Marshall Memo 734

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
April 30, 2018

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"The two most important days in life are the day you are born and the day you discover the reason why."
Mark Twain (quoted in item #1)

"There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so."
Hamlet (quoted in *ibid*.)

"The world doesn't stand still. Situations change. Available information changes. However much we get emotionally attached to our own decisions, however much our opinions and perspectives may have once served us, there comes a point at which constancy can curdle into rigidity."
Jena Pincott (*ibid*.)

"We're sorry. We'll fix it."
Brené Brown, University of Houston professor, quoted in a *New York Times* editorial April 28, 2018 on what should be said by those who have failed the people they serve

"Without high-quality assessments, analysis of student learning will be unproductive."
Kim Marshall and Douglas Reeves (see item #4)

"It's important for teachers to express their own love of the subject, not just accept that math is like eating vegetables. Passion can be contagious."
John Urschel (see item #8)

1. Life Lessons

In this article in *Psychology Today*, science writer Jena Pincott lists correctives for some common cognitive biases (inborn and acquired):

• *Understand that not everything that happens to you is about you*. "At the very least, the egocentric bias causes us to misread others," says Pincott. "It undermines empathy and tolerance. It also traps us in a bubble; we waste vast amounts of psychic energy recovering from insults that were never targeted at us in the first place. To live a life that is less reactive, more directed, it is necessary to put the ego in its place."

• *Worry less about what others think of you*. It turns out that people are much less aware of our competence, awkwardness, verbal flubs, facial expressions, even what we wear, than we imagine. "When we care less about our curated self-image, we open the door to interacting more genuinely," says Pincott. "We can let down our guard. Others may respond in kind, focusing less on their own self-image and opening up."

• *Realize that you don't have to act the way you feel*. Pincott advises "self-distancing" to keep disappointments and negative emotions from spilling into everyday interactions. This involves processing our feelings from an outsider's point of view, addressing ourselves in the third person to normalize and make meaning of disturbing experiences. This makes it possible to preserve our dignity, privacy, and self-respect when we're not at our best.

• *Reframe and manage disappointment and adversity*. "There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so," said Hamlet. Social psychologists have confirmed Shakespeare's wisdom, showing that although there are differences in people's innate ability to handle stressful events, mental fortitude can be acquired. This means learning how not to jump to conclusions, overgeneralize, catastrophize, personalize, and engage in black-or-white thinking. "Resilient people do not define themselves by their adversity," says Pincott. "They understand that bad times are temporary affairs."

• *Solicit honest feedback*. It's possible to be internally self-aware (in touch with our own values and passions) and not externally self-aware (knowing how others see us). "External self-awareness allows us to be more in sync with others," says Pincott. "It makes us more effective leaders because we have more empathy, which comes from understanding other people's perspectives." She advises identifying several "critical friends" and periodically asking them questions like, *What am I doing that I should keep doing? What should I stop doing? What about me annoys you?*

• *Stay true to your own values despite what others expect*. There's sometimes a tug-of-war between what we want and what others expect – parents, teachers, love partners. "People high in both internal and external self-awareness can navigate competing expectations," says organizational psychologist Tasha Eurich. They value authenticity and integrity, knowing what they want to do and illuminating it with other perspectives.

• *Be open to revising your thinking*. "The world doesn't stand still," says Pincott. "Situations change. Available information changes. However much we get emotionally attached to our own decisions, however much our opinions and perspectives may have once served us, there comes a point at which constancy can curdle into rigidity." Studies show that we're most open to change when we're feeling good about ourselves, most resistant to change when we feel threatened and uncertain. Hanging out with a four-year-old is a good way to see what cognitive flexibility looks like.

• *Find ways to tackle tasks you want to avoid*. Pincott suggests several approaches: write down how the drudgery will end with a success; gamify the activity, introducing an element of competition; use second-person self-talk (*You can crush this, Ted!*); bite off a small piece to get started (*Just 20 minutes on this and I'll do something else*); and get into a routine (for example, rising at six to exercise).

