

# Marshall Memo 504

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education  
September 30, 2013

## In This Issue:

1. [Making a school into a community of leaders](#)
2. [A college professor finds out what it's like to struggle in class](#)
3. [Saying no without being unpleasant](#)
4. [Making homework meaningful](#)
5. [Evolution and climate change in the curriculum](#)
6. [Getting boys to read](#)
7. [Helping students notice and make good use of graphics as they read](#)
8. [Jazzing up a science unit with fine-arts activities](#)
9. [Research findings on gestures, misconceptions, and budding engineers](#)
10. [Using mobile devices as tools in French and German courses](#)
11. [French schools give up their free Wednesdays](#)

## Quotes of the Week

“Science must be something that students do, not something that is done to them.”

Judy Beck, Laura Kaufmann, and Cece Toole (see item #8)

“‘I didn’t do it – it was a stupid assignment’ often means ‘I couldn’t do it – it made me feel stupid.’”

Cathy Vatterott (see item #4)

“Students given merely once-over or light instruction in evolution are woefully under-educated... Students and adults deprived of this knowledge are scientifically illiterate and ill prepared for life in a global, competitive world.”

Eugenie Scott and Minda Berbeco (see item #5)

“You cannot get better at reading if you don’t spend time reading; it’s just that simple.”

Frank Serafini (see item #6)

“Listening to beloved stories again and again is a step on the road to literacy that cannot be ignored, no matter how gifted a child might be, or how disadvantaged; no matter which language he or she speaks; no matter when he or she starts school; no matter which country he or she lives in.”

Mem Fox in “What Next in the Read-Aloud Battle?” in *The Reading Teacher*, September 2013 (Vol. 67, #1, p. 4), <http://bit.ly/14YrObA>

---

## 1. Making a School Into a Community of Leaders

(Originally titled “The Time Is Ripe (Again)”)

In this thoughtful article in *Educational Leadership*, leadership guru Roland Barth explains why teacher leadership hasn’t taken off:

First, principals want to be in control. “If I, as a principal, delegate or accept a teacher’s leadership of something and it goes badly,” says Barth, “...the superintendent isn’t going to call that teacher. He or she is going to call me.”

Second, some teachers resent a colleague with special responsibilities. “Who the heck do you think you are?!”

Third, teachers’ plates are full. With increasing accountability for student achievement, most teachers can’t find time for schoolwide matters.

Fourth, teacher leadership can be seen as siding with the enemy. In many schools, there’s an us-versus-them dynamic.

Finally, the business model in schools doesn’t support teacher leadership. The usual message to line workers is, “Do your job.”

These headwinds notwithstanding, Barth believes teacher leadership can make progress because:

- *School leadership is too big a job for one person.* “For a long time, people have realized that the principal alone can’t run something as complex and enormous as a school,” says Barth. “But now I think *principals* realize that.” As a school leader, Barth asked teachers every September what piece of the school they wanted to take responsibility for – the parent committee, PD, etc. “If all teachers are expected to be leaders,” he says, “no one is breaking the taboo about standing higher than the others because everyone is on the same higher level.”

- *The Common Core is a golden opportunity for teacher leadership.* It spells out *what* students should know, not *how* it should be taught. The road is wide open for teachers to shape the classroom details.

- *New models of leadership are emerging.* A number of schools are experimenting with new roles for teachers. Colleges and universities are a good model here – professors are involved in decisions about curriculum, graduation requirements, scheduling, hiring of colleagues and administrators, finance, and use of space.

Barth believes that one key to teacher leadership is unlocking teachers’ secret passions. “Teachers tend to keep two sets of books,” he says. “One lists what they have to do to comply; the other lists what they believe is best for their students.” As principal, Barth got everyone

involved in a weekly two-hour elective where they could teach something they really cared about, and the energy and enthusiasm filtered into the rest of the week.

Barth flinches when he hears, “I’m just a teacher.” All teachers are significant leaders of their students, he says. “The shift comes when you also take a piece of leading the school. There’s tremendous satisfaction that comes from making that jump, to being an owner rather than a renter here.” That’s when everyone’s learning curve – teachers, students, principals – gets a lot steeper.

