Marshall Memo 305

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
October 12, 2009

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"The strategies for educating students to high standards are pretty much the same for all kids: teacher collaboration; a laserlike focus on what we want kids to learn; formative assessment to see if they learned it; data-driven instruction; personal relationship building."

Molly Bensinger-Lacy, Virginia principal (see item #1)

"All you have to do is add, subtract, multiply, and divide. How hard is that?"

A California lawmaker during a debate on mathematics education (see item #2)

"When reasoning is absent, mathematics becomes a black box, and fear and loathing set in."

Hung-Hsi Wu (see item #2)

"One can flatly state that if students do not feel comfortable with the mathematical reasoning used to justify the standard algorithms for whole numbers, then their chances of success in algebra are exceedingly small."

Hung-Hsi Wu (*ibid.*)

"I'm wary of buzzwords like innovation. It's easy to spend money and get nowhere with fuzzy thinking."

Grover Whitehurst of the Brookings Institution, quoted in "Education Agency Will Offer Grants for Innovative Ideas" by Sam Dillon, *New York Times*, Oct. 7, 2009 (p. A21)
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/07/education/07educ.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Education%20Agency%20Will%20Offer%20Grants%20for%20Innovative%20Ideas&st=cse

"Most middle-school guys are total, compete morons."

A middle-school girl who came out as bisexual and was hit on by boys (see item #4)

1. Five Keys to Highly Effective Inner-City Schools

In this meaty *American Educator* article, Education Trust writer Karin Chenoweth describes the characteristics she has observed in her research on high-achieving urban schools:

• *Teacher collaboration* – "No one teacher can be an expert in all aspects of the curriculum, all possible ways to teach it, and every child who sits in his or her class," says Chenoweth. "But every teacher should have expertise that can be tapped by other teachers to improve their knowledge of their subject, their teaching skill, and their knowledge of their students." Effective schools carve out regular common planning time for same-grade and same-subject teacher teams and set cultural norms for those meetings, including:

- If you don't say it in the meeting, don't say it in the parking lot.
- Talk about the things the school can control.
- Focus on teaching and learning, not administrative matters that are more efficiently handled in bulletins or e-mails.

Chenoweth found that principals in highly effective schools often sat in on meetings at the beginning of the year to make sure the norms were well-established, then visited from time to time and received reports from group members. Principals made a point of hiring highly competent, collaborative teachers and made the school's cultural expectations explicit to applicants up front. They were also quick to counsel out or remove teachers who were not willing or able to abide by collaborative norms.

• *A laserlike focus on what students need to learn* – The previous generation of school reform had things exactly backwards, says Chenoweth: considerable teacher freedom on *what* to teach but lots of top-down control on *how* to teach it, including one teaching fad after another. "Teachers should be the experts in *how* to teach," she says, "but on their own, they should not be deciding *what* to teach… That doesn't mean that there shouldn't always be room in a school day or year for teachers to share their passion for the more obscure plays of Wiliam Shakespeare. But the bulk of the curriculum should be devoted to the knowledge and skills that we as a society have decided are essential for students to become educated citizens."

Fortunately, there is a growing consensus on a common set of expectations for high-school graduation that will launch an adolescent into college success and a decent job. The hard part is teasing those expectations back from 12th grade to kindergarten and coming up with a *manageable* list of knowledge and skills for each grade. Teachers then need to create curriculum calendars and unit and lesson plans to execute the curriculum – something that's best done by teams of teachers collaborating in their common planning time. Chenoweth

reports that some of the effective schools give their new teachers with a full year of lesson plans to help them get through their rookie year.

• *Formative assessments* – To check how well students are learning the curriculum, teachers in Chenoweth's model schools give frequent, common assessments and follow up relentlessly, analyzing, reteaching, tutoring, and fine-tuning their units and lessons, always asking what led to the wrong answer. "Sometimes it is just inattention," she writes. "Sometimes it is a misunderstanding of a word or a lack of background knowledge. In this way, teachers catch small problems before they grow."

• *Data-driven instruction* – Beyond using interim assessments to help struggling students, teacher teams in highly effective schools use data to see patterns that aren't visible to teachers on a day-to-day basis. For example, in one school teachers noticed that vocabulary was the weakest area for all groups of students, not just English language learners, and launched a schoolwide initiative in vocabulary development.

