Marshall Memo 837

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
May 18, 2020

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"To all ed companies, PD providers, and anyone else who has a product, PLEASE STOP. JUST STOP. Believe me, we know how to reach you, and I will if I need you. Otherwise JUST STOP."

Twitter message from a frustrated principal, April 2020

"Endurance is patience. It is shortening your time horizon so you just have to get through this day. Endurance is living with unpleasantness. In fact, it is finding you can adapt and turn the strangest circumstances into routine. Endurance is fortifying. It is discovering you can get socked in the nose and take it. Above all, endurance is living with uncertainty. Sometimes it's remaining quiet in the face of uncertainty because no conjecture will really tell you what is coming. Endurance is the knowledge that the only way out is through and whatever must be borne will be borne."

David Brooks in "The People Are Leading the Leaders" in *The New York Times*, May 15, 2020

"Teaching is, in many ways, akin to performing non-invasive brain surgery on a couple dozen patients at a time, creating conditions that rewire students' brains to retain vast amounts of new knowledge and skills."

Bryan Goodwin and Darienne Dey in "Elegant Simplicity in Brain Science" in *Educational Leadership*, May 2020 (Vol. 77, #8, pp. 82-83); Goodwin can be reached at bgoodwin@mcrel.org.

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1. Ideas for Reopening Elementary Schools with Social Distancing

In this *Education Gadfly* article, Michael Petrilli suggests guidelines for opening elementary schools in the fall, drawing on advice from the CDC, schools in other countries that have successfully reopened, and K-12 policymakers. Petrilli believes getting adults back to work is a major imperative, and having schools open will make that possible. With the strong likelihood of cuts in school budgets, any plan must be affordable. And no plan can give 100 percent guarantees because the virus will still be around until a vaccine is widely available. But Petrilli believes elementary schools can be reopened if we follow these steps:

• Give students and educators the choice of full-time remote learning for the coming school year. This is a moral and legal imperative for families with medical risks, and for those who want to quarantine pre-vaccine. Schools would need to make remote learning as attractive and effective as possible, which might mean outsourcing some functions to learning providers.

• Have K-3 students attend school Monday to Friday while grade 4 and 5 students come to school on alternating weekdays, thinning out the student population to make physical distancing easier. "While it's hardly ideal," says Petrilli, "fourth and fifth graders can do some independent work and can be left at home during the school day." In schools where that doesn't seem wise, he suggests using middle-school classrooms for grade 4-5 students and having grade 6-8 students spend more time learning independently at home.

• Run buses at 50 percent capacity or less. This might mean staggered bus schedules, more buses, or more students carpooling, walking, and biking to school.

• Require daily screening of adults and students, mask wearing, and frequent hand-washing in organized bathroom visits. And of course any student or adult showing signs of illness would be required to stay home.

• Keep all groups to 10-12 students and use every possible space around the school and every available adult (including volunteers) to supervise all the groups. This schoolwide social distancing means that students wouldn't mix beyond their mini-homerooms at recess (which would be staggered throughout the day), students would eat in their classrooms, and there would be no assemblies, field trips, or other large-group events.

• Teachers move, students stay put. Homeroom teachers and specialists would rotate from room to room to reach all their students – two groups for homeroom teachers, more groups for art, music, media, physical education, and other specials.

• Have a clear plan if there's an outbreak. If someone in the school community tests positive, the school would be closed for deep cleaning, contacts traced and tested, and if

necessary, quarantined. It might be necessary for the school to be closed for two weeks to ensure there's no super-spread to the community.

"Seven Steps to Sending Elementary Kids Back to School and Parents Back to Work" by Michael Petrilli in *The Education Gadfly*, May 15, 2020

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2. Keeping Track of What's Happening in Online Breakout Rooms

(Originally titled "Practical Tips for Teaching Online Small-Group Discussions")

In this *ASCD Express* article. Rhonda Bondie (Harvard Graduate School of Education) says that in virtual small-group discussions, students sometimes don't remember or stick to the prompt, and teachers find it difficult to monitor what's going on. Bondie has three suggestions:

• *Note-catchers* – Students in each breakout room enter their names in a Google Doc table and one student jots notes as the discussion proceeds. The teacher can monitor these docs, provide real-time written feedback, and if a group seems confused or off task, the teacher can "enter" the room and provide "in-person" support. It's helpful if the discussion prompt is clear upfront, note-catchers have good instructions and an exemplar of what their product should look like, and the teacher lets students know when they're close to the end of breakout time.

