Marshall Memo 446

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
August 6, 2012

In This Issue:

1. An argument against requiring algebra – and some reactions
2. What's right about the Common Core math standards
3. Insights from Native American, Hispanic, and Mestizo college students
4. Developing student "voice" in a Pennsylvania elementary school
5. Douglas Reeves makes the case for teaching handwriting
6. Preventing staff sexual misconduct in schools
7. Getting more from the special-education budget
8. What happens to student learning when teachers are absent?

Quotes of the Week

"It's true that mathematics requires mental exertion. But there's no evidence that being able to prove $(x^2 + y^2)^2 = (x^2 – y^2)^2 + (2xy)^2$ leads to more credible political opinions or social analysis."

Andrew Hacker (see item #1)

"It is a waste of time to expose children to content they are not prepared for, and it is counterproductive to skim over dozens of disconnected topics every year with no regard for student mastery."

William Schmidt on the flaw in many states' math standards (see item #2)

"At home, those who talk a lot are usually considered less wise, but college is all about who gets in the first word."

A Native American student at the University of New Mexico (quoted in item #3)

"My colleagues and I can't afford to wait until the end of the year to find out that our teaching methods are working for only some of our students."

Henry Seton, Cambridge, Mass. humanities teacher, in a letter to *The New York Times* supporting the use of PARCC interim assessments (July 22, 2012)

"It sounds like common sense, but it happens all the time."

Samuel Spitalli on inappropriate teacher-student conversations (see item #6)

"By diminishing handwriting, we diminish student confidence and fluency in writing. And when we diminish student writing, we risk catastrophic consequences for student skills in reading comprehension, math, science, social studies, and interpersonal communication."

Douglas Reeves (see item #5)

1. An Argument Against Requiring Algebra – and Some Reactions

In this provocative *New York Times* opinion column, Queens College (NY) political scientist Andrew Hacker questions whether algebra and subsequent upper-level math courses should be required. Failing algebra is a major reason for our high dropout rate in secondary school and college, he says. "Why do we subject American students to this ordeal? …Think of math as a huge boulder we make everyone pull, without assessing what all this pain achieves."

But doesn't algebra prepare students for jobs in the global economy? True, algebraic algorithms are used to create animated movies, investment strategies, and airline ticket prices, Hacker says. But according to a Georgetown Center on Education study, only 5 percent of entry-level jobs require proficiency in algebra. The kind of mathematics needed in most workplaces is different from academic algorithms, says Hacker, and workers can get on-the-job training in necessary areas.

How about the argument that algebra sharpens students' minds and builds character? "It's true that mathematics requires mental exertion," says Hacker. "But there's no evidence that being able to prove $(x^2 + y^2)^2 = (x^2 – y^2)^2 + (2xy)^2$ leads to more credible political opinions or social analysis… Mathematics is used as a hoop, a badge, a totem to impress outsiders and elevate a profession's status… In the interest of maintaining rigor, we're actually depleting our pool of brainpower."

"It's not hard to understand why Caltech and M.I.T. want everyone to be proficient in mathematics," he continues, "But it's not easy to see why potential poets and philosophers face a lofty mathematics bar. Demanding algebra across the board actually skews a student body, not necessarily for the better… My aim is not to spare students from a difficult subject, but to call attention to the real problems we are causing by misdirecting precious resources."

What kind of math *should* be taught? Hacker believes quantitative skills – arithmetic, decimals, ratios, and estimating – are vital to thoughtful citizenship and personal finance. He supports a "citizen statistics" component that would enable students, for example, to understand how the Consumer Price Index is calculated and how each item is weighted, how the Affordable Care Act works, the costs and benefits of environmental regulations, and the impact of climate change. It's vital that people be able to detect ideology behind numbers, where numbers come from, and what they mean. To reach this goal, quantitative reasoning needs to begin in the early grades.

Hacker's article sparked a number of letters to the *Times*, pro and con. Here are a few excerpts:

• Ben Rothschild, a Georgia high-school student, sees two reasons algebra should be a core requirement: "First and foremost, what kind of message does it teach students if they can simply drop a course that they find challenging? Second, how are American students supposed to compete with foreign students who have mastered these skills?"

