Marshall Memo 542

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
June 23, 2014

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Somehow what troubles people isn't so much being average as settling for it."
Atul Gawande (quoted in item #3)

"The high-performing student who knows many thousands of words has learned them not by having received a jolt of oral language early on, but by accruing bits of word knowledge for each of the thousands of words encountered every day."
Susan Neuman and Tanya Wright (see item #2)

"It's fair to say that words represent the tip of the iceberg. Underlying them is a set of emerging interconnections and concepts that these words represent."
Susan Neuman and Tanya Wright (*ibid*.)

"You have to go down and explore your own failures before you can conquer them. You have to taste humiliation before you can aspire toward excellence."
David Brooks (see item #1)

"As educators, we can accept that the bell curve of performance does exist – and always will – for our districts, our schools, our educators – and ourselves. We can seek to move the performance of our individual districts to the right – from low to average, from average to high, or from high to higher. We can learn with and from one another how to tighten the bell curve, and we hope to shift it to the right: yesterday's high performance in education should become tomorrow's merely average."
Karla Baehr (see item #3)

"Any instrument, when stakes are attached, could distort behavior in unwanted ways, or produce a less accurate picture of typical practice."
The Measures of Effective Teaching study (quoted in item #5)

1. David Brooks on Different Learning Curves

"Most of us are trying to get better at something," says David Brooks in this *New York Times* column, and we tend to believe that progress will be linear, that we'll steadily get better and better. But most of the time that's not true. Here are several possible ways people improve:

• *Logarithmic* – Learning a new language, taking up running, and playing soccer follow this pattern: you make rapid progress at first, then it tails off and improvement becomes more challenging. "During the early high-growth phase, when everything is coming easily, you have to make sure you maintain your disciplined habits… fight the urge to self-celebrate and relax… or else you will fall backward," says Brooks (drawing on the work of Scott Young). "Then later, during the slow-growth phase, you have to break some of your habits. To move from good to great, you have to break out of certain routines that have become calcified and are now holding you back."

• *Exponential* – Ice hockey, baseball, and mastering a craft or an academic discipline follow this pattern: people have to work for a long time (sometimes 10,000 hours) to master the fundamentals, seeing little progress, but then there's rapid growth. "Many people quit exponential activities in the early phases," says Brooks. "You've got to be bullheaded to work hard while getting no glory. But then when you are in the later fast-progress stage… when everyone is singing your praises, you have to fight self-satisfaction… you've got to be open-minded to turn your hard-earned skill into poetry."

• *Stairway* – You make some progress, then there's a plateau with little growth, then there's another step, and so on.

• *Waves* – "You go over some material and the wave leaves a residue of knowledge," says Brooks, "then you go over the same material again and the next wave leaves a bit more residue."

• *Valley* – Your skill level goes down at first, then you improve. "The experience of immigrating to a new country can be like this," says Brooks. "You have to start at the bottom as you learn a new society before you can make your way upward." Moral progress can also follow this pattern: "You have to go down and explore your own failures before you can conquer them. You have to taste humiliation before you can aspire toward excellence."

Being aware of these different growth patterns is helpful in three ways, says Brooks. First, it might steer some young people away from flocking to logarithmic activities that give instant gratification and toward exponential activities with a longer-term payoff. Second, being aware of the structures develops restraint: "You don't only need knowledge about what to do," he says; "you have to train yourself to defeat your natural desires."

And third, says Brooks, "this focus on growth structures takes your eyes off yourself. The crucial thing is not what traits you intrinsically possess. The crucial questions are: What is

the structure of your domain? Where are you now on the progress curve? How are you interacting with the structures of the field? The crucial answers to those questions are not found in the mirror. They are found by seeing yourself from a distance as part of a landscape."

"The Structures of Growth" by David Brooks in *The New York Times*, June 17, 2014, http://nyti.ms/1qEnqdd

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2. Principles for Teaching Vocabulary in the Early Grades

In this article in *American Educator*, Susan Neuman (New York University) and Tanya Wright (Michigan State University) cite the well-known vocabulary gap – entering first graders from high-income families know twice as many words as their low-income peers. But they believe the even worse news is that some adults believe the gap can't be closed. "Luckily," say Neuman and Wright, "there is now a rich and accumulated new knowledge base that suggests a far different scenario." Specifically:

- Children learn words most rapidly in the preschool years, giving educators an ideal window to intervene.
- Effective vocabulary instruction can ameliorate reading difficulties later on, allowing children who started school way behind to be on grade level by fourth grade.
- The quality, quantity, and responsiveness of teachers and family members can effectively mediate socioeconomic status.
- Early gains in oral vocabulary can predict growth in reading comprehension and later reading performance.

