts as an inoculation against negative thinking. Students from more-advantaged backgrounds don't seem to need this. "Sure, they still feel bad when they fail a test or get in a fight with a roommate or are turned down for a date," says Tough. "But in general, they don't interpret those setbacks as a sign that they don't belong in college or that they're not going to succeed there." But students who are in the minority on any dimension are highly susceptible to these feelings, and the kinds of interventions Yeager and Walton help them deal much more effectively with their doubts.

"Who Gets to Graduate?" by Paul Tough in *The New York Times Magazine,* May 18, 2014, http://nyti.ms/1jOxvLL; Tough can be reached at paul@paultough.com.

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2. RU on Track 4College? Text Messages for Graduating Seniors

In this *Education Week* article, Caralee Adams reports that some districts are using texting to keep students on track for college enrollment, especially over the summer. These initiatives respond to the fact that 10-30 percent of students who are accepted by colleges end up not attending, often because they don't deal successfully with the requirements of financial aid, registration, textbook purchases, housing, placement tests, and orientation. Indeed, one National Student Clearinghouse study found that some high schools claiming to have 93-94 percent of their students going to college actually have only 81-84 percent. "There is a mind shift needed as students graduate from high school," says Daniel Voloch of iMentor in New York City. "All those supports that led up to graduation disappear at exactly the moment they begin to make high-stakes decisions."

West Virginia recently launched a pilot program in 14 high schools and four colleges that

sends personalized texts to high-school seniors, starting in January, about key deadlines. The program especially targets low-income students who are the first in their families to attend college. "We want to connect students with college support staff earlier," says Jessica Kennedy of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. "When students transition from high school to college, they don't have anyone to reach out to in the summer. They are scrambling to build new support systems and want more."

Benjamin Castleman of the University of Pittsburgh adds, "There are a lot of tasks that need to be completed that are complex. Texting prompts students to think about these tasks rather than put them off. An added power of the messaging is as a vehicle to connect students to professional assistance. Castleman's research (with Lindsay Page) showed that texting programs cost as little as $7 a student and can result in an increase of student matriculation of up to 11 percent.

Octavia Smoot, an 18-year-old senior from Madison, West Virginia, affirmed the value of the texting program. "I never put [my phone] down, unless I'm sleeping," she said. "Teenagers would rather text than go in and talk to a counselor. Texting is the way we communicate." Lisa Zarin of College Bound agrees: "They would go without food before they would go without a phone," she says. But it's important that texts be personalized, actionable, and contain links. "Texting done poorly can be something that becomes a distraction," says Zarin. "Students shared that if texting is random and like a robo-message, they would ignore it."

"Texting Is Used to Keep Students on College Track" by Caralee Adams in *Education Week,* May 14, 2014 (Vol. 33, #31, p. 1, 20-21), www.edweek.org

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3. Nurturing Young People's Curiosity and Interest

In this article in *Knowledge Quest*, psychologist Daniel Willingham (University of Virginia) affirms the importance of curiosity to academic success and offers a three-step description of what a successful curiosity "episode" looks like:

- We see a mental challenge that needs to be addressed or a piece of knowledge we don't have.
- We seek the pleasure that comes from successfully addressing it (humans enjoy solving problems, he says).
- We quickly calculate that it will take some effort, but know that if we work at it, we might be successful.

Note the key elements: being intrigued, wanting closure, and believing success is possible. Research suggests that this loop – curiosity plus conscientiousness – has as much impact on school grades as intelligence.

Willingham goes on to draw a distinction between curiosity and long-term interest: we can have in-the-moment curiosity about a book or video that doesn't necessarily hold long-term interest – and we can be interested in something over time and not be curious about it in the moment. In both cases, the keys to engaging students are *complexity* (the student is

intrigued and challenged by themes, allusions, and moral implications) and *clarity* – the student can master it without confusion or frustration.

Many educators and parents believe that young people today are less willing to do that follow-up work. "They may be mildly curious about something," says Willingham, "but they don't have the mental discipline to stick to the problem for any length of time. Curiosity seems to evaporate." Digital technologies are often blamed for shortening kids' attention spans and interrupting the loop when curiosity or interest are piqued: "A student might grow curious about, say, an insect she sees in the garden, but when she goes to look it up on Wikipedia she'll soon be distracted by Facebook. Or she'll start a video game or a text message conversation with friends before she ever gets to Wikipedia."

