Marshall Memo 536

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

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Not long ago, the only measure of the quality of a professional development session was whether the participants were smiling when they left the room – and not just because it was over."

Marge Scherer in "Bright Spots in Professional Learning" in *Educational Leadership*, May 2014 (Vol. 71, #8, p. 7), http://bit.ly/1nGu4f7

"When experts are doing the kind of practice that makes them better, they are frequently failing, frequently confused, not necessarily seeing gain for what will feel like a very long time."

Angela Lee Duckworth (quoted in item #4)

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

Thomas Edison on his many failures (quoted in item #4)

"Reading for the non-bibliophile is not a bucolic intellectual romp. For struggling and reluctant readers, it feels progressively more and more like quicksand."

Jason Singer (see item #5)

"School is where many girls are first rewarded for being good, instead of energetic, rambunctious, or even pushy. Soon they learn that they are most valuable, and most in favor, when they do things the right way: neatly and quietly… They leave school crammed full of interesting historical facts and elegant Spanish subjunctives, proud of their ability to study hard and get the best grades, and determined to please. But somewhere between the classroom and the cubicle, the rules change, and they don't realize it."

Katty Kay and Claire Shipman (see item #1)

1. Why Women Are Less Confident Than Men – and How It Can Change

In this important article in *The Atlantic*, veteran reporters Katty Kay (BBC World News America) and Claire Shipman (ABC News) say that for years, women have believed that "with enough hard work, our natural talents would be recognized and rewarded." And indeed, women have made tremendous gains: they are half the American workforce, earn more than half of college and graduate degrees, and are increasing their share of leadership roles in many fields. "And yet, as we've worked, ever diligent, the men around us have continued to get promoted faster and be paid more," say Kay and Shipman.

What's going on? Childrearing is part of the answer. So are cultural and institutional barriers to female success. But another contributing factor, they believe, is "women's acute lack of confidence." And this is true of even the most highly accomplished women they have interviewed as journalists – and of themselves. "Compared to men," they say, "women don't consider themselves as ready for promotions, they predict they'll do worse on tests, and they generally underestimate their abilities."

In one study, male and female college students took a quiz on science reasoning and scored virtually the same – 7.9 and 7.5 out of 10, respectively. Before they took the test, students were asked whether they were good at science: men rated themselves 7.6 on a 10-point scale, women rated themselves 6.5. Asked how they thought they would do on the quiz, men said 7.1, women 5.8. After the quiz (before they were told the results), students were invited to participate in a science competition for prizes: 71 percent of the men signed up – and only 49 percent of the women.

A similar finding emerged from a study at Hewlett Packard of employees applying for promotions: women applied only when they met 100 percent of the qualifications; men applied if they met 60 percent. "Underqualified and underprepared men don't think twice about leaning in," say Kay and Shipman. "Overqualified and overprepared, too many women still hold back. Women feel confident only when they are perfect. Or practically perfect." Along with perfectionism go other tendencies: taking the blame when things go wrong; crediting luck or other people's help when they succeed; concluding that they're not good enough when they hit a rough patch; and avoiding risks.

"Do men doubt themselves sometimes?" they ask. "Of course. But not with such exacting and repetitive zeal, and they won't let their doubts stop them as often as women do." Men tend to possess "honest overconfidence" – they really believe they're better than they actually are, which is why they don't alienate people by coming across as arrogant or overconfident. And

this trait pays dividends in life: it turns out that confidence matters as much as competence. "Within any given organization, be it an investment bank or the PTA, some individuals tend to be more admired and more listened to than others," report Kay and Shipman. "They are not necessarily the most knowledgeable or capable people in the room, but they are the most self-assured" – manifested in expansive body language, a calm, relaxed manner, and speaking early and often. "For decades," say Kay and Shipman, "women have misunderstood an important law of the professional jungle. It's not enough to keep one's head down and plug away, checking items off a list. Having talent isn't merely about being competent; confidence is a part of that talent. You have to have it to excel."

