Marshall Memo 112

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
November 21, 2005

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Throughout my whole experience with dealing with foster care and moving a lot, I know of one friend, school, that stuck with me through it all. School has been my foster parent all along guiding me into my future. I would never turn my back on education because it never turned its back on me."

Tim Dumas, Minneapolis high-school senior, a foster child since first grade, in his college essay (*New York Times*, Nov. 16, 2005)

"There's a reason we go to school, which is that there's someone smarter than us with something to teach us."

Jim Munch, New York high-school senior (see item #8)

"First comes achievement and then comes confidence."

Rick Stiggins and Jan Chappuis (see item #1)

"Brains and skills don't matter if you don't show up on time."

David Brooks (see item #4)

"Some principals just go by you and act like you don't exist."

Karina, a high-school student (*Principal Leadership*, Nov. 2005, Vol. 6, #3, p. 35)

"I can't do this by myself – *puh-leeze*."

JoAnn Cason, Baltimore principal, on the need for a leadership team (see item #7)

"We are always and forever teaching values to the young people around us whether we do it with conscious intent or not."

Leslie Matula (see item #9b)

1. Getting Students Involved in Classroom Assessments

In this important article in *Theory Into Practice*, Oregon researchers Rick Stiggins and Jan Chappuis argue that effective use of interim classroom assessments, and involving students in the assessment process, are critical to closing the achievement gap. The authors bemoan the fact that many teachers and principals have not been given the opportunity to learn about the tremendous power of classroom assessments and the importance of involving students. "It is a new idea for many teachers to understand that formative assessment can and should be done for and by students," they write, "and yet this is crucial to students becoming effective learners."

Drawing on the research, Stiggins and Chappuis describe four conditions they believe are necessary for formative assessments to close the achievement gap:

• *Condition #1: Classroom assessments must deliver the right information to teachers and students.* Assessments must tell students:

- Where am I going? What is the intended learning and the standard of quality?
- Where am I now? How can I measure and monitor my own progress?
- How can I get from here to there?

• *Condition #2: Students need to know the learning expectations to participate actively in their own learning*. This means teachers must be crystal clear about the classroom goals students must master on their journey to meeting state standards. Teachers need to "become clear themselves about the intended learning, teach intentionally to it, and let students in on the secret up front."

• *Condition #3: Assessments must accurately reflect the learning targets and serve as teaching tools along the road to proficiency*. Choosing the best assessments for the purpose at hand is challenging. Should we use multiple choice? true/false? matching? fill-in-the-blank? extended written response? performance assessment? direct personal communication with the student? And the assessments need to be high-quality. Stiggins and Chappuis list some of the ways that assessments can distort learning: "tests can consist of poorly worded questions, place reading or writing demands on respondents that are confounded with mastery of the material being tested, have more than one correct response, be incorrectly scored, or contain racial or ethnic bias. The student can experience extreme evaluation anxiety or interpret test items differently from the author's intent, as well as cheat, guess, or lack motivation. Any of these could give rise to inaccurate test results."

• *Condition #4: Assessment results need to be delivered to their intended users in a timely, understandable, and helpful manner*. This means that assessments give diagnostic information to the teacher and descriptive feedback to the learner – all in user-friendly formats right after each assessment.

Stiggins and Chappuis believe that involving students in using formative assessments to diagnose their own learning and gradually improve is effective both psychologically and pedagogically. They argue that trying to boost the confidence of struggling students through isolated self-esteem exercises is putting the cart before the horse. "First comes achievement and then comes confidence," they write. "If these students are to believe in themselves as productive learners, then they must first experience credible forms of academic success as reflected in the results of what they understand to be rigorous assessment. A small success can spark confidence, which, in turn, encourages more effort. If each attempt brings more success, their academic self-concept will begin to shift in a more positive direction."