This sounds plausible, but Willingham is skeptical. Young people sit through two-hour movies and read hefty novels like *The Hunger Games*. "The problem is not attention capacity," he says; "it's willingness to deploy attention." What's really going on, he believes, is that "pervasive access to entertainment has made for a very low threshold for boredom. If you're bored, a quick fix is close at hand." A YouTube video is disappointing? There are several other choices at your fingertips. Had enough videos? Time to text or visit Facebook. All this makes young people less willing to do the mental work of following through when something makes them curious. "Their experience may have led them to expect high payoff relatively quickly, with a modest outlay of their own mental effort," he says.

So what can educators and parents do to shift this dynamic and encourage young people to follow through when they're curious or interested? Willingham has three suggestions:

• *Model it*. Young people will notice if adults show genuine curiosity and interest in something.

• *Distinguish between short-term curiosity and long-term interest*. It's okay for young people to be intrigued with something and not turn it into a long-term passion. "It's a pleasurable sampling, like a wine-tasting," says Willingham. "For that reason, it can be frivolous. I would argue that indulging our curiosity is never a waste of time. That perspective implies we should honor curiosity in students wherever we find it, however trivial its object may appear to us."

• *Ask good questions*. Curiosity and interest are sparked when adults frame intriguing and provocative questions. Simple, closed-response questions like, *Why do you suppose snakes shed their skins?* is not effective. "The best books, documentaries, and speakers are able to sneak up on good questions, so that by the time the question is posed, the audience is panting to know the answer," says Willingham.

"Making Students More Curious" by Daniel Willingham in *Knowledge Quest*, May/June 2014 (Vol. 42, #5, p 32-35), no e-link available; Willingham is at Willingham@virginia.edu.

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4. What Students Worry About Entering Different Levels of Schooling

Three graphs in *ASCA School Counselor* present data on students' biggest worries and struggles entering each level of schooling:

Entering elementary school:

- Being away from parents – 28%
- Learning to sit still and listen to teachers – 24%
- Making new friends – 18%
- Learning and following school procedures – 20%
- Other – 10%

Entering middle school:

- Peer issues and peer pressure – 20%
- Adjusting to multiple teachers – 17%
- Opening lockers – 16%
- Managing time – 11%
- Finding their way to classes – 11%
- Other – 4%
- Organization – 2%

Entering high school:

- Homework – 20%
- Peer issues and peer pressure – 18%
- Finding way to classes – 14%
- How to maneuver lunch time/accompanying social issues – 13%
- Post-secondary planning – 11%
- Extracurricular activities and choices – 9%
- Opening lockers – 6%
- How to access school services (nurse, guidance counselor, administrators, etc.) – 4%

"What Do Students Entering Your School Seem to Worry About or Struggle With Most?" in *ASCA School Counselor*, May/June 2014 (Vol. 51, #5, p. 40), no e-link available

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5. Providing a School Environment that Supports Traumatized Youth

More than 68 percent of U.S. children have experienced some kind of traumatic event by the time they are sixteen, reports Laura Pappano in this *Harvard Education Letter* article. Twenty-five percent have witnessed violence, and 10 percent have witnessed a domestic assault. "The most artfully designed curriculum means little to a student whose mind is fixed on last night's shooting outside or the scary, violent fight between parents that broke out in the kitchen," says Pappano. "Brilliant teaching often can't compete with the sudden loss of a parent or a friend."

Psychologists have found that many of these young people have had their brain architecture altered. As a result, they struggle with interpersonal relationships, memory and language development, and everyday stress. Something as simple as a teacher announcing a spelling test on Friday can seem like a sabre-tooth tiger walking into the room. "In school, because traumatized students view the world as dangerous and misread social cues, minor

events may trigger defiant, disruptive, or aggressive behavior," says Pappano. "Alternatively, they may withdraw and seem not to care."

These findings have led some schools to think about ways to become "trauma-sensitive." Here are some adaptations:

- Adults working not to raise their voices and relying less on punishments;
- Asking "What's happening? What's going on?" rather than "What's wrong with you?"
- Giving escalating students the opportunity to cool off in a neutral location;
- Working out accommodations for students who are anxious about family members;
- Working to find the causes and triggers of disruptive behaviors;
- Analyzing the timing and location of incidents and preventing future incidents.

And here are some pointers from a publication by Massachusetts Advocates for Children:

• Find islands of competence. Tailoring lessons to children's interests helps them succeed and build positive, trusting relationships.

• Strive for predictability. Routines are important, as is avoiding abrupt transitions.

