# Marshall Memo 296

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
August 10, 2009

## In This Issue:



## Quotes of the Week

"Every great leader is a storyteller."

Hollywood film producer Peter Gruber in "Sharing Stories, Not Just Information, to Communicate Effectively" in *Wharton Leadership Digest*, Summer 2009
http://leadership.wharton.upenn.edu/digest/index.shtml

"Social promotion does not work, but neither does holding students back, especially once they reach adolescence."

Nancy Protheroe (see item #4)

"Writing filled with grammatical errors does not preclude engagement with sophisticated intellectual material, and errors can be dealt with effectively as one works with such material."

Mike Rose (see item #3)

"[A]n all-too-prevalent pattern in schools is for teachers to settle for using good instructional practices and leaving it up to students to decide if they want to do their part. Tragically, in urban schools especially, many students – when given the choice to fail – do."

Dick Corbett and Bruce Wilson (see item #2)

"We measure and test in order to know how to help."

Tina Juarez (see item #1)

---

## 1. Solving the Standards/Compassion Impasse (an "Oldie but Goodie")

In this classic *Kappan* article, Texas middle-school principal Tina Juarez recalls a scene from the 1945 movie, *The Bells of St. Mary's*. Father O'Malley, a parish priest played by Bing Crosby, asks Sister Mary Benedict, the no-nonsense principal of St. Mary's parochial school played by Ingrid Bergman, to shift a student's failing exam grade to passing. Patsy, the student in question, is a troubled child and Father O'Malley has taken pity on her. If the test score isn't raised, she will fail the semester and be unable to graduate with her class. Father O'Malley tries to persuade the principal, even suggesting that Patsy be given extra points for spelling her name correctly.

"Do you believe in just passing everybody, Father?" demands Sister Mary Benedict.

"Maybe I do," says Father O'Malley. "Aren't we here to give children a helping hand – or are we here to measure their brains with a yardstick?" He wants to know why 75 is the passing score.

"Would you put the standard at 65, Father?" asks Sister Mary Benedict.

"Why not?" he replies.

"Then why not 55?" she asks. "Why any grades at all, Father? Why don't we close the school and let them run wild?"

After a moment's reflection, Father O'Malley replies, "Maybe. Be better than breaking their hearts."

It's a tense stand-off, and Sister Mary Benedict finally says that if she is ordered to change the grade, she will do so, but she won't change the cutoff score because that would mean lowering the school's standards. Her greatest fear seems to be that students will lose their motivation without the carrot and stick of grades. Sister Mary Benedict is not without compassion and doesn't want to hurt Patsy, but she's willing to break the occasional student's heart to keep the system running.

This conflict between standards and motivation on the one hand and compassion on the other is still with us today, says Juarez, and she wonders, "Is there an approach to student evaluation that would satisfy both the Father O'Malleys and the Sister Mary Benedicts among us? Are educators condemned to an eternal impasse over grading?"

Seeking an answer, Juarez does some research, tracing the use of grades back to Yale University in the late 1700s; students were rank-ordered according to their performance, with professors using Latin terms like *optimi, inferiores*, and *pejores* to praise students who did well and shame those who did poorly. Subsequently, some educators likened grades to a paycheck –

necessary to get students to slog through meaningless, tedious schoolwork. Grades were part of life, argued others. Without the possibility of failure, success lost its meaning; grades, though they sometimes had pernicious effects, were needed to keep students' noses to the grindstone and maintain standards. Over the years, others pushed back, arguing that failure never motivates and students who get low marks will conclude that they are stupid and quit trying. Grades can do more than break students' hearts, they said; they can permanently close the doors of opportunity.

Juarez finally found what she believes is the solution to this long-running debate. In the 1920s, Winnetka (IL) school superintendent Carleton Washburne said that it made no sense to give all students the same assignments and the same amount of time and then award grades from a uniform scale. Instead of trying to make the child fit the school, he said, schools should adjust to support the child. He believed that assessments should be used as diagnostic tools to discover how to help each student succeed. Washburne insisted that teachers spell out exactly what they expected students to master, make the work as intrinsically interesting as possible, use diagnostic tests to find out where each child needed help, and use a "goal record book" to keep track of progress toward mastery. "Instead of giving grades," he said, "we give dates – the dates on which the children have completed each test in each subject."

