Marshall Memo 519

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
January 13, 2014

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"We can't look longingly at the halcyon ideals of yore, where marriage held more primacy and premarital sex was considered more depraved. Those days are gone."

Charles Blow (see item #3)

"What is more important in our lives than learning how to have mutual, caring, romantic relationships?"

Richard Weissbourd, Amelia Peterson, and Emily Weinstein (see item #4)

"The true measure of the impact of education reform – or any other campaign in the War on Poverty – is whether it produces self-sufficient citizens who can build strong and healthy families for the next generation."

Michael Petrilli in "Can't Buy Me Love" in *The Education Gadfly*, Jan. 9, 2014 (Vol. 14, #2), http://bit.ly/1hk0TLM

"One of the leader's most important roles, is to boil down an organization's many priorities and strategies into a simple plan, so that employees can remember it, internalize it, and act on it."

Adam Bryant (see item #1)

"A disturbing trend I've seen with supervision and evaluation is the use of electronic devices, popularized by iPad applications, on which principals record a classroom observation that is subsequently e-mailed to the teacher. While this practice is accepted by many as a boon to efficiency and thus more frequent classroom observations – frequent classroom observations being a good practice – it reduces dialog between principals and teachers and emphasizes the principal as judge and jury… This check-off mentality is an attempt to use the science of teaching without honoring the art of teaching."

Barry Vitcov (see item #5)

1. Six Ways to Build a Positive Culture

In this *New York Times* article, Adam Bryant summarizes the key factors involved in building and sustaining a good organizational climate – "the things that, if done well, have an outsize positive impact, and if done poorly or not at all, have an outsize negative impact."

• *A simple plan* – "One of the leader's most important roles," says Bryant, "is to boil down an organization's many priorities and strategies into a simple plan, so that employees can remember it, internalize it and act on it. With clear goals and metrics, everyone can pull in the same direction, knowing how their work contributes to those goals."

• *It's about the team* – One leader had a simple rule: you have to do what you say you're going to do. In other words, everyone has to play his or her position well and feel confident that others will do the same. "When everyone does that," says Bryant, "the team can focus on executing the strategy, instead of worrying whether colleagues will do what they're supposed to do. (And such concerns, multiplied across the entire organization, can add up to a lot of wasted energy and lost momentum.)"

• *Rules of the road* – There's more than one way to develop an organization's values and norms, says Bryant. They can come from the leaders, from a bottom-up process, or from a combination of both. The key is that people have to live by those values, reinforce them every day, and not tolerate behavior that's at odds with them. If poor behavior is accepted, people get cynical, and that spreads like an infection.

• *Adult conversations* – Teamwork and values will thrive only if people are willing to have frank discussions when norms are violated and work through their disagreements and misunderstandings. Here's how Seth Besmertnik, a technology CEO, put it: "When you're confident, you can give people feedback. You can be candid. You feel secure enough to say what's really on your mind, to bring someone in the room and say, 'You did this. It really made me feel XYZ.' Having good conversations is really 80 percent of being an effective manager."

• *A little respect* – Bryant says that most adults have had the experience of a boss criticizing them in front of colleagues, and it usually makes them determined not to do that themselves. John Duffy, a mobile-technology executive, says, "We have absolutely clear discussions with everyone about how respect is the thing that cannot be messed with in our culture. When we have problems with somebody gossiping, or someone being disrespectful to a superior or a subordinate, or a peer, it is swarmed on and dealt with. We make everyone understand that the reason the culture works is that we have that respect. There is a comfort level and a feeling of safety inside our business."

• *The hazards of e-mail* – The convenience of e-mail leads many to fall into the trap of

avoiding face-to-face conversations and thinking they can handle almost anything, including conflicts, electronically. "By talking over the phone or in person," says Bryant, "you'll not only avoid dangerous misunderstandings, but you'll also develop relationships and a sense of trust with colleagues, essential ingredients in fostering the kind of high-performing culture that drives innovation." Nancy Aossey, CEO of International Medical Corps, says, "People change when they talk in person about a problem, not because they chicken out, but because they have the benefit of seeing the person, seeing their reaction, and getting a sense of the person. But arguing over e-mail is about having the last word. It plays into something very dangerous in human behavior. You want to have the last word, and nothing brings that out more than e-mail because you can sit there and hit 'send,' and then it just kind of ratchets up and you don't have the benefit of knowing the tone."

