Marshall Memo 461

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
November 19, 2012

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"[S]tudents know good instruction when they experience it as well as when they do not."
Ronald Ferguson (see item #1)

"Our class stays busy and doesn't waste time."
One of Ronald Ferguson's Tripod student survey questions on their teachers (ibid.)

"To put it bluntly, an evaluation process that relies on announced visits is inaccurate, dishonest, and ineffective… This contributes directly to America's widening achievement gaps, since students with any kind of disadvantage desperately need effective teaching."
Kim Marshall (see item #2)

"There's only one way a principal can look parents and other stakeholders in the eye and assure them of the quality of day-to-day teaching: regularly dropping into all classrooms without advance notice."
Kim Marshall (*ibid*.)

"I'm nervous right now, wondering if the Clipboard Crew might walk in and notice that my lesson plans don't match the modifications I am making based on the student feedback."
John Spencer in "Don't Bribe My Kids to Read" in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2012 (Vol. 94, #3, p. 72-73), http://www.kappanmagazine.org

"Computers are consistent, but not necessarily correct."
Michael Marder (see item #3)

"Love trumps fairness every time."
Stephen Asma (see item #5)

1. Student Survey Data As Part of Teacher Evaluation

In this important *Kappan* article, Harvard senior lecturer Ronald Ferguson describes a scenario in which a principal peeks into a classroom and likes what she sees (students are busy and well-behaved) and the teacher and principal are pleased with his test-score results (they're almost always above average). But the students, if asked, would have told a very different story: lessons are uninteresting, assignments emphasize memorization more than understanding, and the teacher seems indifferent to their feelings and opinions. In short, it's not a happy place and there is no love of learning.

Universities routinely survey students on how professors are performing, but until recently, K-12 students have not been given the chance to evaluate their teachers. This is because, although students spend hundreds more hours in classrooms than any administrator, people doubt that students can provide valid, reliable, and stable responses about the quality of teaching.

The Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project has put those doubts to rest. Comparing value-added analysis of test scores, classroom observations, and student perception surveys (using Ferguson's Tripod questions), researchers have found that students provide accurate, helpful information on their teachers' performance. "[S]tudents know good instruction when they experience it as well as when they do not," says Ferguson. The research design was careful to control for students' family background and isolate each teacher's characteristics and impact on learning.

These robust findings notwithstanding, Ferguson offers two caveats about using student survey results to evaluate teachers:

- Any method of assessing teacher effectiveness is prone to measurement error.
- Teachers may temporarily alter their behaviors to improve their survey results, especially if students' opinions have high stakes.

These concerns lead Ferguson to say, "No one survey instrument or observational protocol should have high stakes for teachers if used alone or for only a single deployment." He supports the idea of student surveys being one of *several* measures used to evaluate teachers.

Over the last eleven years, almost a million K-12 students have filled out anonymous Tripod surveys on their teachers, and Ferguson and his colleagues have refined the questions to the point where they pass muster with other researchers. The survey questions are grouped under seven headings, and students respond by rating their agreement or disagreement with each statement on a 5-4-3-2-1 scale:

• *Care*. This goes beyond a teacher's "niceness" to encompass demonstrated concern for students' happiness and success. A sample question: *My teacher really tries to understand how students feel about things*.

• *Control*. These questions measure management of off-task and disruptive behaviors in the classroom. A sample question: *Our class stays busy and doesn't waste time*.

• *Clarify*. This addresses the teacher's skill at promoting understanding, clearing up confusion and misconceptions, differentiating, and helping students persevere. A sample question: *My teacher has several good ways to explain each topic that we cover in this class*.

• *Challenge*. This covers effort and rigor and measures whether the teacher pushes students to work hard and think deeply. Sample questions: *In this class, my teacher accepts nothing less than our full effort* and *My teacher wants us to use our thinking skills, not just memorize things*.

• *Captivate*. Do teachers make instruction stimulating, relevant, and memorable? Sample questions: *My teacher makes lessons interesting* and *I often feel like this class has nothing to do with real life outside school*.

• *Confer*. This covers teachers seeking students' points of view and allowing them to express themselves and exchange ideas with classmates. A sample question: *My teacher gives us time to explain our ideas*.

• *Consolidate*. This measures whether teachers check for understanding and help students see patterns and move learning into long-term memory. A sample question: *My teacher takes the time to summarize what we learn each day*.

Ferguson notes that five of these areas measure teachers' support of students – Care, Clarify, Captivate, Confer, and Consolidate – and two measure "press" – Control and Challenge.

