

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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# Supporting school improvement: Using the Tell Them From Me student, parent and teacher surveys

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation



## Introduction

The Tell Them From Me<sup>1</sup> (TTFM) student, parent and teacher surveys have been used in NSW public schools since 2013. They provide data on a range of aspects of school life, practices and procedures from the perspectives of students, parents and teachers. This data provides valuable insights that can inform school planning and decision-making.

## What questions do the Tell Them From Me surveys ask?

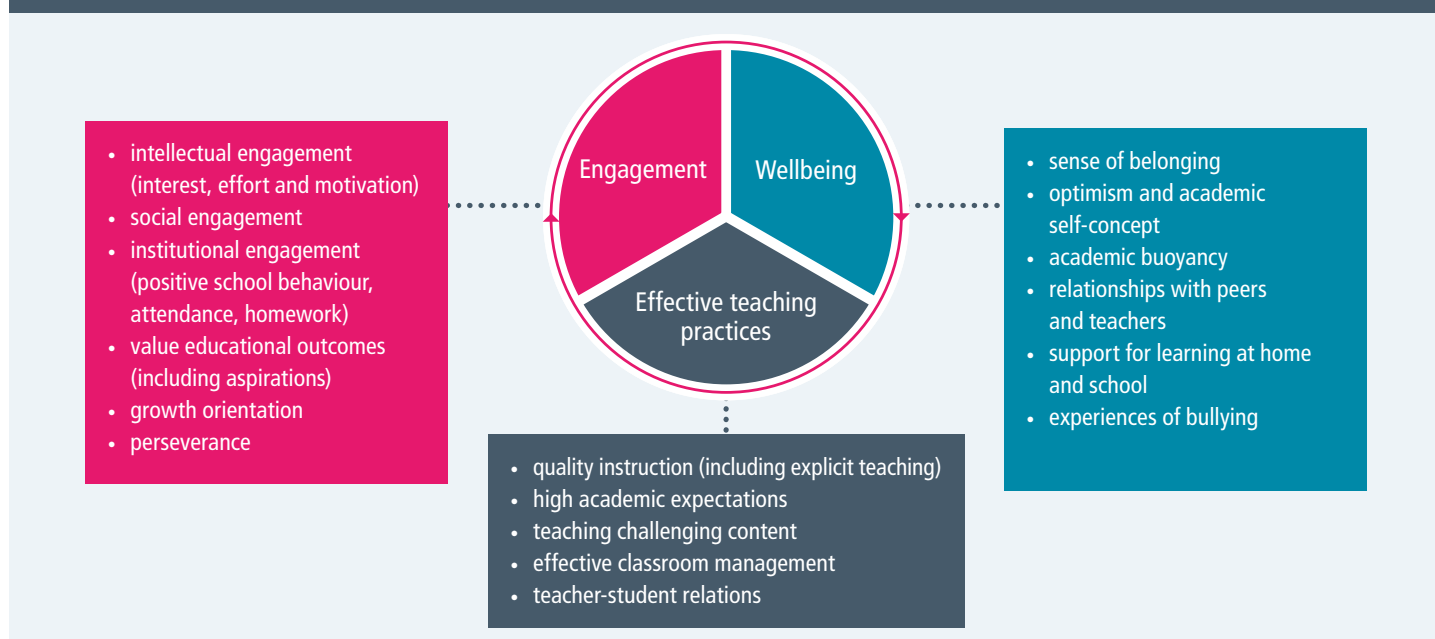
The TTFM student, parent and teachers surveys are designed to capture students' wellbeing and engagement at school, as well as a range of experiences and attitudes of the school community toward school practices and procedures.

The TTFM student survey includes measures of engagement, wellbeing and classroom experiences, reflecting effective teaching practices. Surveys are conducted in March-April and September-October in order to capture students' experiences across the school year. Students complete the survey online, during class time.

In Term 3, schools are able to survey their wider community through the TTFM parent and teacher surveys. These surveys capture opinions about the culture of a school, including how welcoming and supportive the school is. They also provide data on the practices that parents and teachers are employing to support students at home and in the classroom. Schools can ask custom questions in order to obtain feedback from their community on specific initiatives or directions that reflect current school priorities. The parent survey can be completed on a range of portable online devices in over 20 community languages.