Stiggins and Chappuis say that teachers must use classroom assessment to keep learners from losing hope – or to rebuild hope if it has been destroyed. Teachers can do this by involving students in classroom assessments and tapping "a wellspring of motivation that resides within each learner." The trick is to help struggling students take risks and support them through early mistakes. "Students must understand that, when they try to grow academically, at first, they may not be very proficient, and that is all right. The trick is to help them know that failures hold the seeds of later success, but only if we keep going… Wise teachers use the classroom assessment process as an instructional intervention to teach the lesson that small increments of progress are normal. Success is defined as continual improvement over the long haul."

In a table within the article, Stiggins and Chappuis list some ways of involving students in the assessment process. Here are excerpts:

- Having students review strong and weak samples of work to determine attributes of good performance.
- Having students practice using criteria to evaluate anonymous strong and weak papers.
- Having students work in pairs to revise an anonymous weak paper.
- Having students generate and answer questions they think might be on the test, based on their understanding of the content they were responsible for learning.
- Having students review a collection of their work over time and reflect on their growth: "Here is what I have learned… Here is what I need to work on…"

"Using Student-Involved Classroom Assessment to Close Achievement Gaps" by Rick Stiggins and Jan Chappuis in *Theory Into Practice*, Winter 2005 (Vol. 44, #1, p. 11-18), no e-links available

2. Four "Theories of Action" for Boosting Teacher Effectiveness

Good teachers are the single most important factor in getting all students to high levels of performance, says Stephanie Hirsch, deputy director of the National Staff Development Council, in this helpful article in *Theory Into Practice*. But, she adds, not all teachers are

prepared to meet the needs of today's students. Effective professional development is therefore critical to each school's effort to close the achievement gap – professional development that deepens teachers' understanding, transforms beliefs and assumptions, and creates a stream of continuous actions that change habits and affect practice. Hirsch describes four approaches, each of which has different underlying principles. She urges educators to choose the one that is the best match for their school:

• *Kati Haycock: strengthening teaching* – Haycock (who is head of the Education Trust) believes that "poor and minority children depend on their teachers like no others. In the hands of our best teachers, the effects of poverty and institutional racism melt away, allowing these students to soar to the same heights as young Americans from more advantaged homes." The Education Trust's strategy for improving teaching is two-pronged: (a) building on the work of effective teachers who are already in underperforming schools, and (b) creating a vehicle for them to help their colleagues by expanding support structures at the system level and bringing in selected expertise from outside the school.

Haycock believes that professional development should develop teachers' beliefs and capacities *simultaneously*. "One of the most serious mistakes made by people who care deeply about the education of poor and minority kids," she says, "is addressing beliefs separate from skills. Schools that provide workshops on diversity and expectations that do not simultaneously equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to succeed end up with raised expectations but no improvement in results. Unless teachers see evidence of kids learning at higher levels, schools can't sustain the effort over time."

The Education Trust recommends getting teachers together at least once a week to look at student work, evaluate it against standards, and discuss strategies for getting better results. "When schools create that kind of support structure during the regular school day," says Haycock, "they bring about dramatic improvements both in the quality of teaching and in student achievement."

• *Glen Singleton: courageous conversations* – Singleton, head of the Pacific Education Group, takes a different approach. He believes that the key to closing the achievement gap is teaching students to understand their own culture and be able to work with people of unfamiliar cultures. The key to this, according to Singleton, is teachers learning how to have "courageous conversations" in the classroom. These involve asking participants to:

- Stay engaged.
- Speak our truth.
- Experience discomfort.
- Expect and accept non-closure.

When teachers and students take these steps, Singleton believes, they are committing to change the standard culture and practices of classrooms. "When courageous conversations become the classroom norm," he says, "a student of color can say how distant he or she feels from a white text or from an activity, thus offering a teacher information that might challenge her initial perspective that the student is purposely disengaged or perhaps simply lazy… Through

curriculum and instructional choices, teachers must communicate that their students' experiences matter to them and that those experiences are valid."