• *Zone in on your purpose in a zoned-out world*. "The two most important days in life are the day you are born and the day you discover the reason why," said Mark Twain. But a sense of big-picture purpose depends on focus and self-regulation, and that's undermined by the current obsession with checking social media every few minutes, driven by the fear of missing out on something. "You may want big ideas," says author Larry Rosen, "but if your attention is jerked away constantly, they won't come. There's no time to process anything on a deeper level." There isn't even time for the overstimulated brain to daydream. Rosen strongly recommends 30-minute tech breaks. Turning away from the small screen, he says, can reorient us to the big picture.

• *Tolerate ambiguity*. Uncertainty is a "sure-fire fuel of anxiety," says Pincott, but it's part of modern life, and dealing with it has many rewards. "We're more able to shift gears, experiment, be more flexible, take in new information that we'd otherwise reject, and let a situation develop before pulling the proverbial trigger," she says. "We're better able to handle risk and to make decisions without deluding ourselves into thinking we know everything there is to know. In the end, we're less anxious." Studies have shown that one way to make yourself more flexible in uncertain situations is to read fiction. "When nothing is sure," says novelist Margaret Drabble, "everything is possible."

"Lessons You Won't Learn in School" by Jena Pincott in *Psychology Today*, May/June 2018, no e-link available

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2. Which Managerial Coaching Style Works Best?

This *Harvard Business Review* article reports that most managers aspire to check in frequently with their people to see how things are going and develop talent. "Indeed," say the

authors, "the desire for frequent discussions about development is one reason many companies are moving away from annual performance reviews: A yearly conversation isn't enough." But surveys reveal that managers spend only about 9 percent of their time with subordinates; they're just too busy. Given that stark reality, the key question is how leaders can have the biggest impact in that small window of opportunity.

A study by Gartner Executive Programs identified four distinct employee-coaching profiles and analyzed which was most effective:

• *Teacher-managers* give advice, feedback, and direction based on their own knowledge and past experience in the field.

• *Always-on managers* provide continuous coaching, give feedback across a wide range of skills, and stay on top of how employees are developing. This is often seen as the ideal style of management.

• *Connector managers* link employees to others on the team when they themselves can't give the most helpful feedback. They spend more time assessing the skills, needs, and interests of their employees, and realize that they often aren't the best person to do the coaching.

• *Cheerleader managers* are available and supportive and deliver positive feedback, but mostly put employees in charge of their own development.

The Gartner research team came to several conclusions. First, the amount of coaching time was less important than depth and quality – and quality depended on coaching style. Second, the hypervigilant Always-on coaching style was the least effective; in fact, these managers were doing more harm than good. Why?

- Their continual stream of feedback could be overwhelming and kept employees from developing independently.
- They spent less time assessing employees' skill needs and tended to coach in areas that weren't relevant to real needs.
- They were so focused on coaching that they often failed to recognize the limits of their own expertise; they were winging it or giving misguided advice.

Third, the researchers found the Connectors were by far the most effective. In fact, employees who worked with these leaders were three times as likely to be high performers as those under the other three styles.

What's going on here? Consider a professional tennis player's coach who tries to do it all. Nobody knows everything, which is why a really good coach will identify expertise, monitor progress, and outsource certain areas – perhaps strength training, nutrition, serves, lobs, and backhands.

Becoming a Connector is a mindshift for many leaders, especially the humility involved in admitting gaps in knowledge and deferring to others. "Historically," says Jaime Roca of Gartner, "being a manager is about being directive and telling people what to do. Being a Connector is more about asking the right questions, providing tailored feedback, and helping employees make a connection to a colleague who can help them." Being a connector also takes some of the pressure off managers to be all things to everyone. They basically delegate some of

the coaching to other members of their team, encouraging people to coach one another, and constantly assessing and pointing out skills that exist within the organization that can benefit everyone.

"Managers Can't Be Great Coaches All By Themselves" in *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 2018 (Vol. 96, #3, p. 22), https://hbr.org/2018/05/managers-cant-be-great-coaches-all-by-themselves

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3. Ten Things Entrepreneurial Leaders Should Remember

In this article in *District Management Journal,* John J-H Kim and Sam Ribnick list ten pitfalls that entrepreneurial school leaders should keep in mind when launching new initiatives:

• Don't let the urgent allow you to lose sight of opportunities. "While managing your district can be all-consuming," say Kim and Ribnick, "remember to make time to expose yourself to breakthrough ideas."

