Teaching Conditions in District 180 Priority Schools Compared to Non-District 180 Schools: 2011 and 2013 TELL Survey Results

Executive Summary

This research brief analyzes the results of the 2011 and 2013 Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Survey results for the District 180 Priority Schools (D180) in Kentucky. In 2013, more than 43,700 educators (87 percent) in the state responded to TELL Kentucky with 90 percent of schools meeting the response rate threshold of fifty percent allowing for school-level reporting. Response patterns across participant roles and school types were consistent across administrations. More D180 Cohort 1 and 2 educators responded in 2013 as compared to 2011 and at a comparable rate to the non-D180 educators in 2013.

The results of the 2013 TELL Kentucky Survey in the D180 Priority Schools[1] show marked improvement in the rates of agreement on the survey, most notably the same areas on the survey previously shown to be associated with improved student performance and teacher retention.[2] The findings provide affirmation that the Kentucky Department of Education's efforts in assisting these schools are showing positive results. Highlights of the findings include:

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1. For the purposes of this report, D180 Schools include Cohorts 1 and 2 since these schools received the most funds and have had the most time to implement improvements. D180 Cohort 3 schools are reported in a separate section in the report.

2. See http://2011.tellkentucky.org/sites/default/files/attachments/KY11_Final_Report.pdf

2011 vs. 2013 D180 TELL Results

- D180 school educators report their teaching conditions improved considerably between survey administrations and the change is greater for these schools compared to non-D180 schools.

- D180 schools made substantial progress in the areas of Community Support and Involvement and Managing Student Conduct, which in 2011, the New Teacher Center reported were the areas associated with improved student achievement and teacher retention.

D180 Schools Compared to Non-D180 Schools Statewide in 2013

- In 2013, D180 Schools and non-D180 Schools view their teaching conditions similarly and report the highest agreement for Instructional Practices and Support, School Leadership, and Facilities and Resources. Educators indicate the least agreement with Time. The similarity in reported teaching conditions indicates D180 educators' perceptions improved from 2011.

- In 2011, there are consistent discrepancies between the D180 Schools and the rest of the state, as D180 educators perceived less positive teaching conditions across all areas. By spring 2013, D180 educators report comparable rates of agreement as non-D180 educators across all areas indicating they view their teaching conditions similarly

to how non-D180 educators view their conditions, and in some instances D180 educators are more positive. Additionally, D180 Schools closed the gap and reported higher rates of agreement than non-D180 Schools for the areas of Time, Professional Development, and Instructional Practices and Support. Across other constructs, the difference between the groups was also reduced and is now within five percentage points.

- Since 2011 TELL results were released, KDE has also focused efforts on Instructional Practices and Support. While this construct on the 2013 survey had the highest rate of agreement across the state, it also was the construct with highest agreement in the D180 Schools.

- Cohort 1, having received services for the longest period of time, showed higher rates of agreement than Cohort 2 in all survey areas.

The New Teacher Center recommends the Kentucky Department of Education continue its efforts of analyzing the individual TELL Survey results in each of the D180 Schools as part of the focus on school improvement. Additionally, given improvements in Cohort 1 and 2 schools, the Department should leverage the strategies applied to these schools in the areas of community engagement and student conduct with the Cohort 3 schools. Results for the 2013 TELL Kentucky Survey may be viewed at www.tellkentucky.org.

State Context

This research brief reports data related to several major statewide policy initiatives underway in Kentucky to improve student learning and teaching conditions. The first initiative is part of the state's larger process to revise standards and redesign the accountability and assessment system, as authorized through the landmark legislation passed in early 2009, Senate Bill 1. Part of this legislation prioritized improving persistently low achieving schools through the establishment of the District 180

Priority Schools (D180). The focus on improvement for the District 180 Priority Schools parallels the national priority on improving low performing schools through the United States Department of Education (USDOE) School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) accessed the SIG program as a source of support for the District 180 Priority Schools. The second initiative is part of the state's efforts to improve teaching conditions by implementing the Teaching Conditions Standards adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education in 2011. This work uses survey data from the New Teacher Center (NTC) Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Kentucky Survey to assess the presence of teaching conditions and drive school improvement planning. Several statewide projects advocating the use of TELL data have been implemented and are detailed below.

SIG Program Implementation

In the 2009-2010 academic year, the KDE identified persistently low performing schools for targeted interventions through the SIG program. SIG grants are awarded by the USDOE to state education agencies (SEAs) under Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2002).

The SEAs then award sub-grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) or school districts for the purpose of supporting focused school improvement efforts. In 2009, the Obama administration and U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, prioritized supporting the lowest-achieving schools. Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, the USDOE increased the funds provided to SEAs under section 1003(g). These funds also required SEAs to prioritize LEAs identifying "persistently lowest achieving schools" for improvement through four intervention models:

- The "turnaround model" in which the LEA replaces the principal and rehires no more than 50 percent of the staff, gives the principal greater autonomy, and implements other prescribed and recommended strategies.

