

Marshall Memo 583

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education

April 20, 2015

In This Issue:

1. [David Brooks on “résumé virtues” versus “eulogy virtues”](#)
2. [What drives many teachers away from high-poverty schools](#)
3. [Building schools’ capacity for improving teaching and learning](#)
4. [How teams can overcome some common group-process problems](#)
5. [Eleven criteria for an effective prekindergarten program](#)
6. [A student steps up](#)
7. [The characteristics of a good professional dialogue](#)
8. [Basic steps for handling difficult conversations](#)
9. [Twice-a-year check-ins with teachers](#)
10. Short item: [Resources for teaching about race](#)

Quotes of the Week

“A lot of times the kids who lose physical activity are the ones who need it most.”

Emily O’Winter, Colorado wellness coordinator, quoted in “Withholding Recess as Discipline in Decline” by Evie Blad in *Education Week*, April 15, 2015 (Vol. 34, #27, p. 1, 14), www.edweek.org

“It is difficult to disentangle the many ways in which principals affect teachers’ work and their decisions about whether to stay or go. However, teachers repeatedly cite a small number of factors – the principal’s effectiveness as a school manager, instructional leadership, and inclusiveness in decision-making.”

Nicole Simon and Susan Moore Johnson (see item #2)

“If we are serious about teacher quality, we need to make a universal commitment to training and engaging instructional coaches and teacher mentors to regularly observe teachers, debrief with them, and help them set challenging personal goals. We also need to reorient our teacher-evaluation systems away from punitive ‘valuation’ and toward support for improvement.”

Jack Schneider (see item #3)

“The biggest step is to stop asking, ‘*Can I do this?*’ and start asking, ‘*How can we do this?*’”

Frederick Hess in “Speaking Up for Better Schools” in *Educational Leadership*, April 2015 (Vol. 72, #7, p. 54-58), <http://bit.ly/1Oza8WN>; Hess is at rhess@aei.org.

“[P]eople on the road to inner light do not find their vocations by asking, what do I want from life? They ask, what is life asking of me? How can I match my intrinsic talent with one of the world’s deep needs?”

David Brooks (see item #1)

1. David Brooks on “Résumé Virtues” versus “Eulogy Virtues”

“About once a month I run across a person who radiates an inner light,” says David Brooks in this *New York Times* article. “They seem deeply good. They listen well. They make you feel funny and valued. You often catch them looking after other people and as they do so their laugh is musical and their manner is infused with gratitude. They are not thinking about what wonderful work they are doing. They are not thinking about themselves at all. When I meet such a person it brightens my whole day.”

Brooks confesses he’s not one of those people. Distinguishing between “résumé virtues” and “eulogy virtues”, he believes he has more of the former than the latter. In the final analysis, of course, eulogy virtues are more important. “But our culture and our educational systems spend more time teaching the skills and strategies you need for career success than the qualities you need to radiate that sort of inner light,” says Brooks. “[I]f you live for external achievement, years pass and the deepest parts of you go unexplored and unstructured. You lack a moral vocabulary. It is easy to slip into a self-satisfied moral mediocrity... Gradually, a humiliating gap opens between your actual self and your desired self, between you and those incandescent souls you sometimes meet.”

The big question is whether truly virtuous people are born or made. Brooks did some research and concluded that those he admires the most have gone through what he calls a moral bucket list of experiences that take them to a higher level. This means that if you’ve taken the résumé approach, it’s still possible to change:

- *The humility shift* – Our culture encourages us to puff ourselves up, but “all the people I’ve ever deeply admired are profoundly honest about their own weaknesses,” says Brooks. “They have identified their core sin, whether it is selfishness, the desperate need for approval, cowardice, hardheartedness or whatever.”

- *Self-defeat* – Dwight Eisenhower realized that his temper was his Achilles heel, so he worked on projecting a moderate, cheerful exterior while using specific tricks to control anger – for example, writing the names of people he hated on pieces of paper, tearing them up, and throwing them in the trash.

- *The dependency leap* – The key is acknowledging that you can’t do anything significant alone and identifying the people who support you.

- *Energizing love* – Deep devotion “decenters the self,” says Brooks. “It reminds you that your true riches are in another. Most of all, this loves electrifies. It puts you in a state of need and makes it delightful to serve what you love.”