"Management Be Nimble" by Adam Bryant in *The New York Times*, Jan. 5, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/business/management-be-nimble.html?_r=0; this article is adapted from Bryant's new book, *Quick and Nimble: Lessons from Leading C.E.O.'s on How to Create a Culture of Innovation* (Times Books, 2014).

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2. What Teachers Can Do When Students Give an Incorrect Answer

In this *Education Week* article, New York City reading specialist Brooke McCaffrey describes a common classroom sequence: the teacher poses a question ("Who can tell me the part of the spider's anatomy that it uses to spin a web?"), calls on a girl, gets an incorrect answer ("The spider's abdomen?"), moves on to another student who answers correctly ("The spinnerette"), and notices that the first student slumps in her seat, visibly discouraged. Better to stick with the first student, says McCaffrey, but it has to be done strategically. Here's one approach:

> "Wow, Sarah, that's excellent thinking. The body part that the spider uses to spin webs is located in the spider's abdomen, so you were very close. However, the answer was not quite right. It's a long word and it starts with /sp/. Would you like to try again?"

The teacher could also restate the question and/or give the student some additional think time. All of these strategies convey to the student, *I believe in you. I will not give up on you. I have high expectations for you.*

As McCaffrey tried this approach in her classroom, "it caused a slight feeling of anxiety in me. It can be an uncomfortable moment for a teacher when a student demonstrates confusion, and the natural inclination is to diminish that discomfort for both the teacher and the student. Moving on to another student makes an awkward moment pass quickly and allows the lesson to move on."

McCaffrey realized that her body language and tone of voice were important when she didn't call on another student. "If I conveyed any sort of urgency or frustration, sticking with a student began to feel more like putting a student in the hot seat. It became a high-pressure interaction, particularly when a student legitimately did not know the answer, regardless of the amount of cueing I provided." The ideal sequence, she decided, was:

- Ask the question and give about seven seconds of wait time before calling on a student.
- Alternatively, have students turn and talk with a partner and listen in on the conversations to see what misconceptions they might have.
- Another strategy is having students write their answers on small whiteboards, which takes the pressure off verbal responses.
- When a student answers incorrectly, praise what was right about the answer.
- Cue in a way that addresses all students ("Let's all think a little more about that").
- Keep your expression and body language relaxed so students don't feel any tension.
- Especially with math problems, do a quick review of the steps a student could take to get to the correct answer, which will help other students who are having difficulty.
- If the correct answer is not forthcoming, give the correct answer – without any sign of frustration or displeasure.

"In sticking with students," McCaffrey concludes, "I found I changed the energy in my classroom. The quiet, shy students began taking more risks because it was no longer scary to supply a wrong answer. Wrong answers became opportunities for growth for all of us."

"Sticking with Students: Responding Effectively to Incorrect Answers" by Brooke McCaffrey in *Education Week*, Jan 6, 2014 (published online)
http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2014/01/06/fp_mccaffrey_sticking.html?qs=Brooke+McCaffrey
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3. Dealing with the Heart of the Teen Pregnancy Problem

In this forceful *New York Times* column, Charles Blow says, "We can't look longingly at the halcyon ideals of yore, where marriage held more primacy and premarital sex was considered more depraved. Those days are gone." Some statistics:

- 51 percent of pregnancies in the U.S. are unintended – a rate that is significantly higher than in other developed countries.
- Among teenagers, the rate of pregnancy, childbearing, abortion, and sexually transmitted infections is the highest among wealthy nations.
- This is not because U.S. teenagers are more sexually active, but because they have more sexual partners and make less use of birth control.

"Conservatives often stress marriage as a panacea for many of these problems," says Blow, "and indeed, marriage has its benefits. The fewer partners one engages sexually, the lower the risk of encountering disease. And, in terms of having a child, two adults in a home can often do twice as much as one. But, we must respect all family structures and encourage all parents to be active and engaged in child rearing regardless of living arrangements."