What have the survey results revealed about teachers? Even lower-elementary students express clear distinctions among teachers, with greater variation within schools than between schools. Overall, the MET study has shown Tripod survey results to be valid and reliable predictors of student learning in math and ELA – in fact, more reliable than administrators' classroom observations. Students whose teachers scored in the top quarter on Tripod questions learned the equivalent of 4-5 months more per year than students whose teachers scored in the bottom quarter. The differences in ELA were about half as large as in math.

Not all the Seven C items are equally predictive of student achievement. When Ferguson asks audiences which of the Seven C's they think are most important to student achievement, most pick Care. But that's not what the MET data show. Here are the seven survey questions that correlate most strongly with achievement gains:

- *Students in this class treat the teacher with respect*.
- *My classmates behave the way my teacher wants them to*.
- *Our class stays busy and doesn't waste time*.
- *In this class, we learn a lot every day*.
- *In this class, we learn to correct our mistakes*.
- *My teacher explains difficult things clearly*.

However, the difference between these and other Tripod items is not large, says Ferguson: "Educators should keep all of them in mind as they seek ways to improve teaching and learning."

What about student outcomes beyond test-score gains? "We also want attentiveness and good behavior, happiness, effort, and efficacy," says Ferguson. The good news is that he and his colleagues have found "the same teaching behaviors that predict better behavior, greater happiness, more effort, and stronger efficacy also predict great value-added achievement gains." It's not either-or; it's both, and student survey results, used wisely, can help give teachers and administrators valuable data to improve teaching and learning.

"Can Student Surveys Measure Teaching Quality?" by Ronald Ferguson in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2012 (Vol. 94, #3, p. 24-28), http://www.kappanmagazine.org; Ferguson can be reached at ronald_ferguson@harvard.edu. See Marshall Memo 453 for another article on Ferguson's work.

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2. How to Make Short, Frequent, Unannounced Classroom Visits Work

In this *Kappan* article, Kim Marshall addresses what he calls a "major blind spot" among educational researchers and reformers: the fact that most evaluative visits to teachers' classrooms are announced in advance. Teachers, quite understandably, take their performance up a notch for these infrequent, high-stakes inspections, and students tend to behave better too. Could this be the real explanation for rampant grade inflation in teacher evaluations across the nation, as documented by the New Teacher Project's 2009 *Widget Effect* study (23,332 Chicago public-school teachers rated Superior, 9,176 Excellent, 2,232 Satisfactory, and only 149 Unsatisfactory over a recent five-year period, with a similar skew in several other districts)?

Some educators defend announced observations. "I want to see what the teacher is capable of," said one former superintendent. But is the teacher's glamorized lesson representative of what students are getting day to day? asks Marshall. "I can see right through the dog-and-pony show," said a seasoned principal. But can the principal document his hunch? "I need that pre-observation conference for feedback on my lesson planning," said a teacher. But how helpful is discussing a lesson plan once a year, especially if it's not representative of usual preparation?

Why do so many school administrators give credence to lessons that are clearly atypical? Marshall lists some possible reasons:

- Avoidance – A plausible lesson allows the administrator to skirt difficult conversations and the hard work of documenting and supporting a mediocre or ineffective teacher.
- The fundamental attribution error – School leaders tend to assume that seeing what looks like a good teach*er* means that good teach*ing* is going on day to day.
- Infrequency – The conventional process (pre-observation conference, full-lesson observation, detailed write-up, and post-observation conference) is so time-consuming

for administrators that teachers are evaluated only once or twice a year, and it would clearly be unfair for such infrequent visits to be a surprise.

"That's why districts, even without union insistence, have administrators schedule their formal observations in advance," says Marshall.

This time-honored dynamic might seem benign and unavoidable, but it has serious consequences. Effective teachers don't get authentic praise. Mediocre teachers don't get targeted coaching and support. And all too many ineffective teachers are not held accountable. "To put it bluntly," Marshall says, "an evaluation process that relies on announced visits is inaccurate, dishonest, and ineffective… This contributes directly to America's widening achievement gaps, since students with any kind of disadvantage desperately need effective teaching."