• *Pre-assignments* – These might consist of a few slides to prepare students for breakout discussions, prompting them to gather ideas and pose questions to classmates. Students can also add videos, pictures, or text to improve the quality of breakout discussions. Bondie suggests Flipgrid and VoiceThread as helpful tools.

• *Feedback surveys* – "It is very challenging to observe the body language of the whole class throughout an online session," says Bondie, "and it's also hard to know how students felt about the process of the discussion in the breakout rooms." That's why it's important to block out 5-10 minutes right afterward and use the chat function to get immediate feedback.

"Practical Tips for Teaching Online Small-Group Discussions" by Rhonda Bondie in *ASCD Express*, April 23, 2020 (Vol. 15, #16); Bondie is at rhonda_bondie@gse.harvard.edu.

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3. Embracing the New Normal in Videoconference Job Interviews

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, search consultant Kim Brettschneider says that virtual interviews have advantages (no travel, for one thing), but she's also seen a number of snafus, including:

- The camera focusing on a candidate's shiny forehead;
- A pet, an unmade bed, or a naked toddler in the background;
- The candidate, thinking he is on mute, shouting at a spouse to be quiet and telling a child to "go pee;"
- Candidates putting on eye makeup, sneezing onto the screen, and summoning kids to manage the technology;
- Committee members, thinking they're on mute, talking about the candidate.

"Some of those mistakes are recoverable and some aren't," says Brettschneider, "yet most are entirely avoidable." Her suggestions:

• *Consider an artificial background*. If an attractive, office-like background or a plain wall isn't available, use a virtual backdrop from your video service. Not a forest or a beach, though, and keep in mind that if a curious pet or a bored spouse gets within two feet of the camera, they will unexpectedly "pop" through the virtual background. It's a good idea to do interviews behind a locked door, or perhaps with a child sitting next to you with "work" and crayons, and introduce him or her at the beginning of your interview.

• *If life happens, roll with it*. "Pick up your toddler, give your dog a bone, and continue with the interview," advises Brettschneider. "Everyone is much more understanding of awkward live moments during this time of quarantine." Such moments may even work to your advantage, making a human connection.

• *Make muting the default*. "Play it safe if you are worried about a sudden meow, bickering children, or loud blenders in the background," says Brettschneider. Mute your sound and have a finger on the unmute button (in Zoom, it's the space bar) so you can speak on cue. In addition, shut down e-mail and online chat programs.

• *Practice like a TV analyst*. It's a good idea to rehearse talking points beforehand, perhaps recording yourself and watching with a critical eye. But for the actual interview, Brettschneider says, "what matters most is to be fully attentive… and ready to improvise based on what you hear. Active listening is even more important in a video interview because you can't take in as many visual cues as you do in a face-to-face conversation."

• Have your notes on the screen. Be familiar with how to minimize your image so you can sneak a peek at important lists you've prepared.

• *Make eye contact with the camera*. Center your torso on the screen, look up at where the camera is, and glance only occasionally at notes and the faces of interviewers.

• *Have your own name at the bottom of your screen*. If you're using someone else's computer, be sure to change it in settings, and consider doing a dry run of the interview with a critical friend to pick up any other possible distractions.

• *Be prepared for a connection freeze.* This happens, and if it does, have your cellphone handy (silenced) with the main interviewer's number programmed in so you can make a quick call while you reboot and reconnect. It's also wise to pause after each answer in case there's an audio lag, giving interviewers a chance to follow up without being interrupted.

• *Smile early and often*. "You are on camera with your future colleagues," Brettschneider concludes. "Smile (naturally), sit up straight, and speak clearly. Enjoy the chance to talk about your proudest moments… In some ways, a flat screen levels the playing field and allows more equal opportunity to shine in an interview setting and demonstrate advantages."