- The "restart model" in which the LEA converts or closes and reopens a school under a charter school operator, charter management organization, or education management organization.

- The "school closure model" in which the LEA closes the school and enrolls the students in other schools in the LEA that are higher achieving.

- The "transformation model" in which the LEA replaces the principal (except in specified situations), implements a rigorous staff evaluation and development system, institutes comprehensive instructional reform, increases learning time and applies community-oriented school strategies, and provides greater operational flexibility and support for the school.

Through the SIG program, KDE identified persistently lowest achieving schools to participate as part of the District 180 Priority Schools. Schools then selected which model to implement. All but one school chose the transformation model and the other school selected the turnaround model. Both approaches require substantial restructuring.

Cohort 1 SIG recipients were identified as the highest priority schools and were the first to receive assistance service from KDE July of 2010. Cohort 2 SIG recipients began receiving assistance July, 2011. In July of 2012, Cohort 3 SIG recipients were identified but received significantly reduced funding and support compared to the first two cohorts. Cohort 1 and 2 schools received substantially more funding and have had a longer period to implement restructuring models compared to Cohort 3 schools. Table 1 summarizes SIG implementation information.

Kentucky Teaching Conditions Standards

Based on research from across the nation that continues to show that a school's teaching and learning conditions have an influence on student achievement and teacher retention,[3] a coalition of education stakeholders[4] led by Governor Steve Beshear and the Department of Education Commissioner, Dr. Terry Holliday, partnered with the New Teacher Center (NTC) to create the TELL Kentucky Survey. The TELL Kentucky Survey assesses whether critical teaching and learning conditions are present in schools across the state. In March of 2011, the initial TELL Kentucky Survey was administered to all Kentucky certified educators employed in the state's 174 school districts.

Using data from the survey for school improvement became a focus of coalition partners. Since the release of the 2011 TELL Kentucky Survey results, the KDE and each of the TELL Kentucky Partners engaged in extensive outreach with stakeholders across the Commonwealth. The goals of outreach efforts were to provide guidance in how to use the TELL data for improvement planning.

Based on the 2011 TELL Kentucky Survey results, the Kentucky Board of Education adopted the Kentucky Teaching Conditions Standards which identify specific components of each condition and provide a continuum for assessing progress. Additionally, this work resulted in the following initiatives:

- The new Kentucky Professional Growth and Effectiveness System incorporates the use of the TELL data as a required component of the evaluation tool being developed to assess administrator effectiveness.

3. See endnote 1.

4. See endnote 2.

TABLE 1. SIG IMPLEMENTATION DATA				
Cohort	Number of Schools	Start Date	End Date	Amount
1	10	July 2010	August 2013	$15 million - $5 million for 3 years
2	12	July 2011	August 2014	$22 million - $8 million for Year 1 & 2; $6 million Year 3
3	19	July 2012	August 2013	$950,000 - 1 year only

- The Consolidated District Improvement Plan (CDIP) and the Consolidated School Improvement Plans (CSIP) require the use of the TELL data. The Kentucky Learning Forward initiative relies on 2011 TELL data when examining policy recommendations impacting the use of teachers' time and continued opportunities for teachers to collaborate.

- The Kentucky Department of Education asked every KDE office to incorporate the use of the 2011 TELL data into their discussions with respective stakeholder groups. All field staff, including technology partners, used the TELL data as a basis for conversation around how to improve teaching and learning conditions.

As a key component to school improvement efforts, District 180 Schools also participate in the TELL Survey and utilize the results for school improvement planning.

Summary: The Kentucky Senate Bill 1, the USDOE SIG program, the Kentucky Teaching Conditions Standards, and the TELL Survey intersect to promote improvements in student performance in the lowest performing schools. Cohort 1 and 2 schools receiving SIG funds, received substantially more funds and have had a longer time to implement improvements compared to Cohort 3 schools receiving SIG funds.

TELL Kentucky Survey Findings

This report examines the D180 Priority Schools which received SIG funding to assess how teaching conditions differ compared to non-D180 schools in Kentucky. For the purposes of this report District 180 Schools (D180 Schools) represents Cohorts 1 and 2 schools receiving SIG funds combined unless otherwise noted. Non-D180 schools represent schools not receiving SIG funds. D180 Cohort 3 schools are discussed in a separate section of this report.

About the Survey

The TELL Kentucky Survey is a statistically valid and reliable instrument that assesses eight research-based teaching and learning conditions.[5] 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. See Table 2 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

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5. 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.

TABLE 2.   TELL KENTUCKY SURVEY AREAS

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

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

Professional Development—Availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching

Instructional Practices and Support—Data and support available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning

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.

