

# Marshall Memo 45

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education  
July 5, 2004

## In This Issue:

1. Andy Hargreaves on professional development and leadership
2. Rick DuFour on job-embedded professional development
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## Quotes of the Week

"Ideals are like stars: You will not succeed in touching them with your hands, but like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them, you reach your destiny."

Carl Schurz (quoted in the article in item #6b)

"I fear [that] students in poorer communities... will develop only the basics of achievement following the bouncing ball of the script in karaoke fashion."

Andy Hargreaves (see item #1)

"[T]he best staff development happens in the workplace rather than in a workshop."

Rick DuFour (see item #2)

"Developing individual teachers' knowledge and skills is important but not sufficient. The challenge facing schools is expanding the ability of a team of teachers to achieve goals for all their students and developing the ability of the entire faculty to move the school toward its vision."

Rick DuFour (see item #2)

"Quick fixes never last, and teachers resent them. They resent going to inservices where someone is going to tell them what to do but not help them follow up. Teachers want someone who's going to be there, who's going to help them for the duration, not a fly-by-night program that's here today, gone tomorrow."

Lynne Barnes, instructional coach (see item #4)

"Professional developers who see themselves as experts, more gifted than the teachers with whom they're working, are doomed to fail before they begin."

Jim Knight (see item #4)

"[A]n ugly school building is like a body without a soul: it is simply a shell that houses students without kindling a desire to learn."

Delbert Jarman, T.C. Chan, and Linda Webb (see item #7c)

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## 1. Andy Hargreaves on Professional Development and Leadership

In this interview, Boston College researcher Andy Hargreaves speaks out on several important issues:

- *Two-tiered professional development* – “I fear having two kinds of professional learning in schools. Within the professional learning communities provided in affluent schools, students are developing knowledge economy and society skills. Students in poorer communities, on the other hand, will develop only the basics of achievement following the bouncing ball of the script in karaoke fashion – doing better perhaps than they might have done before – but still lacking sophisticated capacities and the deeper learning necessary for success in the knowledge economy. As a result, these students will cater to those who are successful in the knowledge economy by working for them in hotels, spas, and other service industries. We could be building a world of those who will create and those who will cater, and who will do what will depend on where they went to school.”

- *Lone Ranger leadership* – “[I]t’s important to recognize that [improving schools] can’t rest solely on the shoulders of one person but will require the participation of many people over time. This means developing leadership capacity among staff and community members instead of placing it solely on the shoulders of one heroic or charismatic individual.”

- *A grace period for struggling schools* – “Paradoxically, if we want to bring really good people into our poorest communities and keep them there, we must provide opportunities to innovate and experiment so that we tap teachers’ and students’ deepest motivations to learn. Once a basic platform of performance is established, low-performing schools will grow best when there’s a three-year moratorium on monitoring so that they can achieve some momentum before they are inspected. Insisting on yearly progress gives teachers, leaders, and students no time to follow true learning curves where learners – including teachers – need to ingest, practice, and consolidate before they perform. Real learners have curves.”

“Broader Purpose Calls for Higher Understanding” – An Interview with Andy Hargreaves by Dennis Sparks, in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2004 (Vol. 25, #2, p. 46-50) <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/hargreaves252.cfm>

## 2. Rick DuFour on Job-Embedded Staff Development

In his monthly column in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Rick DuFour attacks the artificial distinction that many schools make between the time staff members spend working and the time they spend learning. “The traditional notion that regarded staff development as an occasional event that occurred off the school site has gradually given way to the idea that the best staff development happens in the workplace rather than in a workshop. When teachers work together to develop curriculum that delineates the essential knowledge and skills each student is to acquire, when they create frequent common assessments to monitor each student’s learning on a timely basis, when they collectively analyze results from those assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses, and when they help each other develop and implement strategies to improve current levels of student learning, they are engaged in the kind of professional development that builds teacher capacity and sustains school improvement.”

But DuFour warns that site-based professional development can be ineffective. School leaders need to ensure that they have answers to four key questions:

- *Does the school’s approach to staff development go beyond individual teacher development?* “Schools’ tradition of individual teacher autonomy has worsened the traditional approach to staff development. This approach is based on the premise that schools will improve if individual teachers are encouraged to pursue professional growth opportunities that reflect their personal interests. Thus, the goal becomes providing a potpourri of options to reflect the diverse interests of the staff. Developing individual teachers’ knowledge and skills is important but not sufficient. The challenge facing schools is expanding the ability of a team of teachers to achieve goals for all their students and developing the ability of the entire faculty to move the school toward its vision.”

