Marshall Memo 207

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
October 29, 2007

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"I have to end this curse. Our family has been through so many problems, continuous problems. I feel like I have to stop it, and I'm capable of stopping it."

Bukhari Washington, 14, a ninth grader at Christ the King Prep, a school he loves, in Newark, New Jersey. Bukhari lives in a shelter and has attended 13 schools since kindergarten. ("Eager to Learn, Newark Teenagers Embrace Lessons in Perseverance" by Samuel Freedman, *New York Times*, Oct. 24, 2007)

"I've come to realize that if we give students the choice to fail, some will."

Andrew Beaton, Minnesota high-school principal (see item #1)

"You cannot help kids learn algebra with psychology alone."

Uri Treisman (see item #4)

"While conversions of large, impersonal high schools have always been seen as a way to create more personalization for students and adults, another equally important goal has been largely neglected: improving the quality of teaching."

Stephen Fink and Max Silverman (see item #3)

"The next phase of education reform should begin with leaders calibrating the time requirements necessary to broadly and fully educate all children to sufficiently high standards to participate, thrive, and succeed in our society."

Paul Reville (see item #8)

1. A School Decides It Will Refuse to Let Students Fail

(Originally titled "Insisting on Success")

In this inspiring article in *Education Leadership*, Minnesota high-school principal Andrew Beaton describes his school's decision to abandon the laissez-faire attitude it formerly took when students didn't make up missed assignments or re-take failed tests. "It's *your* grade," Beaton used to say to refuseniks. "If you want to fail, that's your business." A combination of factors made Beaton change his mind. "I feel guilty that I so readily allowed failure as an option," he reflects. "I've come to realize that if we give students the choice to fail, some will."

Contributing to his turnaround was this question in, *Whatever It Takes,* a book by Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Gayle Karhanek (Solution Tree, 2004): "What happens in our school when, despite our best efforts in the classroom, a student does not learn?" Beaton realized that, because there was no schoolwide policy, the answer at this school was, "It depends on the teacher." This was clearly unacceptable.

So Beaton and his colleagues proceeded to design a policy for struggling students that was:

- Based on early intervention rather than remediation;
- Systematic and consistent throughout the school;
- Designed to enable staff to quickly and frequently identify struggling students and get them the help they needed;
- Compulsory: students would be required to receive the extra help they needed, and students who did not participate would lose athletic and other extracurricular privileges.

The new policy, implemented in the 2006-07 school year, had three major components:

• *A new advisory system* – Previously, advisory groups met for 20 minutes every Wednesday for goal-setting, team-building, discussion, and academic planning (students stayed with the same advisor through their years at the school). Under the new system, advisory groups met three times a month:

- In the first advisory, topics were similar to the previous program.
- In the second advisory, advisors met with each student individually to discuss grades, missing assignments, and progress. Since all teachers were required to update grades every three weeks (just before second advisory meetings), advisors could share up-to-the-minute information with each student.

- In the third advisory, students not meeting standards were required to go to specified classrooms to do catch-up work with teachers while other students had enrichment activities or a study hall. Since there was a week between the second and third advisories, many students scrambled to complete work and pass tests so they wouldn't have to go to the remedial classrooms.

• *After-school tutoring* – Any ninth-grader who was not meeting academic standards was required to attend tutoring after school, and those who didn't attend became ineligible for sports, dances, and other extracurricular activities. "No one wants to be on 'Mr. Beaton's list,'" says Beaton gleefully. "The day the list is published, students flood my office, reporting that they have made up their test or turned in their paper, pulling up their grade. Parents and teachers call or e-mail telling me that Sam or Sara has indeed improved his or her grade and is exempt."

• *Credit completion* – Ninth graders who fail a course but are close to passing get a different grade: W (Work in Progress). They can earn their credits working through an on-line curriculum in twice-weekly 120-minute after-school sessions during a three-week extension of the trimester. The advantage of this approach over credit-recovery is that students don't have to start all over.