Response Rates

Response rates are provided for the state overall, by educator role, and by school type to show patterns in participation. Additional response rate details are provided specifically for

D180 and non-D180 schools. In 2011, more than 80 percent of Kentucky educators (42,025) shared their perceptions of their teaching conditions through the TELL Kentucky Survey. Over 92 percent of traditional public schools met the 50 percent response rate threshold required to receive an individual school-level data report. In 2013, participation increased. Over 43,700 educators (87 percent) in the state responded. Nearly 90 percent of schools met the response rate threshold. See Figure 1.

FIGURE 1.   RESPONSE RATE BY YEAR
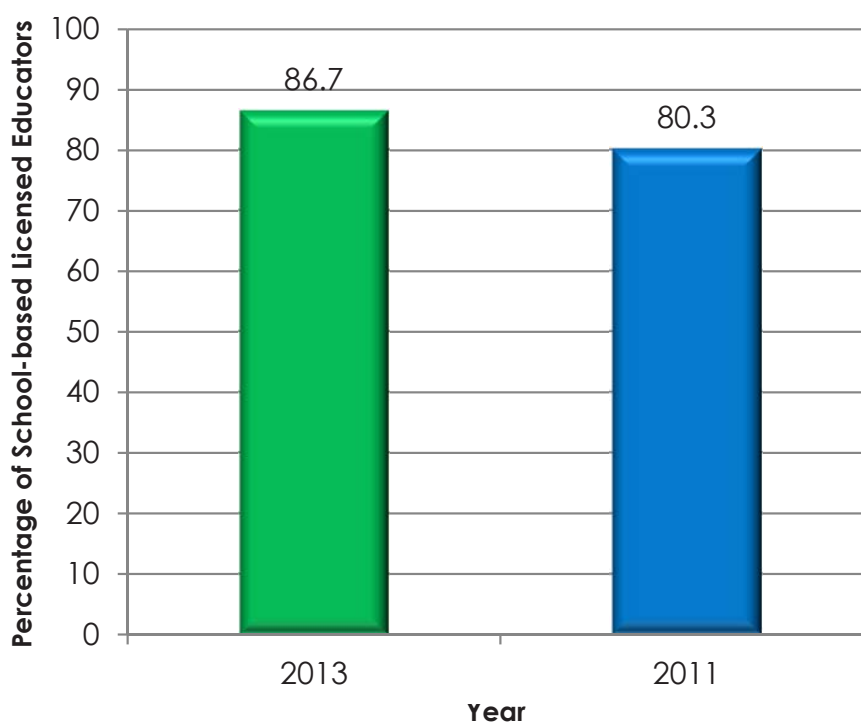
IN 2013, PARTICIPATION *in the TELL Kentucky Survey increased from 2011 levels. More than 43,700 educators (87 percent) in the state responded. Nearly 90 percent of schools met the response rate threshold.*

TELL Kentucky Survey respondent roles are similar across administrations. As Table 3 shows, about 88 percent of participants are teachers, about five percent are administrators, and about seven percent are other licensed educators, such as librarians and school psychologists.

Response rates vary by school type. More educators across elementary, middle, and high schools participated in 2013 as compared to 2011. As Table 4 demonstrates, elementary school educators' participation increased four percentage points, middle school educators increased seven percentage points, and high school educator participation increased 12 percentage points between 2011 and 2013.

As Table 5 shows, over 41,000 non-D180 school educators (87 percent) and 1,071 Cohort 1 and 2 D180 educators (86 percent) responded in 2013. In 2011, over 40,000 non-D180 educators (81 percent) and 978 Cohort 1 and 2 D180 educators (73 percent) participated. In 2011, 81 percent of non-D180 school educators responded and 73 percent (978) of D180 educators responded. Comparatively, in 2011, 83 percent of Cohort 1 responded and 77 percent responded in 2013. For Cohort 2, 68 percent responded in 2011 and 91 responded in 2013. For Cohort 3 schools, 76 percent participated in 2011 and 95 percent participated in 2013.

TABLE 3. RESPONDENTS BY ROLE BY YEAR		
Respondents	**2013**	**2011**
Teachers	88.3%	88.9%
Principals	2.5%	2.5%
Assistant Principals	2.0%	1.8%
Other*	7.1%	6.8%
Total Response Rate	43,761 (86.7%)	42,025 (80.3%)

* Other includes school counselors, school psychologists, social workers, etc.

