

Marshall Memo 729

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education

March 26, 2018

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Quotes of the Week

“If you’re willing to stay at school until 9pm every night, your work will oblige you by expanding to fill whatever time you give it.”

Justin Baeder (see item #1)

“Evidence is starting to emerge that stress isn’t just endemic to leadership – it’s an epidemic.”

Justin Baeder (*ibid.*)

“The feedback sandwich is full of baloney.”

Dan Rockwell (see item #2)

“Pat people on the back more than kicking them in the pants. You suck the life out of people when all you do is point out what’s wrong.”

Dan Rockwell (*ibid.*)

“Contrived collegiality can look collaborative but is really a superficial relationship in which members will often meet but are not afforded the time to dig deeply into the issues.”

Denise Morgan and Celeste Bates (see item #6)

“Across the country at this very minute, there are thousands of students sitting in classes they could have aced on the very first day of school. An even larger population of students are being dragged along to more-advanced concepts before they are ready, simply because the teacher needs to cover all of the course objectives in the allotted amount of days for the semester.”

Jessica Shopoff and Chase Eskelsen in “High School Reimagined (and We Truly Mean Reimagined)” in *The Education Gadfly*, March 21, 2018 (Vol. 18, #12),

<https://bit.ly/2pglHiE>

1. Time Management Insights for Principals

In this article in *The Principal Center*, former principal Justin Baeder weighs in on the perennial issue of work-life balance for school leaders. “Evidence is starting to emerge that stress isn’t just endemic to leadership,” he says, “– it’s an epidemic... Many hard-working educators seem to feel a strong sense of guilt around the idea of self-care, as if a ‘whatever it takes’ attitude toward student learning rules out any effort to limit one’s own stress.” This is a formula for overwork and burnout. To have a positive impact on student learning over time, says Baeder, principals need to pace themselves as professionals, not damage their health by acting like heroes.

An interesting parallel is what has happened in a line of work with a long history of heroism: firefighting. Rushing into burning buildings, carrying out gasping victims, and dousing raging fires – all this epitomizes bravery and self-sacrifice. But starting in the middle of the 20th century, firefighters turned to a much more effective way to save lives: prevention. Firefighters now spend most of their time visiting schools, supervising fire drills, and checking on sprinkler and alarm systems, fire doors, and smoke detectors. According to Steven Pinker in his new book, *Enlightenment Now*, 96 percent of 911 calls to fire stations are for cardiac arrests and other medical emergencies, and most of the rest are for small fires. A typical firefighter sees a burning building every other year. “Professionalism outperforms heroism, every time,” says Baeder. “It’s not flashy, but it works far better.” So what’s the equivalent in the world of the principal?

- *Define and protect the leader’s work.* That means staying focused on a well-defined leadership agenda designed to maximize student learning, and having systems to prevent and deal with things that pull principals away from the core work. “[I]f you’re fighting fires all day, every day,” says Baeder, “it’s time to step back and look at the system you’re dealing with. Do you have a wooden building with no sprinklers, metaphorically speaking? Are you plagued with perpetual emergencies that could and should be prevented by proactive leadership?”

One example is substitute teachers – calling them, assigning them, dealing with problems when they can’t handle classes, covering classes yourself when there aren’t enough subs or they arrive late. Baeder suggests putting some serious time into solving the problem up front: consulting colleagues in other schools who have a better system, recruiting a strong pool of subs, getting a staff member to train and handle subs, and delegating the daily business of calling and assigning replacement teachers to someone in the office.

“Ninety percent of schools have already done this,” says Baeder, “and you can too. In fact, we have the knowledge and the ability to solve virtually every problem that’s currently

stressing principals out. The key to sharing that knowledge and implementing it everywhere is to drop the pretention of heroism. We must instead adopt a mindset of professionalism, stop tolerating the endless cycle of burning buildings, and install the ‘sprinkler systems’ we need.”