Here are some things that the majority of American can agree on, Blow continues: "Most think young people should delay sexual activity until they are mentally and emotionally capable of reasonably consenting and comprehending the consequences. Most want fewer children born to parents unwilling to provide for those children, or incapable of doing so, emotionally or financially. Most want fewer unplanned and unwanted pregnancies. And, most want fewer women to have to face the often wrenching decisions about what to do about such

pregnancies. There are some rather simple ways to move in this direction if we can agree to be less puritanical and more practical."

- Teach young people to "love themselves enough emotionally to be in control of whom they allow to love them physically, and when" – and not surrender that power to peer and societal pressures.
- Help boys move on from a narrow definition of masculinity ("oppression all dressed up as awesomeness" as Occidental College professor Lisa Wade puts it) and become capable of empathy and emotional depth.
- Teach young people that abstinence can be honorable, but it won't be for everyone.
- Provide thorough sex education in the home and at school so that, when the time is right, they can engage in sex safely and responsibly.
- Provide a full range of reproductive services – prevention as well as post-pregnancy.

"Sex Is Not Our Problem" by Charles Blow in *The New York Times*, Jan. 11, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/11/opinion/blow-sex-is-not-our-problem.html?_r=0

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4. Teaching About Romantic Love

"What is more important in our lives than learning how to have mutual, caring, romantic relationships?" ask Richard Weissbourd, Amelia Peterson, and Emily Weinstein (Harvard University) in this important *Kappan* article. Yet schools do precious little in this realm, and parents struggle when it comes to having meaningful conversations with their teens. A high-school girl was quoted in a 2011 *New York Times* article saying, "As a society, we always tell kids, 'Work hard, just focus on school, don't think about girls or guys – you can worry about that stuff later, that stuff will work itself out,' but the thing is, it doesn't."

The cost of this neglect is profound: teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, substance abuse, depression, and many other adolescent problems can be traced back to anxiety and failure in romantic relationships, not to mention an appalling amount of misogynistic language and sexual harassment. In addition, say Weissbourd, Peterson, and Weinstein, "Failure to prepare young people for healthy love and sex can reverberate destructively throughout their lives" – in marital conflict and misery, domestic abuse, divorce, the inability to form relationships, workaholism, and alcohol abuse.

Into the vacuum left by parents and schools surge pornography, images and songs that objectify and debase women, and cultural myths about romantic love – that "real love" is an instant attraction, an intoxication, an obsession. "For adults to hand over responsibility for educating young people about love and sex to popular culture is a dumbfounding, epic abdication of responsibility," say the authors. "[Y]oung people want and need many uncontroversial, vital forms of relationship and sex education. When it comes to relationship education, it is, in fact, possible to find a great deal of common ground across the usual political divides."

Sex education, whether its theme is abstinence-till-marriage or abstinence-plus-information-about-contraception-and-safe-sex, is basically "disaster prevention", say Weissbourd, Peterson, and Weinstein. It usually includes some guidance on how to prevent pregnancy and STDs, and is taught once or twice in the secondary-school years, often by untrained teachers. This approach is driven by a series of distorted images of American adolescents: horny kids bouncing recklessly from one "hook-up" to another; casual and exhibitionistic about their relationships; incapable of distinguishing between sex and love; uninterested in true intimacy. It's not surprising, then, that most sex education courses have little or no effect on young people's attitudes. "Some teens and young adults we have spoken with simply view their sex education courses as ridiculous and stupefyingly distant from their daily hopes, questions, and fears," say the authors. So where do kids get information? Peers, older siblings, older peers, and, of course, the media and the Internet.

Weissbourd, Peterson, and Weinstein surveyed 16-20-year-olds in high schools and colleges, and what they learned suggests the need for better-designed sex education to help teens avoid bad decisions, pregnancy, and STDs – and much more. Contrary to the myths, only 10-15 percent of high-school and college students are having sex with multiple partners; the other 85-90 percent are interested in hanging out with friends on Saturday night and being involved in an intimate romantic relationship. "The real crisis is not young people hooking up recklessly; it's our miserable failure as adults to provide young people with even rudimentary forms of meaningful guidance on how to develop gratifying, mature, respectful sexual and love relationships," say the authors. Their research revealed that kids are looking for guidance on what true love is, how to form mature relationships, how to do the "work" in a relationship, how to avoid getting hurt, and how to break up when things don't work out. One Boston-area high-school teacher said that students have an insatiable desire to talk about this subject: "They're much more present, thoughtful, available to themselves when they talk about love. I always feel bad when we have to move on to another topic."