But what's the alternative? Marshall argues that a number of principals are already implementing a better approach. Here are three layers of change:

• *Changing the structure* – Classroom observations shift from being announced, infrequent, and full-lesson to unannounced, frequent, and short:

- Unannounced – "There's only one way a principal can look parents and other stakeholders in the eye and assure them of the quality of day-to-day teaching," says Marshall: "regularly dropping into all classrooms without advance notice."
- Frequent – He believes ten visits to each teacher each year is enough to get a representative sampling of the teacher's work in different subjects or with different classes and at different points in lessons and the school day, week, and year. In most schools, this means making about two or three classroom visits a day (multiply the number of teachers supervised by 10 and divide by the days in the school year).
- Short – Watching a 5-15-minute video of a teacher in action is enough to satisfy virtually all educators that a lot happens in a classroom in a short period of time and there are always several "teaching points" to take up afterward. Of course, pre-observation conferences are not possible with these visits, cutting down on the time required for each.

"When observations are unannounced, frequent, and short, the supervision dynamic changes dramatically," says Marshall. "School leaders have a much better sense of what's going on in classrooms, and teachers find the process less stressful and believe their bosses *get* what they're doing with students. In addition, administrators' increased presence in classrooms, corridors, and stairways prevents many problems."

• *The human element* – To have an impact on teaching and learning, Marshall argues that follow-up needs to be:

- Face to face – After each classroom observation, administrators should make a point of having a brief, informal conversation with the teacher, ideally within 24 hours. "Every time administrators talk with a teacher after a short visit, they learn something new," says Marshall, "widening their observational window and improving trust."
- Humble – A winning strategy is for administrators to have these post-observation chats in teachers' classrooms. "Being on the teacher's turf changes the power dynamic," says

Marshall, "and there's the additional advantage of seeing student work, curriculum artifacts, and other reminders of what was happening during the observation." It's also important for administrators to slow down and be good listeners; teachers have a lot on their minds.

- Honest – Making lots of short, unannounced visits, administrators will see good teaching, but they will also stumble across some mediocre and ineffective practices. If they don't step up to the plate and address them, the whole process is a waste of time. "Difficult conversations" are difficult. Superintendents can help by having principals role-play with each other to improve their skills.
- Linked to teacher teamwork – One-on-one conversations with teachers after short observations should be linked to teacher teams' work on curriculum planning and analysis of student assessments. "This sharpens administrators' 'eye' and boosts the power of teacher teamwork," he says.

Marshall disagrees with giving teachers initial feedback via e-mails, checklists, and electronic programs. "This kind of one-way feedback is superficial, bureaucratic, annoying, and highly unlikely to make a difference," he says. The same goes for rating each drop-in on a 4-3-2-1 or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory scale. "This increases the teacher's anxiety level and is the opposite of good coaching." Of course if a teacher is ineffective and not responding to support, the process needs to become more formal: longer classroom visits (unannounced, of course), an improvement plan, a timeline for improvement, and possible dismissal.

• *Management details* – Short, unannounced classroom visits are not the same as "managing by wandering around," says Marshall. These observations need to be:

- Systematic – If administrators don't keep a paper or electronic checklist of all staff being visited, there's the tendency to lose track, not be equitable about visits and feedback conversations, and avoid certain classrooms. It's very helpful to have a goal for visits (perhaps two or three a day) to keep up the pace. And if there is more than one administrator in the building, it's important to divide up the workload.
- Documented – Marshall believes that each face-to-face feedback conversation should be followed up with a very brief write-up for the record (shared, of course, with the teacher). The sequence is important to building trust and dialogue: visit, conversation, *then* write-up.
- Linked to end-of-year evaluations – "Yes, these short observations count," says Marshall. "They are an artful blend of supervision, coaching, and evaluation, supporting teaching and learning and, each time, giving the administrator a few more pieces of the puzzle for the teacher's summative evaluation." The best way to capture end-of-the-year performance is by using a rubric, with each teacher sharing his or her self-assessment and comparing, page by page, with the administrator's tentative evaluation and debating any differences in light of the evidence.

Virtually all educators agree that ten short, unannounced classroom visits followed by feedback conversations give a much more accurate picture of a teacher's performance than one or two dog-and-pony shows. If administrators handle them well, the effect can be dramatic.

The logic of this approach is compelling, says Marshall, but some districts are implementing a hybrid model, with announced *and* unannounced visits. "This sounds like a sensible, middle-of-the-road compromise," he says, "but it has a fatal flaw: If principals continue to spend four hours or more on each traditional observation cycle and don't get relief from other responsibilities, they simply won't have time for more than one or two short observations – and that isn't nearly enough for teachers to trust the process and for administrators to get a true sense of what's going on in classrooms. The result will be exhausted and cynical school leaders and no improvements in teaching and learning.