- *Build low walls with gates.* If you don’t protect your core work from all the other agendas that compete for your time, says Baeder, you won’t be effective for students. Working with principals over the last decade, he’s noticed that “the most overwhelmed and stressed-out principals seem to be in a constant state of emergency. It’s not just that they’re dealing with a few emergencies. It’s that *everything* is an emergency, all the time.” But in other schools, the same phenomena aren’t emergencies; they’re handled by systems. In the school where Baeder was principal, for example, there was already a good system for handling substitutes – a combination of technology, delegated responsibilities, and resources that made subs “a permanently solved problem” that rarely demanded his attention.

Baeder likes the analogy of a low wall around a pasture. When teachers needed a substitute, they connected with the school’s online SubFinder system. If that didn’t arrange for a sub, they called the school’s office manager, who worked her magic with glitches in the automated system. If that failed, teachers could “jump over the wall” and bring the problem to him. Importantly, the “wall” was low enough that Baeder could see what was on the other side and intervene if necessary. The result: subs took very little of his time.

- *Designate exception-handlers.* Of course not all problems can be solved with systems. How can principals keep from being pulled off agenda by unique situations that demand an immediate response? An example: there’s a traffic-flow issue out front at dismissal time. This kind of problem could come straight to the principal, but a better process (unless it’s a real emergency) is asking the safety committee to address it at the next meeting. “Again, the ‘wall’ protecting our time shouldn’t be so high that we’re fully insulated from every issue,” says Baeder. “But the wall should gently guide issues to the right ‘gate’... ‘Let’s put that on the agenda’ is a magical phrase. It shows responsiveness and concern, but also a disciplined, measured response – you’re not dropping everything in response to someone else’s issue.”

Another example: a parent comes to the principal and says, “My kid is being bullied. What are you going to do?” The best scenario is that the school has a PBIS program in place and there’s a structured response ready to be implemented – a “gate” to which the principal can direct the parent. If such a program isn’t in place, the principal’s work is getting a program up and running, which will take time now but pays big dividends in the long run. That’s the macro work that prevents lots of inefficient micro stopgaps. “Again,” says Baeder, “think of these as low walls ... to keep people from dumping too many of their issues on us too easily. Some issues are big enough to get over them, and interrupt you immediately, like if there’s a fight, or a serious complaint about a teacher, or some other emergency. But other issues aren’t big enough to go over the wall, so you route them to the ‘gate.’ They walk around for a bit, come to a gate, and try to get in.”

Does this sound bureaucratic? Sure, but it’s bureaucracy in the best sense of the word – systems to get routine things done efficiently. It seems bureaucratic when the fire marshal comes around with a clipboard and scolds a principal for using door stops on fire doors and

asks to see the fire drill logs. “Would it be more ‘heroic’ to carry people out of burning buildings?” asks Baeder. “Absolutely... But which saves more lives – the professional process, or the heroic rescue?”

- *Keep regular working hours.* Even with good systems and low walls in place, leaders still get a lot of other people’s issues. That’s because there’s one leader and lots of stakeholders, and it’s very easy for them to button-hole the leader or send an e-mail. “It’s important to recognize that this work is endless,” says Baeder. “There is no hope of ever being free from this work, or ever finishing it all... You’re the bottleneck in your organization. So how can you keep these pressures from eating you alive?”

Step one, says Baeder, is recognizing that, “If you’re willing to stay at school until 9pm every night, your work will oblige you by expanding to fill whatever time you give it... If you feel guilty leaving at 5pm, just remember this: you’re never going to get everything done, and the longer you work, the more time you waste. You’ll approach each additional task with less mental energy, and you’ll be working on less and less important tasks as the evening wears on. Do the most important work first, and give yourself a hard deadline for going home. You’ll work faster and more efficiently, you’ll prioritize more rigorously, and you’ll be more effective.”

- *Don’t use texts for tasks.* In recent years, there’s been a big increase in texting in professional contexts, accompanied by less use of e-mail, which Baeder believes is a big reason for leaders’ stress and overwork. Texts are great for quick questions, he says, but a very poor way to manage work. Why?

- Texts can’t be marked as unread.
- They’re difficult to forward or copy people on.
- They’re difficult to manage on your computer and other devices.
- They don’t integrate well with productivity tools like Outlook and Google Calendar.

