Marshall Memo 229

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
April 7, 2008

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Quotes of the Week

"Too often, the adult learning in a school looks remarkably dissimilar to the student learning."
Scott Goldberg (see item #2)

"If a practice works in the classroom but is not reflected in the research literature, both the theory and the practice must be questioned to determine why the practice is working. If research supports a certain practice but it doesn't work in a teacher's classroom, questions must also be asked of both research and practice."
Scott Goldberg (*ibid*.)

"So, if the kids who really need the practice aren't attempting the homework and are getting little support at home, and the ones who do complete it are often getting too much support, is homework working for anybody?"
Lisa Mangione (see item #3)

"I think it's going a little too far because kids aren't perfect, and this school thinks they are."
Cameron Kaeding, a sixth grader, on his school's new discipline policy (see item #8)

"Sounds like prison."
Deborah Meier on this district's discipline policy (*ibid*.)

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1. Teacher Teamwork and Results at Adlai Stevenson High School

In this *Education Week* article, Vaishali Honawar reports on teacher collaboration at Adlai Stevenson High School in Illinois, where Richard DuFour pioneered the "professional learning community" concept when he was principal 25 years ago. The essence of this work is weekly meetings of same-course teachers to craft common interim assessments, analyze the results together, discuss strategies for improvement, and brainstorm unit and lesson plans – each teacher having access to the ideas, materials, strategies, and talents of the entire team. At Stevenson, teacher isolation is further reduced by teachers' desks being cheek-to-jowl with those of subject-area colleagues in department offices. "Many of the best things we do don't happen in team meetings," says social-studies teacher Brian Rusin. "The real collaboration happens outside."

DuFour recalls that when this approach was first introduced, some teachers were hesitant, fretting that interim assessments would be used in a punitive way. "The beauty of working in isolation and doing your own assessing is that you are buffered from an external source of validation," says DuFour. "But here we want you to talk to colleagues, want you to look at common assessments that you and your teammates have developed, and that's pretty scary initially." He recalls that it took lots of sensitivity, dialogue, and reassuring to coax teachers into the process. Driving everything was the mission of moving the school from "good enough" to great. And this happened: Stevenson has been on the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon list four times – an honor shared by only two other schools nationwide. More than 3,000 educators visit the school each year to see how it's being done.

Finding time for team meetings is a challenge for many schools. At Stevenson, every Tuesday morning is sacred time for meetings, with students arriving 35 minutes later than usual. Teacher teams range in size from 3 to 20; each team chooses a leader to facilitate discussions and assign duties to colleagues. Even counselors and administrators meet in teams, focusing on monitoring the academic achievement of all students and providing safety-net programs for students who are not successful. Low-incidence teachers who don't have a colleague in the school team up with teachers in other schools via e-mail.

Meetings are relentlessly focused on interim learning results – what's working and what isn't working and which students need extra help. This contrasts with some schools' team discussions of field trip logistics, classroom management, and students not turning in homework. These schools may think they have "professional learning communities", but they don't, says Stephanie Hirsch of the National Staff Development Council. These topics are

important, but real teacher teamwork has to focus on the heart of the matter: what's being taught, its relationship to standards, how students are progressing, and what needs to be done to get all students over the bar.

"What do we do when students don't learn?" is the key question, says Eric Twadell, the current superintendent of Stevenson High. Asking this question, he says, will "slowly but surely change the culture of the school."

Richard DuFour lists the following steps that schools can take to get teacher teams working to their full potential:

- Building in time for teams to collaborate;
- Having teams spell out ground rules and expectations for their work, including how consensus is defined and how conflicts will be resolved;
- Spelling out common grade-level or course objectives and crafting common assessments to measure students' progress at several points during the year;
- Identifying specific, measurable performance goals aimed at more students learning at higher levels;
- Analyzing interim assessment results and samples of student work, identifying areas of concern, and developing strategies to improve performance.

"Working Smarter by Working Together" by Vaishali Honawar in *Education Week*, Apr. 2, 2008 (Vol. 27, # 31, p. 25-27) http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/04/02/31plc_ep.h27.html

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2. Is the Five-Paragraph Essay a Good Formula for Student Writing?

