

Marshall Memo 261

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

November 24, 2008

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Quotes of the Week

“Single-sex education does not guarantee improved schools. Rather, the elements that enable children to succeed in single-sex education can be replicated in coeducational settings. These elements include a focus on core academics, small class size, qualified teachers, sufficient funding, and parental involvement.”

National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (see item #1)

“Simply put, when a single-sex school works, we are not exactly sure why it works.”

Vincent Anfara, Jr. and Steven Mertens (*ibid.*)

“Effective teachers should be just as concerned with what happens with students before class begins as they are with planning the lesson.”

Frank Masci (see item #2)

“Unless students perceive that a teacher sincerely values them and cares deeply about their success and well-being, all the teacher’s attempts at welcoming and establishing rapport will, at best, be viewed with suspicion.”

Frank Masci (*ibid.*)

“Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts.”

The late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, quoted in *Newsweek*, Nov. 17, 2008, p. 36

1. The Debate Over Single-Sex Classrooms and Schools

In this *Middle School Journal* article, education professors Vincent Anfara, Jr. and Steven Mertens explore the efficacy of all-boy/all-girl education. They point out that until the late 1800s, virtually all U.S. classrooms were single-sex, but then the tide turned in favor of coeducation because: (a) It was less expensive to educate children together; (b) Feminists saw coeducation as a necessary step toward women's rights; and (c) Coeducation was seen as a "natural" way of developing positive relationships between boys and girls, which would lead to happier marriages. There was occasional push-back; in his 1873 book, *Sex in Education*, Clarke argued that academic competition in coeducational schools overloaded girls' brains and interfered with the development of their reproductive organs.

For a century, coeducation was the norm, with single-sex classrooms existing almost entirely in private and denominational (mostly Catholic) schools. But starting in the 1990s, there has been increased interest in single-sex education in U.S. public schools – and vehement disagreement from some quarters. Here is Anfara's and Mertens's analysis of the debate.

- *What proponents say* – The main arguments in favor of single-sex classrooms include: (a) Such classrooms help address the "boy crisis" of more suspensions and special education referrals, higher dropout rates, and lower test-taking percentages on tests like the SAT and ACT; (b) Single-sex classrooms allow teachers to address supposed differences in boys' and girls' brain "wiring" by using gender-specific teaching approaches; (c) Single-sex classes help close achievement gaps involving African-American and Hispanic boys; (d) Single-sex classes reduce distractions for boys and girls; (e) Such classes help control boys' behavior; and finally, (e) They improve girls' self-esteem, confidence, and leadership skills.

- *What opponents say* – Those who are against single-sex classrooms say: (a) Separate education is inherently unequal and "an invitation to discriminate" (Greenberger, 2006); (b) The move to single-sex classes is not the key to higher achievement for either sex (the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education said in 2002, "Single-sex education does not guarantee improved schools. Rather, the elements that enable children to succeed in single-sex education can be replicated in coeducational settings. These elements include a focus on core academics, small class size, qualified teachers, sufficient funding, and parental involvement."); (c) Single-sex schools deprive boys and girls of the opportunity to work and socialize together; (d) Course offerings are usually less comprehensive in single-sex schools, especially honors and AP classes; and (e) Teasing may increase inside and outside school.

- *What the research says* – For most of the 20th century the commentary on single-sex classrooms in the U.S. has been a mix of “passionate conviction and rather ambiguous research results” (Jill, 1993). James Coleman’s 1961 study said that coeducation was harmful for girls because they paid too much attention to becoming “desirable objects for boys.” John Goodlad agreed in his 1984 study, *A Place Called School*, and in a 2003 study, Salamone said that the social climate in high schools had not changed. Other studies have addressed the nonacademic values and heightened social pressures that distract students from their schoolwork, as contrasted to the more academic orientation of single-sex schools – students spending more time on homework and wanting to be remembered for their academic prowess more than their social popularity.