- *The call within the call* – Brooks describes how Frances Perkins watched the Triangle Shirtwaist fire – women hurling themselves from the burning factory to their deaths – and was transformed into a lifelong civic activist.

- *The conscience leap* – Some virtuous people come to a crossroads and boldly take a path that defies their upbringing and social norms but liberates them to be more than they could before.

The standard graduation speech, says Brooks, urges us to be true to ourselves. “This is a vision of life that begins with self and ends with self,” he says. “But people on the road to inner light do not find their vocations by asking, what do I want from life? They ask, what is life asking of me? How can I match my intrinsic talent with one of the world’s deep needs? Their lives often follow a pattern of defeat, recognition, redemption. They have moments of pain and suffering. But they turn those moments into occasions of radical self-understanding... The people on this road see the moments of suffering as pieces of a larger narrative. They are not really living for happiness, as it is conventionally defined. They see life as a moral drama and feel fulfilled only when they are enmeshed in a struggle on behalf of some ideal... Those are the people we want to be.”

“The Moral Bucket List” by David Brooks in *The New York Times*, April 12, 2015, <http://nyti.ms/1IwQZ6e>

[Back to page one](#)

2. What Drives Many Teachers Away from High-Poverty Schools

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Nicole Simon and Susan Moore Johnson (Harvard Graduate School of Education) say that teacher turnover in U.S. public schools has increased substantially over the past three decades, especially in schools serving low-income neighborhoods. This constant teacher (and administrator) churn means the children of poverty are frequently taught by the least experienced and often the least effective teachers and attend schools without stable, trusting, productive adult-adult and adult-child relationships.

Why do so many idealistic young educators leave inner-city schools for greener pastures – or leave the profession entirely? Policymakers and researchers have focused primarily on student and teacher characteristics (teachers seemingly prefer working with higher-achieving, more privileged students) and salaries, professional status, and geographic location. But Simon and Johnson draw on six recent studies to make the case that something much more powerful is at work: the suboptimal professional working conditions in most high-poverty schools, specifically, their problems with administrative support, collegial relationships, and school culture.

- *Administrative support* – Principals affect the professional lives of teachers in numerous ways, including:

- Articulating a clear vision for the school and seeing the vision through;
- Hiring skilled teachers and support staff who are committed to the vision;
- Assigning teachers to appropriate subjects and grades;

- Putting in place effective discipline, mentoring, and common planning time;
- Setting a positive professional tone, facilitating differentiated roles for teachers, and rewarding collaboration;
- Partnering with community organizations to maximize students' learning opportunities;
- Navigating tricky political situations and sheltering teachers from distracting external demands and mandates.

Simon and Johnson suggest that principals are even more important in high-poverty schools than in more advantaged communities – and yet, perversely, the neediest schools are more likely to have a succession of inexperienced and less-effective leaders. “It is especially common for novice teachers in such schools to cope with several aspects of mismanagement simultaneously,” say the authors, “which bears heavily on their sense of efficacy and likely affects their students.”

“It is difficult to disentangle the many ways in which principals affect teachers' work and their decisions about whether to stay or go,” they continue. “However, teachers repeatedly cite a small number of factors – the principal's effectiveness as a school manager, instructional leadership, and inclusiveness in decision-making.” School management includes scheduling, facilities, budget, classroom supplies, communication – and simple decency and fairness. Instructional leadership includes hiring and retaining the right people, conducting thoughtful evaluations of teaching practice and making helpful suggestions for improvement, and orchestrating collegial support for new teachers. Decision-making includes listening to teachers' views, giving them a measure of autonomy and discretion, and making them partners in the improvement process.

- *Collegial relationships* – In surveys over the last 50 years, teachers consistently rate cooperative, competent colleagues and mentors as the most important workplace variable.

There are three dimensions:

- An inclusive environment of respect and trust – This is especially important in schools where students' needs are greatest.
- Formal structures for team collaboration, mentoring, and support – In the words of Judith Warren Little, this means “frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete and precise talk about teaching practice (as distinct from teacher characteristics and failings, the social lives of teachers, and foibles and failures of students and their families, and the unfortunate demands of society on the school).”
- Shared professional goals and purpose – This is essential to good collaboration and contributes to a “can do” attitude among colleagues and a willingness to take responsibility for making the whole organization work.