• *Personal relationship building* – Chenoweth says that the atmosphere in the high-achieving schools was very different from that of average and low-performing schools. It was caring, respectful, warm, and yet intolerant of disruption, with students' accomplishments celebrated with enthusiasm and love. "The children weren't being pumped up with phony self-esteem-building exercises," she writes. "They were building genuine self-esteem based on the hard work of accomplishment."

Chenoweth says the one thing she hasn't explored fully in research is the role of leadership. She knows how important the principal's vision, guidance, and support are to the amazing accomplishments of these schools, and hopes to write more about that in the future.

"Piece by Piece: How Schools Solved the Achievement Puzzle and Soared" by Karin Chenoweth in *American Educator*, Fall 2009 (Vol. 33, #3, p. 15-23)
http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/fall2009/chenoweth.pdf
Chenoweth's latest book is *How It's Being Done: Urgent Lessons from Unexpected Schools* (Harvard Education Press, 2009).

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2. Elementary Mathematics – Harder to Teach Than We Think

"All you have to do is add, subtract, multiply, and divide," said one California legislator during a 1990s debate on mathematics education. "How hard is that?" In this thoughtful *American Educator* article, University of California/Berkeley professor emeritus and curriculum expert Hung-Hsi Wu totally disagrees, and proves his point by describing the pedagogical content knowledge needed to teach two topics: adding whole numbers and dividing fractions.

• *Adding whole numbers* – Wu asks us to consider the following second-grade math problem:

$$\begin{array}{r} 45 \\ +\ 31 \\ \hline 76 \end{array}$$

Too often, students learn to solve problems like this by rote, without understanding what it means to add numbers, why it's worth understanding, how it can be fun, and why it's hard if it's not done right. Wu suggests the following approach.

Ask students to imagine that a boy has saved 45 pennies and a girl has saved 31. Do they have enough money to buy some stickers that cost 75 cents? Give students two bags of pennies, one containing 45 and the other 31, and ask them to dump the coins out and count them to find the answer. Many students will mess up (it's hard for second graders to count that many coins accurately), at which point you suggest a shortcut: put aside the 45 pennies (you don't need to count them) and *count on* 31 more (46, 47, 48, etc.). More students will now get the right answer, but some will still mess up. "Then you get to play the magician," says Wu, giving them a way to find the answer by doing two single-digit addition problems. How? Write the sum 45 + 31 and explain that this really means taking 45 and counting 31 more steps. Show that this can be solved much more easily than counting, by adding 4 + 3 and 5 + 1 to get 76.

But this needs more demonstration and the introduction of place value, one of the most important concepts in elementary mathematics. Collect the 45 pennies and put them in bags of ten – 4 bags with 5 stragglers. Do the same with the 31 pennies – 3 bags with 1 straggler. Then have students lay out and add up the bags of ten and the stragglers and they will figure out that there are 4 + 3 bags of ten totaling 7 bags and 5 + 1 stragglers totaling 6, which adds up to 76 pennies. To make the place values explicit, you can show that:

45	40 + 5	40 + 5	45
+ 31	+ 30 + 1	+ 30 + 1	+ 31
76	? ?	70 + 6	76

"Now, they will listen more carefully to your incantations of place value," says Wu, "because you have given them more incentive to learn about this important topic… If we succeed in getting students to *thoroughly understand* addition without carrying, then they will be in an excellent position to handle carrying too." What comes out of this procedure is students understanding that the most obvious way to solve the original problem – counting – is not the easiest. "Instead of tedious, error-prone counting," says Wu, "you used the concept of place value to introduce the idea of breaking up a task digit by digit and adding only two single-digit numbers in succession… It teaches children an important skill in mathematics: *if possible, always break up a complicated task into a sequence of simple ones*."

The beauty of arithmetic algorithms, says Wu, is that they reduce the most complex problems to computations with single-digit numbers artfully put together. "This is the kind of thinking students will need to succeed in algebra and advanced mathematics," he says. They're in a position to understand that even in a more complex problem, for example,

45723
+ 31251
76974

where the 4 stands for 40,000 and the 3 stands for 30,000, finding the answer is still a matter of adding 4 + 3 and the other single-digit sums. This principle carries over into upper-elementary math involving multiplication: problems can be solved by multiplying single-digit numbers

(making it essential to master multiplication tables to automaticity). "One can flatly state," says Wu, "that if students do not feel comfortable with the mathematical reasoning used to justify the standard algorithms for whole numbers, then their chances of success in algebra are exceedingly small."