The research on the effect of single-sex classrooms on girls’ self-esteem in Northern Ireland, Australia, and Belgium, is mixed. Researchers mostly agree that in all-female schools, girls tend to see math and science as less “masculine” and are more willing to commit effective effort in those classes. There also seems to be less sex-stereotyping in single-sex schools. Assertions that U.S. single-sex classrooms offer girls a “safe place” and allow teachers to challenge students’ gendered perceptions and enhance their self-confidence in non-traditional subjects, say Anfara and Mertens, are “largely anecdotal.” But research from abroad supports claims that girls feel “freedom to excel without social pressure,” are more self-confident, and are more willing to take risks in the classroom. However, there is much less evidence that these attitudinal changes translate into improved academic achievement.

Anfara and Mertens are skeptical about much of this research. “Findings conflict,” they say. “There are numerous studies, but few high-quality ones that use comparison groups, control for confounding variables, or use national databases.” In some cases, there’s no way of knowing whether single-sex classes or other factors caused improvement. A meta-analysis by the U.S. Department of Education found only 40 usable studies; among these, 41% favored single-sex schools, 45% favored coeducation, and 6% had mixed results. Researchers have expressed concern about selection bias – single-sex schools tend to educate students from more privileged families who have other advantages when it comes to academic achievement.

The bottom line: “The benefits of single-sex schooling remain unclear,” say Anfara and Mertens. “The research comparing the merits of single-sex education and coeducation has not yielded definitive answers... Simply put, when a single-sex school works, we are not exactly sure why it works... What seems to get lost in the search for definitive evidence is that the exact nature and benefits of single-sex education are highly contextual. School characteristics (e.g., class size, percentage of male and female teachers), teaching styles and instructional practices, and the curriculum, among other factors, all have significant effects on students’ achievement. It depends on the students, their backgrounds, abilities, and needs, and it also depends on what we are looking for as the desired outcomes of this initiative. Findings about single-sex education must be viewed and interpreted with a healthy dose of caution. As a number of researchers... cautioned, the better performance of students in single-sex classes and schools is mainly attributable to a plethora of factors like student ability, socioeconomic status, type of school (private vs. public), school characteristics (e.g., size, organizational structures),

selection bias, and effective teaching. When these factors are controlled for, the academic differences between students in single-sex education and coeducational schools are neither significant nor conclusive.”

“What the Research Says: Do Single-Sex Classes and Schools Make a Difference?” by Vincent Anfara, Jr. and Steven Mertens in *Middle School Journal*, November 2008 (Vol. 40, #2, p. 52-59), no e-link available; the authors can be reached at yanfara@utk.edu and smerten@ilstu.edu.

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2. Maximizing Time on Task in Classrooms

In this *Middle School Journal* article, Johns Hopkins education professor (and former principal) Frank Masci addresses two dimensions of time on task in classrooms – using every minute effectively, and ensuring that students are engaged in meaningful tasks. Time on task is one of the correlates of highly effective schools, but Masci says that he sees too many instances where teachers use time ineffectively. Here are three classroom vignettes, each followed by his analysis of what works and what needs to be improved:

- *Mr. Brown’s 8th-grade science class* – Students enter the class noisily and take their seats after several minutes of chit-chat. Brown sits at his desk during the transition and then gets up and asks students to quiet down, which takes several minutes. He then hands back graded papers, takes attendance, and explains what the class is about, stopping several times to ask for quiet. He finally begins the actual lesson, a lab activity on measuring mass and volume, carefully going over the procedures and safe use of materials. Once students have begun the activity, working in groups of four, Brown circulates, checking in on groups. Some of them finish early, and several students tell him they did a similar lab in sixth grade.

- Brown’s problems clearly begin before instruction even begins, says Masci. “Effective teachers should be just as concerned with what happens with students before class begins as they are with planning the lesson.” Personally greeting and welcoming students as they enter the room is essential.
- Teachers should learn something positive and complimentary about several students each day and mention it to them as they enter – but this must be done with sincerity. “Unless students perceive that a teacher sincerely values them and cares deeply about their success and well-being,” says Masci, “all the teacher’s attempts at welcoming and establishing rapport will, at best, be viewed with suspicion.”
- Students should begin working as soon as they enter the classroom; there need to be regular, efficient routines for handing in and getting back work, doing “bell work,” posting the objectives of the lesson, taking care of routine announcements, and establishing an atmosphere of purpose and clear expectations.
- Each lesson should begin with an activator or activity that grabs students’ attention and draws them into the lesson.
- The teacher should find out what students know about the topic by doing a K-W-L activity or some kind of pre-assessment.

