Marshall Memo 539

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
June 2, 2014

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"All good district schools, all good public charter schools, all good independent schools, all good parochial schools do the same things. It's a fierce focus on developing teachers, a fierce focus on developing leaders. Those schools never lose sight of that."

Brett Peiser in "Uncommon Success" by Peter Meyer in *Education Next*, Summer 2014 (Vol. 14, #3, p. 46-51), http://educationnext.org/uncommon-success/

"Progress is possible if decision-makers heed a few basic principles: learning isn't a commodity; schools are not profit centers; and communities are entitled to a voice and to an accounting of resources. Ultimately, what matters most is what takes place between students and teachers."

Jim Haas of Olathe, Kansas in a letter to *The New Yorker*, June 2, 2014, responding to "Schooled" by Dale Russakoff in the magazine's May 19th issue (an extraordinarily discouraging article about the struggle to improve the Newark, New Jersey schools)

"If we continue to communicate to young people that the principal reason for completing high school is to sit in classrooms for another four years, we will continue to lose an unacceptably large percentage of them along the way."

Robert Schwartz (see item #3)

"Schools and districts, particularly those hoping to use online credit recovery to help catch up students who have fallen behind, would be wise to see the new courses as elaborate, high-tech textbooks: highly variable in their quality, in need of substantial vetting, and – except for the rare student – utterly insufficient on their own."

Sarah Carr in "Credit Recovery Hits the Mainstream" in *Education Next*, Summer 2014 (Vol. 14, #3, p. 30-36), http://educationnext.org/credit-recovery-hits-mainstream/

"All outward violence begins with inner loneliness."

Glennon Doyle Melton (see item #6)

1. Eight Conditions for Improving Student Motivation

In this *Kappan* article, Kathleen Cushman (What Kids Can Do) shares her equation on motivation: V x E = M (Value times Expectancy equals Motivation). In other words, if students value an activity and expect to be successful, they will be motivated. After interviewing hundreds of adolescents on the conditions that increase school motivation, she distilled the following:

• *Condition #1: We feel okay*. "The stresses that students experience, at school or outside of it, take biological priority in the brain over learning," says Cushman. "Learning is very difficult when elemental sensations – fear, shame, hunger, exhaustion, loss, even distraction – stand in the way." Students need to feel safe and cared for, the school and classroom culture need to be supportive, and it's important that teachers focus on inquiry rather than getting students competing for the right answer.

• *Condition #2: It matters*. "Even when the subject doesn't appeal, students are more willing to engage if it presents an intriguing puzzle or an issue of fairness," says Cushman. For example, a New York City student was unenthusiastic about a science unit on fueling the car of the future, but she lit up when the teacher played an introductory video showing that oil is a finite resource and almost everything people do depends on it.

• *Condition #3: It's active*. When the curriculum is hands-on, collaborative, and fun, and when it helps students come to grips with high-level concepts, even reluctant learners tune in and learn – for example, Skyping with 16-year-olds in foreign countries, visiting a dim sum restaurant (chicken feet!), or doing a treasure hunt at the city's historical society.

• *Condition #4: It stretches us*. Students appreciate being pushed to their limits (that's what they experience in computer games). One student said of her teachers, "They see what you're, like, able to be, and they just make it so much bigger." Another student said, "When I'm challenged the perfect amount, I just wanna keep repeating the process. I wanna make it something I'm great at."

• *Condition #5: We have a coach*. "Students said they felt most motivated by teachers who acted like coaches in the classroom," says Cushman, "demonstrating new skills, providing support and encouragement, and helping them learn from their mistakes." Going over quizzes and tests is an ideal forum for coaching – getting students to figure out where they went wrong and fix their errors and misconceptions.

• *Condition #6: We have to use it*. This can be tutoring struggling classmates, engaging in a mock trial in a history class, or sharing new insights on nutrition with family members.

• *Condition #7: We think back on it*. "In the rush to move on, teachers may forget to provide students an opportunity to reflect on the work just concluded," says Cushman. "What

was difficult for them, and how did they manage those challenges? What would they do differently next time? How did they grow?"

• *Condition #8: We plan our next steps*. Students need to see life connections in simple tasks like doing homework and major efforts like senior year capstone projects. "With enough prior scaffolding in self-managing their activities," says Cushman, "students can treat the senior project as a culminating demonstration that they're ready for adult life."