• Don't feel restricted to ideas within the education sector. Reach out to academia, private industry, and government for ideas that are a good fit.

• Don't forget that the staff collectively may have the solution. Convene talented colleagues and use structured approaches to get the best thinking on the table.

• Don't stop talking about the district's vision. "For people to act entrepreneurially, they must truly understand the vision of the district," say Kim and Ribnick.

• Don't sink too much time into converting naysayers. There will always be opposition to any change effort; spend time with people who are on the fence rather than opponents.

• Don't wait a year to see results. Set meaningful short-term goals to mark progress and sustain momentum.

• Don't leave the early wins to chance. "Investing time to help teams achieve success early on will pay off and motivate them to carry the work forward on their own," say Kim and Ribnick.

• Don't lose focus and appear to shift priorities. Principals and teachers will read this as a signal that key initiatives are not as important as they once were.

• Don't forget to celebrate success. This is a powerful and low-cost way to demonstrate support and appreciation.

• Don't assume that innovation and entrepreneurship come naturally. There needs to be a deliberate strategy to foster an environment that values creativity and encourages risk-taking.

"Activating Entrepreneurial Leadership in Education: 10 Mistakes to Avoid" by John J-H Kim and Sam Ribnick in *District Management Journal*, Spring 2018, https://bit.ly/2HCOadS

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4. Teacher Accountability 2.0

In this *Edutopia* article, Kim Marshall and Douglas Reeves say there was good reason for the pushback on using student test scores, value-added measures (VAM), and student

learning objectives (SLOs) as part of teacher evaluation. Among the problems, say Marshall and Reeves: "This year's A teacher can be next year's F teacher because of random variations that have nothing to do with teaching quality," and test scores give few clues on how classroom instruction can be improved. These and other design flaws have contributed to the widespread consensus that the U.S. needs a different approach to teacher accountability. Fortunately, the 2016 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) opens the door for states to make better choices.

Two key questions should be at the center of accountability, say Marshall and Reeves: *Are students learning?* and *How will educators respond when some students aren't successful?* But is it possible to put student results at the center of teacher assessment without using test scores? Yes, say the authors: by "dialing back the pressure and using lower-key measures of student learning throughout the year." Here's when and how:

• *During frequent classroom visits* – Dropping into each classroom for short, unannounced visits at least ten times a year, principals and other supervisors can look over students' shoulders or sit down next to them and ask, "What are you learning today?" and "How will you know when you're successful?" Insights from these informal conversations can be part of really helpful teacher-administrator conversations later in the day.

• *Looking at student work after visits* – Chatting in the teacher's classroom when students aren't there is an ideal way to get into learning outcomes – student writing, creations, exit tickets – in a non-threatening and highly productive way.

• *During curriculum planning meetings* – As teacher teams create curriculum units and assessments, administrators can make suggestions on ways to check for understanding during lessons, in tests, and through performance tasks – a proactive way of focusing on student learning: "Without high-quality assessments," say Marshall and Reeves, "analysis of student learning will be unproductive."

• *During collaborative data meetings* – When teams discuss the results of common assessments, administrators can join in and help make these meetings the engine for instructional improvement (which is not always the case). Again, the conversation is about student learning without high stakes, embedded in an ongoing conversation about helping students who aren't yet successful and talking about the most successful teaching strategies.

• *In teams' value-added reports* – Same-grade/same-subject teacher teams can set goals (for example, 100 percent of second graders reading at least on grade level by June) and at the end of the year report to the principal on student progress from the September baseline. The principal then notes the team's accomplishments in each teacher's individual performance evaluation.

This last item is the basic idea behind SLOs, conclude Marshall and Reeves, "but done at the team level with low-stakes, school-based accountability. By reporting before-and-after data within the same school year with the same teachers, there's a much better chance that teams will set ambitious goals, use rigorous measures they respect, *care* about the results, use during-the-year data to improve instruction, spur each other on (especially team members who don't seem to be pulling their weight), and at the end of the year take real pride and satisfaction in their collective gains in student learning. This fundamentally transforms accountability from

a threatening and mysterious process into a credible reflection of the impact of teachers on their kids."