• *Ms. Jackson's 7th-grade math class* – The teacher greets students as they enter the room, and they go to their seats and begin the warm-up activity on the board. Some finish early, but Jackson gives the activity five minutes until everyone is finished. She then reviews the homework and begins the day's lesson on scientific notation and exponents (a pre-test had revealed that many students had problems with scientific notation). She explains the use of scientific notation on her overhead projector with a number of examples and then gives students a worksheet. Some students finish it in ten minutes and start chatting, but Jackson repeatedly shushes them and waits until everyone has finished, which takes 20 minutes. She then calls ten students to the board, asks each to work out two problems, and then has them explain how they got their answer. At this point there are ten minutes of class left, and Jackson gives out the homework assignment (20 scientific notation problems) and tells students they can begin work on it.

- The beginning of Jackson's class was much better organized than Brown's, and she knew more about students' learning needs because of her pre-assessment.
- However, there was considerable dead-time for a number of students who finished assignments early. Masci recommends long-term projects related to the curriculum unit for students to work on when they finish early.
- Masci calls Jackson's handout "pedestrian" and her classroom procedure "uninspired and repetitive." Word problems and an explanation of why scientific notation is used to express number extremes could increase student motivation. In addition, Jackson could make the information more meaningful with examples from students' everyday experience and mnemonic devices to help them remember key facts.
- Jackson could check for understanding throughout the lesson by using whiteboards or walking around the room to check on students' work. She needs to follow up in future lessons to check for retention and students' ability to transfer the information to new situations.
- Jackson could direct more questions to the whole class to check for understanding and get all students thinking.

• *Mr. Polk's sixth-grade English class* – Class starts with a warm-up activity and moves smoothly to the lesson on identifying adverbs and adjectives. Polk gives out a worksheet with 20 sentences and asks students to circle the adverbs and underline the adjectives. Students work quietly for 15 minutes with Polk circulating, checking for understanding. He then assigns students to groups of five and asks them to choose a recorder, reach consensus on their answers, and be ready to report to the class in ten minutes. Groups report out and Polk tallies the responses from all the groups. When this is finished, there are still five more minutes in the class. Polk returns to his desk and students gather their books and line up at the door waiting for the dismissal bell.

- Polk's strategies and use of time are mostly acceptable, says Masci.
- However, he faults the teacher on the closure of the lesson. The summation should bridge the last activity with the core of the lesson, and it's most effective when it comes

from students – orally, or perhaps in exit cards (which also serve as a check on understanding). Bringing a lesson to an effective end requires good timing and some subtle clock-watching. Ideally, a summation wraps things up and creates anticipation for the next lesson. “Many effective teachers have found ways to deliberately end the lesson on an incomplete note, creating expectation in students about what happens next... begging for more,” says Masci.

- In addition, Polk wastes the last five minutes of instructional time. “While five minutes may not seem a lot,” says Masci, “it adds up.”

Masci ends by recommending several websites that provide lesson plans and ideas for teachers looking for high-quality activities and materials for their classrooms:

- Marco Polo – <http://www.marcopolo-education.org> - is the best of the best, says Masci.
- PBS Teacher Source – <http://www.pbs.org/teachersource> - gives free access to public television material.
- Teacher Planet – <http://teacherplanet.com> - has lesson plans, rubrics, books, tools, grade books, and links to other resources.
- Teachers Helping Teachers – <http://pacificnet.net/~mandel> - has material and links on classroom management, language arts, math, science, social studies, special education, and the arts, and encourages teachers to contribute material.
- Sites for Teachers – <http://sitesforteachers.com> - has more than 200 links to educational sites that provide a plethora of resources and free materials.
- Public domain resources – <http://mciunix.mciu.k12.pa.us/~spjvweb/cfimages.html> - has a vast library of vintage photographs for such historical periods as the Civil War, the Great Depression, and World War II.

“Time for Time on Task and Quality Instruction” by Frank Masci in *Middle School Journal*, November 2008 (Vol. 40, #2, p. 33-41), no e-link available; the author can be reached at fmasci@jhu.edu.