"Eight Conditions for Motivated Learning" by Kathleen Cushman in *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 2014 (Vol. 95, #8, p. 18-22), www.kappanmagazine.com; Cushman can be reached at kathleencushman@mac.com.

Back to page one

2. A High-School Teacher Works to Boost Student Engagement

In this *Kappan* article, Hilary Dack and Carol Ann Tomlinson (University of Virginia/ Charlottesville) describe how Mr. Garcia, a high-school civics teacher, reacted to some critical student evaluations – students said they didn't see connections with their daily lives and most found what they learned about the U.S. Supreme Court pretty boring. Garcia decided to follow four principles as he redesigned his units on the judicial system and the U.S. Constitution. His goal was to engage students more effectively.

• *Principle #1: Students make personal connections*. Garcia started his unit on the U.S. Supreme Court by listing some experiences from the lives of current justices – raised by a single mother; spoke Spanish as a first language, championed women's rights, etc. – and asked students which interested them the most. He then grouped students by their choices and assigned each group one justice to research. Pictures of the justices hung on the walls, along with a number of "mystery fact cards", each applying to an unnamed justice:

- Worked at a steel mill during summers to pay for college.
- Re-read *Pride and Prejudice* every year for many years.
- Grew up in poverty with a father who was a farm worker and a mother who was a housekeeper.
- Was captain of his high-school football team.
- Had both a sister and mother die before graduating from high school.

Garcia then gave groups an information packet about their justice. Students read and discussed their packet, figured out which mystery fact fit, moved the card to the right picture, and presented key information to the class.

• *Principle #2: Students have meaningful choices*. Garcia had students choose one of three tasks on the responsibilities and qualities of Supreme Court justices, each representing a different learning style:

- Practical: Imagine you were hired as a copywriter to redesign educational websites about the Supreme Court for younger students, listing justices' duties, lifetime terms, and key personal and professional qualifications.
- Analytical: Use a flow chart, web, or other diagram to illustrate and explain the relationships among a justice's duties, term length, and qualifications.

- Creative: Write a script for a scene involving senators questioning a nominee for the Supreme Court during a hearing. One senator's questions reveal misconceptions about the duties, term length, and qualifications of a justice. Another senator corrects those misconceptions through skillful questioning of the nominee, while also encouraging the nominee to highlight relevant experiences, accomplishments, and personal traits.

Garcia's students had no problem choosing a task, plunged into the work, and thoroughly enjoyed this segment of the unit.

• *Principle #3: Students focus on ideas worth learning*. Reflecting on the rather pedestrian state standards for his curriculum, Garcia realized that a key concept was leadership, and he proceeded to formulate a series of Essential Questions:

- Who is a great leader?
- Are great leaders born or made?
- Do the qualities of great leaders change in different contexts and periods of history?
- Which of these qualities are already evident to me?
- Which are still emerging?

Garcia tried to shape the unit's learning experiences around uncovering these basic understandings about Supreme Court justices.

• *Principle #4: Students are challenged and supported*. Garcia applied this principle to his unit on the U.S. Constitution, whose Big Idea was *balance*. He chose the topic of random drug testing in schools, hoping to foster an understanding of how the Constitution both empowers and limits government officials, balancing government authority and individual rights. Garcia gave a mini-lecture on the problem of drug use in the U.S., described the Fourth Amendment on unreasonable searches and seizures, and sketched a few Supreme Court decisions on random, suspicionless drug testing in schools and drug testing in competitive extracurricular activities. He then posed the question of whether random drug testing within a school was constitutional. He asked students to imagine that they had to prepare for a public comment session before the local school board on a proposal to require all high schools to administer random, suspicionless drug tests. Three leveled groups of students researched the topic using materials at different levels of difficulty and then chose which stakeholder role they would take at the school board meeting. Here was the assignment for each group:

- The advanced group played school board attorneys or high-school civics teachers and their guiding question was: How will you use your research on the Court's opinions to help the community evaluate the proposed policy?
- The on-grade-level group played parents, substance abuse counselors, or university faculty and their issue was: Identify the most important research findings on this topic and determine whether they support the board's policy.
- The emerging level group played students, administrators, and local psychologists and their question was: How does this policy affect the daily running of the town's high schools and the relationships between students and administrators?