Under Washburne's system, explains Juarez, "A child may not pass a test, but that fact does not translate into a failing grade; rather, the test score indicates that more needs to be done to meet the standard… We measure and test in order to know how to help." This approach is similar to the way doctors chart their patients' vital signs, she says: "Medical doctors never halt their attempts to help patients improve, and charts are used to determine what progress patients have made and what remains to be done to ensure their recovery. Doctors do not 'grade' patients and abandon those who are failing to make progress relative to other patients. Likewise, in Washburne's plan, teachers do not 'grade' learners but continue to help them until learning occurs."

How did Washburne's Winnetka plan affect academic achievement? Student achievement compared favorably with that of districts using traditional grading. Juarez believes that this approach is a better choice than Father O'Malley's standards-bending desire to help a struggling student and Sister Mary Benedict's rigid devotion to protocol. And actually, that was the outcome of the subplot in *The Bells of St. Mary's*. In fact, after brooding over Father O'Malley's request, Sister Mary Benedict did something she'd never done before: she tested Patsy again, found that the girl had indeed mastered the material, and allowed her to graduate with her class. "The dispute between Sister Mary Benedict and Father O'Malley had a happy resolution," concludes Juarez, "because both believed that the learner and learning – not grades – were what mattered. They agreed that the school's purpose was to 'give children a helping hand' – and they came to realize that a helping hand could be extended without breaking hearts or casting aside standards."

"'Why Any Grades at All, Father?'" by Tina Juarez in *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 1996 (Vol. 77, #5, p. 374-377), no e-link available

Back to page one

## 2. Schools Where Failure Is Not An Option

In this meaty article in *Theory Into Practice*, researchers Dick Corbett and Bruce Wilson describe a five-year program in which several urban middle schools in Michigan experimented with not accepting failing performance from students. Following the mastery learning principles enunciated by Benjamin Bloom in the 1970s, students were required to make up failing assignments and keep trying until they achieved passing grades.

This approach is quite different from what Corbett and Wilson describe as the "*luck-based* education" most students experience: "That is, they have to be fortunate enough to be placed in classrooms where their teachers refuse to let them fail. The unlucky ones are left to endure the 'I already told you that,' 'I'm not going to keep repeating myself,' and 'You'll have to catch yourself up' statements that signal to students that their teachers are not very concerned whether they learn. Indeed, an all-too-prevalent pattern in schools is for teachers to settle for using good instructional practices and leaving it up to students to decide if they want to do their part. Tragically, in urban schools especially, many students – when given the choice to fail – do."

The four essential ingredients of the Michigan program (which Corbett and Wilson evaluated) were:

• *Educators bought into insisting on student success* – The philosophy behind the program (see links below) was that schools needed to use work completion as the primary academic lever to bring all students to mastery. Basically, teachers decided to take responsibility for students' success and not blame factors outside their control. Of course, motivated students and involved parents would make life easier, but teachers faced the fact that they could control only what happened during school hours. *It's on us*, they concluded, knowing that if they ceded responsibility for success to students and parents, many students would fail and the achievement gap would widen.

• *Schools switched to a no-failure grading system* – They took all the *Ds, Es, Fs,* and zeroes out of the grading system. Placeholder grades were given for incomplete assignments: *I* for incomplete, *NY* for not yet finished, or *NQ* for not quality. The schools were basically saying that "every student could and would do quality work," explain Corbett and Wilson. "Some students might take longer than others, but no teacher would ever signal the end of an assignment with an *F* or zero." Students were expected to do every assignment, and students didn't receive grades until all their work was at an acceptable level of quality. This shone a bright spotlight on failing students. "We've made the invisible students visible," said one teacher.

• *Staff set up numerous interventions* – When students' work was unsatisfactory or incomplete, teachers knew there were two possible explanations: students didn't understand the assignments, or they weren't motivated to do them. For the first category of students, teachers led in-class reteaching and enrichment sessions and used lunch-time makeup sessions, before- and after-school tutoring, Saturday school, and summer school. Even with the support, catching up was challenging for students. "They give us lots of chances to make up work," said one, "but teachers still give new assignments, which makes it hard to catch up." Some students

who were doing well chafed at having to do assignments again, arguing that their average was passing, but teachers still insisted. Teachers found that they needed to have two types of interventions: (a) extra time and alternative tasks for students who didn't understand, and (b) "annoyances" like lunch study for students who were doing okay but chose to put off doing their work. "Giving good students the freedom to procrastinate – and watching them take advantage of it – was probably the most surprising and frustrating development, according to teachers," report Corbett and Wilson.

