

Marshall Memo 1012

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
November 20, 2023

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Quotes of the Week

“Gifted and talented services can be used to specifically and proactively advance greater school integration, greater equity within gifted services themselves, and most importantly, greater levels of talent development for students of color and those from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds.”

Scott Peters, Matthew Makel, and James Carter III (see item #1)

“Once kids realize that they can act contemptuously toward each other and no one will stop them, then they can do it a lot. Once they start doing it a lot, then the school is going to begin feeling like a different place. It’s going to begin feeling like a less friendly place where you have to avoid the landmines and be careful and watch your back. Then all kinds of problems can happen.”

Elizabeth Englander (see item #2)

“I don’t like the idea of teaching children that they should confront aggressive people. Most adults cannot confront aggressive, dangerous people.”

Elizabeth Englander on encouraging “upstander” behavior with bullies (*ibid.*)

“At school you are not engaged so much in acquiring knowledge as in making mental efforts under criticism. A certain amount of knowledge you can indeed with average facilities acquire so as to retain, nor need you regret the hours you spend on much that is forgotten, for the shadow of lost knowledge at least protects you from many illusions. But you go to a great school not so much for knowledge as for arts and habits: for the habit of attention; for the art of expression; for the art of assuming at a moment’s notice a new intellectual position; for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation; for the art of indicating assent or dissent in graduated terms; for the art of working out what is possible in a given time; for discrimination; for mental courage and mental soberness.”

William Johnson Cory, 1875

1. Can Gifted Programs Be a Force for Equity and Inclusion?

In this *Kappan* article, Scott Peters (NWEA), Matthew Makel (University of Calgary), and James Carter III (Urban Institute) say that gifted programs in American schools have “a long and troubled history,” including:

- Disproportionate representation of students compared to their percentage in the K-12 school population: 118 percent of white students, 70 percent of Latin, and 57 percent of African-American.
- Disproportionate representation by SES, with students from the wealthiest quintile more than seven times more likely to be identified as gifted as those in the lowest quintile.
- One of the strongest predictors of access to gifted services is the percent of adults in the community with a college degree.

“But it doesn’t have to be this way,” say Peters, Makel, and Carter. “Gifted and talented services can be used to specifically and proactively advance greater school integration, greater equity within gifted services themselves, and most importantly, greater levels of talent development for students of color and those from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds.”

Their suggestions:

- *Implement universal screening.* Most schools rely on parent or teacher requests to screen students for gifted programs, which means many potentially eligible students are never considered. One study found that 10 percent of Asian students were referred by their teachers, 2 percent of African-American students, and 1.4 percent of Latin students. “Right out of the gate,” say Peters, Makel, and Carter, “the system is only considering students whose teachers are willing to nominate them for consideration or whose families know about the services, believe they are valuable and culturally inclusive, or have the time and bureaucratic savvy to apply for them. This is a recipe for unequal representation.” When Florida implemented universal screening, identification rates for black and Latin students rose 74 percent and 118 percent, respectively.

- *Use building norms for identification.* The top-performing students within each school (based on local, not state or national norms) should be eligible for gifted services, say the authors. This will open opportunities within schools and boost equity across schools. It is also more politically palatable since using school norms avoids race-conscious policies or putting different student groups in conflict over a fixed number of gifted seats.

- *Make gifted services available in every school.* In most states, offering gifted programs is optional – 63 percent of California schools do so, only 21 percent in Illinois and 13

percent in New York. “The result is a national ‘gifted’ population that is not demographically representative of the country,” say Peters, Makel, and Carter, “and this will never change as long as some schools can decide that gifted services are optional.” The average classroom has a 5-7 year range of student proficiency, which means that even in schools with overall low achievement, there are plenty of students who are ready to do more-challenging work.

- *Provide challenge for high-achieving students within each subject area.* We’ve moved away from the idea that being gifted means having special abilities in all domains and content areas, say the authors: “Because of this philosophical change, we can safely say there are gifted students in all schools, and services should be available in all schools... making sure that the highest-achieving students in every school are appropriately challenged, regardless of how ‘high’ or ‘low’ those students are scoring.” This approach will also attract and keep higher-SES families – those who have the option to move to another district if gifted services aren’t available.