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3. Using Film Clips to Spark Advisory Discussions on Character Education

In this *Middle School Journal* article, Georgia middle-school teacher Kathleen McCaffrey describes how she and three colleagues beefed up their school’s advisory program. The journey began with a frank appraisal of the inadequacies of what they had been doing in their homeroom periods. True, they had a “word of the week,” agendas and posters, a record of academic excellence, and a structure for addressing the needs of the school, but they had to admit that homeroom periods had little substance and consisted largely of paperwork and announcements. McCaffrey’s team concluded that they were not addressing the needs of students who, as she put it, were “wandering our halls without an adult recognizing that personal dilemmas were consuming them.” The teachers were determined to make advisory groups the core of a real character education program.

After doing some research, they zeroed in on the characteristics they wanted in the program: “student-centered, experiential, reflective, authentic, holistic, social, collaborative, democratic, cognitive, developmental, constructivist, and challenging.” They also wanted students to have choice, responsibility, expression, and a sense of community (Daniels and Bizar, 1998). This line of thinking led the teachers to *Film Clips for Character Education*, which proved to be exactly what they were looking for. Created by Emmy-award-winning producer Michael Rhodes, the program consists of a series of 3-4-minute episodes from more than 50 popular films (including *Shrek*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Pay It Forward*, *Bridge to Terabithia*, *Antwone Fisher*, and *Charlotte’s Web*) that serve as discussion-starters around character education (for example, honesty in a clip from *Liar, Liar*, respect from *Remember the Titans*, and kindness from *Forest Gump*). Here are clusters of values addressed in one of the program’s “episodes”:

- Honesty, cooperation, and respect
- Sportsmanship, kindness, and self-control
- Courage, loyalty, and perseverance
- Knowing yourself, peer pressure, understanding bullies
- Pride, honor, and citizenship
- Forgiveness, empathy, and vision
- Teamwork, leadership, tolerance, responsibility, taking a stand, serving others
- Patriotism, citizenship, equality, solidarity, integrity, dissent, accountability, and purpose

McCaffrey’s team was mindful of the need to get buy-in from the rest of the staff – and wary of two concerns expressed by teachers about advisory programs: (a) I am not a counselor, and (b) I do not want additional work creating lesson plans. They gingerly broached the film-clip idea in a voluntary meeting, making it one of several choices for improving advisories. The 30 teachers who showed up had a lively discussion about how advisory groups should be run – multi-age? single sex? composed of students whom teachers already knew? meeting how often? Teachers began to do action research on how nearby schools organized advisories and conducted an internal survey on teachers’ preferences.

The staff decided to use the school’s weekly 25-minute Stop Everything and Read period, converting two days a month into a character-education advisory group. They also decided to make the advisory groups mixed-gender, single-grade, with random assignment of students. Significantly, every certified staff member volunteered to lead a group, which translated to group sizes of 10-13 students.

During the summer of 2007, the four lead teachers adapted the *Film Clips* teachers’ guides, prepared lesson plans for their colleagues to minimize preparation time, and made advisory group assignments. As the new school year began, they put up posters publicizing the program with the slogan, WATT’S UP (Websters Are Talking Together) incorporating the school’s mascot, a jaguar – and soon heard students all over the school asking, “Hey, what’s up with this WATT’S UP?”

[In response to follow-up questions that I e-mailed her, McCaffrey reported that the program was a great success in its first year (2007-08). Teachers found the structure of each advisory discussion – showing a film clip on their LCD projectors and guiding discussion with several questions from their teachers’ guides, then wrapping up with an interactive all-group activity – worked very well, structuring discussions in a way they felt comfortable leading. At the beginning of the second year of the program (2008-09), teachers voted to keep the advisories twice a month and mixed-gender, but decided to assign students to teachers they already knew.

McCaffrey’s favorite clip (she said it was hard to pick) is the scene in *Remember the Titans* in which Coach tells the team that they need to know and care about each other in order to be a real team. This clip, she says, always gives her goose-bumps and leads to a wonderful discussion about acceptance and diversity.]

“Creating an Advisory Program Using Hollywood Film Clips to Promote Character Development” by Kathleen McCaffrey in *Middle School Journal*, November 2008 (Vol. 40, #2, p. 21-25), no e-link available; the author can be reached at mccaffreyk@fulton.k12.ga.us. For information on Film Clips, see <http://www.filmclipsonline.com>. Georgia middle schools have free access to the program, and Film Clips Spirit of America plans to make a set of *Film Clips for Character Education* available to every middle school in the U.S.