Garcia met with each group of students as they prepared for the mock meeting and then monitored the actual debate, with students passionately arguing public safety versus individual

rights. When the bell rang at the end of the period, animated conversations spilled out into the hallways.

In course evaluations later in the semester, one student wrote, "Before this class, I didn't know civics was about me." Another wrote, "I always seemed to work hard in this class, but that's OK because it was really interesting." Garcia had succeeded in engaging his students.

"Searching for the Irresistible" by Hilary Dack and Carol Ann Tomlinson in *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 2014 (Vol. 95, #8, p. 43-47), www.kappanmagazine.com; Dack can be reached at hilary@email.virginia.edu.

Back to page one

3. Multiple Curriculum Pathways in Eleventh and Twelfth Grade

In this *Education Next* interview, Robert Schwartz (Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Pathways to Prosperity Network) says the "college for all" mantra that some districts and schools have adopted needs to be rethought. "While it is absolutely true that two-thirds of jobs projected over the next decade will require education beyond high school, and that as a general proposition the more education you get the greater your lifetime earnings," say Schwartz, "it is also true that for the foreseeable future there will continue to be many good jobs that require some education beyond high school but not necessarily a four-year degree." For example, the average salary for "middle skills" STEM jobs is $53,000.

"Four-year colleges and universities for too long have exercised an undue influence over the high-school curriculum," Schwartz argues. "Why should a set of institutions that are effectively serving only one young person in three be setting the requirements for what *all* students are expected to know and be able to do in order to become productive participants in civic and economic life? If we continue to communicate to young people that the principal reason for completing high school is to sit in classrooms for another four years, we will continue to lose an unacceptably large percentage of them along the way."

The implication: High schools need to develop a much stronger set of career-focused pathways into two-year postsecondary programs. Here are Schwartz's recommendations:

• *Exposure* – Starting in middle school, we need to provide all students with information and advice on a broad spectrum of careers – and the education and training necessary to pursue them. Students should visit a wide variety of workplaces and talk to the adults who work in them. "This is especially important for those most at risk of dropping out," says Schwartz, "for we know that one of the two main reasons dropouts tell us they leave school is that they can't see any connection between what they are asked to study and any future life they can imagine for themselves."

• *Hot fields* – Schools need to up their game in high-growth, high-demand fields like information technology, health care, and advanced manufacturing and create seamless transitions to postsecondary programs that culminate in a degree or certificate with labor-market value. Students should take part in paid internships or apprenticeships and see clearly how academic coursework applies in the real world. "While these pathways need to combine

rigorous academics with relevant career and technical preparation," says Schwartz, "it is not at all clear why the course sequences in these career pathways need to be the same as those for students in the four-year college pathway."

• *A fork in the road after 10th grade* – Schwartz advocates a shared Common Core curriculum through the second year of high school, with all students taking the same ELA and math assessments at the end of their sophomore year. Then juniors and seniors should be offered significant choices. "If we do a thoughtful, untracked implementation of a common core-aligned curriculum with a systemic, sequential program of career information and exposure," says Schwartz, "young people and their families should be in a position to make an informed choice among a set of pathways, all of which lead to some form of postsecondary education or training, but only some of which lead directly to a four-year college or university." College readiness would be measured by passing at least one dual-enrollment college course; work readiness would be measured by successfully completing an internship or some other form of workplace learning.

• *Math that makes sense* – Schwartz thinks it's wrong-headed for university mathematics departments to dictate high schools' math curriculum. "If only 11 percent of jobs even in STEM fields require advanced mathematical knowledge," he says, "why should we force-march all students through a mathematical sequence leading to calculus?" It makes much more sense for high schools to give students a solid grounding in data, statistics, quantitative reasoning, and probability, with advanced math courses as electives. The Dana Center in Texas and the Carnegie Foundation in California have developed and field-tested applied-math courses for grades 11 and 12; such approaches are more likely to hold the attention of struggling students and prepare all students to pass college and community college placement tests.

