

2026 Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Employee Survey Results & Pulse Check Survey Update

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About the Survey

Survey Purpose & Structure

- Conducted to provide insight and feedback from employees on KDE's leadership, operations and work environment. Deployed to employees during June 2026.
- Captured respondent office and division, with perspectives gathered across 5 domains: **Leadership, Communication, Skills & Expertise, Culture & Climate and Operations**. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements in these domains.
- Included an open-ended question in each domain, plus a general comment field, analyzed for sentiment and recurring themes. **All responses were confidential and are reported in aggregate form only.**



Survey Snapshot

- Administration Window: **6/1/2026 – 6/30/2026**
(30 days open)
- Total Valid Respondents: **345**
- **40** Survey Items
- **6** Open-Ended Response Opportunities

Key Survey Insights

- Survey results are on track with projected 2029 targets per the KDE Strategic Plan.
- All survey domains have an overall agreement rate of 82% or better indicating widespread positive sentiment across the agency.
- Agreement rates remained relatively steady across the survey compared to 2025 results. Declines were largest in the Leadership and Culture & Climate domains.
- Survey participation declined year-over-year by 24%, representing 108 fewer respondents.
- Notable domain agreement declines and those survey items below 80% agreement across domains and offices have been identified and will be addressed by leadership.

Employee Survey Results

2026 Employee Survey Results Dashboard



Strategic Plan Updates

- **Updates based on the Spring Employee Survey Results**
 - Process Management Goal and Key Performance Indicators
 - Leadership Key Performance Indicators
- **Updates based on the 2026 Spring/Summer Pulse Check Results**
 - Customer Satisfaction Key Performance Indicators

[KDE Strategic Dashboard Link](#)



Open-Ended Responses

- Responses were reviewed and coded by sentiment (positive, negative, mixed, or uninformative) and by theme.
- Of the 469 responses submitted, 158 were classified as uninformative (N/A entries, statements of no comment, etc.) and excluded from thematic analysis. 311 comments were substantive and included in analysis.
- In order to be considered a theme, at least 15% of comments had to discuss that topic.

Open-Ended Responses Themes

- Four themes emerged from the open-ended responses:
 - Positive Leadership and Supervisor Support
 - Positive Agency Culture
 - Process, Documentation and Operational Challenges
 - Leadership Challenges

Positive Leadership and Supervisor Support

Employees consistently describe their direct supervisors and office-level leadership as supportive, trustworthy, and empowering. Over half of all substantive Leadership comments praised a specific leader or team by name.

- Staff feel trusted to do their jobs and describe leadership as approachable and communicative.
- Several individual leaders are named directly and credited with strong, values-driven leadership.

Leadership Challenges

A subset of employees describe specific leadership practices they experience as inconsistent, unsupportive, or difficult to raise concerns about.

- Concerns center on inconsistency in expectations, limited responsiveness to concerns raised, and uneven treatment among staff.
- Severity varies. In a smaller number of cases, employees describe more serious and sustained impact, including effects on wellbeing.
- Issues are more prevalent in some offices than others, though the underlying concerns appear across multiple parts of the agency.

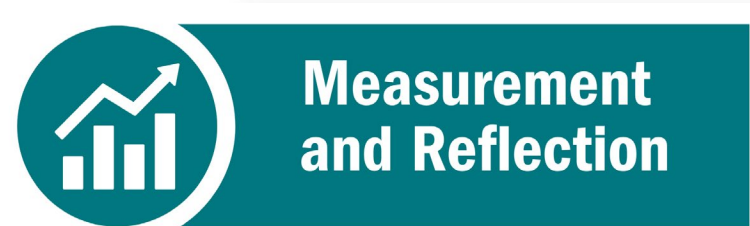
Positive Agency Culture

Employees describe KDE as a genuinely good place to work, with strong teamwork and colleagues who care about each other and the mission.

- "Great place to work" and similar sentiment appears repeatedly across the survey.
- Strength is attributed to colleagues and team environment.
- Holds steady across offices, including several with lower quantitative agreement scores.

Process, Documentation and Operational Challenges

Employees identified opportunities to streamline internal processes, documentation, and procedural review.



Next Steps



**Measurement
and Reflection**



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Questions or Comments?



**Measurement
and Reflection**



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