"This means that, in contrast to dire prognostications, there is much we can do to enable children to read and read well," say Neuman and Wright. The news is especially timely because the Common Core standards represent a markedly more rigorous and demanding set of expectations for students.

Before presenting their principles for content-rich oral vocabulary instruction, Neuman and Wright puncture several myths:

• *Myth #1: Children are word sponges*. Earlier research suggested that young children can learn words from a single exposure ("fast mapping"). This turns out to be inaccurate. Instead, kids learn words incrementally by predicting relationships between objects and sounds, getting a more accurate fix on a word every time they see or hear it. "With each additional exposure, the word may become incrementally closer to being fully learned," say Neuman and Wright.

• *Myth #2: Children have an early vocabulary spurt*. The latest evidence is that children absorb words at a steady, cumulative rate, and what accelerates over time is the integration and use of words after repeated exposures. "The high-performing student who knows many thousands of words has learned them not by having received a jolt of oral language early on, but by accruing bits of word knowledge for each of the thousands of words encountered every day," say Neuman and Wright. This suggests that we need to continuously immerse children in oral and written vocabulary experiences.

• *Myth #3: Storybook reading is enough*. Children listening to and interacting with storybooks is certainly helpful, but recent studies have shown that it's not enough to make up high-risk children's deficits. Teachers need to supplement oral reading with intentional strategies that get students processing words at deeper levels of understanding.

• *Myth #4: Teachable moments teach plenty of words*. Parents and teachers pause and explain an unfamiliar word – "Celebrate means we do something fun" – but in busy classrooms, this happens only about eight times a day, and that's not nearly enough to boost the vocabulary of students who are behind. Teachers need to be "proactive in selecting words that have great application to academic texts with increasingly complex concepts," say Neuman and Wright.

• *Myth #5: Just follow the basal reader's vocabulary scope and sequence*. Studies of commercial reading programs reveal wide disparities in the number of words introduced, how they are taught, and their appropriateness to the grade level. Teachers need to supplement basal readers with a much more systematic approach to teaching grade-appropriate academic vocabulary.

Neuman and Wright follow up with these five principles for vocabulary instruction for young children:

- We need both explicit and implicit instruction; it's not enough for children to hear them in a story or for the teacher to mention them in passing.
- Be intentional about word selection. Teachers can explicitly teach only about 400 words a year. These need to be words that will take students to a higher level of vocabulary proficiency – words like *habitat, organism, protection* and *compare, contrast, and observe*.
- Build word meaning through knowledge networks that make sense to students. "It's fair to say that words represent the tip of the iceberg," say Neuman and Wright. "Underlying them is a set of emerging interconnections and concepts that these words represent." And those links are what drive students' comprehension – for example, *abdomen, lungs, heart, brain*.
- Children need repeated exposure to gain vocabulary. Frequency is the key to vocabulary development, say the authors, with repetition happening in varied, meaningful contexts.
- Ongoing professional development is essential. A proven routine for teaching new vocabulary: (a) Identify words that need to be taught; (b) Define the words in a child-friendly way; (c) Contextualize words in varied and meaningful formats; (d) Review words to ensure they're retained; (e) Monitor children's progress and reteach if necessary.

"The Magic of Words: Teaching Vocabulary in the Early Childhood Classroom" by Susan Neuman and Tanya Wright in *American Educator*, Summer 2014 (Vol. 38, #2, p. 4-13), http://www.aft.org/pdfs/americaneducator/summer2014/Neuman.pdf

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3. Improving medical treatment and improving schools

In this *District Management Journal* article, former Massachusetts superintendent and state education official Karla Brooks Baehr summarizes "The Bell Curve," a 2004 article by Boston surgeon Atul Gawande on improvements in the treatment of cystic fibrosis, and draws parallels for K-12 educators. Gawande says that a diagnosis of cystic fibrosis (CF) used to be a death sentence – in 1964, a child with the condition had a life expectancy of only three years. But in 1964, a physician in Cleveland named LeRoy Matthews claimed that his CF patients had an annual mortality rate of less than 2 percent, compared to the national rate of more than 20 percent. The CF Foundation started collecting data from the 31 existing cystic fibrosis treatment centers to see if Matthews's data were for real, promising that no data from individual centers would be made public.