Only one rule is necessary in schools, says Singleton: *respect*. This may look and feel different across races: "To effectively show me respect," he says, "you must understand what my experience is all about. As my teacher, I need you to understand that, as I come to the school each morning I go through a number of racial tests. If you don't understand where I'm coming from, I will feel less safe in your classroom and in my relationship with you. And if I feel distant I will distance myself from the tasks you as my teacher want me to perform."

• *Ron Ferguson: the Tripod Project* – Harvard professor Ron Ferguson is working with 15 school districts to apply his research on closing the achievement gap. The "tripod" has three legs, each of them vital to success: content, pedagogy, and relationships. His focus on relationships makes Ferguson's work distinct from other approaches and permeates the four goals of the program:

- Helping students feel trusted and engaged. A key to this is developing trust among teachers. This emerges from difficult conversations, the goal being a professional community for sharing ideas, not a program to force compliance.
- Striking a balance between teacher control and student autonomy. Some teachers think they have to "lay down the law" and sometimes threaten students to get them to do the work, which can turn students off and undermine their engagement. Ferguson says teachers should not see control and autonomy as an either-or proposition, but strive to find an effective balance.
- Cultivating ambition rather than ambivalence toward achievement goals and success. Ferguson has found that some teachers' beliefs about student's ability to learn are influenced by their own feelings of competence and capacity to teach effectively.
- Teaching for student understanding and industriousness and combating disengagement. "From the student perspective," says Ferguson, "teachers who encourage students combine emotional support and instrumental assistance. For example, students say they find it encouraging when a teacher really spends time helping them understand instead of giving quick, incomplete answers that leave them still confused. The teacher may meet with the student after school and not seem in a big hurry to leave. It shows that the teacher really wants them to understand, and it gives them hope." Ferguson says that teacher-student relationships progress through three stages: (a) affirmation of the student's ability to complete the task; (b) a sincere offer of assistance and support; and (c) visible pleasure by the teacher in the student's success.

• *Jerry Sternin: positive deviance* – Advocates of this approach, which has been used extensively in development work and HIV prevention, believe that solutions to a community's problems lie within the community. "A basic belief of the Positive Deviance Approach," explains Hirsch, "is that, when someone from the outside provides the solution, those to whom it is directed may not believe it and do not have an investment in it. Once that person leaves, it is difficult to sustain the changes."

In education, "positive deviants" are teachers who, working with the same resources as others, have found ways of boosting student achievement. Here is how Sternin suggests implementing this approach in schools:

- Define the problem. Closing the achievement gap is probably too broad a problem, he says; better to start with a narrower problem such as math achievement scores or Algebra I enrollment.
- Determine the positive deviants (i.e., who in the school is more successful).
- Find out what the positive deviants are doing differently.
- Spread the intervention to other classrooms.
- Test its effectiveness.
- Disseminate the results.

Sternin explains an underlying assumption of this work: "[It] is easier to act your way into a new way of thinking than to think your way into a new way of acting… We start with changing practice. As people see that changes make a difference, their attitude changes and they internalize the knowledge. We can spend our lives learning about something, but that doesn't necessarily change our behavior."

Hirsch concludes the article by pulling out three common themes in these different approaches to professional development:

• Whatever approach is used, it's vital that teachers know their subject matter.

• All four approaches involve open and respectful conversations among teachers that get at the underlying beliefs about teaching and learning.

• To be effective, professional development must include a detailed plan for introducing new content and practices and orchestrating follow-up action.

"Professional Development and Closing the Achievement Gap" by Stephanie Hirsch in *Theory Into Practice*, Winter 2005 (Vol. 44, #1, p. 38-44), no e-link available

3. What We Can Learn from Computer/Video Games

"Why is it that many children can't sit still long enough to finish their homework and yet will spend hours playing games on the computer?" asks University of Wisconsin professor James Gee in this *Harvard Education Letter* article. The answer, he says, is that computer games use super-sophisticated pedagogy that schools would do well to emulate. "It is ironic that young people today are often exposed to more creative and challenging learning experiences in popular culture than they are in school," writes Gee. "The principles on which video-game design is based are foundational to the kind of learning that enables children to become innovators and lifelong learners. Yet how many of today's classrooms actually incorporate these principles as thoroughly and deeply as these games do?"

What are the magic features of well-designed video/computer games? Gee describes three:

• "In good video games problems are well ordered, so that early ones lead the player to formulate hypotheses that work well for solving later, harder games. This well-ordered

sequence creates an ongoing cycle of consolidation and challenge that enables players to confront an initial set of problems, and then practice solving then until they have routinized their mastery. The game then throws out a new class of problem, requiring players to come up with new solutions This phase of mastery is consolidated through repetition, only to be challenged again. This way, good games stay within, but at the outer edge of, the player's competence. They feel doable, but challenging. This makes them pleasantly frustrating, putting players in what psychologists call a 'flow' state."

• "Video games operate on the principle of 'performance before competence.' That is, players can learn as they play, rather than having to master an entire body of knowledge before being able to put it to use… video games are simulations of new experiences and new worlds, yet they are able to engage players with languages and ways of thinking with which they have no prior experience. Players encounter new words and techniques in the context of play, not as abstract definitions or sets of rules. This holds their interest and spurs them on to develop new skills, vocabularies, relationships, and attitudes – irrespective of factors like race and class."

• Video games encourage kids to work with other kids – seeking advice from other players and networking in person and electronically. "Experts can help novices and peers can pool information. New knowledge is available just in time – when players need it – or on demand – when players ask for it."

Gee goes on to list the following attributes of good video/computer games, all of which he thinks are transferable to schools:

- Let learners assess their own previous knowledge and learning styles.
- Build in choices from the beginning.
- Let learners customize what you are offering.
- Give information in multiple modes at once (print, visual, oral).
- Banish the word "remedial."
- Build specialized vocabulary.
- Let learners try out and consolidate their skills in different contexts at the same level, rather than hurrying them from one level to the next.
- Teach skills in a simplified context so earners can see how the skills fit together and how to apply them.
- Provide information "just in time" and "on demand."
- Minimize the distinction between learning and playing.
- Use developmental (not evaluative) tests that allow learners to discover the outer edge of their competence and help them operate just inside that edge.
- Allow learners to practice their skills, and then challenge them to develop new ones. Repeat.
- Ensure that learners at every level have access to knowledge that is distributed and dispersed among people, places, sites, texts, tools, and technologies.
- Create an affinity space where learners can interact with peers and masters around a shared interest."
- Create motivation for extended learning.

- Create and honor preparation for future learning.

Gee concludes: "Let's ask ourselves how we can make learning in or out of school more 'game-like' – not in the sense of playing games in class, but by making the experience of learning as motivating, stimulating, collaborative, and rewarding as the experience of playing a well-designed video game."

"The Classroom of Popular Culture" by James Paul Gee in *Harvard Education Letter*, November/December 2005 (Vol. 21, #6, p. 8, 6, 7), no e-link available

4. Developing America's Human Capital

In last Sunday's *New York Times*, columnist David Brooks declared that if we want to keep up with the Chinese and the Indians, if we want to remain a just, fluid society, and if we want to head off underclass riots, we need to develop our "human capital." By this, he means more than the standard economist's definition of skills and knowledge. Brooks believes that human capital has five facets:

• *Cultural capital* – By this he means "the habits, assumptions, emotional dispositions and linguistic capacities we unconsciously pick up from families, neighbors and ethnic groups."

• *Social capital* – The is "the knowledge of how to behave in groups and within institutions," including politeness and how to behave in a restaurant.

• *Moral capital* – The ability to be trustworthy, including being organized and dependable. "Brains and skills don't matter," writes Brooks, "if you don't show up on time."

• *Cognitive capital* – By this Brooks means brainpower… but contrary to some people's assumptions, he believes there are many different intelligences; some very "brainy" people are clueless when it comes to sensing what others are feeling and evaluating themselves and their abilities. He says cognitive capital is not fixed at birth; it can be improved over a lifetime.

• *Aspirational capital* – "The fire-in-the-belly ambition to achieve. The average millionaire, one study showed, had a B- average in college, but at some point people told them they were too stupid to achieve something and they set out to prove the nay-sayers wrong."

Brooks says that grandiose programs like No Child Left Behind, Title I, or Head Start are not the best way to develop human capital. "These programs are not designed for the way people are," he says. "The only things that work are local, human-to-human immersions that transform the students down to their very beings. Extraordinary schools, which create intense cultures of achievement, work. Extraordinary teachers, who inspire students to transform their lives, work. The programs that work touch all the components of human capital."

"Psst! 'Human Capital'" by David Brooks in *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 2005, no free e-link available

5. How to Build Students' Determination

In this article in the current *Psychology Today,* science writer Peter Doskoch explores what it takes to persevere in the face of obstacles. A sidebar offers seven suggestions for helping kids build "a gritty nature:"

• *Help them find their passion*. Exposing children to a variety of academic, artistic, and athletic pursuits increases the likelihood that they will feel a spark in a particular area.

• *Don't worry about balance*. Joseph Renzulli counsels parents not to worry if a child zeroes in on one particular area and gets really good at it.

• *Provide criticism lessons*. Children need to learn how to receive and give constructive criticism without being deflated.

• *Be a model of grittiness*. Children imitate and learn from adult behavior, so the way we respond to challenges has a big influence. In addition, writes, Doskoch, we should praise kids for their effort rather than for their IQ or physical gifts.

• *Offer challenges*. Educational psychologist Jonathan Plucker frequently asks highly successful people what made them decide to pursue their area of expertise. "Half of them say that someone told them, 'You can never do this. It can never be done.' Many people are discouraged by such comments, so it's best for challenges to be more attainable."

• *Teach people to handle, and learn from, failure*. It's important to learn early on how to cope with setbacks.

• *Encourage optimism*. It's hard to set goals and persevere without a positive sense of the future – which can be nurtured by the adults around kids.

"The Winning Edge" by Peter Doskoch in *Psychology Today*, November/December 2005 (Vol. 38, #6, p. 42-52), no e-link available

6. A Rapid-Response Team for Harassment Incidents

In this article in the November *Principal Leadership*, New Hampshire counseling director Victor Pantesco describes how his high school responded to classroom or hallway incidents in which some students were maligned because of their religion, gender, sexual identity, or race. Teachers were upset by these incidents and the slow response of standard disciplinary referrals, so Pantesco decided to set up a team that could be convened in a matter of minutes to confront the alleged perpetrator. The team had two or three students and two or three staff members. The students were nominated by teachers based on their character, strength, and standing in the school community, and faculty members (an assistant principal, a teacher administrator, and Pantesco) were all respected by peers and students for their honesty and ability to relate to students.

When a teacher saw a student behaving in an intolerant manner, he or she reported the incident to Pantesco and he immediately convened the team in a conference room (the principal supported the effort by providing immediate coverage). The alleged perpetrator was brought to the room by the teacher, who described what happened and went back to class. The team then questioned the student. "This was a very different world from the classroom or

corridor," writes Pantesco. "and almost immediately, the internal struggle of mind and heart in the offender became apparent. Even before the first word was spoken, it was clear this already was reaching deeper than any detention or adult reproach."

The team's approach was entirely Socratic and members avoided using "should" or "should not." Questions centered on what provoked the comment or behavior, how long the offender had held this particular belief or bias, whether he or she could understand the damage and hurt the behavior had caused, and how they might all work together to reduce intolerance in the school. No records were kept of the meetings, and they did not necessarily result in disciplinary action.

The immediate goal was to stop the bigoted behavior, but another result of the team's interventions was that "word got out" that such behavior was dealt with swiftly and surely. Pantesco tells how one boy who was constantly in trouble was brought to the group for a bigoted remark, took one look at the team, and refused to enter the room. "That this 'strong' figure in the student body was consequently seen as not tough enough to face such an assemblage had its own impact on the school population and the reputation of the team.

Pantesco reports that teachers and students appreciated the team, and administrators were glad not to have these problems clogging the disciplinary system. He believes that the team had a significant deterrent effect; there were only four cases in the team's first year.

"An Immediate Response Protocol for Addressing Intolerant Behavior" by Victor Pantesco in *Principal Leadership*, November 2005 (Vol. 6, #3, p. 8-9), no e-link available

7. Distributing Leadership in Edison Schools

This article in the current *Education Week* describes the Edison schools requirement that principals work with a leadership team and distribute leadership. Edison founder Chris Whittle says, "A lot of public schools don't really believe that. They think all they need is a terrific principal. But they need a whole team to drive a school to excellence." John Chubb, Edison's CEO, adds, "It's not an exaggeration to say that the most important factor in determining a school's success academically is if they come together as a team."

Baltimore principal JoAnn Cason doesn't see how she could survive without getting others on board with the school's vision. "It's not about me seeing it," she says. "I've got to get others to see it, too. I can't do this by myself – *puh-leeze*."

Like other Edison schools, Cason has divided her school into "house teams" of about six teachers, each headed by a lead teacher who runs daily 45-minute meetings, models teaching, handles student discipline, and often supervises teachers (for $3,000 extra pay). Every morning Cason has a stand-up meeting with her lead teacher to share information on the day ahead. Cason has a sit-down meeting with the full leadership team of 15 (lead teachers plus other key staff, including the facilities manager) to evaluate programs, monitor student achievement, and set policies.

"Sharing the Load" by Karla Scoon Reid in *Education Week*, Nov. 16, 2005 (Vol. 25, #12, p. 27-30), no free e-link available

8. A Parent Rebellion Against Constructivist Math

In a recent *New York Times* education column, Samuel Freedman reported on parent backlash against the "constructivist" math curriculum in the Penfield public schools outside Rochester, New York. Highly-educated parents in engineering and science careers rose up against the school district and demanded more emphasis on computation and traditional skills. Jim Munch, an award-winning high-school senior, spoke about his experience with the curriculum (TERC Investigations, Connected Math, and Core Plus): "My whole experience in math the last few years has been a struggle against the program. Whatever I've achieved, I've achieved in spite of it. Kids do not do better learning math themselves. There's a reason we go to school, which is that there's someone smarter than us with something to teach us."

School officials defended the curriculum, pointing to gradually improving student achievement and a combined SAT average of 1117 (562 in math). But in the last year, the district has begun to make changes, including supplementing constructivist classes with lessons in computation. And last summer, a group of teachers revised the math syllabus in a somewhat more conventional direction.

But Freedman wonders whether "tweaking around the edges" is the solution. "The dispute is fundamental," he writes. "To its advocates, constructivist math applies the subject to the real world, builds critical thinking and rescues classes from numbing repetition. But to those parents in Penfield and elsewhere – who have children in junior high unable to do long division or multiply two-column numbers, who pay for private tutors or sessions at traditionalist learning centers like Kumon, who wonder why there are so many calculators and so few textbooks – the words a recent graduate spoke to the Board of Education ring tragically true: 'My biggest fear about going to college,' Samantha Meek said at a meeting last spring, 'is attending introductory math courses. How am I going to explain to my professors that I do not understand what they are talking about, that I do not have the same math background as the rest of the students, and that I cannot do mental math and can barely do it with pencil and paper?'"

"'Innovative' Math, but Can You Count?" by Samuel Freedman in *New York Times*, Nov. 9, 2005, no free e-link available

9. Short Items:

a. More on the evolution controversy – University of Maryland professor Steven Salzberg, who was the lead author in a recent study that sequenced the genomes of more than 200 human influenza viruses, believes that the threat of an influenza pandemic emerging from a new, highly virulent bird flu makes a powerful case for teaching students about the process of evolution. A major misconception in the current controversy about the teaching of evolution is that Darwin's theory explains the origins of life. It doesn't. The theory of evolution deals with how life, once it appeared, diversified into millions of plants, animals, and other forms of life that now blanket the earth – and how one virus can mutate into a more dangerous one and

infect humans worldwide. "In order to keep ahead of these diseases," writes Salzberg, "we need to continue our scientific research, and we need to educate our citizens about what they can do both to protect themselves, and to help control the spread of disease. The current assault on the teaching of evolution greatly undermines our efforts to do this, now and in the future."

"Bush, the Flu, and Evolution" by Steven Salzberg in the University of Maryland Newsdesk, Nov. 19, 2005. Spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, Nov. 18, 2005. The full article is available at http://www.newsdesk.umd.edu/scitech/release.cfm?ArticleID=1172

b. The kids are watching! Anyone who spends time around children is a character educator, says Leslie Matula in this article. "It comes with the territory. Children are indeed the 'ever-attentive witness' to all that they hear us say and all that they see us do (Robert Coles). The question is what values, principles, and qualities are they learning from us? In our homes, schools, businesses, and sports events, we need always to be aware that children are looking to us for guidance. They expect us to help them navigate life's complex journey. It simply isn't reasonable to expect them to be respectful to others when they witness us being disrespectful. We cannot expect them to be honest when they hear us laugh about cheating on our income taxes. We cannot expect them to be fair and just when they witness our unfair, unjust actions. The most fundamental truths are more often the most simple. Sometimes they are the hardest to hear. This may be one of those truths. We are always and forever teaching values to the young people around us whether we do it with conscious intent or not."

"They're Watching You: The Importance of Role Modeling" by Leslie Matula in MindOH!, October 2005. Spotted in *PEN Weekly Newsblast*, Nov. 19, 2005, full article available at: http://www.mindoh.com/docs/LM_RoleModeling.pdf

c. Nominations for super-teacher award – Nominations are being accepted for a $100,000 prize to be given to an outstanding teacher in an underserved public or private school (where at least half of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals). The deadline for nominations (to Nancy and Rich Kinder) is December 31, 2005, and they can be submitted at this website, which also has further information: http://www.kinderaward.org.

Spotted in *The Education Gadfly*, November 17, 2005

d. Equal time for criticized teachers – RateMyTeachers.com has gathered more than 8 million ratings on a million teachers in 47,000 schools. It has just added a "rebuttals feature" that allows teachers to respond to the ratings their students give them. Teachers can also flag ratings that they believe slipped past the site's student reviewers, who are supposed to screen out postings that are libelous, malicious, or vulgar. "Since the beginning of the site," said co-founder Michael Hussey, "teachers have asked for the opportunity to respond to their ratings. We always encouraged teachers to respond in the classroom, but now, teachers can use RateMyTeachers to further engage students in a safe discussion over the quality of their teaching."

"Teachers Get a Crack At Responding to Ratings" by Joetta Sack in *Education Week*, Nov. 16, 2005 (Vol. 25, #12, p. 12), no free e-link available

e. Drug prevention and school safety modules – This website has 15 free online training modules dealing with school safety and violence prevention for school personnel, including a module on gang prevention:
http://www.k12coordinator.org

Spotted in *Principal Leadership*, November 2005 (Vol. 6, #3, p. 13)

Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

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

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 36 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 43 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through scores of 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 (with occasional breaks; there were 50 issues in 2004-05).

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Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American School Board Journal
ASCD SmartBrief
Atlantic Monthly
Bay State Banner
Boston Globe
CommonWealth Magazine
District Administration
Ed. Magazine (Harvard School of Education)
Education Digest
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Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
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Language Learner
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
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New Yorker
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal Magazine
Principal Leadership
Psychology Today
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
Teacher Magazine
Teachers College Record
Theory Into Practice

E-links will be provided whenever possible.