

## OF NOTE

[Paying Attention to Retention](#)*The Irreplaceables: Understanding The Real Retention Crisis in America's Urban Schools*

What do independent school leaders do to hold onto exceptional young teachers? In many schools, not very much. Lockstep salary scales and failure to provide the kind of feedback that leads to continued growth often discourage high achieving teachers from remaining in the profession. This new report's findings, while aimed at teacher retention in urban public schools, offer important recommendations about retaining talented teachers that should provoke discussion in independent schools. Since over half of all new public school teachers leave during the first five years (as detailed in No Dream Denied, 2003, from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future) most studies focus on teacher retention with little consideration of teacher quality. The problem, as this study highlights, is that some teachers are more effective at causing significant learning in students than others and they are leaving at the same rate as ineffective teachers. Based on a sample of 90,000 teachers in 2,100 schools, the study found an estimated 20 percent of teachers in a school capable of causing significant learning gains in students. These teachers are labeled the irreplaceables because they are almost impossible to replace. What would keep these excellent teachers in the profession? They want better compensation but they also want feedback on their teaching and an opportunity to work in schools that are serious about the importance of good teaching. They want an environment where there are high expectations for all teachers.

Pearl Rock Kane, The Klingenstein Center, NY

TNTP, July 20, 2012

Klingbrief is a free, monthly publication of recommended articles, books, research reports and media selected by and for independent school educators. The Klingenstein Center for Independent School Leadership provides graduate programs and professional development for independent school educators throughout their careers. For information about submitting to Klingbrief, please click [here](#)

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## ARTICLES, BLOGS, AND OTHER MEDIA

[Seizing Control of the Virtual School](#)*Barriers to Adoption of Online Learning Systems in U.S. Higher Education*, a report by Ithaka S + R

The recently announced online learning collaborative between Harvard and MIT, known as edX (see the recent New York Times article: <http://nyti.ms/1lO6NTD>), should intrigue the K-12 world. We, too, are wondering what the future of online learning will be in our schools. The link above connects to a report by Ithaka S + R, a research consortium that helps organizations migrate to a digital environment. Though a study of the barriers associated with adopting online learning in higher education, virtually the entire report is relevant to independent schools. The report documents the state of interactive online learning, the reasons schools migrate to these platforms, and discussions with academic leaders. Parents and students wish for more individualization, more "real world" learning situations, more diverse curricular offerings, and instantaneous feedback. If schools wait too long to struggle to figure out how to respond, much of the coming changes will fail to be institution-driven. Rather, organizations like Khan Academy offer free online instruction and engage large numbers of students. It is essential that schools pay attention.

Bruce Shaw, Bruce A Shaw Consulting, MA

Ithaka S+R, May 2012

[More Significant Work on Bypassing the Deficit Model of Teaching](#)*Searching for Strengths in the School Setting: To Enrich Dignity, Motivation, and Learning*, by Dr. Robert Brooks*Teachers' Expectations Can Influence How Students Perform*, [NPR blog](#)

What is the power of perceiving students and communicating that perception in a positive way? These two articles examine this question from slightly different perspectives. Dr. Brooks shares a school psychologist's focus on finding and discussing "islands of competence" in the lives of otherwise difficult students. He urges teachers and administrators to move away from a mindset that focuses on fixing deficits to one that seeks students' strengths as a point of entry for a meaningful, personalized educational approach. The NPR piece details the work of several researchers who examined the role that teacher expectations play in student outcomes. The article consolidates research that suggests that expectations shape teacher attitudes, which in turn effect teaching and learning in powerful ways. It goes on to explore ways to move teacher expectations from negative to positive perceptions of students.

Chris Lauricella, The Park School of Buffalo, NY

NPR Blog

Website: Dr. Robert Brooks writings

[Teaching Deliberately, Thinking Creatively](#)*Design Thinking Toolkit*

As educators, we often strive to rethink an aspect of our teaching or improve the efficacy of daily practice. The Design Thinking Toolkit provides educators with a conceptual framework for using the design process to solve educational challenges. The toolkit, a collaboration of Riverdale Country School and the consulting firm IDEO, walks the reader through the design steps of discovery, interpretation, ideation, experimentation, and evolution. The toolkit is hosted at <http://designthinkingforeducators.com/>, a website that also provides real life examples from a host of different schools. The free downloadable toolkit is a great resource for jumpstarting innovation in an individual classroom, or engaging in a broader dialogue about change in teaching and learning within a department or larger school community.