The solution: Don’t let people text you at 10pm and expect an immediate response, and don’t let people text you random requests that you’ll struggle to keep track of. Institute a clear policy that people e-mail you if they need you to do something, and model this by using e-mail the same way yourself.

“How Instructional Leaders Can Create Healthy Work-Life Balance” by Justin Baeder in *The Principal Center*, March 2018, <https://www.principalcenter.com/instructional-leaders-can-create-healthy-work-life-boundaries/>

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2. Skillfully Handling Difficult Conversations

In this *Leadership Freak* article, Dan Rockwell has suggestions for dealing with a stressful meeting that can no longer be avoided [his original list of six was supplemented by online suggestions from readers]:

- *Build positive relationships.* “Pat people on the back more than kicking them in the pants,” says Rockwell. “You suck the life out of people when all you do is point out what’s wrong.”

- *Prepare.* “Before anything else, preparation is the key to success,” said Alexander Graham Bell. It’s a good idea to talk the conversation through with a trusted advisor or coach. Being prepared tells people they matter.

- *Choose a good location.* Your office is not the best place for a difficult conversation; better to meet in their space, a neutral location, or taking a walk. If you’re in an office, remove physical barriers and don’t sit behind your desk.

- *Be present.* Don’t say, “I’ll be with you after I finish this e-mail.” Before the conversation, set your phone to Do Not Disturb, put your computer to sleep (if you’re in your office), get your head in a positive space, jot down three positive qualities you see in this person, and think more about what you want than what you don’t want.

- *Stay open.* Don’t script everything, Rockwell advises. Listen and adapt to how your colleague reacts in the opening minutes.

- *Cut to the chase.* “The feedback sandwich is full of baloney,” says Rockwell. Start off by saying, “Let’s jump right in” or “There’s an issue I’d like to discuss.”

- *Pivot to the future.* “Don’t spend 45 minutes explaining what’s wrong and 10 minutes discussing how to make it right,” he says. State the issue, give an example, declare your positive intentions for the person, and ask, “How might you improve in this area?”

- *Follow through.* This is especially important if things don’t change. “A single conversation isn’t magic fairy dust,” Rockwell concludes.

“6 Power Tips for Tough Conversations” by Dan Rockwell in *Leadership Freak*, March 22, 2018, <https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/03/22/6-power-tips-for-tough-conversations/>; Rockwell can be reached at dan@leadershipfreak.com.

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3. A Systematic Approach to Talent Development

In this Charter School Growth Fund article, Caroline Kemp Lopez and Jill Dominguez describe how leaders in each IDEA Public School (there are 60+ campuses in this network) conduct a 4-hour talent review of all their teachers each October or November. The goal is to assess teachers’ status and tailor support for the remainder of the school year. IDEA uses a matrix with teacher performance on the X axis and potential on the Y axis. Here’s what the matrix contains, grouped into three vertical columns:

Strong: These teachers are on track to meet year-end student achievement goals and are in the top quartile among their colleagues:

- Strong performance, strong potential: Irreplaceable, strong future potential;
- Strong performance, adequate potential: Current star, improving moderately;
- Strong performance, weak potential: Performing, but little or no improvement.

Adequate: These teachers are close to meeting achievement goals and performing in the middle 50 percent compared to peers:

- Adequate performance, strong potential: Future star, exceptional rate of growth;
- Adequate performance, adequate potential: Solid, improving moderately;
- Adequate performance, weak potential: Acceptable, not likely to grow much.

Weak: These teachers are in the bottom quartile compared to colleagues and won't hit goals without significant intervention:

- Weak performance, strong potential: Coachable, exceptional rate of growth;
- Weak performance, adequate potential: Poor; improving only moderately;
- Weak performance, weak potential: Up or out; little or no improvement.