"How to Ace the Virtual Interview" by Kim Brettschneider in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 15, 2020 (Vol. 66, #29, pp. 37-38)

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4. Orchestrating Productive Struggle with a Fifth-Grade Math Problem

In this article in *Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12*, Katherine Baker (Elon University), Naomi Jessup (Georgia State University), Victoria Jacobs (University of North Carolina/Greensboro), Susan Empson (University of Missouri/Columbia), and math coach/consultant Joan Case describe Ryan, a fifth grader, working on this math problem:

There are 5 pizzas for 8 kids to share equally. How much pizza could each kid get?

Ryan asks for clarification on the number of pizzas and starts drawing and dividing up his pictorial pizzas. He makes mistakes, asks for help, comes up with an incorrect solution, and shows some signs of frustration – scratching his head, scrunching his face, looking down, and folding his hands in front of his face.

"Taken out of context," say the researchers, "these expressions and gestures could indicate that Ryan was distraught, but in this context, they all seemed to be signs of his thinking. Other students may be more verbal, some may sigh, some may tap a pencil, and some may be even more visibly frustrated. By expecting variety, you will become attuned to how particular students in your classroom look and sound during their productive struggles."

Stepping back from this case study, the authors dispel some misconceptions about productive struggle: it's not students experiencing needless frustration or extreme levels of challenge with overly difficult problems; it's not students feeling despair because the math makes little sense; it's not students waiting for information to be presented so it can be memorized or practiced. Here's how they believe productive struggle should look:

- Students solving problems and grappling with key math ideas that are within reach;
- Students using existing understandings to engage with problems that do not have immediately apparent solutions;
- Students persevering in making sense of math during problem solving.

This means teachers need to choose math problems that are in the zone of productive struggle, communicate to students the value and importance of "mental sweat," carefully observe and appropriately support students as they work, give them enough think time, acknowledge the struggle, and discuss the experience afterward so students draw the right long-term lessons.

Ryan finally solved the pizza problem and felt good about it, but the authors don't think getting the right answer is essential: "We view struggle as productive whenever learning opportunities become available for either you or your students as a result of the struggle."

The authors' closing thoughts: "Recognizing and supporting students' productive struggles in real time can be challenging but will prove worthwhile and help you appreciate the multi-faceted nature of struggle. Your students depend on you to support their productive struggles in their pursuit of deep learning, and you can depend on productive struggle to teach you more about the learning in your classroom."

"Productive Struggle in Action" by Katherine Baker, Naomi Jessup, Victoria Jacobs, Susan Empson, and Joan Case in *Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12,* May 2020 (Vol. 113, #5, pp. 361-367); the e-link works for NCTM members; Baker can be reached at kbaker17@elon.edu.

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5. Unconscious Bias in Secondary-School Science Classrooms

In this article in *Urban Education*, Michael Shepherd (California State University, Fresno) reports on his study of 128 California teachers evaluating the verbal responses of ninth graders to open-ended science questions. The teachers (a racially and gender-diverse sample from private, charter, and traditional public schools) listened to a randomized mix of recordings of identically worded student responses to these questions (three examples of the stock responses are included after each question):

What is the goal of a scientific method?

- *To get the best data you can get.*
- *To test and prove hypotheses.*
- *To set a standard way for checking information.*

Why are scientific models useful?

- *Because they give you a physical example of something.*
- *Because they give us new ways of looking at things.*
- *Because they provide a visual element.*

Why is it important that scientific investigations be repeated?

- *Because there might not be enough data.*
- *In case something was left out the first time.*
- *So they are guaranteed to be right.*

After hearing each recorded response, teachers rated how well they believed students answered the question on an eight-point Likert scale – from *Not-so-well* to *Very well*. Teachers heard ten randomized student responses to each question, and the rating sessions lasted 10-15 minutes.

Unbeknownst to the teachers, students had been recorded repeating stock answers spoken by Shepherd (students didn't read the answers because Shepherd found that when they read, they sounded like they were reading, and he wanted students to sound somewhat spontaneous). Students made two recordings of each response with identical wording, but with a telling difference: first they spoke with rising intonation at the end ("upspeak"), then with falling intonation (which comes across as more confident and authoritative). The scripts were in standard English, but it was possible for teachers to tell students' race and ethnicity via subtle linguistic cues – and teachers could tell almost all students' gender.

