Marshall Memo 459

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
November 5, 2012

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Quotes of the Week

"You can observe a lot by watching."
Yogi Berra (quoted in item #4)

"Classroom observations can foster teacher learning – if observation systems include crucial components and observers know what to look for."
Charlotte Danielson (see item #1)

"When teachers see the concrete steps they must take to improve their practice, and when they can continually practice skills connected to those steps, transformational success comes within reach."
Paul Bambrick-Santoyo (see item #3)

"If the principal wants to make a difference in teaching and learning (rather than fulfilling a bureaucratic requirement), the best way to give feedback to teachers is face to face, ideally within 24 hours of the visit and, if possible, in the teacher's classroom when students aren't there."
Kim Marshall (see item #4)

"You have somebody's career in the palm of your hand."
A Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) teacher (see item #5)

"When I enter a classroom, I think about how I look because I want my students to know they are important, as important as a president."
Scott Farver reflecting on his years as a fifth-grade teacher (see item #8)

1. Charlotte Danielson on Effective Observation and Follow-Up

(Originally titled "Observing Classroom Practice")

"Classroom observations can foster teacher learning – if observation systems include crucial components and observers know what to look for," says teacher-evaluation guru Charlotte Danielson in this *Educational Leadership* article. To be fair, "the judgments that are made about a teacher's practice must accurately reflect the teacher's true level of performance." Although some of teachers' work is "behind the scenes", Danielson believes the most important parts of teaching can be observed in classrooms. A teacher who is ineffective in front of students can't be considered competent.

What should administrators look for in classrooms? Danielson believes that every district needs a research-based instructional framework (hers, for example) that gives everyone a detailed, well-crafted, agreed-upon definition of teaching at different levels of effectiveness. The framework should be validated, meaning that teachers who do well on the rubric produce significant gains in student achievement. Administrators should also be clear on what evidence they must gather to score teachers, and the evaluation process should be supported by training ensuring that different administrators would give pretty much the same ratings to the same teacher. In addition, it's important that teachers have a clear picture (ideally through videotapes) of performance at different levels.

Danielson believes administrators need to be proficient in four areas to conduct effective classroom observations, and should be certified in these before conducting high-stakes evaluations:

• *Collecting evidence* – She says administrators should write down what they actually see and hear in classrooms, not their opinions or interpretations. This might include something the teacher says (e.g., "Can anyone think of another idea?"), what students do (e.g., taking 45 seconds to line up), or something else (e.g., backpacks strewn in the middle of the floor). It's hard for many administrators to refrain from making judgments, says Danielson, but it's important to separate evidence from conclusions, especially when there's disagreement about a teacher's level of performance.

• *Deciding on rubric scores* – This is where the administrator takes the evidence gathered in the classroom and finds the rubric language that provides a valid interpretation and judgment. Ideally, different administrators observing the same classroom will identify the same rubric lines and the same 4-3-2-1 levels of performance. This is relatively easy for low-

inference items (did the class start on time?) but considerably more difficult for items like a teacher using questioning and discussion to deepen understanding.

• *Conducting professional conversations with teachers* – Although there are times when administrators need to tell teachers bluntly that something must change, the focus in most follow-up conferences with teachers, Danielson believes, "should be dialogue, with a sharing of views and perspectives. After all, teachers make hundreds of decisions every day. If we accept that teaching is, among other things, cognitive work, then the conversations between teachers and observers must be about cognition." These conversations "are the best opportunity to engage teachers in thinking through how they could strengthen their practice." This, of course, has implications for how administrators are trained and supported.

• *Making the teacher an active participant* – In most conventional evaluations, says Danielson, teachers are passive recipients and the administrator does almost all the work – not the best strategy for bringing about adult learning. To change this one-sided dynamic, Danielson suggests the following steps. First, both teacher and administrator become conversant with the evaluation rubric. Second, after a classroom observation, the administrator shares his or her low-inference notes with the teacher and accepts additions and edits from the teacher's perspective. Third, the teacher and administrator independently align the observation notes with the rubric, identifying which cell accurately describes and evaluates what was taking place in the classroom. Finally, they meet and compare their rubric scores and discuss any differences.

"Observing Classroom Practice" by Charlotte Danielson in *Educational Leadership*, November 2012 (Vol. 70, #3, p. 32-37), http://www.ascd.org; Danielson can be reached at info@danielsongroup.org.