"Using Student Learning in Teacher Assessment" by Kim Marshall and Douglas Reeves in *Edutopia*, April 30, 2018, https://www.edutopia.org/article/using-student-learning-teacher-assessment; Reeves can be reached at douglas.reeves@creativeleadership.net.

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5. Understanding the Role of Dialect in the Black-White Achievement Gap

In this article in *The Atlantic*, author William Brennan chronicles the work of Julie Washington, who earned her doctorate in speech pathology in 1990 and has focused her research on African-American children code-switching between dialect and standard English. Washington's epiphany came when she was reading P.D. Eastman's classic picture book, *Are You My Mother?,* to a four-year-old who was a "heavy speaker" of African-American English. The girl listened as Washington read the exchanges between a lost hatchling and various animals: *"Are you my mother?" the baby bird asked the cow. "How could I be your mother?" said the cow. "I'm a cow."* At the end of the story, the girl told the story from memory: "She goes, 'Is you my mama? I ain't none of yo' mama!'" And so on.

Washington found the retelling deft and charming, and only later, back in her office at the University of Michigan, did she understand what the girl had accomplished: "She had to listen to a story in a dialect she doesn't really use herself, understand the meaning, hold the story in her memory, recode it in her own dialect, and then say it all back to me. That's *hard*." – especially for a youngster. Washington became convinced that dialect was playing a significant and unrecognized part in the reading achievement of African-American children who are immersed in dialect at home.

The idea of teaching black children to code-switch is not new, and it tends to cause controversy – most notably in 1996 when the Oakland, California school board proposed using "Ebonics" as part of reading instruction. There was fierce opposition, even ridicule, and the school board backed off. But Washington, now a professor at Georgia State, believes Oakland was onto something. Her own upbringing was instructive. Raised in a middle-class home in Seattle, she was strongly discouraged from speaking in dialect (her parents saw it as a barrier to mainstream success), but picked it up from her friends and was soon effortlessly code-switching depending on the context. Why, she asked herself, was this so easy for her and so difficult for many African-American children?

Washington's research found that about two-thirds of black children (like other speakers of nonstandard dialects such as Swiss German or Cypriot Greek) learn to code-switch "naturally" in the early-elementary grades. But for those who don't – about one-third of black children – "code-switching isn't going to happen unless you teach it," says Washington. "We *know* those kids will have trouble." And indeed, by the end of fourth grade, non-switching students are reading a full grade level below their switching classmates.

Washington believes there are two explanations. First, children who speak the heaviest dialect have the most difficulty with the words that are pronounced differently in African-

American English – including consonant clusters that aren't pronounced when they appear at the end of a word. When a teacher writes *told* on the board and sounds it out, the dialect-infused black child must make the translation to *toll*; the same with *past* and *pass*. This wreaks havoc with sound-to-letter correspondence, further complicated by the number of homonyms in the English language that are pronounced the same but spelled differently. The child who comes to school speaking a "really dense" dialect is having an experience very similar to that of a native Spanish speaker.

A second classroom dynamic, says Washington, is teacher hostility to black children's dialect (sometimes it's black teachers who have this attitude). In a 1973 study by Ann McCormick Piestrup (which Washington believes still rings true today), black children were constantly interrupted and corrected as they read or answered questions. What they said was correct, but teachers pounced on differences in pronunciation and grammar. Over time, these students withdrew into "moody silences;" when they spoke, their tone was soft and hesitant. Students who were frequently interrupted ended up getting the lowest reading scores. Washington believes increased cognitive load is part of what was handicapping these students. "What does it do to your response times when you have to stop and interpret something before you can move on?" she asks. "Over the course of a school day, these moments have to add up."

Washington says one way to narrow the achievement gap is by helping African-American children learn the dialect of school – and helping schools accept the dialect children bring from home. Researchers have developed ToggleTalk, a code-switching curriculum being implemented in several school districts https://learningtotalk.umd.edu/toggletalk/. Another approach is using the same strategies that help ELLs grasp English grammar. "Many of the features covered for students who speak another language are exactly the same ones that cause African-American English speakers trouble," says Washington. In a Michigan elementary school she studied, teachers who used a bilingual curriculum with African-American students saw a 75-percent rise in the number of students passing state reading tests.