[“Gifted Education Advances School Integration and Equity”](#) by Scott Peters, Matthew Makel, and James Carter III in *Kappan*, November 2023 (Vol. 105, #3, pp. 50-54); Peters can be reached at scott.peters@hnhco.com, Makel at matthew.makel@ucalgary.ca.

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2. Handling Students’ Post-Pandemic Mental Health Issues

In this *Kappan* interview, Kathleen Vail talks with Elizabeth Englander (Bridgewater State University) about her work in schools. Some excerpts:

- Teachers and school-based administrators aren’t psychologists or therapists, says Englander, but they can work to create a positive climate where kids feel safe, make friends, and develop social skills. A lot of that work is in small, minute-by-minute interactions with students.

- Following an uptick in cyberbullying during the pandemic, a little more than half of the young people Englander talks to say that people are now trying to be nicer to each other online, and kids are thinking about healthier ways to live with their cellphones. She was in a restaurant in Boston and noticed a group of teens who had put their phones face down in the middle of the table so they wouldn’t use them.

- That said, there’s still a lot of social harm occurring online, sometimes the result of cluelessness, insensitivity, and impulsivity – for example, I take out my phone and share a photo of you and think it’s hilarious, but you feel humiliated. And there’s some outright cruelty, which is easier to inflict when you’re not face to face with another person. Kids are sometimes afraid to tell their parents about online bullying for fear that their phones will be taken away, which means a lot of bullying goes unreported.

- Cyberbullying and in-person cruelty definitely affect students’ mental health, including anxiety, withdrawal, social isolation, difficulty making friends, sleep problems, depression, and school avoidance. The pandemic exacerbated these problems, and for some students the effects will take a while to subside, but schools report that things seem to be getting better this year.

- Englander advises educators to address specific student actions that are hurtful to others, especially what she calls gateway behaviors. For example, a girl raises her hand in class and expresses an opinion and another student rolls her eyes and makes a noise that shows quite publicly that she thinks the speaker is an idiot. Englander believes that if the teacher says, “I don’t think you should roll your eyes when Jennifer talks, because it hurts her feelings,” that’s not the best strategy. Better to say, “That’s a really inappropriate behavior, and it bothers me, so stop doing it.” Research shows the latter approach is much more helpful, she says.

- “This is an encouraging finding because it’s not a big thing to do,” Englander continues. “You don’t have to figure out if that kid is being bullied, which is an impossible task.” Teachers often can’t tell if a remark in a school corridor is a one-off or part of a repeated pattern, if it’s harmless teasing or a cruel taunt, if it’s inconsequential or the prelude to a fight. But adults don’t have to know the whole backstory to tell a student that something they said or did is an inappropriate behavior and it needs to stop.

- Given the hundreds of interactions a teacher sees every day, it’s tempting for the teacher who noticed the eye-roll to let that one slide. “It’s totally understandable for educators and parents to feel that you can’t fight every battle,” says Englander. “The problem is that once kids realize that they can act contemptuously toward each other and no one will stop them, then they can do it a lot. Once they start doing it a lot, then the school is going to begin feeling like a different place. It’s going to begin feeling like a less friendly place where you have to avoid the landmines and be careful and watch your back. Then all kinds of problems can happen. The climate really can change.”

- On the question of whether students should be upstanders to bullying, Englander says that’s an issue “where mass media got ahead of the research.” A study by the Youth Voice Project found that 75 percent of the time, students intervening made no difference or made things worse for the bullying target, which is a pretty high failure rate. “I don’t like the idea of teaching children that they should confront aggressive people,” she says. “Most adults cannot confront aggressive, dangerous people.” It’s better to teach kids to help the victim in other ways – for example, saying, “Don’t pay any attention to him” – and involving an adult.

[“Helping Students Be ‘Happier and Less Worried’ – A Conversation with Elizabeth Englander”](#) by Kathleen Vail in *Kappan*, November 2023 (Vol. 105, #3, pp. 31-35); Englander can be reached at eenglander@bridgew.edu.

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3. A Math Coach Improves Instruction in Four Middle Schools

In this article in *Educational Researcher*, Hayley Weddle (University of Pittsburgh) and Marie Lockton and Amanda Datnow (University of California/San Diego) report on their study of a math coach working with teacher teams in four underperforming urban middle schools from 2015 to 2019. The coach, a veteran math teacher who had not previously served in a coaching role, was respected and trusted by teachers, who described her as experienced, insightful, a good listener, and “really knows math.”