“The Time Is Ripe (Again)” by Roland Barth in *Educational Leadership*, October 2013 (Vol. 71, #2, p. 10-16), [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org)

*[Back to page one](#)*

## **2. A College Professor Finds Out What It’s Like to Struggle in Class**

“We all complain about our weak students,” says Laura Browder (University of Richmond) in this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, “– their slacking off during group work; their bizarre inability to comprehend simple directions; their disorganization; their need to tell us how smart they really are, despite appearances; the way they sometimes put their heads down on their desks.” Imagine Browder’s chagrin when she saw herself exhibiting these same behaviors when she took an intensive course in Russian last summer.

She enrolled in the University of Virginia’s Summer Language Institute so she could translate her Russian grandparents’ letters and documents from Soviet archives. Browder was optimistic as she plunged into the nine-hour-a-day course because she had learned Danish as a child and was a good memorizer. But from the very beginning, things did not go well. The students around her were 20 years younger and weren’t having much difficulty, but to Browder, the work seemed impossible. “I was freaking out,” she says. “I had no idea what was going on and no idea how to begin fixing it. As a somewhat lax English major, I had never really mastered basic study skills. Being a professor required a very different skill set. And now my deficiencies as a college student were coming back to haunt me.”

In the early weeks, she found herself behaving as some of her worst students had in her own classroom:

- She told the professor the work was too hard for her.
- She goofed off in class, talking American politics with another student rather than constructing a Russian dialogue, and her group had to fake its way through a class presentation.
- She stayed up too late doing her homework and came to class exhausted.
- On some days, she was so confused and overwhelmed that she misunderstood the teacher’s directions and came to class unprepared.
- She constantly fought the urge to say she was smarter than she appeared to be.
- Her heart sank when another student asked her incredulously, “You still don’t know how to do that?”

- “And in the late afternoon,” Browder says, “all I wanted to do was put my head down on the desk and let the teacher’s words just wash over me.”

But with lots of help, she began to cope. The professor told her that people learn languages at different rates, and if she didn’t keep trying, there was no way she would make progress. “That obvious truth proved to be the best and most comforting piece of advice anyone gave me about the process,” she says.

Other women in the course expressed sympathy and showed her their systems for taking notes. She stopped sitting next to the student who couldn’t understand her difficulties. Browder’s 13-year-old daughter helped her buy the right school supplies. She raised her hand often, and although she made mistakes, she improved. She went to office hours, made flashcards, memorized the 96 possible case endings for regular nouns and adjectives, and devoted Sunday afternoons to studying. Gradually, she stopped feeling like the worst student in the class.

“Later in the summer,” says Browder, “during the optional 7:30 a.m. translation hour, we worked our way through some samples of my grandparents’ Comintern personnel files. It was thrilling to feel that – with a great deal of handholding – I could read them.” In her final oral exam, she started to recite the 12-line poem she’d worked hard to memorize and after three words, her mind went blank: “At that point, all I could do as laugh – and then stumble my way through the rest of the poem. As a teacher, I would have assumed that a student behaving as I did simply hadn’t bothered to learn her poem.”

In the end, Browder passed the course; she translated 15 lines of a Chekhov story and delivered a short talk about her grandfather in Russian, complete with a joke in the final line. “Most of all,” she concludes, “I experienced firsthand the disorientation and panic of a freshman – as well as moments of intellectual excitement. Whatever happens, I will never look the same way at a student with her head down on the desk. I’ve been there.”

“My Summer As a Bad Student” by Laura Browder in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sept 27, 2013 (Vol. LX, #4, p. B16), no free e-link available

[Back to page one](#)

### **3. Saying No Without Being Unpleasant**

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Allison Vaillancourt (University of Arizona/Tucson) says she often has to figure out how to politely decline a request to participate in a committee or activity for which she just doesn’t have time. Here are some approaches she’s come across:

- “I’ve been trying to figure out a way to say that I could do this – because I would enjoy it. But the terrible truth is that I am really overcommitted in the next couple of years, and adding anything is probably not a good idea. I really hope I can help in the future.”
- “I’m not the best person for that, so let me suggest ---- or ----.”
- “It would be so great to work with you on this, so I’m crushed that my schedule won’t permit me.”
- “I wish I could say yes, but I’m in the middle of a big project right now.”