In this thoughtful *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, University of Chicago writing instructors Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein defend the much-maligned five-paragraph essay – up to a point. Widely used in middle and high schools, this writing formula is criticized because it "forces students to conform to a mechanical routine that chokes the life out of writing," report the authors, "encouraging them not to wrestle with ideas but to conform to a one-size-fits-all straitjacket." But this formula is actually a helpful convention for many students, they argue: "The reason the five-paragraph essay has survived as long as it has is that it gives students who need it a series of clear operations to perform: Offer an introductory claim followed by three supporting paragraphs and then a conclusion that restates and deepens the claim." Lots of students won't figure this out on their own and find the structure helpful. "Many teachers who think they are being progressive and student-centered by rejecting such prescriptive methods," say the authors, "are passing up a chance to demystify intellectual practices that many students find profoundly puzzling."

The origin of the resistance to formulas, say Graff and Birkenstein, is "the romantic cult of genius, which proclaims that creativity and convention don't mix." But elitism comes with this notion, they argue: "That romantic dogma leaves no clear way for disseminating the higher-order habits of critical literacy to large numbers of people. Instead it suggests that writers must look within and wait for the muse to strike – and if it doesn't, they simply are not

members of the elect." This is elitist and exclusionary, they argue. Formulas have the potential to be democratizing, "making the complex practices of the few available to the many."

But the five-paragraph essay formula isn't perfect, say Graff and Birkenstein: "The downside of this thesis/evidence formula is that it has the student perform those important maneuvers in an isolation booth, without engaging other people. Thus it bypasses one of the most important rhetorical requirements: that we enter the social fray, presenting what others have said not as an afterthought or as mere support for our own argument, but as our argument's motivating source, its very reason for being." They make the same criticism of the SAT writing test, which they say is "deadeningly asocial and results in a monologue."

"The problem with the five-paragraph essay," they argue, "is not that it is a cookie cutter, but that it is the wrong *type* of cookie cutter; the cookies you make with it won't be your best. What critics of the five-paragraph model should be objecting to is not that it is a formula, but that it is a weak formula, one that produces arguments that are disengaged and decontextualized, severed from any social mission or context."

Graff and Birkenstein go on to suggest better formulas – ones, they say, that will lead students to "make arguments without abstracting themselves from the conversations that surround them." In their own teaching, they use a general formula: "They say/I say" – first you summarize someone else's argument (they say), leading to your own (I say). Here are some variations of this:

- Although it is often said that ----- I claim -----
- I agree with X that -----, and would add -----.
- Group X argues -----, and I have mixed feelings about it. On the one hand, -----. On the other hand, -----.
- I used to think -----. Now, however, after -----, I have come to see -----.
- At this point, you will probably object that -----. While it's true that -----, I still maintain -----.

"Far from turning students into mindless automatons," say Graff and Birkenstein, "formulas like those can help them generate thoughts that might not otherwise occur to them." And students should be free to modify the formulas to suit their own purposes.

"In Teaching Composition, 'Formulaic' Is Not a 4-Letter Word" by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Apr. 4, 2008 (Vol. LIV, #30, p. A40), no e-link available

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3. Homework: Issues of Fairness and Effectiveness

In this *Kappan* article, Lisa Mangione, an Amherst, NY middle-school teacher, wonders about the efficacy of complex homework assignments that in many cases end up being "outsourced" to parents. "And what about those students who will not get help with their homework, simply because the adults at home are unable or unwilling to help?" Mangione asks. Should those students be penalized for choosing their parents badly?

Mangione remembers her father's advice when she first started teaching. A veteran educator, he told her, "Homework should be independent practice." In other words, it should reinforce what was already modeled and taught, and students should be able to do it without parental help. And as for whether it should be graded, he made a sports analogy: homework is like practice that athletes do before a game, but "It only counts in the game."

So how can teachers get students to complete their homework without the leverage of grades – having it count? Mangione suggests that the same logical consequences might apply as in sports: if you don't practice, you won't do well in the game, so you'd better not miss practice!

In schools where homework is graded, there are serious equity issues. Homework is "an entirely different animal from school to school, class to class, teacher to teacher," says Mangione, "ranging from rote memorization of spelling words to long-term projects that encompass an entire unit of study." Given these differences, how can grades be fair from class to class? Not to mention the problem of some students getting lots of help from the "big parental elves" at home while others get none. All this vitiates the link between homework and students' real understanding.

