

# Marshall Memo 115

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education  
December 12, 2005

## In This Issue:

1. Richard Allington on choosing an elementary reading program
2. Ratings of comprehensive school reform programs
3. How state science standards stack up
4. Does *Good to Great* apply to schools?
5. A middle school's four-step plan for student misbehavior
6. Administrators cross-training in New Mexico
7. Problems using data in schools
8. What high-impact high schools do
9. Eleven characteristics of good professional development
10. Do's and don'ts on accommodations for children with special needs
11. Books that teenagers love
12. Short items: (a) Ask-a-scientist website; (b) Standards for coaching; (c) ELA lesson plans; (d) Online scoring of student writing; (e) A hands-on lesson in germ transmission

## Quotes of the Week

"A couple of years ago I spent the day at an elementary school in New Jersey... I handled three classes, and by the time I staggered out the door I wanted to lie down for the rest of the day. Teaching is the toughest job there is."

Anna Quindlen in her *Newsweek* column, November 28, 2005 (p. 100)

"No product currently available provides a complete reading curriculum."

Richard Allington (see item #1)

"To become good writers, students need to write and write and write some more."

Marcia Barton (see item #12d)

"'[E]qual time' for intelligent design creationism and Darwin... is not unlike recommending that mustard plasters and bleeding be taken as seriously as antibiotics and bypass surgery."

Chester Finn (see item #3)

"U.S. students run a grave risk of being expected to discover the laws of thermodynamics for themselves and to replicate the work of Newton, Einstein, Watson, and Crick."

Chester Finn (*ibid.*)

"Effective data use requires a culture that is driven by inquiry, not fear."

Mary Ann Lachat and Stephen Smith (see item #7)

---

## 1. Richard Allington on Choosing an Elementary Reading Program

In his president's message in the winter issue of *Reading Today*, University of Tennessee professor Richard Allington focuses on the criteria that principals and school districts should use as they decide on reading programs. The current rage is "evidence-based education," using "scientifically-based" criteria, especially the "gold standard" – multiple independent experimental studies. Allington says that only two interventions meet this standard: reducing class size and one-on-one tutoring for struggling readers. Research on other programs is less rigorous.

Allington is especially critical of a checklist from the University of Oregon, *A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis*. This guide, he says, includes several criteria that are not supported by the research. "Basically," he writes, "the guide is a couple of individual researchers' ideas of what they think the research suggests might be included in a core reading program. But that isn't empirical evidence; that is, at best, professional judgment marketed as empirical evidence."

Allington says there's good and bad news when it comes to picking elementary reading materials. Reputable studies show that certain products bring about positive gains in student learning, but what we see in advertisements for reading programs is not real research. These programs are not supported by published, peer-reviewed research studies or independent, randomized field trials by researchers with no financial ties to the product. "Instead of rigorous research," concludes Allington, "these advertising materials offer testimonials, cherry-picked case reports, or simple assertions that the product design was influenced by the report of the National Reading Panel."

"If rigorous, independent evidence is almost never available," asks Allington, "how then might we select from the broad array of commercial materials available?" We need to pay attention to what limited research there is, he says, "while also relying upon the professional wisdom that experience has provided the field." Allington thinks that educators should scrutinize three elements with particular care:

*First, ask about a product's educative potential for teachers.* Will it develop expertise about effective reading instruction? "Since study after study points to teacher expertise as the critical variable in effective literacy instruction, why would we purchase products that have little, if any, potential to develop teaching expertise?"

*Second, look at the product's role in your total literacy curriculum.* "I've never encountered any product," says Allington, "that by itself, comprises even a full reading curriculum, much less a full literacy curriculum... We can use commercial products in our design of an effective literacy curriculum, but we cannot expect any vendor to produce the complete curriculum for us." The pieces we buy have to fit into the overall program, building students' proficiency and helping them apply reading skills in independent reading. "It is during independent reading," he writes, "that readers consolidate the skills and strategies they have been taught and come to own them." [For Allington's ten criteria for a total literacy curriculum, see Marshall Memo 92, #1.]

*Third, look at the product's interest level for students.* "Key to reading proficiency is engagement in reading," he says. "Key to engagement is how interesting the texts and the curriculum topics are."

Allington says that it's particularly challenging to fit commercial products into a balanced overall literacy curriculum: "Some products may assist in fostering a few very specific skills or strategies (e.g., phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, or narrative text comprehension). But we have to ask whether these products sop up so much instructional time that our curriculum becomes unbalanced such that we develop readers who can complete a story map but cannot decode big words. Or who can decode but exhibit little comprehension of what they have read. Or who can read passages fluently with repeated readings but whose vocabulary deficit grows every year in part because they are reading and rereading the same texts."