Here's what Shepherd concluded after a careful analysis of all the teachers' ratings of students' responses:

- There was very little difference in teachers' evaluations of male versus female students.
- Responses spoken with rising intonation (by male and female students) were rated significantly lower than identical responses spoken with falling intonation. Shepherd notes that in classrooms (and life), rising intonation is much more common among females.
- Responses spoken by African-American and Latino students were rated significantly lower than identically worded responses spoken by white students.

- There was no significant correlation between teachers' gender, race, ethnicity, and social class and their ratings, nor with the type of schools in which teachers worked.

Shepherd believes his study shows that unconscious biases are at work in many classrooms, with significant impact. Students' self-efficacy, motivation, and achievement suffer when they notice (perhaps unconsciously) that their verbal responses, seemingly just as good as those of their classmates, are evaluated less favorably. These subtle signals interact with the stereotype threat experienced by students of color, and by female students in STEM classes, resulting in a cumulative impact on school performance– and whether students end up pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

"Effects of Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Intonation on Secondary Science Teachers' Evaluation of Spoken Responses" by Michael Shepherd in *Urban Education*, June 2020 (Vol. 55, #5, pp. 730-752); Shepherd can be reached at mshepherd@csufresno.edu.

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6. Why Are the Least-Experienced Math Teachers Teaching Ninth Graders?

In this article in *Education Week*, Mark Lieberman reports that some educators are pushing back on the longstanding practice of assigning rookie teachers to the most challenging high-school math classes, while more-senior teachers get their pick of desirable courses – where students are better prepared and less likely to cause discipline problems. What's perverse about this, says Lieberman, is that lower-level math classes tend to have students with more learning difficulties, as well as a higher proportion of ELLs and students of color; these students especially benefit from seasoned, highly effective teachers. The discipline problems in lower-track classes may be partly the result of instruction that fails to engage students and help them overcome longstanding anxiety, low self- concept, and a fixed mindset about math. Poor achievement in ninth grade can throw students off for the rest of their high-school careers.

Another dimension of tracked math departments is that teachers of color are often assigned to the lower-level courses, with the rationale that they are better able to relate to the those students and get better results. This may be true, says Lieberman, but teachers who are relegated to those courses don't get to teach AP and other higher-level classes, and often aren't nourished with the kind of attention, feedback, and training they need and deserve.

Over time, tracked teaching assignments can contribute to teachers getting in a pedagogical rut, as well as producing exhaustion and high turnover. That, in turn, means many teachers in the math department are new, inexperienced, and have provisional credentials, which can lead to more burnout, turnover, and discouraging student achievement.

One solution being implemented in a number of schools is rotating math teachers through all courses they're qualified to teach. This has several advantages:

- All teachers become familiar with the full 9-12 curriculum.
- Teachers know the prerequisite skills and knowledge for each level.
- Nobody gets burned out teaching only lower-level classes.
- Students who need more attention and catching up get their share of effective teaching.
- Rotating course assignments will foster fresh pedagogical and curriculum thinking,

which is less likely when the same people teach the same courses year after year.

"Time to 'Detrack' Math Teachers, Reformers Say" by Mark Lieberman in *Education Week*, May 6, 2020

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7. A Study of the Language Math Teachers Use

In this article in *Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12*, Tracy Dobie (University of Utah) and Miriam Gamoran Sherin (Northwestern University) describe three ways in which the pedagogical language math teachers use can be helpful to clarify intent and improve practice:

• *Naming my practice* – For example, a high-school teacher encountered the term *cognitive demand* and realized, "It was something I was doing, but I didn't have a phrase for it… students are doing the heavy mental lifting." Learning the term didn't change what this teacher did with students, but it gave her the language to describe it more precisely, make connections to other practices, and enhance discussions with colleagues.

• *Sharpening my practice* – A middle-school teacher learned about *5 Practices,* a protocol for encouraging productive math discussions, and found it made him more intentional in classroom dialogues. "I could ask myself, is it an assessing question or an advancing question?" he said. "And is that what I want to be asking now?"