The data showed that Matthews really was getting outstanding results – the median age of death for his CF patients was 21 years, seven times the age of patients treated elsewhere. This naturally raised the question of what Matthews was doing differently, and he shared his approach: He and his colleagues viewed CF as a cumulative disease and provided aggressive treatment long before patients got sick. The Matthews approach rapidly spread to other CF centers, and within six years, average life expectancy of patients nationwide was 18 years. Because of the CF Foundation's data, the treatment of this disease is now far more consistent among doctors across the nation. Each center goes through a rigorous certification process, follows the same detailed guidelines, and participates in research trials to improve care. New ideas spread quickly from center to center – for example, a mechanized vest invented at the Minneapolis CF Center to replace daily "chest thumping."

But there is still a bell curve of results: the average life expectancy is 33 years nationally, with the best center getting more than 47 years and the worst considerably less than 33. "If the bell curve is a fact, then so is the reality that most doctors are going to be average," says Gawande. "There is no shame in being one of them, right? Except, of course, there is. Somehow what troubles people isn't so much being average as settling for it." And this troubling realization is a powerful driver of improvement.

Gawande tells the story of Cincinnati Children's Hospital, which had an excellent reputation but mediocre results for its cystic fibrosis patients. In 2001, the hospital boldly decided to release its CF data as part of a strategy for winning a multimillion-dollar grant. Not a single family abandoned the hospital because of its firm commitment to improving treatment. The hospital then persuaded the CF Foundation to reveal the names of the top-performing hospitals and systematically studied their methods. It turns out that methods were less important than attitudes.

Gawande describes the difference in patient care between Cincinnati's center and a doctor at the top-performing Minneapolis Center. Meeting with an adolescent girl whose lung function had declined since her last visit, the Minneapolis doctor was relentless, aggressive, and collaborative. He would settle for nothing less than 100 percent lung function – in other words, as good as someone without cystic fibrosis. He explained to the girl the difference between a 99.95 percent chance each day of staying well with treatment and a 99.5 percent

chance without treatment, adding up the .05 percent daily difference over 365 days to show an 83 percent versus a 16 percent chance of making it through the year without getting sick. He insisted that the girl enter the hospital for 2-3 days to make up for lost ground. In Cincinnati, the doctors, who were good people working as hard as they could, made none of these demands of a similar patient and let her leave with a follow-up appointment in three months.

Heeding these and other comparative lessons, the Cincinnati center dramatically improved its performance and now ranks among the best cystic fibrosis centers in the nation, with an average lung function over 100 percent. Over time, the bell curve shifted significantly to the right – but there is still a bell curve, with the average lung function at 75 percent. The struggle to improve care continues.

How do these insights apply to K-12 schools? Baehr says that the recent introduction of a 4-3-2-1 teacher-evaluation scale has brought about a dramatic shift from the previous 2-point scale in which 98-99 percent of teachers were rated "Satisfactory" to a bell-shaped curve that spotlights mediocre and average performance and naturally drives improvement. And the public release in Massachusetts and other states of student growth percentiles – detailed, meaningful, credible, comparative data – will lead educators and parents to compare learning results in schools with similar populations, stop excuse-making for poor performance in schools with "needier" students when comparable schools are doing better, and stimulate the spread of the most-effective practices.

Gawande distinguishes between "lagging" indicators (the cystic fibrosis death rate, for example), which don't provide much guidance for improving performance, and "leading" indicators (patients' lung function and body mass index), which are much more helpful in spotting problems early and facilitating improvement. In education, state test scores and graduation rates are lagging indicators, informative but not very helpful. Baehr suggests the following might be effective, easy-to-measure leading indicators:

- Third-grade reading proficiency;
- Fifth-grade attendance;
- Eighth-grade writing proficiency;
- Ninth-grade promotion rates;
- Success in high-school college-prep mathematics courses.

