Marshall Memo 203

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
October 1, 2007

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"School is the most brutal frontier for these kids, and as we all know, anything from a lisp to a bad haircut is grounds for persecution."

Lorraine Ali on quirky children's experience in school (see item #3)

"I'm scared of people with disabilities. I don't know why. I knew this kid who had cystic fibrosis, and my sister and I used to hide from him because we were scared."

A seventh grader (see item #5)

"At first I was kind of offended, but then I realized this was a common stereotype and that I'd just have to let my teaching do the talking for me."

Justin Smith, a straight first-grade teacher in North Kansas City, Missouri, after the mother of one of his students asked to have her son transferred out of his class, saying she didn't want her child "taught by a homosexual." Smith had offered to tie a scarf on the boy's Halloween costume.
From "Come Back, Mr. Chips" by Julie Scelfo in *Newsweek*, Sept. 17, 2007, p. 44

"Unless people intentionally schedule time for more challenging work, they tend not to get to it at all or rush through it at the last minute."

Tony Schwartz (see item #2)

"Intensity is important. I always tell people that our culture is friendly and intense, but if push comes to shove, we'll settle for intense. But there is no contradiction between being intense and having fun. We can absolutely do that."

Jeff Bezos, Amazon CEO, in a *Harvard Business Review* interview (Oct. 2007, p. 82)

1. Richard DuFour on *Real* Professional Learning Communities

In this pointed article in *Middle School Journal*, consultant/author Richard DuFour responds to an article from an earlier issue of the magazine that belittled Professional Learning Communities as a bandwagon or "an idea worth considering." DuFour bemoans the fact that the ideas that he and his colleagues have been presenting in recent years have been widely misinterpreted and sometimes implemented imperfectly. He goes on to say that in a *true* Professional Learning Community, teachers are organized into collaborative teams that have these ten characteristics:

• Team members are clear about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students need to acquire by the end of the course, grade level, or unit.

• Teachers agree on the criteria they will use to assess the quality of student work and can apply those criteria consistently.

• The team has developed common interim assessments to monitor each student's learning at several points during the year.

• The team uses the interim assessment results to identify students who are having difficulty so teachers can provide timely, systematic interventions that guarantee struggling students additional time and support for learning until they have become proficient.

• Team members use assessment results to assess their individual and collective effectiveness, and constantly use data and their colleagues' best practices to improve their own classroom practice.

• Team members work interdependently to achieve SMART goals; note DuFour's definition of this acronym:

- Strategic (linked to school goals)
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Results-oriented (focused on evidence of student learning rather than teacher strategies)
- Time-bound

• Continuous improvement processes are built into the team's routine work practice.

• Decisions are made not simply by pooling opinions but by building shared knowledge on best practices.

• Each team demonstrates, through collective efforts, its determination to help all students learn at high levels.

• Collaborative team time is used to focus on these critical issues.

"Professional Learning Communities: A Bandwagon, an Idea Worth Considering, or Our Best Hope for High Levels of Learning?" by Richard DuFour in *Middle School Journal*, September 2007 (Vol. 39, #1, p. 4-8), no e-link available

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2. The Science of Stamina – Managing Our Energy

In this helpful *Harvard Business Review* article, New York-based author/consultant Tony Schwartz paints a vivid picture of the fix in which many leaders find themselves: working 12- to 14-hour days, sleeping and eating poorly, always feeling exhausted, not engaging with family members – and feeling guilty and dissatisfied. Schwartz and his colleagues, who work with corporate executives who are caught up in this syndrome, maintain that the capacity to work hard can be systematically expanded and regularly renewed through simple rituals that nurture four sources of energy: the body, the emotions, the mind, and the spirit. Here are his recommendations in each area, preceded by the self-assessment he asks clients to fill out. If you are scoring yourself, here is Schwartz's guide to interpreting the number of items checked in each area:

- 0 – Excellent energy management skills
- 1 – Strong energy management skills
- 2 – Significant deficits
- 3 – Poor energy management skills
- 4 – A full-fledged energy crisis

• *The body: physical energy* – "It's scarcely news that inadequate nutrition, exercise, sleep, and rest diminish people's basic energy levels, as well as their ability to manage their emotions and focus their attention," writes Schwartz. Here's the first part of his "energy audit"; check any that apply:

- o I seldom get 7-8 hours of sleep and often wake up feeling tired.
- o I frequently skip breakfast, or I settle for something that isn't nutritious; I often eat lunch at my desk, if I eat it at all.
- o I engage in less than three cardiovascular workouts and one strength workout a week.
- o I don't take regular breaks during the day to renew and recharge.