The result is a dysfunctional dynamic. "Unfortunately," says Mangione, "the students who most need the practice and discipline of self-guided assignments are the ones who just never do them… We may think that grading homework sends a message that it isn't optional, but the fact is, the students who are most at risk will almost always opt out."

"So," Mangione asks, "if the kids who really need the practice aren't attempting the homework and are getting little support at home, and the ones who do complete it are often getting too much support, is homework working for anybody?"

Not the way many schools are handling it, but Mangione believes it can work – if it's handled properly. She concludes by quoting approvingly from the findings of homework expert Harris Cooper of Duke University:

- The quality of homework assignments is more important than the quantity of time students spend on them.
- Homework should be a mix of mandatory and voluntary assignments.
- Students should be able to do their homework without parent assistance, except for creating a good environment in which to do the work.
- Homework should not be graded; mandatory assignments that are not handed in should result in remediation, not a failing grade.
- Schools and districts should have explicit guidelines for homework, accompanied by teacher training.

"Is Homework Working?" by Lisa Mangione in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2008 (Vol. 89, #8, p. 614-615), no e-link available

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4. One Way for Principals to Follow Up on Mini-Observations

In this article in *Principal Leadership*, Yeshiva University researcher Scott Goldberg says, "Too often, the adult learning in a school looks remarkably dissimilar to the student learning." He's particularly concerned about the tense, unproductive conversations that some teachers have with their principals after classroom visits. Goldberg embraces the idea of unannounced mini-observations with face-to-face feedback shortly afterward, but he worries that if the principal leads off with a statement about what he or she observed, the conversation will be dominated by the teacher pushing back on any misperceptions the principal had and cluing the boss in on the context of the lesson. This, Goldberg fears, will lead to teacher defensiveness, difficult conversations – and principals avoiding classroom visits altogether.

"Why should the teacher have to 'correct,' 'expand,' and 'push back'?" asks Goldberg. "How would the protocol look if the conversation began with questions from the principal, rather than statements? An alternative debriefing protocol will help the principal gain insight into the activities of each classroom and help the teacher become a more self-reflective practitioner."

In fact, says Goldberg, it's better for administrators to go into a mini-observation knowing nothing about the lesson, and refrain from stating an opinion or critiquing the teacher's performance. He has several suggestions for principals who might want to try this approach:

• *Don't review lesson plans beforehand*. It's better for the principal to view the lesson cold, out of context.

• *Observe lessons half-way through*. "By arriving in the middle of a lesson and leaving early, the observer will be unaware of the stated goal of the lesson or how the lesson concluded," says Goldberg. "Rather than making assumptions during the conversation with the teacher, the principal is forced to begin with questions about what he or she missed to provide a context for the observation."

• *Ask, don't tell*. Goldberg suggests that principals ask a series of questions when they follow up with each teacher:

- What were your goals for the lesson?
- To what extent did the students achieve these goals?
- Did all the students achieve these goals?
- How do you know whether students achieved these goals?
- Would you change anything in the next lesson?

"Asking questions will focus the teacher on student learning and differentiation in a nonthreatening manner," he says. "The principal is not critiquing the teacher; the teacher is reflecting on what was planned, what happened, and whether it met students' needs."

• *Carefully connect research and practice*. "If a practice works in the classroom but is not reflected in the research literature," writes Goldberg, "both the theory and the practice must be questioned to determine why the practice is not working. If research supports a certain practice but it doesn't work in a teacher's classroom, questions must also be asked of both research and practice."

• *Elicit definitions of good teaching*. Goldberg suggests that principals draw teachers out, individually and collectively, on what successful teaching and effective student learning look like. "For some," he writes, "this may be a good first step that will lead to a nonthreatening observation and a discussion that is based on those definitions. For others, such a discussion will be an outgrowth of the individual observations and conversations."

In short, Goldberg believes that principals should handle post-observation conversations in a way that doesn't make teachers defensive and focuses on the results of their teaching. "That is, the emphasis is shifted away from feedback on the teacher's teaching to reflection on the way in which instruction took place," he concludes, "how students learned in the context of the classroom, and how to meet students' needs more of the time."