"What Counts as Evidence in Evidence-Based Education?" by Richard Allington in *Reading Today*, December 2005/January 2006 (Vol. 23, #3, p. 16), no e-link available

## **2. Ratings of Comprehensive School Reform Programs**

A new report from the federally-funded American Institutes for Research (AIR) rates the impact of 22 elementary comprehensive school-reform models on student achievement using "scientifically based research" from the What Works Clearinghouse – and also whether programs provide professional development or technical assistance. Here are the ratings:

- *Very strong evidence of effectiveness*
  - No programs
  
- *Moderately strong evidence of effectiveness*
  - Direct Instruction
  - Success for All
  
- *Moderate evidence of effectiveness*
  - Accelerated Schools PLUS
  - America's Choice School Design
  - Core Knowledge
  - School Renaissance
  - School Development Project

- *Limited evidence of effectiveness*
  - ATLAS Communities
  - CONECT
  - Different Ways of Knowing
  - Integrated Thematic Instruction
  - Literacy Collaborative
  - National Writing Project
  - Modern Red Schoolhouse
  - Ventures Initiative and Focus System
  
- *Zero evidence of effectiveness (unreliable studies)*
  - Breakthrough to Literacy
  - Coalition of Essential Schools
  - Community for Learning
  - Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning
  - Expeditionary Learning
  - First Steps
  - Onward to Excellence II
  
- *Negative effect on student achievement*
  - No programs

Some program developers argued that AIR’s criteria favor more-prescriptive programs. “It’s a lot easier to measure impact if all schools use the same kind of approach,” said Lewis Cohen of the Coalition for Essential Schools. Another complaint was that doing the research to generate evidence of effectiveness requires a high level of funding.

“Report Critiques Evidence on School Improvement Models” by Debra Viadero in *Education Week*, December 7, 2005 (Vol. 25, #14, p. 15). To get the full AIR report, “Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models,” go to <http://www.csrq.org/reports.asp> and look under “Current Reports.”

### **3. How State Science Standards Stack Up**

The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation just released a critical analysis of state science standards, giving each state a letter grade. Seven states earned an A: California, Indiana, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, South Carolina, and Virginia. Kansas brought up the rear with an ignominious F- (for its treatment of evolution, among other things).

In this commentary article in *Education Gadfly*, Fordham president Chester Finn is quick to point out that “terrific standards are no guarantor of a terrific education being delivered or absorbed.” Finn is concerned about schools emphasizing “discovery learning” too much. “If schools taught nothing else,” he writes, “the school day *might* be long enough to contain a full measure of lab work and student-directed learning *as well as* teacher-led instruction in fundamental scientific knowledge, skills, and procedures. Given the tight limits within which science education typically occurs, however, and given educators’ affection for constructivist pedagogy rather than traditional instruction, U.S. students run a grave risk of

being expected to discover the laws of thermodynamics for themselves and to replicate the work of Newton, Einstein, Watson, and Crick. That's crazy."

Finn notes that evolution continues to be a flashpoint and says the intelligent design folks are incredibly persistent. "They've even recruited President Bush and Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist to urge 'equal time' for intelligent design creationism and Darwin," writes Finn, "which is not unlike recommending that mustard plasters and bleeding be taken as seriously as antibiotics and bypass surgery."

"Getting Serious About Science" by Chester Finn in *Education Gadfly*, December 8, 2005. The full study, "The State of State Science Standards 2005" by Paul Gross, is available at: [http://www.edexcellence.net/doc/Science%20Standards.Final%20\(12-6\).pdf](http://www.edexcellence.net/doc/Science%20Standards.Final%20(12-6).pdf)

#### **4. Does *Good to Great* Apply to Schools?**

Jim Collins's best-selling management book *Good to Great* (Harper Business, 2001) has been widely read by educators – but do its lessons apply to the world of schools? In a new 35-page paper, Collins says that many of the basic principles enunciated in *Good to Great* are just as relevant in the world of schools, including the importance of "confronting the brutal facts," strong leadership, understanding the core mission, "getting the right people on the bus," and using technology effectively. And he also believes that school principals need what he calls "Level 5" qualities: professional will, personal humility, and ambition for their organization (not themselves).