"Let's face it," Marshall concludes: "Announced, infrequent, full-lesson classroom visits are bogus. Half-measures won't work. We must make a clean break with the past and use an approach that will win teachers' trust, provide continuous feedback on their work, fuel teacher teamwork, and culminate in accurate end-of-year evaluations."

"Let's Cancel the Dog-and-Pony Show" by Kim Marshall in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2012 (Vol. 94, #3, p. 19-23), http://www.kappanmagazine.org; Marshall can be reached at kim.marshall48@gmail.com.

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3. More on Problems with Value-Added Evaluation of Teachers

Why is there such a push to evaluate teachers using value-added analysis? asks Michael Marder (University of Texas/Austin) in this *Kappa Delta Pi Record* article. Because many governors, state education commissioners, and federal legislators have embraced these points:

- Teachers are the single most important in-school factor in student achievement.
- Teachers' background, degrees, and certifications do not tell if they are effective.
- Conventional evaluation systems give almost all teachers good ratings.
- It's possible to identify the best and worst teachers by analyzing students' state test scores.

"If you held these beliefs… wouldn't you act?" asks Marder. And action is coming. Within the next two years, many public school teachers' annual evaluations will include calculations using student growth on standardized tests. The same is true of principals.

"Using computers to evaluate teachers based on student test scores is more difficult than it seems," says Marder. Here are two seriously flawed methods of using student achievement:

- Grading teachers based on their students' test scores – for example, giving a math teacher a grade of A, B, C, D, or F depending on whether 90 percent, 80 percent, 70 percent, 60 percent, or 50 percent of students passed a state exam, or on whether the class average was 90, 80, etc. Either method would be unfair, because some teachers might have classes that entered with higher achievement than others, giving them a head start.
- Grading teachers based on how much their students' scores increase during the year. But this is unfair to teachers whose students enter the year with high achievement – it's almost impossible for them to get strong gains because students have already topped

out. In addition, it's very difficult to design tests that measure during-the-year and year-to-year gains.

"Value-added modeling is a genuinely serious attempt to grapple with the difficulties," says Marder. It does so by calculating how well students *should* do by the end of the year and then evaluating teachers on whether they exceeded, met, or did not meet those statistical goals.

"To design a computer program that creates a custom expectation for the classroom of each teacher is not an easy task," says Marder. "The program has to take many things into account… The calculations are so complex that only a handful of specialists know how to carry them out." But are they valid for the individual teacher? Many concerns have been raised about missing information such as student mobility, large variations in results from year to year, the need for many years of data to get reliable results, and the lack of suitable pretests in some subject areas. That's why educators and policymakers who understand value-added calculations – advocates and skeptics – agree that the results should be used with caution. "However," says Marder, "because numbers in official printouts are so specific and appear so authoritative, it will prove problematic in practice to prevent them from dominating decisions about promotion and dismissal."

He tackles the complexities by asking a simple question: "What are the data you can find on a student that most accurately predict how much the student's score will change over the next year?" The most important predictor is the student's score the previous year. "This effect is huge," says Marder. Thus, the surest way for a teacher to boost his or her value-added score would be to swap a few students based on their previous achievement levels.

"There are other large effects floating around," continues Marder. At certain grade levels, especially those with high stakes promotion tests, students consistently make bigger gains that are unconnected to teacher performance. And then there's poverty, race, and differences between the best and worst teachers. It turns out that teachers are one of the smallest factors in test-score gains or losses.

The bottom line: Marder doesn't trust the value-added formulas. Every one he has looked at "begins with a bit of technical hastiness" as it tries to account for the many factors operating inside and outside the school, he says. "Make a technical mistake in accounting for them, then attribute that mistake to the teacher, and the results are wrong."

"It is tempting to automate a process that previously has been the province of human judgment," Marder concludes. "But judgment is always present: if not in each detailed decision, then in the rules of automation. Automating a decision does not make it right. Computers are consistent, but not necessarily correct… Expert advice on value-added modeling always says that it should at most be used as a component of evaluation, in combination with other factors. Indeed. It provides information. It can flag real problems. But it has a limited view. And like the humans that created it, it is fallible."