Jean-Pierre (JP) Jacquet, NYC Department of Education, NY

Design Thinking for Educators, 2012

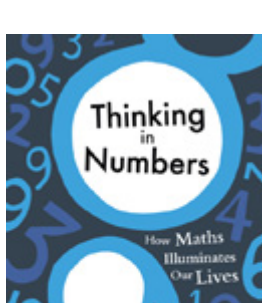
## BOOKS

[Failing to Succeed, Succeeding to Fail](#)*Teach Your Children Well: Parenting for Authentic Success Why Values and Coping Skills Matter More than Grades, Trophies, or "Fat Envelopes"*, by Madeline Levine, PhD

When the author of *The Price of Privilege* speaks, the ears of many independent school parents may perk up - after all, the opportunities afforded by our schools in September sometimes sour by November as students quickly run themselves ragged. The price of privilege is still quite high. More interested in goodness than smartness in her newest book, Levine rallies us against over-parenting, over-programming and the overwhelming emphasis placed on attending prestigious schools. Our version of success isn't just skewed, according to Levine; it "is failure" itself. Detailed in its advice, Levine's book moves from concerns in elementary-school all the way to high school, serving as a healthy primer on the developmental aspects of each phase. Read by a parent body and faculty together, *Teach Your Children Well* could spur robust discussions; read by a faculty alone, Levine's level-headed insights could give a school the courage to live up to its mission.

Stephen J. Valentine, Montclair Kimberley Academy, NJ

Harper Collins, 2012

[A Rigorous and Inspiring Climb into the World of Math](#)*Thinking in Numbers: How Maths Illuminates Our Lives*, by Daniel Tammet

Reading Thinking in Numbers: How Maths Illuminate Our Lives is a stretch of the perfect sort. It is a rigorous and inspiring climb into the world of numbers, and not at all a defeating one. British author Daniel Tammet takes a subject every school teaches and addresses why it matters so much and so richly in all our lives. A non-fiction book that is a clear exception to the genre's usual defining qualities, it makes no apology for the poetry of its style or the constancy of the literary, historical and sociological contexts it inhabits comfortably. Tammet is the ultimate connector of disciplines, seeing in math the infinite capacity to answer both "Why?" and "What if?" across many subjects and periods. The 24 essays in the book, include "Shakespeare's Zero", "Poetry of the Primes", "All Things are Created Unequal" and "Proverbs and Times Tables", each an invitation to take the elegance of Math seriously while becoming more cognizant of its long and necessary reach into our imaginations and our education. It is a book to savour as an educator and one to inspire thinking about thinking.

Elizabeth Morley, The Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, University of Toronto, Canada

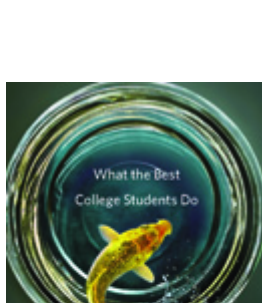
Hodder and Stoughton, 2012

[Beyond Slick and Mumble: The Art of Speaking Well](#)*As We Speak*, by Peter Meyers and Shann Nix

In this comprehensive and well-researched guide to improving our public speaking skills, the authors delve into the three core building blocks they consider vital for effective communication: Content, Delivery and State. The book is a valuable resource for any public speaker as it supplies us with useful concrete strategies while also challenging us to inspire as we speak. In a field where motivational speaking may be seen as overly slick, the authors ground their advice in their own experience as teachers, coaches and actors. The book also includes on-line communication protocols, as well as case studies that can be used for professional development.

Eric Temple, Lick-Wilmerding High School, Ca.

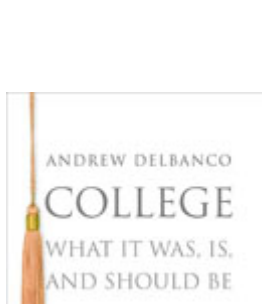
Atria Books, New York, 2011

[What Defines a Great Learner?](#)*What the Best College Students Do*, by Ken Bain

In a thoroughly researched follow-up to his highly acclaimed *What the Best College Teachers Do*, Ken Bain explores how passionate students do not necessarily measure achievement by the grades on their transcript, but rather by learning in depth and expanding their ability to think about ideas beyond mere course requirements and earning high marks. Through a series of interviews with well-known personalities including Stephen Colbert, Jeff Hawkins, and Cheryl Hayashi, as well as dozens of successful students who aren't famous television personalities or MacArthur Genius Award recipients, Bain identifies key elements of scholarship, particularly the ability to make connections across disciplines and the ability to handle complexity and ambiguity. One brilliant chapter is an examination of the learning and teaching experiences of David Protess, founder of the Chicago Innocence Project and former journalism professor at Northwestern University. Bain's examination of how Protess engaged his first-year journalism students to deeply examine cases that may have led to wrongful convictions is a treatise on experiential learning that is valuable to teachers and learners of all subjects and at any level of education.