But Collins acknowledges that schools have a "different set of realities," including the following: (a) performance is not measured by profit; (b) there are constraints on hiring and firing; and (c) because of a diffuse power structure, school leaders often don't have the authority to make change happen by themselves. As a result, effective leadership looks a little different in schools than it does in the business world. Because principals have far less direct control over what happens, they need an additional skill-set to *make the right decisions happen*.

Collins calls this "legislative" rather than "executive" leadership, and cites Lyndon Johnson's tenure as majority leader of the U.S. Senate as an example. Collins also gives an example from a school: a high-school science teacher who built a top-notch department by refusing to recommend teachers for tenure unless they had demonstrated exceptional performance in their first years as teachers. Collins says that this man "realized that the default is that if you haven't done something terrible, you're going to be passed on through. And his response was: That's not good enough."

"Building anything great is difficult," concludes Collins. But, he adds, "There are schools that do it, there are teachers that do it, and there are science departments that do it."

"Management Writer Applies Principles to K-12 Education" by Jeff Archer in *Education Week*, December 7, 2005 (Vol. 25, #14, p. 12), no free e-link available. The monograph, "Good

to Great and the Social Sectors: Why Business Thinking Is Not the Answer,” can be purchased at <http://www.leadershipnow.com/leadershop/0977326403.html> and at Amazon.com.

## 5. A Middle School’s Four-Step Plan for Student Misbehavior

Students push limits, writes Robert Ruder, a former Pennsylvania middle-school principal in this article in the December *Principal Leadership*. “A principal who wants to focus on being the school’s instructional leader cannot allow the climate of the building to disintegrate.” To meet this ongoing challenge, he used a four-step process in his school:

- *Step 1: Straight to the principal.* If a student committed an offense that warranted being sent out of class, the teacher called Ruder on his cell phone and sent the student to the principal’s office, not the main office. Ruder dropped whatever he was doing and met with the student immediately. This completely avoided the usual process of having misbehaving students wait for the principal in the office and being able to watch the workings of the school. When this happens, says Ruder, “They know who is going home sick, who left their lunch at home, and who forgot their gym uniforms. They greet and interact with other students who have legitimate business in the office, members of the office staff, and the never-ending flow of parents who come to the office for a multitude of reasons.”

- *Step 2: A call home.* Ruder had misbehaving students call their parent or guardian and explain why they were sent out of class. Ruder then chimed in by speakerphone to further explain the infraction, and told the parent that he would follow up with a decision on consequences once he had read the teacher’s written report.

- *Step 3: A written report.* Teachers were required to fill out the school’s standard discipline referral form shortly after sending a student to the principal, giving an *objective* description of what happened. “The student’s past behavior in the classroom, the teacher’s frustration with the student’s behavior, and the student’s lack of academic achievement were not recorded on the referral,” Ruder explains.

- *Step 4: Consequences.* After getting the teacher’s report, Ruder had another meeting with the student (ideally the same day) in which the student read the teacher’s report (or had it read to him or her) and was given a chance to respond. Ruder then decided on the consequence and called the parent with the news.

Ruder says that this system was responsible for a very low level of suspensions and after-school detentions in his school. Students dreaded having to call their parents when they got in trouble, so most of them avoided trouble. Ruder also thinks the system had a deterrent effect on borderline students who witnessed their classmates going through the process and thought better of breaking classroom or school rules themselves.

Ruder says that several elements had to be in place from the outset for the system to work as well as it did:

- Explaining the four-step process to students in a beginning-of-the-year assembly (and in the student handbook). Students were given a vivid sense of what it would be like to call their parent in the middle of the day and explain why they were in the principal’s office.

- Getting teachers' buy-in and agreement to hold up their end of the bargain (i.e., only sending students to the office for serious offenses and following up immediately with an objective written report). Ruder says that discipline was mostly handled within classrooms or teams and only the most serious offenses came to him.
- Telling parents about the process up front.
- Following up with reminders to students, teachers, and parents during the year.

“A Four-Step Process to Address Student Discipline” by Robert Ruder in *Principal Leadership*, December 2005 (Vol. 6, #4 p. 8-9), no e-link available

## **6. Administrators Cross-Training in New Mexico**

In this *Principal Leadership* article, assistant principal Kim Orr describes what sounded like a wild and crazy idea at first: the principal of this 1,400-student junior high school wanted to set up a four-week rotating duty schedule for himself and his three assistant principals.