The key is focusing on results in a few carefully chosen areas and then working on staffing, training, scheduling, curriculum, technology, and other interventions to make a difference. "As educators," says Baehr, "we can accept that the bell curve of performance does exist – and always will – for our districts, our schools, our educators – and ourselves. We can seek to move the performance of our individual districts to the right – from low to average, from average to high, or from high to higher. We can learn with and from one another how to tighten the bell curve, and we hope to shift it to the right: yesterday's high performance in education should become tomorrow's merely average... [We] need to seek out credible, actionable data, and respond non-defensively with high expectations and a sense of urgency…"

Baehr returns to the comparison between excellent and mediocre CF centers to explain how some schools and districts have improved results: "Just as at the Minneapolis and

Cincinnati CF centers, the telling difference between high- and low-performing schools came not from the strategy they used, but from the difference in focus, intensity, intentionality, and sense of urgency each school brought to the challenge of implementing that strategy." She sees these elements in schools that are showing the way:

- An instruction- and results-focused principal galvanizing individual and collective responsibility for improving results for all students;
- A mix of deliberate improvement efforts, expectations, practices, and continuous feedback;
- Teams of teachers with effective coaching pursuing continuous improvement;
- A well-orchestrated system of data collection and analysis that informs a responsive and adaptive system tuned to students' specific academic needs.

"Lessons from Health Care" by Karla Brooks Baehr in *The District Management Journal*, Spring 2014 (Vol. 15, p. 12-19), available for purchase at http://bit.ly/1pvkjR4; Gawande's article is at http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/12/06/041206fa_fact?currentPage=all.

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4. A Model for Boosting Student Engagement

Student disengagement is widespread internationally, say Matthew Bundick, Russell Quaglia, Michael Corso, and Dawn Haywood (Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations) in this *Teachers College Record* article. Engagement is high when students start kindergarten but steadily falls off as students move through the grades; by high school, studies have found, half of students say they are bored and 40-60 percent are "chronically disengaged."

Engagement is an essential component of academic and life success, say the authors, and getting students more engaged reduces the racial and economic achievement gap. But what does student engagement look like? The conventional definition has three dimensions:

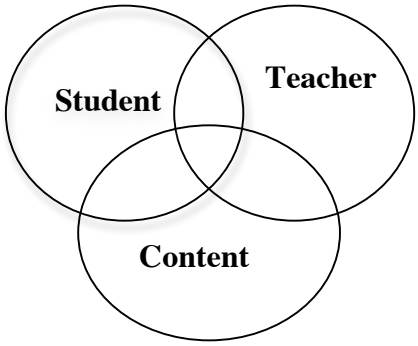
• Behavioral engagement:
- Attending and participating in classes
- Putting effort into studying and academic tasks
- Completing assignments
- Compliance with school rules
- Participating in school-related activities

• Cognitive engagement:
- Psychological investment in learning and mastering academic material
- Desire for challenge
- Planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's thinking
- Self-regulation

• Emotional engagement:
- Positive relationships with peers and staff
- A sense of belonging in the school environment
- A sense of connectedness to and interest in the academic content
- A sense of efficacy and confidence regarding one's academic ability

"There are also additional upsides to student engagement," say the authors. "When a classroom is filled with students who are paying attention, focused, participating, mentally stimulated, and having fun, the teacher is much more likely to enjoy being there and, in turn, likely to be more invested (and less likely to burn out)."

This construct is helpful in *describing* student engagement, but to *improve* it, the authors propose a different conceptual framework. Drawing on the work of Elizabeth City, Richard Elmore, Susan Fiarman, and Lee Teitel, they believe we should focus on the *instructional core* – the interaction of three key elements in every classroom:



- The student
- The teacher
- The content

The four intersections of these three circles in the Venn diagram suggest the key areas that schools need to work on:

- Student and teacher – Caring and the quality of relationships
- Student and content – The relevance of what's being taught
- Teacher and content – The teacher's knowledge and instructional competence
- Student, content, and teacher – The sweet spot where all three intersect; if the intersections are working well, there will be strong student engagement.

Here is more detail about each intersection:

• *Student and teacher* – The key here is students' sense that the teacher is "supportive, invested, caring, fair, and respectful," say the authors. And when students feel this way, teachers are more likely to be at their best.

• *Student and content* – Students are constantly making the judgment, implicitly or explicitly, about how relevant the material is to their current interests, their future goals, and their identity and sense of self.