"Questions Replace Feedback" by Scott Goldberg in *Principal Leadership*, April 2008 (Vol. 8, #8, p. 64-66), no e-link available; the author can be reached at scott.goldberg@yu.edu.

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5. Ten Myths About Brain-Based Learning

In this article in *Principal's Research Review*, Arkansas State University professor Amany Saleh debunks these myths:

• *Myth #1: The brain doesn't grow new cells after infancy*. On the contrary, the brain grows new cells and dendritic connections throughout the lifespan. In addition, the brain continually reorganizes itself in response to life experiences.

• *Myth #2: Some people are left-brained while others are right-brained*. This idea has been undermined by recent research. The two hemispheres do specialize in certain functions, but there is considerable overlap and coordination and incoming information is processed by both hemispheres.

• *Myth #3: Playing Mozart to babies increases their intelligence*. Alas, this turns out not to be true. However, listening to beautiful music can release endorphins; slow down respiration, heart rate, and brain waves; reduce stress; and increase alertness, all of which can facilitate learning.

• *Myth #4: Good brains are inherited*. Nonsense, says Saleh. Enriching life experiences (including good nutrition, travel, effective teaching, cultural stimulation, and exercise) change and improve the brain's structure, while debilitating life experiences (including poor nutrition, domestic abuse, drug abuse, ineffective teaching, and lack of exercise) have a negative impact on the brain.

• *Myth #5: Brain research is too new to be reliable*. There is more and more evidence for certain insights about the brain and learning, especially from MRI and neuroimaging techniques. But educators should be cautious, says Saleh, about adopting practices based on flimsy evidence.

• *Myth #6: Medication is the only evidence-based intervention for a number of brain-related problems*. It's true that meds can be effective in treating depression, attention deficit,

and hyperactivity – but so are meditation, mental exercises, and cognitive games, combined with good nutrition and exercise.

• *Myth #7: Children's games are a waste of time*. On the contrary, "pretend" games help young children extend consciousness, promote language and social development, and encourage creativity, and for older children, computer games (in moderation) stimulate certain kinds of brain growth. For all children, exercise and fun social interaction have positive effects on overall physical health and the brain.

• *Myth #8: Students with special needs should focus only on basic skills*. Not true, says Saleh. "Exposing students with disabilities to enriched curricula can help them adapt and grow new connections in the brain that may help to compensate for their disabilities."

• *Myth #9: Narrowing the curriculum to what is on high-stakes tests will prepare students for the future*. Saleh says that enriching the curriculum with varied and challenging tasks helps students become better learners and problem-solvers.

• *Myth #10: Implementing brain-based teaching requires too much time and expertise*. True, it requires time and teacher training, says Saleh, but it yields significant dividends in student achievement. "Students who are exposed to enriched school programs consistently outperform students from traditional school programs on academic standardized tests," he concludes.

"Myths About the Brain" by Amany Saleh in *Principal's Research Review*, March 2008 (Vol. 3, #2, p. 3-5), no e-link available

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6. A New York High School Successfully Detracks

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Ed Wiley and Kevin Welner of the University of Colorado at Boulder and Carol Corbett Burris and John Murphy of South Side High School describe the long-term effects of detracking in a diverse, suburban middle and high school. In 1993, this Long Island (NY) district set an ambitious goal: By 2000, 75 percent of all graduates would earn a New York State Regents diploma, in addition to a local diploma (at the time the Regents figure was 58 percent).

To accomplish this, the district gradually eliminated low-track courses that were not aligned to Regents expectations, added additional support for lower-achieving students, and reduced the number of tracks to two: regular and honors (for 11th and 12th graders, honors consisted of International Baccalaureate and/or Advanced Placement). The district also began to detrack math classes and ramped up expectations in the feeder middle school, while adding four-day-a-week math support classes for struggling students.

The impact on student achievement was dramatic: Students in the detracked cohort had a 70 percent increase in their odds of obtaining an International Baccalaureate diploma and an even greater increase in getting a Regents diploma. White and Asian students had a three-fold increase, African-American and Latino students eligible for free or reduced-price meals had a five-fold increase, and African-American and Latino students not eligible for free and reduced-

price meals had a 26-fold increase. Further, even as enrollment in IB classes increased, average scores remained high.