Having placed all teachers in the matrix, IDEA leaders plan specific follow-up for each of three categories of teachers. Some sample interventions:

- “A players” – those performing well, with high potential (the Irreplaceables, Current Stars, and Future Stars):
 - Tell them they're irreplaceable and you need them at your school.
 - Have them lead PD sessions and/or train trainers in specific areas of strength.
 - Get them coaching a colleague at their campus or another location.
 - Involve them in decision making.
 - Nominate them for an action learning program in an area of interest.
 - Invite them to participate in a hiring committee.
 - Differentiate policies for them and explain why.
 - Nominate them for awards and let them know.
 - Have the principal give them positive feedback and praise.
 - Provide 1-to-1 coaching on IDEA leadership competencies.
 - Find out what really matters to them and act on it.
 - Discuss long-term career aspirations and provide opportunities that prepare them for those roles.
- “B players” – those with high potential but adequate or weak current performance (the Solids, Acceptables, and Performings):
 - Practice the 5:1 praise-to-criticism ratio, highlighting areas of proficiency and excellence.
 - Be very clear about the changes they need to make to be high-performers.
 - Provide positive feedback when they make progress.
- “C players” – those with potential but weak current performance (the Coachables and Poores):
 - Provide consistent, directive coaching.
 - Assign them a mentor/coach in the same role.
 - Increase classroom visits and on-the-spot coaching.
 - Publicly recognize them when they do well or exemplify the school's core values so they don't become discouraged.
 - Provide differentiated professional development.
 - Target resources most likely to be effective for each person – e.g., book study, videos to watch, verbal debriefs.

Lopez and Dominguez mention three risks with this process:

- Not following up – Training, coaching, and stretch opportunities are crucial.
- Overlooking or over-investing in talent – Leaders need to monitor themselves for unconscious biases, especially in the area of future potential.

- Ignoring the steady performers – “It can be difficult to find capacity when you’re focused on retaining A players and improving C players,” say the authors, “but 50-75% of your employees likely will be in that ‘solid B’ category. Develop lighter-touch strategies to recognize and support them.”

“Using a Nine-Box Matrix to Understand IDEA’s Talent Pipeline” by Caroline Kemp Lopez and Jill Dominguez, Charter School Growth Fund, March 20, 2018, <https://stories.chartergrowthfund.org/using-a-nine-box-matrix-to-understand-ideas-talent-pipeline-dec764f30d11>

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4. Have Teacher-Evaluation Reforms Helped?

In this *Education Week* article, Matthew Kraft (Brown University) says that a lot of time, money, and effort has been invested in rethinking teacher evaluation in recent years, with at least 44 states making major changes. What’s the net effect? “On the whole,” says Kraft, “evaluation reforms have fallen far short of reformers’ ambitious goals and promises. The evaluation process has hardly become an engine of professional development in most districts; few schools recognize, let alone dismiss, low-performing teachers, while teachers identified as high-performing are lucky to receive a small merit pay bonus, if any recognition at all.” Here is Kraft’s analysis of the pluses and minuses:

- *Positive consequences:*

- Acknowledgement that the quality of teaching really matters;
- Greater recognition that teaching quality varies from classroom to classroom;
- The widespread adoption of rubrics that provide a common language for rigorous discussions of the quality of teaching;
- Data that allow administrators and researchers to answer a range of questions about teachers’ impact on student learning;
- Improved (but still imperfect) metrics to inform the evaluation of teachers;
- More turnover of ineffective teachers;
- Greater attention to the fact that poor and minority students have less access to highly effective teaching.

- *Negative consequences:*

- Principals engaging in time-consuming formal evaluations that often have little value – and not spending time on more-productive activities;
- Teachers fearing that the evaluation process is focused on identifying and dismissing low-performers, making teachers hesitant to recognize areas of weakness and engage in professional improvement with their supervisors;
- An increased focus on individual teacher performance at the potential cost of team efforts and school organizational practices;
- Would-be teachers less likely to enter a profession with this kind of accountability system;
- The costs associated with teacher turnover, especially in hard-to-staff schools.