• Harriet Small of Massachusetts says, "In algebra, we learn to organize, to extrapolate, to go step by step, to analyze data. While the child who goes on to become an artist may never need the quadratic formula, he can use the logical reasoning and application skills developed in high-level math classes to make informed decisions as a modern global citizen… If so many students are 'struggling with algebra,' we should examine the methods being used to teach it instead of taking it off the syllabus."

• Zachary Miller of North Carolina says he hated math for many years: "Through algebra, geometry and trigonometry, I cursed a system that compelled me to take such 'useless' courses. Eventually, I was required to take calculus, the most dreaded of all math courses. I prepared for the worst. It came as a surprise, then, that I quickly found myself enjoying the class. The reason was that I had finally encountered a talented math teacher with a passion for the subject. His passion proved infectious, and now, a year later, I'm looking to study mathematical biology at an Ivy League university. It's an outcome I would have never predicted just a few years ago. It could have never happened if I had been allowed to quit when I first struggled with math."

"Is Algebra Necessary?" by Andrew Hacker in *The New York Times*, July 29, 2012, http://nyti.ms/P34qxb and letters in response, July 31, 2012, http://nyti.ms/OgK18T

Back to page one

2. What's Right About the Common-Core Math Standards

In this *Education Week* article, Michigan State professor William Schmidt reports on a study he conducted with Richard Houang comparing the Common Core State Standards in mathematics with U.S. state standards as of 2008-09 and standards from other high-performing countries. Their conclusions refute the contention of some common-core critics that the new math standards aren't up to snuff internationally and that some states' standards are better:

• "The common-core math standards mirror those of the world's highest-achieving nations," says Schmidt. The new U.S. standards have replicated three key characteristics of the best standards around the world: coherence (the logical structure that guides students from basic to more-advanced material); focus (narrowing down to a few key concepts at each grade level); and rigor (the difficulty at each grade).

• Common-core math standards avoided the trap that many of the supposedly better state standards fell into – including too many standards at each grade and introducing advanced material too early. "It is a waste of time to expose children to content they are not prepared for," says Schmidt, "and it is counterproductive to skim over dozens of disconnected topics every year with no regard for student mastery. As it stands today, we simply hope that students will somehow 'get it' at a later grade, and yet we know that far too many students never do."

Of course the common-core standards won't "self-implement", says Schmidt. The key elements of success will be high-quality classroom instruction, aligned curriculum materials, and assessments that truly measure student mastery of the standards. "The essential question is not whether the common core can improve mathematics learning in the United States," he concludes, "but whether we, as a nation, have the commitment to ensure that it does."

"Seizing the Moment for Mathematics" by William Schmidt in *Education Week*, July 18, 2012 (Vol. 31, #36, p. 24-25), http://bit.ly/NK2yIV

Back to page one

3. Insights from Native American, Hispanic, and Mestizo College Students

In this illuminating *American Educational Research Journal* article, Alicia Fedelina Chavez (University of New Mexico), Fengfeng Ke (Florida State University), and Felisha Herrera (UCLA) describe what they found interviewing 50 Native American, Hispanic, and Mestizo (culturally blended Spanish and Native American) students at the University of New Mexico. The students were highly articulate about how they learn best, and the authors (while stressing that there were individual differences within cultures) were able to tease out eight types of learning experiences that maximized college success for students from these traditions:

• *Purpose* – "Gaining larger wisdoms and serving home communities were characterized by student participants as critical to learning and often sustained them from dropping out of college when things became difficult," say Chavez, Ke, and Herrera. "Students discussed their need to go beyond the acquisition of knowledge toward larger truths, understanding the world based on more than discrete facts." As one Zuni student said, "I can't give up. My people, all those who come after me, are counting on me to finish this degree and come home to assist. So I work hard every day to make connections between what I am learning and the needs and realities of my people."

• *Ways of taking in and processing knowledge* – Students stressed their desire for hands-on learning experiences, having an emotional as well as an intellectual component, and being given time to reflect. "I really wish my instructors would take time in classes to let me think," said one Native American student, "especially before they ask us to respond to them or to discuss with peers. I feel foolish because I've always had that at home and when I attended our tribal school. I know that my professors think I'm not very smart because my hand doesn't shoot up in the air immediately when they ask a question. At home, those who talk a lot are usually considered less wise, but college is all about who gets in the first word." Native American students in the study stressed the importance of having archival information and knowledge from lectures accessible throughout the course – being able to go back through PowerPoints and other lecture materials when they need them. Several students likened this to oral history and storytelling activities within their tribes.