One of the trickiest parts of teaching code-switching is that many black families are resistant to the idea. Washington describes a tense parent meeting in which a mother erupted, "How dare you say we talk different than other people! What the hell is 'black English'? We don't speak 'black English'!" "You do," said Washington and code-switched: "I think I said, 'Look, we ain't got no business doin' this." The room erupted with laughter. "Okay," said the mother, "we do speak like that. But we don't like you calling it that." This exchange made Washington realize that it wasn't productive to present code-switching only as a way to ward off catastrophic reading failure; advocates also need to emphasize the *advantages* of speaking a dialect. In a recent paper, she argued that being fluent speakers of two dialects had the same cognitive advantages as speaking two languages. "We see value in speaking two languages," she says. "But we don't see value in speaking two dialects. Maybe it's time we did."

"The Code-Switcher" by William Brennan in *The Atlantic*, April 2018 (Vol. 321, #3, p. 18-20), https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/04/the-code-switcher/554099/

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6. New York City Reduces Chronic Student Absenteeism

In this article in *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, Robert Balfanz and Vaughan Byrnes (Johns Hopkins University) report on a New York City program launched after a 2008 study showed a high level of chronic student absenteeism (defined as missing 10 percent of the school year). The program, which eventually served 100 elementary, middle, and high schools, had a significant impact on student attendance at a relatively modest cost. One of their most encouraging findings was that students who exited chronic-absentee status saw academic improvement across the board and were successful in getting back on track for graduation. This contradicts the conventional wisdom that "off-track" students cannot recover and improve their academic performance. Here are the main components of the New York City program:

• *Citywide interagency effort* – The task force leading this effort involved multiple city agencies because the causes of chronic absenteeism are so complex and varied: homelessness, asthma, housing mobility, familial responsibilities, fear of gangs, bullying, and parents or students who don't understand the importance of good attendance – or going to school at all.

• *Data to measure, monitor, and act* – The task force used data to identify students chronically absent during the previous school year, develop early-warning flags to spot students beginning to show signs of excessive absenteeism, monitor targeted students' progress and adjust interventions accordingly, and share information with school partners, mentors, and key agencies through new data-sharing agreements.

• *A "Success Mentor Corps" to give personalized support to students and families* – Some corps members were external to schools (AmeriCorps members, social work students, retired professionals); some were internal (teachers, coaches, security officers, and others); and some were peers (selected 12th-grade students). Mentors provided person-to-person outreach to chronically absent students, spending about 15 hours a week at the school, with 80 percent of the time devoted to contact time with students. The mentors greeted their mentees, called their homes, met them individually and in groups, identified underlying causes of absenteeism, celebrated students' talents and successes, and worked with the school and its partners to connect students and their families to local resources that could address problems.

• *Principals' weekly student success meetings* – To take part in the program, principals had to agree to lead weekly "student success meetings" to bring together school partners to track data and collaborate on effective interventions.

• *Promoting awareness about chronic absenteeism* – The task force launched a citywide ad campaign on buses, subways, and Metro Cards (*It's 9 AM, Do You Know Where Your Kids Are?*); organized a Truancy and Absenteeism Help Center; and, in the third year of the program, launched WakeUpNYC! with 30,000 students receiving recorded wake-up calls from celebrities and student role models.

• *Connecting local community resources with schools* – The task force made a concerted effort to get schools serving as organizing hubs through which community agencies, homeless shelters, and social services could connect with students and their families. This was vital since families were often not aware of available services and agencies hadn't been

provided with data on which students had attendance problems.

• *Attentiveness and incentives* – A key component of the program was immediately noticing and following up on absences (usually by a call home), taking additional steps if necessary, and publicly recognizing improvement (assemblies, certificates, perks like tickets or special privileges).

• *Accountability strategies to sustain efforts* – Chronic absentee statistics became a metric in schools' progress reports and evaluations, as well as in monthly homeless shelter reports.

• *A focus on homeless students* – The task force made a point of creating a "culture of school attendance and success" in the city's 15 homeless shelters, keeping track of attendance data and helping families keep their children in the school of origin.

Balfanz and Byrnes believe the most significant component in the program was one-on-one mentoring. If other school districts replicate that part of the New York City model, the authors recommend that it be at the same level of intensity: mentors spend at least three days or 15 hours a week at a school; a defined and manageable caseload of students; direct access to attendance data; a seat at weekly principals' meetings; and the ability to link students with professional supports outside the school.