- “This is an important event, and I’m afraid I wouldn’t be able to give it the attention it deserves.”
- “Can you give me a few weeks to think about this and call you if I think I can make this work?”
- “I wouldn’t be able to participate on a regular basis, but I’d be happy to serve as a sounding board from time to time.”
- “You are so kind to think of me. I wish I could.”

“Saying No Without Being Negative” by Allison Vaillancourt in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sept 27, 2013 (Vol. LX, #4, p. A43); a slightly different version of this article is at <http://chronicle.com/blogs/onhiring/you-are-so-kind-to-think-of-me/41025>

*[Back to page one](#)*

#### **4. Making Homework Meaningful**

In this *AMLE Magazine* trio of side-by-side articles, three educators share their views on homework:

- Cathy Vatterott (University of Missouri/St. Louis) says the usual rationale for giving homework – teaching students responsibility – is incomplete. “That may encourage obedience and responsibility for *working*,” she says, “but the more important purpose is to encourage students to take responsibility for *learning*. When properly designed, homework encourages students to self-evaluate and reflect on their learning.” Homework should also help teachers see how well students understand, what’s getting in the way of learning, and what should be done next.

Vatterott is against grading homework because that raises the stakes and prevents an authentic dialogue between student and teacher. “I didn’t do it – it was a stupid assignment’ often means ‘I couldn’t do it – it made me feel stupid,’” she says. But will students do homework if it isn’t graded? Yes, if they get feedback and the process genuinely helps them be more successful in school. “Coaches don’t keep score during practice,” says Vatterott, “but they *do* give lots of individualized feedback and they *do* require their athletes to practice.”

- Lee Jenkins (consultant) says, “Traditional homework practice is one of the major contributors of dislike or even disdain for school.” Most homework in middle and high schools is copied, a number of students’ A grades on tests are pulled down by low homework grades, and teachers spend a lot of time grading homework – time that would be better spent preparing lessons. Jenkins suggests a different approach:

- Assign homework.
- Don’t collect it.
- Instead, give a short quiz at the beginning of class consisting of a random selection of 2-5 problems from the homework.
- Quickly grade the quiz.

“The homework quiz measures what is in the students’ heads and not what they copied or was completed by their parents,” says Jenkins. This reduces student pressure and cuts way down on teacher grading time.

• Larry Sandomir (a teacher in a progressive New York City school) says, “I try to create a learning process rather than unnecessary learning tension... Homework matters if it deepens and expands a student’s understanding of and appreciation for a particular subject. It matters if it helps a student better balance his or her life in terms of time management and sense of proportion... [Students] should want to discuss what they are doing with their parents because it makes them think, wonder, get excited, or even struggle.”

“Giving Feedback,” “Removing Pressure,” and “Making Meaning” by Cathy Vatterott, Lee Jenkins, and Larry Sandomir (respectively) in *AMLE Magazine*, September 2013 (Vol. 1, #2, p. 6-7), [www.amle.org](http://www.amle.org); the authors can be reached at [Vatterott@umsl.edu](mailto:Vatterott@umsl.edu), [lee@lbellj.com](mailto:lee@lbellj.com), and [lawrence.sandomir@calhoun.org](mailto:lawrence.sandomir@calhoun.org).

*[Back to page one](#)*

## **5. Evolution and Climate Change in the Curriculum**

In this article in *Scientific American*, Eugenie Scott and Minda Berbeco (National Center for Science Education) warn against the latest attempt to undermine the teaching of evolution in schools – “academic freedom” legislation in some states encouraging teachers to convey the “evidence against evolution” – evidence that can be found only in creationist literature, along with assertions that the earth is not billions of years old.

The theory of evolution “is one of the most important ideas in human intellectual history,” say Scott and Berbeco, “and students have a right to learn it. The common ancestry of living things and the mechanisms of inheritance explain why things are the way they are. Students and adults deprived of this knowledge are scientifically illiterate and ill prepared for life in a global, competitive world. Students given merely once-over or light instruction in evolution are woefully undereducated.”

Scott and Berbeco are also concerned about attempts to prevent teachers from conveying the facts about climate change. “That the planet is warming and that the burning of fossil fuels over the past 150 years explains the current rapid rate of change are virtually indisputable in the scientific community,” they say. “Opposition to climate change stems less from religious ideology than from political and economic ideology... Whatever our society decides to do about climate change, it must be based on solid science. We all will suffer if that science is compromised because of ideological opposition to its consequences. Beginning learners have a right to know what scientists have concluded. It is not right to allow religious, political, or economic ideologies to trump instruction in science.”

