



## Preliminary Findings of the 2013 TELL Maryland Survey

To do their best work with students, teachers need supportive school environments that maximize their opportunity to be effective. With the leadership of Governor O'Malley, the New Teacher Center (NTC) worked collaboratively with a coalition of education partners<sup>1</sup> to implement the third iteration of the Maryland Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning Survey (TELL Maryland Survey) to assess whether educators across the state report having the resources and supports necessary to encourage the most effective teaching. Findings from this initiative will inform school improvement planning.

### About the Survey

The TELL Maryland Survey is a statistically valid and reliable instrument that assesses eight research-based teaching and learning conditions.<sup>2</sup> The eight constructs are empirically linked to student achievement and teacher retention and include: Time, Facilities and Resources, Community Support and Involvement, Managing Student Conduct, Teacher Leadership, School Leadership, Professional Development, and Instructional Practices and

Support.<sup>3</sup> See Table 1 for descriptions of each area. Additionally, the TELL Survey includes questions for novice teachers (those in their first three years in the profession) to assess induction support and for principals to assess district-level supports. Response options for core questions use a Likert scale and range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. For this brief, results are summarized using a rate of agreement that combines the strongly agree and agree categories.

1. The Coalition of education partners included the Maryland Association of Boards of Education, the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals, the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals, the Maryland State Board of Education, the Maryland State Department of Education, the Maryland State Education Association, the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland, and the American Federation of Teachers-Maryland.

2. Swanlund, A. (2011). Identifying working conditions that enhance teacher effectiveness: The psychometric evaluation of the Teacher Working Conditions Survey. Chicago, IL: American Institutes for Research. Additional validity and reliability analyses on the 2009 and 2011 TELL Maryland Surveys are available online at [www.tellmaryland.org](http://www.tellmaryland.org).

3. See endnotes for research.

**Note:** The results presented in these initial findings may vary slightly (within one percent) from the statewide data available in the web-based "detailed report" due to rounding the agree and strongly agree categories separately and then again rounding to a whole number. The "summary" report as well as holding the cursor over the detailed report bar graph provides agreement rates to a tenth of a percent. Additionally, some small variation (less than one percent) may result from final cleaning and data posting that occurred after these trends were compiled. In all cases, these small variations do not change reported trends.

TABLE 1. 2013 TELL MARYLAND SURVEY CONSTRUCTS

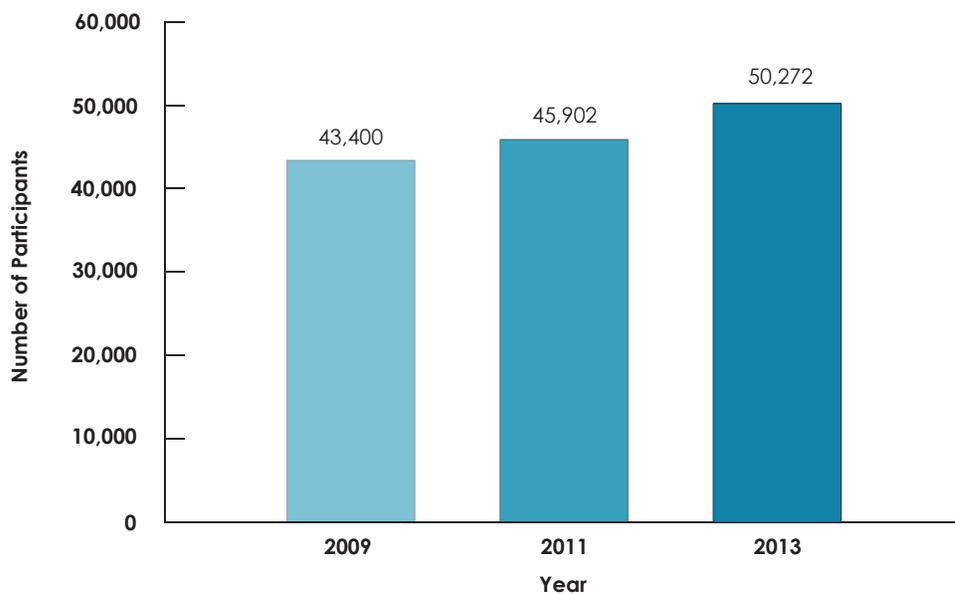
- Time**—Available time to plan, collaborate, provide instruction, and eliminate barriers in order to maximize instructional time during the school day
- Facilities and Resources**—Availability of instructional, technology, office, communication, and school resources to teachers
- Community Support and Involvement**—Community and parent/guardian communication and influence in the school
- Managing Student Conduct**—Policies and practices to address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment
- Professional Development**—Availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching
- Teacher Leadership**—Teacher involvement in decisions that impact classroom and school practices
- School Leadership**—The Ability of school leadership to create trusting, supportive environments and address teacher concerns
- Instructional Practices and Support**—Data and support available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning

This summary will provide a brief overview of major trends emerging from preliminary analyses of both licensed and education support personnel at the state aggregate level.