• *Teachers took a critical look at the assignments they gave students* – The no-failure policy raised immediate questions about whether some assignments were worth the battle. "Teachers realized… that if they were going to be instructionally stubborn and enforce the completion of all assignments, they needed to take a very careful look at what they were asking students to do and make sure that the work was worth doing in the first place," say Corbett and Wilson. "They realized that if students were going to have to go to summer school to finish certain tasks, then the assignment had better be pretty worthwhile to begin with," they say. "In other words, having a bunch of kids completing word search puzzles in June was not an appealing image of an improved education." Teachers talked frequently in grade-level teams about what constituted a good assignment that merited grades and what was busywork or less important. They decided to give grades only for assignments that broke new ground or demonstrated proficiency. Homework, daily class work, and practice exercises didn't rise to that level, teachers reasoned, so they stopped giving grades for this type of work; if it was done well enough, proficiency would show up on culminating graded tests and assignments.

How did students respond to the no-failure regime? They appreciated – but also groused about – their teachers' unwavering insistence on doing assigned work at an acceptable level. "My teacher is mean, out of the kindness of her heart," said one student. "There is no way you can fail and get away with it," said another. "I hate it," said many, but equally common were comments like, "It makes you buckle down and finish things." Some students noticed the improved pedagogy: "The program makes teachers give better assignments because they don't want to fight with us about stupid things," said one. And students liked having second chances. "If I fall behind, I can make it up and I won't just flunk because I didn't get it the first time," said another student. "I would rather do the work again than take a *D* or *F*. That way I will be better prepared for the next grade."

How effective was the program? Corbett and Wilson report that teachers definitely had to work harder and regretted the fact that they often had to match wits with students and keep them from gaming the system. One piece of retrospective wisdom was that they should have done more at the beginning of the program to enlist students and parents in the overall philosophy of no failure. "In light of what we have learned from students' reactions to a reform based on principles they valued in the first place (i.e., teachers who did not give up on them), just having adults work harder at putting a program in place will not be sufficient," say Corbett and Wilson. "Students need to be participants and not just beneficiaries of the reform."

But after five years, Corbett and Wilson report that student achievement was impressive and teachers in these middle schools "stridently reaffirmed that going back to blaming students

and parents for poor performance and to failing scores of students each year was not what they wanted to do."

"Students' Reactions to a 'No Failure' Grading System and How They Informed Teacher Practice" by Dick Corbett and Bruce Wilson in *Theory Into Practice*, Summer 2009 (Vol. 48, #3, p. 191-197), no e-link available; Wilson can be reached at bruce.wilson8@verizon.net. The schools were part of the Academy for Educational Development's Middle Start program – http://www.middlestart.org, adopting the Achievement by Continual Improvement (ABCI) strand: http://www.middlestart.org/what/abci.cfm .

*Back to page one*

## 3. Doing Remediation Right

In this important *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, UCLA professor Mike Rose argues that most colleges' remedial writing courses are ineffective. Typically, they begin with low-level writing assignments and workbook exercises focused on grammar and usage, and use readings at a basic level in style and content. The assumption is that remedial students need to go back to square one, correct their linguistic errors, slowly build up their skills, and avoid overtaxing their abilities.

This approach doesn't work, says Rose, and he describes a different strategy for teaching struggling students material they have not yet mastered. Here are the steps that he and his UCLA colleagues have used to get much better results – steps that might well be applicable in K-12 remedial classes:

- First, analyze the type of reading and writing students are asked to do in their regular classes.
- Second, find similar readings from various disciplines and create assignments that help students develop their writing skills.
- Third, sequence the assignments from basic to more challenging and make them cumulative.
- Fourth, use a good deal of discussion and writing in class, so students constantly try out ideas and get feedback on their work as it develops.

Students in UCLA remedial classes have the usual grammatical, stylistic, and organizational problems, and they get constant feedback on their errors in class, in conferences, and in comments on their papers – *always in the context of their academic writing*.

This is essential, says Rose. "Writing filled with grammatical errors does not preclude engagement with sophisticated intellectual material, and errors can be dealt with effectively as one works with such material." Most students in remedial classes aren't lacking in intelligence; they were poorly educated in basics in their K-12 schools but can catch up with the right kind of intervention. America is a country that gives second chances, says Rose. "An educational system as vast, complex, and flawed as ours must have mechanisms to remedy its failures… The notion of a second chance, of building safety nets into a flawed system, offers a robust idea of education and learning: that we live in a system that acknowledges that people change, retool, grow, and need to return to old mistakes, or just to what is past and forgotten."