What explains the deficit of female confidence? There are some brain and hormonal differences that seem to tilt males toward risk-taking, conflict, and aggression – and females toward relationships, worrying, and dwelling on past negative experiences. But recent research on brain plasticity raises the chicken-and-egg question: is it nature or is it nurture? To explore the role of nurture, Kay and Shipman look at three arenas where confidence may be encouraged – or discouraged:

• *The elementary classroom* – It's well-established that girls begin school with some developmental advantages over boys: they have longer attention spans, more-developed verbal and fine-motor skills, and are more socially adept. "School is where many girls are first rewarded for being good, instead of energetic, rambunctious, or even pushy," say Kay and Shipman. "Soon they learn that they are most valuable, and most in favor, when they do things the right way: neatly and quietly… In turn, they begin to crave the approval they get for being good. There's certainly no harm intended by overworked, overstressed teachers (or parents). Who doesn't want a kid who works hard and doesn't cause a lot of trouble?"

But the result is that many girls are learning to avoid taking risks and making mistakes – and mistakes are essential to building confidence. Stanford social psychologist Carol Dweck noticed that boys get eight times more criticism than girls in elementary classrooms. Boys get a lot more scolding and punishment, but it's less damaging because of the way many adults express it: "Boys' mistakes are attributed to a lack of effort," says Dweck in her book *Mindset*, "while girls come to see mistakes as a reflection of their deeper qualities." Girls are praised for being perfect, and this comes back to haunt them when they mess up.

• *The playground* – Boys also benefit from the rough-and-tumble of unstructured play. "From kindergarten on," say Kay and Shipman, "they roughhouse, tease one another, point out one another's limitations, and call one another morons and slobs." Many learn to let derogatory remarks slide off their backs and they become more resilient.

• *The sports field* – Girls who play team sports are more likely to graduate from college, find jobs in male-dominated fields, and earn bigger salaries. But despite Title IX, girls are still not participating in athletics as much as boys, and they are nearly six times as likely to drop out of sports teams, especially during adolescence. "What a vicious circle," say Kay and Shipman: "girls lose confidence, so they quit competing, thereby depriving themselves of one of the best ways to regain it. They leave school crammed full of interesting historical facts and elegant Spanish subjunctives, proud of their ability to study hard and get the best grades, and

determined to please. But somewhere between the classroom and the cubicle, the rules change, and they don't realize it. They slam into a work world that doesn't reward them for perfect spelling and exquisite manners." And their confidence takes another beating.

This leads Kay and Shipman to a tricky area: what often happens when women *do* display confidence in the classroom and the workplace. "Attitudes toward women are changing, and for the better," they say, "but a host of troubling research shows that they can still pay a heavier social and even professional penalty than men do for acting in a way that's seen as aggressive. If a woman walks into her boss's office with unsolicited opinions, speaks up first at meetings, or gives business advice above her pay grade, she risks being disliked or even – let's be blunt – being labeled a bitch. The more a woman succeeds, the worse the vitriol seems to get. It's not just her competence that's called into question; it's her very character." Which is why many accomplished women play down their competence and power – while men in similar positions tend to do the opposite.

Despite some early doubts, Kay and Shipman have come to believe that all this can be changed. "Confidence is not, as we once believed, just feeling good about yourself," they say. For a better definition of confidence, they turn to Ohio State University psychologist Richard Petty: "Confidence is the stuff that turns thoughts into action." It turns thoughts into judgments about what we're capable of doing, which affects the ability to execute. This suggests a "virtuous circle," say Kay and Shipman. "Confidence is a belief in one's ability to succeed, a belief that stimulates action. In turn, taking action bolsters one's belief in one's ability to succeed. So confidence accumulates – through hard work, through success, and even through failure."

They conclude by describing research by University of Warwick psychologist Zachary Estes on men's and women's performance reorganizing 3-D images on a computer screen. When first tested, women did much worse than men, but when Estes looked at the data, he noticed that women hadn't attempted many of the puzzles – they'd given up. He ran the test again, this time telling everyone that they had to at least attempt every puzzle. This time the women did just as well as the men. The experiment illustrates a key point, say Kay and Shipman: "The natural result of low confidence is inaction. When women don't act, when we hesitate because we aren't sure, we hold ourselves back. But when we do act, even if it's because we were forced to, we perform just as well as men do."

Estes then conducted two other experiments. First, he gave men and women different puzzles and asked them before they attempted each one how confident they felt about having the correct solution. Women's scores dropped to 75 percent while men's rose to 93. "One little nudge asking women how sure they are about something rattles their world," say Kay and Shipman, "while the same gesture reminds men that they're terrific."

