Marshall Memo 657

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
October 17, 2016

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Missing even a little school has negative effects. Missing a lot of school throws students off track to educational success."

Robert Balfanz (see item #3)

"A school's rate of chronic absenteeism was more useful for predicting a school's test scores than other common measures, including the school's percentage of students in special education, English language learners, or students receiving free or reduced-price lunch."

Kim Nauer in "Battling Chronic Absenteeism" in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2016 (Vol. 98, #2, p. 28-34), reporting a three-year study of New York City elementary and K-8 students, www.kappanmagazine.org; Nauer is available at nauerk@newschool.edu.

"If a student makes an error, teachers must discern the severity of the error and what caused the incorrect response. Was it a small computational error? Did the student misread the question or not understand what was being asked in class? Or is there a deeply held misconception that will make learning all future related content very difficult without some type of remediation?"

Jonathan Brendefur, Sam Strother, Kelli Rich, and Sarah Appleton in "Assessing Student Understanding: A Framework for Testing and Teaching" in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, October 2016 (Vol. 23, #3, p. 174-181), no e-link available; Brendefur can be reached at jbrendef@boisestate.edu.

"A body of psychological research shows that even mild pushback against offensive remarks can have an instant effect."

Benedict Carey and Jan Hoffman (see item #2)

"Eighth graders are not going to pick on a bunch of 1st graders; 12th graders are not going to pick on 6th graders, because they are just so much younger."

Amy Ellen Schwartz, quoted in "Shorter Grade Spans Are Linked to More Bullying, Study Finds" by Sarah Sparks in *Education Week*, October 5, 2016, www.edweek.org

---

1. Should Teachers Remain Neutral on Hot Political and Social Issues?

In this article in *AMLE Magazine*, author/consultant Rick Wormeli bemoans the "divisive, no-compromise rhetoric among political parties, the distrust among people of color and police officers, and the ugly, online vitriol against others spewed daily on social media… Each week's news reconfirms our worst fears that we're not the society we thought we were." Wormeli asks, "How do we help students find hope for themselves in such a world? We need to build compassionate character, civil discourse, respect for diverse opinions, and courageous action in students as never before."

Issues like evolution, climate change, racism, LGBTQ, and the current presidential campaign are tricky territory for teachers. It's tempting to share our views – "Being purely neutral on racism, sexism, religious persecution, bullying, and the leadership of our country comes across as inert and impotent, and we are neither," says Wormeli. But educators are authority figures and schooling is compulsory, so parents at all points on the political spectrum are right be concerned about undue influence on their children – especially in the middle grades, when young people often experiment with different values, beliefs, and personas. "Sometimes middle-level students try to one-up themselves in small groups with racially, sexist, or culturally insensitive put-downs," says Wormeli. "Though they would be horrified to learn the level of hurt these jokes create in their subjects of derision, they don't perceive it as harmful enough to stop telling the jokes or hanging out with these particular friends. Correcting what's wrong and standing up for what's right are still fragile acts."

The teacher's or administrator's dilemma is when to impose our own philosophy and values. If a student makes a strident comment about Muslims or the Iraq war, asks Wormeli, "Do we jump in and declare what is right and wrong? Do we allow students to know our political, religious, cultural stance? Do we remain neutral in all things because we are guiding sages and/or public employees? Or, do we have an obligation to demonstrate for students how to have a strong opinion and act upon it constructively yet remain civil with cynics of that philosophy?… How do we demonstrate for students how to believe in something politically, religiously, and culturally, yet also respect students and their families whose beliefs are diametrically different from our own?"

Here's one approach suggested by Minnesota middle-school educator Kim Campbell when confronted by a racist comment in class: "Wow, that comment does not feel kind to me.

Can you help me better understand what you meant or were thinking?" Reflecting on the current political scene, Campbell says: "I work very hard at not bringing my bias into the conversation… Let's just say it has never been tested like it has been with this election. When you have a diverse classroom, as I do, it is important that I try as hard as I can to hear both sides of whatever issue we are discussing."

Campbell has tried to create an environment in which students feel safe sharing what they are really thinking. One technique is to have students respond anonymously to prompts; then the teacher reads some of them aloud so students hear multiple perspectives, and the class moves into a Socratic discussion. It's also a good idea to draw Venn diagrams or pro/con charts and get students writing short essays from a point of view other than their own. A starting point might be, "I hear what you are saying, but you realize not everyone agrees with you. Let's explore the counter-arguments to your position." The key is disagreeing in a civil way, with the teacher insisting on fairness, respect, and kindness.