"Measuring Teacher Quality with Value-Added Modeling" by Michael Marder in *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, October-December 2012 (Vol. 48, #4, p. 156-161), http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ukdr20/48/4

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4. Los Angeles Experiments with a New Teacher-Evaluation System

In this *Kappan* article, Katharine Strunk and Tracey Weinstein (University of Southern California), Reino Makkonen (WestEd), and Drew Furedi (Los Angeles Unified School District) share the lessons they learned piloting a new teacher-evaluation plan in the Los Angeles Unified School District during the 2011-12 school year. The experiment included:

- Teacher self-assessments and lesson planning;
- Classroom observations by school-based administrators and external observers;
- An observation protocol adapted from Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching;
- Pre- and post-observation conferences with teachers;
- An online platform for teachers and observers to report notes and ratings;
- Feedback surveys of students and parents;
- Value-added measures at the teacher, grade/subject, and schoolwide level.

As these were piloted in a number of schools and departments, the research team gathered reactions from teachers, administrators, and focus groups. Here's what they found:

• 60 percent of teachers and 77 percent of administrators said the plan would be an improvement over the existing teacher-evaluation system, and most said they were glad they had participated in the pilot. "I was encouraged to look at my own practice and set goals for myself," said one teacher. "I felt like I had a particularly effective year, because of my participation…"

• However, many administrators and teachers said the workload involved in the new system was unmanageable.

• There were also concerns about the lack of shared values and a common vision of what good teaching looks like, as well as administrators' variable expertise in observing instruction (extensive training is going on during the 2012-13 school year).

• Serious budget cuts across California and LAUSD put a crimp in some of the plans, especially the ability of hard-pressed administrators to get into classrooms.

• The teachers' union took the position that the proposed changes in teacher evaluation could not be implemented until they were negotiated and told teachers not to participate.

• A pending court case (*Jane Doe et al. v. John Deasy et al.*) raised questions about how test scores should be used to evaluate teachers.

• There were problems with the online teacher-evaluation system, including entries being deleted and server crashes.

• There were communication glitches on the timing and intent of the new policies.

• The link to professional development was not "built up" and communicated to teachers as the program was implemented.

Strunk, Weinstein, Makkonen, and Furedi say the district has learned from these difficulties and is glad it is proceeding slowly before fully implementing the plan.

"Lessons Learned" by Katharine Strunk, Tracey Weinstein, Reino Makkonen, and Drew Furedi in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2012 (Vol. 94, #3, p. 24-28), http://www.kappanmagazine.org; Strunk can be reached at kstrunk@usc.edu.

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5. Is Favoritism Wrong?

In this thoughtful *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, philosophy professor Stephen Asma (Columbia College/Chicago) says the opposite of fairness is not selfishness. But that's the way it seems when we hear children complain, "That's not fair!" It's easy for parents and teachers to see this as a thinly disguised attempt to get one's way. "Kids learn early that an honest declaration of 'I'm not getting what I want' holds little persuasion for parents," says Asma. "So they quickly figure out how to mask their egocentric frustrations with the language of fairness. An appeal to an objective standard of fairness will at least buy some bargaining time for further negotiations."

However, Asma continues, "This is not entirely duplicitous on the part of the child, who is often legitimately confused and cannot easily distinguish his private sufferings from larger and clearer social imbalances." The opposite of fairness is not selfishness but *favoritism*. And it's not always a bad thing.

How can that be? We're always telling children to be fair by sharing generously and being open-minded toward people who are different from themselves. Favoritism and bias are demonized and seen as prejudice. Some social-science research has postulated that children are inherently biased against those who look different, giving parents and educators a strong reason to preach against bias and bigotry (whose flip side is favoritism toward one's tribe).

But there's new thinking on this, reports Asma. Yes, people are biased toward their in-group, but research on children's preferences shows this doesn't mean they're negative toward other groups. "The old folk wisdom that group closeness comes from opposition to others is not borne out by recent data," he says. "Nor is the old developmental story that we all start out as egotistic Hobbesians, who slowly learn to care for others… Kids simultaneously make social evaluations based on at least three criteria: self-interests, group interests, and justice interests… Favoritism, not egoism, is probably the primal value system."

And favoritism isn't always based on family, racial, or ethnic ties. People sometimes favor those who share the same birthday, cheer for the same baseball team, or support the same political candidate. Asma believes schools need to recognize this. For example, he says, "Rosa Parks and Susan B. Anthony were not fighting for the equality of all people per se, but for the inclusion of their in-groups. It's no disservice to them or denigration of them to point out this basic fact of favoritism."