In the final experiment, Estes told random members of the group that they had done especially well on the previous set of puzzles. On the next test, the men and women who got this confidence boost had dramatic improvements in their scores.

"These results could not be more relevant to understanding the confidence gap, and figuring out how to close it," conclude Kay and Shipman. "What doomed the women in Estes's

lab was not their actual ability to do well on the tests. They were as able as the men were. What held them back was the choice they made not to try. The advice implicit in such findings is hardly unfamiliar: to become more confident, women need to stop thinking so much and just *act*… If we keep at it, if we channel our talent for hard work, we can make our brains more confidence-prone. What the neuroscientists call plasticity, we call hope."

"The Confidence Gap" by Katty Kay and Claire Shipman in *The Atlantic*, May 2014 (Vol. 313, #4, p. 56-66), http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/04/the-confidence-gap/359815/; Kay and Shipman's book is *The Confidence Code: The Science and Art of Self-Assurance – What Women Should Know* (HarperBusiness, 2014)

Back to page one

2. What's the True Goal of Education?

In this *Education Week* article, author Marc Prensky questions whether *learning* is the best word for what we want from our schools. Learning is the right word if our aspiration is that students graduate as *learned* scholars, but that's not what most of us have in mind for K-12 schools. Learning is important, of course, but it's a means to an end. "The real goal of education, and of school," says Prensky, "is *becoming*… Most of us would prefer our children become the very best people they can be, capable of effective thinking, acting, relating, and accomplishing in whatever field they enjoy and have a passion for."

"We spend so much time and effort looking at test scores, averages, and other petty measurements of 'learning' that we have little time or energy left to focus on who our students are (or are not) as individuals," he says, "what they love or hate, or what drives them. We shouldn't be surprised, then, if they become people we do not like or respect, or if we have concerns about their potential contributions to society… There are probably billions of people in the world who have finished school without becoming what they could have. Some may have acquired knowledge and skills through their education, but have accomplished little or nothing."

Rather than constantly asking how much students have learned and obsessing about how to measure learning, Prensky believes we should be asking, "What did you become that you weren't before? Have you moved in a positive direction to better yourself and society?" He believes teachers should sit down a few times a year and write to students and parents about what each student is becoming. And students should be asking themselves, "Who am I becoming? Have I become a better thinker? If so, in what ways? Am I able to do things I couldn't before? What is important to me and why? Can I relate comfortably to individuals, in teams and in virtual communities? Can I make the world a better place?"

"If we had different expectations," Prensky concludes, "who knows what our kids might become?"

"The Goal of Education Is Becoming" by Marc Prensky in *Education Week*, May 7, 2014 (Vol. 33, #30, p. 40, 36), www.edweek.org

Back to page one

3. Thomas Guskey on Planning Professional Development Backwards

(Originally titled "Planning Professional Learning")

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, Thomas Guskey (University of Kentucky/ Lexington) casts a skeptical eye on professional development in many schools. Too often, he says, we "fall prey to clever consultants and adept entrepreneurs more concerned with what sells than with what works to improve student learning. Seduced by dynamic presentations and jazzy technology, desperate school leaders jump onto education bandwagons, committing scarce resources to strategies and programs based more on wishes and promises than on solid evidence of effectiveness."

In the past, Guskey has suggested that professional development activities should be evaluated by looking at evidence in these key areas:

- How did participants react?
- Did participants acquire new knowledge and skills?
- Did the school or district support the initiative?
- Did participants put their new knowledge and skills to work in classrooms?
- Did student learning improve?

"Because each level builds on those that came before," he says, "success at one level is necessary for success at each higher level, and no level should be neglected in the evaluation process."

But when it comes to *planning* professional development, Guskey believes the sequence should be reversed, planning backwards from desired student learning outcomes. Here are his main points in each area:

• *Desired student learning outcomes and how they will be measured* – Trouble spots and areas for improvement can be spotted in standardized test scores, subgroup data, interim assessments, classroom assessments, discipline data, classroom observations, focus groups, and interviews. Guskey notes that teachers tend to prefer evidence from classroom assessments and insights from homework completion and behavior reports. Administrators tend to prefer standardized test scores and district assessments. The compromise: multiple measures!