Another key objective is developing students' consumer savvy about the media. Wormeli quotes teacher/author Debbie Silver: "It's possible to teach about biased reporting, inaccurate statistics, and fact-checking without taking a stand on issues, and we should definitely do that. Our job is not to teach kids what to think but rather how to think!" Students also need to understand where opinions come from – family, media, friends, hearsay, personal knowledge, websites, speeches, tweets, YouTube, talk shows, news outlets, magazines – and how to respond when things get heated. Such discussions are teachable moments not only for discussion skills and critical thinking but also historical and civics content. A class might agree that certain words will not be used: *Racist, stupid, hater*. A helpful comment is, "I'm just trying to understand your thinking…" Wormeli recommends www.iCivics.org as "the number one place to start with great middle-level resources and online role-playing games that teach the kind of healthy, informed conversations we want to have in school."

While understanding the importance of respecting diverse points of view, Wormeli believes that "young adolescents are desperate for models on how to stand up to unfairness, bullying, racism, violence, and religious intolerance. They also want clarity on how to disagree with friends, family, and strangers with civility instead of violence. They want to participate successfully in their local communities, yet sometimes the only models of doing so are parents yelling at their sports coaches, personal attacks among adults at school board meetings, or the barrage of YouTube clips of media pundits and politicians talking over each other… Young adolescents are looking to their parents, teachers, and coaches for evidence that the world is fair and people are compassionate." Often schools are left to answer this plea, sometimes in explicit discussion of the issues, sometimes through literature that shines a light on the human drama.

"Politics, Racism, Religion, Classism, Sexual Orientation: Do Teachers Remain Neutral or Share Their Beliefs with Students?" by Rick Wormeli in *AMLE Magazine*, October 2016 (Vol. 4, #3, p. 37-41), http://bit.ly/2dvW4Fo; Wormeli can be reached at rwormeli@cox.net.

Back to page one

2. Bystanders Pushing Back on Offensive Speech

What should a person do when a friend, co-worker, or boss makes a tasteless comment, an offensive joke, or a racist or sexist slur? ask Benedict Carey and Jan Hoffman in this *New York Times* article. Among some male friends, says Deborah Cameron of the University of Oxford, sexual banter can be a way of bonding. Choosing to push back, or not join in, can make a man feel like he's spoiling the mood, or even open questions about his masculinity. But if a bystander says nothing about offensive comments, that gives the other person a green light – and even provides encouragement.

The problem is that directly confronting another person's comment – "I don't appreciate that," "That's not cool," "That's racist" – runs the risk of provoking his or her anger or defensiveness and damaging a valued relationship. So what's a bystander to do?

It's actually not necessary to take a confrontational, principled stand or publicly shame the culprit, say Carey and Hoffman: "A body of psychological research shows that even mild pushback against offensive remarks can have an instant effect… [S]ubtle objections can stop people in midsentence, in some cases prompting later reflection… With a clearer understanding of the dynamics of such confrontation, psychologists say, people can develop tactics that can shut down the unsavory talk without ruining relationships, even when the offender has more status or power…" Here are some possibilities:

• *Distraction* – Abruptly changing the subject or, in a locker room, spraying the offender with water or turning up the volume of music that's playing.

• *Making it about you* – For example, reacting to a comment about sexual harassment, a person might say, "This is bothering me. One of my good friends was raped."

• *Politely demurring* – A person might say, "I don't agree" and improvise from there.

• *Cordial, respectful correcting of language* – Repeating the comment in one's own words with a different tone and demeanor can be effective.

• *Verbal aikido* – Pretending that the culprit is purposefully being outrageous: "I love satire! It's so weird that people believe that for real and it's so cool that you called it out."

• *Appealing to better angels* – To a comment that reveals racial stereotyping, a bystander might say, "But shouldn't everyone be treated the same?"