- *Does the school’s approach challenge staff members to act in new ways?* Teachers must go beyond acquiring new knowledge; they must also change the way they have been teaching if it is not producing results.

- *Does the school’s approach focus on results rather than activities?* The real test of staff development is not how many new topics were covered in a workshop, how many staff attended, and how happy they were with the workshop, but whether “it alters instructional behavior and practices in ways that benefit students” (Sparks, 1994). “Leaders must help schools shift their emphasis from amassing programs and projects to creating a collaborative culture in which teachers work together to improve

student learning... The best way for leaders to help schools focus on what matters is by asking the question, 'What evidence can you provide that staff are helping more students achieve at higher levels?'"

• *Is the school's approach a sustained commitment to achieving important goals? "One of the challenges of leadership is to bring coherence to the myriad pressures and initiatives bearing down on schools. Leaders bring coherence to organizations when they establish clear goals, coordinate efforts to achieve those goals, and sustain the effort over an extended period of time. School improvement efforts have to continue for 3-5 years, during which the entire staff works on incremental annual improvement with respect to long-term goals.*

DuFour has these suggestions for any school-based leader who is serious about improving student achievement across the board:

- *Make collaboration non-negotiable. "Create structures that require teachers to work together, and build time for that work into the school day and annual calendar."*
- *Have teams answer three questions. Teacher teams should be required to answer these questions on every unit of instruction:*
  - What is it we want all students to know and be able to do as a result of this unit?
  - How will we know when each student has demonstrated proficiency?
  - What will we do to address the needs of students who initially have difficulty mastering the intended learning?

If the team's work does not address these critical questions, there is little reason to expect improvement.

- *Have teams establish norms. Teachers need protocols to clarify their commitments for how they will work together.*
- *Require teams to set SMART goals. Insist that every team develop and pursue student achievement goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, time-bound, and aligned with school and/or district goals.*
- *Give teams data. Every team should have timely, user-friendly, relevant data and information so members can measure the impact of their work.*
- *Monitor the work of every team. Review the products they generate at each step of the process and the progress their students make toward the SMART goals.*

- *Celebrate teams' progress* – but also “be prepared to confront teams or individuals who are not honoring this collaborative approach to continuous improvement.”
- *Ask for input.* It's important to be open to teachers' ideas on resources and training that will make them more proficient in their work.

“The Best Staff Development Is In the Workplace, Not In a Workshop” by Rick DuFour in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2004 (Vol. 25, #2, p. 46-50), <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/dufour252.cfm>

### 3. The Qualities of a Good Instructional Coach

It's not easy to make the transition from successful teacher to effective coach. Coaches need to develop different skills, build a new kind of professional relationship with their teacher “clients,” and learn how to look at classroom interactions with a “coaching eye” rather than a “teaching eye.” In this article, two academics and a Connecticut math coach present their findings on the skills and knowledge needed to be an effective coach, and suggest on-line seminars as an ideal forum for coaches in different schools to share common dilemmas, escape their isolation, and make a real difference in their schools:

- *Interpersonal skills* – Coaches need to be sensitive to teachers' dilemmas, fears, and celebrations and give teachers respectful and collaborative feedback, not telling them what to do but serving as a knowledge resource and helping them be reflective.
- *Content knowledge* – Coaches must know their subject matter cold, including curriculum and learning materials. At the same time, they should not come across as know-it-all “experts” and must give teachers space to discover and be creative.
- *Knowledge of the curriculum* – Coaches need to know the fundamental ideas behind the curriculum and how those ideas connect across grade levels.
- *Pedagogical knowledge* – “To lead, coaches need to understand how children learn, including a deep knowledge of the tasks, questioning strategies, and classroom structures that help students develop ideas.”
- *Awareness of coaching resources* – “Coaches need specific knowledge of professional development materials, literature, and resources that can be used to support a teacher's development of subject or pedagogical knowledge or help teachers better understand how to teach for understanding.”

- *Knowledge of the coaching strategies* – These include knowing what to look for in classrooms and using pre- and post-conferences, on-the-spot coaching, questioning, samples of student work, and scripts of classroom dialogues.

- *Using questions sensitively* – “Coaches must maintain a collaborative, trusting relationship... so the teacher sees the coach’s questions as prompts for reflection, not critical judgments that put the teacher on the defensive. For the coach, this means phrasing genuine questions for reflection rather than questions with a single right answer, and waiting for the teacher to respond.”