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2. Robert Marzano on Two Layers of Teacher Evaluation

(Originally titled "The Two Purposes of Teacher Evaluation")

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, researcher/author Robert Marzano argues that teacher evaluation should balance two overlapping purposes: measuring teachers' effectiveness and developing their craft:

• *Measuring effectiveness* – Marzano identifies 15 items on his list of 41 teacher competencies that he believes are sufficient to quickly evaluate a teacher's pedagogical skill:

- Providing clear learning goals and scales to measure those goals;
- Tracking student progress;
- Celebrating student success;
- Establishing classroom rules and procedures;
- Identifying critical information;
- Previewing new content;
- Chunking content into digestible bites;
- Elaborating on new information;
- Recording and representing knowledge;

- Reviewing content;
- Examining similarities and differences;
- Examining errors in reasoning;
- Practicing skills, strategies, and processes;
- Noticing when students are not engaged;
- Managing response rates.

These, Marzano believes, provide an efficient evaluation of overall effectiveness but are missing many of the elements needed to help teachers get better.

• *Developing teachers' craft* – For this to occur, he says we need a more detailed list and a less frequent process. Developmental evaluation should have three characteristics:

- A comprehensive list of teaching competencies that research says are associated with student achievement (see Marzano's list below);
- A developmental scale (for example, Not Using, Beginning, Developing, Applying, and Innovating) that allows teachers to pinpoint their current level of performance;
- Acknowledging and rewarding growth; teachers and administrators select specific areas for improvement, set goals, and track progress over time.

Below is Marzano's full list of 41 criteria (of which the 15 above are a subset). He doesn't advocate evaluating teachers on all of them each year; rather, he suggests that teachers work their way through the criteria over several years. The list has three broad areas:

<u>Routine strategies</u>:

1. Providing clear learning goals and scales to measure those goals;
2. Tracking student progress;
3. Celebrating student success;
4. Establishing classroom rules and procedures;
5. Organizing the physical layout of the classroom;

<u>Content strategies</u>:

6. Identifying critical information;
7. Organizing students to interact with new knowledge;
8. Previewing new content;
9. Chunking content into digestible bites;
10. Processing new information;
11. Elaborating on new information;
12. Recording and representing knowledge;
13. Reflecting on learning;
14. Reviewing content;
15. Organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge;
16. Using homework;
17. Examining similarities and differences;
18. Examining errors in reasoning;
19. Practicing skills, strategies, and processes;
20. Revising knowledge;

21. Organizing students for cognitively complex tasks;
22. Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks involving hypothesis generation and testing;
23. Providing resources and guidance;

Strategies enacted on the spot:

24. Noticing when students are not engaged;
25. Using academic games;
26. Managing response rates;
27. Using physical movement;
28. Maintaining a lively pace;
29. Demonstrating intensity and enthusiasm;
30. Using friendly controversy;
31. Providing opportunities for students to talk about themselves;
32. Presenting unusual or intriguing information;
33. Demonstrating "withitness"
34. Applying consequences for lack of adherence to rules and procedures;
35. Acknowledging adherence to rules and procedures;
36. Understanding students' interests and backgrounds;
37. Using verbal and nonverbal behaviors that indicate affection for students;
38. Displaying objectivity and control;
39. Demonstrating value and respect for low-expectancy students;
40. Asking questions of low-expectancy students;
41. Probing incorrect answers with low-expectancy students.

"The Two Purposes of Teacher Evaluation" by Robert Marzano in *Educational Leadership*, November 2012 (Vol. 70, #3, p. 14-19), http://www.ascd.org; Marzano can be reached at robert.marzano@marzanoresearch.com.

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3. Weekly Supervision and Coaching of Teachers in Newark, NJ

(Originally titled "Beyond the Scorecard")

In this important *Educational Leadership* article, New Jersey educator/author Paul Bambrick-Santoyo questions the efficacy of using rubrics for classroom observations. Why? First, most rubrics have so many criteria that it's difficult for a teacher to absorb and implement the feedback. Second, rubric-based evaluations are usually based on one or two lessons a year – lessons that often aren't representative of a teacher's daily work. And third, evaluations usually take place toward the end of the school year – too late for teachers to make important changes.