What's the bottom line? Kraft believes there's been a small net positive impact, but acknowledges that this is subjective, with a lot riding on how well the negatives are addressed. "Might states have been better off investing their time, money, and effort into an entirely different approach toward improving teacher quality?" he asks. "It's possible, but answering this question at the national level is at best a speculative endeavor. As policymakers continue to rethink teacher evaluation systems under ESSA, we need to fully embrace this conversation about the merits and drawbacks of teacher evaluation reforms."

"Were Teacher-Evaluation Reforms a Net Positive or a Net Negative?" by Matthew Kraft, *Education Week*, March 15, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2FMXr1W>; Kraft is at mkraft@brown.edu.
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5. A Different Way to Address the Challenge of Deferring Gratification

"Let's face it, for most students academic work isn't intrinsically enjoyable," says David DeSteno (Northeastern University) in this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article. "Even for the highly motivated ones, studying certain subjects or going to certain classes can feel like pulling teeth, especially if it stands in the way of more pleasurable options like watching television or checking updates on Facebook." That's where self-control would seem to be the key; Walter Mischel's fabled "marshmallow" experiments and follow-up studies by other researchers have established the importance of deferring gratification to future success.

But the strategies most often used by educators and parents to get students to suppress the desire for immediate pleasure – building willpower and executive function – "are precisely the wrong ones," says DeSteno. "Besides having a poor long-term success rate in general, the effectiveness of willpower drops precipitously when people are feeling tired, anxious, or stressed. And, unfortunately, that is exactly how many of today's students often find themselves." In fact, telling students to get a grip and use willpower may make things worse, detracting from their ability to succeed in academic work and maintain relationships with others. Trying to teach non-cognitive skills like grit and self-control through a cognitive channel, says DeSteno, "can set up a vicious cycle of increasing stress, failure, and social isolation."

Fortunately, he says, there's a solution. Instead of preaching willpower to enhance self-control and grit, educators and parents should talk to young people about gratitude, compassion, and a sense of pride in their ability. These, says DeSteno, citing recent research, "nudge the mind to accept sacrifices to cooperate with and, thereby, build relationships with others." At the heart of cooperation with others is a willingness to sacrifice immediate self-interest in order to share with and invest in others. This builds positive character traits like trustworthiness, generosity, fairness, and diligence.

"When a person feels grateful," DeSteno continues, "he'll work harder and longer to pay others back as well as pay favors forward. When a person feels compassion, she'll give time, money, effort, even a shoulder to cry on to another in need. When a person feels proud, she'll devote more effort to developing skills that others value, and will be admired for it..."

These emotions enhance a willingness to sacrifice for others because they increase the value that people place on future rewards relative to present ones.”

What is the implication of all this for the social-emotional curriculums being developed in many schools? That educators should focus less on willpower and grit and more on the role of positive emotions – gratitude, compassion, and pride – which have a way of indirectly increasing willpower. These emotions, DeSteno concludes, “ease the way to perseverance toward long-term goals, and they simultaneously make people act in ways that strengthen social relationships – something that benefits the health of body and mind and, indirectly, raises educational attainment itself.”

What does this look like in a classroom? Here are several examples from DeSteno’s book, *Emotional Success: The Power of Gratitude, Compassion, and Pride* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018):

- Students are praised for small steps toward a goal – “I’m really impressed with how hard you worked today; you’re getting closer to solving that problem.”
- Students take a few moments daily or weekly to recall and focus on something they’re grateful for – a small kindness or favor someone has done for them that day, like someone helping with a math problem.
- Doing a “reciprocity ring” – Students write on sticky notes something they need help with and post them on a board in the shape of a circle; then everyone, using different sticky notes, writes offers of help and puts them next to the problem they want to help solve. This generates gratitude and visually shows the interconnected web of support.
- Engaging in brief (5-10 minute) mindfulness practice every day; this has been shown to enhance compassion.