- *Grounding coaching in student work and learning* – When a coach and teacher talk about students’ work products and data on the whole class’s achievement, the relationship tends to be more collaborative around the common goal of student learning. These are questions a coach might ask a mathematics teacher:

- *What is the mathematics here?*
- *What does this piece of student work, or this student’s response, tell us about what this child understands?*
- *What might you do next?*

- *Use demonstration lessons sparingly* – Teachers should not be dependent on the coach to teach a lesson, and demonstrations should not be one-shot lessons in which the teacher sits back and watches passively. Some coaches teach demo lessons because teachers want to see if the coach can handle their class. A coach might want to pick up on this challenge to gain credibility, but should always preview the lesson with the teacher beforehand, involve the teacher as an action researcher during the lesson (e.g., taking notes on focus questions, observing a particular student’s reactions, or acting as a co-teacher), and make time for a follow-up talk. These after-lesson conversations might have to take place in the playground or the parking lot, but without them, the demo lesson is pointless.

“How to Develop a Coaching Eye” by Stephanie Feger, Kristine Woleck, and Paul Hickman in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2004 (Vol. 25, #2, p. 14-18)  
<http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/feger252.cfm>

#### **4. What Good Coaches Do**

Pathways to Success, a University of Kansas staff development program, has developed a list of key activities and pieces of advice for instructional coaches:

- Meet with departments and teams.
- Meet one-on-one with interested teachers.

- Work mostly on real content, not theory.
- Model lessons in each teacher's classroom: seeing is believing.
- Pay for teachers' time outside contractual hours.
- Make change as easy as possible; provide materials, strategies, and routines.
- Respond immediately to teachers' requests; they're busy people!
- Go slow to go fast; pushing for rapid change can alienate staff.
- Focus on relationships; work hard to see things from the teacher's viewpoint.
- Have a partnership mind-set: "Instructional coaches must genuinely see themselves in equal relationships with teachers and expect to get as much as they give whenever they collaborate. Professional developers who see themselves as experts, more gifted than the teachers with whom they're working, are doomed to fail before they begin."
- Offer teachers choices; "The heart of professionalism is individual discretion (Skrtic, 1991).

Hiring the right instructional coach is vital. "In addition to being disciplined, organized, and professional, instructional coaches also must be flexible, likable, good listeners with great people skills, and committed to learning. Most importantly, instructional coaches have to be outstanding teachers. A good instructional coach must be able to go into any classroom and provide a model lesson that responds to an individual teacher's needs."

"Instructional Coaches Make Progress Through Partnership" by Jim Knight in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2004 (Vol. 25, #2, p. 32-37), no e-link available.

## **5. Induction Matters!**

Statistics on the attrition rate for new teachers in American schools are sobering:

- One in two new teachers will quit within five years.
- Nearly 6 percent of the teacher workforce (207,000 teachers) will not return to the classroom next fall.
- We spend more than \$2.6 billion a year replacing teachers who leave the profession.

A new report from the Alliance for Excellent Education contends that comprehensive induction programs help new teachers develop into skilled professionals much more rapidly. Several items from the report:

- A good induction program cuts teacher attrition rates in half.

- Induction creates a payoff of \$1.37 for every dollar spent.
- Only one percent of beginning teachers currently benefit from a comprehensive induction program.

The report defines a comprehensive induction program as including the following elements:

- High-quality mentoring;
- Common planning time;
- On-going professional development;
- An external network;
- Standards-based evaluation.

The Alliance urges schools to use Title II ESEA funds to pay for induction programs, and makes the case for additional federal funding for this crucial area.

“Tapping the Potential: Retaining and Developing High Quality New Teachers by the Alliance for Excellent Education, June 23, 2004 (*PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, July 2, 2004) [http://www.all4ed.org/press/pr\\_062304.html](http://www.all4ed.org/press/pr_062304.html)

## 6. Short Items:

*a. Knowing when to turn off the cell phone* – Zach Kelehear, an Alabama education professor, tells the story of a principal who is interrupted as he greets students on the first day of school by a call asking him to come to the central office to meet with a board member on a personnel matter. As he is about to leave, the principal notices a boy with tears streaming down his face and asks him what’s wrong. “I can’t go into school,” the boy replies. “My father said that since I was old enough to be in school, I was old enough to tie my own shoes, and if I didn’t, the other kids would make fun of me.” The principal’s cell phone rang several more times as he tied the boy’s shoe, took him by the hand, walked him to his new classroom, and introduced him to his new teacher: “Ms. Davis, I want you to meet my new friend.” To the boy, he said, “Any time you want help tying your shoes, come to get me. Together, we are going to have a very good year.” The principal then turned off his cell phone and returned to bus duty.