An important factor in effective bystander interventions, says Sharyn Potter of the University of New Hampshire, is finding approaches that feel natural and innate and preparing effective lines. "If you have a plan in your head," she says, "then you can use it." Another key factor is one's mindset about whether a bigoted or sexist person can change. A recent study by Aneeta Rattan of the London Business School and Carol Dweck of Stanford University found that people who are optimistic about the possibility of personality improvement do better when faced with a bystander dilemma. "In that sense," says Rattan, "this work suggests that your belief system about others can either be a barrier or a staircase where you can take that first step – even if it's just saying, 'I disagree.'"

"Stopping Offensive Speech In Its Tracks" by Benedict Carey and Jan Hoffman in *The New York Times*, October 13, 2016, http://nyti.ms/2encQ8h

Back to page one

3. Dealing with Excessive Student Absences

In this article in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Robert Balfanz (Johns Hopkins University) addresses the high rate of chronic absenteeism, commonly defined as a student missing 15 or more days for any reason (including suspension) in a school year. This statistic is far more helpful than average daily attendance, which masks the number of students who are missing too much school to be successful. The first U.S. Department of Education report on chronic absenteeism was released in June 2016, showing that more than 6 million students are missing three or more weeks of school each year. That's 13 percent of the public-school population, but the figure is 20 percent for high-school and black and Hispanic students and 25 percent for students with disabilities.

Balfanz reports that there is lots of variation in chronic absenteeism by grade level (high in primary grades, lowest in 3rd and 4th grade, high again in 9th and 10th grade); over time (some students have high rates of absence for multiple years); and by location (half of chronically absent students attend just 4 percent of U.S. districts; in the most affected middle schools, roughly half of all students are chronically absent and in the worst high schools, two-thirds of students were). "Missing even a little school has negative effects," says Balfanz. "Missing a lot of school throws students off track to educational success. Studies of chronic absenteeism in preK, kindergarten, and the elementary grades have consistently found links to lower achievement levels in later grades, especially for children from low-income families." And low attendance in middle and high school ripples into students not making it to post-secondary schooling, and being involved in the criminal justice system.

How can chronic absenteeism be reduced? By closely monitoring data; looking for root causes; making school inviting; intervening early (a student's attendance in September tends to be a bellwether: half of students who miss 2-4 days in the first month of school go on to miss more than 20 days by the end of that school year); supporting students and families; and working with community agencies. Balfanz says it's important to look at which of these four drivers of chronic absenteeism is at work with individual students and in different grades:

- Events and forces outside school – Sibling and elder care, jobs, transportation problems, untreated medical and mental health conditions;
- Threat avoidance – Teasing and bullying in school or on the way to school; being afraid of being punished for being late or having incomplete classroom work;
- Disengagement – Nothing interesting going on in school; no adults who notice and engage with me;
- Faulty beliefs – For example, families viewing preK and kindergarten as nonessential or believing that missing two days a month is not a big deal.

Balfanz spotlights three effective programs for combatting chronic absenteeism:

• *Diplomas Now* www.diplomasnow.org – Focusing on middle and high schools with attendance problems, this program combines whole-school reform strategies, enhanced student support (an extra team of adults works with school staff to help struggling students with attendance, behavior, and academic work), an early-warning system, and connecting the neediest students with professional assistance.

• *Challenge 5* – When community leaders in Grand Rapids, Michigan learned that 36 percent of public school students were chronically absent, they blanketed the area with the Challenge 5 message in English and Spanish (*Strive for fewer than five days absent*), established attendance teams at each school, monitored attendance, and intervened with students missing too much school. Principals received training and used incentives, competitions, and targeted parent outreach to get the message out. Chronic absenteeism has dropped by 25 percent and student achievement is up.

• *Scaling It Up: My Brother's Keeper Success Mentor Initiative* – Working in more than 30 school districts, the goal is to pair every chronically absent 6th and 9th grader with a Success Mentor, as well as implementing a version of the model in needy elementary schools.

"Missing School Matters" by Robert Balfanz in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2015 (Vol. 98, #2, p. 8-13), www.kappanmagazine.org; Balfanz can be reached at rbalfanz@jhu.edu.

Back to page one

4. Project-Based Learning with Fourth and Fifth Graders

In this article in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Eleanor Smith and Margaret Pastor (special education teacher and principal in a Maryland elementary school) describe the progress of two very different students as their teacher (and her special education colleague) began to implement project-based learning. Mario had just arrived from another school and showed every sign of being a challenge: a non-reader with very low academic scores and limited English, he had a history of behavioral problems and initially presented as scowling and incommunicative. Megan, on the other hand, entered fourth grade with a record of almost perfect grades, completed her work meticulously and on time, and was very well behaved – although shy and not a risk-taker.