“Climate in the Classroom: Evolution Is Not the Only Scientific Idea Being Kept Out of the Curriculum” by Eugenie Scott and Minda Berbeco in *Scientific American*, October 2013 (Vol. 309, #4, p. 14), <http://bit.ly/18HjXw8>

*[Back to page one](#)*

## 6. Getting Boys to Read

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, Frank Serafini (Arizona State University) addresses boys' chronic underachievement in reading. Some of the reasons:

- On average, boys spend less time reading than girls.
- Boys may have few male readers in their lives to emulate.
- The things boys like to read are often not allowed in school.
- Boys are generally less concerned with reading to please the teacher.
- About 90% of elementary teachers are women and may relate less well to boy readers.
- Boys are often more physically active than girls and less willing to read for extended periods of time.

“Our goal is to get boys to comprehend more difficult, complex material,” says Serafini, “but first we have to get them reading... In all too many classrooms, dramatic novels with female protagonists tend to outnumber books about worms and sports. As a boy reader, I was starved throughout elementary school for books on topics that really interested me.” Researchers have found that boys are drawn to books with these characteristics:

- Focused on plot, not drama and emotions;
- Visually appealing, for example, magazines and graphic novels;
- Practical, with information boys can use;
- Main characters boys can easily relate to;
- Funny, with elements of mischief and slapstick.

Making books like these readily available is a good start. Here are Serafini's follow-up suggestions:

- *Support browsing.* Walking a boy through a library can give him a sense of what's there that he wasn't aware of. Book talks are also important; the best ones begin, “If you liked that book, you will enjoy this book as well.” There are also a number of websites to steer boys toward just the right book, including [www.guysread.com](http://www.guysread.com), [www.readkiddoread.com](http://www.readkiddoread.com), and [www.gettingboystoread.com](http://www.gettingboystoread.com).

- *Use shorter texts.* “Reading opinion columns, essays, news articles, featured magazine articles, short stories, and informational texts is just as important as reading novels,” says Serafini. Complex picture books are also good. Here is a list of his favorite picture books and novels for boy readers: [www.frankserafini.com/book-lists/boysbooks.pdf](http://www.frankserafini.com/book-lists/boysbooks.pdf).

- *Provide extended amounts of time to read.* “You cannot get better at reading if you don't spend time reading,” says Serafini; “it's just that simple... We need to help boy readers figure out when they are going to find space for reading in their busy lives.”

- *Reduce the focus on after-reading activities.* This includes quizzes, worksheets, book reports, dioramas, and other “enrichment” activities, which Serafini thinks take up too much time in the reading program. “Sharing one's noticings and interpretations in whole-class and small-group discussions should be the primary way of responding to texts,” he says. “Rereading favorites, selecting texts that are connected to what has been read, and offering recommendations for other readers are things lifelong readers say they do on their own. If these activities support successful, lifelong readers, they will support boy readers as well.”

- *View reading as a social activity.* Many boys don't enjoy reading as a solitary activity; they want to talk to their friends about what they're reading.
- *Focus on visual and multimodal texts.* Picture books, comics, graphic novels, and informational texts help boy readers make sense of complex material.
- *Invite male readers into the classroom.* Role models can debunk the notion that real men don't read. "The more boys can connect to other literate males," says Serafini, "the better the chance they will come to see themselves as readers."
- *Develop boys' identities as readers.* "All the access to books in the world will not make boys pick up a book if being a reader is not something they aspire to become or isn't an identity their peers would approve of," says Serafini. "In other words, we have to find ways to make reading cool both in and out of school."

"Supporting Boys As Readers" by Frank Serafini in *The Reading Teacher*, September 2013 (Vol. 67, #1, p. 40-42), <http://bit.ly/1bXsodP>; Serafini can be reached at [fserafini@mac.com](mailto:fserafini@mac.com).