"College Prep for All?" An interview with Robert Schwartz in *Education Next*, Summer 2014 (Vol. 14, #3, p. 56-60), http://educationnext.org/multiple-pathways-can-better-serve-students/

Back to page one

4. An Alternative to Ineffective "Q & A" Teaching

In this article in *Edutopia*, Petra Claflin (YES Prep) confesses that she was sometimes guilty of what she calls "Q & A Teaching," and says it's quite common during the direct instruction portion of teachers' lessons. Here's an example:

> **Teacher**: I'm now going to model how to solve this type of problem. First I set up my equation. Now, who thinks they have an idea of what I should do next?
> (30 seconds waiting for hands)
> **First student**: Solve for x?
> **Teacher**: Well, before that. You're on the right track, but what would I do first?
> **Second student**: Get the x by itself?
> **Teacher**: No, not quite. What I'm going to do first is…

"It's easy to understand why we do this," says Claflin. "We want students to be involved and stay engaged in the lesson. The problem for a lesson covering a new skill, though, is that the

end result is disjointed instruction possibly including wrong information, since students were asked to contribute aloud before they were ready." Q & A can also throw off the timing of the lesson, since it's usually impromptu. The result: direct instruction taking 30 minutes when it was supposed to take ten. Here are Claflin's suggestions for avoiding this trap:

• *Announce your intention*. Tell students that you're teaching a model and will check for understanding when you're finished. It's not a conversation.

• *Toss the ball to students*. Before you start, give the class a few minutes to try figuring it out by themselves. This makes them interested to see if your explanation comports with their solutions.

• *Rehearse the lesson*. "When you script and practice what you're going to say, you give yourself the opportunity to really make sure that you're putting that concept or skill into words, and doing it succinctly," says Claflin.

• *Watch the clock*. "If you've been talking for 15 minutes and you're still not done, 90 percent of the time you probably won't make things any clearer by talking any longer," she says. "So just stop and let your students try the task with their groups or partners."

• *Watch yourself teach*. Video is really helpful for this. "We often make assumptions about our teaching and only realize some of our tendencies when we actually see ourselves doing them," says Claflin.

"Keeping your instruction clear, succinct, and as short as possible is essential for ensuring that students are spending as much time as possible grappling with the concept and practicing new skills," she concludes.

"Avoiding the Trap of 'Q & A' Teaching" by Petra Claflin in *Edutopia*, March 26, 2014, http://www.edutopia.org/blog/avoiding-q-and-a-teaching-petra-claflin

Back to page one

5. Working with Introverted Students and Colleagues

In this interview with Gail Connelly in *Principal*, Susan Cain discusses her recent book on introverts, who make up one-third to one-half of the population. Introverts don't fit into America's "extrovert ideal" – they're less assertive, gregarious, and charismatic – and their strengths – focus, introspection, and observation – are often undervalued. "I would say in a typical school, most students feel they are much more praised for being leaders than they are for being great thinkers or great artists or scientists," says Cain. "Introverts are just as loving and as interested in connections as anyone else. They are just as social; they are just differently social."

So what can schools do to level the playing field? Educators should keep in mind that introverts need a "longer runway" to take off, says Cain. "They fly like everyone else, but their runway is longer. They need to know that you think it's okay that they have a longer runway. They need to know that you value them for who they are." What does this look like in the classroom?

- Quiet time within each school day, perhaps children reading by themselves;
- Pairing students to discuss topics in depth;

- Making less use of larger groups (6-7 students), which tend to make introverted children feel anxious and over-stimulated;
- For group activities, sticking with smaller groups and making sure each student has a role;
- Identifying thoughtful, reflective students and drawing them out.

What about principals who are introverts? Cain says they have probably mastered the art of holding an audience of colleagues or parents and getting their ideas across. "But they equally need to really understand who they are and what their true strengths are," she says, "and to structure their days in a way that plays to these strengths." This might mean scheduling a quiet solo lunch after a morning of meetings and presentations. "You do what you need to do to recharge. Don't feel guilty for doing that."

Cain also recommends that principals have an open discussion with colleagues about how each person functions best. This encourages other introverts to "come out" and improves the overall functioning of the school. It also helps extroverts understand that when a colleague goes off for a quiet lunch, it's not a personal affront but a need to recharge and regroup. "One of the big differences between introverts and extroverts is that introverts want to process things before they articulate them," says Cain, "whereas extroverts like to think out loud… When you want to get the most of your introverted colleagues' brains, give them a chance to prepare for the discussion. Don't spring it on them." In staff meetings, allow time for reflection and individual jotting, go around giving everyone a chance to share ideas, ask for different viewpoints, and don't let extroverts dominate.

