



About the TELL Kentucky Survey

The research is clear: teaching conditions matter for student learning. That is why, starting in March of 2011 Kentucky education leaders administered the first statewide Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Kentucky survey. The TELL survey is an anonymous, web-based survey for teachers and school administrators to voice perceptions of teaching and learning conditions in their schools. Survey planning and administration are overseen by a steering committee of Kentucky education partners, and survey results are collected and analyzed by the New Teacher Center.

The first TELL Kentucky survey was administered in 2011 with a record-breaking 80% response rate. With each biennial administration of the survey, response rates have increased and in 2017, 91% (41,502) of Kentucky educators responded to the survey. All statewide results, district results and individual school results (for schools which meet the minimum response rate criteria of 50% response) are publicly available at www.tellkentucky.org

Previous TELL survey data have informed Kentucky school and district improvement plans, new evaluation tools, and professional learning opportunities. For more information, including additional reporting and research articles, please visit www.tellkentucky.org



2017 Winner's Circle

Muhlenberg South Middle School

Muhlenberg County, Region 1

Dawson Springs Junior/Senior High School

Dawson Springs, Region 1

Estes Elementary School

Owensboro Independent, Region 2

Colony Elementary School

Laurel County, Region 3

Okolona Elementary School

Jefferson County, Region 4

Strode Station Elementary School

Clark County, Region 5

Ewing Elementary School

Fleming County, Region 6

Carroll County Area Technology Center

Carroll County, Region 6

Black Mountain Elementary School

Harlan County, Region 7

Magoffin County High School

Magoffin County, Region 7

About the TELL Kentucky Winners' Circle

In the year in which the statewide Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Kentucky Survey is administered, ten schools are recognized for their effective teaching and school leadership practices and will be shared as models of best practices across the state. A winner is selected from each of the 7 Supreme Court regions of the state, with 3 'at large' winners selected. The 10 Winners' Circle schools represent a variety of grade levels and demographics.

Selection for the 2017 Winners' Circle awards is based on the 2017 TELL Kentucky Survey results, school safety and student achievement scores. A team of TELL Kentucky partners makes the decision as to the selection of the Winners' Circle honorees, with final determination based on schools in each region with the highest growth in three TELL Kentucky constructs closely correlated with teacher retention and student achievement: school leadership, managing student conduct, and community engagement.

2017 Winners' Circle Honorable Mention Schools

In addition to the 10 Winners' Circle schools, the following schools are acknowledged for high scores in the selection process and are the 2017 Winners' Circle Honorable Mentions schools:

<i>Calhoun Elem., McLean Co.</i>	<i>Scott Co. Middle, Scott Co.</i>
<i>Adairville School, Logan Co.</i>	<i>Wellington Elem., Fayette Co.</i>
<i>Munfordville Elem., Hart Co.</i>	<i>Ersil P Wade Elem., Fleming Co.</i>
<i>Tamarack Elem., Daviess Co.</i>	<i>Spencer Co. High, Spencer Co.</i>
<i>GC Burkehead Elem., Hardin Co.</i>	<i>River Ridge Elem., Kenton Co.</i>
<i>GR Hampton Elem., Knox Co.</i>	<i>Sandy Hook Elem., Elliott Co.</i>
<i>Green Co. Middle, Green Co.</i>	<i>Allen Elem., Floyd Co.</i>
<i>West Marion Elem., Marion Co.</i>	<i>Greenup County ATC</i>
<i>Lincoln Elem., Jefferson Co.</i>	<i>Russell ATC</i>
<i>Medora Elem., Jefferson Co.</i>	<i>Corbin ATC</i>
<i>Farmer Elem., Jefferson Co.</i>	
<i>Bardstown Primary, Bardstown</i>	
<i>Indep.</i>	

My congratulations to our 2017 TELL Kentucky Winners' Circle Schools. With their participation, these schools have discovered the power to unlock information on critical teaching and learning conditions and harness it as part of the ongoing improvement planning process. Setting goals based on whole staff feedback – is a great way to enhance professional performance and student performance. Research has proven it time and time again; working conditions have a direct impact on the learning conditions for students. By effectively using the information gathered, the entire school shares ownership in improving school culture, student success and its ability to close the achievement gap.