[Back to page one](#)

## 7. Helping Students Notice and Make Good Use of Graphics as They Read

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, Kathryn Roberts (Wayne State University) and five colleagues suggest how elementary teachers can foster graphical literacy in their students, following the emphasis on this in the Common Core standards:

- *Help children see that good readers pay attention to graphics.* Some parents and teachers inadvertently encourage students to focus more on the words than the pictures. Teachers should seize every opportunity to get students to use graphics as they read.
- *Talk about graphics during read-alouds and shared reading.* A teacher might say, "Hmm. I'm noticing that the person who made this book put a diagram here. I'm learning something from the picture that I couldn't learn from the words."
- *Emphasize the concepts of importance and extension.* The teacher might make a deliberate mistake (pretending to be an "uninformed reader") and say it's not necessary to look at a picture or diagram, inviting students to correct the error.
- *Have students create their own graphics.* For example, primary-grade students make detailed diagrams of animals' body parts as they create a field guide for the city zoo.
- *Use books with clear, persuasive, and engaging graphics.* For example, the flowchart and surface diagram in *Honeybees* (Heiligman, 2002) grab the reader's attention and convey the meaning through their details.
- *Discuss why the illustrator chose to include some graphical devices and not others.* For example, reading *Scary Creatures: Wolves* (Clarke, 2004), the teacher might ask why there's a cross-sectional diagram of the inside of a wolf.
- *Have students plan the graphics in their own compositions.* Students might be guided to create tables of the information they want to convey and decide on the most appropriate way to illustrate each piece of information.
- *Give students opportunities to give and receive feedback on the graphics they create.*

When students share their writing from the “author’s chair,” other students can comment on the appropriateness, clarity, and impact of graphics.

- *Pair students to read texts that include rich graphical devices.* “Partner reading, in which children discuss text with others and engage in asking and answering questions, leads to the social construction of meanings that are more in depth than any one reader could construct alone...” say Roberts et al. “A logical extension of this practice is to include discussion of graphical elements.”

- *Group children by their graphical development needs.* Some students may need more-intensive instruction to see and use graphics in texts.

- *Fill the classroom with high-quality graphics.* The graphics could include steps to getting ready for recess and a chart of outside temperatures and appropriate clothing.

- *Develop a schoolwide plan for teaching students to understand and compose graphics.* For example, some teachers might refer to a *chart* while others call it a *table*; the school should decide on consistent terms.

“Diagrams, Timelines, and Tables – Oh, My!” by Kathryn Roberts, Rebecca Norman, Nell Duke, Paul Morsink, Nicole Martin, and Jennifer Knight in *The Reading Teacher*, September 2013 (Vol. 67, #1, p. 12-23), <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/TRTR.1174/abstract>; Roberts can be reached at [eo9096@wayne.edu](mailto:eo9096@wayne.edu).

[Back to page one](#)

## 8. Jazzing Up a Science Unit with Fine Arts Activities

“Science must be something that students do, not something that is done to them,” say Judy Beck and Laura Kaufmann (University of South Carolina Upstate/Greenville) and Cece Toole (Meredith College) in this article in *AMLE Magazine*. In that spirit, they suggest how a middle-school unit on simple machines can incorporate drama, visual arts, dance, and music:

- Show videos of simple machines and have students write about what they learned:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMtYSr\\_abLg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMtYSr_abLg) and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdTYXc9EYHo> and

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k84twc\\_F89k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k84twc_F89k)

- Show pictures of gadgets made of simple machines from the Inventor’s Toolbox – [www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/InventorsToolbox.html](http://www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/InventorsToolbox.html) - and have students list the simple machines that make up these complex gizmos.

- Show the music video [www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1Fhs8pXGxM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1Fhs8pXGxM) and have students read the lyrics of Bill Nye’s song: [http://lyrics.wikia.com/Bill\\_Nye:ABC%27s\\_of\\_Machinery](http://lyrics.wikia.com/Bill_Nye:ABC%27s_of_Machinery).

After these introductory activities, Beck, Kaufmann, and Toole then suggest breaking students into four groups based on interests:

- Movement/dance – Students create a dance with a movement for each of the six simple machines.

- Theater/drama – Students create a skit portraying each simple machine.

- Visual arts – Students create a mobile with a visual representation and a real-world application of each of the simple machines.

- Music – Students create their own song or rap explaining the six simple machines and how they are used in the real world.

“Exploring Science Through Fine Arts” by Judy Beck, Laura Kaufmann, and Cece Toole in *AMLE Magazine*, September 2013 (Vol. 1, #2, p. 20-23), [www.amle.org](http://www.amle.org); the authors can be reached at [jbeck@uscupstate.edu](mailto:jbeck@uscupstate.edu), [lkaufmann@uscupstate.edu](mailto:lkaufmann@uscupstate.edu) and [toolecec@meredith.edu](mailto:toolecec@meredith.edu).