Schwartz says the people he works with often find responding to these questions "uncomfortable, sobering, and galvanizing." When they look at the data, they're ready to change their ways.

This involves establishing rituals: a regular bedtime that allows for a good night's sleep; a good breakfast and moderate, nutritious meals during the day; three vigorous 20-minute aerobic workouts a week, one combined with strength training; and regular breaks during the day; for many people, these don't need to last more than a few minutes – getting outside, listening to music, or talking to a colleague about something other than work.

• *The emotions: quality of energy* – To take control of our emotions, says Schwartz, it's important to be aware of how we feel at various points during the workday and the impact of these emotions on our effectiveness. Here's his inventory:

- I frequently find myself feeling irritable, impatient, or anxious at work, especially when the pressure is on.
- I don't have enough time with my family and loved ones, and when I'm with them, I'm not always "present."
- I have too little time for the activities I most deeply enjoy.
- I don't stop frequently enough to express my appreciation to others or to savor my accomplishments and blessings.

"Confronted with relentless demands and unexpected challenges," says Schwartz, "people tend to slip into negative emotions – the fight-or-flight mode – often multiple times a day. They become irritable and impatient, or anxious and insecure. Such states of mind drain people's energy and cause friction in their relationships. Fight-or-flight emotions also make it impossible to think clearly, logically, and reflectively."

One simple but powerful ritual for defusing negative emotions is deep abdominal breathing – inhaling and exhaling slowly for five or six seconds each can turn off the fight-or-flight response and induce relaxation and recovery. Another ritual that fuels positive emotions is showing appreciation to others, either in a hand-written note, an e-mail, a call, or a face-to-face conversation. This can be as beneficial to the giver as it is to the recipient – but it's important to build it into one's schedule, says Schwartz, for example, regularly having lunch with colleagues and making a point of passing along specific, detailed positive feedback when it's warranted.

A third way to cultivate positive emotions is to change the "story" we tell ourselves about the events in our lives. "Often, people in conflict cast themselves in the role of victim," says Schwartz, "blaming others or external circumstances for their problems… It's been a revelation for many of the people we work with to discover they have a choice about how to view a given event and to recognize how powerfully the story they tell influences the emotions they feel." The trick is to tell the most hopeful and personally empowering story possible, without denying or minimizing the facts, by looking through one of three lenses: (a) the reverse lens, asking, "What would the other person in this conflict say and in what ways might that be true?" (b) the long lens, asking, "How will I most likely view this situation in six months?" and (c) the wide lens, asking, "Regardless of the outcome of this issue, how can I grow and learn from it?"

• *The mind: focus of energy* – Most leaders regard multitasking as smart time management, but Schwartz has doubts. Here's his audit for this area; check any that apply:

- I have difficulty focusing on one thing at a time, and I am easily distracted during the day, especially by e-mail.
- I spend much of my day reacting to immediate crises and demands rather than focusing on activities with longer-term value and high leverage.
- I don't take enough time for reflection, strategizing, and creative thinking.

- I work in the evenings or on weekends, and I almost never take an e-mail-free vacation.

Distractions are inefficient, says Schwartz. The "switching time" we spend when we jump from one activity to another – answering a phone call or looking at an e-mail, for example – can increase the amount of time needed to finish the primary task by as much as 25%. It's far more efficient to fully focus for a period of time, take a true break, and then fully focus on the next activity.

Schwartz suggests several rituals to help focus: (a) When doing a task that requires concentration, go to a secluded location away from phones and e-mails; (b) During meetings in your office, don't allow phone calls and focus completely on the people you're with, answering the accumulated messages or voicemails in one "chunk" afterwards; (c) turn off the "ping" on your e-mail and establish a ritual of doing e-mail in two 30- to 45-minute chunks a day, and explain to colleagues that if it's an emergency, they should phone or see you in person.