• *Interconnected learning with contexts* – Native American students often spoke of the benefits of learning through connectedness to the earth. A Diné student reveled in being able to work outside with a laptop: "The other day I spent hours under the fall leaves by a mountain

creek responding to e-mails, reading course materials, and working on my assignment. Because I grew up deeply connected to the natural world, rather than being distracted, I got so much done and felt like I offered greater insights to my peers because I felt centered." Hispanic and Mestizo students spoke of the need to connect to home, family, culture, and place. One student said, "My learning is helped when teachers start with stories of how an idea or theory matters to them and then ask us to do the same."

• *Responsibility for learning* – The students interviewed for this study appreciated online discussions and after-class chats with classmates and felt responsible for contributing material and ideas and helping their peers. Learning through discussion and collaboration is second nature to those from collective cultures and extended families, say the authors.

• *Conceptions of time* – "Many Native and Hispano students in this study discussed the incongruence between time orientations in traditional classes and their own sense of time as relational, seasonal, reflective, and unbounded," say the authors. A Zuni student spoke of the importance of sleep in learning: "It is as though I need to be in a different state of consciousness before I really grasp things. I go to sleep after studying complex concepts and when I wake up, I get them. I have learned to trust in this process and I actually avoid courses where this kind of processing is not possible. I look for seminar classes that have take-home essay exams and assignments instead of timed tests and essays. I never stay up all night studying before an exam because I know that my mind needs that sleep time after I study to let things simmer and settle in so I can do well on a test."

• *Faculty care* – Students said they appreciated professors who shared personal experiences, asked for and listened to student input, provided tutorial support, were responsive in e-mails and Web conferences, designed courses that met the needs of different kinds of learners, and informed students of campus support services. "'Being there' seems to be the top quality of a good instructor," say the authors, "as students often feel they are 'learning alone together' in face-to-face courses and 'all alone out there in cyberspace' in online classes… Storytelling traditions are a deep aspect of teaching and learning within these cultural communities."

• *Peer interaction* – There were different styles of discourse among the students in this study. "I really struggle when I don't have the immediate back and forth aspect of interaction with my peers," said a Hispanic student. Others preferred time to reflect. "You know in my tribe, we spend large amounts of time together in silence," said a Native American student. "We apply the reflective power of processing together in silence. I like learning online in part because there is room for silence. I can read on my own, go for a run for reflection time, then return to share my insights about readings, theory, and compare to another student's insights."

• *Sequence of learning* – "I need to see things as a whole first," said a Zuni student, "how it all connects, and how it might play out in real life. Then I am ready to learn about the theory of it all because I understand it in a bigger, more real way first. I've had professors who always start with an example, a story from their own work or even a metaphor and this helps me understand something in a bigger way first. Then when they discuss a more abstract,

focused theory it makes sense to me." Students from all three cultures expressed a preference for starting with stories, examples, metaphors, case studies, lab work, or simulations.

"Clan, Sage, and Sky: Indigenous, Hispano, and Mestizo Narratives of Learning in New Mexico Context" by Alicia Fedelina Chavez, Fengfeng Ke, and Felisha Herrera in *American Educational Research Journal*, August 2012 (Vol. 49, #4, p. 775-806), http://bit.ly/OZzAL6; Chavez can be reached at afchavez@unm.edu.

Back to page one

4. Developing Student "Voice" in a Pennsylvania Elementary School

In this *American Educational Research Journal* article, Dana Mitra and Stephanie Serriere of Penn State University say the ABCs that all young people need to succeed in school are *agency, belonging,* and *competence* – and also *discourse* and (civic) *efficacy*. Here are their definitions:

- *Agency* – Acting or exerting influence and power in a given situation, which includes a sense that one has the right to question authority and be heard and respected;
- *Belonging* – Developing meaningful relationships with other students and adults and having a role at the school;
- *Competence* – Developing new abilities and being appreciated for one's talents;
- *Discourse* – Exchanging ideas and opinions to work toward a common goal;
- (Civic) *Efficacy* – The belief that one can make a difference in the world and that one has the responsibility to do so.

Mitra and Serriere contend that the best way to develop the ABCDEs is giving students more voice in addressing and solving real problems. Their two-year study of fifth graders in a diverse K-5 school shows this can happen in elementary as well as secondary grades.