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4. How Good Are Computer-Adaptive Tests?

In this *Education Week* article, Katie Ash reports on the status of computer-adaptive interim assessments, specifically the Northwest Evaluation Associates (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment system, which is being used in more than 2,300 U.S. schools. Students take these tests on computers, and the software responds to whether students get each question right or wrong. Students who answer a question correctly are given a more difficult item, while those who answer incorrectly are given an easier one. Compared to a fixed-form test, computer-adaptive tests have the following advantages:

- Struggling students are less frustrated taking the test and higher-achieving students are less bored, since the test adjusts to their current level of proficiency.
- Testing is less time-consuming since students don’t waste time answering items they already know or don’t yet know.
- There is very rapid turnaround of results, in contrast to paper-based tests.
- Teachers are able to pinpoint the level of each student, adjust instruction for the whole class and for individual students, and track progress during the year.
- Students can more readily get involved in analyzing their own data, setting goals, and tracking their progress.

However, not everyone is sold on computer-adaptive assessments. Among the disadvantages pointed out by some critics:

- The diagnostic information is not as detailed as the data from fixed-form, standards-based assessments. In essence, teachers are told that a student is “pretty good in this area” but not given more specific information.
- In some subject areas, there isn’t a clear consensus on which test items are easier and which are harder, which undermines the validity of such tests.
- Computer-adaptive tests assume that all students have learned the subject matter in the same way, which is not always the case, especially in social studies.
- Test companies like NWEA haven’t released technical information that is necessary to evaluate the validity of the tests, says Scott Marion of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment. “It’s a pretty nice framework for making certain types of tests for certain purposes,” he says, “but the promises – from what I’ve seen – far exceed the practice.”

[Two additional concerns about computer-adaptive tests: (a) When teacher teams sit down to analyze interim assessment data, they can’t compare students’ performance on specific test items because students took different items; and (b) Lower-achieving students don’t take on-grade-level test items, which may leave them unprepared for the rigor level of state tests.]

“Adjusting to Test Takers” by Katie Ash in *Education Week*, Nov. 19, 2008 (Vol. 28, #13, p. 19-21), no free e-link

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5. New Math Courses for High-School Seniors

In this *Education Week* article, Sean Cavanaugh reports on some alternatives to the traditional pre-calculus/calculus course for high-school seniors who have passed Algebra 2, are college bound, but don’t plan on majoring in math. These courses are not to be confused with watered-down “Consumer Math” courses often taken by struggling high-schoolers. Among the new options:

- Statistics/Probability/Data Analysis – Collecting and analyzing data, conducting studies, measuring probability, recognizing patterns, and making estimates.
- Discrete Math – Using math in real-world applications for problem-solving, using discrete rather than continuous variables.
- Advanced Math Reasoning/Quantitative Reasoning – Applying math skills to civics, economics, public policy, finance, and other areas.
- Linear Algebra and Geometry – Studying the geometry and algebra of vectors and matrices, with applications in technology, finance, engineering, and other areas.
- Engineering Math – Examining how engineers use math to solve complex problems in industry, including computers, electrical, and aerospace engineering. This can involve trigonometry, functions, complex numbers, and vectors analysis.

William McCallum, a professor at the University of Arizona in Tucson, sees an important role for such courses. “We want students to have an appreciation for the power of

mathematics, and an inclination to use it – not to want to skip over it,” he says. When students develop a fear of math in their last years of high school, “many never come back.”

Achieve, Inc. and the Charles A. Dana Center are promoting alternative senior-year math courses – see <http://www.utdanacenter.org/k12mathbenchmarks/resources/capstone.php> .

“Senior Year Inviting More Math Choices” by Sean Cavanagh in *Education Week*, Nov. 19, 2008 (Vol. 28, #13, p. 1, 11), no free e-link

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6. “Boundary Invasions” as Possible Precursors to Sexual Abuse

In this *American School Board Journal* article, Seattle attorneys Michael Patterson and Donald Austin say that in most cases of sexual abuse by school employees, there is a pattern of “grooming” before actual abuse begins. Preventing these preliminaries to abuse can be difficult, they say, because “sexual grooming can be quite subtle and similar to innocent behavior.” Sexual predators typically target a vulnerable student and engage in increasingly persistent “boundary invasions” in which they (a) determine whether the child is one they can take advantage of, and (b) accustom the child to gradually increasing encroachments on their personal space and personal lives. “Sometimes students welcome the adult’s initial attentions,” write the authors. “By the time the boundary invasions have become inappropriate, a special relationship exists in the student’s mind that justifies them.”

