

# Marshall Memo 202

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education  
September 24, 2007

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## Quotes of the Week

“Accountability can be a sledgehammer or a spotlight.”

Joel Klein, Chancellor of Schools, New York City (speech Sept. 19, 2007)

“The traditional norms of teaching – autonomy, egalitarianism, and seniority – exert a powerful and persistent influence on the work of teachers. They reinforce the privacy of the individual’s classroom, limit the exchange of good ideas among colleagues, and suppress efforts to recognize expert teaching. Ultimately, they cap a school’s instructional quality far below its potential.”

Susan Moore Johnson and Morgaen Donaldson (see item #3)

“And *how* old are you?”

A veteran teacher to a young instructional coach (*ibid.*)

“My message was not about crime and punishment, but about community.”

Joanne Rooney’s beginning of the year message as principal (see item #9)

“Drilling students for the end point of test performance is shortening the goal for them. The true goal is developing students’ ability to read critically and enjoyably for their entire lives.”

Donalyn Miller, Texas sixth-grade teacher (see item #6)

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## 1. Project-Based Learning Done Wrong – and Right

In this *Education Week* article, reporter Bess Keller explores the do's and don'ts of project-based learning. First, an example of a not-so-good project. Last year, North Carolina earth/environmental studies teacher Laura Spencer had her students build model houses that could withstand the equivalent of hurricane-force winds (a leaf-blower going full blast). It seemed like a neat project, but Spencer has decided to drop it this year because she concluded that her students, however much they enjoyed the project, weren't learning too much from it. "That was a reflection of me not setting up specific learning goals," she said.

A summer workshop helped Spencer formulate an "essential question" for a curriculum unit that was aligned with the thematic focus of her high school, Global Studies and Economics. Spencer's guiding question: "How does the availability of natural resources affect the economic development of third-world countries?" Spencer's plan is for students to complete individual weekly assignments, with expectations laid out in scoring rubrics. Later, groups of students will choose a country, identify an economic or environmental problem, and propose a sustainable solution. The culminating performance task will be for each group to present its solution, with visual aids, as if they were facing potential donors at a summit of wealthy G-8 nations.

Heller quotes Daniel Willingham, a University of Virginia cognitive psychologist, on a common pitfall of project-based learning: "One of the big mistakes people make when they think about constructivism and trying to apply it to the classroom is the idea that learning has to be active, by which is meant physically active." What counts, says Willingham, is *mental* activity. By that criterion, project-based learning isn't always the best way to teach something. Teacher talk-and-demonstration, cooperative learning, and case studies may be more effective with some content. "I don't think any method is obviously superior to any other," he says. "I'd take any method done well over any method done in a mediocre way."

E.D. Hirsch, the "core knowledge" guru who is also at the University of Virginia, concurs. There's no substitute for having students watch plants grow if they're learning about plants, he says, but all too often, activities turn out to be tangential and too many teachers fall into the trap of believing that children will learn if they're actively engaged in doing fun projects. Hirsch warns that there are significant opportunity costs to classroom projects if they are off-target and/or very time-consuming. The challenge for teachers, he says, is bringing about student understanding as efficiently as possible. This is especially important for

disadvantaged students who have fewer opportunities to gain academic knowledge outside school and for whom every minute in school counts.

“Teachers forget they can’t just expect this magic thing to pop up,” says Pamela Wise, a Coalition of Essential Schools coach working with teachers in Charlotte, North Carolina. “Kids have to have exposure to it and time to practice it; you need a two-minute presentation [before] a ten-minute one.” Here are other ideas for making project-based learning effective:

- The project should be part of a curriculum unit with clear objectives aligned to state standards.
- The unit should be framed by “essential questions” that will lead students to the “big ideas” and understandings.
- The final project should require that students demonstrate their mastery of the key understandings, either in a performance or a “museum” display.
- Rubrics are needed to spell out for students exactly what constitutes acceptable and higher-level work.
- Students need to be “hooked” on the essential questions through an effective, dramatic device.
- Students need to be grouped in appropriate ways.
- The unit needs to provide students with the “scaffolding” they need to be able to do the final performance task – all the smaller lessons and tasks that get students ready for the final assessment.
- There need to be periodic checks on progress as the unit progresses.