Under pressure to improve student achievement on state tests, the coach was charged with working with teachers during their scheduled collaboration meetings, and informally at other times, to improve their instructional capacity. The coach used three strategies to shift teachers toward a more-conceptual approach to math and get students generating new understandings, engaging in complex problem solving, and participating in discourse:

- *Fostering conversations about student thinking* – In the first year, teacher team meetings happened infrequently (in one school not at all), and there was little discussion of students’ thinking or understanding. The coach worked on getting teachers to adopt a more-ambitious curriculum, leading conceptual discussions in classrooms, using manipulatives, and being okay with “productive struggle.” By the third year, the researchers saw teachers regularly looking at student work and assessments and having detailed, evidence-based discussions about what students were thinking and understanding.

- *Fostering collaborative relationships* – In her second year, the coach started leading quarterly, all-day, cross-school workshops that got teachers co-planning and talking about math with their school teams and with teachers in the other schools. Teachers were deeply appreciative of the opportunity to talk to teachers working on the same content and grade levels; one described the workshops as “the most incredible forms of professional development in that they provide you not only with content that is useful for your classroom but an arena to work with other teachers where you can bounce ideas.”

- *Addressing teachers’ mathematics knowledge* – Teachers’ expertise varied, and the coach encountered misconceptions and gaps in teachers’ basic knowledge. In one meeting, a teacher was confused about determining and comparing the absolute value of two negative fractions. Trying to be encouraging, the coach said, “This is exactly what the kids struggle with,” but the meeting ended with this teacher still not understanding an important concept. Colleagues were aware of the teacher’s knowledge gaps, noting worsening test scores in her classes, but were uncertain what to do – as was the school’s principal. The coach, conscious of the importance of maintaining collegial relationships and not hurting poorly prepared teachers’ feelings, said, “I can’t sit down and teach [individual teachers] all the math they need to know.”

Weddle, Lockton, and Datnow describe some additional complications and challenges the coach encountered. First, the schools’ principals, under heavy pressure to raise test scores, suggested that the coach should work with the teacher teams with the lowest student achievement. “While in some ways this helped the coach direct her focus,” say the authors, “some teachers were frustrated by administrators’ efforts to direct the collaborative coaching process. Unsurprisingly, trying to please both administrators and teachers proved to be challenging for the coach, given diverging expectations.”

Second, the coach felt the need to constantly refer to the state tests, stress how the curriculum covered tested standards, and include sample test questions in her workshops and team meetings. But the coach disagreed with the notion that test scores were the ultimate measure of teachers’ effectiveness and students’ math understanding. As she pushed for conceptual understanding of math concepts and “rich tasks” in classrooms, she said at one

point, “It may not be reflected in test scores, but that’s a shift in practice I have seen.” The researchers’ comment: “In the context of persistent accountability frameworks, the coach’s broader view of what it means for a teacher to improve practice positioned her as a bridge between teachers’ and administrators’ expectations.”

Third, administrators needed redirection on what they looked for when they evaluated math teachers’ classes. The coach was pleased that with her encouragement, administrators agreed to focus on how teachers were promoting students’ thinking and use of academic language. That rippled back to her meetings with teacher teams, where she frequently asked, “How is our instruction going to help us achieve these goals?”

Fourth, the coach had to convince administrators to stop micromanaging teacher meetings by having teachers follow rigid protocols and submit detailed reports. “During the first and second years of the study,” report Weddle, Lockton, and Datnow, “teachers were frustrated by spending their time filling out these forms as opposed to freely discussing problems of practice.” At the end of the second year, the coach bluntly told administrators that the structure was leaving little time to discuss rich tasks and look at student work. The administrators relented and gave teachers more autonomy on how to use their meeting time.

Finally, the coach brought to administrators the teachers’ suggestion to co-plan and co-teach lessons. One principal “loved the plan” and worked on getting funding, and other principals appreciated the coach’s role finding new and better ways to build teachers’ capacity.

[“Fostering, Tailoring, Negotiating: The Complexities of Collaborative Coaching in Schools Under Pressure to Improve”](#) by Hayley Weddle, Marie Lockton, and Amanda Datnow in *Educational Researcher*, November 2023 (Vol. 52, #8, pp. 482-490); the authors are at hweddle@pitt.edu, mlockton@SanDiego.edu, and adatnow@ucsd.edu.