The beauty of place value and the decimal system, says Wu, is that it makes it possible to handle large numbers using only ten digits: 0, 1 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. The decimal system came from the Islamic Empire around the 12th century; the Arabs got it from the Hindus around the 8th century, and recent research suggests that the Hindus got it from the Chinese, who have had a decimal place-value system from way back.

• *Dividing fractions* – "The rhyme, 'Ours is not to reason why, just invert and multiply,' gets it all wrong," says Wu. "With a precise, well-reasoned definition, there is no need to wonder why – the answer is clear." He says he encounters many well-educated adults who have no clue why they invert and multiply when dividing fractions – and that's the challenge that upper-elementary teachers face: getting their students to understand the logic. "Because fractions are students' first serious excursion into abstraction," says Wu, "understanding fractions is the most critical step in understanding rational numbers and in preparing for algebra." Wu believes that starting in fifth grade, students need to be taught that each division statement (24/6, for example) implies a multiplication statement: 24 = 6 x 4. They also need to shift from the primary-grade methods for visualizing fractions – pizzas and pies – to seeing fractions as intervals on a number line. With whole numbers, students can count on their fingers. With fractions, the number line is the perfect way to making fractions concrete. Number lines also help put improper fractions in perspective: 1/3, 2/3, 3/3, 4/3, 5/3, 6/3, 7/3, etc., and visualize equalities, such as 2/3 being the same as 4/6. Once students know how to multiply fractions, they can make the leap (with explanation from an expert teacher) to understanding why they need to invert and multiply in order to divide fractions. A good example to drive the logic home is this problem: *A 30-yard ribbon is cut into pieces that are each ¾ yard long to make bows. How many bows can be made?*

Wu concludes by arguing that in the upper elementary grades, students need to be slowly acclimatized to three key characteristics that make higher-level mathematics learnable:

• *Coherence* – Math topics are not a collection of unrelated facts but a "whole tapestry where each item exists as part of a larger design," says Wu. It's essential, for example, that students see the close relationship between whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percents. It's also important that they understand the general principle of reducing complicated tasks to simple subtasks.

• *Precision* – "Children should learn about this mathematics tapestry in a language that does not leave room for misunderstanding or guesswork," says Wu. "It should be a language sufficiently precise so that they can reconstruct the tapestry step by step." For example, when fractions are taught without clear definitions, students never really understand them and have great difficulty when they begin algebra.

• *Reasoning* – "When reasoning is absent," says Wu, "mathematics becomes a black box, and fear and loathing set in." Students make mistakes like not shifting each row of

answers over to the left in long multiplication, or adding numerators and denominators in fractions. "Reasoning is the power that enables us to move from one step to the next," he continues. "When students are given this power, they gain confidence that mathematics is something they can do, because it is done according to some clearly stated, learnable, objective criteria. When students are emboldened to make moves on their own in mathematics, they become sequential thinkers, and sequential thinking drives problem solving."

Because of the advanced content knowledge needed to teach this material, Wu advocates that schools should employ specialized math teachers starting in fourth grade.

"What's Sophisticated About Elementary Mathematics?" by Hung-Hsi Wu in *American Educator*, Fall 2009 (Vol. 33, #3, p. 4-14)
http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/fall2009/wu.pdf

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3. A Surprising Way to Develop "Executive Function" in Kindergarten

In this *New York Times Magazine* article, Paul Tough reports on Tools of the Mind, an experimental kindergarten program based on the work of Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist who did his work in the early 1900s. Tools of the Mind aims to improve children's "executive function" – that is, their ability to organize their thoughts, process information coherently, hold relevant details in short-term memory, avoid distractions and mental traps, and focus on the task in front of them. Vygotsky believed that the most important task in kindergarten is learning how to think – helping children go from being unable to control their reactions and interests to mastering their thoughts. Cognitive psychologists point to numerous studies indicating that executive function is key to children's success in school and life. "The problem," says Tough, "is that just as we're coming to understand the importance of self-regulation skills, those skills appear to be in short supply among young American children."

Can these skills be taught, or are they innate or a product of early parenting? Tools of the Mind classrooms, operating in a number of locations, show early promise. The program uses a counterintuitive approach – having children engage in extensive play. Vygotsky believed that children's ability to play creatively with other children was a better indicator of future academic success than vocabulary, counting skills, or knowing letters. This is quite different from the reigning kindergarten approach of recent years, which has pushed reading, writing, and cognitive skills. But the activities in Tools of the Mind classrooms are far from being unstructured free play. "The romantic idea that children are born with flowering imaginations and a natural instinct for make-believe is simply wrong," reports Tough. "Especially these days… when children spend more time in front of screens and less time in unsupervised play, kids need careful adult guidance and instruction before they are able to play in a productive way."