**--Stephen Pruitt,
Commissioner of Education**

Magoffin County High School
Magoffin County, Region 7

Magoffin County High School, located in Salyersville, Kentucky, is a rural school in the eastern part of the state that serves 600 students grades 9 - 12. Seventy-five percent of our student body qualifies for free and reduced meals. Despite being in a county that has been severely impacted by economic woes and a recent natural disaster, we are fortunate to have a new facility.

While our new building provides students and staff with an optimal experience, we realize that it is the people who make the school experience valuable. Our staff is a close-knit group willing to work together with open lines of communication. They recognize the importance of a positive school culture and climate. As we analyze our TELL Survey results, we acknowledge how important it is to reflect on where we have been in addition to where we are headed. In an effort to improve the school experience for all shareholders, we have paid particular attention to areas that help to remove barriers for staff and students alike. We have made an effort to provide our teachers with more time to collaborate during the school day through common planning and by using a protocol for effective professional learning communities. Additionally, we have worked diligently to manage student conduct by revising discipline guidelines, maintaining consistency, and clearly communicating with students, staff, and parents. To improve culture, we utilize student culture surveys in addition to a Principal's Advisory Council made up entirely of students and the principal. This has helped to give our students a stronger voice in our school.

Like all schools, Magoffin County High School is a work in progress. We are constantly reflecting and planning to meet the changing needs of our school community. The TELL Survey has been instrumental in helping us to analyze our data to better improve what we do for students, staff, and the entire community.

Muhlenberg South Middle School
Muhlenberg County, Region 1

Muhlenberg South Middle School is a rural school in the heart of Western Kentucky with 502 students in grades 6-8. Fifty percent of our students qualify for free/reduced lunches. We like to tell visitors "Welcome to Paradise." We truly believe that we have a great school with great students, great staff, and a great community. Our "One Word" for our staff is "Family." We have a great school family where we work well with each other helping each other be better today than we were yesterday.

We believe that culture is the root. Jon Gordon, best-selling author of *The Energy Bus*, states, "Great leaders create great cultures. Culture affects motivation, and motivation affects productivity and performance. It all starts with culture, and the most important thing a leader can do is create a culture of greatness." We have strived to create this culture of greatness and school culture has been our main focus over the last two years. A culture of greatness is created by holding everyone accountable, being approachable, building a cohesive team, modeling the way, and encouraging others. Throughout the last two years we have used concepts from Jon Gordon books such as *The Energy Bus*, *The Carpenter*, *The Seed*, etc. We wanted to remind everyone of our "why."

We have moved up to a Distinguished school. Teacher attendance has improved 57% from two years ago, behavior events are down 769 events from two years ago, and students involved in behavior events has decreased by 125 students. This has been a total team effort. We have reviewed TELL Survey data to identify our areas of improvement and continued focus on our areas of strength.

We truly believe the following quote by Jon Gordon, "Culture drives behavior and behavior drives habits. Culture influences what your leaders and teams think, say, and do each day. Culture trumps strategy every time."

Dawson Springs Junior/Senior High School

Dawson Springs, Region 1

Dawson Springs Jr/Sr High School is a part of the Dawson Springs Independent School system and is located in the southwest corner of Hopkins County. The student body numbers 305 and consists of mostly low social-economic students, with approximately 73% of the students participating in the Federal Free/Reduced Lunch Program. The mission statement of Dawson Springs Jr/Sr High School is simple: "Forwarding Student Achievement and Development - Every Student, Every Day". This statement encompasses every aspect of the school's success.

Dawson Springs Jr/Sr High School is an institution that consistently achieves academic excellence and has received numerous awards. This success is no accident; it is the end result of a schoolwide attitude of high expectations and personal accountability.

To the students of Dawson Springs Jr/Sr High School, community service is an activity that not only benefits the community, but also teaches valuable skills and traits. Through multiple activities offered, we help our students develop the skills and attitudes they will need make them better leaders and better citizens.

At Dawson Springs Jr/Sr High School, every member of the staff and faculty is seen as a leader who is capable of accountability, autonomy, and action. Leadership is not a mere title reinforced by a rigid vertical hierarchy. It is a process that enables every member of the school to accept leadership roles. The excellent results achieved on the TELL Survey serve as a validation of the day to day process that makes Dawson Springs Jr/Sr High School a place where leadership from every member of the faculty and staff is encouraged and supported.

Black Mountain Elementary School

Harlan County, Region 7

Black Mountain Elementary is a rural school in Southeast Kentucky with 325 students in grades K-8. 92% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. We are very proud of our students and value each and every one.