"The Quiet Effect" by Gail Connelly, interviewing Susan Cain, in *Principal*, May/June 2014 (Vol. 93, #5, p. 32-36), www.naesp.org; Cain's book is *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* (Broadway Books, 2013); her TED talk on the book is at http://www.ted.com/talks/susan_cain_the_power_of_introverts.

Back to page one

6. One Teacher's Strategy for Preventing Bullying in Her Class

In this article in *Reader's Digest*, author Glennon Doyle Melton describes what her son's veteran fifth-grade teacher does every Friday afternoon: she has students take out a piece of paper and write the name of one student who has been an exceptional classroom citizen that week and four classmates with whom they'd like to sit the following week. Students pass in their papers understanding that their buddy requests may or may not be honored. After dismissal, the teacher spreads out students' papers and looks for patterns:

- Who is not getting requested by anyone?
- Who can't think of anyone to request?
- Who never gets noticed enough to be nominated for citizen of the week?
- Who had lots of friends the preceding week and none this week?

What she's looking for is isolated children – those who are struggling to connect with their peers and falling through the cracks of the class's social world, not being noticed, perhaps being bullied.

"As a teacher, parent, and lover of all children, I think this is the most brilliant Love Ninja strategy I have ever encountered," says Melton. "It's like taking an X-ray of a classroom to see beneath the surface of things and into the hearts of students… those children who need a little help, who need adults to step in and teach them how to make friends, how to ask others to play, how to join a group, or how to share their gifts… the truth comes out on those safe, private little sheets of paper."

Melton asked the teacher how long she had been using this system and she said ever since Columbine. "This brilliant woman watched Columbine knowing that all violence begins with disconnection," says Melton. "All outward violence begins with inner loneliness… And so she decided to start fighting violence early and often in the world within her reach… What a way to spend a life: looking for patterns of love and loneliness. Stepping in, every single day, and altering the trajectory of our world."

"One Teacher's Brilliant Strategy to Stop Bullying" by Glennon Doyle Melton in *Reader's Digest*, June 2014, http://www.rd.com/advice/parenting/stop-bullying-strategy/

Back to page one

7. Apps for Problem-Based Math Games

In this *Edutopia* article, Patrick Feeney recommends a number of tablet-based apps derived from classic thinking games, puzzles, and recreational math problems. "Puzzle apps are fantastic tools for training students to be creative mathematical thinkers," says Feeney. "In addition, well-designed puzzle apps align perfectly with the following Common Core Standards: make sense of problems; persevere in solving them; reason abstractly and quantitatively; use appropriate tools strategically; look for and make use of structure; and look for regularity in repeated reasoning. Feeney recommends the following apps:

- Engel's Enigma
- Tower of Hanoi
- Master Mind Code Breaker
- Set Pro
- Cut the Block
- Move the Turtle
- Slice It!
- 3b3b
- KenKen
- Nine Gaps
- Rubik's Cube

Here are Feeney's criteria for selecting good puzzle apps:

• *Depth of underlying mathematics* – The game should have a rich math structure. Rubik's Cube, for example, involves group theory and permutations.

• *Interactive and fun* – "A lot of math apps are quite static," says Feeney, "and no more exciting than pen-and-paper versions of the same puzzle." The best apps are inherently interactive and have colorful animated graphics.

• *Visual* – The patterns and structures within the game should be visually apparent. Rubik's Cube brings the abstract math of permutations to a concrete level appropriate for young children.

• *Easy to learn, hard to master* – The best games ramp players up so they can achieve basic proficiency quite quickly, but then challenge them to apply those skills to solve harder and harder problems. "Avoid puzzles that get too hard too fast or don't provide enough opportunities for intuitive breakthroughs," says Feeney.

• *Multiple levels* – The best puzzles contain more than one math principle and can be used for different age levels, with older students going deeper and deeper into the mathematical content.

"Games in the Mathematics Classroom: There's an App for That!" by Patrick Feeney in *Edutopia*, May 7, 2014, http://www.edutopia.org/blog/game-apps-in-math-class-patrick-feeney

Back to page one

8. Using Short Bursts of Exercise to Help Students with ADHD Focus

In this article in *Principal*, consultant Dan Lawler cites several recent studies showing that exercise improves all students' attention and self-regulation – and is especially helpful for students with ADHD. John Ratey, co-autor of *SPARK: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain* (Little, Brown, 2013), says that "exercise is like a dose of Ritalin" because it increases dopamine and other neurotransmitters that govern the attention system. "As a result," says Ratey, "the student is better able to focus on demand, be more engaged, and be less fidgety."