The hardest thing, says Schwartz, is focusing on the activities that have the most long-term leverage. "Unless people intentionally schedule time for more challenging work," he writes, "they tend not to get to it at all or rush through it at the last minute." To counteract this tendency, he suggests the following ritual: each night, identify the most important challenge for the next day and then make it the very first priority in the morning, rather than checking e-mail or opening mail. People who do this often find that by ten in the morning they already feel they've had a productive day.

• *The human spirit: energy of meaning and purpose* – Here's the final segment of Schwartz's energy audit; check any that apply:

- I don't spend enough time at work doing what I enjoy most and do best.
- There are significant gaps between what I say is most important to me in my life and how I actually allocate my time and energy.
- My decisions at work are more often influenced by external demands than by a strong, clear sense of my own purpose.
- I don't invest enough time and energy in making a positive difference to others or to the world.

"People tap into the energy of the human spirit when their everyday work and activities are consistent with what they value most and with what gives them a sense of meaning and purpose," says Schwartz. "If the work they're doing really matters to them, they typically feel more positive energy, focus better, and demonstrate greater perseverance." One corporate executive asked himself, *What do I want to be remembered for?* Having asked the question, he knew he didn't want to be remembered as the crazy guy who worked long hours and made his people miserable. When his son called and asked him to come to a band concert, he wanted to say, "Yes, I'll be there and I'll be in the front row." He didn't want to be the father who "comes in and sits in the back and is on his BlackBerry and has to step out to take a phone call."

Putting first things first, says Schwartz, involves clarifying priorities and establishing rituals that allocate time and energy in three areas:

First, doing what you enjoy most and do best – To identify these areas, Schwartz asks his clients to remember at least two work situations in recent months when they've experienced "flow" – they feel effective, effortlessly absorbed, inspired, and fulfilled – and then analyze what energized them and what talents they were drawing on. It's important to realize that people can feel good at activities they don't truly enjoy, and, conversely, they may love doing things they don't have a natural gift for and require a lot of energy and time to do well. Having identified their "sweet spots", leaders should, as much as possible, delegate the tasks they don't enjoy (ideally to people who *do* enjoy doing them) and block out time for doing the things that produce "flow."

Second, consciously allocating time and energy to the most important areas of life – Many of Schwartz's clients are conflicted about how little time and focus they give to their families. Simple rituals help: one executive decided to "switch off" for three hours every evening to be with his wife and kids. Another stopped talking on his cell phone at a particular spot on the highway twenty minutes from home so he had calmed down and gotten himself into a "home" mode by the time he arrived.

Third, living our core values in our daily behaviors – "Most people are living at such a furious pace that they rarely stop to ask themselves what they stand for and who they want to be," says Schwartz. "As a consequence, they let external demands dictate their actions." Interestingly, Schwartz doesn't recommend explicitly defining one's values; the results of this exercise are "too predictable", he says. Instead, he suggests "uncovering" values by answering questions like, "What are the qualities that you find most off-putting when you see them in others?" When leaders identify what they can't stand in other people – for example, stinginess or rudeness – they are pinpointing what they value – in this case, generosity and civility. The next step is to confront areas where there's a conflict between what they value and how they actually behave. For example, if they realize that consideration is a core value but they're often late for meetings, they might establish a ritual of ending meetings five minutes early to allow time to be punctual (or even early) for the next meeting.

Schwartz concludes by saying that people are much more likely to establish and maintain energy-building rituals if their boss actively supports this philosophy – and practices the key tenets. "Organizational support also entails shifts in policies, practices, and cultural messages," he writes. Some examples: a rule about not looking at e-mail during meetings; a "no-meeting zone" from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. to give people space to do first things first; a group-exercise time; and a "renewal room" where people can go to chill out and refuel.

"Manage Your Energy, Not Your Time" by Tony Schwartz in *Harvard Business Review*, October 2007 (Vol. 85, #10, p. 63-73), no e-link available; Schwartz can be contacted at tony@theenergyproject.com. He is the author of *The Power of Full Engagement: Managing Energy, Not Time, Is the Key to High Performance and Personal Renewal* (Free Press, 2003).