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4. Discussion-Worthy Tasks for Upper-Elementary Math Groups

In this *Mathematics Teacher* article, Nicola Hodkowski (Digital Promise) and Carolyn Carhart-Quezada (Cognition) say students learn more about mathematics when they discuss with classmates, connecting what they know with formal math content. To spark meaningful discussions, say the authors, teachers need to pose *open tasks* – that is, questions with multiple entry points, varied solution strategies, and more than one right answer. Well-chosen tasks allow students to “discuss, argue, represent, hear, and compare one another’s viewpoints.”

Hodkowski and Carhart-Quezada came up with a series of open tasks to help below-level fourth and fifth graders better understand fractional reasoning. Working on the tasks online in groups of four, facilitated by a tutor, students made significant progress. “By prioritizing conceptual understanding and promoting mathematical discourse,” say the authors, “we were able to both change traditional tutoring and empower our students to see themselves as doers and sense-makers of mathematics.”

Hodkowski and Carhart-Quezada developed five types of open tasks for their program and thought about where each type was most helpful:

- Multiple strategies – More than one strategy can be used, but the solution or answer is the same – for example: *The answer is $\frac{1}{2}$. What is the question?*
- Multiple outcomes – Solution strategies may be similar, but solutions are different – for example: *Add something to $\frac{3}{4}$ that sums to a number close to 1 but not exactly 1. Who is closest? How do we know?*
- Sorting and ordering – Students are asked to invent a sorting criterion, with different criteria leading to different sorting – for example: *With the following fractions, quickly decide if they are bigger or smaller than $\frac{1}{2}$. How did you decide? $\frac{3}{11}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{5}{6}$, $\frac{7}{8}$, $\frac{7}{10}$, $\frac{6}{12}$*
- Justification – Students need to explain and justify their answers to groupmates – for example: *Ana says that $\frac{1}{8}$ is bigger than $\frac{1}{3}$ because 8 is bigger than 3. Margo thinks that Ana is not right. Who do you agree with? Explain your reasoning.*
- Group challenge tasks – Students work in pairs and discuss outcomes with another pair – for example: *6 people are going to share these 5 candy bars equally [show 5 rectangles]. Write a fraction that shows how much one person gets.*

Students' prior knowledge and readiness determine which type of problem will spark the best discussions. With students who are new to a concept, multiple-strategy tasks seem more engaging, allowing for more exploration as the group works toward a single solution. With students who had already been introduced to a concept and are working to deepen their understanding, a multiple-outcome task is more appropriate, with students discussing how they came up with different answers.

Hodkowski and Carhart-Quezada noticed that at first, students talked less and the tutors talked more – the opposite of what was intended. Why? Students weren't used to having discussion in math classes and lacked confidence in their insights. "We quickly realized," say the authors, "that rituals, routines, and collaborative norms were needed when using open tasks." The tutors were prompted to establish these norms:

- Explain why, not just the right answer.
- Show active listening.
- Compare and critique with groupmates.
- Summarize what you've learned.

Tutors supported these norms by saying, "Yes, and..." rather than immediately telling the answer and nudging students for "deeper noticings and wonderings about others' work."

But in some groups, setting norms was not enough. Over time, Hodkowski and Carhart-Quezada worked with tutors to develop several other ways to jumpstart discussions:

- Individual think time before sharing in the group – Giving students 20-30 seconds to ponder the problem before beginning the group discussion.
- After presenting the problem, the tutor divides a slide into four sections, one for each student; students solve the problem on their section and then look at their groupmates' solutions and discuss.
- Students think about the task alone, then work together on solving it on one slide, then the teacher chooses one student to explain their solution, discuss, and decide on the correct solution.

- Taco talk – Students are assigned to be tomato, lettuce, cheese, and taco shell, the first three present their ideas in that order, then the fourth student (taco shell) wraps up the discussion by explaining what their groupmates said.

[“Let’s Give Them Something to Talk About”](#) by Nicola Hodkowski and Carolyn Carhart-Quezada in *Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12*, November 2023 (Vol. 116, #11, pp. 837-844); the authors can be reached at nhodkowski@digitalpromise.org and carhart-quezada@cignition.com.

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5. In Elementary Schools, to Departmentalize or Not to Departmentalize?