TTFM parent survey		
Parents feel welcome	Parents are informed	Parents support learning at home
School supports positive behaviour	School supports learning	Safe school
Time spent on homework	Inclusion at school	Parent participation at school
TTFM teacher survey		
Leadership	Collaboration	Learning culture
Data informs practice	Teaching strategies	Technology
Inclusive school	Parent involvement	

## TTFM student survey



<sup>1</sup> Tell Them From Me is provided by, and is the intellectual property of The Learning Bar.

## What is the evidence base behind the surveys?

The TTFM student, parent and teacher surveys include measures that are aligned to practices that are known to work best to support student learning, including CESE's research on What Works Best to help improve student performance<sup>2</sup>. Through TTFM, schools have access to reliable, timely and actionable data that align to each of the 8 themes in What works best.

Schools are able to use TTFM to measure and monitor the extent to which these effective teaching practices are in evidence in their classrooms and across the school. Analysis of this data will highlight areas of strength and improvement to ensure that all students are best supported to succeed in their learning.



<sup>2</sup> [www.cese.nsw.gov.au/publications-filter/what-works-best-2020-update](http://www.cese.nsw.gov.au/publications-filter/what-works-best-2020-update)

## How do TTFM measures of wellbeing, engagement and effective teaching practices drive student outcomes?

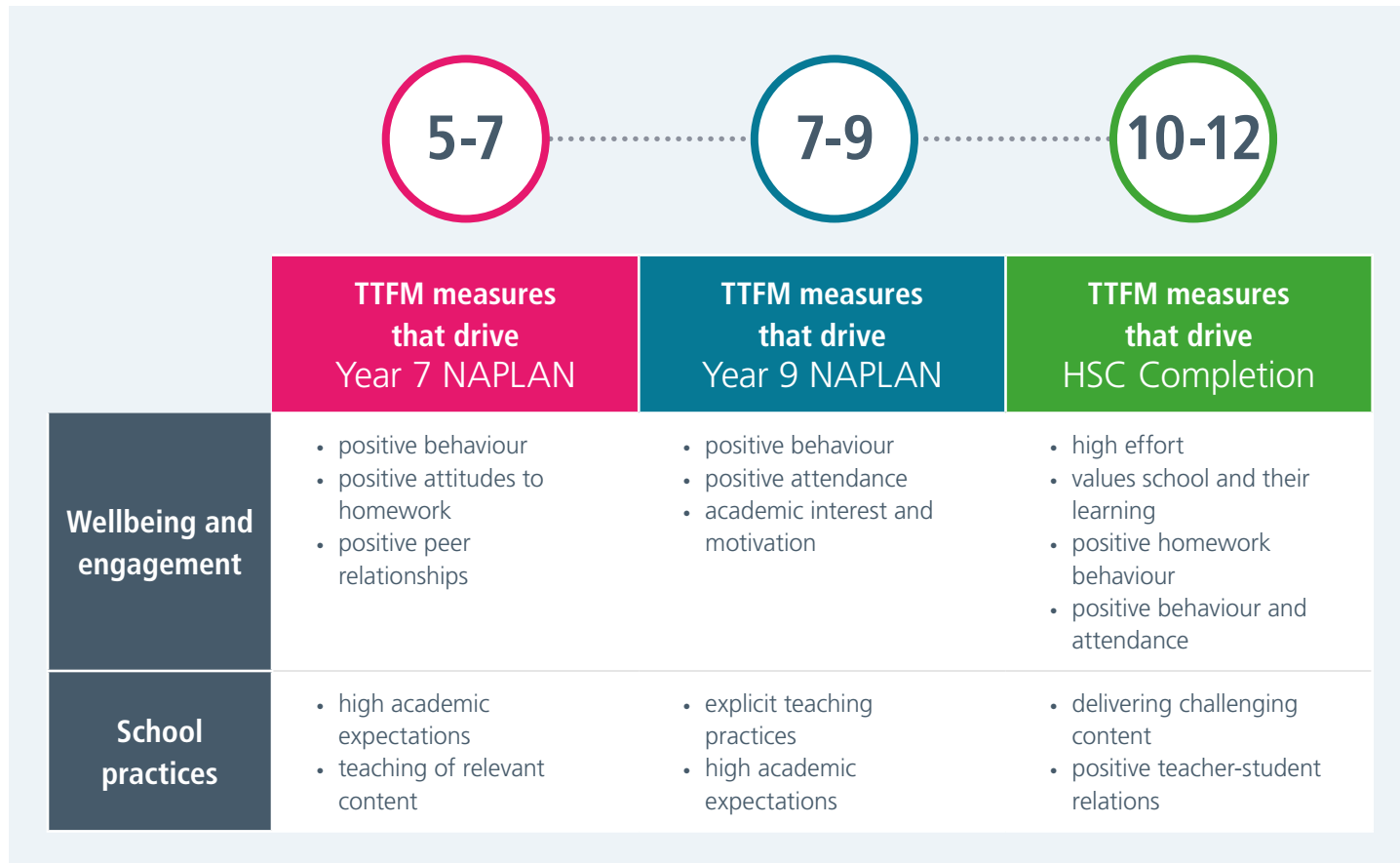
CESE's research and case studies have highlighted a number of important findings that have implications for teaching and learning in schools. Key findings include:

- Teachers' high expectations have a positive impact on student achievement. High expectations also improve students' interest and motivation, positive behaviour and attendance, each of which also impact achievement.
- Student learning is improved when lessons are well-organised and provide opportunities for students to ask about, and demonstrate their understanding of, difficult concepts.
- School practices in Year 6, including positive teacher-student relationships and participation in sport and extracurricular activity, help to support students as they transition to high school.
- Positive behaviour and attendance, as well as high levels of academic challenge and effort, increase the chances that a student will finish school.
- Students' perception of the support that they receive from their teachers begins to decline in late primary school, only increasing once more as students enter their senior years of secondary school.

- Classroom factors, such as positive behaviour and teachers' high academic expectations, support learning at all stages of schooling from Years 5 to 12. Other specific drivers of student outcomes are significant at different times as children proceed through the school years.

Understanding these drivers of student outcomes helps us to provide differentiated support for students to ensure that they are known, valued and cared for and are able to work towards their potential.

All of the findings from CESE's published TTFM research can be found at [www.cese.nsw.gov.au/publications](http://www.cese.nsw.gov.au/publications).



## How does TTFM support the department's priority that every student is known, valued and cared for in every public school?

The department's Strategic Plan includes a set of performance measures to support the goal that every student is known, valued and cared for in every public school. These draw on the TTFM measures of:

- positive sense of belonging
- high advocacy at school (support from teachers)
- high academic expectations for success.

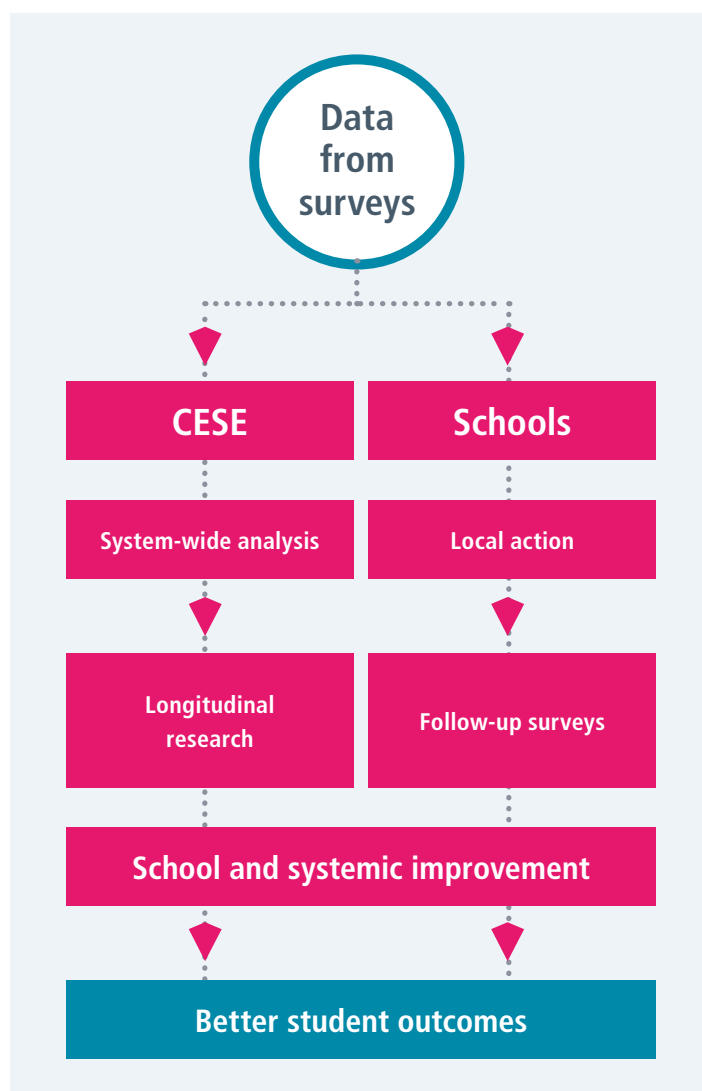
CESE's TTFM research has helped to inform and support the department's efforts to ensure that every student is known, valued and cared for. Our research shows that students' wellbeing and engagement at school, and the teaching and learning environments that they experience, are important to their learning and success.