Did the new approach work? Beaton shares the following statistics from the 2006-07 year:

- In the first trimester, the grade 9-12 failure rate fell 48 percent.
- The 9th-grade failure rate fell 68 percent.
- In the second trimester, the grade 9-12 failure rate fell 23 percent.
- The 9th-grade failure rate fell 45 percent.
- In the third trimester, the grade 9-12 failure rate fell 17 percent.
- The 9th-grade failure rate fell 44 percent.
- In all, there were 600 fewer failing grades than the previous school year.
- Anecdotally, students and staff confirmed that the school had "created a climate of increased expectations, accountability, and schoolwide support."

"Insisting on Success" by Andrew Beaton in *Educational Leadership*, October 2007 (Vol. 65, #2, p. 74-77); go to http://www.ascd.org and navigate to the October issue to purchase this article. Beaton can be reached at beatona@colheights.k12.mn.us.

Back to page one

2. A San Diego High School Systematically Develops Vocabulary

In this meaty and helpful *JESPAR* article, San Diego State University professor Douglas Fisher describes a four-year vocabulary-building program at Hoover High School, which had the lowest student achievement of San Diego's high schools when the program began in 1999. Fisher describes the initiative's five strands, which were developed and implemented by a literacy leadership team composed of teachers and administrators:

• *Wide reading* – Every student, teacher, administrator, counselor, health worker, and secretary was given twenty minutes every day to "just read." The school invested heavily in books, especially for the school's English language learners. In addition to the 20 minutes of Sustained Silent Reading, content-area teachers gave students time to read materials pertaining to the topic being taught (for example, an extensive collection of books on World War II and Japanese internment camps in history classrooms).

• *Read-alouds and shared reading* – Every teacher was asked to read aloud from a relevant book, article, or magazine for 3-5 minutes of every 90-minute class. Planners saw this as an excellent way to help students learn content and vocabulary. Administrators supervised teachers during read-alouds and also freed up teachers to observe each other and have follow-up conversations about effective material to read.

• *Content-specific vocabulary instruction* – Teachers in each department collaborated to build common vocabulary lists specific to their subject areas so that students would learn the same words in all sections. Teachers then worked to make vocabulary-building interesting and engaging by using vocabulary journals, vocabulary role play, word sorts, semantic feature analysis charts, list/group/label, semantic mapping, vocabulary cards, barrier games, concept ladders, and word walls.

• *Words with multiple meanings* – Hoover High teachers realized that as students moved from class to class, they were encountering the same words used in a number of different ways (for example, *run* for office, *run* this off, *run* the program, *run* in my stockings, *runny* nose, etc.) – and this was especially challenging for English language learners. Teachers collected several word lists, including one from Marzano and Pickering (2005) and came up with a coordinated schoolwide effort to help students master words with multiple meanings.

• *Words of the week based on common affixes and roots* – Teachers noticed that many Hoover students were not good at guessing the meaning of unknown words because they didn't know enough about root words, prefixes, and suffixes. So the literacy leadership team came up with the Words of the Week (WOW) program. For each week of the school year, a specific prefix, suffix, or root was selected and every teacher was expected to use, teach, and reinforce the WOW words as creatively as possible and post them on a word wall. The words were also posted schoolwide and staff made an effort to lighten things up, including using the five words of the week in a humorous sentence (e.g., "Although Larry paid a very small *tuition* for Moe's *tutelage*, his *intuition* told him using a computer *tutorial* would be less painful than the blows to the head that his current *tutor* used to emphasize each point."). Administrators prowled the school on Thursdays asking students the meanings of words, and students were invited to perform raps with the WOW words in the back quad area every Thursday. Here was Sashay's effort:

> I'm *fluent* on the mic because I flow with confidence. When I spit, I'm *fluorescent*, homie, don't get me twisted. Inside and out, I *fluctuate* on the stage just to hype the crowds. I know you love the way I bling when I move about. My good *influence* keeps me *affluent*, so the

money neva run out. As long as I'm doing what I'm doing, I'll be famous in a big white house.