“No Easy Project” by Bess Keller in *Education Week*, Sept. 19, 2007 (Vol. 27, #4, p. 21-23), <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/09/19/04project.h27.html>

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## **2. Four Cautionary Notes on Schools-Within-Schools**

This *Education Week* article analyzes a new book, *Schools Within Schools: Possibilities and Pitfalls of High School Reform* by Valerie Lee and Douglas Ready (Teachers College Press, 2006). Lee and Ready found that many districts have jumped onto the schools-within-schools (SWS) bandwagon without looking carefully at the research. The evidence so far is that subschools usually have better social climate, attendance, and graduation rates than large high schools or free-standing small schools, but the research is less clear on whether SWS’s produce better academic achievement. Lee and Ready’s study of five large high schools that created schools-within-schools identified these possible reasons that SWS’s are not reaching their full potential:

- *Schools-within-schools often increased student stratification by race, academic achievement, and SES.* The schools that Lee and Ready studied allowed students to choose which subschool they would attend, and students made up their minds based on a number of factors, including being with friends, perceived academic rigor, and recommendations and pressure from family members and teachers. Free choice produced starkly different student

bodies, to the point where some subschools were known to be “full of brains” and others were considered “dumping grounds.”

- *Schools-within-schools rarely took advantage of the potential for instructional innovation.* In theory, say the authors, a smaller, more personalized learning community should foster greater buy-in and engagement from students and teachers, allow teachers to weave the SWS’s theme across the curriculum, and foster greater collaboration among teachers, more collective responsibility for student learning, and greater attention to individual students’ needs. But Lee and Ready found that these benefits rarely occurred.

- *Many students were part-timers in the SWS.* The researchers found that the potential benefits of small subschools were often diluted because students took courses and engaged in other activities out in the larger high school – for example, Advanced Placement courses, physics, and journalism classes that were not available within their subschool. These students were really attending a hybrid organization, part small school and part comprehensive high school. “These efforts to straddle very different organizational forms led to both confusion and tensions within each school,” say Lee and Ready.

- *Schools-within-schools had problems with staying power.* The principals in four of the five schools moved on within the space of two years, and Lee and Ready found that each school, to some degree, backed away from reform after an initial period of enthusiasm.

The authors aren’t willing to give up on schools-within-schools but say that planners need to: (a) put constraints on students’ SWS choices to ensure a good academic mix across the board; (b) engineer an equitable distribution of rigorous courses and top-notch teachers in each SWS; (c) keep teachers focused on taking full advantage of the potential for instructional innovation; and (d) pay close attention “to what is taught, to whom it is taught, and how it is taught.”

“Schools-Within-Schools Model Seen Yielding Trade-Offs” by Erik Robelen in *Education Week*, Sept. 19, 2007 (Vol. 27, #4, p. 10),

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/09/19/04small.h27.html>

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### **3. How Teacher Leaders Can Have Optimal Impact in Classrooms**

(Originally titled “Overcoming the Obstacles to Leadership”)

In this thoughtful article in *Educational Leadership*, Susan Moore Johnson and Morgaen Donaldson of Harvard’s Graduate School of Education focus on three aspects of school culture that have negative effects. “The traditional norms of teaching – autonomy, egalitarianism, and seniority – exert a powerful and persistent influence on the work of teachers,” they write. “They reinforce the privacy of the individual’s classroom, limit the exchange of good ideas among colleagues, and suppress efforts to recognize expert teaching. Ultimately, they cap a school’s instructional quality far below its potential.”

Here is how Johnson and Donaldson believe each of these norms hampers the work of idealistic young teacher leaders:

- *Autonomy* – Many experienced teachers believe their classroom is their castle and treat teacher leaders’ attempts to observe them and give feedback as intrusions.

- *Egalitarianism*– Experienced teachers often question whether a peer can possess expert knowledge or presume to act on it (“Who does she think she is?” and “Here comes the hotshot.”). In addition, they may resent teachers leaders’ special privileges, such as getting substitute coverage and having frequent access to the principal (Are they the boss’s “pet?”).