TABLE 4. RESPONSE RATE BY SCHOOL TYPE BY YEAR						
	2013			**2011**		
School Type	**Headcount**	**Responded**	**% Responded**	**Headcount**	**Responded**	**% Responded**
Elementary	25,407	22,880	90.1	25,622	22,129	86.4
Middle	9,548	8,189	85.8	10,082	8,071	80.1
High	13,826	11,408	82.5	14,713	10,341	70.3
Other	1,719	1,284	74.7	1,932	1,484	76.8

TABLE 5. RESPONSE RATE BY COHORT AND NON-D180 CLASSIFICATION BY YEAR						
	2013			**2011**		
Comparison	**Headcount**	**Responded**	**% Responded**	**Headcount**	**Responded**	**% Responded**
Non-D180	48,240	41,726	86.5	49,828	40,147	80.6
Cohort 1	410	317	77.3	469	388	82.7
Cohort 2	833	754	90.5	865	590	68.2
Cohort 3	1,013	962	95.0	1,187	900	75.8

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Summary: The response rate increased between survey administrations for the state as a whole. Response patterns across participant roles and school types were consistent across administrations. More D180 educators responded in 2013 as compared to 2011 and at a comparable rate to the non-D180 educators in 2013.

## District 180 Priority Schools Compared to Non-D180 Schools

Finding: In 2013, D180 schools and non-D180 schools view their teaching conditions similarly and report the highest agreement for Instructional Practices and Support, School Leadership, and Facilities and Resources. Educators indicate the least agreement with Time. The similarity in reported teaching conditions indicates D180 educators' perceptions improved from 2011.

This section compares the TELL 2011 and TELL 2013 survey results of D180 schools, to the state survey results for non-D180 schools for the same time points. By the time of the TELL Kentucky Survey administration in the spring of 2013, Cohort 1 schools had received over two and a half years of targeted support and Cohort 2 schools had received about 20 months of targeted support.

Additionally, Cohort 3 D180 TELL survey results are compared to state results for non-D180 schools for 2013. Cohort 3 results are analyzed separately because the Cohort 3 schools have had less than a full year of implementation and also fewer funds compared to Cohort 1 and 2 schools. In analyzing the data between groups and between time points, there are many approaches to presenting the comparisons. This brief will first show how D180 and non-D180 schools compare across constructs in 2013 and then in 2011, reporting highest rated constructs and lowest rated constructs at each time point to demonstrate how educators view teaching conditions overall within each context. Then the change between groups across constructs will be presented to show where the most perceived improvements have been made in teaching conditions between points in time for each group.

Figure 2 provides comparisons between groups of rates of agreement by year. The highest rated constructs for both groups of schools in 2013 are Instructional Practices and Support (non-D180 86 percent and D180 87 percent) followed by School Leadership and Facilities and Resources. Both non-D180 and D180 educators report 85 percent agreement for the area of School Leadership and 82 percent agreement for the area of Facilities and Resources.

FIGURE 2. RATES OF AGREEMENT BY YEAR—D180 SCHOOLS AND NON-D180 SCHOOLS
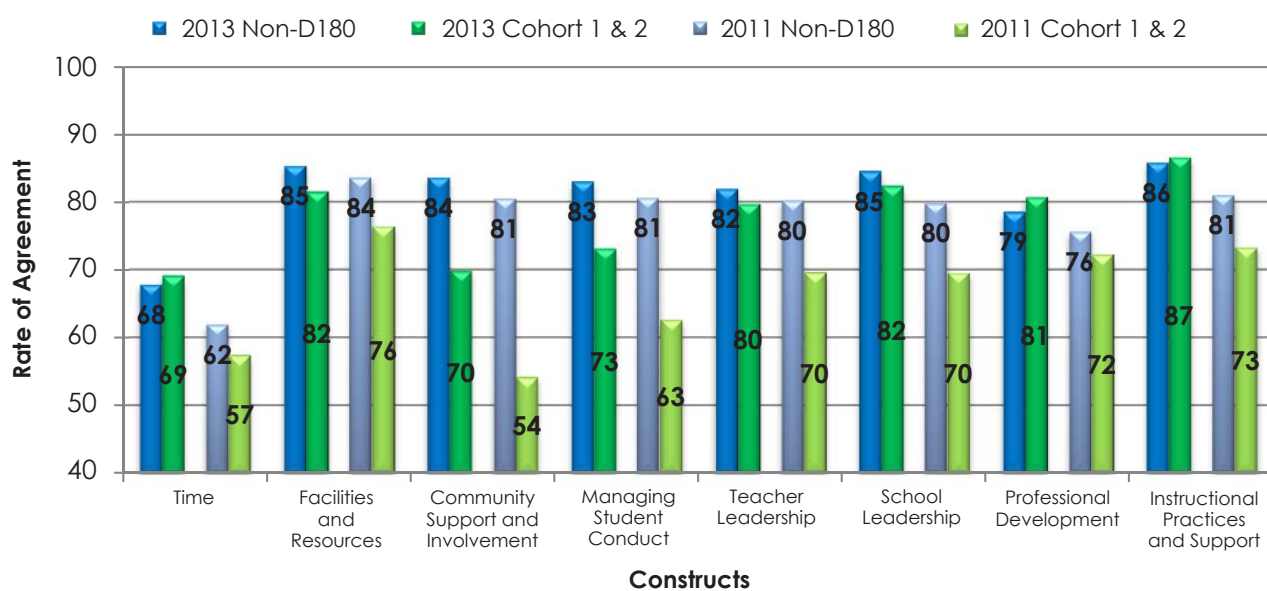
In 2011, both non-D180 and D180 rate the highest construct as Facilities and Resources (84 percent for non-D180 and 76 percent for D180). Non-D180 educators rate Community Support and Involvement and Managing Student conduct the next highest constructs with 81 percent agreement each. D180 educators reported Instructional Practices and Support as the next highest construct (73 percent rate of agreement).