The authors conclude that detracking – if it is accompanied by high expectations for all students, sufficient resources, and a commitment to the belief that students can achieve when they have access to an enriched curriculum, is an effective strategy to help students reach high standards – and does not harm the achievement of higher-achieving students. "The findings of this study should help to alleviate the concerns of those who fear that high achievers will learn less if they are placed in classes with low-achieving students," conclude the authors, "and that lower achievers will be frustrated when given high-track curriculum."

"Accountability, Rigor, and Detracking: Achievement Effects of Embracing a Challenging Curriculum As a Universal Good for All Students" by Carol Corbett Burris, Ed Wiley, Kevin Welner, and John Murphy in *Teachers College Record*, March 2008 (Vol. 110, #3, p. 571-607), no e-link available

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7. Tracking and a Widening Achievement Gap in North Carolina

In this troubling article in *Teachers College Record*, San Francisco State professor Maika Watanabe describes the differences in instructional practices between "regular" middle-school classrooms in North Carolina (which were disproportionately populated by students of color and lower socioeconomic status) and "academically gifted" classes. The latter had:

• *Less explicit test preparation* – Students in "academically gifted" classes received significantly less test-oriented drill using multiple-choice formats geared to state tests.

• *More time for higher-level topics* – This included more emphasis on different writing genres, literature appreciation, and independent assignments, and work on collaborative projects.

• *More reading and writing practice at home and in class* – "Academically gifted" students were given more reading (e.g., novels) and more writing projects (often for authentic audiences). "Regular" students experienced more teacher storytelling accompanied by low-level comprehension questions.

• *More challenging instruction and assignments* – "Academically gifted" students read novels at advanced reading levels, were asked more higher-order thinking questions, and were assigned more essay questions. They were asked to be involved in more critical thinking, self-direction, and creativity.

• *More written and immediate feedback on essay assignments* – "Academically gifted" students received a significantly greater number of written comments from teachers on their writing – in one comparison, five times more corrections and comments. In interviews, teachers explained this by saying that "academically gifted" students wrote more and were less sensitive about criticism.

Watanabe notes that North Carolina's high-stakes testing policies have made all teachers more conscious of curriculum coverage and test preparation, but she found that the impact was much heavier in the "regular" classrooms. "Students of color and students from

low socioeconomic backgrounds in the 'regular' track are thus shortchanged in opportunities to learn even in the new context of statewide accountability policies that policymakers purport to be part of the state's response to 'close the achievement gap,'" she concludes. "These differences in instructional opportunity have far-reaching implications for students' educational and career trajectories and their future roles as citizens who exercise their right to vote."

"Tracking In the Era of High-Stakes State Accountability Reform: Case Studies of Classroom Instruction in North Carolina" by Maika Watanabe in *Teachers College Record*, March 2008 (Vol. 110, #3, p. 489-534), no e-link available

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8. Tough Love in Cheektowaga, New York

In this *New York Times* article, Winnie Hu reports on a new discipline policy in the Cheektowaga schools outside Buffalo, NY. Students whose grade in any class falls below 65, or show poor effort, become ineligible for athletics, academic clubs, dances and plays, after-school games and crafts, and ice cream. The only way to get back into these activities is to show improvement on progress reports that their teachers fill out each week.

Hu solicited reactions from several educators, including Deborah Meier, who said, "Sounds like prison. It's such a sad, sad commentary because, in my opinion, the improvements that it can make in behavior are marginal, and it does not begin to touch upon what engages the students in school." Two students agreed. "I'd like to go to a normal school," said Anthony Pachetti, a seventh grader who was barred from activities for failing math, science, and social studies. "It's not doing anything for me except taking everything away." Cameron Kaeding, a sixth grader who was off activities for problems in math and social studies, agreed. "It's horrible," he said. "I think it's going a little too far because kids aren't perfect, and this school thinks they are."

Principal Brian Bridge, a former social worker, argues that the policy will create a safer environment and teach students to be part of a community. His staff nicknamed him "Joe Clark" and gave him a bullhorn, and he reacted by lightening up and instituting hat and pajama days, pep rallies, and raffle prizes for students who succeed under the new rules. At least one teacher said the no-nonsense approach has reduced fighting in the hallways and cafeteria and induced more students to finish their homework. Grades and attendance have remained about the same, and time will tell what the impact will be on test scores.