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3. "Quirky" Children – Are They Just Different or Do They Need Help?

In this poignant *Newsweek* article, reporter Lorraine Ali describes her own 4-year-old son's eccentricities, some of which were on display in front of a crowd of parents at a pre-school performance of *Let's All Sing Like the Birdies Sing*. Ali describes how her boy "spun, then stomped, then shimmied his way out of line as if responding to several different styles of music no one else could hear." As the other parents laughed, Ali was ambivalent: should she be proud of his individuality or fearful that he was so different from the other children?

"School is the most brutal frontier for these kids," she writes, "and as we all know, anything from a lisp to a bad haircut is grounds for persecution." There are several possible strategies: enrolling the child in a "special" school, such as the Monarch in Houston for children on the autism spectrum or the Landmark in Vermont, which specializes in children with ADHD. Another approach is capitalizing on strengths to build self-confidence – for example, sending a child who focuses only in math class to a school that emphasizes math and science.

A third approach, recommended by All Kinds of Minds, a nonprofit learning institute, is to deemphasize labels like Asperger's syndrome and work with eccentric children on an individual basis, empowering them through "grass-roots" techniques. "If a quirky kid is trying to talk to his 10-year-old peers about architectural design," suggests Mary-Dean Barringer, "I'd wait until they're alone, then say, 'You know, with that group, architecture's not going to work, but here are some topics that might.' You can coach them in verbal pragmatics... They may not be the most popular kids, but it could help them navigate socially through those tough school years."

The challenge is how to know the difference between a nonconformist child and one with more serious issues that need professional help. What's to be done with an eighth grader who alienates peers with his obsessive talk of baroque music, a six-year-old who'd rather spend recess talking to the hamster than playing dress-up with her classmates – or Lily, who always wears her clothes inside out because the seams "are just too hurty" and swears she can hear spiders walking on the wall two rooms away. "We've been told Marcus has everything from autism to ADD to a blanket sensory disorder with such a long name, I can't even remember it," says the mother of a 7-year-old whose "stupid/smart" behavior is utterly mystifying. "We get different answers depending on the specialist, and none of them seem to really fit. It makes you wonder how much of this is really founded and how much is just guesswork."

Are we too concerned with conformity? We are, says Dr. Elizabeth Berger, a psychiatrist who works with children and adolescents and author of *Raising Kids with Character*. She thinks there is "something amiss when every mother is susceptible to fears whether or not this week's fashionable diagnosis applies to her child. There is something unexamined in our thinking when we elevate the need for normalcy to a state of spiritual grace, and live under a constant anxiety that we fail to measure up to its demands." But how to decide?

Dr. Perri Klass, pediatrician and coauthor of *Quirky Kids: Understanding and Helping Your Child Who Doesn't Fit In – When to Worry and When* Not *to Worry*, offers this guideline: "Parents need to ask themselves, Is this making him unhappy or just making me unhappy? Is he having a perfectly good time in school, but he's not interested in the things the other kids are interested in? Or is he desperately trying to be part of something but doesn't seem to understand how?" Klass says that quirky children can often be placed in one of three categories:

- Skewed development – Kids who don't talk on time or "talk constantly but never seem to get their point across."
- Temperamental extremes – Kids who have rigid routines or throw "nuclear tantrums."
- Social complications – Toddlers who keep to themselves while other kids are playing.

Ali believes the challenge for those who work with these children comes down to this: "Can we make the world they're going to grow up in sufficiently kind and welcoming to them and their quirks, and can we provide them with the basic skills they need to navigate in that world?" Speaking of her own son, she says, "One day we call him Space Cookie, the next day Sweet Pea, the next our Tasmanian devil. But he is a whole person, the sum of all his average, stellar and quirky parts, and my job is much like any other parent's – to guide him when necessary, let go when I overdo it, and constantly sweep for minefields (even ones I have inadvertently laid in his path) that threaten to obliterate his incredibly unique spirit. I can't wait to see who he becomes, this boy in a bright yellow canary suit, who insists on dancing to his own tune."