Did the program work? Did it ever! Fisher reports that the school's average Gates-MacGinitie reading test scores rose from 4.3 (grade level) in 1999 to 7.6 in 2005 (student demographics remained the same). On a state vocabulary assessment between 2001 and 2005, students went from answering 30% of questions correctly to 50% correct in grade 9, 62% in grade 10, and 75% in grade 11. As for schoolwide achievement, as measured by California's Academic Performance Index of test results in math, science, social studies, and English, Hoover was the lowest-scoring school in San Diego in 1999 (and one of the lowest in the state) with an API of 444. By 2005, Hoover had climbed to 580 – an increase of 136 points, the greatest change in achievement of any high school in the district.

Fisher concludes with several lessons that he and Hoover's staff learned in their four years of hard work:

- Students need to read and be read to a lot if their vocabularies are to develop.
- A concerted effort to develop vocabulary has a ripple effect in all subject areas.
- A schoolwide approach works. "Vocabulary learning cannot be left to the discretion of individual teachers," says Fisher.
- Although it's not clear which contributed the most, Fisher believes that all five components of the Hoover program were important to success.
- Teacher involvement in designing and implementing the program was crucial.
- Teachers benefited from access to high-quality professional development.
- Using a wide repertoire of instructional strategies was key; students got bored when some teachers used the same vocabulary strategies day after day.
- Ongoing involvement by the school's administrators was essential.

"Creating a Schoolwide Vocabulary Initiative in an Urban High School" by Douglas Fisher in *Journal of Education for Students Place At Risk* (JESPAR), Fall 2007 (Vol. 12, #3, p. 337-351), no e-link available; Fisher can be reached at dfisher@mail.sdsu.edu.

Back to page one

3. Successfully Converting Large High Schools into Small Schools

"While conversions of large, impersonal high schools have always been seen as a way to create more personalization for students and adults," write Washington state educators Stephen Fink and Max Silverman in *Education Week*, "another equally important goal has been largely neglected: improving the quality of teaching… [T]he conversion process must be seen as what gets you to the beginning of the work, rather than an end of itself." They go on to describe some mistakes they believe many conversion efforts are making:

• *Unproductive planning* – Some conversions drag on for more than three years in an effort to build ownership and buy-in. "Missing from the discussions," say the authors, "are these central questions: How will we improve instruction? What do we mean by personalization?"

• *Not hiring outstanding principals* – "The same leaders who struggled to run the comprehensive high school are often expected to somehow do a better job in a small school," say Fink and Silverman.

• *Instructional cluelessness* – Unless district and school leaders have the knowledge, skill, and vision for substantive improvement, say the authors, the conversion process will focus on "factors other than what is required to improve the quality of teaching practice."

• *Trying to keep the peace* – "To appease various groups," say Fink and Silverman, "issues revolving around ability-grouping, advanced-placement opportunities, band, school spirit, or athletics may take precedence over strong efforts to improve instruction and enhance personalization."

• *Uneven hiring* – Too many schools, say the authors, fail to staff schools with "the appropriate mix of teachers who can get all students ready for college, career, and citizenship."

• *Not stepping up to the plate* – Leaders have often failed to dismiss teachers who are not successful with their students, say Fink and Silverman.

These and other problems have led some districts to give up on converting large, unsuccessful high schools, opting instead for start-ups and replications. But conversions can work, say the authors, if certain key principles are followed:

- Instructional leadership – It's essential to find principals who are adept at fostering teacher collaboration, holding staff accountable, and building a positive school culture.
- District support – "Small schools on conversion campuses are too fragile for district leaders to take a wait-and-see approach," say Fink and Silverman. "They must have a clear understanding of each principal's strengths and weaknesses, with clear plans for how they will support each leader."
- Getting the right people on the bus – "Principals and hiring teams need discretion in selecting staff members they believe can best meet their vision, mission, and the needs of their students," write the authors. This means not rehiring non-credentialed teachers.
- Deep personal relationships – Successful small schools, say Fink and Silverman, have strong student-to-student, student-to-teacher, and staff-to-staff bonds. "These relationships can only be fostered in environments that are intentionally structured to support them," they insist. The following factors get in the way: (a) A lack of independence for small schools; (b) Teachers remaining in campus-wide academic departments; (c) Teachers and/or students crossing over to other schools; (d) A common bell schedule; and (e) All-campus events that hinder the growth of unique school cultures and personalization.