The article gives a detailed account of how a group of fifth-grade girls protested to their teacher about the cafeteria's salad offerings; one girl was lactose intolerant and couldn't eat what she had been served. The teacher said she was proud of them and encouraged the Salad Girls (as they came to be known) to bring their complaint to the principal. She discouraged their initial idea – to stage a protest outside the cafeteria – and encouraged them to gather data around the school. The girls then spoke at an all-school assembly, canvassed all classrooms for students' opinions on salad options, reported their data in a PowerPoint presentation to the principal and the district's somewhat resistant food services manager, and persuaded her to pilot an alternative salad offering in the school. The new approach was eventually adopted in all the district's schools and the girls were praised by the superintendent and a nearby university president and interviewed on local television.

Mitra and Serriere describe how each of the ABCDEs were developed in the girls' crusade for better salad choices:

- Agency – The girls articulated their opinions and felt "heard"; they learned to question authority respectfully, and they developed leadership and an increasing sense of responsibility to help other students with similar concerns;

- Belonging – The Salad Girls made connections to caring adults and their peers and bonded as a group;
- Competence – The girls learned how to communicate their message to those in power, collect, analyze, and present data, manage their time, and speak in public.
- Discourse – They worked as a team, created a synergy of needs and talents, valued their connections with others, and learned how to communicate with those in power.
- (Civic) Efficacy – The girls developed a sense of social consciousness – an awareness of the needs of the broader school, a belief that they had the ability and need to address those needs, and experienced individual "a-ha moments" when civic efficacy became a conscious process.

This was all possible because teachers and school leaders scaffolded and supported the effort, encouraging the Salad Girls to use inquiry and reach out to their peers, and orchestrated meetings with district leaders. Mitra and Serriere conclude by urging all schools to give students the chance to have experiences like the Salad Girls – by addressing real school problems or simulated issues in social studies and other subjects.

"Student Voice in Elementary School Reform: Examining Youth Development in Fifth Graders" by Dana Mitra and Stephanie Serriere in *American Educational Research Journal*, August 2012 (Vol. 49, #4, p. 743-774), http://bit.ly/RcaXu0; Mitra can be reached at dana@psu.edu.

Back to page one

5. Douglas Reeves Makes the Case for Teaching Handwriting

In this thoughtful *American School Board Journal* article, author/consultant Douglas Reeves asks whether teaching cursive is worth the time and effort schools used to put into it. Handwriting is still a hot-button issue for many educators and parents. What's the right course of action, given the shortage of time in the school day?

"Handwriting has been in our intellectual toolbox for about 6,000 years," says Reeves, "with the printing press occupying a scant half millennium and computerized fonts only a few decades of that relatively short spectrum of human history." Teaching handwriting was once a major component of the elementary curriculum, with millions of students spending hours learning the Palmer Method. But in recent decades, handwriting instruction has declined to an average of ten minutes a day in elementary classrooms. Graders of standardized writing exams are explicitly told to focus on content, not how letters and words are written.

It's tempting to continue this de-emphasis of handwriting, says Reeves, but he urges us to push back. "By diminishing handwriting, we diminish student confidence and fluency in writing," he argues. "And when we diminish student writing, we risk catastrophic consequences for student skills in reading comprehension, math, science, social studies, and interpersonal communication. Just as skills in keyboarding, Web design, and oral communication open the door of opportunity for students, so do handwriting skills. Students need multiple methods of communication in the 21st century. Each of these skills requires the care and attention of teachers, parents, and students."

Fluency in handwriting is closely linked to fluency in written expression and achievement across all subject areas, says Reeves, citing the work of Steve Graham at Vanderbilt University. He suggests two simulations:

- Have students fill out summer job applications from a local employer and decide whom to hire. Handwriting plays an important role in making the judgment.
- Ask students to imagine they have just received a $10,000 scholarship to a college or technical school, and have them write a half-page thank-you note to the donor. Then have students look at the notes and judge which scholarships are likely to be renewed.

"[R]eaders attribute traits of intelligence and character to those who take the time and care to write neatly," says Reeves. "It may not be fair, but it is reality." Students need to learn how to write so their audience can easily understand.