• *New practices to be implemented* – The key question is: What instructional approaches will produce the desired student learning? What is the evidence for various possible approaches? "We need to be willing to challenge consultants who preface their statements with the phrase, 'Research says…" by asking, 'What research?'," says Guskey. "And we should expect detailed answers with specific citations that we can verify." Be skeptical of references to blogs, newspaper articles, Google searches, or Twitter and Facebook, he advises. "Look specifically for publications that are *refereed*, meaning that experts in the field have reviewed the articles and judged them as sufficiently rigorous to yield trustworthy results."

• *Organizational support* – "Many valuable improvement efforts fail miserably because of a lack of active participation and clear support from school leaders," says Guskey. "Others prove ineffective because schools have not provided the resources required for implementation." Teachers need time, funding, materials, and technology to make new

programs work. They also need ongoing feedback on how things are going, which means frequent observations of classrooms, interim assessments, and rapid feedback.

• *Educator knowledge and skills* – What will teachers need to know and be able to do to reach the student-learning goals? This will drive the *what* and *why* of professional development, says Guskey: "Participants must develop sufficient depth in their knowledge of new practices so that they can adjust these practices to fit the nuances of their particular context while maintaining program fidelity. At the same time, they must understand the rationale behind the change."

• *Optimal professional learning activities* – After attending to the first four steps, it's time to design PD. Will the most effective strategy be a seminar or workshop? Action-research projects? Organized study groups? PLC work? There's a wide range of choices, and what's effective in one context may not be in another. "What works always depends on where, when, and with whom," says Guskey. "But if we begin with the end in mind and plan backward, we can take many of those context-specific elements into consideration, making success much more likely."

"Planning Professional Learning" by Thomas Guskey in *Educational Leadership*, May 2014 (Vol. 71, #8, p. 10-16), http://bit.ly/1j7ypaW; Guskey can be reached at Guskey@uky.edu.

Back to page one

4. Rewarding Students for the Struggle

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Anne Sobel (Northeastern University/ Qatar) says it's unfortunate that schools and universities "still work from a grading scale that supports only success." From a young age, students learn that getting the right answer is what counts. In fact, says Sobel, failure is the crucible of development. She quotes Thomas Edison: "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." Angela Lee Duckworth of the University of Pennsylvania has reached the same conclusion in her research on "grit": "When experts are doing the kind of practice that makes them better," she says, "they are frequently failing, frequently confused, not necessarily seeing gain for what will feel like a very long time."

"So how can we give our students permission to fail while maintaining a high standard in the classroom, teaching our subject, and encouraging our students to get good grades?" asks Sobel. Here are her suggestions:

• *Create an ethos*. It should be clear to students, right from the start, that a certain amount of failure is okay, that this is a safe space to experiment and make mistakes. Sobel suggests sharing "famous failure" quotes from Michael Jordan, Steve Jobs, Walt Disney, the Beatles, Oprah, and Albert Einstein, playing an appropriate TED talk, and sharing anecdotes at strategic points in a course. It's important, of course, to distinguish between stumbles on the road to success and lackadaisical performance.

• *Find new definitions of success*. Sobel creates a "controlled failure scenario" in her course on film production: students are given four hours to create a one-minute video of one

page of a script, and she evaluates them on how well they support each other, solve problems, and keep a positive attitude under stress. "The only way to fail at this assignment is by refusing to adapt," she says.

• *Give real-time feedback*. It's often a waste of time to give students suggestions at the end of a course or project, says Sobel. Timely formative feedback is far more productive: "When students have a chance to refine their work on the basis of feedback, it creates a deeper experience with the material."

• *Build it into your grading*. In her course, Sobel has an assessment category titled *Execution versus Level of Difficulty*: students understand that final grades depend partly on the challenge of the project. "A grading category that takes difficulty into consideration offers a safety net that gives students the confidence to take calculated risks," she says.

• *Reflect on failure*. At the end of a project or course, it's very helpful for students to share successes and mistakes, realize that everyone makes mistakes, and think about what to do differently next time. "Learning to fail could help our students become more resilient, self-aware, innovative, and compassionate," she concludes.