“We’re Teaching Grit the Wrong Way” by David DeSteno in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 23, 2018 (Vol. LXIV, #28, p. A28), <https://www.chronicle.com/article/We-re-Teaching-Grit-the/242854>; DeSteno can be reached at d.desteno@northeastern.edu

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6. Seven Keys to Getting Traction with Professional Development

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, Denise Morgan (Kent State University) and Celeste Bates (Clemson University) summarize the findings of a 2017 report on the ideal design elements of professional development:

- *Focused on content* – “Content anchors everything,” say Morgan and Bates. “It is ultimately what allows teachers to connect theory to practice.” Of course content has to be coupled to the best instructional strategies for the students teachers are working with. PD leaders need to do their homework and guide colleagues in book and article study groups and viewing relevant classroom videos.

- *Active learning* – Professional development sessions should minimize lectures and maximize hands-on activities, including looking at student artifacts, exploring materials that teachers will use in their classrooms, participating in and modeling lessons, watching lesson videos, grappling with questions, and reflecting on local problems of practice.

- *Support for collaboration* – This can be one-on-one, in small groups, or with the whole faculty, the key being sufficient time to nurture a “togetherness mindset” and develop collective knowledge and relational trust. “Contrived collegiality can look collaborative,” say Bates and Morgan, “but is really a superficial relationship in which members will often meet but are not afforded the time to dig deeply into the issues.” True collaboration involves unit and lesson planning, classroom observations, collective analysis of student work, and tweaking plans and strategies in an ongoing effort to meet the needs of all students.

- *Models of effective practice* – Teachers need to see instructional practices in action through videos, demonstration lessons, peer observations, case studies, and samples of student work – giving instructors a sense of how lessons will unfold in their own classrooms. Seeing a variety of models, say Bates and Morgan, “allows teachers to understand that no two students follow the same path and shows the importance of teacher expertise in instruction.”

- *Coaching and expert support* – This can come from instructional leaders, literacy coaches, university faculty, or expert peers, and should include classroom visits and debriefs, video analysis, co-planning, and looking at student work. “Coaches who view their role as tentative and adopt a co-learner stance,” say Bates and Morgan, “assist teachers in seeing multiple possibilities when making decisions.”

- *Feedback and reflection* – There needs to be enough time built into PD “for teachers to think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice,” say the authors. “For feedback to be helpful, it must be viewed as constructive and not critical.” Trust and a sense of common purpose are essential to teachers hearing and acting on feedback.

- *Sustained duration* – “A one-shot, sit-and-get approach to professional learning, no matter how dynamic, is not sufficient,” say Bates and Morgan. Teachers need ongoing support over weeks, months, even years as they identify issues in their classrooms, study them, implement changes, reflect on results, and continuously improve their practices.

“Seven Elements of Effective Professional Development” by Celeste Bates and Denise Morgan in *The Reading Teacher*, March/April 2018 (Vol. 71, #5, p. 623-626), available for purchase or to ILA members at <https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/trtr.1674>; the authors can be reached at dmorgan2@kent.edu and celestb@clemson.edu. The full report is “Effective Teacher Professional Development” from Learning Policy Institute by Linda Darling-Hammond, Maria Hyler, and Madelyn Gardner, June 2017, <https://bit.ly/2qPSb27>.

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7. Graphic Texts About Science, History, and Coding

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, Sara Kersten-Parrish (University of Nevada/Reno) and Ashley Dallacqua (University of New Mexico/Albuquerque) recommend three graphic nonfiction series that are the very opposite of dry and boring:

- Science Comics

- *Volcanoes: Fire and Ice* by Jon Chad
- *Plagues: The Microscopic Battlefield* by Falynn Koch
- *Coral Reefs: Cities of the Ocean* by Maris Wicks

- *Bats: Learning to Fly* by Falyynn Koch

In these books, say Kersten-Parrish and Dallacqua, “Students are no longer asked to accept the singular story presented in textbooks. Instead, they are challenged to question how science is done and what counts as a complete representation of the process of scientific inquiry.”

- Nathan Hale’s Hazardous Tales (all by Nathan Hale)

- *One Dead Spy* – The Revolutionary War
- *Alamo All-Stars* – The Alamo
- *The Underground Abductor* – Harriet Tubman
- *Big Bad Ironclad* – The Civil War
- *Donner Dinner Party* – The Donner Party
- *Treaties, Trenches, Mud, and Blood* – World War I
- *Raid of No Return* – Pearl Harbor

The narrators of each book constantly ask questions and challenge the ways stories are told, offering multiple perspectives.