- *Seniority* – Teacher leaders with relatively few years of teaching experience are often regarded as being too green to have a leadership role outside the classroom. One 29-year-old teacher leader supporting the implementation of a new math curriculum was asked confrontationally, “And *how* old are you?” More-experienced teachers are often resentful when they aren’t chosen for support roles and envious if younger colleagues are chosen.

Johnson and Donaldson say these barriers are discouraging and demoralizing to eager-beaver teacher leaders and lead them to adopt one or more of these coping strategies:

- *Wait to be drafted.* One way to avoid accusations of favoritism is to lay back until nobody else has volunteered and become a teacher leader only if specifically asked. One sixth-grade instructional coach followed this strategy and was able to say to his colleagues, “You’re the ones who didn’t want the role, so I’m expecting you guys to give me a little bit more support.”
- *Work with the willing.* Rather than taking on resistant colleagues, some teacher leaders work only with teachers who are open to their help. “I’ve kind of given up the right with the teachers who constantly cancel on me or don’t want me in their room,” said an elementary literacy coordinator.
- *Work side by side.* Effective teacher leaders emphasized that they were not supervisors or administrative spies, but instead sources of support, giving their colleagues choices in how they incorporated proposed changes in their classrooms.

Johnson and Donaldson point out that these three strategies may help teacher leaders get their foot in the door with some colleagues, but do nothing to change the culture of autonomy, egalitarianism, and seniority in their schools.

To have a more substantial impact, teacher leaders need administrative support, but all too often they are thrown into the deep end of the pool without a proper explanation to the staff and without ongoing support. “Informal roles with unpredictable funding will never be taken seriously,” write Johnson and Donaldson. “To be viable, these roles must have well-defined qualifications, responsibilities, and selection processes.”

Clearly the principal makes or breaks the role of teacher leader. “It is not enough for the principal to be a passive supporter,” say the authors. “Rather, he or she needed to anticipate the resistance that teacher leaders might encounter from colleagues and help them broker the relationships they would need to do their work.” Among the most helpful actions:

- Having a “big game plan” – an instructional strategy of which teacher leaders are a logical part.
- Clearly explaining the role of each teacher leader.

- Publishing the qualifications and responsibilities of teacher leaders, encouraging all staff to apply, and running a selection process that is transparent and above reproach.
- Providing common planning time, substitute coverage, professional development time, faculty meeting time, and other support to integrate the work of teacher leaders into the game plan.
- Preventing teacher leaders from being sucked into administrative duties except in dire emergencies.
- Promoting a new set of norms – collaborative work, teachers coming out of their classroom silos, and expertise recognized wherever it lies.
- Providing teacher leaders with professional development “that prepares them to respond to their colleagues’ resistance respectfully while helping these teachers improve their practice.”

“Overcoming the Obstacles to Leadership” by Susan Moore Johnson and Morgaen Donaldson in *Educational Leadership*, September 2007 (Vol. 65, #1, p. 8-13); go to <http://www.ascd.org> and navigate to this article.

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#### **4. Teacher Leaders – The Why and the How**

(Originally titled “The Many Faces of Leadership”)

Some teachers have the “leadership itch”, writes consultant and author Charlotte Danielson in this article in *Educational Leadership* – but for a variety of reasons they don’t want to become principals. These teachers want to have an impact beyond their own classroom but want to stay close to students. Danielson argues that there are four reasons that we especially need to get these teachers involved in leadership roles:

- Ambitious teachers can become frustrated and cynical. Unlike other professions, K-12 education is “flat” – it doesn’t give classroom practitioners more responsibility as they gain experience and seniority. If they can’t scratch the leadership itch, teachers can become stale and not reach their full potential.

- Teachers have a longer time-horizon than administrators. The average tenure for principals is 3-4 years; for teachers it’s much longer. Teachers therefore have more institutional memory and are more able to take the long view and carry out long-term projects.

- The principal can’t do everything. Today’s school leaders have impossible jobs; they are expected to be visionaries, day-to-day managers, and instructional leaders and carry the full responsibility for the district’s and state’s accountability requirements. They need help!

- Principals can’t be expert in all areas. Most have taught only in a few areas, and they often need to defer to teachers’ content expertise, especially at the high-school level.