The two children's teacher launched a project-based study of U.S. geography, and Mario picked the state of Texas for his challenge. "He quickly became engaged in posing questions and searching for answers to all manner of inquiry about the state," say Smith and Pastor, "and the transformation was astonishing. We learned that he could indeed speak and understand English well; he simply had not cared to speak up in school." That year, Mario began to read for the first time and became a happy, eager student.

Meanwhile, Megan struggled to complete projects because there was often more than one correct answer. She was particularly frustrated when she couldn't figure out how to create a "perfect" diorama. Megan had never been asked to use creativity to solve a problem, and it was very challenging for her.

The following year, the teacher looped up to fifth grade with most of her students, and the class launched into a more ambitious project creating an imaginary colony on the planet Mars. During the Fall, students learned about Earth, Mars, and space, teleconferenced with space scientists, hosted guest speakers, watched videos about the solar system, and took field trips, including to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. In December they started to design their Martian colony, each student and their teachers assigned responsibility for a 6 x 9-foot pod (they could see how their pod fit into the overall colony on a

bulletin board scale model). "Teachers realized that much of their teaching was now guided by casual student discourse while they worked on the pods and other displays," say Smith and Pastor. "Questions and dialogue flowed, and teachers incorporated academic content into these student-led and student-owned conversations." Students delved into what they would need to survive on Mars and posted their ideas – surveys, supply lists, expense forms, descriptive proposals – on an Idea Board modeled after a picture the class had noticed in the background of a photo from the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Students became experts on Mars and their classroom attracted visitors from around their school.

At one point Megan realized that her perfectly measured and scaled furnishings didn't fit in her pod, which was a little too small. With prodding from the special education teacher, Megan negotiated with students in neighboring pods and got them to share some of their space. She and Mario ended up taking the lead building a life-size model of one of the living pods. At the end of the year, the entire student body, parents, and many community members viewed the class's Mars colony.

Over the two years, Mario made tremendous progress (while still testing below grade level in reading and math), and even came up with an original insight that the pods should be launched from the moon since it had lower gravity than Earth (the class learned that NASA engineers had a similar idea). "Megan also had grown in important ways," say Smith and Pastor. "She no longer approached learning as an exercise in remembering and repeating information but rather as taking on challenges and seeking answers. Her self-confidence, in turn, had made her into a true leader… And for the first time, she shared with us, she loved to learn."

"Engage Me and I Learn" by Eleanor Smith and Margaret Pastor in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2016 (Vol. 98, #2, p. 41-43), www.kappanmagazine.org; the authors can be reached at ekshgs@gmail.com and peggypastor@gmail.com.

Back to page one

5. A High School's College-Going Culture: Necessary But Not Sufficient

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Steven Athanases (University of California/ Davis) and Betty Achinstein, Marnie Curry, and Rodney Ogawa (University of California/ Santa Cruz) report on their study of a charter high school that aspired to send its low-SES, predominantly Latino students to college. The researchers found that the school had successfully developed all the trappings of a college culture:

- A carefully articulated mission with college entrance as its centerpiece;
- Schoolwide college-going goals;
- Strong agreement among faculty members on the importance of students going to college;
- High expectations of students' college-going talk, demeanor, and comportment;
- Comprehensive college counseling;
- Teachers of color as multicultural navigators and role models.

However, the researchers found that in daily classroom interactions, there was little of the kind of rigorous instruction that would put students on the path to college success.

The school's teachers worked hard and were deeply invested in the mission, but as the researchers observed classes over a period of months, they found that the school's college-going rhetoric was rarely translated into academic substance. Specifically:

- Daily instruction "hovered around moderate academic challenge and intermediate literacy concerns," they say;
- Teachers seldom used "disciplinary discourse, discovery, debate, and critique," opting instead for test prep and "routines, basics, and formulaic approaches;"
- Classroom discussions seldom involved true collaboration and the social construction of knowledge;
- Teachers rarely probed in ways that prompted students to elaborate substantively on their ideas;
- Students were often producing products that simply complied with rules and conventions;
- Teachers didn't regularly make students' learning "visible, viable, and meaningful."