• *Teacher and content* – Knowledge of subject matter is not enough, of course. Equally important is the teacher's pedagogical and social skill in presenting material in ways that students understand and engage in. A teacher's knowledge and instructional skill also foster students' respect, which improves engagement.

• *The sweet spot* – When all three intersections are strong, the sum of the parts is greater than the individual components, say the authors.

What are the practical implications of this model? In the first domain (student/teacher relationships), there are numerous ways that teachers can show they care about students: being serious about teaching, showing respect for students, asking them to work hard, talking to and listening to them, expressing interest in them as people, taking the time to explain difficult material, responding to requests for help, being fair, having a sense of humor, not embarrassing or demeaning students in front of peers, and not forgetting students' names.

In the domain of content relevance, it helps if teachers know about students' interests and life plans, which can start with asking authentic questions about their skills, personal

experiences, interests, and goals. Allowing for some choice in what curriculum activities students engage in and how they show their learning is another avenue for integrating students' interests.

The teacher-content domain encompasses not just subject-matter expertise but also effective ways of presenting lessons in the most effective manner – cooperative learning, high expectations for all students, an appropriate level of challenge and scaffolding, checking for understanding, and skillful use of technology and the Internet.

"Promoting Student Engagement in the Classroom" by Matthew Bundick, Russell Quaglia, Michael Corso, and Dawn Haywood in *Teachers College Record*, April 2014 (Vol. 116, #4, p. 1-34), http://www.tcrecord.org/library/abstract.asp?contentid=17402

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5. The Efficacy of Surveying Students on Their Teachers' Work

In this paper from Bellwether Education Partners, Jeff Schulz, Gunjan Sud, and Becky Crowe report that there is a growing belief in school districts and charter management organizations across the nation (bolstered by the Measures of Effective Teaching study) that student perception surveys can provide low-cost, valid, reliable, and helpful insights on teachers' classroom performance. "However," say the authors, "incorporating student surveys into formal, high-stakes teacher evaluation and development systems has its challenges… The jury is still out… on whether student surveys will join classroom observations and student-achievement data as a third common measure in newly redesigned teacher-evaluation systems, or if adoption will remain limited to a small number of progressive districts and CMOs." They quote the MET study – "Any instrument, when stakes are attached, could distort behavior in unwanted ways, or produce a less accurate picture of typical practice" – and note the critical importance of good survey questions, efficient administration, and student confidentiality. Schulz, Sud, and Crowe highlight two challenges:

• *Gaining teacher buy-in and support* – Teachers are often skeptical and resistant to the idea of being evaluated by their students, especially if the results are part of their formal evaluation. There's also the common belief that surveys are popularity contests and teachers who are rigorous and demanding will not get high ratings. Teacher push-back caused both Georgia and Connecticut to scrap their initial plans to have student surveys count in teachers' evaluations. "Before piloting, administrators need to communicate clearly and regularly with teachers and students about what the surveys will ask (and why), how the questions were developed, and how the results will be used," say Schulz, Sud, and Crowe. There also needs to be evidence that students' opinions are correlated with student achievement and other teacher-effectiveness measures. Once reassured on these points, teachers often embrace student surveys as helpful in understanding their performance and how it relates to student achievement.

• *Using data to improve teaching practice* – This involves figuring out how to incorporate student-survey data into professional development. Surveys can be used as a quick snapshot of student impressions mid-year, with immediate implications for coaching and changing classroom practices. Districts surveyed by Schulz, Sud, and Crowe were in the early

stages of learning how to use survey data for teacher improvement. "Making connections between survey administration and improved teacher effectiveness is critical," say the authors. "Districts and states will need to commit to, and invest in, using the results for teacher development and support and devising clear action plans for integrating the data into their teacher learning communities, coaching cycles, and other professional development opportunities."

The authors close with recommendations for each of the major stakeholders working with student surveys [teachers and students are not included]:

• States – Avoid dictating one-size-fits-all ideas for how districts should use surveys; monitor early-adopters for lessons; support pilot programs and develop the knowledge base; and encourage collaboration and sharing of best practices.

• Districts and CMOs – Engage teachers early in the process to build understanding and trust; explore various survey options; talk to multiple vendors to assess their offerings; and make sure survey data are used as part of the professional development process.