Rose sums up the keys to rescuing struggling students: "Successful remedial programs set high standards, are focused on inquiry and problem-solving in a substantial curriculum, use a pedagogy that is supportive and interactive, draw on a variety of techniques and approaches, are in line with students' goals, and provide credit for course work."

"Colleges Need to Re-Mediate Remediation" by Mike Rose in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 24, 2009 (Vol. LV, #42, p. A76), no e-link available

*Back to page one*

## 4. What Can Be Done to Prevent Dropouts?

In this *Principal's Research Review* article, ERS researcher Nancy Protheroe explores studies on reducing the dropout rate. Some key findings:

• *Early detection* – Dropping out is "more of a process than event," and early detection and prevention are key – as early as elementary school in some cases. There isn't just one indicator, but risk factors include low academic performance (failing grades, poor test scores, and being retained) and signs of disengagement (absenteeism, truancy, disciplinary problems, and low participation in extracurricular activities).

• *Spotting different patterns* – Each dropout's path to dropping out is unique; some are on the slippery slope in elementary school while others don't hit the wall until middle or high school. Data-gathering and analysis are vital to bringing appropriate supports and interventions to struggling students when they need them most (and also avoiding "false positives" that identify students as at-risk when they're not).

• *Not falling prey to wishful thinking* – A common response to struggling sixth graders is to blame the ups and downs of early adolescence and the transition to middle school and hope students grow out of it. The evidence is that sixth graders with serious risk factors *don't* recover, so early intervention is essential.

• *Failing grades in ninth grade* predict about 80 percent of dropouts, making this a far better measure than race, gender, and economic status, which predict only about 12 percent of the variation in graduate rates.

• *Leading indicators* – data that can be acted upon during the school year – are far more useful than *lagging* indicators (test scores and other data that arrive too late to help struggling students). Schools should look for the best leading indicators of academic performance, engagement in school, and social background and create an early warning system to bring help to students in a timely fashion. An example of this is the Early Warning System Tool developed by Hepppen, O'Cummings, and Therriault, Worksheet 1 (2008): http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/EWStool-updated-10-20-08.xls.

• *Following up* – It's not enough to gather data; struggling students need effective interventions and constant monitoring!

• *Changing dysfunctional policies* – Schools should examine their overall programs to see if prevention can take place before more expensive and disruptive remedial programs become necessary. Specifically, schools might consider revising:

- Attendance policies – Some districts don't require action until students have missed five consecutive days of school. Canny students can game the system by stopping just short of the maximum and accumulating numerous absences without triggering intervention. High-risk students need far more aggressive treatment.
- Grade retention policies – "Social promotion does not work," says Protheroe, "but neither does holding students back, especially once they reach adolescence." It's much more effective to use extended school days, Saturdays, and summer school to help students catch up.
- Grade promotion policies – It makes no sense to have students repeat a grade and re-take courses that they have already passed. Students should re-take only courses they have failed and get support to rejoin their peers mid-year or earlier.
- Grading policies – Giving students a zero for missed work or exams pulls down their course average so drastically that it's almost impossible for them to recover. One alternative is grading on a 60-100 scale, which makes recovery easier. Another is to implement a "B or better" policy in which students must re-do work until it reaches the proficient level. This makes sense because research shows that students who get Bs and As in high school succeed in college.

"Using Data to Reduce the Drop-Out Rate" by Nancy Protheroe in *Principal's Research Review*, July 2009 (Vol. 4, #4, p. 1-7), no e-link available

*Back to page one*

## 5. Can Whole-Class Instruction Help All Students Learn?

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Notre Dame professors Sean Kelly and Julianne Turner ask whether whole-class instruction, so ubiquitous in schools, is inherently detrimental to the achievement of academically-weak students. Classrooms in which teachers use the initiate/recite/evaluate (IRE) pattern – the teacher asks a question, a student responds, the teacher publicly evaluates the student's response – would certainly seem to favor high-achieving students, but is this true of all whole-class teaching? Kelly and Turner test the idea: "Unidimensional classrooms, where whole-class instruction predominates, are socially risky classrooms in which low-achieving students are more likely to engage in 'failure-avoiding' behavior, such as withdrawing effort to maintain a positive sense of self-worth… Thus, in these classrooms, the distribution of student engagement is thought to become polarized, with high-achieving students being engaged and low-achieving students becoming increasingly disengaged."