In this article in *Teaching With a Mountain View*, Colorado teacher Mary Montero summarizes the pros and cons of departmentalizing in the upper-elementary grades, drawing ideas from an extensive online discussion – and gives her recommendations in each area.

- Teacher-student relationships:
 - Pros – Departmentalizing means students have several teachers to go to for academic and personal support. If a student doesn’t “click” with one teacher, they work with others every day who might be more sympatico.
 - Cons – Because departmentalized teachers aren’t spending most of the day with one class, will they get to know students as well and form strong relationships?
 - Montero’s recommendation – Teachers who have moved from self-contained to departmentalized classes, she says, find that relationships can still be robust. However, it’s important for schools that departmentalize to have homeroom classes that serve as a “home base” for daily morning meetings and team-building activities. Students in different homerooms should also have opportunities to work with one another.
- Consistent routines and expectations:
 - Pros – Students in self-contained classes have already experienced a bit of departmentalization by moving to specials, so having two or three different core teachers is not a radically new experience. The same is true for students with IEPs, who may work with several teachers in the course of the day. In middle school, departmentalization will be the norm, so introducing a partial version in the upper-elementary grades is a helpful “baby step” to prepare them.
 - Cons – If there are different expectations, routines, and classroom environments from class to class, departmentalization can be challenging for some students. Those with special needs may have a particularly difficult time.
 - Montero’s recommendation – If a school does departmentalize, it’s important that grade-level teacher teams agree on common classroom management routines and expectations for student work. Having a consistent, predictable daily schedule is also helpful. Montero believes upper-elementary teams of two or three teachers is the sweet spot for getting students ready for middle school – less overwhelming than switching among four or more teachers.
- Teachers’ subject area mastery:

- Pros – “By focusing on one or two subject areas,” says Montero, “teachers can dig deep into the standards and develop a teaching specialty. Students benefit from a more-focused teacher.” Specialized teachers have fewer lesson preps and more time to polish units and lessons – and achieve better work-life balance. Teachers may also be able to choose a subject about which they’re passionate.
- Cons – Self-contained teachers can create cross-curricular, transdisciplinary units and lessons, which is more challenging when each subject is taught by a different teacher. Departmentalized teachers can get out of touch with standards and ideas in the subjects they’re not teaching.
- Montero’s recommendation – Departmentalized teachers need to meet regularly, coordinate content, and create cross-curricular units, themes, and lessons. Principals should assign teachers to subjects in which they’re confident and pedagogically strong and never assign teachers to subjects they don’t want to teach. There’s also the issue of equitable workloads; Montero notes that ELA teachers are teaching reading and writing and have a heavier load grading students’ essays.
- Use of instructional time:
 - Pros – “Transitions make great brain breaks,” says Montero. “Students truly need a little downtime between lessons, and the transition from one class to another provides not only a break but is also a great visual for the mental switch that has to happen when you move from one subject matter to another.” With guidance and practice, students can move from class to class with minimal loss of instructional time.
 - Cons – Students moving from class to class, even with smooth routines, takes time. Moving from class to class on a bell schedule also reduces the flexibility a self-contained teacher has to extend a lesson or shift to a new subject if an activity finishes earlier than expected – also to accommodate students’ individual differences. In addition, assemblies, field trips, and class photos steal time from classes that happen to be scheduled when those activities intrude.
 - Montero’s recommendation – The key to successful departmentalization is collaboration among teachers at each grade level and flexible scheduling so that all teachers are equitably affected by assemblies and impromptu changes in the schedule.
- Teacher collaboration:
 - Pros – With departmentization, several teachers are working with all students and can contribute different ideas on behavioral and academic problems. Teachers can share classroom techniques that seem to be working for challenging students. In schools that are large enough to have two or more teachers in each subject area per grade level, teachers can reap the benefits of planning and sharing ideas with same-subject colleagues.
 - Cons – In a self-contained classroom, says Montero, teachers get to know their students very well and are in a better position to figure out how to address the needs of struggling students, behavior issues, or other concerns.

- Montero’s recommendation – Collaboration can result in better unit and lesson plans, better pedagogy, and a better experience each day for students. But collaboration won’t happen by itself, and that means scheduling of teachers’ planning periods and creating a culture of sharing and trust. It’s also vital for principals to form teacher teams that are compatible and able to work harmoniously.

