

Oct 05, 2017 | Written by Submitted | 0



On September 18, the Kentucky Department of Education recognized ten public schools from across the Commonwealth for outstanding teaching and learning conditions. These **“Winners’ Circle”** schools were recognized for their effective teaching and school leadership practices and will be shared as models of best practices across the state. We are proud to announce that one of the ten winners was Magoffin County High School from Salyersville, Kentucky.

During the Continuous Improvement Summit in Lexington, each school was honored and received a certificate and a 4’ x 6’ banner. The Winners’ Circle schools were selected based upon the results of the 2017 Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Kentucky Survey which was administered to all public school teachers and principals in March of this year. The ten were selected in a four-phase process. In Phase I, schools that reached the minimum 50 percent survey response rate threshold were identified. In Phase II, schools ranking in the third or fourth quartiles in working conditions continued to the next phase of selection. In Phase III, schools were examined for details regarding their TELL Kentucky results, specifically growth in managing student conduct, school leadership, and community support and involvement, as well as other criteria (such as school safety), using a rubric designed by the New Teacher Center and the TELL Kentucky Steering Committee. Phase IV schools met all of the minimum criteria for selection and were identified by the New Teacher Center and the TELL Steering Committee to represent each of the State Board/Judicial Districts, two at-large schools and one area technology center. In addition to the ten Winners’ Circle Schools, twenty-two schools received Honorable Mentions and will be used as examples of best practices for other schools across the state.

“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,” Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt said. Superintendent, Scott Helton said, “I would like to congratulate Magoffin County High School, staff, students and parents on receiving this award. The survey represents their continuous efforts through communication to improve relationships between all stakeholders.”

Schools recognized as being in the Winner’s Circle of teaching and learning conditions are:

- Muhlenberg South Middle, Muhlenberg County
- Dawson Springs Junior/High, Dawson Springs Independent
- Estes Elementary, Owensboro Independent
- Colony Elementary, Laurel County

- Okolona Elementary, Jefferson County
- Strode Station Elementary, Clark County
- Ewing Elementary, Fleming County
- Carroll County Area Technology Center, Kentucky TECH Schools
- Black Mountain Elementary, Harlan County
- **Magoffin County High, Magoffin County**

In March 2017, Kentucky provided the opportunity for educators to share information about the conditions in their schools and the supports needed to do their jobs well. The anonymous, online biennial survey included topics such as use of time, school leadership, teacher leadership, facilities and resources, professional development, community engagement and support, instructional practices and support, managing student conduct, and new teacher support. The New Teacher Center, a national non-profit dedicated to improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders, administered the TELL Kentucky Survey. Nearly 45,000 – approximately 91 percent – of the certificated educators in the state completed the voluntary TELL Kentucky Survey, setting another national record and surpassing the 2015 response rate of almost 89 percent. All of the traditional public schools in the state met the minimum response threshold (at least 50 percent response and a minimum of five respondents) for data to be made available; fifty-one districts had 100 percent participation.

This is the fourth administration of the TELL survey in Kentucky; the first TELL survey was conducted in 2011. School, district and statewide results, as well as the New Teacher Center's Preliminary Findings, Guides, and Tools for Using the Data, can be viewed at www.tellkentucky.org [1]. The intent of this work is to provide schools, districts and the state with data that can be used to enhance school improvement efforts. The Kentucky Board of Education has used the results of the 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017 TELL Kentucky Survey in policy discussions. The Kentucky Department of Education is using the findings to guide its assistance to persistently low-achieving schools, in the work with improving effective teachers and leaders and supporting and retaining a quality educator workforce.

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