Choices for Children: Why and How to Let Students Decide (*)
Moreover, consider the conventional response when something goes wrong (as determined, of course, by the adults). Are two ... the reading? Hit them with a pop quiz. Again and again, the favorite motto of teachers and administrators seems to be

To be sure, there is nothing new about the idea that students should be able to participate, individually and ... developmental, constructivist, holistic, or learner-centered; in specific innovations such as whole-language learning,

Sometimes, however, the main barrier to giving children choices is a simple lack of gumption. Parting with power is not ... once told me how difficult it was for her to leave the classroom walls bare when her students showed up on the first

Every day ought to include at least one block of time in which children can decide individually what to do: get a head ... themselves. In expressing an idea or responding to a lesson, children sometimes can be allowed to decide what medium or

But if the concept is not exactly novel, neither do we usually take the time to tease this element out of various ... matters as well as other aspects of school life? What limits on students' right to choose are necessary, and what

Third, the importance of choice is often weighed against the fact that children need some

The irony is enough to make us wince. As one survey of American schools after another has confirmed, students are rarely invited to become active participants in their own education.(1) Schooling is typically about doing things

Finally, it needs to be said that allowing people to make decisions about what happens to them is inherently preferable ... to have in the future, they ought to have a chance to choose in the present. Children, after all, are not just adults-

One is repeatedly struck by the absurd spectacle of adults insisting that children need to become self-disciplined, or ... children around. The truth is that, if we want children to take responsibility for their own behavior, we must first

Because quite a few programs and practices in which children can make meaningful choices have been described elsewhere, I ... be grouped according to whether they are primarily concerned with academic decisions or with social and behavioral ones.


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