What was the problem to which this was the solution? First, the principal rarely saw students, spent very little time in classrooms, and dealt only with the broadest issues of the school. Second, the assistant principals were pigeonholed in their specific areas of responsibility (discipline, I.E.P. meetings, grant-writing, budget, scheduling, etc.), which led to burnout and did not give them the kind of balanced administrative experience they would need to move up to a principalship. Third, teachers had to shop around for answers to routine questions. And fourth, if one administrator was out of the building for any reason, the others didn't know enough about that person's areas of expertise to make decisions.

As he planned the rotation, the principal decided that administrators would keep certain duties for the entire year. Each continued to supervise a couple of departments. One dealt with facilities and maintenance issues. One handled athletics. One handled Title I and testing. And the principal handled public relations and got the “glory” of going to mandatory district and state meetings.

But from experience, the principal thought there were four major functions that lent themselves to rotation:

- Discipline;
- I.E.P.s and similar meetings;
- Teacher supervision;
- “Walk-in” business with students, teachers, and parents in the main office.

So the principal made each administrator a specialist in each of these areas for one week at a time and rotated the duties. When it was your week on discipline, you handled all disciplinary referrals schoolwide. When it was your week to cover the main office, you handled all parent complaints and concerns, fielded telephone calls, and did various other odd jobs (including serving as back-up for the administrator handling discipline). When it was your week on special education, you answered questions, represented the school and district at important meetings, and facilitated operations. And when it was your week to supervise teachers,

(depending on the time of year) you visited classrooms, coached teachers, participated in classroom activities, or did formal evaluations.

How did the system work? The administrative team spent the first year ironing out the kinks. They discovered that a weekly meeting was essential to updating each other on goings-on in each of the four areas. They found that the rotation created an even greater need for consistent policies so that decisions didn't depend on the individual personality of the administrator who happened to be in charge that week. They found that it was essential to tell staff, students, and parents who was assigned to what each week. Finally, they learned that there were times when activities crossed boundaries, and when one administrator was absent, colleagues had to perform multiple functions.

On balance, Orr reports, the administrative rotation is working well. The main benefits are:

- Assistant principals are getting much more balanced training for the principalship. "I know that I am ready to run a school on my own when the time is right," she says.
- There is less burnout; each week brings fresh challenges and that keeps administrators sharp and fresh.
- Administrators (especially the principal) spend more time in classrooms, and teachers have commented positively on this.
- All four administrators had broader expertise in the running of the school, which has helped them and teachers (who can go to any of the four to get answers to questions).
- The rotation forced the team to communicate better, which led to more consistent policies and practices in all areas.

"Playing Every Position" by Kim Orr in *Principal Leadership*, December 2005 (Vol. 6, #4 p. 29-31), no e-link available

## **7. Problems Using Data in Schools**

This thoughtful study has the following sad commentary (with research citations) on the use of data in urban high schools: "Although the range of data available to schools is extensive, it is rarely used effectively (Wayman and Stringfield, 2003). Schools that want to use data to drive their decisions often don't know where to begin or what type of data to use (AASA, 2002). There is often too much data, but not the right type or not in a format that facilitates use (Schmoker, 2003). Data often aren't available to school staff when they need it, and the often complex and confusing formats of data reports make it more difficult for them to sort through what is most useful for them (Lachat, 2003 and NFIE, 2003). In attempting to use data, schools often employ the wrong type of data, using indirect measures of learning for which they have no explanatory model to interpret the data (Marzano, 2003). Teachers often use data meant for compliance when what they need is timely, diagnostic data on the students they teach (Olson, 2002, and Rudner and Boston, 2003)... [M]ost schools conduct their education programs with little analysis of how well programs work for students, and rely instead on 'gut feelings' about what is and isn't working (Bernhardt, 2006b)... [E]ven when

teachers are given training and time to think about using data to inform their practices, they may be reluctant to do so in a culture where they feel threatened or fear they will be attacked for something they are doing or not doing in the classroom (Bernhardt, 2006b). Effective data use requires a culture that is driven by inquiry, not fear.”

“Practices That Support Data Use in Urban High Schools” by Mary Ann Lachat and Stephen Smith in *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk* (Vol 10, #3, p. 333-349), no e-link available

## **8. What High-Impact High Schools Do**

A new study from the Education Trust compares four high schools that are getting better-than-expected results with students who are behind academically with three high schools that are demographically-similar but are getting run-of-the-mill results. These are the characteristics that distinguished the effective schools:

- Focusing on preparing students for college and careers, not just graduation;
- Embracing external standards and assessments (rather than just tolerating them);
- Setting high expectations for students regardless of their prior performance;
- Identifying students who need help early, and making sure they get it;
- Adjusting class size so struggling students get more attention;
- Assigning teachers based on students’ performance and needs, not just seniority;
- Exerting more control over who gets hired.