- Secret Coders (all by Gene Luen Yang and Mike Holmes)

- *Paths and Portals*
- *Potions and Parameters*
- *Robots and Repeats*
- *Secrets and Sequences*

These books introduce middle school students to binary numbers and coding in a way that’s closer to fiction than nonfiction. “In essence,” say Kersten-Parrish and Dallacqua, “these books are novel-sized story problems... Embedded within the narrative are lessons the three characters learn about the base of coding.” Each book ends with a puzzle for readers to solve.

The authors list a number of other high-quality graphic nonfiction texts for elementary classrooms:

- *Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans* by Don Brown
- *The Great American Dust Bowl* by Don Brown
- *Lowriders in Space* by Cathy Camper, illustrated by Raul the Third
- *Lowriders to the Center of the Earth* by Cathy Camper, illustrated by Raul the Third
- *Hidden: A Child’s Story of the Holocaust* by Loic Dauvillier and Greg Salsedo, illustrated by Marc Lizano
- *Sharks: Nature’s Perfect Hunter* by Joe Flood
- *Bass Reeves: Tales of the Talented Tenth, No. 1* by Joel Christian Gill
- *Bessie Stringfield: Tales of the Talented Tenth, No. 2* by Joel Christian Gill
- *Dogs: From Predator to Protector* by Andy Hirsch
- *Clan Apis* by Jay Hosler
- *Last of the Sandwalkers* by Jay Hosler
- *The Basics of Cell Life with Mas Axiom, Super Scientist* by Amber Keyser, Barbara Schulz, Matt Webb, and Cynthia Martin
- *March* (books 1, 2, and 3) by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin, illustrated by Nate Powell

- *Primates: The Fearless Science of Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Biruté Galdikas* by Jim Ottaviani and Maris Wicks
- *Around the World* by Matt Phelan
- *Dinosaurs: Fossils and Feathers* by M.K. Reed, illustrated by Joe Flood
- *Robots and Drones: Past, Present, and Future* by Mairghread Scott, illustrated by Jacob Chabot
- *Human Body Theater: A Nonfiction Revue* by Maris Wicks

“Three Graphic Nonfiction Series That Excite and Educate” by Sara Kersten-Parrish and Ashley Dallacqua in *The Reading Teacher*, March/April 2018 (Vol. 71, #5, p. 627-633), available for purchase or to ILA members at <https://bit.ly/2DWkNfG>; the authors can be reached at sarakersten@unr.edu and adallacqua@unm.edu.

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8. Short Items:

a. A Boston Basics community toolkit – This new feature in Boston Basics, a program to support effective birth-to-3 parenting, includes an overview, skill-building activities, videos, organizing suggestions, and more: <https://bit.ly/2ujoQU7>.

“The Boston Basics Community Toolkit” by Ron Ferguson and colleagues, March 2018; for a full description of Boston Basics, see Marshall Memo 629.

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b. A video of Broadway rehearsals – This 6-minute *New York Times* video gives a vivid sense of the behind-the-scenes work involved in preparing for a Broadway production: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/22/arts/broadway-hamilton-frozen-behind-the-scenes.html>

“Inside Broadway’s Secret Laboratory: ‘Hamilton,’ ‘Frozen,’ and So Much More” by Michael Paulson, Alicia DeSantis, Emily Rhyne, and Mae Ryan, *The New York Times*, March 2018

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About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and other educators very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 48 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 60 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). Every week there's a podcast and HTML version as well.

Subscriptions:

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Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC
American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
District Management Journal
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Next
Education Update
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
English Journal
Essential Teacher
Exceptional Children
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)
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Language Arts
Literacy Today
Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School
Middle School Journal
Peabody Journal of Education
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Reading Research Quarterly
Responsive Classroom Newsletter
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
School Administrator
School Library Journal
Social Education
Social Studies and the Young Learner
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Education Gadfly
The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time Magazine