"How Failure in the Classroom Is More Instructive Than Success" by Anne Sobel in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 9, 2014 (Vol. LX, #34, p. A32), http://chronicle.com/article/How-Failure-in-the-Classroom/146377/

Back to page one

5. Digital Reading Is Engaging, But What About Deeper Comprehension?

In this *Education Week* article, Benjamin Herold reports on recent research indicating that when students read on computers, tablets, and smartphones, their comprehension suffers – especially the deeper understanding called for in the Common Core State Standards. There appear to be three reasons:

- When reading electronic texts, students tend to skim the surface in search of specific information, rather than reading more carefully and drawing inferences, constructing complex arguments, and making connections to their own lives. "It's not the end of reading," says Andrew Dillon of the University of Texas/Austin, "but it is the diminution or simplification of reading."
- As they read digital texts, students tend not to employ the comprehension strategies they've learned with traditional texts.
- The bells and whistles of electronic texts (animations, embedded videos, links, and interactive features) can distract students from the meaning. "Consumers are often looking for something with a lot of pizazz," says Jordan Schugar of West Chester University, "but that is not necessarily going to support deeper reading."

Herold profiles a 14-year-old New Jersey student who finds reading boring and prefers to read on a digital device. Yet this student says, "I understand better when [text] is on paper, because it's all right there, and it's not skipping ahead and back all the time."

A plethora of commercial products – among them Curriculet, Actively Learn, and Subtext – claim to boost engagement, provide real-time feedback, and build skills. "Reading

for the non-bibliophile is not a bucolic intellectual romp," says Jason Singer, CEO of Curriculet. "For struggling and reluctant readers, it feels progressively more and more like quicksand."

But there's very little research on whether these products work, and Herold has his doubts as he watches the New Jersey student jumping around within a Curriculet electronic text. "Some of this stuff, it distracts me off the main topic," says the student. The key to making digital texts effective, says Herold, is allowing teachers to control what is embedded in a text, limiting "whiz-bang" features, and making sure the focus is on reinforcing student understanding of the content. Jason Singer agrees. "Reading flow should only be interrupted if the interruption is meaningful and relevant," he says.

"We have to move into the 21st century," says Tufts University reading expert Maryanne Wolf, "but we should do so with great care to build a 'bi-literate' brain that has the circuitry for 'deep reading' skills, and at the same time is adept with technology… Some of our best thought will go into how the [digital] medium can address its own weaknesses."

"Screen Reading Poses Learning Challenges" by Benjamin Herold in *Education Week*, May 7, 2014 (Vol. 33, #30, p. 1, 24, 25), www.edweek.org

Back to page one

6. Why Cooperative Learning Didn't Work in England

In this article in *Better: Evidence-Based Education*, Robert Slavin (Johns Hopkins University) and Mary Sheard and Pam Hanley (University of York, UK) report that since the late 1970s, numerous studies in the U.S. have shown that cooperative learning is effective at improving students' math achievement. They were therefore shocked when a study of cooperative learning they conducted in upper-elementary classrooms in England showed no positive results. Undaunted, the researchers tried again, studying a well-implemented program in a number of English schools. Once again, despite the fact that students and teachers seemed to enjoy the cooperative-learning format, students in those classrooms did no better than control groups.

What happened? Slavin, Sheard, and Hanley looked closely at teachers' feedback and observations and came up with two explanations:

• The teachers in England were far less comfortable than their American counterparts about giving students interim assessments – and data from quick individual quizzes are a vital part of motivating students to make sure every member of their team masters the material. Teachers in England skipped this part, instead giving teams points based on behavior and helpfulness.

• Teachers in England routinely differentiated instruction, teaching variations of a lesson to students at different achievement levels. They were not comfortable with the expectation that they teach the same lesson to a whole class of heterogeneous cooperative-learning groups.

The authors' conclusion: "Teaching methods proven to be effective in one culture and system cannot be assumed to be effective in another." They're still convinced cooperative

learning can work in England, but it will require "further adaptation to the traditions and expectations of teaching in English schools."