There were exceptions, especially a first-year teacher who masterfully infused high-level content and provided the kind of support that would enable her students to reach higher levels of performance. But the researchers concluded that such teaching was rare and the school should bring the same kind of energy and organizational commitment to professional development that it brought to creating a college-going culture. Specifically, they say, "far deeper and more engaged attention was needed to help teachers truly develop their capacity to design instructional scaffolding that was responsive to learners and faded appropriately to transfer control of learning to students…"

"What our study suggests," conclude Athanases, Achinstein, Curry, and Ogawa, "is that greater focus on the kinds of actual discussions and academic interactions found in college-level classrooms may be a critical missing piece in current conceptions of a college-going culture… Adolescents need opportunities to generate and express rich understandings of ideas and concepts."

"The Promise and Limitations of a College-Going Culture: Towards Cultures of Engaged Learning for Low-SES Latina/o Youth" by Steven Athanases, Betty Achinstein, Marnie Curry, and Rodney Ogawa in *Teachers College Record*, July 2016 (Vol. 118, #7, p. 1-60), http://education.ucdavis.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/athanases_tcr_college-going_cultures.pdf

Back to page one

6. Reshaping the Role of Principal Supervisors

In this article in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Amy Saltzman (The Hatcher Group) describes two ways that Washington, D.C. and Tulsa, Oklahoma have changed the role of principal supervisors: reducing the number of principals they work with to 12 (from 25-40), and making teaching and learning the focus of the job (versus compliance and operations). "Supervisors in both districts now concentrate on bolstering their principals' work to improve instruction," says

Saltzman. Supervisors spend 70 percent of their time inside schools visiting classrooms, analyzing assessments, helping with staffing, honing professional development, doing long-range planning, and working hand in hand with their principals to find the best path forward. When they're not visiting schools, supervisors stay in touch with their principals by phone, e-mail, and texts. An assistant helps each supervisor by taking care of parent complaints, broken boilers, and other operational issues.

The reduced span of control, focus on instruction, and prominence within the hierarchy ("It's one of the most important positions in the district," said D.C.'s chancellor) has attracted a different breed of professional to the job – experienced principals who are passionate about improving what happens in classrooms and would have had no interest in the old desk-bound compliance role. Interestingly, when D.C. shifted its structure, not one of the previous area superintendents moved into the new positions.

The revised roles combine several key functions: a shoulder for stressed-out principals to cry on, direct instructional support, and boss/evaluator. "These seemingly contradictory roles can make it difficult to build trusting relationships," says Saltzman. Surveys show that it takes time to establish trust, and some principals complain that supervisors aren't in their schools enough. There's also been turnover among principals, including some who didn't appreciate losing some of the autonomy they previously enjoyed and others who didn't relate well to the intense focus on instruction.

But some principals have reached a good place with their supervisors. "It doesn't feel evaluative," says Tulsa principal Jennifer Pense. "She's truly a coach. That has taken away a lot of the fear of asking for help and not having to feel like I need to be perfect." The multiple roles aren't always comfortable for supervisors. "I know they've made progress," says D.C. supervisor LaKimbre Brown of some of her principals, "but I still have to say at the end of the day that they get a '2' ('minimally effective') rating. It creates this tension. I think I spend too much time belaboring how to craft the managerial part to preserve the relationship."

What are the results in schools whose principals are working with this model of supervision? Long-range studies are ongoing, says Saltzman, but the initial reports from Tulsa and D.C. are encouraging and both districts' superintendents are enthusiastic and optimistic.

"Revising the Role of Principal Supervisor" by Amy Saltzman in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2016 (Vol. 98, #2, p. 52-57), www.kappanmagazine.org; Saltzman can be reached at asaltzman@thehatchergroup.com. This article comes from *The Power of Principal Supervisors: How Two Districts Are Remaking an Old Role* (The Wallace Foundation).