Bambrick-Santoyo calls this the "scoreboard" approach to evaluation. In the real world of classrooms, he says, using a "theoretically complete framework of effective performance" is not what drives improved performance. In the nine high-performing Newark schools he manages, principals focus on *skillful coaching* of their teachers. Here are the key elements:

• *Frequent, short classroom visits*. Teachers in North Star Academy schools get weekly, unannounced 15-minute visits, followed every time by a face-to-face feedback conversation. When administrators are in classrooms, they don't use a long checklist; instead, they jot notes on one or two "change levers" that will help each teacher become a little more effective with students.

Are weekly classroom visits feasible? Bambrick-Santoyo says they are if administrators divide up the faculty so no one supervises more than 15 teachers, visit classrooms physically close to one another in blocks (for example, four in an hour), and lock in a schedule of weekly check-in meetings with teachers. "Routine coaching using this approach still takes significant time," he says. "But if your goal is to coach and drive teacher development, this time must be spent."

• *Focus and practice*. In feedback conversations, North Star administrators zero in on one or two specific, bite-size, attainable goals – for example, how an elementary teacher might get every single student participating in choral responses – and then role-play with the teacher to hone the skill. "This focus on key action steps cuts through the confusion that an elaborate rubric might have created and provides a clear path," says Bambrick-Santoyo. "Feedback and evaluation won't change real classrooms unless teachers build the skills needed to make a change."

• *Coach for growth, not for scores*. Instead of rubric scores, teachers walk away from each meeting with a specific goal, knowing the administrator will be back soon to see how it's going.

• *Use rubrics for summative evaluations*. North Star principals pull together their impressions from the weekly visits and conversations and evaluate each teacher twice a year using a detailed rubric. Teachers self-assess and compare their ratings with the administrator's, agreeing on final scores and goals for the remainder of the year or the next year.

"To improve the team, you don't study the scoreboard; you go out and practice," concludes Bambrick-Santoyo. "When teachers see the concrete steps they must take to improve their practice, and when they can continually practice skills connected to those steps, transformational success comes within reach."

"Beyond the Scorecard" by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo in *Educational Leadership*, November 2012 (Vol. 70, #3, p. 26-30), http://www.ascd.org; the author can be reached at pbambrick@uncommonschools.org.

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4. When Evaluating Teachers, What Works Best, High-Tech or Low-Tech?

In this *Education Week* article, Kim Marshall argues that when principals, assistant principals, and department heads supervise teachers, using laptops, tablets, and smartphones isn't always the best approach. Here's Marshall's take on what works best in each of the four components of teacher supervision:

• *Learning about the curriculum: High-tech* – Before making a classroom visit, it's helpful for administrators to know the big ideas, essential questions, knowledge and skill goals,

and planned assessments of the teacher's current curriculum unit. The most efficient way for teacher teams to share their unit plans and get comments and suggestions from colleagues and supervisors is via an easily accessible online platform like Google Docs. "With this background information," says Marshall, "it should be obvious within a minute of walking into a classroom how the lesson fits into the broader instructional plan."

• *Classroom visits: Low-tech* – "You can observe a lot by watching," said Yogi Berra, and that strikes Marshall as the best approach to observing instruction. "Take a deep breath, slow yourself down, stroll around looking over students' shoulders to check out the instructional task," he advises. "Ask yourself whether the task is appropriately rigorous and on target for the unit and lesson objectives. In addition, quietly chat with a couple of students ('What are you working on?')… and, of course, assess what the teacher is saying and doing." Within 5-10 minutes, there are always a few key take-aways, and the administrator should jot these down on a notepad, index card, or piece of paper. Using an electronic device for note-taking has two important disadvantages:

- It makes it more difficult to walk around the classroom.
- It's disconcerting to many teachers - *What's being typed? Where is the information going? Is the administrator texting or e-mailing?*

Marshall believes it's especially ineffective to try to fill out a checklist or rubric during a classroom visit: "This doubly distracts the administrator from being a good observer, imposing a long list of criteria onto a fluid, highly complex situation that requires fully focused powers of observation, mobility, wisdom, and differentiation for each teacher's background and unique classroom situation." Administrators should be formulating the two or three most important pieces of praise or coaching for each teacher, not filling out forms, Marshall believes; school leaders "should push back against attempts to 'principal-proof' the observation process, and teachers should raise concerns when administrators bring technology, checklists, and rubrics into their classrooms."