But the research doesn't support this conclusion, say Kelly and Turner. Looking carefully at the level of student engagement in different classroom structures – whole-class, small-group, and individual work – they found that invidious comparisons and dynamics that discourage low-achieving students occur in all three. What matters is how the teacher handles teacher-student and student-student exchanges. If small-group and individual classroom

structures are handled badly, they can be just as harmful for low-achieving students as poorly-handled whole-class instruction.

So whole-class teaching is not inherently detrimental to low-achieving students; it just has that potential. Key to avoiding that is breaking free of the IRE (initiate/recite/evaluate) pattern. "In the typical IRE style of instruction," say Kelly and Turner, "participation is inherently risky. Typically, the teacher's questions focus only on eliciting the correct response from students. The goal is not so much to provoke student thought and analysis, but to transmit a specific, common understanding to students and/or evaluate whether students hold the common understanding."

This dynamic can be totally changed if the teacher leads a discussion in which students can think and analyze for themselves and different points of view are taken seriously. Teachers can also get all students involved in whole-class instruction by asking open-ended questions, respecting students' responses, scaffolding difficult material, and stressing mastery goals rather than competition and performance goals. "Instead of emphasizing social comparison," conclude Kelly and Turner, "whole-class instruction can be used to honor a variety of ideas, to help students develop their thinking and arguments, or to demonstrate the value of 'mistakes' for learning… One important determinant of these desirable motivational contexts is the nature of classroom discourse. How whole-class instruction is implemented is crucial to students' sense of self-worth and to students' engagement."

"Rethinking the Effects of Classroom Activity Structure on the Engagement of Low-Achieving Students" by Sean Kelly and Julianne Turner in *Teachers College Record*, July 2009 (Vol. 111, #7, p. 1665-1692), no e-link available

Back to page one

## 6. Pointers for Teaching Unfamiliar Material

In this thoughtful *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Therese Huston of Seattle University offers suggestions for teaching subject matter you've never taught before. There are advantages to teaching fresh material, she argues; students don't necessarily learn more when you're perfect. "They learn more when you're human and you make the classroom a place where it's safe to ask questions."

• *Use backwards design*. "What do you want students to be able to do as a result of learning in your course?" asks Huston. "Then outline the kinds of evidence that will be acceptable. Finally, decide what you need to do, and what students need to do, to produce that kind of evidence." This will help you locate and organize materials, background information, practice, and strategic advice. Starting with meaningful goals in mind produces far better learning than the day-by-day planning approach.

• *Ask the right questions*. With the course's ultimate goals in mind, look at the subject matter from the point of view of students, who are content novices, and frame questions that will spark excitement and curiosity. A teacher who is new to subject matter can sometimes relate better to students' naïve curiosity and frame better questions than a content expert.

• *Reach out for help*. Getting advice from a supportive colleague who has taught the subject matter before is important.

• *Read the materials up front*. This sounds obvious, but careful reading of each chapter can answer questions like these:

- Does the material raise any big questions for you?
- What is most interesting – and least interesting?
- Which theories, findings, events, cases, or equations are most important to the field?
- Which concepts or examples are hardest for you to understand and need further explanation to students?
- What background information will help students understand the material?
- Is there advice students need before reading the material?
- Are there big questions you can ask about the chapter? It's good to introduce these early in the course.

All this will help students make better meaning of the reading and produce better classroom discussions and learning experiences.

• *Lead off with a topic you're familiar with*. Starting with an area in which you know the facts, terms, and examples helps build your confidence – and your credibility with students.

• *Build flexibility into the syllabus*. A common source of anxiety is falling behind the syllabus – or going too fast. Listing readings and topics by the week (rather than the day) can help. You might also include a class midway through the course with an ambiguous topic and a short reading assignment – one that could be skipped or expanded. Another approach is to issue a revised syllabus during the course.

• *Use at least one case study*. Cases make students into fact-finders and spark their intrinsic motivation, says Huston. "They are actively working to understand how all the pieces of the case fit together, rather than passively waiting for you to assemble everything in perfect working order."