"One way to develop these capacities is to provide students with various examples of caring, vibrant romantic relationships," say Weissbourd, Peterson, and Weinstein, "showing how thoughtful, self-aware adults deal with common stresses and challenges. (One can imagine students watching and discussing, for instance, the compelling, mature marriage of the main couple on the TV show "Friday Night Lights.") It would encourage students to reflect on the many forms of love – 'There are as many loves as there are hearts,' Tolstoy says – and develop their thinking about how to distinguish immature from mature love and how to parse the myriad forms of attraction, infatuation, and love. Done well, these conversations can respond to students' underlying anxieties, help them avoid badly wounding and even scarring each other, and improve their abilities to develop and maintain a wide range of relationships. Further, reflecting on romantic and sexual relationships can help students develop important academic skills and may be the most powerful way to teach young people ethics – far more effective than the typical forms of character education in high school and college – because ethical issues in romantic relationships meet teens exactly where they are emotionally." For example:

- *What do I do if I know my friend is cheating on his girlfriend who is also my friend?*
- *Is infidelity justified under any circumstances?*
- *Is it exploitation when a senior dates a freshman?*

There are also opportunities in the regular curriculum to get into conversations about romance and love, say the authors. History, literature, and social studies are prime territory, as well as after-school programs and athletic teams. "Sports coaches especially need guidance on talking about romance and love," say Weissbourd, Peterson, and Weinstein, "given how commonly they're viewed as mentors by the more than 40 million children who play organized sports and given how frequently they hear low-minded talk among boys about girls and expressions of homophobia on buses and in locker rooms."

A small number of U.S. programs have moved in this direction, including Love U2: Increasing Your Relationship Smarts and The Art of Loving Well. Other countries, including Norway, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand, are implementing promising programs. It's vital to develop high-quality curriculum and provide the training and online support needed for programs to take root.

"Preparing Students for Romantic Relationships" by Richard Weissbourd, Amelia Peterson, and Emily Weinstein in *Phi Delta Kappan*, December 2013/January 2014 (Vol. 95, #4, p. 54-58), www.kappanmagazine.org; Weissbourd is at richard_weissbourd@gse.harvard.edu.

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5. Getting Teacher Evaluation Right

In this thoughtful American Association of School Administrators website article, Barry Vitcov (New Teacher Center) urges school districts to change teacher evaluation from being a one-way street – principals telling teachers how they are doing – to a two-way street in which principals and teachers collaborate in three ways:

• *A shared understanding of teaching and learning* – Classroom visits are primarily judgmental, says Vitcov, something that is done *to* teachers. Many superintendents see inter-rater reliability as an important challenge, and they send their principals off to workshops where they watch video clips and practice rubric-scoring. The assumption is that rubric scores measure research-based "best practices" in a precise way. But classroom dynamics are far too complex to be reliably scored on any instrument, says Vitcov: "Rubric language lacks finite clarity and requires interpretation and deeper understanding of what is written. When the addition of varied classroom contexts and observer bias is taken into consideration, ratings become even more skewed." For example, what does it mean that students are "engaged"? Does it mean they are listening attentively to the teacher? Talking together in cooperative learning groups? Working on cognitively demanding tasks?

"A disturbing trend I've seen with supervision and evaluation is the use of electronic devices, popularized by iPad applications, on which principals record a classroom observation that is subsequently e-mailed to the teacher," says Vitcov. "While this practice is accepted by many as a boon to efficiency and thus more frequent classroom observations – frequent classroom observations being a good practice – it reduces dialog between principals and

teachers and emphasizes the principal as judge and jury… This check-off mentality is an attempt to use the science of teaching without honoring the art of teaching. And one rater's bias toward one particular instructional practice can strongly influence how they use a rubric."

One way to change these unfortunate dynamics, he says, is for principals and teachers to visit classrooms or watch video clips together, talk about what they see, and develop a common understanding of the district's evaluation criteria. "Ongoing professional development where principals and teachers reflect on instruction and student outcomes as part of a joint learning process helps to shift what is often perceived as a negative process to a positive one," he says. "It is through active dialog with and among principals and teachers that shared understandings of effective practices will ultimately impact student achievement." In addition, he says, "The system needs to support principals to do frequent classroom observations with frequent conversations with teachers about teaching and learning."