### Response Rate

NTC administered the anonymous survey to all school-based certified educators and designated education support personnel in early 2013. More than 50,000 educators (58 percent) in the state responded (Figure 1). This represents a six-percentage-point increase from the 52 percent responding in 2011.

FIGURE 1. RESPONSE RATE BY SURVEY ITERATION



Response rates vary by school type. As Table 2 demonstrates, on average, 62 percent of elementary school educators participated in the survey, 58 percent of middle school educators responded, 54 percent of high school educators responded, and 56 percent of educators from other types of schools, such as alternative or vocational responded.

Table 3 illustrates the response rate by position. More than 36,000 educators responding to the survey identified

themselves as teachers. More than 850 indicated they were principals. Nearly 7,000 respondents indicated that they were Education Support Personnel.

More than seven out of 10 schools (1,050 of 1,445) met or exceeded the 50 percent response rate threshold required to receive an individual school-level data report. All results may be viewed online at [www.tellmaryland.org](http://www.tellmaryland.org).

TABLE 2. 2013 SURVEY RESPONSE RATE BY SCHOOL TYPE

School Type	Headcount	Responded	Percent Responded
Elementary	39,842	24,548	61.6
Middle	19,849	11,415	57.5
High	24,550	13,267	54.0
Other	1,869	1,042	55.8
TOTAL	86,110	50,272	58.4

TABLE 3. 2013 SURVEY RESPONSE RATE BY POSITION

Community Support and Involvement Questions	Frequency
Teacher (including instructional coaches, department heads, vocational, literacy specialist, etc.)	36,434
Principal	863
Assistant Principal	1,057
Other Education Professional (school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, etc.)	3,266
ESP - Educational Support Personnel (instructional or clerical support person)	6,896
Records w/ no defined position.	1,756
Total	48,516*

\*Note. There were 1,756 (3.5%) records with no position defined.

**NTC ADMINISTERED the anonymous survey to all school-based certified educators and designated education support personnel in early 2013.**

## Preliminary Findings

The rates of agreement by item and survey area were reviewed. Preliminary findings identify items across areas with relatively high or low levels of agreement. Items and rates of agreement are reported within select survey areas below.

### *Educators Continue to Report High Agreement that Most School Leadership Conditions Are Present*

As they did in 2011, educators in Maryland continue to agree that school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning (94 percent), and holds teachers to high standards (94 percent) (Table 4). More than eight out of 10 educators report agreement on items related to performance assessment and feedback.

- Eighty-five percent of educators agree that teacher performance is assessed objectively in 2013 compared to 84 percent in 2011.
- About the same proportion (82 percent) report that procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent for both 2013 and 2011.

- Eighty-five percent of participants report that teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching compared to 84 percent from the previous iteration in 2011.

### *Educators Report Higher Agreement on Most Items Related to Managing Student Conduct*

Seven of the eight questions in the area of Managing Student Conduct improved from 2011 to 2013. Consistency of enforcement and support of teachers managing student behavior increased the most between administrations (Table 5).

- More than two-thirds of educators (68 percent) agree that school administrators consistently enforce rules for student conduct compared to 64 percent in 2011.
- Eight out of 10 educators (80 percent) indicate that teachers consistently enforce rules for student conduct compared to 77 percent in 2011.
- More than three quarters of respondents (78 percent) report agreement that school administrators support teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom. This represents a 3-percentage-point increase from 2011.

TABLE 4. SELECT INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES AND SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

Select TELL Maryland School Leadership Questions	Percent Agree		2013-2011
	2013	2011	
The school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning.	94.1	93.2	0.9
Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction.	93.7	92.1	1.6
Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching.	84.9	83.7	1.2
Teacher performance is assessed objectively.	84.5	84.1	0.4
The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent.	82.3	82.2	0.1

TABLE 5. MANAGING STUDENT CONDUCT QUESTIONS

Select TELL Maryland Managing Student Conduct Questions	Percent Agree		2013-2011
	2013	2011	
School administrators consistently enforce rules for student conduct.	67.9	63.6	4.3
School administrators support teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom.	77.6	74.6	3.0
Students at this school follow rules of conduct.	70.2	67.6	2.6
Teachers consistently enforce rules for student conduct.	79.5	76.9	2.6

Educators also report an increase in agreement that students follow rules of conduct (70 percent in 2013 compared to 68 percent in 2011).

*Educator Agreement on All Items Related to Time Decreased*

Across all areas measured, educators agreed the least that teachers have sufficient time to teach, plan, and collaborate. Additionally, rates of agreement declined across all questions associated with time. See Table 6.

- In 2011, 64 percent of educators indicated that teachers have sufficient instructional time to meet the needs of all students compared to 60 percent in 2013. This represents a four percentage point decline between administrations.
- The same four percentage point decline occurs in educator perceptions about class sizes being reasonable so that teachers have the time available to meet the needs of all students (60 percent in 2011 compared to 56 percent in 2013).
- In 2011, 59 percent of educators agree that non-instructional time provided for teachers is sufficient compared to 56 percent in 2013.

TABLE 6. TIME QUESTIONS

Select TELL Maryland Time Questions	Percent Agree		2013-2011
	2013	2011	
Teachers have sufficient instructional time to meet the needs of all students.	59.5	63.5	-4.0
Class sizes are reasonable such that teachers have the time available to meet the needs of all students.	56.0	59.9	-3.9
The non-instructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient.	56.5	58.8	-2.3
Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine paperwork teachers are required to do.	52.7	53.8	-1.1
Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions	63.5	64.5	-1.0
Teachers are protected from duties that interfere with their essential role of educating students.	69.0	69.9	-0.9
Teachers have time available to collaborate with colleagues.	N/A	65.2	N/A

## Education Support Personnel Report More Engagement

Since the previous survey administration, Education Support Personnel (ESPs) report higher rates of agreement on important areas such as decision making and communication with school leadership and colleagues (Table 7).

- About three-quarters of ESPs (76 percent) in 2013 report that there is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in their school compared to 68 percent in 2011.

- Eight out of ten ESPs (80 percent) indicate that their school leadership communicates clear expectations to them compared to 77 percent two years ago.
- Fifty-five percent of ESPs agree that they have an appropriate level of influence on decision making in their school compared to 53 percent in 2011.

TABLE 7. ESP QUESTIONS			
Select TELL Maryland ESP Questions	Percent Agree		2013-2011
	2013	2011	
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in this school.	75.7	68.2	7.5
The school leadership communicates clear expectations to ESPs.	79.9	77.3	2.6
ESPs have an appropriate level of influence on decision making in this school.	55.3	52.9	2.4
ESPs feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them.	72.2	70.3	1.9

**SINCE THE PREVIOUS survey administration, Education Support Personnel (ESPs) report higher rates of agreement on important areas such as decision making and communication with school leadership and colleagues.**

**Eighty percent of ESPs indicate that their school leadership communicates clear expectations to them, compared to 77 percent two years ago.**

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## Summary

Educators continue to report high agreement on items related to school leadership. Additionally, items associated with effectively managing student conduct through consistent rule enforcement and teacher support improved since 2011. However, educators report the least agreement and decreasing agreement with items related to time. Finally, ESPs report increases in agreement for their communication with colleagues and their inclusion in decision making processes.

## Next Steps

To provide support and inform Maryland educators, stakeholders, and policymakers about the results of this survey, a number of resources and reports are being developed, including:

- A series of tools for schools and districts to use in facilitating dialogue on their teaching and learning conditions and how to utilize this as an artifact to inform school improvement planning have been revised and posted.
- Additional analyses and reports examining the connections of teaching and learning conditions with student achievement and teacher retention; validity and reliability of the survey instrument; and a variety of group comparisons (principals and teachers, etc.).
- Plans to include the use of TELL Survey results into eleven regional Educator Effectiveness Academies in the summer of 2013.

All resources and reporting will be made available electronically at [www.tellmaryland.org](http://www.tellmaryland.org).

## Endnotes

- Borman, G. & Dowling, N. (2008). Teacher attrition and retention: A meta-analytic and narrative review of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(3).
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## About the New Teacher Center

New Teacher Center focuses on improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers. NTC partners with states, school districts, and policymakers to design and implement systems that create sustainable, high-quality mentoring and professional development; build leadership capacity; work to enhance teaching conditions; improve retention; and transform schools in vibrant learning communities where all students succeed.



725 Front Street, Suite 400, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831-600-2200 | Fax: 831-427-9017 | [info@newteachercenter.org](mailto:info@newteachercenter.org)  
[www.newteachercenter.org](http://www.newteachercenter.org)