Our vision is all students will be challenged to their full potential and be prepared for college or a career to contribute to society throughout their lives. We take this mission seriously, we believe that every student (stakeholder) brings something to the table and is therefore a valuable piece of the puzzle. Without contribution from every student the puzzle will never be complete.

One of our main focuses is protected instruction time. If teachers and students are uninterrupted then the level of quality instruction will be delivered in its entirety and with rigor.

We as a staff are driven and motivated to succeed, two years ago we were a focus school. We have since improved to a "High Progressing / Proficient school, and intend to keep moving forward.

Addressing needs from our previous Tell Survey allowed us to focus on improving culture within the school. Implementing various PLC committees and delegating Leadership Roles to Staff, allowed for a sense of ownership in decision making within the school.

Carroll County Area Technology Center
Carroll County, Region 6

Carroll County Area Technology Center is a rural school located on the Ohio River half way between Louisville and Northern Kentucky. Carroll Co. ATC provides career and technical education to secondary students in Carroll, Gallatin, Henry, Owen and Trimble County school districts as well as the iLead Academy also located in Carrollton. Last year, the ATC provided technical education courses and pathways for over 600 students in nine different program areas.

We focus on the importance of preparing students for a future through technical education pathways while also helping them navigate their current life circumstances. The entire ATC staff is composed of instructors who left gainful occupations in their respective fields in order to dedicate themselves fully to educating young people. The staff's experience gives them a clear outlook regarding worth ethic standards and what it takes for students to be successful in today's workplace. The school provides multiple student opportunities including dual credit options, SREB Advanced Career curriculum, Problem Based Learning, and Industry Certifications.

Previous TELL survey results helped us focus on what's important. As our focus narrowed on certain areas I began to realize that being principal was not about managing a building, but it's more about empowering a team of educators to make a world of difference for their students. Empowered teachers will empower students. It's about building confidence and celebrating the success as we go. Our staff did a comprehensive review of the entire 2015 survey and reflected on the significance of each question. After some deep thinking and reflection we discussed ways to experience improvement.

Estes Elementary School
Owensboro Independent, Region 2

Estes Elementary is one of five elementary schools within the Owensboro Public Schools district and serves 465 students ranging from preschool to fourth grade. Estes is a highly transient school, and approximately 95% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunch. We have a diverse school representing six countries and five languages. We have amazing students who demonstrate resilience, acceptance, and love each and every day.

At Estes, we base all of our decisions on what is best for our students. We understand the importance of building positive relationships with our students, and that is a priority. We also understand the importance of, and require, high expectations for our students academically, behaviorally, and socially. We developed our shared mission and vision together as a staff. At Estes, we are developing and expanding growth mindset and lifelong success for every student through grit, innovation, and leadership. We have implemented PBIS for ten years, and we are a Leader in Me school.

Staff members are empowered to be leaders throughout the school, district, and state. Teachers often lead our after school PLCs to teach other teachers, staff members, and administrators through meaningful professional development opportunities. This includes personalized professional development where teachers are able to attend what they need and/or what they are interested in learning more about.

When our TELL survey data came out previously, teachers were asked to analyze and discuss why we may have gotten the results we did and what we could do to improve. Throughout the last two years, teachers' input and ideas were reviewed and discussed, changes were implemented and the principal provided evidence of what had been done to make improvements. The overall result was tremendous growth in the school culture with Tell survey data to support it.

Colony Elementary School

Laurel County, Region 3

Colony Elementary, a Laurel County Public School is located in the beautiful rolling hills of western Laurel County serving students kindergarten through fifth grade. Colony has approximately a little over 300 students, with 79% of our students receiving free or reduced- price lunch. Our students come from diverse backgrounds, but as a school and district we work together to provide the same opportunity to all our students to learn in a student centered environment.

Our school is recognized as a “Distinguished” school and that can be contributed to the commitment of our teachers, support staff and parents/guardians. We strive and encourage open dialogue between our parents/guardians and staff. Throughout the school year we offer opportunities for the groups to come together through family reading nights, community dinners and plays. We want our students to receive an academically challenging education, but also have the skills to be future productive citizens in their community. Additionally, each month Colony Elementary incorporates our character word of the month into our classrooms, reinforcing the qualities of a good student, but also a good citizen.

