Marshall Memo 629

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
March 21, 2016

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"If the central purpose of education research is to identify solutions and provide options for policymakers and practitioners, one would have to characterize the past five decades as a near-complete failure. There is little consensus among policymakers and practitioners on the effectiveness of virtually any type of educational intervention."

Thomas Kane in "Connecting to Practice" in *Education Next*, Spring 2016 (Vol. 16, #2, p. 80-87), http://bit.ly/1RcQ2FE

"So often we use assessment in schools to inform students of their progress and attainment. Of course this is important, but it is more critical to use this information to inform teachers about their impact on students. Using assessments as feedback for teachers is powerful. And this power is truly maximized when the assessments are timely, informative, and related to what teachers are actually teaching."

John Hattie in "We Aren't Using Assessments Correctly" in *Education Week*, October 27, 2015, http://bit.ly/1RcgOhF

"Books are a school's oxygen, and the more we read and share words, the healthier our school communities are."

Mitch Center (see item #10)

"More and more people seem to agree that digital learning in K-12 classrooms works best when it is used with the oversight of a teacher."

Paul Peterson and Michael Horn (see item #9)

1. Preparing Children to Start School Ready to Learn and Thrive

In this article in *The Bay State Banner*, Ron Ferguson (Harvard Achievement Gap Initiative), Jeff Howard (The Efficacy Institute and the Black Philanthropy Fund), and Martin Walsh (Mayor of Boston) describe the Boston Basics Campaign. "Our goal," they say, "is to help parents and caregivers adopt five easy practices that research has proven are essential to brain development from birth to age three." Here they are:

• *Maximize love and manage stress*. "Showing affection and patience at every opportunity helps children build confidence to explore the world on their own," say the authors.

• *Talk, sing, and point*. "Talking and singing to infants and toddlers stimulates their brains and develops their skills," say Ferguson, Howard, and Walsh. "Pointing helps them connect words to the associated objects."

• *Teach counting, grouping, and comparing with everyday objects*. "Having fun with numbers, names, shapes, and patterns is how children learn to understand their world," they say. "And it prepares them to learn and love math."

• *Let children explore through free movement and play*. "Curiosity is a child's built-in engine for learning," say the authors. "It's our job to encourage it and provide safe outlets. At home or in the playground, help kids dive into their environment and develop their 'mind's eye.'"

• *Read and discuss stories*. "Whether made-up or factual, the people, places and events of stories are the building blocks for our children's imagination and much of their learning later in life," say Ferguson, Howard, and Walsh.

"We know that raising kids is hard," they conclude, "and it's only made harder by the stresses of work, money, illness, violence, and more. So we want to make our entire city a relentlessly supportive place for all those who care for young children." Introductory videos can be viewed at www.bostonbasics.org.

"Five Simple Habits to Help Our Children Thrive" by Ron Ferguson, Jeff Howard, and Martin Walsh in *The Bay State Banner*, March 17, 2016, http://bit.ly/22yLwXb

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2. Counteracting Stereotype Threat In Urban Seventh Graders

In this article in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Geoffrey Borman (University of Wisconsin/Madison), Jeffrey Grigg (Johns Hopkins University), and Paul

Hanselman (University of California/Irvine) report on their study of the impact of self-affirmation with about 1,000 students in a district's middle schools. At four points during a school year, the researchers had half of the students (the treatment group) engage in activities that affirmed things that were important to them while the remaining students (the control group) wrote about neutral topics.

Specifically, in the first two exercises in September and late October, the treatment group chose two or three items from a list of eleven that were most important to them while the control group chose those that were least important to them. Both groups were then given follow-up questions and wrote about their choices. In the third writing exercise in February, treatment students were asked to write a paragraph summarizing the kinds of things that can be important to people, using examples from the lists they chose from in the first two rounds, and then to describe something that was important to them. Students in the control group wrote about what students do to prepare for school and what they did before school that morning. The final exercise in April had students write more about the item they had chosen in the third round. (These prompts were adapted from the Madison Writing and Achievement Project.)

What was the impact of this brief, unobtrusive intervention? Borman, Grigg, and Hanselman report the following:

- African-American and Hispanic students in the treatment group saw one-point improvements in GPA.
- These students had improved scores in end-of-the-year math (but not ELA) tests compared to the control group.
- White and Asian students in the treatment group did not register improvements in either of those areas.