• Don't dumb down the curriculum. Work for traumatized students should be in line with that of their classmates. If there's a skill or knowledge gap, address it forthrightly.

• Provide positive behavior supports. Analyze triggers for problematic behavior.

"'Trauma-Sensitive' Schools: A New Framework for Reaching Troubled Students" by Laura Pappano in *Harvard Education Letter*, May/June 2014 (Vol. 30, #3, p. 1-2, 5-6), www.edletter.org

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6. A Critique of the KIPP Character-Education Model

In this *New Republic* article, Jeffrey Aaron Snyder (Carleton College) worries about the KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) approach to developing character. KIPP teachers focus on seven strengths – grit, zest, self-control, optimism, gratitude, social intelligence, and curiosity – all of which are believed to correlate with college and life success. KIPP students discuss their "character growth card" in parent/teacher conferences, comparing their own self-assessments ("Remembered and followed directions" for self-control, "Showed enthusiasm" for zest) with their teachers'. Snyder sees three problems with the KIPP approach:

• *We don't know how to teach character*. Psychologists and educators are learning more and more about character, but don't have much of a handle on how to enhance it. "We may discover that the most 'desirable' character traits are largely inherited," says Snyder. In fact, grit is highly correlated with conscientiousness, one of the "big five" OCEAN personality traits that psychologists believe is stable and hereditary. It's also possible that grit has strong cultural roots – Snyder notes that Chinese students put in phenomenal hours doing homework. "I have no doubt that many KIPPsters can rattle off the seven character strengths," says Snyder. The real question is whether learning to speak KIPP's character language actually translates into substantive cognitive and behavioral changes. I am afraid that for most of the students, most of the time, the character lessons at KIPP will become indistinguishable from the kind of

repetitive teacher-directed talk that only registered as so much background noise." Students watch what we do, not what we say.

• *Character-based education is not tethered to morality*. Dave Levin, KIPP's leader, made a deliberate choice to avoid values and steer clear of the culture wars. "The inevitable problem with the values-and-ethics approach," he said, "is that you get into, well, whose values? Whose ethics?" But Snyder believes that KIPP's approach "unwittingly promotes an amoral and careerist 'looking out for number one' point of view… Life is narrowed into an endless competition for money, status, and the next merit badge." Where is kindness, citizenship, honesty, justice, thrift, and patriotism? "Today's grit and self-control are basically industry and temperance in the guise of psychological constructs rather than moral imperatives," says Snyder. "While it takes grit and self-control to be a successful heart surgeon, the same could be said about a suicide bomber. When your character-education scheme fails to distinguish between doctors and terrorists, heroes and villains, it would appear to have a basic flaw. Following the KIPP growth card protocol, Bernie Madoff's character point average, for instance, would be stellar. He was, by most accounts, an extremely hard-working, charming, wildly optimistic man." Oddly, kindness is prominent in KIPP's motto – *Work Hard, Be Nice* – but is not on the list of character strengths.

• *This approach drastically constricts the overall purpose of education*. KIPP is laser-focused on preparing students to enter and succeed in college, which, says Snyder, is "both noteworthy and laudable." But there's more to life than college, and he's concerned that "Character is treated as a kind of fuel that will help propel students through school and up the career ladder." The classroom is too narrow a slice of young people's lives to evaluate and develop character, he believes. "Gone are any traditional concerns with good and evil or citizenship and the commonweal. Gone, too, the impetus to bring youngsters into the fold of a community that is larger than themselves – a hopelessly outdated sentiment, according to the new character education evangelists. Virtue is no longer its own reward."

"Teaching Kids 'Grit' Is All the Rage. Here's What's Wrong With It" by Jeffrey Aaron Snyder in *New Republic*, May 6, 2014,
http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117615/problem-grit-kipp-and-character-based-education
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7. Ten Keys to a Successful One-to-One Laptop or Tablet Program

(Originally titled "Your 1:1 Program: Can You Answer These 10 Questions?")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Doug Johnson (media director in Mankato, Minnesota) cites Los Angeles' troubled 1:1 iPad rollout as evidence that "1:1 programs can be either a highly effective means of improving teaching and learning or a disastrous waste of money." Districts need to answer these questions:

• *What are the initiative's teaching and learning goals, and how will they be measured?* Start with the desired outcomes, not the technology.

• *What training is in place for teachers?* All too many PD efforts are too little, too late and focus on the device, not the pedagogy.