But when are students going to learn good handwriting in the already overcrowded curriculum? Reeves contends that 10-15 minutes a day is not enough to develop proficiency, any more than practicing basketball or soccer that little would produce skilled performance. His suggestion: ask all teachers in all subjects and grades to emphasize handwriting and help students develop the form of expression as well as the content. "The entries on the charts in the fitness classes are as important a form of communication as the lab report in science and the graphs in math," he says. "Students, factory workers, professionals, and families will continue to need to communicate, a need at the core of what it means to be human. Our decisions about writing will either enhance or diminish the capacities of our children to communicate."

"The Trouble with Handwriting" by Douglas Reeves in *American School Board Journal*, August 2012 (Vol. 199, #8, p. 36-37), http://www.asbj.com; Reeves can be reached at dreeves@changeleaders.com.

Back to page one

6. Preventing Staff Sexual Misconduct in Schools

Teacher sexual misconduct is "alarmingly common," says Palm Beach State College (FL) professor Samuel Spitalli in this *American School Board Journal* article, and he urges schools to take steps to prevent it from occurring. "The goal," he says, "is to create an environment that is emotionally and physically safe and where teachers and students know *in advance* what behaviors are both acceptable and unacceptable, as well as the consequences of noncompliance."

One way to broach this difficult topic in a beginning-of-the-year meeting is to say, (a) the school is committed to nurturing the special bond between teachers and students; (b) all educators need to protect students from exploitation; and (c) it's possible for teachers to be falsely accused of improper conduct with students. This paves the way to addressing these topics:

- The importance of positive, trusting student-teacher relationships to student achievement;
- What it means to maintain professional demeanor and distance;
- Sexual harassment – a definition and examples;

- The school's protocols for e-mail, texts, and social networking with students;
- Guidelines for contact with students outside school hours;
- Safeguards to avoid the appearance of misconduct.

"A fine line exists between encouraging teachers to develop positive student-teacher relationships, yet maintaining a professional distance," says Spitalli. "Good teachers enjoy their students and respect them. They genuinely demonstrate how they care about them and earn their trust.

"Where that line must be made clear, however, is ensuring that teachers not regard students as equals or place them on an adult level emotionally, which could lead to the development of a more personal, rather than professional, student-teacher relationship. That means teachers should never socialize or interact with students in a way that they would socialize or interact with adults; discuss things with them that are personal in nature; or engage them in any way that would erode a professional student-teacher relationship. For example, students should not be burdened with details of a teacher's divorce, personal family issues, social life, partying activities, etc. It sounds like common sense, but it happens all the time."

A second way to prevent sexual misconduct, says Spitalli, is for school administrators to get out of their offices and walk through all parts of the school. When he was a school administrator, he made a point of visiting vacant classrooms, band rooms, and gyms. "My goal was to show that I could unpredictably be anywhere, at any time, for any reason," he says. "Being visible, in and of itself, is a deterrent."

Finally, Spitalli says, administrators need to take action when there are credible reports of misconduct. "School officials face daunting issues when charging a teacher with sexual misconduct," he acknowledges. "It is inherently repugnant and, for some, something they would rather not have to address. Moreover, they fear possible backlash from parents and students when confronting a popular teacher." There's also the difficulty of getting students and colleagues to testify and the fear of making unfounded allegations, leading to litigation. But stopping a sexual predator is of utmost importance – and a legal and ethical imperative.

"An Epidemic of Shame" by Samuel Spitalli in *American School Board Journal*, August 2012 (Vol. 199, #8, p. 26-27), http://www.asbj.com; the author is at spitalls@palmbeachstate.edu.

Back to page one

7. Getting More from the Special-Education Budget

"When district leaders treat special-education dollars as inviolable, they miss the opportunity to think strategically about how talent, time, and technology are deployed," say Stephen Frank and Karen Hawley Miles of Education Resource Strategies in this important *Education Week* opinion article. They suggest four ways that urban school districts can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of special-education programs in tough economic times:

• *Stop using special education as a catch-all program*. "Special education is often the only well-funded program for dealing with disruptive students or those who fall multiple years

behind their peers," say Frank and Miles. "This creates strong incentives for over-placement." The result is inflated budgets and inappropriately referred students feeling stigmatized.

• *Place students in more-inclusive settings*. The percent of students placed in restrictive classrooms varies from 2.5 to 9.9 percent. "Not only do overly restrictive placements violate federal law and good education practice," say Frank and Miles, "they are also enormously expensive, costing three to four times as much as serving students in general education settings."