It *is* important for there to be a shared understanding of good teaching and what administrators are looking for when they visit classrooms, he continues, and suggests that school faculties look at their evaluation criteria and boil them down to no more than five key criteria that everyone can keep in their heads – for example: SOTEL: Safety, Objectives, Teaching, Engagement, and Learning.

• *Immediate feedback to teachers: Low-tech* – Some busy administrators give teachers quick feedback in written or electronic form, but Marshall believes this kind of commentary will have very little impact on classroom practice – especially checklists, rubrics, and low-inference narratives without clear conclusions or recommendations. "If the principal wants to make a difference in teaching and learning (rather than fulfilling a bureaucratic requirement), the best way to give feedback to teachers is face to face," he says, "ideally within 24 hours of the visit and, if possible, in the teacher's classroom when students aren't there." These short, informal conversations allow the teacher to explain the context, show artifacts and student work, and accept coaching and suggestions – as well as educating the administrator about what

the teacher is trying to accomplish. "Face-to-face talks are the drivers of change," says Marshall.

• *Documentation: High-tech* – The most efficient way for an administrator to keep track of numerous classroom visits and important details about each one (What time of day? Which part of the lesson? Which curriculum unit? When did the follow-up chat take place?) is electronically. Some schools are developing their own software, and a number of products are being aggressively marketed to school leaders. T-EVAL www.t-eval.com, developed by three educators in Tennessee, has the unique feature of providing a 1,000-character-maximum window for the administrator to sum up the observation and conversation and automatically e-mail it to the teacher (and archive it).

"Teacher Observation: Tech or No Tech?" by Kim Marshall in *Education Week*, Oct. 31, 2012 (Vol. 32, #10, p. 20-21), http://bit.ly/SAiZ1E

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5. Key Success Factors with Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)

(Originally titled "The Potential of Peer Review")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Harvard Graduate School of Education professor Susan Moore Johnson and Cambridge (MA) principal Susan Fiarman address two concerns often voiced about teacher involvement in teacher evaluation: Does it encroach on the principal's domain, and do peers give truly candid feedback to fellow teachers? Based on the experience of a number of districts using the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) model, Johnson and Fiarman give a ringing vote of confidence to the model – provided it's implemented well. Their suggestions:

• *Select outstanding consulting teachers*. It's essential to have a rigorous, transparent selection process to avoid the perception of favoritism. Candidates need a strong track record in the classroom (verified by unannounced visits) and demonstrated writing skills. And of course teachers and union officials need to be part of the selection process.

• *Establish clear guidelines for consulting teachers*. This includes how many classroom visits they should conduct with their assigned teachers, what types of assistance to provide, and what steps to take with persistently ineffective teachers.

• *Use clear teaching standards and rubrics*. Peer reviewers must be able to give feedback and direction to teachers using specific, agreed-upon language about effective and ineffective classroom practices.

• *Offer good training and support*. Consulting teachers need lots of help to develop and hone the repertoire of skills necessary to build rapport and trust with teachers, observe classrooms perceptively, help teachers shift from practices that aren't working, and keep accurate records – all in a much less-structured job than they've had as teachers. "It's a huge learning curve," said one consulting teacher. "People come to this position at the top of their game. Consulting teachers are the leaders at their schools. This is sort of a kick to the ego because you have to learn so much in this job."

• *Make sure the PAR panel does its job*. This is most important when dealing with unsatisfactory teachers. "You have somebody's career in the palm of your hand," said one consulting teacher. Here are the types of questions asked by PAR panels in such cases: *What have you done to help her? Have you videotaped her? Have you taken her on a peer visit to see a master teacher? What resources have you given her? What's the structure in the school like? Does she have a team leader who's working with her on a weekly basis? Is her staff development teacher helping her?*

"The Potential of Peer Review" by Susan Moore Johnson and Sarah Fiarman in *Educational Leadership*, November 2012 (Vol. 70, #3, p. 20-25), http://www.ascd.org; the authors can be reached at susan_moore_johnson@gse.harvard.edu and sfiarman@cpsd.us. [See Marshall Memo 254 for a longer article about peer review.]