"Cooperative Learning in Mathematics: Lessons from England" by Robert Slavin, Mary Sheard, and Pam Hanley in *Better: Evidence-Based Education*, Winter 2014 (Vol. 6, #1,p. 4-5), http://www.betterevidence.org/issue-14/cooperative-learning-in-mathematics-lessons-from-england/

Back to page one

7. Improving Math Proficiency: What Works

In this article in *Better: Evidence-Based Education*, Robert Slavin (Johns Hopkins University) reports on an analysis of 200 studies of K-12 mathematics education. Researchers compared data on three ways of improving students' math achievement:

• *Math curriculum programs* – These included textbooks and curriculum materials. "There was very little evidence that it mattered which curriculum was used," says Slavin. "None of them showed any strong evidence of effectiveness in comparison to the others."

• *Computer-assisted instruction programs* – At the elementary level, CAI programs are mostly supplementary and used only a few times a week. Results were positive for computational skills (less positive for concepts and problem-solving), but the evidence was not very robust. At the secondary level, there was little evidence that CAI programs were better than regular instruction and no programs stood out as having large effects.

• *Classroom teaching strategies* – Professional development designed to improve teaching had the strongest evidence of effectiveness, with training in cooperative learning, classroom management, and motivation showing the best results: "Changing the way that children work together, and classroom management and motivation, can improve the mathematics outcomes for all students," says Slavin.

"What Works in Teaching Mathematics" by Robert Slavin in *Better: Evidence-Based Education*, Winter 2014 (Vol. 6, #1,p. 4-5), http://www.betterevidence.org/issue-14/what-works-in-teaching-mathematics/

Back to page one

8. Rethinking Attitudes About Career and Technical Education

In this *Education Week* article, UCLA professor Mike Rose describes an English teacher discussing the word *aesthetics* in her 11th-grade class and a student from the school's woodworking program saying the word has no relevance for him. Somehow he sees no connection between aesthetics and the work he does crafting a table or cabinet.

"Our nation's egalitarian ethos notwithstanding," says Rose, "there is a tendency in our culture to diminish the intelligence of those who do manual work, from negative editorial characterizations of 19th-century laborers to contemporary autoworkers I have heard labeled by one supervisor as 'a bunch of dummies'… Young people who are interested in working with their hands grow up amid these commonplace beliefs and utterances and, even in a post-curriculum-tracking world, pick up the biases of occupational status in school."

"If we are serious about improving career and technical education and creating more and better pathways into the world of work," says Rose, "then we need to think hard about the deeply ingrained attitudes we have about certain kinds of work and the public language that issues from those attitudes."

"Reframing Career and Technical Education" by Mike Rose in *Education Week*, May 7, 2014 (Vol. 33, #30, p. 33), www.edweek.org

Back to page one

9. Phasing in Common Core Standards and Accountability

In this *Education Week* article, consultants Jane Leibbrand and Alice Seagren say that the simultaneous implementation of Common Core State Standards and high-stakes accountability for students, teachers, and administrators is causing "trauma, drama, resignations, and meltdowns… Only policymakers far removed from the classroom could conceivably recommend mixing and pouring these two gargantuan movements into a blender and expecting teachers to drink up with nary a complaint or protest."

"Any large-scale change requires a phase-in period," say Leibbrand and Seagren. They believe five years is the right amount of time to provide the necessary orientation, training, and classroom materials, using assessments to fine-tune curriculum and teaching and gradually phasing in accountability.

"Charting a Common-Sense Course for the Common Core" by Jane Leibbrand and Alice Seagren in *Education Week*, May 7, 2014 (Vol. 33, #30, p. 1, 32-34), www.edweek.org

Back to page one

10. Short Items:

a. Students at two very different high schools compare notes – In this poignant *New York Times Magazine* article, pairs of students from University Heights, a New York City public high school, and Fieldston, an elite private school a short distance away in the Bronx, pair up and talk as part of a program that brings students in the two schools together. The students' photographs and brief statements shine a bright light on adolescence and inequality.

"The Tale of Two Schools" by Joel Lovell, photographs by Ryan Pfluger, in *The New York Times Magazine*, May 2, 2014, http://nyti.ms/1qvJyqX

Back to page one

b. Essential questions lists – This website, created by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins, has a list of 25 essential questions in all curriculum areas that is changed every day: http://www.essentialquestions.org (click on 25 Essential Questions)

Back to page one

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

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

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

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 (with results of an annual survey)
- 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 (also in Word and PDF)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or log-in

Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

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