For these reasons, says Danielson, teacher leaders are more essential than ever to school improvement. There are *formal* teacher leaders – department chairs, master teachers, and instructional coaches – and *informal* teacher leaders – those who spontaneously take the initiative to address a problem or start a new program. Teacher leaders depend on a number of qualities to be successful change agents: expertise in their field, confidence, persuasiveness,

open-mindedness, respect for others' views, the ability to listen, optimism, enthusiasm, confidence, decisiveness, perseverance, and flexibility.

Danielson sees three areas in which teacher leaders can make a difference, all of them important:

- *Within the department or team* – For example, getting sixth graders reading to kindergarten students during lunch; getting grade-level colleagues looking together at the reasons for students' underperformance in writing; or observing a colleague who is concerned about girls' reluctance to take part in group activities. This kind of leadership requires great interpersonal skill and tact and depends on the teacher leader having credibility and trust among colleagues.

- *Across the school* – For example, doing the scheduling magic that's necessary for students to be involved in plays, debate teams, and advanced classes, or helping the school re-think its grading and report cards.

- *Beyond the school* – For example, participating in district-wide committees on teacher evaluation or curriculum, serving on the state's standards board, or representing teacher views to the school board.

“Not every school is hospitable to the emergence of teacher leaders,” says Danielson, “especially informal teacher leaders.” The principal can play a key role by:

- Creating a safe environment for risk-taking – Teachers will speak up and get involved only if they are pretty sure they won't be criticized or put down.
- Letting go – Some principals are reluctant to give up leading meetings or analyzing data, which keeps potential teacher leaders from emerging. Principals need to reach out and be open to delegating some important tasks.
- Countering the “tall poppy syndrome” – In Australia, there's a saying that those who stick their heads up risk being cut down to size. Principals need to counteract this tendency in the culture of some schools and honor teachers who step outside traditional roles and take on leadership projects.
- Providing opportunities to learn leadership skills – The repertoire needed for teacher leadership is rarely provided by teacher preparation programs or standard workshops. To reach their full potential, teachers with the “leadership itch” need to learn about curriculum planning, instructional improvement, assessments, use of data, collaboration, and facilitation. Principals need to provide potential teacher leaders with convenient access to workshops, courses, readings, and consultation in these areas.

“Teacher leadership is an idea whose time has come,” concludes Danielson. “The unprecedented demands being placed on schools today require leadership at every level.”

“The Many Faces of Leadership” by Charlotte Danielson in *Educational Leadership*, September 2007 (Vol. 65, #1, p. 8-13); go to <http://www.ascd.org> and navigate to this article.

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## 5. Ten Roles for Teacher Leaders

In this *Educational Leadership* article, consultant Cindy Harrison and National Staff Development Council official Joellen Killion list ten ways that non-administrative teacher leaders can work to improve teaching and learning in their schools:

- *Resource provider* – Sharing classroom materials, Web sites, readings, and other resources with their colleagues;
- *Instructional specialist* – Helping colleagues differentiate instruction, plan lessons, and study research-based practices.
- *Curriculum specialist* – Helping colleagues agree on learning expectations, use common pacing charts, and develop common assessments.
- *Data coach* – Leading conversations with colleagues to analyze and formulate action plans from interim or summative student achievement data.
- *Classroom supporter* – Working inside colleagues’ classrooms to help implement new ideas, perhaps by doing demonstration lessons or observing and giving feedback.
- *Learning facilitator* – Leading workshops for colleagues and following up to guide the implementation of best practices.
- *Mentor* – Serving as a one-on-one role model and coach for novice teachers as they navigate the challenges of a new profession.
- *Instructional leader* – Serving on a school improvement committee, acting as a grade-level or department chair, or representing the school on community or district task forces or committees.
- *Catalyst for change* – Teacher leaders can push for change where others are not stepping forward.
- *Ongoing learner* – “Learners model continual improvement, demonstrate lifelong learning, and use what they learn to help all students achieve,” say Harrison and Killion.

“Ten Roles for Teacher Leaders” by Cindy Harrison and Joellen Killion in *Educational Leadership*, September 2007 (Vol. 65, #1, p. 74-77); go to <http://www.ascd.org> and navigate to this article.