"Using Data and the Human Touch: Evaluating the NYC Inter-Agency Campaign to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism" by Robert Balfanz and Vaughan Byrnes in *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, January-June 2018 (Vol. 23, #1-2, p. 107-121), available for purchase at https://bit.ly/2Fup1fv; Byrnes can be reached at vbyrnes@jhu.edu.

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7. Building Middle-School Students' Math Vocabulary

In this article in *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, former middle-school teacher Katherine Ariemma Marin (now at Stonehill College) remembers how flummoxed her sixth graders were by a word problem that asked them to write an *expression*. "How can we write an expression?" asked one student. "You make expressions with your face." Marin realized that for many of her students, mathematics was at times like learning a foreign language, especially with math terms that had other meanings in everyday discourse. "But at this moment," she says, "I had an aha! moment about how to attack the vocabulary problem through instruction. We needed a routine that acknowledged the complexity of learning the language of mathematics and supported students in developing fluency in that language."

Marin created a grid with six columns, and as new words came up (including *variable, product, quotient, edge, face, factor, base, cone, difference,* and *mean*), she talked through each new term with the whole class and had students fill in all the columns in their math notebooks. The first column indicated how familiar they were with the word: (1) I know this word and can define it; (2) I have seen or heard this word before; or (3) I have never seen or heard this word before. "The simple act of rating a list of words led to rich discussions and enhanced students' fluency in the language of mathematics," says Marin. "As students grew more fluent in the language of mathematics, they were better able to approach problems as 'problem solvers'

rather than 'problem performers.'" Here's a sample of one row of the grid with all six columns filled in:

- Rating: 2
- Word: Expression
- Definition: A mathematical phrase combining operations, numbers, and/or variables
- Synonym(s): Phrase, algebraic expression
- Examples: 6 6n 6+n (no equal sign)
- Sample problem: Lucia earns $8 per hour for babysitting and gets a $5 tip. Write an expression to represent the amount she would earn if she worked for x hours.

Students gradually added more words to this section of their notebooks, and Marin regularly quizzed them on the words and asked students to apply them in new situations.

"Routinizing Mathematics Vocabulary: The Vocab Grid" by Katherine Ariemma Marin in *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, May 2018 (Vol. 23, #7, p. 395-398), https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5951/mathteacmiddscho.23.issue-7; Marin can be reached at kmarin@stonehill.edu.

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8. A Former NFL Player Tackles Advanced Mathematics at MIT

In an interview with Mary Hendrie in *Education Week*, former Baltimore Ravens offensive lineman John Urschel talks about working toward his doctorate in applied mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Urschel is on a mission to make STEM subjects more relevant, lively, and fun in schools. "Math doesn't have to be an exercise in drudgery, a list of questions that demand using a formula," he says. "Math is fundamentally problem-solving. That can mean doing puzzles or playing games, or finding ways to connect math to problems that kids face in everyday life."

Motivation is one problem students may have with STEM subjects in school, he says: "It's important for teachers to express their own love of the subject, not just accept that math is like eating vegetables. Passion can be contagious." In a Baltimore classroom, kids were fascinated when Urschel explained the science behind making ice cream.

He believes some parts of the traditional curriculum are more important and motivating than others. "Not every kid needs to take calculus," he says. Logic, statistics, and career applications may be more important down the road. He's a fan of the STEM Behind Cool Careers program. Here's a brief video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=REC-gGdPqeA.

"In Conversation: John Urschel: From the NFL to MIT" by Mary Hendrie in *Education Week*, April 25, 2018 (Vol. 37, #28, p. 22-23), www.edweek.org

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If you have feedback or suggestions,
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About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and other educators very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 48 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 60 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are 50 issues a year). Every week there's a podcast and HTMI version as well.

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Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC
American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
District Management Journal
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Next
Education Update
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
English Journal
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Harvard Business Review
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Language Arts
Literacy Today
Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School
Middle School Journal
Peabody Journal of Education
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Reading Research Quarterly
Responsive Classroom Newsletter
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
School Administrator
School Library Journal
Social Education
Social Studies and the Young Learner
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Education Gadfly
The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time Magazine