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6. Literacy Intervention Teachers Implement Their Theory of Action

In this thoughtful article in *The Reading Teacher*, Diane Stephens (University of South Carolina/Columbia) and a group of colleagues in South Carolina school districts describe a three-year evolution in their thinking about Tier 2 RTI intervention teaching in their elementary schools. The new thinking developed in classrooms, weekly teacher meetings, summer retreats, and a series of graduate courses on literacy. Here are the challenges these educators encountered – and what they learned:

• *Challenge #1: Naming our beliefs* – At the beginning of their work together, teachers didn't have a clear set of literacy beliefs. "No one had ever asked us before," said one. Three years later, they had a carefully honed "Theory of What Matters for Readers," namely that they wanted all students to:

- Understand that reading is meaningful;
- Believe in their ability to make sense of texts;
- Consider reading a pleasurable event;
- Self-monitor spontaneously and consistently;
- Have the knowledge, skills, and strategies to problem-solve to ensure meaning;
- Use this information flexibly;
- Use this information independently;
- Use this information with increasingly sophisticated texts.

Teachers used these goals to assess students' instructional needs each year, and were surprised to find that there were bigger deficits in the attitudinal areas (for example, one-third didn't know that that reading is a meaning-making process) than in strategies and skills (only about nine percent needed help here). Students who weren't clear on the first three items on the list were stuck, and conventional reading instruction made little difference. Students who had positive beliefs in the first three were ready to soak up instruction and get better.

With this broad-gauge diagnosis of their students' needs, teachers began to focus on changing students' beliefs about reading.

• *Challenge #2: Constructing a theory of students as readers* – For example, one of the intervention teachers noticed that a boy was reading with only fair comprehension and was a year behind grade level. Her immediate impulse was to work on increasing his sight vocabulary, since many words weren't in his oral vocabulary, but that had already been tried by his regular teacher and wasn't working. The intervention teacher saw the deeper problem: the boy didn't enjoy reading and never read on his own. So she began reading high-interest books aloud, gave the boy audiotapes to take home, and saw a marked increase in independent reading, self-monitoring, and vocabulary development. With lots of support, this student was reading on grade level within a year.

• *Challenge #3: Choosing appropriate texts* – Initially, intervention teachers worked to get students reading texts at the "just right" level. But as they worked with students, teachers noticed that many regarded reading as "work." So teachers switched to a new selection criterion for books: students should see them as fun and easy. Students' pleasure and enjoyment increased, as did their confidence, content knowledge, sight-word vocabularies, and sense of story structure – and students' reading levels accelerated.

• *Challenge #4: Providing focused instruction consistent with the "what matters" list* – Many of the students in teachers' intervention groups scored "Not yet" on every one of the items on the "What matters" list, and it was tempting to try to address all of the factors at once. But this confused and overwhelmed students, and teachers learned to home in on one thing at a time.

• *Challenge #5: Helping students develop a generative theory of reading and of themselves as readers* – "Changing the trajectory of a student as a reader would be a much simpler process if we… could simply tell students what to do and when to do it, and then spend time reinforcing that behavior," say the authors. But that was clearly not working with a girl who believed that reading was just calling words, substituted a nonsense word every time she got to a word she didn't know, and didn't believe a text *needed* to make sense. "To help a child succeed as a reader," the authors concluded, "we must create a context in which the student can construct a generative theory." Once this is in place, students begin to self-monitor and problem-solve using skills and strategies they already have and those that teachers introduce.

With this girl's intervention group, the teacher began to read aloud from a book about a princess (the girl's favorite topic), paused, discussed the action so far, and challenged students to guess what would happen next. Soon students were flipping ahead in the book and using pictures and words to generate predictions. The teacher read other books in the princess series, discussing the meaning and continuing to challenge students to predict outcomes. In her independent reading, the girl began to pause when she came across unknown words and work to figure them out. She *wanted* the text to make sense, and for the first time she understood that reading was meaningful. It took her six months to change her theory of reading and then she made rapid progress and was soon reading on grade level.

• *Challenge #6: Ensuring consistent instructional focus across stakeholders* – At first, there were differences in the instructional approach in Tier 1 and Tier 2 classrooms. Over time, intervention teachers worked with regular-education teachers, speech therapists, and others to

create a seamless instructional experience for students throughout each school day. One strategy was to frontload content material and vocabulary so struggling students would be more successful during Tier 1 classes. Regular-education teachers also introduced below-level books and modified assessments to help below-level students grasp material and feel successful.

What were the results? Using careful pre- and post-assessments, the team found that, on average, students gained two months of reading proficiency for every month of instruction.