When these are not present in a school, even the most talented and committed teachers are likely to leave.

- *School culture* – Simon and Johnson define this as the “prevailing norms and values that are expressed through individuals' practices and behaviors... A strong, positive school culture reinforces the sense of community and social trust necessary for school improvement. Not surprisingly, strong school culture is also linked to increased teacher retention.” Key

components are (a) schoolwide student discipline – especially problematic in schools with large numbers of young, inexperienced teachers – and (b) parent engagement: “Parents influence teachers’ commitment to their school and predict turnover at all school levels,” say Simon and Johnson. Teachers need parents to get their children to school with positive attitudes and be available to take part in “joint problem solving” about student behavior – more important than helping with homework. “Some teachers view these challenges as insurmountable and enormously frustrating, but others feel supported by schoolwide parent engagement efforts.”

Simon and Johnson conclude, “The research suggests that building and sustaining strong work environments should be central to every district’s school improvement strategy... Creating school environments where teachers can offer the transformative pedagogy that will prepare historically underserved students for college and careers is extraordinarily difficult work – and it is highly dependent on the collective capacities of school-based practitioners.” So one of the highest priorities is placing experienced, effective principals in high-poverty schools and supporting them as they make key hiring, personnel, and organizational decisions.

“Teacher Turnover in High-Poverty Schools: What We Know and Can Do” by Nicole Simon and Susan Moore Johnson in *Teachers College Record*, March 2015 (Vol. 117, #3, p. 1-36), <http://bit.ly/1IyESWg>; the authors can be reached at nicole_simon@mail.harvard.edu and susan_moore_johnson@gse.harvard.edu.

[Back to page one](#)

3. Building Schools’ Capacity for Improving Teaching and Learning

In this *Education Week* article, Jack Schneider (College of the Holy Cross) says the current conversation around improving teaching is “disturbingly misguided.” Some advocates talk as though the profession is full of rotten apples who need to be discarded, and the teachers who aren’t rotten need to be prodded into stepping up their game. Implicit in this approach is a threat: *Get better or else*.

“There is a logic to this kind of thinking,” says Schneider. “Yet it is also characterized by a fundamental assumption about what shapes teacher quality... What if the problem isn’t with our teachers, but, rather, with teaching as a profession?” Actually, he says, most teachers in the U.S. are well-educated, highly motivated, hard-working, and quite competent. The problem is a set of professional working conditions that thwart growth:

- Large caseloads – Teachers work with as many as 150 students at a time, all of whom have different backgrounds and distinct needs.
- Not enough downtime – Teachers work with students most of the day, and there is little time for practice, reflection, and innovation.
- Isolation – There is insufficient collaboration with and learning from colleagues.
- Lack of autonomy – Teachers control few of the key variables: students, curriculum, textbooks, and standards of achievement.
- Lack of feedback – It’s difficult to see one’s impact on student learning, says Schneider: “Current data efforts are focused almost entirely on student standardized-

test scores, which often tell teachers little that they don't already know.”

- Evaluation - Current practices, says Schneider, “only encourage teachers to hide their flaws, and have been generally ineffective in transforming the labor force.”

A small number of teachers succeed despite these workplace shackles. “But the vast majority could be better,” says Schneider. “Not because of who they are. But because of how their jobs have been structured.”

If we want to improve teaching and learning, he contends, we need what countries with a strong professional corps of teachers have put in place: a national philosophy and strategy for teacher development. Here are Schneider's suggestions:

- *Time for collaboration* – Through rethinking the weekly schedule and school year and creative use of extracurriculars and paraprofessionals, teachers can be given time that is essential for planning, reflection, and collaboration.

- *Curriculum* – Teachers need access to common, high-quality instructional materials. “Developing a small set of world-class tools to replace a grab-bag of idiosyncratic resources should be a priority,” says Schneider. “Given the emergence of the Common Core State Standards, this is increasingly possible.”

- *Embedded professional development* – Rather than delivering PD in periodic one-shot workshops, it should be an integral part of teacher teamwork around strategies, goals, and analysis of student work.

- *Observation, coaching, and evaluation* – “If we are serious about teacher quality,” says Schneider, “we need to make a universal commitment to training and engaging instructional coaches and teacher mentors to regularly observe teachers, debrief with them, and help them set challenging personal goals. We also need to reorient our teacher-evaluation systems away from punitive ‘valuation’ and toward support for improvement.”