"The Not-So-Inevitable Failure of High-School Conversions" by Stephen Fink and Max Silverman in *Education Week*, Oct. 24, 2007 (Vol. 27, #9, p. 29); for the whole article (with free registration), go to: http://www.edweek.org/ew/topics/research/index.html

Back to page one

4. Counteracting "Stereotype Threat" in Middle Schools

This *Education Week* article reports on ways to counteract stereotype threat – the phenomenon of students' test performance faltering because something activates a "rumor of inferiority" about their group's ability and they fear that poor performance will confirm that stereotype. Ongoing research by Stanford professor Claude Steele, New York University professor Joshua Aronson, and others has shown that almost any group of students can suffer from stereotype threat: for example, white male students' math scores took a nose-dive when they were told that the test was designed to study Asian students' apparent mathematical superiority. The same was true of elementary girls taking math tests and elderly people taking memory tests when the test-givers conveyed an innate-ability message just before subjects took the test.

Aronson says he is concerned that over time, students in the most vulnerable groups begin to avoid challenging work in areas where their group is rumored to be inferior. In one experiment, he and his colleagues found that Latino students, when told that a test measured mathematical ability, chose easier problems. "I think we need to worry about how students' vulnerability can lead to real differences in ability," he said. "As students shy away from those things that could make them smarter, it becomes sort of a negative spiral."

Researchers believe that stereotype threat begins to affect student performance at the middle-school level. That's when minority students begin to disengage from academic work and girls get nervous about their math ability, so researchers are working on effective interventions for that grade level. Drawing on the work of Carol Dweck [see article summaries in Marshall Memos 206 and 144], Aronson and Baruch College professor Catherine Good designed an experiment in which Texas seventh graders were divided into three groups and given different messages by college-student mentors:

- Group 1 students were told that intelligence could be improved and expanded.
- Group 2 students were told that learning difficulties were a normal part of the middle-school transition process.
- Group 3 students (the control group) were given an anti-drug message.

Girls' end-of-year reading and math test scores improved significantly in the first two groups, especially in math; girls' gains closed a pre-existing boy/girl achievement gap. In Group 3, despite some gains, girls did much worse than boys.

Catherine Good commented on the ways that teachers can inadvertently convey the wrong message – for example, praising students for being "smart" rather than for working hard, and giving the impression that the Einsteins and Newtons of the world made their discoveries and breakthroughs overnight, rather than toiling on them for years. "When students perceive their learning environment to convey a fixed view of intelligence," she says, "their achievement goes down." But if teachers communicate the opposite – that intelligence can be developed by effective effort – "stereotype threat doesn't have much power."

Steele, Aronson, and other researchers are encouraged by recent findings, but believe that in addition to the psychological intervention, students need solid catch-up work in the subjects in which they are underachieving. Researchers from the Strategic Education Research

Partnership (SERP) are testing a three-week summer program for low-achieving minority students, Academic Youth Development, aimed at grooming students to see themselves as a community of math scholars. In the intensive program, students learn how the brain grows and changes as it acquires new information – and also take accelerated math classes and lessons targeted on problem-solving and proportional reasoning. Uri Treisman, a University of Texas/Austin math professor who is leading the effort, says the one-two punch is essential. "It has to go hand in hand," he says. "You cannot help kids learn algebra with psychology alone. By the same token, many people look at this and say, 'The math is great,' so they give kids harder math without the psychology. That doesn't work either."

"Experiments Aim to Ease Effects of 'Stereotype Threat'" by Debra Viadero in *Education Week*, Oct. 24, 2007 (Vol. 27, #9, p. 36, 30), for the whole article (with free registration), go to: http://www.edweek.org/ew/topics/research/index.html

Back to page one

5. Number Sense: The Key to Helping Struggling Elementary Students

(Originally titled "The Need for Number Sense")

In this *Education Leadership* article, University of Delaware education professor Nancy Jordan says that we're making two mistakes with students who have "math difficulties" – we're not diagnosing them early enough, and we're drilling them on basic number facts rather than getting to the root of the problem.

Students with math difficulties haven't developed calculation fluency – the ability to quickly solve problems like 9 + 7 or 16 – 9. Most other students learn how to solve such problems by counting up or down and then becoming fluent in basic number relationships. But students with math difficulties continue to count on their fingers, don't develop fluency with basic math facts, and are seriously handicapped as math gets more difficult. The result is a downward spiral of frustration and failure. Most teachers assume the problem is that these students haven't memorized basic math facts, so their strategy is to assign lots of drill and practice. This approach isn't working, says Jordan, because the real problem is that struggling students don't have "number sense."

What is number sense? It's an intuitive knowledge of number concepts, says Jordan, including:

- Grasping and comparing quantities (6 versus 8);
- Internalizing counting principles (e.g., the final number in a count is the quantity of the set; numbers are always counted in the same order);
- Estimating quantities on a number line.

Struggling students need to grasp these concepts to be successful in math.

The problem is that students with math difficulties are often are not diagnosed until fourth grade or later. Jordan says the warning signs are there in kindergarten – and can be addressed early on. She and her colleagues have developed a number-sense screening test designed to be given three or four times during kindergarten. It measures:

- Counting skills and principles;

- Number knowledge (e.g., which number is larger or smaller);
- Nonverbal calculation (e.g., the student is shown two chips, which are then hidden from view; the student is shown three more chips, which are then hidden, and is asked how many chips there are in all);
- Story problems related to objects (e.g., Jack has three pennies; Sue gives him two more pennies; how many pennies does Jack have now?);
- Number combinations not related to objects (e.g., how much is two plus three?).

Researchers screened 400 kindergarteners four times during the year and continued to assess 300 of them in first grade. Three distinct growth trajectories emerged from the study:

- Students who started kindergarten with low number sense progressed very little;
- Students who started kindergarten with low-to-moderate number sense made steep improvements starting mid-way through kindergarten;
- Students who started kindergarten with a high degree of number sense continued to be proficient.

There were three findings from the study: (a) A student's proficiency in number sense at the beginning of kindergarten was highly correlated with math achievement at the end of first grade; (b) Low-income students were four times more likely to be in the first group; and (c) Students in the second group – those who improved their number sense – did well in math at the end of first grade, irrespective of social class. The inescapable conclusion: teachers need to intervene early, and those interventions can make a significant long-term difference, especially for low-SES students.

What can help students who enter school with undeveloped number sense? Not memorization drill, says Jordan. What these students need is "explicit help representing, comparing, and ordering numbers and joining and separating sets, particularly with totals of 5 or less." Teaching or tutoring should begin with hands-on manipulation of concrete objects, then transition to imagining set transformations without concrete materials (e.g., *Imagine four pennies. Now take away one penny. How many pennies are left?*). Number lists and board games that use number lists (like Chutes and Ladders) are very helpful. Number lines, on the other hand, are not recommended, because they start at zero and confuse young learners.

"The Need for Number Sense" by Nancy Jordan in *Educational Leadership*, October 2007 (Vol. 65, #2, p. 63-66); go to http://www.ascd.org and navigate to the October issue to purchase this article.

Back to page one

6. "Response to Intervention" for Better, Quicker Delivery of Services

(Originally titled "No More 'Waiting to Fail'")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, University of Southern Maine professor Rachel Brown-Chidsey touts the advantages of Response to Intervention (RTI), a relatively new approach to teaching and assessing students. Since the 2004 reauthorization of the federal special-education law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act), schools are allowed to use evidence of a student's failure to respond to instructional interventions as part of

the process of documenting a learning disability (before this, the criterion was a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability, and students often had to "wait to fail" before qualifying for special-education services).

Brown-Chidsey likens Response to Intervention to the prevention-focused process used in medicine. For example, with Type-2 diabetes, here are the steps:

- Primary prevention – To prevent diabetes, healthy eating and regular exercise;
- Secondary prevention – To deal with diabetes when symptoms first appear, dietary and exercise changes;
- Tertiary prevention – To reduce the effects of diabetes once it has surfaced, insulin for lifelong management.

Response to Intervention uses a similar three-step approach:

- Tier 1 – Instruction and assessment aimed at bringing all students to proficiency;
- Tier 2 – For students who haven't achieved expected levels with Tier-1 instruction, more focused assessments and interventions, for example, 30 minutes of additional daily reading and math instruction, weekly monitoring, and adjustments to fit students' needs; for many students, this is all it takes to get them back on the success track;
- Tier 3 – If a student doesn't meet expectations with Tier 1 and 2, teachers and other staff conduct a comprehensive evaluation to see if the student has a disability that requires special-education services.

This approach, says Brown-Chidsey, raises the achievement of all students, reduces the number of students who need special education, and gets services to students who need them more quickly.

"No More 'Waiting to Fail'" by Rachel Brown-Chidsey in *Educational Leadership*, October 2007 (Vol. 65, #2, p. 40-46); go to http://www.ascd.org and navigate to the October issue to purchase this article.

Back to page one

7. Once a Poor Reader, Always a Poor Reader? Not!

(Originally titled "The Case for Late Intervention")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, California educators Stephen Krashen and Jeff McQuillan argue that even if students aren't reading well in the upper-elementary grades, they can catch up. A highly effective intervention, they say, is *free voluntary reading*, defined as "reading because you want to: no book reports, no comprehension questions, and the freedom to put the book down when it is not right for you." There is overwhelming evidence, say Krashen and McQuillan, that free voluntary reading, done right over a period of years, produces higher reading comprehension test scores, better writing, better spelling, and larger vocabularies.

The keys to a successful program are: (a) access to lots of good books on a variety of topics that match students' passions; (b) plenty of quiet time to read; and (c) opportunities for students to talk about their book to peers, in discussion groups, or with their teachers.

Krashen and McQuillan go on to address three common misconceptions about free reading:

• *Misconception #1: Poor readers don't read well enough to read on their own.* Not true, say the authors, provided that high-interest/low vocabulary books are available – e.g., comic books, or the *Captain Underpants* and *Goosebumps* series.

• *Misconception #2: Poor readers don't like to read.* True, some children have developed negative attitudes, but these can be turned around by adult modeling, direct encouragement, free choice to read or not read, and providing a well-chosen "home run" book. Reading guru Jim Trelease says that such books have often created lifelong readers.

• *Misconception #3: Left to their own devices, kids will read junk.* Krashen and McQuillan argue that even if students start with light reading (e.g., comics), they tend to progress to more challenging books as their fluency and confidence grow – and often end up reading classics that their teachers would have recommended in the first place.

"The Case for Late Intervention" by Stephen Krashen and Jeff McQuillan in *Educational Leadership*, October 2007 (Vol. 65, #2, p. 68-73); go to http://www.ascd.org and navigate to the October issue to purchase this article.

Back to page one

8. Do We Need a Longer School Day and School Year?

In this important *Education Week* article, Massachusetts state education board chairman Paul Reville argues that too many educators see a zero-sum game when it comes to time and curriculum content: either we water down core content standards or we cut down on art, music, and other "secondary" subjects. This logic is wrong, he says. "It assumes that students can go forward and be successful at the next stage of their lives with substandard proficiency in core subjects, and it treats school time in its current form as absolutely immutable."