"You and Your Quirky Kid" by Lorraine Ali in *Newsweek*, Sept. 17, 2007 (p. 49-54), no e-link

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4. Strategies for Improving Middle-School Classroom Discussions

In this *Middle School Journal* article, University of North Carolina professors Bruce Taylor and Karen Wood suggest ways to foster greater student engagement in middle-school discussions:

• *Fishbowl discussions* – This approach can be used to model small-group discussions, to engage students in talking about challenging topics (e.g., the Holocaust or global warming), or to give students greater autonomy running discussions themselves. The classroom is arranged with 3-5 chairs in an inner circle and the remainder of the chairs in an outer circle. The teacher chooses a few students to sit in the middle seats and the rest of the class sits around the outside. Responding to question cards provided by the teacher or generated by classmates, the inner-circle students begin to discuss a text, poem, or article that all students have read. Only they are allowed to speak; if students in the outer circle want to say something, they need to get up and tap one of the inner-circle students on the shoulder and trade places with him or her. If some students in the outer circle are too quick to tap in, the teacher can set a time limit between taps. If some students in the outer circle are not tapping in, the teacher can change the rules so inner-circle students can tap students in the outer circle to get them involved. A

variation on this format is for the inner circle to discuss a topic or text with students in the outer circle remaining silent and taking notes, then giving their critique of the discussion.

• *Ticket to talk* – At the end of a science, social studies, language arts, health, or family/consumer class, students are asked to write anonymous comments or questions on slips of paper and hand them in as they leave (an exit slip). Alternatively, the teacher might ask students to write their questions for homework and treat them as admission slips for the next class. The teacher can then use the student-generated questions to check on their level of understanding, to spark whole-class or small-group discussions, or as writing prompts. Taylor and Wood say that student-generated questions foster much great engagement by classmates.

• *Discussion webs* – This technique can help get shy students involved in a discussion and help explore the different sides of a controversial topic, and can also get the teacher off center stage. Students take a topic and answer a series of yes/no questions using a web format. For example, students who have just finished reading *Bridge to Terabithia* answer the question, "Should Jess have gone back to Terabithia after the accident?" *Yes* reasons might include: He wanted to say goodbye to Leslie; he needed to face his fear; he was there to save May Belle; he saw a sign (a bird) and it made him feel better. *No* reasons might include: It could have been dangerous; it wasn't the same without Leslie; he should have gone back when he found out May Belle followed him. Conclusion from this web: Yes; even though it was dangerous, going back to Terabithia helped Jess.

• *Say something* – This protocol helps students understand and monitor their understanding of a challenging text. Students pair up and take turns reading aloud from a narrative or expository text and then "say something" about what they have just read (five options include making a prediction, asking a question, clarifying something that was misunderstood, making a comment, or making a connection). Partners take turns reading and responding until the passage is finished. If a student can't respond, it's time to go back and re-read the passage. *Say something* helps students learn how to "have a conversation with the text" and develop a metacognitive vocabulary for that conversation.

• *Question-answer relationships (QAR)* – This is a strategy to get students thinking about the kind of information they need to answer a question. There are three basic types of comprehension questions:

- Right there – The information is right in the text;
- Think and search – Students must combine their prior knowledge with information from the text and make an inference;
- In my head – Students must answer from their own knowledge and interpretation.

Questions can be generated by the teacher or by students; it's helpful for the teacher to model the process once and for students to read the questions before reading the text. Taylor and Wood say that *QAR* helps foster a metacognitive conversation among students about what questions demand of them and makes them more aware of the level and kind of comprehension they're using in different contexts. It can also serve as test preparation.

"Fostering Engaging and Active Discussions in Middle-School Classrooms" by Bruce Taylor and Karen Wood in *Middle School Journal*, September 2007 (Vol. 39, #1, p. 54-59), no e-link available; Taylor can be reached at btaylor@uncc.edu and Wood at kdwood@email.uncc.edu.

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5. Walking in the Shoes of Students with Disabilities

In this *Middle School Journal* article, Indiana University (PA) teaching associate Paula Purnell observes that non-disabled students are more likely to tease peers who have learning disabilities than a person in a wheelchair. There seems to be more fear associated with unseen disabilities. One seventh grader said, "I'm scared of people with disabilities. I don't know why. I knew this kid who had cystic fibrosis, and my sister and I used to hide from him because we were scared." Purnell suggests that middle schools conduct workshops to help students overcome their fear of differences and become more empathetic. Here are three possible activities:

• Have students pair off, open a book, and take turns trying to read the text aloud looking through a pocket mirror. This is roughly analogous to a student with a visual perception problem trying to process information and not receiving it in a way that his or her brain can easily decipher.