“Ed. Trust Examines ‘High Impact’ Schools” by Catherine Gewertz in *Education Week*, December 7, 2005 (Vol. 25, #14, p. 16). The full study, “Gaining Traction, Gaining Ground: How Some High Schools Accelerate Learning for Struggling Students,” is available at: <http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/6226B581-83C3-4447-9CE7-31C5694B9EF6/0/GainingTractionGainingGround.pdf> A second report, “The Power to Change: High Schools That Help All Students Achieve,” is available at: <http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/012DC865-97CA-4C2F-8A04-9924E2F392F0/0/ThePowerToChange.pdf>

## **9. Eleven Principles of Good Professional Development**

This brief article in *The Learning System*, a new National Staff Development Council newsletter, lists the characteristics of high-quality professional learning:

- It takes place at school, not away from school.
- It occurs daily, not occasionally.
- It engages teams, not individuals.
- It relies on discussion, not presentation.
- It requires initiative, not passivity.
- It stimulates thinking, not inattention.
- It emphasizes creation, not replication.
- It sparks investigation, not transmission.
- It generates understanding, not confusion.
- It produces ownership, not compliance.

- It improves practice, not deception.

“Read the Writing on the Wall, and Then Act Accordingly” by Hayes Mizell in *The Learning System*, Dec. 2005/Jan. 2006 (Vol. 1, #4, p. 2), no e-link available

## **10. Do’s and Don’ts on Accommodations for Children with Special Needs**

In this article in the December *Principal Leadership*, Martha Thurlow of the University of Minneapolis suggests the following do’s and don’ts on accommodations for children with special needs:

*Don’ts:*

- Don’t introduce new accommodations for the first time during an assessment.
- Don’t base the decision about what accommodations a student will use on the student’s disability category.
- Don’t start from the district or state list of approved accommodations when considering what accommodations a student will use in an upcoming test.
- Don’t pick accommodations once and never again re-evaluate the need for them or for new ones.

*Do’s:*

- Systematically use accommodations during instruction and carry these into the assessment process.
- Base the decision about accommodations, both for instruction and for assessment, on the needs of the student.
- Consult the district or state list of approved accommodations after determining what the student needs, then reevaluate the importance of the accommodations that are not allowed. If they are important for the student, request their approval from the district or state if it is required.
- Evaluate the student’s accommodations periodically; as students move through the grades and improve skills, accommodations may need to be changed.

Thorlow concludes: “Accommodations on assessments are important, but improving student performance on state and district assessments ultimately relies on ensuring that these students are learning throughout the year.”

“Educating Students with Disabilities: Do You Pass the Test?” by Martha Thurlow in *Principal Leadership*, December 2005 (Vol. 6, #4 p. 12-15), no e-link available

## **11. Books That Teenagers Love**

Every year, the International Reading Association compiles a list of 30 trade books acclaimed by teenagers. This year’s Young Adults’ Choices includes books published in 2003:

- *After* by Francine Prose
- *The Afterlife* by Gary Soto
- *The Battle of Jericho* by Sharon Draper
- *Begging for Change* by Sharon Flake

- *Blood Trail* by Nancy Springer
- *The Creek* by Jennifer Holm
- *The Dark* by Marianne Curley
- *Dr. Ernest Drake's Dragonology: The Complete Book of Dragons* edited by Dugald Steer
- *The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things* by Carolyn Mackler
- *East* by Edith Pattou
- *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini
- *Fault Line* by Janet Tashjian
- *The First Part Last* by Angela Johnson
- *For Freedom: The Story of a French Spy* by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
- *Full Tilt* by Neal Shusterman
- *The Class Café* by Gary Paulsen
- *Inside Out* by Terry Trueman
- *Milkweed* by Jerry Spinelli
- *Molly Moon's Incredible Book of Hypnotism* by Georgia Byng
- *My Not-So-Terrible Time at the Hippie Hotel* by Rosemary Graham
- *A Northern Light* by Jennifer Donnelly
- *Patiently Alice* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
- *Pirates!* By Celia Rees
- *The River Between Us* by Richard Peck
- *Shadow of a Doubt* by S.L. Rottman
- *Storm Catchers* by Tim Bowler
- *Sweetblood* by Pete Hautman
- *Vampire High* by Douglas Rees
- *Vampire Kisses* by Ellen Schreiber
- *Wayne: An Abused Child's Story of Courage, Survival, and Hope* by Wayne Theodore

“List Outlines Books Teens Love” in *Reading Today*, December 2005/January 2006 (Vol. 23, #3, p. 40); for an annotated list of these books, go to:

<http://www.reading.org/Library/Retrieve.cfm?D=10.1598/JAAL.49.3.6&F=JAAL-49-3-YA-Choices.html>

## 12. Short Items:

**a. Ask-a-scientist website** – This website, sponsored by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, allows students to ask questions about biological science. Although many questions come from high-school students, some of the best ones come from the lower grades, for example, “Why don’t any animals have green fur?” Check out <http://askascientist.org/>.

Spotted in *ASCD SmartBrief*, Dec. 6, 2005

**b. Standards for coaching** – The International Reading Association has developed a set of standards for middle- and high-school literacy coaching. This document is available at:

<http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/reports/coaching.html>

“IRA, Others Develop Middle, High School Literacy Coaching Standards” in *Reading Today*, December/January 2005-2006 (Vol. 23, #3, p. 1, 3)

**c. ELA lesson plans** – The ReadWriteThink website, sponsored by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English, in partnership with the MCI Foundation, has more than 450 peer-reviewed reading and English language arts lesson plans for K-12 teachers. Teachers can also submit lessons for publication on the site. It's at: <http://www.readwritethink.org>

“RWT Offers Lesson Authors Worldwide Audience” in *Reading Today*, December/January 2005-2006 (Vol. 23, #3, p. 48)

**d. Online scoring of student writing** – Students and teachers can now submit student writing to Criterion, a computerized grading service at Educational Testing Service, and receive feedback and a score within seconds. The Web-based service compares students' writing to “training” essays submitted in advance by the teacher, or models of the class assignment, at each proficiency level. Ed Bent, a sociology professor in Missouri, has developed a similar program called SAGrader.

Marcia Barton, a technology-integration specialist in California, thinks that on-line grading services should encourage teachers to assign more writing because they won't have such daunting stacks of papers to grade themselves. And if students write more and get quick feedback, she believes they will become more proficient. “To become good writers,” says Barton, “students need to write and write and write some more.”

“Grade-a-Matic: The Red Pen Goes High Tech” by Cheri Lucas in *Edutopia*, December 2005/January 2006 (Vol. 1, #9, p. 14) <http://www.edutopia.org>  
Criterion is at <http://www.ets.org/criterion>, SAGrader at <http://www.sagrader.com>.

**e. A hands-on lesson in germ transmission** – Nancy Foote, an educator in Arizona, taught her students about how easily germs can be spread from person to person by secretly putting ultraviolet glowing powder on the doorknob of her classroom. After fifteen minutes of normal activity, she told students what she had done, got out a blacklight, and shone it around. The glow of “germs” was everywhere – on kids' hands, desks, books, even their faces. They got the message!

“Sage Advice” in *Edutopia*, Dec. 2005/Jan. 2006 (Vol. 1, #9, p. 14) <http://www.edutopia.org>.  
The powder, Glo Germ, is available from <http://www.teachersource.com>.

© Copyright 2005 Kim Marshall

***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](mailto: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 36 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 43 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through scores of 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 (with occasional breaks; there were 50 issues in 2004-05).

## ***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
- Why the Marshall Memo?
- Focus topics
- 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 Educational Research Journal  
American Educator  
American School Board Journal  
ASCD SmartBrief  
Atlantic Monthly  
Bay State Banner  
Boston Globe  
CommonWealth Magazine  
District Administration  
Ed. Magazine (Harvard School of Education)  
Education Digest  
Education Gadfly  
Education Next  
Education Update (ASCD)  
Education Week  
Educational Leadership  
Educational Researcher  
Edutopia  
Elementary School Journal  
Harper's  
Harvard Business Review  
Harvard Education Letter  
Harvard Educational Review  
Journal of Staff Development  
Language Learner  
Middle Ground  
Middle School Journal  
NASSP Bulletin  
New York Times  
New Yorker  
Newsweek  
PEN Weekly NewsBlast  
Phi Delta Kappan  
Principal Magazine  
Principal Leadership  
Psychology Today  
Reading Research Quarterly  
Reading Today  
Rethinking Schools  
Review of Educational Research  
Teacher Magazine  
Teachers College Record  
Theory Into Practice  
*E-links will be provided whenever possible.*