What we need to do, Reville says, is rethink our traditional school calendar and significantly expand the school day and year to match our significantly expanded 21st-century learning aspirations. "It takes more time to educate all students to a high standard of performance in core subjects," he writes, "to adequately address a broad array of additional subjects, and to provide the kind of enriched education that most parents want for their children.

"The next phase of education reform," Reville continues, "should begin with leaders calibrating the time requirements necessary to broadly and fully educate all children to sufficiently high standards to participate, thrive, and succeed in our society… This added time would allow schools to fully pursue the sciences, social studies, the arts, foreign languages, health, and vocational and technical skills, and to add social-services supports, recreational activities, off-campus learning opportunities, and a wide range of curriculum enrichments."

True, some schools waste time, Reville concedes, and they need to retool before they add more time. "More time for failing practices is a nonstarter," he writes. "But we cannot hope to educate all students, especially those who have suffered the injuries of poverty, to high levels in a wide range of competencies unless and until we 'right-size' the school day and

school year. We must reinvent the school schedule and calendar to meet the needs of today's students."

"Stop the Narrowing of the Curriculum by 'Right-Sizing' School Time" by Paul Reville in *Education Week*, Oct. 24, 2007 (Vol. 27, #9, p. 10), for the whole article (with free registration), go to: http://www.edweek.org/ew/topics/research/index.html

Back to page one

9. Short Items:

a. Dynamic history maps website – This amazing website has a series of twelve animated historical maps, including the development of the world's religions and several on the current war in Iraq and the Gulf War. Check it out at: http://www.Mapsofwar.com.

Spotted in *The Boston Globe*, Oct. 22, 2007, Sidekick p. 2

b. Music and lyrics for all subjects – This Michigan-based website has hundreds of songs, lyrics, and curriculum suggestions for math, ELA, science, social studies, foreign languages, special education, and more. Check it out at: http://SongsforTeaching.com.

Spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, October 26, 2007

Back to page one

c. Little Rock websites – Teachers covering the Civil Rights Movement will find National Park Service lesson plans at http://www.nps.gov/chsc/index.htm. There is also an online archive of *Arkansas Democrat* and *Arkansas Gazette* articles from this period at: http://www.ardemgaz.com/prev/central/index.html and http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/dl/LittleRock/littlerockdocuments.html.

"Teaching the Legacy of Little Rock" in *American Educator*, Fall 2007 (Vol. 31, #3, p. 42-45)

Back to page one

d. Constitution website – A comprehensive collection of about 1,100 U.S. Constitution documents is now available online at http://www.ConSource.org. These include the Constitution itself, James Madison's notes on the Constitutional Convention, the Federalist Papers, and the Bill of Rights' legislative history. More documents will be added, including George Washington's private and public correspondence this December.

"Worthwhile Web Sites" in *American Educator*, Fall 2007 (Vol. 31, #3, p. 3)

Back to page one

e. AVID article – This *American Educator* article describes the development and content of AVID – Advancement Via Individual Determination – a program to accelerate the achievement of middling high-school students toward college admission. The full article is available at: http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/fall2007/jacobson.htm

"Focusing on the Forgotten: How to Put More Kids on the Track to College Success" by Jennifer Jacobson in *American Educator*, Fall 2007 (Vol. 31, #3, p. 30-35, 46-47)

Back to page one

f. For high-school students: Be the first in your family to go to college – This article in *American Educator* is written specifically for high-school students who want to go to college – and need the tools to make it: http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/fall2007/cushman.htm and an additional checklist at http://www.firstinthefamily.org/checklist

"Be the First in Your Family to Go to College" by Kathleen Cushman in *American Educator*, Fall 2007 (Vol. 31, #3, p. 36-41)

Back to page one

Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

If you have comments or suggestions, if you saw an article or web item in the last week that you think should have been summarized, or if you would like to suggest additional publications that should be covered by the Marshall Memo, please e-mail: kim.marshall8@verizon.net

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 37 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 44 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are about 50 issues a year).

Subscriptions:

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

Website:

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

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

Marshall Memo subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

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

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

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