Some schools have instituted "time-in" for students with ADHD, scheduling them for 10 minutes of exercise before school, at mid-day, and whenever a teacher notices the student losing focus. One school turned a small unused space into a time-in room and equipped it with an exercise bike and Dance Dance Revolution. "Parents were thrilled that the school was employing a natural and balanced proactive intervention," says Lawler. "Another benefit was that we were teaching children how to use exercise to assist with the management and self-regulation of their ADHD." The school was so pleased with the results that it found a bigger space, added other exercise activities, and used it as a reward for a wider range of students.

Lawler adds that it's important for staff and parents to be cognizant of the research rationale for this approach and know that it's not a cure-all; some students need medication in addition to a thoughtful exercise program.

"Improve ADHD Behavior with Exercise" by Dan Lawler in *Principal*, May/June 2014 (Vol. 93, #5, p. 40-41), www.naesp.org

Back to page one

9. Why Are Boston's Charter Schools the Strongest in the Nation?

In this *Education Gadfly* article, Michael Goldstein (Match Education) shares his theory on why Boston's charter schools outperform the city's district schools by far great

margins than charters in any other major urban area (see the graph in the link below), and are also more effective than charter schools in other parts of Massachusetts:

• *Talent* – For a variety of reasons (Harvard is one of them), Boston attracted several exceptionally gifted, hard-working charter leaders (Brett Peiser, John King, Evan Rudall, and others), who kept in close touch as they developed their schools, sharing ideas and continuously improving their practice. There's also been a flow of teachers and administrators from one charter school to another.

• *Competition* – Goldstein likens the synergy among innovative Boston schools to Jared Diamond's explanation (in *Guns, Germs, and Steel*) for Western Europe's rise after the year 1000: close proximity, finite resources, and intense competition for students, teachers, and funding led to the rapid adoption and improvement of classroom and school ideas.

• *A common philosophy* – Among Boston charter schools, there is a higher proportion of authentic adherents of the "no excuses" model than in Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York City, or Washington, D.C. "In terms of idea sharing," says Goldstein, "it's a lot easier to discuss the nuance, the details, when you agree on something big. For example, basketball coaches who meet to discuss the two-three zone defense learn more about key details versus when coaches meet to discuss 'defense' – because the first question is man or zone, the second question is what type of zone, and so on." Staff training and staff mobility are also easier when educators agree on the basic model.

• *Effective thought leaders* – Goldstein credits Kay Merseth at Harvard and Linda Brown at Building Excellent Schools for providing effective training and development for educators in many of Boston's charter schools.

"Boston's High-Quality Charters Make No Excuses" by Michael Goldstein in *The Education Gadfly*, May 28, 2014 (Vol. 14, #22), http://bit.ly/1pABgKe

Back to page one

10. Do Public Schools Do a Better Job Teaching Math Than Private Schools?

In this *Education Next* article, Peter Wolf (University of Arkansas) takes issue with a recent book by Christopher Lubienski and Sarah Theule Lubienski, *The Public School Advantage: Why Public Schools Outperform Private Schools* [see Marshall Memo 537]. The book's finding that public-school math achievement is better than that of private schools is based on flawed methodological choices, says Wolf:

- A narrow definition of school performance (standardized math test scores);
- Use of tests more closely aligned with public than private school curricula;
- The use of control variables that are measured differently across school sectors;
- Faulty measurement of data on students who switch sectors.

"Comparing Public Schools to Private" by Patrick Wolf in *Education Next*, Summer 2014 (Vol. 14, #3, p. 52-54), http://educationnext.org/comparing-public-schools-private/

Back to page one

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 43 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).

Subscriptions:

Individual subscriptions are $50 for a year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and how to pay by check, credit card, or purchase order.

Website:

If you go to http://www.marshallmemo.com you will find detailed information on:

- How to subscribe or renew
- A detailed rationale for the Marshall Memo
- Publications (with a count of articles from each)
- Article selection criteria
- Topics (with a count of articles from each)
- Headlines for all issues
- Reader opinions (with results of an annual survey)
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

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

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
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Middle School Journal
NASSP Journal
NJEA Review
Perspectives
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
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 Language Educator
The Learning Principal/Learning System/Tools for Schools
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time
Wharton Leadership Digest