Educators report the lowest rates of agreement for the Time construct in 2013. Both groups are under 70 percent agreement. In 2011, the non-D180 group indicate a 62 percent rate of agreement for the Time construct which is the lowest rated construct and the D180 educators report the lowest rate of agreement for the construct of Community Support and Involvement (54 percent) followed by the Time construct (57 percent).

It should be noted that in 2011 no construct received above an 80 percent rate of agreement from D180 educators while non-D180 educators report agreement rates at or above 80 percent for six of the eight constructs. Additionally, D180

educators' rates of agreement are lower on every construct and in some instances, substantially lower. For example, the gap between rates of agreement for the Community Support and Involvement construct is 27 percentage points (81 percent agreement for non-D180 educators and 54 percent agreement for D180 educators) and 18 percentage points for Managing Student Conduct (81 percent agreement for non-D180 educators and 63 percent agreement for D180 educators).

Finding: D180 Cohort 1 schools, having received services for the longest period of time, showed higher rates of agreement than D180 Cohort 2 schools in all survey areas.

Across all survey areas in 2013, Cohort 1 rates of agreement are higher than Cohort 2 rates of agreement indicating that Cohort 1 educators view their teaching conditions more positively than Cohort 2 educators. Additionally, across both groups, educators perceive Instructional Practices and Support as the most positive area. Both groups also view the area of Time as the least positive and report similar rates of agreement for this area, although Cohort 1 is slightly higher. See Figure 3.

FIGURE 3.   D180 COHORT 1 COMPARED TO COHORT 2 2013 RATES OF AGREEMENT
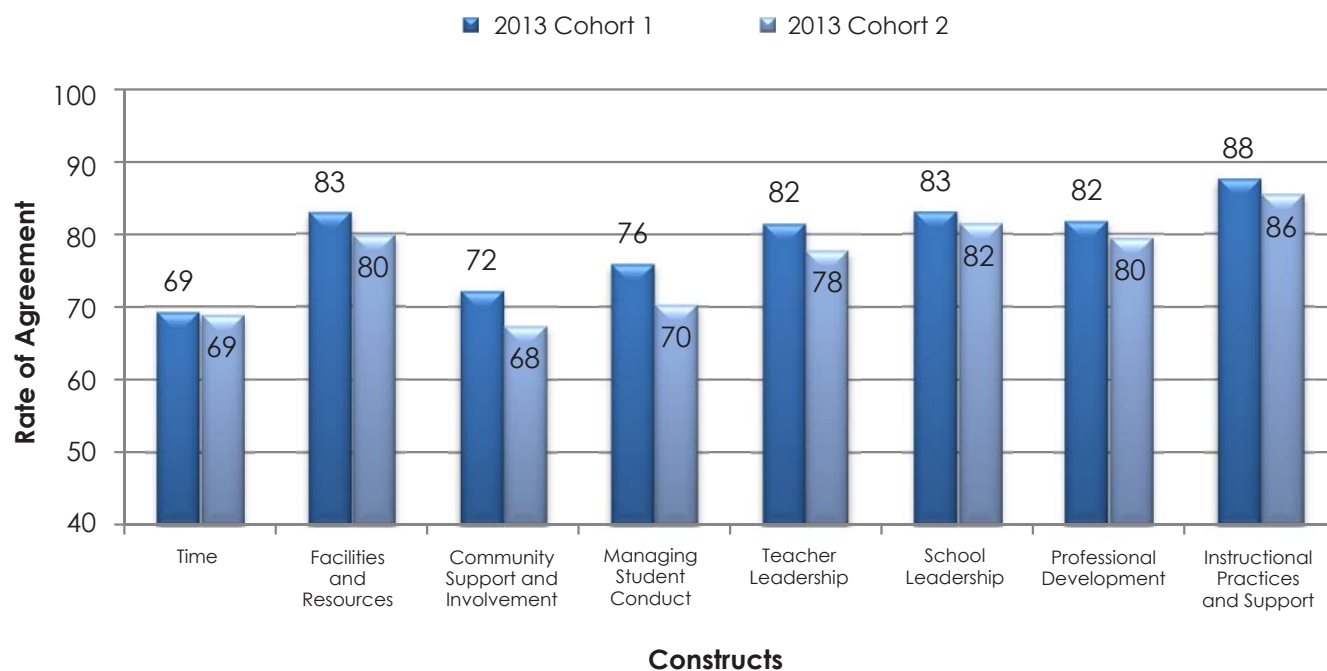
Summary: The consistent discrepancies between the groups in spring of 2011, indicate that D180 educators perceive less positive teaching conditions across all areas compared to non-D180 educators perceptions. By spring 2013, D180 educators report comparable rates of agreement as non-D180 educators across constructs indicating they view their teaching conditions similar to how non-D180 educators view their conditions, and in some instances D180 educators are more positive. Additionally, both groups view Instructional Practices and Support, School Leadership, and Facilities and Resources as overall strengths compared to the other areas. Finally, the area of Time is still viewed by both groups as a challenge.