• *Transparency and joint ownership* –Vitcov says he has visited schools where teachers talk to their supervisors about what to look for during classroom visits. These look-for suggestions can come from grade-level teams, subject-area departments, or a whole faculty – for example, when students are being asked to apply knowledge from prior instruction, what type and quality of student responses should be observed? "It is through these kinds of discussions that supervision becomes a shared process," says Vitcov, "and those shared processes can result in more accurate and community-calibrated evaluations. It allows a sense of intra-rater reliability between administrators and teachers. When the central office involves principals in frequently using this sort of community-generated knowledge with one another, it builds inter-rater reliability among principals."

• *Focusing on student learning* – "We've known for a long time," says Vitcov, "that the alignment of content (what is taught), instruction (how content is taught), and assessment of student achievement is fundamental to high-functioning schools." A major limitation with conventional classroom supervision is that it focuses on teacher behaviors rather than student learning. "What I ask principals to do," he says, "instead of simply watching what the teacher is doing, is to first look at what the students are doing... Looking at what students are doing before strict attention to what teachers are doing encourages principals and teachers to examine how student achievement was a result of instruction. Principal and teacher dialog that connects student outcomes with teacher behaviors is an important step in determining next learning targets, instructional strategies, and assessment of student learning."

"Teacher Ratings in a PLC World" by Barry Vitcov on the American Association of School Administrators website, January 2014, https://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=31418; Vitcov can be reached at barry.vitcov@gmail.com.

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6. Should a Supervisor Intervene During a Classroom Observation?

In this *Kappan* article, Newark charter-school leader Paul Bambrick-Santoyo says that most educators believe it's inappropriate for a supervisor to give teachers feedback while they are teaching; the expectation is that the supervisor should be a silent observer. The "fly on the

wall" approach makes sense if the feedback is too substantive or detailed for the teacher to handle during the class, if the feedback would distract the teacher from a specific practice he or she was working on, or if it might derail the lesson.

But real-time feedback can be helpful, says Bambrick-Santoyo, if it is something the teacher can implement immediately, can learn from, and it is given in an unobtrusive manner. He suggests three techniques:

• Nonverbal communication – The supervisor and teacher agree on specific signals to telegraph a particular course of action – for example, holding up a red card means the teacher is doing too much of the talking.

• Quiet verbal prompts – When students are doing independent or group work, the supervisor might whisper a quick suggestion out of students' hearing – for example, the need to deal with a student who is off task.

• Raise a hand to be called on – This allows the teacher to give the supervisor the floor while maintaining his or her authority, and allows the supervisor to interject a suggestion or ask students a question to clarify what they understand. After the class, it's important for the supervisor to clarify with the teacher the reason for interjecting.

"Giving and Getting Feedback in Real Time" by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo in *Phi Delta Kappan*, December 2013/January 2014 (Vol. 95, #4, p. 72-73), www.kappanmagazine.org; the author can be reached at pbambrick@uncommonschools.org.

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7. "Instructional Rounds" Conducted by Teachers

In this *Harvard Education Letter* article, Lee Teitel (Harvard Graduate School of Education) describes how a Connecticut principal who had been participating in the Instructional Rounds process (principals and superintendents touring classrooms and providing feedback) suggested that it might be a good idea for her teachers to conduct "rounds" in their own school. "Instead of looking *at* the teachers, what if we looked *with* the teachers at the students and what they were learning?" she asked.

With her superintendent's blessing, the principal kicked off a cycle of in-school rounds. Grade-level teams identified their "stuck points," half of them observed each other one week, and then they flipped roles the next week. Grade-level team meetings became a forum for processing what they saw and committing to specific changes. Teachers repeated the process every 7-8 weeks and saw gains in instructional rigor and state test scores.

As the school-based instructional rounds process spread to other schools, there was an increase in the number of classroom visits, collaboration with external rounds teams and instructional coaches, and an increased focus on each school's major issues and improvement goals. Teitel says there are several advantages to school-based rounds:

• As insiders, teachers already know the school's issues and goals and can begin rounds with fewer preliminaries.