- *Career ladders* – Teachers who demonstrate their effectiveness should be given more autonomy, responsibility, and compensation, says Schneider, so they can spread their effective practices to colleagues within their schools and districts.

“Problems with Teaching Lie in the Profession” by Jack Schneider in *Education Week*, April 15, 2015 (Vol. 34, #27, p. 20-21), www.edweek.org; Schneider is at jschneid@holycross.edu.

[Back to page one](#)

4. How Teams Can Overcome Some Common Group-Process Problems

(Originally titled “Making Team Differences Work”)

“To be high functioning, teams must embrace disagreement and encourage individuals to voice their perspectives while acknowledging others' viewpoints,” says executive coach Beth Strathman in this article in *Educational Leadership*. “Doing so encourages active participation, which brings forth thoughtful, relevant, and forthright contributions from group members.” Strathman identifies four common pitfalls that prevent honest, productive discussions:

- *Problem #1: The group meanders and gets nowhere.* Solution: Communicate the essential information up front, including:

- The reason the group has convened;
- The expected outcome of the meeting;
- The skills, knowledge, and abilities each member adds;
- The timeline for the work;
- Any standards the group must adhere to;
- The group's role – to provide input, make a recommendation, or make a final decision.

With this kind of prologue, a group is much more likely to be focused, assign tasks, set timelines, and produce results.

• *Problem #2: Things get personal.* People misunderstand each other, and feelings are hurt – for example, “He’s impossible to deal with” “She doesn’t care about kids, just her ego” and “He thinks he’s so smart with his National Board certification, but he doesn’t know anything about my classroom.” Solution: Establish and enforce group norms. “Not everyone on a team or committee will want to be best friends, but personal attacks, criticisms, and judgments cannot be tolerated,” says Strathman. Ground rules govern the time, place, and manner of group members’ behavior. Some examples:

- Be on time;
- Cell phones off;
- Avoid restating what’s already been said;
- Use “Yes, but…” to build on areas of agreement;
- State disagreements by focusing on known facts, not judgments about people.

Of course ground rules are worthless unless they’re enforced. Sometimes the leader has to make a statement like, “Sam, instead of referring to the 1st-grade teachers in your building as ‘incompetent,’ let’s home in on possible issues related to the curriculum. What skills do students lack as they enter second grade?”

• *Problem #3: Members have group-related conversations outside of meeting times.* This can signal that some members don’t feel heard or validated during meetings and feel the need to argue their points or do their complaining off-line. “As factions coalesce, bonding over gossip or feelings of superiority, exclusion, or unfairness, teams can begin to split,” says Strathman. Solution: The leader holds group members accountable for bringing up issues at meetings and pushes back when they bring up issues off-line.

• *Problem #4: Discussions are lackluster, important angles aren’t explored, some members dominate, dissent is not heard, and the group goes off on tangents.* Solution: Team leaders need to dig deeper, ask for examples, flush out underlying assumptions, and give weight to dissenting viewpoints – for example, “I’m intrigued by Jennifer’s comment, which seems to run counter to the group’s general opinion. Jennifer, what assumptions are you operating under?”

“Making Team Differences Work” by Beth Strathman in *Educational Leadership*, April 2015 (Vol. 72, #7, p. 60-64), <http://bit.ly/1D68x4b>; Strathman can be reached at beth@bethstrathman.com.

[Back to page one](#)

5. Eleven Criteria for an Effective Prekindergarten Program

“Very young children learn differently even from children in primary grades,” say Christopher Brown (University of Texas/Austin) and Brian Mowry (Austin Independent School District) in this *Kappan* article. They suggest *Rigorous DAP*, an acronym for a set of principles to guide a developmentally appropriate early-childhood program that will prepare students for K-12 success:

- *Reaching all children* – The key is providing activities that will pique children’s interest and increase their participation in academic content. For example, a prekindergarten teacher created a wilderness habitat in her classroom with families of stuffed bears, raccoons, squirrels, robins, and bats (each introduced on a separate day) and integrated all this with readalouds from books and scientific facts.

- *Integrating content* – Teachers need to blend literacy, math, science, and other areas and take full advantage of the interconnectedness of learning. For example, a student tells how a raccoon had ravaged his family’s campsite, leading the class to a discussion of nocturnal animals.