“Reflection Helps Good Leaders Find Inner Balance” by Zach Kelehear in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2004 (Vol. 25, #2, p. 14-18), no e-link available.

**b. National Staff Development Council Standards** – According to the standards adopted by the NSDC in 2001, effective staff development that improves the learning of all students is:

- *Results driven* – It begins with a clear and specific goal that describes teacher and student learning and then plans backward to accomplish that goal.
- *Standards-based* – It springs from student content standards, teaching standards, leadership standards, and staff development standards.
- *Job-embedded* – Professional learning is part of every teacher’s workday, revolving around conversing with colleagues, examining student work, jointly planning lessons, observing classrooms, and solving problems with colleagues.

“Chart a Measured Course Toward Change” by Patricia Roy and Shirley Hord in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2004 (Vol. 25, #2, p. 54-58), <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/roy252.cfm> .

**c. The effect of aesthetics** – This intriguing article reports on studies showing that school design matters to student achievement, but cosmetic factors appear to make more of a difference than structural factors. In addition to promoting student achievement, “a beautiful school building serves as a school missionary to spread the educational gospel to the community. It sends the message to parents and community leaders that the school district cares about the education of the children by creating an attractive environment to support student learning... It is a pity that aesthetic designs in school planning are often mistaken for cosmetics and are the first to be cut in time of budget constraints. However, an ugly school building is like a body without a soul: it is simply a shell that houses students without kindling a desire to learn.”

“A Beautiful School is a Caring School” by Delbert Jarman, Linda Webb, and T.C. Chan in *School Business Affairs*, June 2004 (spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, July 2, 2004 <http://asbointl.org/WhatsNew/SchoolBusinessAffairs/index.asp?bid=7496>

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***Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?***

*If you have comments or suggestions, if you saw an article or web item in the last week that you think should have been summarized, or if you would like to suggest additional publications that should be covered by the Marshall Memo, please e-mail: [kim.marshall8@verizon.net](mailto:kim.marshall8@verizon.net)*

# About the Marshall Memo

## *Mission and focus:*

This weekly memo aims to keep busy principals and other educators very well-informed on important research and ideas in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, a former Boston teacher and administrator, is your “designated reader,” searching through 37 publications the week they come out, choosing the articles that are most relevant and useful to improving teaching and learning, and summarizing them in a brief e-mail. Some ideas will be familiar, reinforcing what readers already know, but others will be new and genuinely thought-provoking. Target topics include:

- *School leadership* – Building a professional learning community; effective teamwork; effective schools practices; supervision and evaluation of teachers; time management.
- *Effective teaching* – Key variables associated with high student achievement; professional development of teachers; teacher leadership and career ladders; multiple intelligences and brain research.
- *Curriculum* – Alignment and planning with the end in sight; teaching for understanding; new ideas in reading, writing, and math.
- *Assessment* – Aligned formative and summative assessments; using data and student work for continuous improvement; graphic display of student achievement data; standardized testing and the debate on standards.
- *Closing the gap* – Effective strategies to close the racial / economic achievement gap; the innate-ability / intelligence / effective effort debate; safety-net programs.
- *Positive school culture* – Student discipline; social-emotional learning; moral development; parent involvement; and community partnerships.
- *And...* New areas of research; upcoming television and radio programs on education.

## *Publications covered:*

(those read this week are underlined)

American Education Research Journal  
American Educator  
American School Board Journal  
ASCD SmartBrief  
Atlantic Monthly  
Bay State Banner  
Boston Globe  
Commonwealth Magazine  
Curriculum / Education Update (ASCD)  
Ed. Magazine (Harvard School of Education)  
Education Digest  
Education Gadfly  
Education Next  
Education Week  
Educational Leadership  
Educational Researcher  
Elementary School Journal  
Harpers  
Harvard Business Review  
Harvard Education Letter  
Harvard Education Review  
Journal of Staff Development  
Middle School Journal  
NAASP Bulletin  
New York Times  
New Yorker  
Newsweek  
PEN Weekly NewsBlast  
Phi Delta Kappan  
Principal Magazine  
Principal Leadership  
Psychology Today  
Reading Research Quarterly  
Reading Today  
Review of Educational Research  
Teachers College Record  
Teacher Magazine

E-links will be provided whenever possible.

## *Subscriptions:*

The Marshall Memo is sent every Monday (with occasional breaks). Subscriptions are \$50 a year. Reduced rates for institutional subscriptions can be negotiated. Contact Kim at [kim.marshall8@verizon.net](mailto:kim.marshall8@verizon.net) or 222 Clark Road, Brookline, MA 02445 (617-566-4353).