Huston has found that colleagues teaching material for the first time often make one or more of these mistakes:

- Underestimating how much time it will take to prepare – A new course requires serious work!
- Assigning too much work – This overburdens students – and the teacher;
- Failing to manage expectations – Other commitments may have to take a back seat while you find your sea legs teaching new material;
- Forgetting what you've learned – In the midst of teaching new material, you may forget simple rules like *Never give tests on Friday* or *Build in time for student meetings at midterm*.
- Over-preparing for classes – "If you prepare too much," says Huston, "you can become exhausted and resent the students. And if you're cramming the night before to research just a few more sources, you won't have time to organize it all." Better to start by identifying three or four learning objectives for the day and backwards-designing the class around those goals. "Ask yourself, on the basis of what you've read about

Concept A, what would you reasonably expect students to be able to do?" suggests Huston. "What should students be able to do when they've finished studying Concept B?"

- Lecturing too much – This can seem like an efficient way to convey information, but many students don't learn well in this mode. If you lecture, step back from the material and insert provocative questions and mini-discussions to keep students involved.
- Over-using lists – For example, the eight most powerful political parties in India; the problem with lists is that students can get this kind of pre-packaged material from other sources and using lists sends the signal that rote memorization is the name of the game. Lists can be used to examine deeper questions, for example, "Why are some items on the list and not others?" and "Why is the list organized this way?" You might also construct lists from scratch using students' ideas.

"How to Teach What You Don't Actually Know" by Therese Huston in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 24, 2009 (Vol. LV, #42, p. A25-A26), no e-link available

*Back to page one*

## 7. The Rappin' Math Teacher

In this *American School Board Journal* piece, editor Joetta Sack-Min interviews middle-school math teacher Alex Kajitani, who is California's 2009 Teacher of the Year. As a rookie teacher, Kajitani couldn't get students' attention and teach them math rules. He noticed that students could memorize every word of a new rap song within days of its release, so he composed "The Itty Bitty Dot", a rap designed to teach addition and subtraction of decimals. "I came in the next morning and just sort of busted it out for them," says Kajitani. "It was an absolute disaster. I got laughed at. I even remember one of the students clutching his stomach and rolling out of his chair." But at lunch time, Kajitani was amazed to hear students singing the song in the cafeteria, and the next day, they asked, "Are you going to rap again?" He's been math-rapping ever since, and students' test scores have soared, with some remedial students making 100-point test gains on the California standards test.

How often does Kajitani rap? Not every day, he says, but frequently, usually to introduce a new concept that he predicts will be difficult for students. "And it's not just to understand the math better but to feel good about school," he says. "It takes the academic content and puts it in a language that students can understand and are already big fans of." Kajitani has produced a CD and workbook, but for teachers who aren't comfortable rapping in front of their students, he recommends letting students write their own raps. "One of the most important things," he says, "is to make sure you're not only teaching the content matter, but also making sure it's relevant to these students' lives.

To see Kajitani in action, see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ropuXkgqqYo.

"Q&A with Alex Kajitani, The Rappin' Mathematician" by Joetta Sack-Min in *American School Board Journal*, August 2009 (Vol. 196, #8, p. 9);

*Back to page one*

## 8. Short Items:

***a. Through Students' Eyes website*** – This website describes the five-year Through Students' Eyes project, which includes photographs and writing by young people in Cleveland and Washington, D.C.: http://www.throughstudentseyes.org.

Spotted in "Additional Resources for Classroom Use" in *Theory Into Practice*, Summer 2009 (Vol. 48, #3, p. 239)

*Back to page one*

***b. Photovoice website*** – This website documents the methodology used by the Through Students' Eyes project directors – using documentary photography to empower urban youth: http://www.photovoice.org.

Spotted in "Additional Resources for Classroom Use" in *Theory Into Practice*, Summer 2009 (Vol. 48, #3, p. 239)

*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.marshall8@verizon.net

# 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 37 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 about 50 issues a year).

### *Subscriptions:*

Individual subscriptions are $50 for the school year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and information on paying by check or credit card.

### *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
- What readers say
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Marshall Memo subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

- The current issue (in PDF or Word format)
- All back issues (also in PDF or Word)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or password

### *Publications covered*

*Those read this week are underlined.*

American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Catalyst Chicago
Changing Schools (McREL)
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
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
Teacher Magazine (online)
Teachers College Record
The Atlantic Monthly
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools/The Learning Principal