• Teachers are familiar with students and the curriculum and can ask more specific questions of students ("What strategy are you using?" "What do you do when you don't understand?").

• Teachers can put their insights to work in grade-level meetings the same week and in classrooms immediately afterward. "Nobody leaves at the end of the visit," says Teitel. "Teachers own the work."

School-based rounds aren't always effective. Teachers who work together may find it difficult to leave the "land of nice", making polite suggestions to each other without tackling difficult issues. They may also overlook mediocre or ineffective practices that an outsider would notice right away. That's why Teitel believes it's helpful to combine school-based rounds with visits from educators with an outside perspective.

"School-Based Instructional Rounds: Tackling Problems of Practice with Teachers" by Lee Teitel in *Harvard Education Letter*, January/February 2014 (Vol. 30, #1, p. 8, 6-7), www.edletter.org

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8. Comparing Early Warning Indicators and Teachers' Intuitions

In this *JESPAR* article, James Soland (Stanford University) asks how well teachers' hunches about whether students will drop out or enroll in college jibe with more scientific Early Warning System (EWS) data. "What new information do teachers gain by having an EWS prediction," asks Soland, "given what they already know about students from classroom observation and assessment?" Do early-warning data add precision, perhaps spotlighting borderline students who aren't showing up on teachers' radar screens? Do they push teachers to intervene earlier with at-risk students? Or are schools' statistics on course failure and attendance enough? Here are his findings:

• *How accurate are teacher predictions?* Soland found that teachers' dropout predictions were accurate more than 88 percent of the time and college enrollment predictions 74 percent of the time. Teachers were less accurate in their predictions for Latino and African-American students than with white students. More-experienced teachers made more accurate predictions than novices. Teachers of the same gender as their students made more-accurate predictions, as did teachers of the same race.

• *What informs teacher intuition?* The key variables were teachers' sense of student tenacity and preparedness, neither of which were included in the statistical data. "Teachers naturally collect a huge amount of data, especially related to academic tenacity, simply by observing their students on a daily basis," says Soland.

• *Is there evidence of self-fulfilling prophecies?* Teachers were much more likely to wrongly predict that a student would not attend college than the opposite (while predictions of dropping out were evenly split). With black and Latino students, teachers were almost twice as likely to incorrectly predict that students would drop out than they were with white students (predictions of college going were slightly more accurate). But Soland's statistical analysis found very little evidence that teacher attitudes affected student outcomes.

• *How accurate were teacher predictions compared to early warning indicator data?*
Teacher predictions about students dropping out were quite accurate, but early warning statistics were significantly more accurate in predicting students' college entry. Specifically:

- Dropping out: Teachers were accurate 89% of the time, EWI 88%
- College going: Teachers were accurate 74% of the time, EWI 83%

Soland's conclusions: First, early-warning data were less biased, providing objective confirmation of accurate teacher intuitions and corrective evidence when teachers were off base. Second, says Soland, "EWI models appeared precise for students about whom teachers disagreed or remained unsure." Third, "the accuracy of EWI predictions cannot be improved much by adding teacher judgment to the model." In short, early-warning data "help educators better focus their conversations about at-risk students around data. Predictions from these systems also allow interventions and supports to be matched to the most actionable predictors of long-term outcomes, often earlier than might otherwise be the case." And finally, for schools that don't have elaborate statistical data, simply looking at students' attendance and course failure tells a great deal about the likelihood of students dropping out or attending college.

"Predicting High School Graduation and College Enrollment: Comparing Early Warning Indicator Data and Teacher Intuition" by James Soland in *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk* (July-December 2013 (Vol. 18, #3-4, p. 233-261), http://bit.ly/KfV3yQ; Soland can be reached at jsoland@stanford.edu.

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9. Short Items:

a. No Name-Calling Week – FYI, next week is the 10-year anniversary of this anti-bullying initiative. Details at http://glsen.org/participate/programs/no-name-calling-week

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b. Massachusetts curriculum resources – This website has curriculum maps, a growing collection of backwards-designed curriculum units (in collaboration with Jay McTighe), and other resources: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/tls/

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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 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).

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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
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 Update/Curriculum Update
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Middle School Journal
NASSP Journal
NJEA Review
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 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