• *Is there a digital citizenship curriculum in place?* Guidelines and training need to be clear and positive. See https://sites.google.com/a/isd77.k12.mn.us/ilearn77 for a sample.

• *What happens if a student breaks or loses the device?* Heavy-duty cases and a low-cost insurance program are wise investments.

• *How will devices be managed and maintained?* This means putting staffing and a management system in place up front.

• *What e-resources will accompany the hardware?* This includes e-books, content databases, a course management system, and cloud-based productivity and collaboration tools.

• *Is the network infrastructure in place?* This involves coverage of the building and enough bandwidth to handle dozens of students using devices at the same time.

• *How will you ensure that all teachers use the devices well?* Teachers need to be involved developing policies, and effective use of technology should be part of their evaluation.

• *What will happen in a few years when all these devices are obsolete?* Short-term funding without a long-term plan will come back to haunt the district.

• *Are other areas of the school's budget being cut to pay for this project?* It's important for the district to be transparent about the budget choices involved.

"Your 1:1 Program: Can You Answer These 10 Questions?" by Doug Johnson in *Educational Leadership*, May 2014 (Vol. 71, #8, p. 86-87), http://bit.ly/1hYlzYi; Johnson can be reached at doug0077@gmail.com.

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8. David Brooks on Understanding a Social Phenomenon

In this *New York Times* column, David Brooks uses the issue of teenage pregnancy to illustrate the steps needed to understand something – what he calls the "stairway of wisdom:"

• Step 1 is looking at the basic facts and trends. According to a recent Brookings Institution study, the annual teenage childbearing rate in the U.S. has declined an amazing 52 percent since 1991.

• Step 2 is looking at academic research for causes. It turns out that teen pregnancy is not falling because of abortions; in fact, the abortion rate is falling as well. Improved sex education may be involved, but teen pregnancy rates are declining even in states (like Texas) without comprehensive sex ed. For reasons that aren't entirely clear, teens are having their first sexual experiences somewhat later and having fewer sexual partners than previous cohorts.

• Step 3 is looking at individual stories for a deeper understanding. "Unlike minnows, human beings don't exist just as members of groups," says Brooks. "People live and get pregnant one by one, and each life and each pregnancy has its own unique story… Maybe a young woman just wanted to feel like an adult; maybe she had some desire for arduous love; maybe she was just absent-minded, or loved danger, or couldn't resist her boyfriend, or saw no possible upside to her future anyway."

• Step 4 is walking in the shoes of those being studied. "Our master teacher here is Augustine," says Brooks. "He came to believe that it takes selfless love to truly know another

person… Those of us who work with data and for newspapers probably should be continually reminding ourselves to bow down before the knowledge of participation, to defer to the highest form of understanding, which is held by those who walk alongside others every day, who know the first names, who know the smells and fears."

"Stairway to Wisdom" by David Brooks in *The New York Times*, May 16, 2014 (p. A27), http://nyti.ms/1o7pV45

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9. With Math Achievement, Do Private Schools Really Add More Value?

In this *Education Week* article, Holly Yettick reports on a scholarly book, *The Public School Advantage: Why Public Schools Outperform Private Schools* by Christopher Lubienski and Sarah Theule Lubienski (University of Chicago Press, 2013), whose title conveys its essential findings. Looking at 2003 NAEP data on demographically similar grade 4 and 8 students, the authors found that public schools achieve the same or better mathematics results as private schools. And factoring in 1998-99 Early Childhood Longitudinal Study kindergarten data, the Lubienskis found that public-school children entered kindergarten with lower math achievement than demographically similar private-school children, but by the time they reached fifth grade, they were outperforming their private-school peers.

Why? The book suggests two explanations: First, public-school teachers are more likely to be certified, which requires them to engage in ongoing professional development. Second, PD leads public-school teachers to use more conceptual math pedagogy and curriculum, versus focusing on traditional computation. The Lubienskis say that "private, autonomous, choice-based schools are not necessarily more innovative or academically effective but instead often perform at lower levels even as they attract more able students."

The book has been criticized by some voucher advocates on methodological grounds. In a response to critics, Christopher Lubienski defends the findings and adds a third explanation: Private-school parents have made the extra effort to select a non-public school and pay tuition. Parental commitment was not one of the factors in the Lubienskis' book, but he argues that if it could be measured, it would add even more to public schools' advantage.