“All sexual grooming is comprised of boundary invasions, but not all boundary invasions constitute sexual grooming,” write Patterson and Austin. “Obviously, we do not want to wait until molestation has occurred to prevent sexual grooming merely because of problems with definitions.” The best way to deal with this dilemma, they say, is for schools to clearly define appropriate and inappropriate boundary invasions, put staff on notice, ask staff to report possible problems, and step in when they occur. School officials should be clear about behavior that is justified for educational or health reasons – for example, a teacher or paraprofessional changing a kindergartener’s pants after a toileting accident, a coach touching a student appropriately during wrestling, football, or gymnastics practice, or a teacher having a student assistant stay after school to help prepare a presentation.

“Problems sometimes begin to occur when the pattern of such contacts gets out of hand and begins to take the form of a ‘special’ or ‘secret’ relationship,” say the authors. Even then, it’s best to call an employee on the carpet for boundary invasions rather than for sexual grooming: “While grooming includes or at least implies sexual intent, ‘inappropriate boundary invasions’ address professional judgment and how to behave professionally around students... Most boundary invasions may be nothing more than temporary lack of judgment. In younger teachers, it may be in getting used to the fact that meeting your social needs by interacting with students is not a good idea.”

Things get complicated when school employees interact with students outside of school, for example, a student mowing a teacher’s lawn, being coached by a teacher in Little League, or being friends with a teacher’s children. Dual relationships can cause problems, say

Patterson and Austin, and school officials need to remain alert and set limits when boundaries are crossed.

“Stop the Grooming” by Michael Patterson and Donald Austin in *American School Board Journal*, December 2008 (Vol. 195, #12, p. 18-20), no e-link available.

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7. A 21st-Century School-Home Communication System

In this helpful *American School Board Journal* article, Delaware school administrator Chuck Longfellow spells out the ideal technology set-up for home-school communication:

Phones:

- Each classroom has a phone with an outside line.
- Classroom phones are near a computer where student gradebooks and records are stored.
- There are enough incoming and outgoing lines to accommodate peak calling times.
- Classroom phones are set to not ring during the school day.
- Classroom phones have voicemail and a voicemail indicator light.

Voicemail:

- All teachers have their own passcode-protected voicemail box.
- Staff members can check their voicemail from outside the building.
- Teacher voicemail boxes can be reached by calling a special phone number that doesn't have to be answered in the main office.
- All parents are given their children's teachers' phone numbers.
- Staff receive training on how to use the system instructionally (e.g., homework assignments, field trip notices).

Autodialers:

- The school can call all parents within 30 minutes in an emergency.
- Administrators or designated staff members can initiate calls from outside the building.
- The system logs completed and incomplete calls and can restrict calling time.
- The school can send calls to specific homerooms, grades, bus groups, etc.
- There is a system for keeping students' emergency numbers up to date.

E-mail:

- Each teacher and administrator has her or her own password-protected e-mail account.
- Users can read and send e-mail from home.
- Users can store e-mail addresses in a personal address book.
- The system can store pre-set groups for mass mailing (parents, teachers, teams).
- The system protects users from viruses, spam, and other technological and social engineering hazards.

Parent access to student information:

- At a minimum parents can see their children's attendance, assignments, grades, report cards, and schedules.

- The system is password-protected and allows for multiple accounts for each student to accommodate special situations such as joint custody.
- The availability of the system is well publicized to all parents.

“Proven Tools That Work” by Chuck Longfellow in *American School Board Journal*, December 2008 (Vol. 195, #12, p. 24-27), no e-link available. The author can be reached at chuck.longfellow@appo.k12.de.us.

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8. Short Item:

Free online supplementary K-3 reading program – FreeReading is an open-source, teacher-created reading program that includes vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, and writing lessons: <http://www.freereading.net>.

Spotted in “New Products”, *District Administration*, November 2008 (p. 70)

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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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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