Unfairness has roots in envy, says Asma. Equality is the American ideal, and inequality drives envy – of another person's car or lawn or athletic ability. In the 19th century, children and parents were taught something quite different about envy: "There will always be people better off than you, and the sooner you accept and conquer your envy, the better off you'll be." This changed in the 20th century; parents were urged to give their children an equal share of everything to prevent envy and sibling rivalry – to prevent *unfairness*. This has been taken to the much-ridiculed extreme of giving ribbons to all students in a race just for taking part. Contrast this, Asma says, to Chinese preschools where children stand up to tell a story to their classmates and then listen unflinchingly to detailed critiques – too boring, voice too quiet, paused too many times, terrible ending.

There's a difference between equal opportunity and equal outcomes, Asma concludes: "A better way to integrate fairness and favoritism for kids is to show how opportunity and outcome are part of a process. Everyone should have equal opportunity to become your friend, but not everyone can be your friend… Anyone should be a candidate for friend status [hopefully from a broad and diverse pool of candidates], but few will be admitted to the elite club. Why few? Because favorites (friends) can be created only by spending time together, sharing experiences, and immersing themselves in each other's lives – and time, sadly, is a finite resource… Love trumps fairness every time."

"In Defense of Favoritism" by Stephen Asma in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Nov. 16, 2012 (Vol. LIX, #12, p. B6-B9), http://chronicle.com/article/In-Defense-of-Favoritism/135610/

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6. School Librarians As Part of Professional Learning Communities

In this *Knowledge Quest* article, Sandra Hughes-Hassell (University of North Carolina/Chapel Hill), Amanda Brasfield (teacher librarian in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools), and Debbie Dupree (opening a new school library at Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy) list ways school librarians can be a vital part of PLCs:

• *Information specialist* – Provide knowledge to PLC members by providing relevant professional literature and research; help teachers integrate technology into their classrooms; prepare for meetings by reading professional literature to anticipate topics or jump-start conversations;

• *Staff developer* – Provide mini-lessons or training to a PLC at their request to address a specific need;

• *Teacher and collaborator* – Create assessments with a PLC;

• *Critical friend* – Provide honest, positive, and/or critical feedback to PLC members regarding instruction or planning; meet with the PLC after completion of a collaboratively taught unit to refine lessons and make adjustments to the unit plan for the future;

• *Leader* – Take responsibility for extra assignments from the PLC, above and beyond what is normally expected; set the agenda for a PLC meeting;

• *Researcher* – Help colleagues move beyond anecdotal evidence by doing action research on literacy issues, for example, the efficacy of sustained silent reading;

• *Learner* – For example, delve into the Common Core State Standards and how they can better promote inquiry;

• *Student advocate* – Offer alternative teaching strategies or assessment strategies to address different learning styles or needs;

• *Teacher/collaborator* – Teach a portion of a unit co-planned with a teacher.

"Making the Most of Professional Learning Communities" by Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Amanda Brasfield, and Debbie Dupree in *Knowledge Quest*, November/December 2012 (Vol. 41, #2, p. 30-37), http://www.ala.org/aasl; the authors are at smhughes@email.unc.edu, amanda.brasfield1@gmail.com, and ddupree@wcpss.net.

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7. Short Items:

a. Youth and Participatory Politics Survey – This survey includes data from about 3,000 people age 15-25 on their civic and political participation and use of digital media: http://ypp.dmlcentral.net

"Digital Media Shapes Youth Participation in Politics" by Joseph Kahne and Ellen Middaugh in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2012 (Vol. 94, #3, p. 52-56), http://www.kappanmagazine.org; Kahne can be reached at jkahne@mills.edu.

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b. Map of teacher union strength – In this *Education Week* article, Stephen Sawchuk reports on a new study by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute on the status of teacher unions in all 50 states.

"Study Ranks Strength of Teachers' Unions By State" by Stephen Sawchuk in *Education Week*, Nov. 7, 2012 (Vol. 32, #11, p. 8)
http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/11/07/11unions.h32.html

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c. Professional learning networks for librarians – This LiveBinder is great for librarians who want to reach out to like-minded colleagues in other schools: http://www.librarygirl.net/2012/07/pln-starter-kit.html

"Power Up Your Professional Learning" by Jennifer LaGarde and Tiffany Whitehead in *Knowledge Quest*, November/December 2012 (Vol. 41, #2, p. 8-13)

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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.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 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 45 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
ASCD SmartBrief
Better Evidence-Based Education
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
New York Times
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
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Teaching Children Mathematics
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
The School Administrator
Theory Into Practice