"Authors Contend Public Schools Outperform Private Schools" by Holly Yettick in *Education Week,* May 14, 2014 (Vol. 33, #31, p. 1, 22), www.edweek.org

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10. Selected Multicultural Books

In this article in *School Library Journal*, the editors bemoan the dearth of children's books with diverse characters and authors and list some "culturally specific" books published in the last two years that they recommend for school libraries:

• *Deep in the Sahara* by Kelly Cunnane, illustrated by Hoda Hadadi (Random/Schwartz and Wade, 2013), Gr. 2-4; a positive and empowering portrayal of Muslim culture in Mauritania.

• *All Different Now: Juneteenth, the First Day of Freedom* by Angela Johnson, illustrated by

E.B. Lewis (S. and S. 2014), Gr. 2 and up; the Juneteenth celebration seen through the eyes of a young girl on a southern plantation.

• *King for a Day* by Rukhsana Khan, illustrated by Christiane Kromer (Lee and Low, 2013), Pre. S-Gr. 2; a Pakistani boy confined to a wheelchair looks forward to a springtime festival and kite-flying contest.

• *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale* by Duncan Tonatiuh (Abrams, 2013), Gr. K-2; Pancho searches for his father who went north to work in the fields and didn't return.

• *I Lived on Butterfly Hill* by Marjorie Agosin, illustrated by Lee White (S. and S./Atheneum, 2014), Gr. 6 and up; an 11-year-old Chilean girl is sent to live in Maine during a time of tumult in her country.

• *Lost Girl Found* by Leah and Laura LeLuca Bassoff (Groundwood, 2014), Gr. 8 and up; a Didinga girl is caught up in the dangers and horrors of Sudan's civil war.

• *Serafina's Promise* by Ann Burg (Scholastic, 2014), Gr. 4-6; a Haitian girl dreams of becoming a doctor in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake.

• *Africa Is My Home: A Child of the Amistad* by Monica Edinger, illustrated by Robert Byrd (Candlewick, 2013), Gr. 4-8; the events surrounding the slave ship Amistad seen through the eyes of a 9-year-old girl.

• *My Basmati Bat Mitzvah* by Paula Freedman (Abrams/Amulet, 2013), Gr. 4-7; a half-Indian, half-Jewish girl learns to navigate her religious beliefs and sense of herself.

• *Written in Stone* by Rosanne Parry (Random, 2013), Gr. 5-7; in 1918, a girl from the Makah tribe in the Pacific Northwest deals with the sudden death of her father and tries to preserve the stories and ways of her people.

• *Revolution* by Deborah Wiles (Scholastic, 2014), Gr. 5 and up; the intersecting stories of a black boy and a white girl in Mississippi during the Civil Rights Movement.

• *The Blossoming Universe of Violet Diamond* by Brenda Woods (Penguin/Nancy Paulsen Books, 2014), Gr. 4-6; 11-year-old Violet, who has grown up in a mostly white environment, longs to reconnect with the African-American side of her family.

• *The Shadow Hero* by Gene Luen Yang, illustrated by Sonny Liew (First Second, 2014), Gr. 7 and up; a graphic novel about the first Asian-American superhero.

"Windows and Mirrors: Top Recent Titles That Reflect the Multicultural Experience" in *School Library Journal*, May 2014 (Vol. 60, #5, p. 25-31), www.slj.com

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

If you have comments or suggestions, if you saw an article or web item in the last week that you think should have been summarized, or if you would like to suggest additional publications that should be covered by the Marshall Memo, please e-mail: kim.marshall48@gmail.com

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 43 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 64 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are 50 issues a year).

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Individual subscriptions are $50 for a year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and how to pay by check, credit card, or purchase order.

Website:

If you go to http://www.marshallmemo.com you will find detailed information on:

- How to subscribe or renew
- A detailed rationale for the Marshall Memo
- Publications (with a count of articles from each)
- Article selection criteria
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- Headlines for all issues
- Reader opinions (with results of an annual survey)
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
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- The current issue (in Word or PDF)
- All back issues (also in Word and PDF)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or log-in

Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
ASCD SmartBrief/Public Education NewsBlast
Better: Evidence-Based Education
Center for Performance Assessment Newsletter
District Administration
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Middle School Journal
NASSP Journal
NJEA Review
Perspectives
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Responsive Classroom Newsletter
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
School Administrator
School Library Journal
Teacher
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children/Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The District Management Journal
The Language Educator
The Learning Principal/Learning System/Tools for Schools
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time
Wharton Leadership Digest