Peter Schmidt, Gill St. Bernard's School, NJ

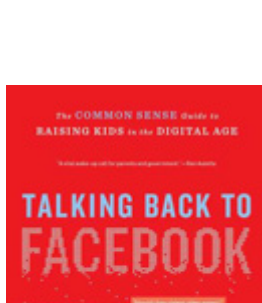
Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012

[Recapturing College from a Climate of Disparagement](#)*College: What it was, is, and Should be*, by Andrew Delbanco

Admission to elite and highly selective colleges, followed by a successful career, is one of the fundamental reasons why parents choose to educate their children in independent schools. Well documented are the rising tuition costs, student debt and the fact that fewer college graduates attain a well-paying job in the profession for which they have trained. Delbanco's text is timely because it gives historic context for the original purpose of the university and chronicles its current challenges--particularly the increasingly popular notion, parroted by PayPal billionaire Peter Thiel, that entrepreneurship can only be developed outside the walls of the university. Delbanco reminds us that universities are more than vehicles to professional and financial stability, that in the past, particularly for people of means, the university was a source of enlightenment and social responsibility. Because Delbanco does not focus as much on the possibilities for higher education in the 21st Century, his book could lay a strong foundation for an important discussion about the goals for which we are preparing our students. How can we continue to strengthen ties between Higher and K-12 education? How can we ensure that the university is a means to a life well lived, rather than an obstacle to entrepreneurship for a few, and a debt-addled lifetime of struggle for the many? (For a longer review visit Anthony Grafton's article in the New York Review of Books on May 24, 2012) (<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/may/24/can-colleges-be-saved/?page=1>)

Gina Siple, Buckley Country Day School, NY

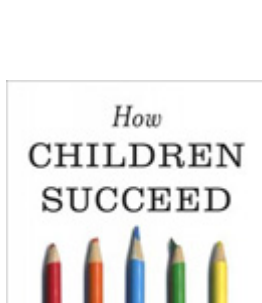
Princeton University Press, 2012

[Can We Make the Digital Age Technologies Compatible with Childrearing?](#)*Talking Back to Facebook: The Common Sense Guide to Raising Kids in the Digital Age*, by James P. Steyer

What is the effect of modern media and "virtual living" on child development? Jim Steyer, founder and director of Common Sense Media, explores this question in *Talking Back to Facebook*. The first part of the book explores a cluster of media issues related to relationships, attention/addiction problems, and privacy. Steyer does a fine job synthesizing current research and identifying both the strengths and concerns related to digital age technologies. The second half of the book provides "common sense" tips for integrating technology into childhood developmental stages. These tips are largely constructive and thoughtful suggestions for appropriately integrating ubiquitous technology into children's lives - a bit like Doctor Spock for the digital age.

Chris Lauricella, The Park School of Buffalo, NY

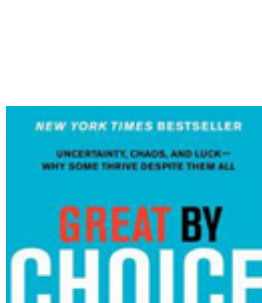
Scribner, 2012

[The "Soft" Personality Traits May be the Key to Hardest Challenges](#)*How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*, by Paul Tough

Why don't private schools serving affluent families produce more real-world changers? What can we do to improve the lives of millions of poor children? Why are so many American students dropping out of college just as the degree has become so valuable? Character matters, but not the moral kind, argues Paul Tough, who suggests that the elusive key to solving the achievement gap between our nation's poor and more well-off students, as well as the 'character' gap between those with resilience and those who retreat from challenge, may be in teaching the skills of self-regulation: grit, conscientiousness, resilience, perseverance and optimism. We have long known the value of these 'soft' personality traits. Tough journeys through science, research, and anecdote show that these traits are malleable and teachable. Today's so-called helicopter parents, in an effort to make certain that their children have access to everything they need to succeed, neglect to see struggling with failure as an important part of their development. Children of poverty, on the other hand, are surrounded by challenge but lack safety nets. Ironically, in an America with significant class divides, both ends of the spectrum are at risk. By helping all students manage failure and think reflectively about their performance, and by teaching the parents of the most at-risk students to be caregivers that teach their younger children to manage environmental stress, we can begin to answer some of the most difficult challenges in education today.

Damaris W. Maclean, Nightingale Bamford School, NY

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012

[Collins Separates More Wheat from the Chaff](#)*Great by Choice*, by Jim Collins

BHAGs (Big Hairy Audacious Goals), Hedgehog Concept, getting the right people on the bus, Level 5 Leaders, and The Flywheel are all guidance, designs, and techniques Jim Collins used in his seminal book *Good to Great* (Harper Collins 2001), geared originally to for-profit organizations. Now as the keynote speaker for the upcoming NAIS Annual Conference in Philadelphia, Jim Collins will talk about his latest book *Great by Choice* (Harper Business 2011). His newest buzz words and visuals - 20 Mile March, 10Xers, and Fire Bullets then Cannonballs - have the same staying power for helping the reader get and hold on to his important points. In *Great by Choice*, Collins is a master at helping leaders solidify the steps that can guide an organization to becoming great by choice, not by luck or unlimited funds. With his well-honed techniques of using graphic design and well researched data, he intricately explains each of his new big concepts - Fanatic Discipline, Empirical Creativity, Productive Paranoia, and Level 5 Ambition.

Dane L. Peters, Brooklyn Heights Montessori School Brooklyn, NY

Harper Collins Publishers, 2011

To submit comments or suggestions, or to request that the newsletter be sent to a colleague, contact Adele Tonge, Communications Manager at [klingsbrief@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:klingsbrief@tc.columbia.edu).

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