Back to page one

7. Shortcomings in Oklahoma's School Rating System

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Curt Adams, Patrick Forsyth, and Jordan Ware (University of Oklahoma) and Mwarumba Mwavita (Oklahoma State University) report on their study of Oklahoma's A-B-C-D-F school ratings. The system is designed to recognize schools receiving top ratings and launch turnaround plans in schools receiving poor ratings, with the overall objective of closing racial and economic achievement gaps. The researchers

were interested in whether schools receiving As and Bs had high student achievement *and* smaller racial and economic achievement gaps, compared to schools receiving Ds and Fs. In other words, did the school ratings provide meaningful and useful information about differences in student achievement across different racial and economic groups, within and between schools?

Oklahoma's school ratings are composed of two equally weighted components: (a) test scores in reading, math, science, and social studies; and (b) student growth in reading/English and math. In addition, schools can get up to 10 bonus points for attendance, advanced course participation, a low dropout rate, and return rates on parent climate surveys.

The authors' conclusion? "Our evidence suggests that a composite letter grade provides very little meaningful information about achievement differences," say Adams, Forsyth, Ware, and Mwavita. The way the grades are computed ends up "hiding achievement gaps rather than revealing them… The largest achievement gaps were in schools ranked as the most effective… Average performance of free and reduced-price lunch students was nearly equivalent across letter grades… To be meaningful, grades need to reflect the performance of all students and student subgroups. Oklahoma's A-F letter grades fail this test by making it possible for schools to receive As and Bs while failing to serve their free and reduced-price lunch and minority students… Perhaps the most troubling finding was that A and B schools were least effective for poor, minority children, while D and F schools were most effective… Poor, minority students end up being left behind when grades obscure achievement differences within schools."

The authors conclude: "The absence of informational significance means that school grades cannot be used to nurture the human and social capacity under which effective schools adapt to their external environments and to the needs of their students. School grades deliver little informational value to teachers and administrators. They hide achievement differences, they cannot be disaggregated by content standards, and they do not measure student growth toward college, citizenship, and career ready expectations. Furthermore, school grades cannot be used to measure the effectiveness of improvement strategies or interventions; any change from one year to the next is just as likely attributable to factors outside school control than to what happens within schools and classrooms… School performance is multifaceted and varies across subjects, classrooms, and students. Instead of measuring and reporting variability, grades treat teaching and learning in school as fixed processes. As a result, lower-achieving students receive the same performance status as higher-achieving students, essentially ignoring variance that can help schools recognize and respond to unmet student needs."

"The Informational Significance of A-F School Accountability Grades" by Curt Adams, Patrick Forsyth, Jordan Ware, and Mwarumba Mwavita in *Teachers College Record*, July 2016 (Vol. 118, #7, p. 1-31), http://captulsa.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Informational-Significance-of-A-F-Accountabiity-Grades-Final.pdf

Back to page one

8. Short Items:

a. Third-grade math videos – This *Inside Mathematics* link http://bit.ly/2dNH6NU contains videos and lesson ideas for teaching students about multiplication and division.

"Third Grade Math: Interpreting Multiplication and Division" featuring Mia Buljan of the Hayward, California schools, from the Charles A. Dana Center of the University of Texas/ Austin, October 2016

Back to page one

b. Fourth graders speak out about stereotyping – This video shows Maryland students directly confronting racial and ethnic prejudices https://vimeo.com/182020903.

"The Lie" from Untitled Productions, September 2016, directed by Kevin Pastor

Back to page one

c. Books featuring African-American girls – Marley Dias and the Grassroots Community Foundation have created a database of thousands of books featuring black girls, searchable to author, title, and reading level: http://grassrootscommunityfoundation.org/1000-black-girl-books-resource-guide

"Highlighted and Underlined" in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2016 (Vol. 98, #2, p. 7)

Back to page one

d. Decoding educational jargon – The Glossary of Education Reform website from the Great Schools Partnership and the Education Writers Association has a searchable list of many terms and hot topics: http://www.edglossary.org.

"Highlighted and Underlined" in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2016 (Vol. 98, #2, p. 6)

Back to page one

If you have feedback or suggestions,
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 45 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).

Subscriptions:

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
- Topics (with a count of articles from each)
- Headlines for all issues
- Reader opinions
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

- The current issue (in Word or PDF)
- All back issues and podcasts
- An archive of all articles so far, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- A collection of "classic" articles from all issues

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
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
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Literacy Today
Middle School Journal
Peabody Journal of Education
Perspectives
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
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 Journal of the Learning Sciences
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 Magazine
Wharton Leadership Digest