The researchers attribute these results to the fact that the four writing exercises successfully counteracted stereotype threat among the black and Hispanic students, which raised their academic achievement. "No one claims that stereotype threat accounts for the entirety of the achievement gap," conclude the authors, "or that self-affirmation can close it completely, but self-affirmation may help narrow the gap at little or no additional cost to districts as part of an overall strategy to achieve equity. Our findings show that self-affirmation can substantially narrow the residual achievement gap that cannot be explained by demographic characteristics or prior achievement, and this is the portion of the achievement gap implicated by stereotype threat. If implementing a series of brief expressive writing exercises can covertly address this gap by substituting for other in-class writing activities, it would appear well worth it to do so."

"An Effort to Close Achievement Gaps at Scale Through Self-Affirmation" by Geoffrey Borman, Jeffrey Grigg, and Paul Hanselman in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, March 2016 (Vol. 38, #1, p. 21-42), available for purchase at http://bit.ly/1U1Ugn8

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3. Ten Highly Effective Teaching Practices from Down Under

In this paper from the Australian Society for Evidence-Based Teaching, Shaun Killian presents these well-researched keys to teaching and learning:

• *Clear lesson goals* – "If you cannot quickly and easily state what you want your students to know and be able to do at the end of a given lesson, the goal of your lesson will be unclear," says Killian.

• *Show and tell* – Start a lesson by succinctly sharing target information and knowledge and modeling any skills or procedures that students will learn.

• *Checking for understanding* – Use all-class methods (for example, dry-erase boards or clickers) to see how students are doing and use the information to decide what to do next.

• *Students graphically summarizing new learning* – Students might create a mind map, flow-chart, or Venn diagram.

• *Plenty of practice* – "Practice is not about mindless busywork," says Killian. "Nor does it involve assigning independent tasks that you haven't previously modeled and taught." Students need to practice the right things with the teacher circulating to do another check for understanding. For maximum impact, practice sessions should be spaced over time.

• *Feedback* – "Unlike praise, which focuses on the student rather than the task, feedback provides your students with a tangible understanding of what they did well, of where they are at, and of how they can improve," says Killian.

• *Giving all students time to succeed* – The basic idea of mastery learning is to keep the learning goal constant while giving students different amounts of time (with feedback) to master it. This is the approach used by successful coaches of swimming, dancing, martial arts, and other sports.

• *Productive group work* – The danger of having students work in groups is "social loafing" – most of the work being done by the most skilled or well-informed student in the group. "You should only ask groups to do tasks that all group members can do successfully," says Killian. Each group member should also be personally responsible for one step of the task.

• *Teaching strategies as well as content* – Students need direct, explicit instruction in reading, writing, and math skills, followed by guided practice and feedback so they can use the skills independently.

• *Nurturing metacognition* – This goes beyond knowing which strategies to use – it's getting students to think about their options, look at how well strategies are working, and be aware of their own skills and knowledge with respect to worthy learning goals.

Killian concludes by mentioning some strategies that *don't* have a large effect on student results – among them, whole language, teaching test preparation, and inquiry learning – and a few that are effective but didn't quite make the top ten, including high expectations and reciprocal teaching.

"Top 10 Evidence-Based Teaching Strategies" by Shaun Killian in *The Australian Society for Evidence-Based Teaching*, January 2015, http://bit.ly/1pvtypZ

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4. Close Reading 101

This *Education Week* white paper sponsored by the Great Books Foundation suggests eleven ways to build the skills of close reading – "Getting students to slow down, engage with

the text in different ways, and reflect as they read…"

- *Be a close reader yourself*. This means reading texts carefully beforehand and modeling close reading with students ("How do we know that Macbeth feels guilty?").
- *Model it first*. When students are novices with close reading, use a document camera to show them step by step how to analyze specific portions of a text and annotate, thinking aloud as you do so.
- *Teach students to look for the evidence*. This is a key Common Core skill.
- *Teach "stretch texts."* Students should be challenged to read increasingly complex texts over time – passages that raise authentic questions and could be interpreted in different ways depending on students' background knowledge or prior reading.
- *Always set a purpose for reading*. Have students read a passage once and then pose a specific challenge for their second reading.
- *Differentiate*. If a text is above some students' reading level, they can still think about it in different ways and read "between the lines" by hearing it read aloud or working with a classmate.
- *Focus on making connections*. Go beyond simple comprehension questions, asking students to dig deeper for big ideas, how the reading relates to other texts students have read, and how they might learn more about the topic.
- *Use student queries to drive discussion*. Have students come up with questions about a passage and then sort them by those that can be answered with a few words versus those that are worthy of close reading and further explanation.
- *Let them make mistakes*. Students will misinterpret, and it's important to use those errors positively to model the process of using evidence and arguing a point.
- *Listen to your students*. "Along with close reading the text, you need to close read your students," says the paper. "When you begin to let students' questions and ideas about the text take the lead, you'll find your class will be much more invested in the reading."
- *Close-read across the curriculum*. For example, close reading can be used with charts and graphs in science, discussing a math concept, or working to understand various interpretations of a speech by a historical figure.