[Back to page one](#)

## 9. Research Findings on Gestures, Misconceptions, and Budding Engineers

This roundup in *Principal* recommends three brain-based strategies to try in classrooms:

- *Encourage gestures.* San Francisco State researchers found that 2-5 year-olds who used hand gestures while sorting cards by color and shape did better than older children who didn't use gestures. A different study reported in *Child Development's* spring issue found that grade 2-4 students learned new math concepts more quickly when their teachers used hand motions to illustrate concepts.

- *Predict students' mistakes.* A study by Philip Sadler found that middle-school physical science teachers got better results when they anticipated what their students might get wrong before they began teaching. “This study demonstrates that for teachers, the ability to think like a student may be just as important as being thoroughly well-versed in content,” says the roundup author.

- *Nurture young engineers.* A Vanderbilt University study published in the July issue of *Psychological Science* found that 13-year-olds with strong spatial ability (they could mentally manipulate two-dimensional and three-dimensional figures) were much more likely to be high achievers down the road. “These students have exceptional and under-challenged potential, especially for engineering and technology,” says lead researcher David Lubinski. “We could do a much better job of identifying these students and affording them better opportunities for developing their talents.”

“3 Brain-Based Strategies to Try This Year” in *Principal*, September/October 2013 (Vol. 93, #1, p. 6-7), [www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org)

[Back to page one](#)

## 10. Using Mobile Devices As Tools in French and German Courses

In this article in *Foreign Language Annals*, Lara Ducate and Lara Lomicka (University of South Carolina/Columbia) report on their study of college students in intermediate French and German classes who used iPod Touches and cell phones as an integral part of their courses. Here are some of the in-class tasks that were assigned: searches about cities, people, political parties, and historical events; information-map tasks on political parties, paintings, and history; exploring newspaper headlines; searching travel apps; comparing TV commercials; navigating Google Maps viewing YouTube videos in the target language; referencing dictionary and

grammar apps; researching and comparing weather; and searching and listening to French and German music.

For homework, students were required to compose three Twitter messages for classmates, at least two in the target language. Students also did four out-of-class projects: a short video about themselves; a photo collage about their dorm or apartment; a short video in collaboration with classmates about their city; and interviewing three people about a stereotype they might have about France or Germany or French or German people.

Ducate and Lomicka found that students took full advantage of the portability and power of their devices and got much deeper exposure to the target language. “When iPod Touches were put into the hands of learners,” they conclude, “the range of activities and live-time access to authentic materials, resources, and support transformed learning, offering students unlimited access to resources, opportunities to communicate using the language in important and meaningful ways, mobility, convenience, and opportunities for learning anywhere and at any time.”

“Going Mobile: Language Learning With an iPod Touch in Intermediate French and German Classes” by Lara Ducate and Lara Lomicka in *Foreign Language Annals*, Fall 2013 (Vol. 46, #3, p. 445-468), <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/flan.12043/abstract>

[Back to page one](#)

## 11. French Schools Give Up Their Free Wednesdays

This article in *The Economist* reports on a controversial change being implemented by French education officials: students will now have to go to school every Wednesday. Since 1882, French students have had a four-day week, originally to allow for religious education outside school. Initially the day off was Thursday, with longer hours on the other four days, but in 1972 the no-school day was moved to Wednesday. A cottage industry of day care, sports, and music activities has grown up to keep students occupied on their non-school day.

The new mandate for Wednesday classes came because officials were concerned that students were too tired at the end of their longer four-day-a-week classes. But there have been howls of protest from those who benefit from the Wednesday holiday. Stay tuned!

“Weird About Wednesday” in *The Economist*, Sept. 21, 2013 (p. 55-56), <http://econ.st/1dtpIIIs>

[Back to page one](#)

© Copyright 2013 Marshall Memo LLC

*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](mailto: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).

## ***Subscriptions:***

Individual subscriptions are \$50 for a year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and how to pay by check, credit card, or purchase order.

## ***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
- Reader opinions (with results of an annual survey)
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

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

## ***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  
Edutopia  
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  
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