Vygotsky said that children develop executive function best through *purposeful* play, so the schools in this experiment have children engage in what Tough describes as "complex, extended make-believe scenarios with several children and lasting for hours, even days…

dressing up in fire-fighter hats and wedding gowns, cooking make-believe hamburgers and pouring non-existent tea, doing the hard, serious work of playing pretend." Children are prompted by their teachers – and peers – to stay "in role" and make the play scenarios as real as possible. "When children follow the rules of make-believe and push one another to follow those rules," says Tough, "they develop important habits of self-control." Tools of the Mind students are also taught to use "private speech" – how to talk to themselves as they do a difficult task – to help themselves remember what step comes next, and "mediators" (little cue cards) to help them remember key steps. Children carry around clipboards with the day's activities, and every Friday they have a private 5-10-minute "learning conference" with a teacher to discuss what they accomplished that week, where they were unsuccessful, and what skills they will work on the following week.

Tools of the Mind classrooms differ from conventional kindergartens in another important way: they do not use gold stars and other extrinsic rewards, including praising children for their positive self-control ("Look at how well Cindy is sitting") and time-outs and harsh criticism when they break rules. The theory is that external reinforcement systems train children to act in particular ways "for the approval of others, to avoid punishment and win praise and treats," explains Tough. This kind of learning will not last, say the Tools of the Mind theorists. "Children learn only how to be obedient, how to follow orders, not how to understand and regulate their own impulses," says Tough. "The ultimate goal of Tools of the Mind is not emotional or physical self-regulation; it is cognitive self-regulation – not the ability to avoid grabbing a toy from the kid next to you (though that's an important first step), but the much more subtle ability to avoid falling for a deceptively attractive wrong answer on a test or to concentrate on an arduous mental task. And those abilities are more difficult to affect by other-directed regulation. Because the abilities are more abstract, they are less likely to be elicited by rewards. Kids are rarely able to organize their thoughts better in order to get an ice-cream cone."

So when students misbehave – for example, Billy grabbing Jamal's toy – Tools of the Mind teachers tell Billy he broke a rule but don't make a big deal of it. Instead, they ask themselves what in the classroom made it hard for Billy to control himself, and what mediators could help him do better next time. "We pretty much try not to use this whole concept of misbehavior," says Elena Bodrova, a child-development scholar based in Denver. "These kids are not born criminals. Even if they do something that is completely out of bounds, they do it because they can't stop themselves."

How well is Tools of the Mind working? Early results are positive: after a year of the program, children in Denver did significantly better than a control group on literacy measures, and another study in Canada showed that students consistently scored higher on executive function. Four major long-term studies are in progress, and more data will be forthcoming. "In the end," concludes Tough, "the most lasting effect of the Tools of the Mind studies may be to challenge some of our basic ideas about the boundary between work and play. Today, play is seen by most teachers and education scholars as a break from hard work or a reward for positive behaviors, not a place to work on cognitive skills. But in Tools of the Mind

classrooms, that distinction disappears: work looks a lot like play, and play is treated more like work."

"The Make-Believe Solution" by Paul Tough in *The New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 27, 2009 (p. 30-35) access with free registration at
http://www.nytimes.com/glogin?URI=http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/27/magazine/27tools-t.html&OQ=_rQ3D1Q26scpQ3D3Q26sqQ3DTheQ2520Make-BelieveQ2520SolutionQ26stQ3Dcse&OP=5058518cQ2FqQ3CQ20Q2FqQ60s,pZsshQ2BqQ2BMMQ25qMQ25qQ2Byq3Q5DOQ5DQ7CamQ20qQ2ByhssYpQ3BhQ3AQ7Dh3Y

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4. Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth in Middle School

In this *New York Times Magazine* article, writer Benoit Denizet-Lewis reports on American middle-school students who experience same-sex attractions and decide to come out to their close friends and perhaps to their parents and classmates and teachers as gay (most often the case with boys), lesbian, or bisexual (most often the case with girls). A common reaction when a 12- or 13-year old comes out is, *Are you sure? You're too young to know. It's probably a phase*. If a 12-year-old boy told his parents or a school counselor that he liked girls, their reaction would probably not be one of disbelief, dismissal, or rejection. "But that's what we say too often to gay youth," says Eileen Ross, director of the Outlet Program in Mountain View, California. "We deny them their feelings and truth in a way we would never do with a heterosexual young person."