• Survey providers – Continue to develop validated survey questions, improve the ease-of-use of surveys, and find the most effective ways of using student data.

• Funders – Support research on survey use for high stakes; encourage competition by funding multiple vendors; create channels for stakeholders to share best practices; and fund collaborations to create tighter links between survey items and follow-up PD.

"Lessons from the Field: The Role of Student Surveys in Teacher Evaluation and Development" by Jeff Schulz, Gunjan Sud, and Becky Crowe in a Bellwether Education Partners paper, May 2014, http://bellwethereducation.org/publication/Lessons_from_the_Field; Crowe can be reached at becky.crowe@bellwethereducation.org.

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6. Is Phonemic Awareness Instruction Appropriate for Learning Spanish?

In this *American Educational Research Journal* article, Claude Goldenberg (Stanford University), Tammy Tolar and David Francis (University of Houston), Leslie Reese (California State University/Long Beach), and Antonio Ray Bazan and Rebeca Mejia-Arauz (Instituto Tecnologico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente) report on a comparative study of the role of phonemic awareness instruction with first and second graders learning Spanish in Mexico and the U.S. "Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to focus on and manipulate individual phonemes and is measured by having individuals perform various manipulations such as phoneme isolation, blending, segmentation, and deletion," the authors explain. "Phonemic awareness is consistently and highly predictive of reading and spelling achievement in English." But the relationship between phonemic awareness and reading proficiency is not a one-way street – rather, progress in one stimulates progress in the other. Instruction in phonemic awareness seems to be important for students who are having difficulty learning to read in English.

The question is whether this is also true with Spanish, a language with much simpler and more transparent orthographies and much more consistent relationships between letters and

their corresponding sounds – for example, the letters *a* and *f* in Spanish always represent the same sounds (and no others), and the *a* and *f* sounds are always represented by those letters. The authors hypothesized that instruction in phonemic awareness might be less important in Spanish than in English.

What were the findings? The Mexican students started first grade equal to or above the Spanish-speaking U.S. students in Spanish vocabulary and listening comprehension, but far lower in phonemic awareness. They ended second grade matching or surpassing the reading skills of the American students, while remaining lower in phonemic awareness. The authors say this casts doubt on whether instruction in phonemic awareness is helpful for children learning to read Spanish and other languages with similar characteristics (such as Italian and Turkish).

"How Important Is Teaching Phonemic Awareness to Children Learning to Read in Spanish?" by Claude Goldenberg, Tammy Tolar, Leslie Reese, David Francis, Antonio Ray Bazan, and Rebeca Mejia-Arauz in *American Educational Research Journal*, June 2014 (Vol. 51, #3, p. 604-633), https://openarchive.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/PASpanReadingFINALACCEPTED_1.pdf; Goldenberg can be reached at cgoldenberg@stanford.edu.

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7. Does the Responsive Classroom Program Affect Test Scores?

In this *American Educational Research Journal* article, Sara Rimm-Kaufman, Ross Larsen, Alison Baroody, Michelle Ko, Julia Thomas, Eileen Merritt, and Jamie DeCoster (University of Virginia), Tashia Abry (Arizona State University), and Timothy Curby (George Mason University) report on a three-year, randomized controlled study of the Responsive Classroom program in grade 2-5 classrooms in 24 schools. Their research question was whether devoting significant time to social-emotional learning would help or hurt students' academic achievement (as measured by standardized test scores). The findings:

- Math and reading test scores of Responsive Classroom students were comparable to those of the control group.
- Students whose teachers implemented Responsive Classroom with the greatest fidelity did better than control-group students. Fidelity was linked to principals' commitment to the program, scheduling accommodations, and professional development.
- Responsive Classroom practices seemed to be especially helpful to students who had initially low math and reading achievement.

"Efficacy of the *Responsive Classroom* Approach: Results from a 3-Year, Longitudinal Randomized Controlled Trial" by Sara Rimm-Kaufman, Ross Larsen, Alison Baroody, Timothy Curby, Michelle Ko, Julia Thomas, Eileen Merritt, Tashia Abry, and Jamie DeCoster in *American Educational Research Journal*, June 2014 (Vol. 51, #3, p. 567-603), http://aer.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/02/21/0002831214523821; Rimm-Kaufman can be reached at serk@virginia.edu.

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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).

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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