For small schools with only one class per grade level, says Montero, departmentalization isn’t an option – but teachers should take advantage of Zoom and online groups to share ideas with teachers in similar situations.

“Not all pros and cons are equal,” Montero concludes. “It’s important to prioritize the things that will make the classroom learning environment the best it can be for our students.” For schools deciding whether or not to departmentalize, she suggests making a list of pros and cons for teachers – then pros and cons for students – and making a decision on what’s best for students, keeping in mind that “a happy and less-stressed teacher can make for a better learning environment, which is a pro for students, too!”

[“The Pros and Cons of Departmentalizing Elementary Schools”](#) by Mary Montero in *Teaching with a Mountain View*, November 17, 2023

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6. Can AI Help Students Understand and Appreciate Shakespeare?

In this *School Library Journal* article, artificial intelligence specialist Mike Gioia says that using AI tools to translate Shakespeare’s language into contemporary English is “categorically different” from the paraphrases, annotations, and summaries of the Bard’s work that are frequently used in high-school classrooms. There’s no question that many students find Elizabethan English difficult to understand, but doesn’t any attempt at translation rob students of a full appreciation of Shakespeare’s genius?

Not so, says Gioia. AI tools (including his free [Shakespeare Translator](#)) can act as a “reading copilot” for students, reducing the many barriers to entry. When a teacher feeds a passage into a large language model, it can “instantaneously synthesize, explain, and contextualize” hard-to-understand passages, offering definitions of words, historical context, and other details that elude most high-school students. In addition, students can ask chatbots like ChatGPT follow-up questions and get an immediate response.

But can artificial intelligence accurately capture Shakespeare’s meaning and parse his arcane syntax? Let’s look at a well-known passage from *Hamlet* translated by AI, then the original language:

The big question is whether it’s better to keep on living or to end it all. Is it nobler to endure the hardships and misfortunes that life throws at us, or to fight against all the problems that come our way and put an end to them? Death would mean eternal rest and therefore an escape from the pain and suffering that life brings us.

To be, or not to be, that is the question: whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing end them. To die; to sleep; no more; and by a sleep to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to.

Such translations “lack the beauty and power of Shakespeare’s verse in every sense,” says Gioia. “But they elucidate the meaning and make one eager to revisit the original. In the end, Shakespeare’s wisdom remains untouched. Technology just provides more on-ramps to enjoy it.”

[“Much Ado About AI”](#) by Mike Gioia in *School Library Journal*, November 2023 (Vol. 69, #1, pp. 22-23)

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7. Graphic Novels on Human Psychology

In this *School Library Journal* feature, Brigid Alverson recommends nine inventive graphic novels that explore what’s going on inside characters’ minds:

- *Buzzing* by Samuel Sattin, illustrated by Rye Hickman, grade 3-7
- *Just Roll With It* by Lee Durfey-Lavoie, illustrated by Veronica Agarwal, grade 4-7
- *Smaller Sister* by Maggie Edkins Willis, grade 4-7
- *My Own World* by Mike Holmes, grade 5-8
- *Here I Am, I Am Me: An Illustrated Guide to Mental Health* by Cara Bean, grade 7 and up
- “*Elle(s)*” by Kid Toussaint, illustrated by Aveline Stokart, grade 7-9
- *Heart and Brain: Onward to the Good Things!* by Nick Seluk, grade 8 and up
- *Inside the Mind of Sherlock Holmes* by Cyril Lieron, illustrated by Benoit Dahan, grade 9 and up
- *Lights, Planets, People!* by Molly Naylor, illustrated by Lizzy Stewart, grade 10 and up

“Heady Stuff” by Brigid Alverson in *School Library Journal*, November 2023 (Vol. 69, #1, pp. 30-33)

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About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and other educators very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 54 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 60 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). Every week there's a podcast and HTML version as well.

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Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC
American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
ASCD SmartBrief
Cult of Pedagogy
District Management Journal
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
English Journal
Exceptional Children
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Ed (formerly Ed. Magazine)
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Kappan (Phi Delta Kappan)
Knowledge Quest
Language Arts
Learning for Justice (formerly Teaching Tolerance)
Literacy Today (formerly Reading Today)
Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12
Middle School Journal
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School Library Journal
Social Education
Social Studies and the Young Learner
Teachers College Record
Teaching Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time
Urban Education