- *Growing as a community* – Circle times are opportunities to draw on students’ prior knowledge and get them sharing insights and questions.

- *Offering choices* – Students should have the chance to shape part of their daily experience as they move among whole-group, small-group, center-based, child-initiated, play-based, indoor and outdoor, and loud and quiet learning experiences.

- *Revisiting new content* – Not all students will understand and remember the first time around, so spiraling the curriculum is essential.

- *Offering challenges* – It’s sometimes helpful to stretch content, vocabulary, and skills to what students will learn in later grades – for example, a teacher asked about the differences between what robins, squirrels, raccoons, and humans need to live.

- *Understanding each learner* – Effective teachers learn about their students in multiple ways – being available to parents at the beginning and end of each day, making home visits, connecting with children’s diverse personal, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, sending home a weekly newsletter, and getting parents’ responses to content-specific questions.

- *Seeing the whole child* – Growth in one domain – physical, conceptual, emotional, and social – depends on and influences growth in others.

- *Differentiating instruction* – Classroom activities should have built-in variability so students can engage in different ways and the teacher can adjust support depending on how students are doing.

- *Assessing constantly* – This includes anecdotal records, work samples, digital photographs, and videos going into portfolios to give the teacher a sense of how students are progressing and how instruction needs to be tweaked.

- *Pushing forward* – Teachers maximize each child’s learning through all of the above, keeping in mind the end goals of the content that needs to be learned, a classroom that’s a great place to be, and students growing and being successful in all areas.

“Close Early Learning Gaps with Rigorous DAP” by Christopher Brown and Brian Mowry in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2015 (Vol. 96, #7, p. 53-57), www.kappanmagazine.org; Brown can be reached at cpbrown@utexas.edu.

[Back to page one](#)

6. A Student Steps Up

In this *Kappan* article, Washington State high-school teacher Patricia Beltran describes how a student’s PowerPoint presentation on Elie Wiesel’s book, *Night*, was interrupted by cries of “No, no, no!” from outside the classroom. Beltran guessed it was a student from a nearby class for students with significant social and emotional disabilities, and commented on the ironic juxtaposition of Wiesel’s despair during his imprisonment and the real-time despair of a young man outside their door. She added that the student was surely getting support from a caring teacher.

But the cries of “No, no, no!” continued, and after a few more minutes, one boy abruptly got up, said, “I got to see that kid,” and left the room. The despairing cries stopped and the boy returned to his seat. Beltran asked the class to think about what had just happened, and when no one responded, she asked the boy what he had done. “That kid just needed someone to hold his hand for a while to calm down,” he said. “It’s not right, it’s not right.”

“I found myself without words,” says Beltran. He was a stocky, taciturn Mexican-American student who rarely contributed in class and was having difficulty with the work. “Nothing about him obviously suggested the kind of tenderness, compassion, and bravery this action demonstrated,” she says. “He had done what Wiesel calls us to do... He didn’t turn away or assume others would do something. He got up and took action. I was content to let my colleague handle the situation next door; this student was not.”

She finally expressed her admiration for the student. After class, another student stopped and talked to him, also praising what he had done. Beltran and her special-education colleague nominated the boy for “student of the month” and called his father to tell him about the incident. As Beltran got to know the student better, he confided that his mother was in detention for an immigration violation and faced possible deportation. “The student had been dealing with his own despair since the beginning of the school year,” she says. “I had no idea... He taught me that assumptions are easy and often wrong and that a young man who appears disinterested and mildly hostile can be facing despair but still have the courage to reject it and even conquer it.”

“The Student As Teacher” by Patricia Beltran in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2015 (Vol. 96, #7, p. 80), www.kappanmagazine.org; Beltran can be reached at beltranp@bsd405.org.

[Back to page one](#)

7. The Characteristics of a Good Professional Dialogue

(Originally titled “The Art of Dialogue”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Oscar Graybill (Socratic Seminars International)

and Lois Brown Easton (author/consultant/coach) describe four types of interaction, each of which has its place:

- Conversations – convivial, casual, friendly talk about personal and social matters;
- Discussions – there’s a purpose, often to make a decision; people may choose sides;
- Debate – a structured form of discussion in which the format dictates taking sides;
- Dialogue – people inquiring into ideas and building their understanding of an issue without pressure to choose a side, be “right,” or make a decision.