• *Rethinking my practice* – An elementary teacher learned the term *productive struggle* in an online course and realized that she'd never seen struggle as a positive thing for her students. "After I learned about productive struggle, it made sense," she said. "Young children are building their identities as mathematics learners and need a sense of self-efficacy, and it's important for them to feel capable of pushing ahead without teacher intervention."

Working with researchers in nine other countries, Dobie and Sherin found similarities in conceptual language, but several countries had unique terms:

- From the Czech Republic, words that translate as *the teacher's echo*– reformulating a student's answer to increase its clarity or mathematical correctness.
- From France, words that translate as *a teacher eliciting students' solutions to draw on contrasting approaches to highlight or synthesize key concepts*.
- From China, words that translate literally as "draw dragon dot eye" – the metaphor is drawing a picture of a dragon and adding the eye at the very end, bringing the dragon to life; in classrooms, that's a *finishing touch*, when the teacher or a student brings it all together and adds a final thread that helps everyone understand.

Dobie and Sherin urge math teachers and supervisors to think about the lexicon they currently use and consider ways to expand it and communicate with colleagues about useful concepts.

"What's In a Name? Language Use As a Mirror Into Your Teaching Practice" by Tracy Dobie and Miriam Gamoran Sherin in *Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12,* May 2020 (Vol. 113, #5, pp. 354-360), the e-link works for NCTM members; the authors can be reached at tracy.dobie@utah.edu and msherin@northwestern.edu.

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8. Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher on Truly Balanced Literacy Classes

In this article in *Principal*, Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher (San Diego State University and Health Sciences High and Middle College) review the long and "fraught" debate over how to teach reading, and list four things that school leaders and policymakers should look for in well-taught reading classrooms:

• *Balance in skills and knowledge* – All students are systematically taught the foundational skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency so they can break the code and have access to the written word. "But skills instruction without equally robust attention to knowledge-building won't deliver breakthrough results," say Frey and Fisher. That means vocabulary building and instruction in literature, science, social studies, and the arts from the earliest grades.

• *Balance across domains* – Are students having "a rich set of daily experiences" in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing? ask Frey and Fisher. "Are students regularly engaged in learning that requires them to formulate ideas, ask questions, and exercise critical thinking?"

• *Balance in narrative and informational texts* – Nonfiction texts, readalouds, and writing are just as prominent in classrooms as fiction and make-believe. Classrooms have a wide variety of books, magazines, and other media.

• *Balance in direct and dialogic teaching* – Students get a full range of learning experiences, including teacher mini-lectures, discussions, small-group collaboration, and working on their own. "When observing discussions," say Frey and Fisher, "watch to see whether the teacher shares responsibility for discussion with students, and note cognitively challenging questions. Listen for periods of 30 seconds or longer when students are speaking instead of the teacher."

"Across Reading Domains: What to Look for in a Balanced Literacy Classroom" by Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher in *Principal*, May/June 2020 (Vol. 99, #5, pp. 42-43); the authors can be reached at nfrey@mail.sdsu.edu and dfisher@sdsu.edu.

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9. Responses to Criticism of Social-Emotional Learning

In this *Phi Delta Kappan* article, Timothy Shriver and Roger Weissberg (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, CASEL) applaud how quickly the principles of social and emotional learning have been embraced by educators, young people, families, employers, and policymakers. But recently there's been some pushback, and Shriver and Weissberg respond to four areas of concern:

• *Ambiguity* – The most frequent criticism is that SEL is too broad and vague, meaning different things to different people. And indeed, there are more than 100 different groups promoting SEL, and almost as many definitions. But a few bedrock principles have been articulated by CASEL over the last 25 years, say the authors: "the processes through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and

show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions."

• *Hype* – Critics say that SEL has been pushed as a cure for problems ranging from the achievement gap to racism to student depression and anxiety. "We know full well," say Shriver and Weissberg, "that when education research findings look too good to be true, they should be treated with skepticism." But they believe there's solid evidence that SEL, when implemented correctly, has a positive impact on academic and behavioral outcomes.