• Have students hold a strip of paper against their foreheads and try to write their names on their own paper. This activity helps them understand why some students have a difficult time with small motor tasks that most would consider very easy.

"It made me feel dizzy, sick, mad, stupid, and confused," said one student. "I just wanted to go do something that I knew I could do – like watch TV." Another student commented, "The activities made me understand a little bit better their life compared to mine, and now I respect them more." Of course simulations can't completely replicate what it's like to have a learning disability, but they can help students understand the physical component of unseen disabilities and become more aware of the challenges some of their classmates face every day.

• Another approach, says Purnell, is playing several videotapes of local adults and students telling the story of their disability. It's important to record these using a structured format: brief introduction, a description of a specific incident, and a conclusion or resolution. People are surprisingly eager to be taped, and such videos can be powerful testimonials. One profoundly deaf middle-school student described her disability and adaptive equipment, but went on to declare, "I go to public school, I like boys, I participate in sports, I have lots of friends, I watch TV, I play PlayStation… and last but not least – *I have feelings*."

"Strategies for Creating Inclusive and Accepting Middle-School Classrooms" by Paula Purnell in *Middle School Journal*, September 2007 (Vol. 39, #1, p. 32-37), no e-link available; Purnell can be reached at p.g.purnell@iup.edu.

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6. Books That Turn on Young Readers

In this interview in *Teacher Magazine*, Texas teacher Donalyn Miller shares three lists of books she highly recommends for hooking young readers:

Intermediate (grades 4-5):

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
The Word Eater by Mary Amato
Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardiner
The Tarantula in My Purse by Jean Craighead George

Middle School (grades 6-8)

My Life in Dog Years by Gary Paulsen
Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli
The Supernaturalist by Eoin Colfer
The Beasties by William Sleator

High School (grades 9 and up)

Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes by Chris Crutcher
The First Part Last by Angela Johnson
Seedfolks by Paul Fleischman
Nightjohn by Gary Paulsen

"Creating Readers: Part III – An Interview with Donalyn Miller" in *Teacher Magazine*, Sept. 19, 2007 (online, available with free registration):
http://www.teachermagazine.org/tm/articles/2007/09/19/06millermentorill.h19.html

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7. Short Items:

a. History teachers' website – This website – http://www.HistoryTeacher.net - is an amazing resource for U.S., European, and World History courses. It has over 150 PowerPoint presentations on a wide variety of topics, and also practice tests, oral history projects, primary sources, and a plethora of links. Definitely a must for any high-school history teacher!

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b. Visual thesaurus – This program – http://www.VisualThesaurus.com - allows teachers to visualize different word definitions and is a great tool for helping students understand different definitions and broadening their vocabulary. You get two free trials and then have to subscribe. Some schools get a schoolwide subscription so all teachers can have access to this rich tool.

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c. Authors' websites – The following children's book authors have websites that can be good resources for author studies – and even getting in touch with an author:

- Valeria Fontanals – http://www.littletalentum.com
- Jeff Hopkins – http://www.picturescometolife.com

- Srivi Kalyanasundaram – http://www.sriviliveshere.com/yali.htm
- Katie McKy – http://www.katiemcky.com
- Caleb Neelon – http://www.theartwheredreamscometrue.com
- Leda Schubert – http://www.ledaschubert.com

Spotted in *Ed. Magazine*, Fall 2007 (Vol. L1, #1, p. 24)

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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

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 37 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 44 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 about 50 issues a year).

Subscriptions:

Individual subscriptions are $50 for the school year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and information on paying by check or credit card.

Website:

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- Article selection criteria
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- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

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

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Atlantic Monthly
Catalyst Chicago
Chronicle of Higher Education
CommonWealth Magazine
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
NASSP Bulletin
New York Times
New Yorker
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
Teacher Magazine (online)
Teachers College Record
TESOL Quarterly
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools