

# Marshall Memo 178

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education

March 26, 2007

## In This Issue:

1. *Caveat emptor* on educational software
2. Common assessments and teacher teamwork in Nebraska
3. An Ohio district launches professional learning communities
4. Using coaches effectively in South Carolina
5. A New York district gets teams meeting three ways
6. What a boss should provide
7. Research on after-school and summer programs
8. A meeting agenda that focuses on results
9. A Navajo reservation school has it both ways
10. The Marines' mission-based orders
11. Short items: (a) Lifting the veil; (b) What it takes in middle school; (c) Reading Recovery research; (d) Do you know what a fifth grader knows?; (e) Lessons from "American Idol"

## Quotes of the Week

"Voluptuous."

A middle-school teacher's retort when a student called her "fat lady" (see item #11b)

"[A] huge sense of humor and a small ego."

A Bronx principal on what middle-school teachers need to be successful (*ibid.*)

"I hate it when a boss says simply, 'Great job, Joe.' Joe may have done a great job, but possibly he could have done even better, and if I point out how, maybe he will do better next time."

Larry Bossidy (see item #6)

"If we want to improve student learning in our schools, we must improve our professional practices. Being effective and efficient with our collaborative time is essential."

Robert Garmston (see item #8)

"You must be preoccupied with clarity. If you do nothing else as a leader, be clear."

Becky DuFour, reviewing *The One Thing You Need to Know* by Marcus Buckingham in *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2007 (p. 69)

---

## 1. *Caveat Emptor* on Educational Software

This hard-hitting article by Todd Oppenheimer in *Education Next* reports that very few instructional software packages have come close to proving their effectiveness. American schools spent \$1.9 billion on electronic curriculum products in 2006 (a quarter of instructional materials outlays and rising), but research indicates that most software works no better than cheaper traditional materials. In fact, the What Works Clearinghouse has given only four programs its “Positive/Potentially Positive Effect” rating:

- DaisyQuest (beginning reading)
- DaisyQuest for Preschool Children (early childhood education)
- Fast ForWord Language (English language learners; good for language development, but ineffective for reading)
- The Expert Mathematician (middle-school math)

It’s notable that Accelerated Reader (AR), a hugely popular software package used by more than half the nation’s schools, is not on the list. Renaissance Learning, the company that produces Accelerated Reader, holds annual conferences that “feel like religious revival meetings,” says Oppenheimer. “Testimonials at these conferences are typically adorned with lengthy, seemingly solid studies proving AR’s power,” he continues. “Yet none of these studies have held up to serious scrutiny.” He quotes Timothy Shanahan, an education professor at the University of Illinois/Chicago and president of the International Reading Association, saying that these studies all suffer from serious problems and don’t show that Accelerated Reader works.

The Los Angeles school district got badly burned when it bought another software program – Pearson’s Waterford Early Reading – before looking carefully at the research. After implementing the program to the tune of \$50 million, the district’s own analysis showed virtually no student learning gains. Oppenheimer says that other schools and districts can learn two lessons from stories like these:

- *Beware of seemingly persuasive numbers, and don’t get taken in by aggressive sales tactics.* Just because a vendor says its research is “scientifically based” doesn’t mean it is. For example, says Oppenheimer, independent evaluators found that most of the evidence presented by Pearson on the Waterford program had methodological problems, including lack of control groups, small sample sizes, missing information, and numbers based on subjective survey data. Many software companies make claims, he continues, but in most cases they are citing internal studies, testimonials, glowing news accounts, or their own propaganda. Most of the so-called research on software packages fails to meet the criteria established by the Institute of

Education Sciences (IES), which oversees research for the Department of Education. Here are the IES criteria for a “scientifically based” study:

- It randomly assigns its test subjects to comparable groups.
- It yields reliable, measurable data.
- If the study makes any claims about what causes its effects, it substantially eliminates plausible competing explanations.
- Its methods are clear enough that other researchers can repeat or extend them.
- The study has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or equivalent panel of independent experts.

• *Don't fall into the trap of trusting your own people's subjective reports over solid research.* Ronni Ephraim, L.A.'s chief instructional officer, was asked if she had looked at the research on Waterford before supporting the district's massive investment. She admitted that she hadn't. “Every classroom situation is different,” she said, “and nothing compares to L.A. I'd rather listen to my own teachers.” This approach is quite common; to many administrators, says Oppenheimer, “the sensations of success or failure inside your own classrooms are going to feel a lot more relevant than abstract statistics drawn from schools on the other side of the country... To researchers, however, Ephraim's way of thinking can make an instructional method look like it's working when it's not. All too often, some other environmental factor is driving the improvement; sometimes, in fact, the gains are just normal growth associated with getting older.”

Oppenheimer closes his article on a hopeful note: soon, he says, highly reliable *Consumer Reports*-type ratings of programs will be a mouse-click away, and companies will be forced to put their resources into developing truly effective programs, not slick promotions.

“Selling Software: How Vendors Manipulate and Cheat Students” by Todd Oppenheimer in *Education Next*, Spring 2007 (Vol. 7, #2, p. 22-29)

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/6017486.html>

## **2. Common Assessments and Teacher Teamwork in Nebraska**

In this *Journal of Staff Development* article, three Nebraska educators contrast the isolated world of classroom teachers to the weekly routine of high-school football coaches:

- Every Friday night, they lead their players onto the playing field for a performance for which the coach will be held accountable by the entire community.
- Every week, spectators and parents are looking for improvement in the players.
- After each game, coaches continue their work, poring over the statistics, reviewing their game plan, and tending to injured players.
- On Saturday morning, they look at the game videotape, scrutinize every play, and evaluate each player's contribution.
- Then they start planning for the next week's game, organize practices based on the data, and psyche their players to do their best.

District leaders decided that teachers needed to operate more like athletic coaches, and they embarked on a journey to promote collegiality within the school day. First, they needed to create the time for teams to meet, and ran three options by the community:

- Releasing students early one day a week;
- Starting school later one day a week;
- Tweaking the calendar to create a full professional development day each month.

Most teachers, parents, and school board members liked the third option best, and for the following year (2002-03), ten minutes were added to every school day to make up for the time lost by the six scheduled professional days.

The district then created a protocol for teacher meetings and designated team leaders. Prior to monthly meetings, all teachers were required to identify an area in which students were struggling and collect assessment data, along with six samples of student work – two high-scoring, two average, and two low-scoring. During team meetings, colleagues ask three questions about each teacher’s data:

- Did your assessment match your instructional strategy?
- What were students’ strengths?
- What were students’ weaknesses?

Team members then suggest approaches that might improve performance, and teachers implement them and report back at subsequent meetings.

The authors report that this protocol resulted in many teachers moving beyond merely assigning work, grading papers, and posting final marks; it has made them reflective and analytical about their students’ work all the time.

After a year of these monthly team meetings, district leaders realized that teacher teams needed to meet more frequently. In 2004, they created weekly 40-minute meetings in elementary schools and bi-weekly 50-minute meetings in secondary schools. Teacher teams focused first on curriculum planning, answering Rick DuFour’s four questions:

- What do we want students to learn?
- How will we know they are learning? (This included drafting common formative assessments)
- What will we do if they don’t learn it?
- What will we do if they already know it?

Second, teams crafted interventions for struggling students, asking themselves:

- What do the data reveal about this student’s learning?
- What could account for this student’s lack of success?
- Did this student’s achievement match my expectations? Why or why not?
- What instructional strategies helped my colleagues’ students succeed on our common assessment?

Teachers then worked together to develop a customized intervention plan, implement it, and monitor progress in subsequent meetings.

Has this approach worked? The article includes graphs showing impressive progress in virtually all subject areas and grade levels over the last four years.

“Finding Time for Teams” by Jeff Johnston, Mary Knight, and Laura Miller in *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2007 (Vol. 28, #2, p. 14-18), no e-link available

### **3. An Ohio District Launches Professional Learning Communities**

In this *Journal of Staff Development* article, two district leaders from the Findlay City, Ohio schools describe the five-year plan they followed to create a collaborative professional culture in their high school:

- *Step 1: Learning the concepts* – All district administrators heard Rick DuFour speak about his work at Adlai Stevenson High School in Illinois, and high-school department chairs followed up with a full-day session with DuFour. The assistant superintendent then asked all administrators to read two of DuFour’s books, *Professional Learning Communities At Work* (1998) and *Getting Started* (2002) and engage in two day-long discussions of the books in August 2001 and June 2002. During that school year, three teams of Findlay administrators visited Adlai Stevenson High School to observe its teacher teams at work and discuss strategies with their administrators. Out of all this came a decision to rewrite and realign curriculum expectations and design common assessments for each course that teachers would administer and analyze twice a year.

- *Step 2: Launching professional learning communities* – During the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years, teachers began to meet once each quarter from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m., which was made possible by students coming in two hours late on those days. Grade-level and content-area teacher teams used the meetings to develop common assessments, talk about lesson plans, reflect on how lessons went, and look at student results. Some volunteer committees met after school hours to develop additional common assessments and plan academic study halls, academic lunches, and an elective summer study skills class for high-school freshmen.

After two years, it became apparent that teacher teams were not meeting frequently enough, and the district orchestrated a 20-minute delayed-start for students every Thursday morning, which made possible weekly 45-minute team meetings.

- *Step 3: Embracing data* – At the beginning of the 2004-05 school year, administrators presented student achievement data that showed Findlay schools near the bottom of demographically-similar schools in Ohio. This shocked staff into a greater sense of urgency about improving achievement. All teachers attended a required workshop on using data and analyzing state graduation and test requirements, and the early-morning meetings took on more focus and intensity. Teachers also took advantage of an electronic grading program that made scoring and analyzing common assessments much easier, and moved from twice-yearly to monthly common assessments.

At this point, the district hit a speed bump: the teachers’ union filed a grievance about the way the weekly meetings were being conducted, and the district was forced to compromise: teachers would meet by department before breaking into voluntary collaborative teams, and the teams would not be required to submit minutes or notes on their meetings. “In hindsight,” write the authors, “the school district should have had a written and signed memorandum of

understanding with the union that spelled out the parameters and expectations of the Thursday morning professional development/collaborative time.”

Despite this conflict, most teachers continued to attend the collaborative meetings, and the authors report that the school’s culture shifted from top-down data sharing to teachers constantly asking for data from the central office: *Who are our economically disadvantaged students? Which subset on the state tests did our students not perform well on? How are our students doing on AP exams?*

During this time period, student achievement improved markedly: from 64% to 84% meeting Ohio graduation test standards, from 66% to 96% meeting reading standards, with even more significant jumps in the scores of low-SES and special education students. The authors say that although not all teachers are on board with the concept of professional learning communities, the district has taken great strides and is moving ahead ambitiously with plans to extend the initiative and improve the quality of discourse in all teacher teams.

“Data Delivers a Wake-Up Call: Five-Year Plan Unites Teachers Into a Collaborative Culture” by Sandra White and Julie McIntosh in *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2007 (Vol. 28, #2, p. 30-35), no e-link available

#### **4. Using Coaches Effectively in South Carolina**

In this *Journal of Staff Development* article, South Carolina education official Nan Dempsey shares insights from the state’s coaching initiative, which has 144 coaches working in 45 school districts (one coach, one school, one content area). The theory of action is that coaches boost student learning by promoting teacher learning; each coach provides the equivalent of eight additional embedded professional development days each year – without significantly disrupting teacher-student learning time.

How do coaches spend their time? A major emphasis is working with grade-level teacher teams in the following ways:

- Questioning teachers on the goals of the next unit and lesson;
- Deciding what evidence teachers will accept that students understand what’s been taught;
- Probing teachers on their strategies for teaching the unit and what materials will be most effective;
- Working to make teachers more self-sufficient and empowered;
- Following up with unannounced classroom observations to see the plans in action, sometimes getting involved in hands-on assistance with students;
- Debriefing with teachers afterwards.

Participating schools districts create time for coaches to do their work with teachers in five ways:

- *Buying time* – For example, one school hires substitutes to free up grade-level teams to work with their science coach on how to use the kits that come with their science program.

They discuss each kit's contents and the concepts to be taught, prepare materials, and practice teaching lessons. The same school pays teachers to attend additional summer training.

- *Using planning time* – Another school arranged its schedule to provide the teachers at each grade level with daily common planning time, which is prime time for their coach to help teachers with planning, data analysis, etc. Other schools use lunch time for team meetings, freeing up teachers from cafeteria duty by using specialist teachers, paraprofessionals, or parent volunteers.

- *Freeing time* – In another school, teachers lighten their preparation load by specializing in particular science kits and teaching “their” kit on a rotating basis.

- *Embedding time* – Coaches squeeze in their individual work with teachers before and after school and in impromptu coaching sessions during the day.

- *Using existing time more effectively* – The South Carolina officials believe that coaches should not be used to do small-group work with students. Instead, they should be used to enhance the instructional impact of teachers, who are doing the real work with students.

“Five Elements Combine in a Formula for Coaching” by Nan Dempsey in *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2007 (Vol. 28, #2, p. 10-13), no e-link available

## **5. A New York District Gets Teams Meeting Three Ways**

In this *Journal of Staff Development* article, two leaders from the Maine-Endwell, NY district describe the ways they captured time for job-embedded professional development:

- *All-day professional days* – The district abandoned conventional “sit and git” workshops by outside experts and started using its 2-4-times-a-year conference days to get lead teachers working with colleagues drafting common assessments, analyzing assessment data and student work, aligning curriculum with state standards, and sharing best practices.

- *Early dismissal days* – These days free up time for additional teacher meetings (six times a year for elementary schools, four for middle schools, and three for the high school). Teacher teams use the early-dismissal days to improve their understanding and skill in a particular area, for example, social studies and ELA teachers working on how to teach analytical reading questions.

- *Roll-through time* – A school hires enough substitutes to free up a grade-level team, and the substitutes “roll” sequentially through the school, giving each team a one-period meeting time within a day or two. This approach to creating meeting time has been useful for introducing new curriculum materials, as well as regular curriculum support and interim assessment data work. The emphasis in the more-frequent roll-through meetings is on teachers trying out different approaches and reporting back on successes and problems.

“Shaping the Workday” by Kathryn Sever and Linda Bowgren in *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2007 (Vol. 28, #2, p. 20-23), no e-link available

## 6. What a Boss Should Provide

In the latter portion of this *Harvard Business Review* article, former corporate executive Larry Bossidy shares this list of what subordinates should expect from their boss. See how many of these cross over to the world of principals and teachers:

- *Provide clarity of direction.* This means communicating clearly where we're going, why, and what the benefits will be if we accomplish what we set out to achieve.

- *Set measurable goals and objectives.* Without these, it's hard to know whether you and your boss are on the same page. Team goals and individual goals should define what people are striving for and where to invest precious time.

- *Give frequent, specific, and immediate feedback.* Doing this signals people that the boss is interested in their growth and sees a path for their future. People shouldn't have to wait for the end-of-year evaluation to find out how they're doing, and the feedback needs to be specific to be helpful. "I hate it when a boss says simply, 'Great job, Joe'", says Bossidy. "Joe may have done a great job, but possibly he could have done even better, and if I point out how, maybe he will do better next time."

- *Be decisive and timely.* "People should expect me to make decisions as soon as I have the information I need, and not to be careless or impetuous but to give clear, unambiguous answers," says Bossidy.

- *Be accessible.* If a boss wants to be well informed, he or she needs to be readily available, not constantly "behind closed doors." And people need to know that it's okay to bring bad news. "Most people can handle good news on their own," says Bossidy. "They turn to the boss when they need some help."

- *Demonstrate honesty and candor.* This is especially important in performance evaluations, where people too often use vague language ("hard worker," "amiable") rather than specific, direct language ("results oriented", "team player").

"What Your Leader Expects of You – and What You Should Expect in Return" by Larry Bossidy in *Harvard Business Review*, April 2007 (Vol. 85, #4, p. 58-65), no e-link available

## 7. Research on After-School and Summer Programs

This review of the research on out-of-school time programs in *Principal's Research Review* makes the following points:

- Adolescents who spend three or more hours home alone in the afternoon are more likely than others to use drugs (including alcohol), show signs of depression, have behavior problems, engage in risky sexual behavior, and become victims of car crashes and violent crime.
- Out-of-school time programs need clear goals and outcomes and must think through their focus, practices, and length before launching.
- High-quality staff and on-going professional development are important, as are regular classroom visits by administrators, followed up by informal feedback to teachers

- Out-of-school time programs should be aligned with the school’s regular program so they complement what students get during the day. It’s a good idea to hire a teacher from the day school to keep after-school programs apprised of key activities, have the school’s parent liaison do double duty, hire an aide to coordinate the academic records of student progress in both programs, and use the same literacy and math materials as the regular program.
- The regular program and the out-of-school-time program might pool their resources to hire joint arts and recreation specialists who work in both time-slots. It’s also excellent if classroom libraries, manipulatives, and games are available to support homework and other after-school activities.
- Continuous gathering and analysis of program data are vital to success.

“The Benefits of Out-of-School Time Programs” by Kirsten Miller in *Principal’s Research Review*, March 2007 (Vol. 2, #2, p. 1-6), no e-link available

## 8. A Meeting Agenda That Focuses on Results

“If we want to improve student learning in our schools,” writes professor/consultant Robert Garmston in his column in the *Journal of Staff Development*, “we must improve our professional practices. Being effective and efficient with our collaborative time is essential.” He goes on to make the case for a structured agenda for meetings, with the following elements:

- *Identify the outcome(s) of the meeting.* This helps participants start with the end in mind. It’s best to specify a *product*, not a process, as the outcome.
- *Plan an opening that sets the tone and focuses participants on outcomes.* A good opening activates prior knowledge and gets “minds and voices, as well as bodies, in the room,” says Garmston.
- *List the topics to be addressed in the meeting,* with a guiding question and a clear purpose for each one (is this topic for dialogue, information, recommendation, or decision?), any background information the group needs, and the process that will be used to address the topic.
- *Think about the sequence of topics.* The opening topic should be the most difficult, and the last one should lend itself to closure and leave the group on an upbeat note.
- *Estimate the approximate time each topic will take.*
- *Identify the person responsible for each task* (that person should be alerted before the meeting).

“Results-Oriented Agendas Transform Meetings Into Valuable Collaborative Events” by Robert Garmston in *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2007 (Vol. 28, #2, p. 55-56), <http://www.nsd.org/publications/articleDetails.cfm?articleID=1447>

## 9. A Navajo Reservation School Has It Both Ways

The K-8 Navajo Language Immersion School in Fort Defiance, Arizona made AYP in all subgroups last year while maintaining Navajo culture and language, reports this article in

*Education Week*. The school's hybrid approach grew out of concerns that children were losing their cultural roots (the percent of entering kindergarten students who were fluent in Navajo fell from 89% to 3% between 1979 and 1989). The school's kindergarten and first-grade students receive all their instruction in Navajo, and there is a strong cultural emphasis through the grades. But the school also aligns its curriculum with Arizona standards and uses interim assessment data to track achievement and fine-tune teaching.

"A Culture Put to the Test: For Navajo Children, a Rigorous Program Draws on Tradition to Spur Achievement" by Mary Ann Zehr in *Education Week* (Vol. 26, #28, p. 25-28) <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/03/21/28navajo.h26.html>. Note that *Education Week* is giving free access to all articles and archives through April 15<sup>th</sup>.

## 10. The Marines' Mission-Based Orders

In this *Harvard Business Review* article on making explicit the "promises" between bosses and subordinates, the authors share the way in which officers in the Marine Corps give orders:

- Each order clearly articulates what the commanding officer wants.
- Each order includes an explanation – known as the commander's intent – of why the objective matters and how it relates to the mission.
- The order leaves the methods of implementation to the discretion of the subordinate officer closest to the situation on the ground.

"Promise-Based Management: The Essence of Execution" by Donald Sull and Charles Spinosa in *Harvard Business Review*, April 2007 (Vol. 85, #4, p. 78-86), no e-link available

## 11. Short Items:

**a. *Lifting the veil*** – In February, Caitlin Dean, a 15-year-old high-school freshman in Colchester, Connecticut took her teacher up on the idea of wearing traditional Muslim garb, complete with a face-hiding burqa, for an entire day. She was pelted with hateful and abusive comments, including "This is America. Go home," revealing the persistent animosity toward American Muslims sparked by the 9/11 attacks and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. "My fear of this hatred of Islam is that it will become synonymous with patriotism," said teacher Angie Parkinson. "We are a nation of immigrants."

Spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, March 16, 2007

**b. *What it takes in middle school*** – When 45-year-old middle-school teacher Corinne Kaufman was called "fat lady" by one of her students, she calmly turned around and said, "Voluptuous" and proceeded to give the class a vocabulary lesson they are unlikely to forget. This *New York Times* article also quoted a Bronx principal saying that to be successful with middle-school students, teachers need to have "a huge sense of humor and a small ego."

Spotted in *Education Gadfly*, March 22, 2007; for the original March 17, 2007 *New York Times* article, “For Teachers, Middle School Is Test of Wills” by Elissa Gootman, go to: [http://www.nytimes.com/glogin?URI=http://gk.nytimes.com/mem/gatekeeper.html&OQ=rQ3D1Q26URIQ3DhttpQ3AQ2FQ2Fwww.nytimes.comQ2F2007Q2F03Q2F17Q2FeducationQ2F17middle.htmlQ26OQ51Q3D\\_rQ513D2Q5126orefQ513DsloginQ26OPQ3D19709b08Q512FmQ512Ba\\_mQ515BQ5160LAMO5160Q5160nQ515CmQ515C!!m!UmS.maQ515BCLQ512AnQ515EQ5160BmS.gQ515EQ515BQ515B8aeRng8&OP=545e3810Q2FQ25\).YQ251Q51\(Q5EqTQ25B\(Q7CQ5Ess1pQ25sm3\(.B\(.qQ25nQ5E\(.Q2B..s.mQ60B\(Q7C](http://www.nytimes.com/glogin?URI=http://gk.nytimes.com/mem/gatekeeper.html&OQ=rQ3D1Q26URIQ3DhttpQ3AQ2FQ2Fwww.nytimes.comQ2F2007Q2F03Q2F17Q2FeducationQ2F17middle.htmlQ26OQ51Q3D_rQ513D2Q5126orefQ513DsloginQ26OPQ3D19709b08Q512FmQ512Ba_mQ515BQ5160LAMO5160Q5160nQ515CmQ515C!!m!UmS.maQ515BCLQ512AnQ515EQ5160BmS.gQ515EQ515BQ515B8aeRng8&OP=545e3810Q2FQ25).YQ251Q51(Q5EqTQ25B(Q7CQ5Ess1pQ25sm3(.B(.qQ25nQ5E(.Q2B..s.mQ60B(Q7C)

**c. Reading Recovery research** – Reading Recovery, the New Zealand one-on-one tutoring program for at-risk first graders that has been implemented in many U.S. schools, was not supported in the initial round of Reading First “scientifically based” analyses. But it recently received the endorsement of the federal What Works Clearinghouse, which is highly selective in the programs it recommends. For details, see: <http://whatworks.ed.gov/InterventionReportLinks.asp?iid=209&tid=01>

**d. Do you know what a fifth grader knows?** A new Fox show pits adults against fifth graders on common-knowledge questions like naming the colors of the rainbow and the presidents on Mount Rushmore. Apparently a number of students are watching the show and coming to school to see if their teachers know the answers. To try an online quiz printed by the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, go to: <http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=576640>.

Spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, March 16, 2007; for the full story from the *Hartford Courant*, go to: <http://www.courant.com/news/education/hc-burqa0312.artmar12.0.3126355.story?coll=hc-headlines-education>

**e. Lessons from “American Idol”** – According to Christopher Ames in this article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, three things are implicit in the wildly popular talent/reality show, “American Idol”:

- A belief in genuine standards: “We may at times disagree about whether a performance is good or bad,” writes Ames, “but extreme examples remind us that those differences in taste exist within that shared context of what counts as ‘in tune,’ an agreement about what ultimately is a credible performance.”
- A respect for expertise;
- The fact that people are often not good judges of their own ability.

Spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, March 23, 2007. For the original article, see: <http://chronicle.com/temp/reprint.php?id=mb0x36m50m0jsrmg01bzsts8th5z86sx>

© Copyright 2007 Kim Marshall

***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 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 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 (with occasional breaks; there are about 50 issues a year).

## ***Subscriptions:***

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

## ***Website:***

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

- How to subscribe or renew
- Why the Marshall Memo?
- Publications read
- Article selection criteria
- Topics covered
- Headlines for all issues
- What readers say
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

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

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

## ***Publications covered***

*Those read this week are underlined.*

American Educator  
American School Board Journal  
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs  
Atlantic Monthly  
Catalyst Chicago  
CommonWealth Magazine  
Daily EdNews  
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  
Teachers College Record  
TESOL Quarterly  
Theory Into Practice  
Times Educational Supplement, Magazine