• *Reduce unwanted teacher turnover*. "One of the biggest wastes of district resources is the perennial loss of talented teachers who burn out and leave the profession," say Frank and Miles. This is especially true in special education, with its heavy workload, individualized preparation, and fear of legal action if students' IEPs aren't met.

• *Focus more on quality and less on quantity*. Special-education programs often devote 75-85% of resources to reducing class size and hiring teaching assistants – not on what research suggests are the decisive factors in classrooms: high-quality instruction, high expectations, a rigorous curriculum aligned to standards, and using frequent formative assessments to adjust instruction to students' needs. While IEPs sometimes require smaller classes and assistants and these help ensure a safe learning environment, they're not always in students' best interests. In particular, a personal student aide "does not always promote student independence, effective inclusion, or academic support," say Frank and Miles. They suggest reallocating some funds to expert coaching to improve instruction and differentiation.

The authors conclude by envisioning a better staffing and instructional configuration within schools:

- Replacing single-teacher classrooms with teams of teachers that group and re-group students throughout the day according to need;
- Using dual-certified teachers and blurring the distinction between regular-education and special-education instructors;
- Teacher collaboration as the norm;
- Using daily or near-daily assessments of progress to continuously adjust instruction to students' needs.

"In this scenario," conclude Frank and Miles, "special education becomes less about establishing small and often-isolated groups and classes and more about pushing knowledge and skills into integrated settings that promote the progress of each and every student. Such an approach could help districts and schools reduce unwarranted special-education placements, especially restricted placements, eliminate the barriers that separate special- and general-education teachers (and students), and focus more resources on improving instructional quality."

"Improving Special Education in Tough Times" by Stephen Frank and Karen Hawley Miles in *Education Week*, July 18, 2012 (Vol. 31, #36, p. 24-25), http://bit.ly/MJ66Nb

Back to page one

8. What Happens to Student Learning When Teachers Are Absent?

"The mythology surrounding the substitute teacher is not a pretty one," says reporter Jaclyn Zubrzycki in this *Education Week* article: "Paper airplanes, lost learning, bullying." The average teacher is out 10 days a year, and one study found that 37 percent of teachers are absent more than 10 days a year. That's a lot of time for students to spend with unfamiliar, low-status teachers. Two studies have linked lower student achievement to low teacher attendance, and data show that absenteeism is higher in economically disadvantaged schools, which also have more difficulty getting qualified substitutes.

"Almost everyone appreciates at a gut level that what happens in the regular teacher's absence is not often something to brag about," says Raegan Miller of the Center for American Progress. "It's kind of an underbelly, one of the darker secrets of what happens in public education." Teacher morale is one component of teacher attendance levels, but even schools with the best working conditions and collegiality have to deal with absences – people get sick, have family demands and crises, and attend professional development outside their schools. There are three approaches to maintaining the quality of instruction when the regular teacher is out:

• *Professionalize substitute teaching* – Only 15 states currently require substitutes to have college degrees, only 13 percent of districts evaluate subs, very few provide training, and daily pay ranges from $50 to $234. Requiring certification, providing training and evaluation, and paying a decent wage all help improve the pool and improve classroom performance.

• *Building substitutes* – Some schools have full-time teachers who fill in for absent teachers. They are more expensive than per-diem subs, but have the advantage of becoming familiar with students and school routines. "When you know that your colleague's responsible for covering classes, it makes teachers more accountable for thoughtful, rigorous lesson planning," says Jed Lippard, principal at Prospect Hill Academy in Cambridge, Mass., which has three building subs and, when absences exceed their capacity, enlists regular teachers.

• *Internal coverage* – A few schools fill absences internally, with teachers using their prep periods to cover absent colleagues' classrooms. "The more specific and strong the school culture is, the greater the premium there's going to be on managing who's in the building as tightly as can be," says Jonathan Travers of Education Resource Strategies in Boston.

"Educators Take Another Look at Substitutes" by Jaclyn Zubrzycki in *Education Week*, July 18, 2012 (Vol. 31, #36, p. 1, 16), http://bit.ly/PcSsFj

Back to page one

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 44 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 44 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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Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Better Evidence-Based Education
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
New York Times
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
The Atlantic Monthly
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
The School Administrator
Theory Into Practice