Middle-school principals are struggling with how to handle this phenomenon. Some resist allowing students to set up Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) organizations, while others have found that a GSA on campus cuts down on all forms of bullying. Some don't discipline veteran staff members who turn a deaf ear on homophobic slurs and bullying. Some, aware of the faddish tendencies of their students, don't believe that early self-identification is always authentic. But Denizet-Lewis reports that studies show that with gay and lesbian youth, while self-identification doesn't usually happen until 14, 15, or 16, the mean age of initial awareness of same-sex attraction is ten, with boys usually becoming aware a year earlier than girls. To complicate matters, not all youth who experience same-sex attractions go on to self-identify as gay.

Meanwhile, the interactions among middle-school students are complex. Some gay boys are stunned when their peers totally support and accept them when they come out. Some boys and girls openly date same-sex partners. Other gay boys, or those suspected of being gay, are taunted and bullied. Many stay in the closet. "It's so gay" continues to be such a common term of abuse (meaning that something is stupid) that teachers feel it's impossible to squash. In Jennifer Mathieu Blessington's Houston classroom, a student held up a book with a pink cover and said it "looks gay." "Everyone in the class started laughing like it was the funniest thing they'd ever heard," says Blessington. "But I said, 'We don't use the word 'gay' in a negative way in this classroom. Gay people are human beings, and that's the way we talk about them in here. Is that understood?"

In another school, a girl came out as bisexual and briefly dated a female classmate. "We didn't think we had anything to be ashamed of, so we didn't want go around hiding," she said. "It was a whole big drama at school. Some guys made fun of us, others hit on us. Most middle-school guys are total, compete morons." The situation is fluid, and "confusion and experimentation can be understandably disorienting for parents and educators," says Denizet-Lewis. "Is an eighth grader who says he's gay just experimenting? Could he change his mind in a week, as 13-year-olds routinely do with other identities – skater, prep, goth, jock – they try on for a while and then shed for another? And if sexuality is so fluid, should he really box himself in with a gay identify? Many parents told me they especially struggled with that last question." Meanwhile, research shows that teenagers in "rejecting families" are significantly more likely to attempt suicide, use drugs, and engage in unprotected sex than those in accepting families.

"Coming Out in Middle School" by Benoit Denizet-Lewis in *The New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 27, 2009 (p. 36-41, 52-55) access with free registration at http://www.nytimes.com/glogin?URI=http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/27/magazine/27out-t.html&OQ=_rQ3D1Q26scpQ3D1Q26sqQ3DComingQ2520OutQ2520inQ2520MiddleQ2520SchoolQ26stQ3Dcse&OP=21accdf4Q2FI8Q26wIQ5EQ3FJMQ60Q3FQ3FQ23(I(ffgIfgI(Q20IlLFLuQ3EyQ26I(Q20Q3F2Q23qQ23noQ23lQ2A

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5. A More Ambitious Approach to Family Involvement

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Harvard researchers Mark Warren, Soo Hong, Carolyn Leung Rubin, and Phitsamay Sychitkokhong Uy note the weak connection that many schools in low-income areas have with parents and the surrounding community. "In these schools," they write, "a few brave souls become active and involved; they can be seen running bake sales to raise funds for the school. But most urban schools fail to engage families broadly and deeply around the education of their children."

The researchers suggest a solution: schools should team up with local community-based organizations (CBOs): "We argue that when CBOs are authentically rooted in community life, they can bring to schools a better understanding of the culture and assets of families, as well as resources that schools may lack. As go-betweens, they can build relational bridges between educators and parents and act as catalysts for change." Drawing on the experience of partnerships in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Newark, the researchers list three key elements to success:

- Rebuilding relationships among parents and between parents and educators and fostering trust;
- Working to develop parent leadership;
- Bridging the culture and power gap between parents and educators.

When implemented well, they say, school/CBO partnerships can raise student achievement. Among the services provided in the three partnerships they studied are in-school Spanish-English translation; parents signing contracts agreeing to volunteer in classrooms a certain

number of hours each year; a school-based health clinic offering a full array of physical, dental, and mental-health services to children and their families; an after-school program offering tutoring, enrichment programs, dance classes, and field trips; a summer program; workshops for parents on topics such as a new math curriculum, adult-education topics, and parenting suggestions; adult-education classes to build skills and leadership capacity; involving parents in school decision-making; and involving parents in community activism and neighborhood improvement.