"School's New Rule for Pupils in Trouble: No Fun" by Winnie Hu in *New York Times*, Apr. 4, 2008, p. 1, A20)
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/04/education/04middle.html?_r=1&scp=3&sq=Winnie+Hu&st=nyt&oref=slogin

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9. How Computers Can Help Achievement

In this *Education Week* article, Massachusetts-based researcher Andrew Zucker lists the ways in which educational technology, which is sometimes criticized as over-hyped, can

enhance student achievement:

- Word processing helps students become better writers.
- Digital tools such as "probes" can collect, graph, and analyze data in science and math classes.
- The Internet is indispensable for studying civics and current events.
- Computers can help level the playing field for students with disabilities and English language learners by enlarging type size, translating to and from English, converting text to speech, correcting mistakes, and helping teachers individualize instruction.
- Computers help teachers communicate more easily with colleagues, parents, and administrators.
- Schools can provide comprehensive, easy-to-access information to students, parents, and community members in their websites. The Fresno, California school district's website gets one million logins each year.
- Professional development is improved by online courses, workshops, resources, and video vignettes of exemplary teaching.
- Computers can link students' demographic information to career interests, colleges, and financial aid.
- Handheld devices and "clickers" can enhance classroom instruction and monitor student learning during class time.

"Smart Thinking About Educational Technology" by Andrew Zucker in *Education Week*, Apr. 2, 2008 (Vol. 27, # 31, p. 28-29) http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/04/02/31zucker_ep.h27.html

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10. Acing a Predictable Interview Question

"Tell me about yourself," is an all-too-frequent opening question in job interviews, says Washburn University career services director Kent McAnally in this *Education Week* article. He says that interviewers really *don't* want to know about your third-grade teacher and suggests that candidates should respond as if they had been asked a much better question: "Please describe the preparation and experiences that make you particularly well-suited for this position." In fact, he says, candidates should rehearse a well-thought-out answer, since the tell-me-about-yourself question is so common and at this stage of the interview, you have maximum flexibility. It's a golden opportunity to list the university courses, workshops, student teaching, job and life experiences, and personal qualities that are tuned to this particular job – plus the ways in which the mission and goals of this school match your strengths. And don't tail off at the end, says McAnally. Close strongly, making this "a preview of why this is going to be a great interview and why I want you for this position."

"Interview Starters" by Kent McAnally in *Education Week*, Apr. 2, 2008 (Vol. 27, # 31, p. 35); for related information, go to http://www.topschooljobs.org/

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11. The Impact of Class Size on Students' On-Task Behavior

A new British study, summarized in this *Education Week* article, found that students in the U.K., Hong Kong, and the U.S. tended to be off-task more of the time in larger classes than in smaller classes. The researchers observed students' moment-by-moment behavior at 10-second intervals and found that the larger the class, the more the teacher lectured and the less students did what they were supposed to be doing. Low-achieving students were especially affected by class size; they were nearly twice as likely to be disengaged in a class of 30 students as they were in a class of 15.

Unlike previous class-size studies that found a threshold for positive effects (e.g., class size had to be under 17 to have a major impact), this study found that any reductions of class size were beneficial to student attentiveness.

"Students Observed to Be 'On Task' Less as Class Size Grows" by Debra Viadero in *Education Week*, Apr. 2, 2008 (Vol. 27, # 31, p. 9)
http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/04/02/31aera.h27.html

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12. Comprehensive Sex Education: Does It Work?

This *Education Week* article reports on a new study by researchers at the University of Washington in Seattle, which found that teenagers who had taken a comprehensive sex education course had a 50 percent lower risk of getting pregnant or impregnating someone than students who took an abstinence-only sex education course. Data for the report came from a 2002 survey of 1,700 adolescents 15-19 years old. The report, "Abstinence-Only and Comprehensive Sex Education and the Initiation of Sexual Activity and Teen Pregnancy," is available at http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/04/02/31report-1.h27.html.

"Impact of Sex Education on Pregnancy Examined" in *Education Week*, Apr. 2, 2008 (Vol. 27, # 31, p. 5)

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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).

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- How to change access e-mail or password

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Atlantic Monthly
Catalyst Chicago
CommonWealth Magazine
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
NASSP Bulletin
New York Times
New Yorker
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
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