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## 6. A Texas Teacher Talks About Reading

In her column in *Teacher Magazine*, Texas 6<sup>th</sup>-grade teacher Donalyn Miller answers questions from the field. Some excerpts:

• *How do you get a girl who is socially the queen bee of the class, but reads far below grade level, to pick up a book and read?* Part of her reluctance must be her fear of her peers seeing her reading a babyish book. “Getting her to read would be a powerful motivator for the rest of the class!” writes Miller. “Realistic fiction books with characters like her and her friends would be the best choice... books that have ‘popular’ girls in them.” Miller recommends *The Clique* series by Lisi Harrison, *Click Here* by Denise Vega, and books by Lurlene McDaniel and Carolyn Cooney.

• *Do you believe in a reward system?* “I think reading is its own reward,” says Miller, “and that rewarding children with prizes and incentives removes the internal motivation to read. I do reward children with praise and public acknowledgement of their reading accomplishments, but that is all.”

• *What do you think of Accelerated Reader?* – Miller is not a fan of Accelerated Reader computer book quizzes because many questions test low-level recall and some good books don’t have AR quizzes, which can lead students to avoid those books. “What is more important to me is how students apply the strategies and concepts I have taught them in class within the context of their reading,” says Miller. “Reading has to be more than just the act of memorizing discrete facts from books.” In her classroom, independent reading is a core part of the reading program, with all students using their readers’ notebooks to engage in an ongoing dialogue with their teacher on the books they are reading, and also keeping lists of the books they have read as a class and individually, lists of books they plan to read, and lists of their reading interests.

• *How do you deal with a principal who doubts that independent reading will boost scores on high-stakes tests?* “The successful test scores of the wide range of students I have taught over the years show that what we are doing works,” says Miller. “...Everything I do in my class meshes with what reading research tells us is best for developing readers. Who can take issue with that? If you have a strong foundation for what you are doing in your classroom, supported by the work of researchers in the field of literacy, share this with your principal, parents, and colleagues.”

“Drilling students for the end point of test performance is shortening the goal for them,” Miller concludes. “The true goal is developing students’ ability to read critically and enjoyably for their entire lives... This is my goal, inspiring ‘forever’ readers.”

In a sidebar in this article, Jace Barton, a 2005 alumnus of Miller’s class, shares his list of the thirteen books he thinks kids should read before they turn 13:

- *The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau
- *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls
- *The Thief Lord* by Cornelia Funke
- *Tangerine* by Edward Bloor
- *Holes* by Louis Sachar
- *The Schwa Was Here* by Neal Shusterman
- *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan
- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
- *The View from Saturday* by E.L. Konigsburg
- *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer
- *The Boy Who Saved Baseball* by John Ritter
- *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

“Ask the Mentor: Creating Readers, Part III” – an interview with Donalyn Miller in *Teacher Magazine* online, September 19, 2007; the full article is available after free registration at:

## 7. Getting to Root Causes with “Five Whys”

This *American School Board Journal* article is by Gary Lister, a “change manager” in the U.S. Air Force by day and chairman of the school board in Bleckley County, Georgia after hours. Lister says that in the Air Force, one of the most useful problem-solving techniques is the “Five Whys” – repeatedly asking “Why? What caused this problem?” until you get to the root cause (it often takes five rounds). For example, you’re driving home from work and your car stops in the middle of the road:

- *Why did my car stop?* Because it ran out of gas.
- *Why did it run out of gas?* Because I didn’t buy any gas this morning.
- *Why didn’t you buy gas?* Because I didn’t have any money.
- *Why didn’t you have any money?* Because I lost it all last night in a poker game.
- *Why did you lose your money in last night’s poker game?* Because I’m not very good at bluffing when I don’t have a good hand.

In this example, it took five whys [and perhaps a sixth is needed, repeating the fifth with an extra twist: *Why did you lose your gas and rent money in last night’s poker game?* Okay, because I’m a gambling addict.]

“Far too often,” says Lister, “we assume too quickly that we have arrived at the root of the problem and blithely set about solving it. Working on a nonexistent problem is not only wasteful, it’s frequently counterproductive, creating additional problems that weren’t there in the first place.”

Lister recommends the Five Whys – but cautions that this approach can be time-consuming and tedious, especially for large groups, and different teams analyzing the same issue can reach different conclusions. But he still considers it an excellent way of getting to the heart of the matter.