• *Equity and culture* – The critique here is that SEL comes mostly from white researchers and educators and is most often focused on students of color. "Such concerns must be taken seriously," say Shriver and Weissberg. "However, the SEL movement has *never* proposed that SEL is appropriate for only some children or that it should in any way substitute for academic instruction." On the contrary, advocates argue that all children benefit from a broad approach, and equity has been a central concern within the movement over the years.

• *Impatience* – There's been a tendency, as with the Common Core State Standards, to push too hard and too fast. Slow and steady is the way, say Shriver and Weissberg, working with educators on the ground, school boards, state education departments, and national leaders. "Our goal should remain simple and strong," they conclude: "to educate both head and heart in ways that optimize the achievement and positive development of every child."

"A Response to Constructive Criticism of Social and Emotional Learning" by Timothy Shriver and Roger Weissberg in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2020 (Vol. 101, #7, pp, 52-57); the authors can be reached at tshriver59@gmail.com and rweissberg@casel.org.

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10. Insights from Psychology and Neuroscience

(Originally titled "The Sciences of Teaching")

"Teachers shape young lives and build young brains every day," say Carol Ann Tomlinson (University of Virginia/Charlottesville) and author/consultant David Sousa in this article in *Educational Leadership*. "The more we know about the how and why of doing those two things, the more the learners in our care will benefit." Tomlinson and Sousa summarize some of the key findings from the psychology and neuroscience of learning – and suggest how schools can tap them to continuously improve teaching and learning:

• *Growth mindset* – Learning is boosted when educators and parents are aware of their own mindsets, explain, teach, and reflect often with students on how growth mindset works, establish a conducive classroom culture, and empower students to control their own metacognition.

• *Prior knowledge* – Teachers must constantly connect what's being learned to what students already know – and be aware of the variations in each student's fund of knowledge. It's helpful when learning units are built around big ideas and key concepts tied to students' interests and insights.

• *Social-emotional skills* – Effective teachers cover knowledge and skills and link them to their emotional significance, crafting assignments that ask students to use knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems.

• *Diversity* – The best schools are keenly aware of the panoply of differences in each classroom, make students partners in creating learning environments that work for them, and help students build on their strengths and work through their learning difficulties. It's especially helpful when students have voice and choice in their learning.

"The Sciences of Teaching" by Carol Ann Tomlinson and David Sousa in *Educational Leadership*, May 2020 (Vol. 77, #8, pp. 14-20); the authors can be reached at cat3y@virginia.edu and davidsnj@aol.com.

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11. Short Items:

a. A Detailed Guide for Online Learning – This 11-page guide has practical advice and numerous links for engaging students online and building lasting learning through taking in new content, strengthening long-term memory, and retrieving what's been learned.

"A Science of Learning Guide to Educational Technology" by Kristin Webster, Ryan Marklewitz, Sam Leitermann-Long, Eva Shultis, Andrew Seidman, and Ian Kelleher at the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning at St. Andrew's Episcopal School, Maryland, April 2020; Kelleher and colleagues are open to feedback at ikelleher@saes.org.

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b. Comprehensive Online Mental Health Resources – This website, created by Sam Dylan Finch, covers a wide range of issues: emotional, physical, situational, relational, and more.

"Your Covid-19 'Choose-Your-Own-Adventure' Mental Health Guide" by Sam Dylan Finch in *HealthLine*, April 24, 2020

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c. An Online Activity to Help Students Understand Place Value – This website, created by Daniel Scher, helps students visualize numbers and place value on a number line. Students guess the location of a red dot on the line and then zoom out to get a more precise sense. There are multiple problems.

Spotted in "Place Value Activities for Third and Fourth Grade" in *Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12,* May 2020 (Vol. 113, #5, p. 423)

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If you have feedback or suggestions, please e-mail kim.marshall48@gmail.com

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and other educators very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 50 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 60 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are 50 issues a year). Every week there's a podcast and HTML version as well.

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Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC
American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
District Management Journal
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Next
Education Update
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
English Journal
Essential Teacher
Exceptional Children
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Language Arts
Literacy Today (formerly Reading Today)
Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12
Middle School Journal
Peabody Journal of Education
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Reading Research Quarterly
Responsive Classroom Newsletter
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
School Administrator
School Library Journal
Social Education
Social Studies and the Young Learner
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Education Gadfly
The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time Magazine