Our school motto is “Hand in Hand, Together We Can” and that is what we do, we work together to achieve our goals. We celebrate the achievements of our students and our staff and we work together when there is problem to reach a solution. Our students are provided stability and a safe environment to learn each day.

We are honored to be recognized and to be placed in the TELL Kentucky Winner’s Circle. This is an honor for our school, but also a testament to our staff, students and parents/guardians. We will celebrate this achievement as a school, but also as a community because like our motto, “Hand in Hand, Together We Can,” we are going to continue to do the best for our students.

Ewing Elementary School

Fleming County, Region 6

Ewing Elementary lies in the heartbeat of a small rural farming community in Western Fleming County. Ewing is comprised of 309 Prek-6th grade students. The school has a high percentage of Free/ Reduced Lunch averaging around 70%.

School culture is at the forefront of who we are and what we do. We are fortunate to have a strong community support system in place with many community outreach programs. That outreach program has been highly developed in the past two years along with churches that are actively involved in our school community. Our volunteer program logged 2,500 hours for the 2015- 2016 school year and approximately 2,900 hours for 2016-2017. Ewing Elementary is a school focused on vision and purpose. There is a team atmosphere and positive morale throughout the school. School leadership emphasizes the involvement of teacher leaders in critical decisions around school improvement and supports teachers in their roles as education experts in the classroom. School-wide policy changes and communication with parents/community partners have positively impacted the growth of our school. .

At Ewing Elementary, we have a clear vision and direction for student achievement and success where all stakeholders are accountable. Our shared vision of becoming a School of Distinction is now a reality. Thank you for recognizing our commitment to continuous improvement.

Strode Station Elementary School
Clark County, Region 5

Strode Station Elementary is home of the Stallions! We are a diverse school with students of varied social, ethnic and economic backgrounds, with an enrollment of approximately 542. We are one of four elementary schools that service Clark County students K- 4. Our Guidelines for Success are “*Stallions, Stay Safe and Engage in Learning*”, which can be heard every morning as students and staff join in unison to proclaim our focus. Our Mission Statement is “*Striving to Reach our Dream of Excellence*”, the staff is committed to creating a rich learning environment that is engaging and meets diverse needs; and encourages strong parent, community and school involvement. Building relationships are key as we embrace each day as an opportunity to provide ALL students with a safe-learning environment, and a focus on student achievement!

The TELL survey data from two years ago reflected a coming together of a new staff after redistricting had occurred to provide more equitable learning environments for the students of Clark County. With that baseline data, we began a continuous process of prioritizing our needs to focus on our challenges. The newly assigned staff at Strode Station met to begin a new collaborative culture with improving student achievement as our goal. Today we are a family of learners who continue to meet to improve on instructional practices which engage students in learning, students are practicing reflection and thinking to reach their grade-level goals, the support staff also rallies our students by providing great meals and a healthy environment and the community is supporting our improvement process.

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” – Henry Ford

Okolona Elementary School
Jefferson County, Region 4

Okolona Elementary is located in a suburb of Jefferson County with an enrollment of 322 students from Pre-K-5th grade. Okolona is a Title 1 school with approximately 89% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch status. Our ESL population continues to grow and is currently at 15%. In addition, 14% of our students receive special education services. We have 15 classroom teachers, 1 Reading Recovery teacher, 1 Math Interventionist, 2 ECE teachers, and 1 Goal Clarity Coach. The average number of years of teaching experience is 9.1 years. There is a team atmosphere at Okolona with our fifty-five employees working together to do what is best for students each day.

Our mission is to value each student as a unique learner and provide engaging learning opportunities within a safe and caring environment. Okolona’s vision is to develop students socially, emotionally, and academically through valuable learning experiences in order to become productive members of society. The Instructional Leadership Team, staff members, and administration have a strong commitment to the overall social and academic achievement of each student at Okolona. Our school is where students work to develop 21st century skills needed to be successful in life that include collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity.

Okolona has very little teacher turn over because of the positive culture and climate that has been established. In 2014-15 school year I started as principal and we used the previous TELL survey results as a guide to take the pulse of the climate and culture of Okolona. The survey results from 2015 were analyzed in an effort to foster continuous improvement at Okolona. The 2017 results showed tremendous growth in all aspects of the survey, which is indicative of the warmth, and positivity you feel when you walk in the doors of Okolona, an exceptional place to work.