“When members of a group are just trying to understand an issue, they may find that dialogue is all they need,” say Graybill and Easton. “Dialogue doesn’t just happen naturally; educators must consciously learn and practice it.” Here are their guidelines for a group engaging in a productive dialogue:

- Group members speak for themselves, not trying to represent others’ views.
- Members avoid making grand pronouncements, instead connecting what they know and believe to their experiences, influences in their lives, and particular sources of information.
- Members refrain from characterizing others’ views in a critical spirit, keeping in mind that the goal is to understand, not persuade.
- Members listen with resilience, “hanging in” when they hear something that’s hard to hear.
- Members don’t stay confused; they ask for clarification when it’s needed.
- Members don’t raise their hands; they take turns speaking and listen to what others are saying.
- Members share airtime and refrain from interrupting others.
- Members can “pass” or “pass for now” without needing to justify themselves.
- Members discuss ideas rather than one another’s opinions.
- Members talk with one another, not just the leader.
- Members respect confidentiality.

“The Art of Dialogue” by Oscar Graybill and Lois Brown Easton in *Educational Leadership*, April 2015 (Vol. 72, #7, online only), <http://bit.ly/1yLMzZp>; Graybill can be reached at Oscar@socraticseminars.com, Easton at leastoners@aol.com.

[Back to page one](#)

8. Basic Steps for Handling Difficult Conversations

(Originally titled “10 Tips for Tackling Tough Conversations”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, school counselor Brett Novick (Rutgers University) has these suggestions for high-stress, high-stakes encounters:

- *Begin with the end in mind.* What’s the desired outcome?
- *Seat people strategically.* Sitting side by side can make all the difference.
- *Let the other person speak first.* This way you can find points of agreement.
- *Allow silences.* Don’t prattle. Let important points sink in.
- *Listen.* Try to understand the underlying emotions. Don’t rush in with suggestions.

- *Look under the anger.* “You must be sad about how you feel your child was treated.”
- *Decide whether an issue is worth fighting for.* A setback now might help long-term.
- *Don’t try to reason with angry people.* Get them calmed down first.
- *Cover yourself legally.* It’s sometimes helpful to have a colleague present.
- *Avoid trigger words and phrases.* These include *can’t, won’t, never, always, problem child.* Rather than, “Your kid is chronically absent”, say, “Your child has been out 15 days.” Using phrases like “Help me understand...” is a good tactic.

“10 Tips for Tackling Tough Conversations” by Brett Novick in *Educational Leadership*, April 2015 (Vol. 72, #7, p. 80-81), <http://bit.ly/1P5OCer>; Novick can be reached at iambrettj@gmail.com.

[Back to page one](#)

9. Twice-a-Year Check-Ins With Teachers

(Originally titled “Tell Me About... Good Ways to Communicate with Teachers”)

In this letter to *Educational Leadership*, retired principal Dave Weston says that mid-year and again in spring he gave teachers five questions they could respond to in writing or electronically:

- What’s going particularly well for you this year?
- What concerns/issues do you have at this point?
- What can I do to best support you right now?
- If you could get some professional development right now, what would it be?
- Anything else?

“This never failed to yield important nuggets that helped me focus my support on teachers’ priorities,” says Weston.

“Tell Me About... Good Ways to Communicate with Teachers” in *Educational Leadership*, April 2015 (Vol. 72, #7, p. 93), www.ascd.org

[Back to page one](#)

10. Short Item:

Resources for teaching about race – This *Teaching Tolerance* website has numerous free curriculum resources for high-school teachers addressing issues of race and diversity:

<http://www.tolerance.org/supplement/supplementary-resources>

[Back to page one](#)

© Copyright 2015 Marshall Memo LLC

*If you have feedback or suggestions,
please e-mail kim.marshall48@gmail.com*

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

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

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

Subscriptions:

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

Website:

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

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

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

- The current issue (in Word or PDF)
- All back issues (also in Word and PDF)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- A collection of "classic" articles from all 11 years

Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
ASCD SmartBrief/Public Education NewsBlast
Better: Evidence-Based Education
Center for Performance Assessment Newsletter
District Administration
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard 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
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 Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Principal/Learning System/Tools for Schools
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time
Wharton Leadership Digest