"11 Quick Tips: Turn Your Students Into Close Readers" in *Education Week*, March 1, 2016, http://www.edweek.org/ew/marketplace/whitepapers/white-papers.html

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5. Words From Other Languages That Might Enrich English

In this article in *Scientific American*, Steve Mirsky says the English language lacks some felicitous words that others possess. Some examples:

- *Iktsuarpok* (Inuit) – The anticipation one feels when waiting for someone, prompting to keep going outside to check if they have arrived.
- *Kvell* (Yiddish) – To glow with pride and happiness at the successes of others, often family members.

- *Shemomedjamo* (Georgian) – To keep eating even when full because to do so is just so darn enjoyable.
- *Desbundar* (Portuguese) – Becoming uninhibited while having fun.
- *Utepils* (Norwegian) – The pleasure of drinking beer outside on a hot day.
- *Schnapsidee* (German) – Drinking too much and coming up with an ingenious plan.
- *Gokotta* (Swedish) – Waking up early to go outside to hear the morning's first birds singing.
- *Prostor* (Russian) – A desire for spaciousness, roaming free in limitless expanses, not only physically but also creatively and spiritually.
- *Waldeinsamkeit* (German) – The mysterious, and possibly slightly creepy, solitude one might feel when alone in the woods.

Mirsky found these in an article in *The Journal of Positive Psychology* by Tim Lomans entitled "Towards a Positive Cross-Cultural Lexicography: Enriching Our Emotional Landscape Through 216 'Untranslatable' Words Pertaining to Well-Being." If you want to read Lomans's full collection, or if you have words to contribute to his growing lexicon, just go to http://www.drtimlomas.com/#!lexicography/cm4mi.

"There Are No Words" by Steve Mirsky in *Scientific American*, April 2016, http://bit.ly/1S097Zk

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6. Harvard's "Best Foot Forward" Classroom Video Project

In this paper from the Harvard Center for Education Policy Research, Thomas Kane, Hunter Gehlbach, Miriam Goldberg, David Quinn, and Daniel Thal report on their experiment using teacher-recorded classroom videos to substitute for in-person classroom observations. The researchers embarked on this venture because they saw significant weaknesses in the traditional teacher-evaluation process. Here's their analysis of the old model's theory of action:

- A common vocabulary about key aspects of teaching is established, with teachers and supervisors trained on a rubric.
- The supervisor visits the teacher's classroom and takes notes.
- In the post-observation conference, the supervisor's oral and written feedback causes the teacher to recognize previously unrecognized aspects of his or her teaching and/or students' behavior that fall short of standards.
- The teacher identifies at least one desirable instructional change that will improve performance.
- The teacher is willing and able to incorporate this change in day-to-day instruction.
- As a result, student achievement improves.

Kane, Gehlbach, Goldberg, Quinn, and Thal say there is little evidence that this chain of events will happen, which means that the traditional teacher-evaluation process is extremely weak at changing teaching practice and improving student achievement. Their hypothesis is that video evaluation will be much more robust.

The researchers recruited principal and teacher volunteers in Delaware, Georgia, Colorado, and California and divided the teachers into two groups. Those in the control group continued with traditional in-person evaluation visits followed by conferences with their supervisors. Teachers in the treatment group were given a special video camera and asked to record at least five lessons, upload them to a secure website (along with lesson artifacts), and choose three to submit for evaluation. Principals viewed the selected videos on their computers, made time-stamped comments on the tapes tagged to the district's evaluation rubric, gave the teacher a chance to review the comments and scores, and then met in person to discuss the lesson and decide on a final evaluation score. Treatment teachers also received virtual feedback on two videos from outside content experts from The New Teacher Project.

Based on the first year of implementation (during the 2013-14 school year), the researchers were pleased with the project and are following up with a second report on whether the intervention resulted in student achievement gains. Here is their assessment of the first year:

• Almost all the teachers in the treatment group were successful in recording lessons, and taped an average of 13 lessons each – far more than required. A number of teachers shared videos with colleagues.

• The researchers were able to compare the videos teachers chose not to submit with those they submitted and found very little difference. They also found that less-proficient teachers submitted videos that were representative of their weaknesses.

• Teachers who recorded their lessons were more critical of their own performance than teachers in the control group, especially with respect to time management and checking on student mastery during instruction. Almost half said that watching the videos, they saw things students were doing, and things they themselves had done, that they hadn't noticed while teaching.

• Teachers in the treatment group were quite positive about the conferences they had with their supervisors – they found the talks less adversarial, the tone more supportive, and their evaluations more fair. Teachers also reported fewer disagreements on ratings and were more likely to identify a specific change they would make in their classrooms as a result of the process.

• Administrators reported that they found treatment teachers less defensive and that the post-observation conferences went more smoothly.

• Administrators were less confident than teachers that significant improvements in classroom practice would occur as a result of the process. There was also some concern about substituting videos for in-person classroom visits in terms of understanding student learning and classroom challenges.

• Most administrators viewed classroom videos during non-instructional parts of the school day or in the late afternoon, evenings, weekends, and holidays – in other words, the video process allowed them to time-shift observing lessons from the heart of the school day and gave them more flexibility. Administrators spent somewhat less time in treatment teachers' classrooms.

• At the end of the study year, most treatment teachers and administrators were quite positive about the process and were in favor of replacing some or all of in-person classroom observations with the video process. However, there was considerable sentiment (with which the researchers agreed) for keeping at least one in-person classroom observation a year.

[There is no question that teachers watching videos of their classroom performance can be a powerful professional development experience, especially if watched with a critical friend, focusing on what's working and one or two things what can be improved. The fact that teachers in the treatment group recorded and viewed an average of 13 lessons is wonderful: it undoubtedly made them much more aware of how they are coming across to students and gave them ideas for improvement – as well as affirming effective practices. However, I have several concerns about using videos for teacher evaluation and with the structure of this experiment:

- The researchers accepted the traditional process of infrequent, full-lesson observations, with administrators viewing only 3 of the 900 lessons typically taught in a year – hardly enough to get a representative sample and provide timely, meaningful affirmation and coaching.
- With volunteer teachers controlling which lessons to video and which of those to submit, there had to be a skew toward well-prepared, well-taught lessons. The only way for administrators to have an accurate picture of the day-to-day instruction that students experience (which is what drives achievement) is to make unannounced, frequent, brief visits to all teachers.
- The researchers also accepted the questionable practice of rubric-scoring a single lesson. This evaluative dynamic undermines effective coaching and is arguably a misuse of rubrics, which seem best suited for end-of-year summation of multiple classroom visits, discussions, and other points of contact.
- This experiment relied on volunteer teachers and principals. Would non-volunteers be willing to video lessons and follow this process?
- The time-shift of observations to after hours is worrisome in terms of administrative workload. Would it result in supervisors spending more time in their offices, more time viewing videos after hours, and less time in classrooms?
- An alternative more likely to produce results is administrators visiting classrooms on a regular basis (at least 2-3 a day), thoughtfully observing segments of lessons, looking over students' shoulders at the assignments they've been given, asking a few kids, "What are you working on?", and looking at what's on the walls – and then following up with face-to-face affirmation and coaching, preferably in the teacher's classroom when students aren't there. Teachers viewing videos of their work is a great PD experience, but the evaluation process can't be done by remote control. K.M.]

"The Best Foot Forward Project: Substituting Teacher-Collected Video for In-Person Classroom Observations – First Year Implementation Report" by Thomas Kane, Hunter Gehlbach, Miriam Goldberg, David Quinn, and Daniel Thal, a Harvard University Center for Education Policy Research paper, February 25, 2015, http://bit.ly/1RvAhx3

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7. Teaching Students Mathematical Argumentation

In this article in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, Chepina Rumsey (Kansas State University) and Cynthia Langrall (Illinois State University/Normal) provide pointers for teaching elementary students mathematical argumentation, a key component in Common Core and Standards for Mathematical Practice. The authors recommend incorporating five specific components:

• *Provide language supports*. The discourse of mathematical argumentation is unfamiliar to many students, and it's helpful to teach and model language frames, including:

- I agree with _____ because _____.
- I noticed _____ when _____.
- I wonder why _____.
- I have a question about _____.
- I disagree because _____.
- Based on _____, I think _____.

Students might then be presented with a claim and given three possible frames for responding to it.

• *Discuss rich, familiar content*. With odd and even numbers, students could be asked to provide justification for various claims – for example, *An even number plus an odd number gives an odd su*m, or *If you add two even numbers, you'll get an even number for the sum*. These discussions can also be a bridge to understanding arithmetic properties.

• *Specify conditions*. A mathematical proof has a claim and the conditions under which the claim is true. When students are presented with a claim – for example, *The sum of three numbers will be even* – they realize the need to specify conditions. This also teaches students the importance of precision in mathematics.

• *Introduce false claims*. One of the goals of teaching argumentation is to encourage students to become producers of math understanding and knowledge, say the authors. So teachers need to give students opportunities to develop their own ideas and have the confidence to validate or challenge the ideas of others. A teacher might show students a series of multiplication problems and then ask them to respond to a generalization: *Every time you multiply two numbers, you are always going to get an even number as the product*.

• *Manipulate familiar content to be unfamiliar*. Building on their knowledge of the associated property of addition, students might be asked if these statements are true or false:

$(a + b) + c = a + (b + c)$

$(a – b) + c = a – (b + c)$

The key skill with problems like this is students' ability to ask *What if…?* and develop a playful posture trying out different combinations of numbers.

"Teaching with an emphasis on mathematical argumentation is a powerful tool that can be embedded into many mathematical content areas as well as other subject areas," conclude Rumsey and Langrall.

"Promoting Mathematical Argumentation" by Chepina Rumsey and Cynthia Langrall in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, March 2016 (Vol. 22, #7, p. 412-419), http://bit.ly/1RfrLN4;

the authors can be reached at chepina@ksu.edu and langrall@ilstu.edu.

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8. Getting Students Engaged in Advanced Math Problem-Solving

In this article in *The Atlantic*, Peg Tyre reports on the growing number of U.S. students who are enthusiastically taking part in after-school and summer programs for advanced math problem-solving – and the fact that America's teenage team won the gold medal at the 56th International Mathematical Olympiad in Thailand last summer. Here's an example of the type of problem that students in these programs are asked to solve (more at http://Expii.com):

> Imagine a rope that runs completely around the Earth's equator, flat against the ground (assume the Earth is a perfect sphere, without any mountains or valleys). You cut the rope and tie in another piece of rope that is 710 inches long, or just under 60 feet. That increases the total length of the rope by a bit more than the length of a bus, or the height of a 5-story building. Now imagine that the rope is lifted at all points simultaneously, so that it floats about the Earth at the same height all along its length. What is the largest thing that could fit underneath the rope? (a) bacteria, (b) a ladybug, (c) a dog, (d) Einstein, (e) a giraffe, or (f) a space shuttle.

"Unlike most math classes," says Tyre, "where teachers struggle to impart knowledge to students – who must passively absorb it and then regurgitate it on a test – problem-solving classes demand that the pupils execute the cognitive bench press: investigating, conjecturing, predicting, analyzing, and finally verifying their own mathematical strategy. The point is not to accurately execute algorithms, although there is, of course, a right answer (Einstein, in the problem above). Truly thinking the problem through – creatively applying what you know about math and puzzling out possible solutions – is more important. Sitting in a regular ninth-grade algebra class versus observing a middle-school problem-solving class is like watching kids get lectured on the basics of musical notation versus hearing them sing an aria from *Tosca*."

"The Math Revolution" by Peg Tyre in *The Atlantic*, March 2016 (Vol. 317, #2, p. 50-57), http://theatln.tc/1ZkPr8a

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9. What's the Ideal Ratio of Computer Time in Blended Learning Classes?

"More and more people seem to agree that digital learning in K-12 classrooms works best when it is used with the oversight of a teacher," say Paul Peterson (Harvard's Kennedy School of Government) and Michael Horn (Clayton Christensen Institute) in this article in *Education Next*. "A student can learn effectively via computer if an educator is around to assist and supplement, and teachers are realizing the power computers – properly used – have to enhance their craft… [freeing them] to do what only humans can do well – provide empathy, understanding, and mentorship."

But what is the right amount of computer time? Peterson and Horn decided to crowdsource the question. They asked a representative sample of the U.S. public the following question, allowing responses from zero to 100 percent: *About what share of instructional time in high school do you think students should spend receiving instruction independently through or on a computer?* The median response – the midpoint between the highest and lowest answers – was 30 percent.

"But is crowdsourcing a question like this a good idea?" ask Peterson and Horn. "Is the public really that smart?" To check this out, they asked the same question to a cross-section of experts in blended learning. Some of them were critical of the question, but when they answered, the consensus was about 40 percent of instructional time. Peterson and Horn then asked a representative group of teachers, and their median response was 20 percent. So the public "crowd" was exactly half-way between the blended-learning experts (who would tend to be more favorable to computer time) and teachers (who would be inclined toward more teacher time). Remarkable!

The authors close with a caveat: of course the amount of computer time varies with individual students and the subject matter.

"The Ideal Blended-Learning Combination" by Paul Peterson and Michael Horn in *Education Next,* Spring 2016 (Vol. 16, #2, p. 94-95), http://bit.ly/21Ds74X; for a full exploration of the idea that the crowd usually gets it right, see *The Wisdom of Crowds* by James Surowiecki (Anchor Paperback 2015)

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10. Questions Principals Might Ask in the Hallway

In this article in *Edutopia*, Newark assistant superintendent Mitch Center says he understands the super-hectic life of school principals and the tendency for on-the-run conversations to be superficial ("How's it going?") or task-oriented ("Don't forget the meeting after school"). Center suggests three questions for colleagues and students that go deeper and might serve to further a school's overall mission:

• *What are you reading?* This question reinforces the idea that everyone is a reader and encompasses the overall literacy curriculum as it affects students and adults. "Books are a school's oxygen," says Center, "and the more we read and share words, the healthier our school communities are. If reading is not yet a top priority in the school, this question can spark an important conversation and can lead to tangible next steps, like a staff book club or schoolwide reading time."

• *I've been thinking about ----. What do you think?* This might involve querying a cafeteria worker about a way to improve the flow of students getting their lunch, or asking a teacher for input on a scheme to increase student movement in classrooms without losing instructional time. When leaders ask for input, help, or advice, they model openness and encourage staff members to feel part of a team effort.

• *If you were me, what would you change?* The goal of this open-ended question is to get staff and students to speak freely about what's most important to them. "You'll learn a lot from this question," says Center, "so only ask it if and when you are truly ready to listen."

"Talking in the Hallway: 3 Questions Principals Should Be Asking" by Mitch Center in *Edutopia*, February 26, 2016, http://edut.to/1U1hwSc; Center can be reached at mcenter@nps.k12.nj.us.

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11. Are KIPP Schools' Results Explained By Selection and Attrition?

In this article in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Ira Nichols-Barrer, Philip Gleason, Brian Gill, and Christina Clark Tuttle (Mathematica Policy Institute) examine the oft-repeated rap on KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) charter schools: that they rely on selective admission, pushing out low-achieving students, and replacing them with higher achievers to improve test scores. The researchers' findings, based on an analysis of data from 19 KIPP middle schools:

- On average, the KIPP schools admit similarly disadvantaged students compared to local schools.
- Attrition patterns are typically no different at KIPP than at nearby district schools.
- Students leaving KIPP schools have similar prior achievement compared to those exiting nearby schools.
- KIPP schools tend to replace students who leave midstream with students with higher baseline achievement, fewer males, fewer students with special needs, and a similar number of low-income students.
- District schools' late entrants tend to be more disadvantaged than previously-enrolled students.
- At KIPP schools, fewer vacant seats are backfilled in grades 7 and 8 than in district schools.

"Overall," the authors conclude, "KIPP's positive achievement impacts do not appear to be explained by advantages in the prior achievement of KIPP students, even when attrition and replacement patterns are taken into account." The explanation for the KIPP schools' higher student achievement, most markedly in the first year that students attend, appears to be operational and instructional differences.

"Student Selection, Attrition, and Replacement in KIPP Middle Schools" by Ira Nichols-Barrer, Philip Gleason, Brian Gill, and Christina Clark Tuttle in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, March 2016 (Vol. 38, #1, p. 5-20), available for purchase at http://bit.ly/22zuHvm

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12. Short Items:

a. Unite for Literacy website – This free online library of a wide selection of narrated digital picture books is best for new readers: http://www.uniteforliteracy.com/?redirect=true.

"Unite for Literacy: An Interview with Mark W.F. Condon" by Marla Mallette and Diane Barone in *The Reading Teacher*, March/April 2016 (Vol. 69, #5, p 471-481), available for purchase at http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/trtr.1439/abstract.

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b. Retrieval practice website – This site http://www.retrievalpractice.org/summary has recommendations for using retrieval practice to improve pulling information from memory, research on why retrieval practice works, and a free guide.

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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 others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 44 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

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

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- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- A collection of "classic" articles from all 11 years

Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

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