Finding: D180 school educators report their teaching conditions improved considerably between survey administrations and the change is greater for these schools compared to non-D180 schools. D180 schools made substantial progress in the areas of Community Support and Involvement and Managing Student Conduct.

The next section of this brief highlights the change within and between groups as a way to formatively assess the association between D180 support and perceived changes in teaching conditions.

Figure 4 shows the percentage point difference between non-D180 and D180 schools for both survey administrations to demonstrate in which areas the most perceived improvement in teaching conditions occurred. TELL results indicate that both D180 and non-D180 schools increased the average rate of agreement across all constructs between 2011 and 2013. However, D180 rates of agreement increased more than the non-D180 schools.

In 2011, the largest gaps between non-D180 and D180 schools were in the areas of Community Support and Involvement (26 percentage point difference) and Managing Student Conduct (18 percentage point difference). Results from the 2013 survey indicate each of these gaps is reduced by approximately 50 percent. While these two areas still demonstrate the largest differences between the groups, the differences are much smaller.

Additionally, D180 schools closed the gap and reported higher rates of agreement than non-D180 schools for the areas of Time, Professional Development, and Instructional Practices and Support. Across other constructs, the difference between the groups is now within five percentage points. In 2011, the average gap across all survey areas between the groups was 11 percentage points, now the average gap across all survey areas is four percentage points, a reduction of 32 percent.

FIGURE 4.   PERCENTAGE POINT DIFFERENCES BY YEAR—D180 SCHOOLS AND NON-D180 SCHOOLS
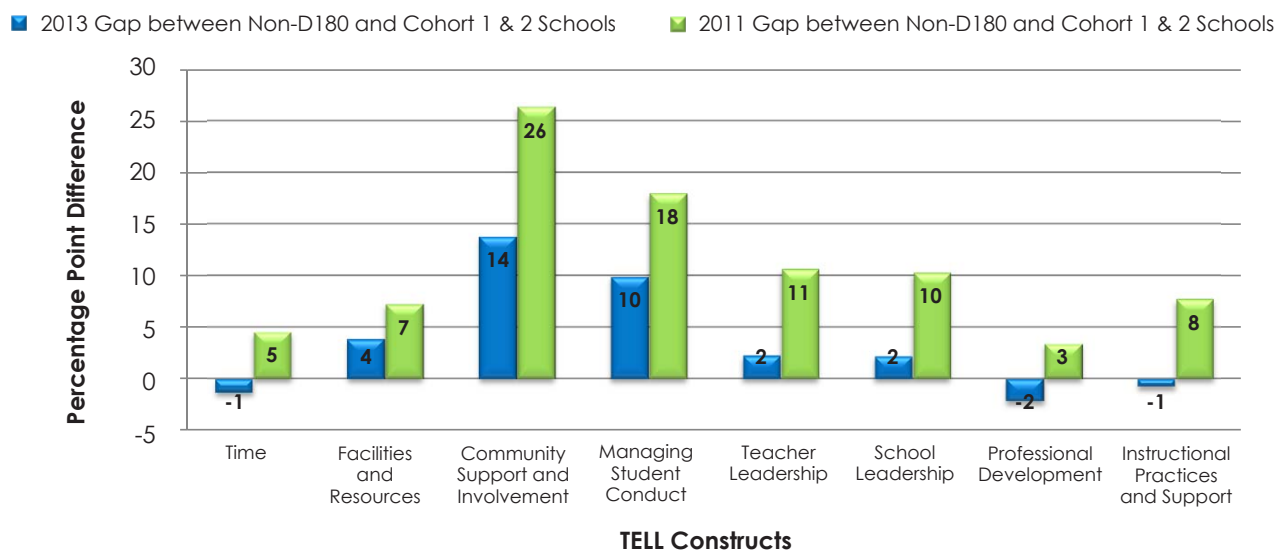
Summary: After the 2011 survey administration, Community Support and Involvement and Managing Student Conduct were identified as areas of focus for D180 schools due to the gap between D180 schools and non-D180 schools. Data from the 2013 survey show substantial progress has been made in these two areas specifically. While gaps remain, the gaps were reduced by approximately 50 percent from 2011.