The researchers draw three lessons from the experience of these school/community partnerships:

• *Educators should take a patient approach*, building relationships over time. "School leaders often 'rush' to hold workshops that they think are important to school reform goals," write the authors, "but few parents attend. This should not be surprising because a large body of scholarship consistently shows that people come to participate in social action events of all sorts most often when someone they know asks them to go. In other words, relationships matter to participation. Investment in parent engagement, then, should be about creating the relationships that provide a foundation for long-term and sustainable change in schools, not a quick fix to any school's problems."

• *Most schools can't do the necessary outreach work alone*, so it makes sense to partner with community-based organizations that have already established themselves in the community. "If educators collaborate with community partners and help to develop parent leadership," they write, "they can form collaborative initiatives that meet the interests, values, and capacities of any particular school community." This involves shifting the culture of the school and moving parents beyond traditional parent-involvement activities.

• *Schools should go beyond the "within the four walls" approach* to family involvement and embrace a model in which they and their communities learn from each other and join forces to link school improvement to community revitalization.

"Beyond the Bake Sale: A Community-Based Relational Approach to Parent Engagement in Schools" by Mark Warren, Soo Hong, Carolyn Leung Rubin, and Phitsamay Sychitkokhong Uy in *Teachers College Record*, September 2009 (Vol. 111, #9, p. 2209-2254), no e-link

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6. Statistics on the Fate of High-School Dropouts

In this *New York Times* article, Sam Dillon reports on a Northeastern University study that used census and other government data to conclude that 9.4 percent of young male high-school dropouts are in jail or juvenile detention, compared to 2.8 percent of young high-school graduates and 0.2 percent of college graduates under 25. The situation is worst for young African-American male dropouts: 22.9 percent are incarcerated or otherwise institutionalized on an average day, compared to 7.2 percent of Asian dropouts, 6.6 percent of white dropouts, and 6.1 percent of Hispanic dropouts. The study estimates that the total lifetime cost to the nation of each high-school dropout is $292,000 in lost tax revenues, food stamps and other aid, and incarceration for those who turn to crime. "This report makes it clear that every American

pays a cost when a young person leaves school without a diploma," says Marc Morial, president of the National Urban League.

"Study Finds That About 10 Percent of Young Male Dropouts Are in Jail or Detention" by Sam Dillon in the *New York Times*, Oct. 9, 2009
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/09/education/09dropout.html?scp=1&sq=Study%20finds%20that%20about%2010%20percent%20of%20young%20male%20dropouts&st=cse

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7. Using Data to Prevent Youth Violence in Chicago

In this *New York Times* article, Susan Saulny reports on an initiative in the Chicago Public Schools to identify the students most likely to become victims of gun violence and provide services and police protection to prevent that from happening. From an analysis of the 500 Chicago Public School students who were killed over the last five years, these correlates emerged:

- Failing in school and being academically off track;
- Excessive school absenteeism (skipping an average of 42 percent of school days);
- A record of behavioral flare-ups in school;
- Being in special education;
- Living in an unstable home situation;
- Being an African-American male.

Financed by federal stimulus money, Chicago's program aims to blanket the 10,000 students who have those characteristics with academic support, adult attention, social services, a paid job, and targeted policing focusing on the neighborhood areas and times of day when crimes are most likely to happen. "What this model won't do is get every kid who gets shot," said Ron Huberman, the new CEO of Chicago schools, "but what it does do is give us a fighting chance to identify those kids who are most in trouble."

"Public School Violence Plan in Chicago Focuses on Potential Victims" by Susan Saulny in the *New York Times*, Oct. 7, 2009
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/07/us/07chicago.html?scp=1&sq=Public%20School%20violence%20plan&st=cse

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8. Short Item:

Paintings from the New Deal – This *American Educator* article by Roger Kennedy has a number of artworks from the New Deal's Public Works of Art Project, including a wonderful painting of the Golden Gate bridge in the early stages of construction.

"Coaxing the Soul of the Nation Back to Life: How the New Deal Sustained, and Was Sustained by, Artists" by Roger Kennedy in *American Educator*, Fall 2009 (Vol. 33, #3, p. 24-29) http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/fall2009/kennedy.pdf

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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

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).

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- How to change access e-mail or password

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Catalyst Chicago
Changing Schools (McREL)
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
New York Times
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
The Atlantic Monthly
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools/The Learning Principal