“Why Oh Why?” by Gary Lister in *American School Board Journal*, October 2007 (Vol. 194, #10, p. 54-55), no e-link available; Lister is at [educationreporter@netcommander.com](mailto:educationreporter@netcommander.com).

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## 8. Early Failure Prevention in Oklahoma

(Originally titled “Teachers Step Up”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, consultant/author Douglas Reeves describes how the high school in Jenks, Oklahoma intervened early to prevent student failure. Staff members noticed that incoming students who had a D in English or math in eighth grade (and also failed a criterion-referenced reading or math test) were highly likely to fail math in ninth grade. The school decided to launch a preemptive strike on these students:

- Expert teachers, including some who taught AP classes, volunteered to teach catch-up classes.

- The school doubled learning time in the subjects these students were in danger of failing.
- Student attendance in the remedial classes was made mandatory.

The results were dramatic: on the state math test, 42 percent of targeted students scored Satisfactory or Advanced, compared to 20 percent of students enrolled in regular math classes.

This is just the beginning, says Jenks superintendent Kirby Lehman. He and his colleagues won't be satisfied until 100 percent of students achieve proficiency.

“Teachers Step Up” by Douglas Reeves in *Educational Leadership*, September 2007 (Vol. 65, #1, p. 87-88), go to <http://www.ascd.org> and navigate to this article.

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## **9. A Principal’s Beginning-of-the-Year Message**

(Originally titled “Putting Our Stamp on the Year”)

“My message was not about crime and punishment, but about community,” writes Joanne Rooney in this *Educational Leadership* article about the messages she gave to students at the outset of each year when she was an elementary school principal. “As more stakeholders interject their agenda into schools, principals must step forward to clarify the fundamental purpose of our work. Our job as principals is to wrap words around that concept and articulate it clearly and consistently – from day one.” Here’s what she said to students in each classroom:

- “Whatever we do in school should enhance learning. This is our paramount standard for all school activities, and everyone – including the principal – is held to that standard.
- We are all learners. Even your teachers continue to learn so they will be better teachers.
- Your teachers will be prepared to teach every day. They expect no less of you.
- Respect for each person in the school community is non-negotiable.
- We are all in this together.”

“Putting Our Stamp on the Year” by Joanne Rooney in *Educational Leadership*, September 2007 (Vol. 65, #1, p. 78-79), go to <http://www.ascd.org> and navigate to this article.

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## **10. Four Keys to High Achievement**

In a “kicker” at the end of their working paper, “Privatizing Education in Philadelphia: Are Educational Management Organizations Improving Student Achievement?”, Johns Hopkins University researchers Martha Abele Mac Iver and Douglas Mac Iver mention the four key factors that recent research has linked to high student achievement:

- Teacher quality
- Principal instructional leadership
- School climate focused on academic achievement
- Consistency and coherence in curriculum and instruction

Spotted in *Education Gadfly*, Sept. 20, 2007. For the full study, go to:

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## 11. Short Items:

**a. *Teacher Leaders Network online*** – The TLN Teacher Voices blog is an ongoing discussion and mentoring site: see [http://teacherleaders.typepad.com/tln\\_teacher\\_voices](http://teacherleaders.typepad.com/tln_teacher_voices).

Spotted in “Lessons from Networking” by Barnett Berry, John Norton, and Ann Byrd in *Educational Leadership*, September 2007 (Vol. 65, #1, p. 50), <http://www.ascd.org>.

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**b. *Technology information website*** – The Technology Information Center for Administrative Leadership (TICAL) website claims to be a one-stop-shopping repository of computer information for the busy principal, with content information, expert advice, and interactive tools to solve problems or point school leaders in the right direction. Check out <http://www.portical.org>.

Spotted in *Education Week’s Digital Directions*, Fall 2007, p. 8

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**c. *Computer teachers’ website*** – The Computer Science Teachers Association has just launched a website with teaching materials, lesson plans, learning modules, presentations, and course descriptions. Check it out at <http://www.csta.acm.org>. Note that you need to be a CSTA member to use all the database features.

Spotted in *Education Week’s Digital Directions*, Fall 2007, p. 8

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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.marshall8@verizon.net](mailto: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:

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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