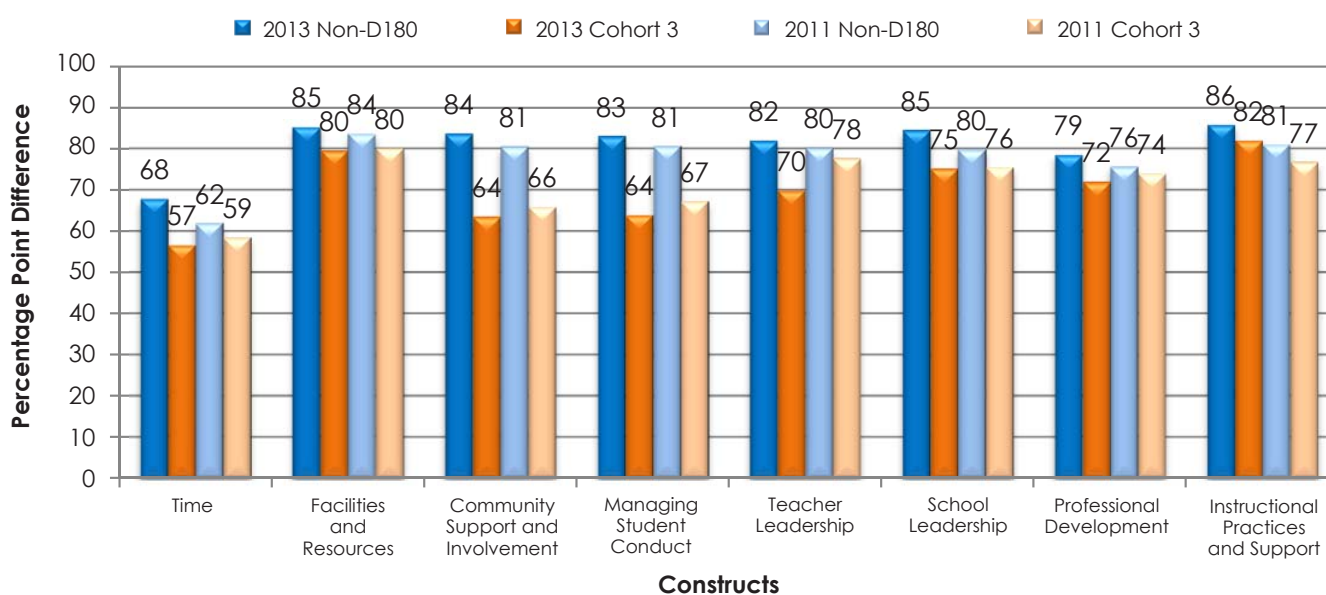## D180 Cohort 3 Schools Compared to Non-D180 Schools

Finding: D180 Cohort 3 schools' rates of agreement declined between survey administrations on six of eight survey areas. The greatest areas of discrepancy between D180 schools and non-D180 schools were in the areas of Community Support and Involvement and Managing Student Conduct.

As stated, D180 Cohort 3 schools did not receive District 180 Priority Schools status and support until July, 2012 and these schools received substantially fewer funds than Cohort 1 and 2 schools. Given that at the time of the 2011 TELL Kentucky Survey, D180 Cohort 3 schools had not yet been identified for support and at the time of the 2013 TELL Kentucky Survey, these schools had been receiving targeted support for less than

a year, the TELL data reported for D180 Cohort 3 schools represents pre-D180 implementation at the 2011 survey point and early D180 implementation at the 2013 survey point.

Figure 5 demonstrates that non-D180 school educators reported higher rates of agreement across all areas both years compared to D180 Cohort 3 educators. The rate of agreement for educators in non-D180 schools increased for every survey area between 2011 and 2013. However, rates of agreement for D180 Cohort 3 educators decreased for six out of the eight survey areas. Facilities and Resources stayed the same with 80 percent agreement each time and Instructional Practices and Support was the only survey area that increased from 77 percent agreement in 2011 to 82 percent agreement in 2013. It should be noted that in 2011 Teacher Leadership was the second highest rated construct (78 percent) and declined the most in 2013 (70 percent) for D180 Cohort 3 educators. Across all survey areas, the difference between non-D180 and D180 Cohort 3 schools increased, meaning there is a larger gap between these groups of educators' perceptions of teaching conditions in 2013 than there was in 2011. D180 educators largely view their teaching conditions as declining while non-D180 school educators view their conditions as improving.