"'I Know There Ain't No Pigs with Wigs' – Challenges of Tier 2 Intervention" by Diane Stephens, Robin Cox, Anne Downs, Jennie Goforth, Lisa Jaeger, Ashley Matheny, Kristi Plyler, Sandra Ray, Lee Riser, Beth Sawyer, Tara Thompson, Kathy Vickio, and Cindy Wilcox in *The Reading Teacher*, October 2012 (Vol. 66, #2, p. 93-103), http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/TRTR.01094/abstract; Stephens can be reached at stephend@mailbox.sc.edu.

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7. Principles of Teaching On a Navajo Reservation

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Paul Zolbrod writes about teaching upper-level literature and basic composition courses at the Navajo Nation's Diné College Crownpoint campus in New Mexico. His mission, he says, has been advancing literacy that tribal students need "if they are to pass comfortably between two cultures without relinquishing a proud heritage." Over 22 years on the reservation, Zolbrod has dealt with serious obstacles, including some elders who regard teachers as the enemy, kinship ties that matter more than student-teacher relationships, a strong oral tradition, and a defining creation mythology. Here are the lessons he's learned. "They overlap, they remain tentative, and they invite possible application into the educational mainstream," he says.

• *The medium of print is fundamental*. "Together with reading, learning to write remains fundamental both on and off the reservation," says Zolbrod, "even as electronic media supplant print."

• *Students should have the same professor through an entire course sequence*. "Trust develops early," he says, "and progress and problems alike are easily observed without formal assessment."

• *Grammar matters, because language is a system*. Zolbrod's students come to school having mastered their own language, but haven't learned how it works (i.e., nouns, verbs, etc.), so mastering grammar is essential to literacy in English.

• *The coupling of subjects and verbs is the starting point*. Zolbrod likens subjects to males, verbs to females, and the resulting clause their living offspring: "Likewise, a compound or complex sentence assumes the characteristics of extended kinship, just as a paragraph resembles a clan… In written English, each clause is to be as carefully crafted as turquoise inlay as it takes its proper place in forging a silver bracelet."

• *Successful teaching is designed in a cultural context*. Drawing on Navajo creation stories, Native American concepts about the four parts of human life, and the four steps in undertaking tasks, Zolbrod has his students craft essays in these stages: thinking, planning,

execution, and perfecting. "It all begins with recognizing one's own cognitive Navajo self," he concludes. "For me it adds to the continuing pleasure of learning from those I have come to teach."

"On the Reservation, Balancing Literacy and the Oral Tradition" by Paul Zolbrod in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Nov. 2, 2012 (Vol. LIX, #10, p. B34-35), http://chronicle.com/article/On-the-Reservation-Literacy/135288/

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8. A New Mexico Teacher Decides to Wear a Tie to School

In this *Education Week* article, Western New Mexico University/Gallup professor Scott Farver remembers trying to decide whether to wear a necktie when he was a fifth-grade teacher in a high-poverty school. When he wore one, students commented on how dressy he looked and one colleague asked, "Isn't that a bit much for here?"

But Farver wasn't deterred. "I felt more professional," he says. "I felt more important. I felt like my students felt like they were more important." He ended up wearing ties for the rest of the year.

At one point, Farver had his students write letters to President Obama about bullying and teen alcohol abuse – issues that were very much on their minds. To everyone's surprise, they received a letter from the White House and a follow-up phone message saying that the president would like to stop by the school if he was in the area.

This got Farver thinking: if the president really did visit the school, people would dress up. "If I wore a tie for an important person like the president of the United States but not for my students, what kind of message would that send? If I did not wear a tie, did that mean they were unimportant? … We dress up for important people and events. We dress up for presidents. My students are important. Every day of school is important, as important as if the president were visiting."

"So I wear a tie," says Farver, his school clothing choices changed for good. "I shine my shoes. I get haircuts. I try to reflect [my students'] value by what I wear, how I speak, and how I behave. When I enter a classroom, I think about how I look because I want my students to know they are important, as important as a president."

"About the Necktie" by Scott Farver in *Education Week*, Oct. 31, 2012 (Vol. 32, #10, p. 21), www.edweek.org

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

If you have comments or suggestions, if you saw an article or web item in the last week that you think should have been summarized, or if you would like to suggest additional publications that should be covered by the Marshall Memo, please e-mail: kim.marshall48@gmail.com

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 43 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 45 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are 50 issues a year).

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Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

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