FIGURE 5. RATES OF AGREEMENT BY YEAR—D180 COHORT 3 SCHOOLS AND NON-D180 SCHOOLS

In summary, Figure 6 shows that the D180 Cohorts with the most implementation time have shown the most improvement in perceived teaching conditions. Additionally, while overall rates of agreement on most survey areas are lower for D180 schools compared to non-D180 schools, the rates of agreement in these D180 schools increased more than non-D180 schools between survey administrations, meaning D180 schools are making progress quickly. D180 Cohort 3 schools have received less support and fewer funds than Cohorts 1 and 2. Teaching conditions for Cohort 3 schools were rated lower than non-D180 and Cohort 1 and 2 schools. Across the three Cohorts, educators' perceptions of Community Support and Involvement and Managing Student Conduct still lagged those of non-D180 educators.

Over all, Cohort 1 and 2 and non-D180 educators perceive their teaching conditions are similar with the exception of two areas, community involvement and student conduct. However, Cohort 3 participants report much less positive conditions compared to both Cohort 1 and 2 and non-D180 educators.

The New Teacher Center recommends the Kentucky Department of Education continue its efforts of analyzing the individual TELL Survey results in each of the D180 Schools as part of the focus on school improvement efforts and strategies. Additionally, given improvements in Cohort 1 and 2 schools, the Department should consider leveraging the strategies applied to these schools in the areas of community engagement and student conduct with the Cohort 3 schools as appropriate given the limited funding. Results for the 2013 TELL Kentucky Survey may be viewed at www.tellkentucky.org.

FIGURE 6. COMPOSITE RATES OF AGREEMENT BY GROUP AND IMPLEMENTATION TIME
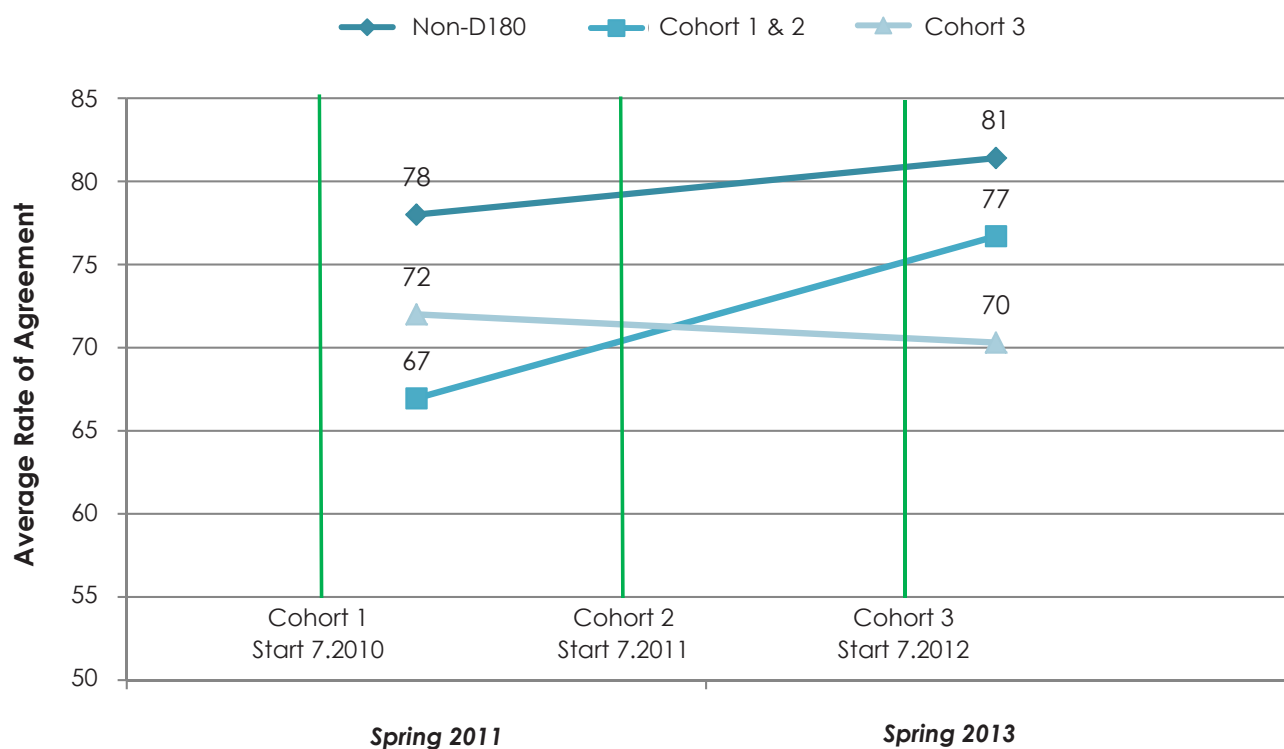
Endnotes

1. References for the association between teaching conditions and student learning and teacher retention.

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2. The coalition of education stakeholders includes Governor Beshear, Commissioner Holliday, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, the Kentucky School Boards Association, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, the Kentucky Education Association, The Education Professional Standards Board, the Kentucky Chamber, the Kentucky Association of School Councils, the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, TELL Kentucky, and the Kentucky PTA.

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.

New Teacher Center

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