## How are the TTFM surveys used?

TTFM survey results can be used locally at schools to help inform school planning and decision-making. Data can be triangulated to compare the opinions and experiences of students, parents and teachers at school. School leaders are then able to identify areas for improvement in school practices and make informed planning and programming decisions. Ongoing participation in the surveys helps schools to monitor the success of their programs, ensuring that school initiatives are making a difference to improve wellbeing, engagement and learning outcomes for their students. Many TTFM measures closely align with elements of the School Excellence Framework and schools can draw upon their data as valuable evidence to demonstrate their progress and successes.

At the same time, system-wide analysis of survey data from TTFM helps drive improvement for all public schools. This analysis provides direction for the department in developing policies and initiatives for school improvement, and is shared with schools to help inform the work of teachers and school leaders and promote evidence-based practices that make a difference in improving student outcomes. Case studies, reflection guides and professional learning help schools to engage with these findings and to plan for school improvement accordingly.



## How are survey results accessed and analysed?

Within a week of completing their survey, schools are able to access their TTFM results through a reporting platform provided by The Learning Bar, who administers the surveys.

Through the portal, school leaders can analyse school data using interactive charts and trend reports. This allows for the identification of areas for targeted improvement and provides schools with a tool for monitoring the effectiveness of their programs and initiatives.

In addition to the TTFM portal, the department provides access to selected TTFM measures from the student survey through Scout. These reports allow schools to consider the extent to which their students are known, valued and cared for, using the sense of belonging, high expectations and advocacy at school measures from the TTFM student survey.

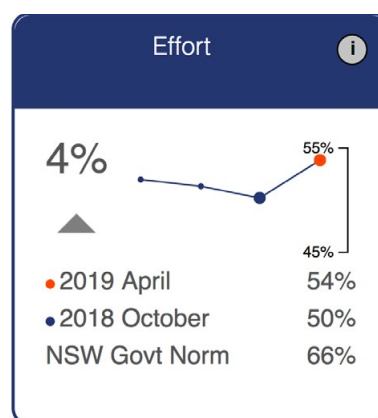
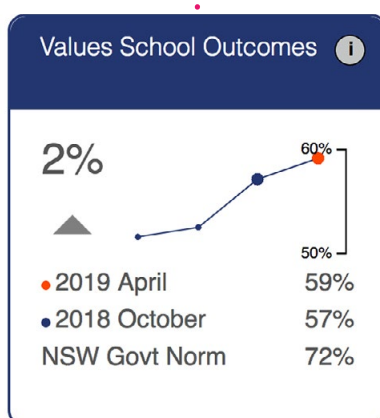
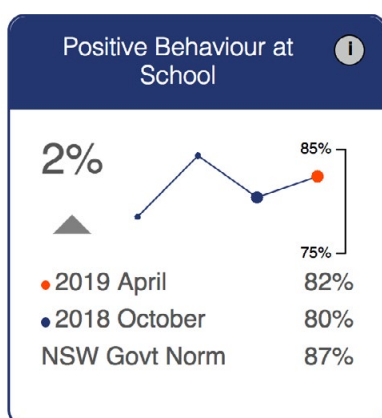
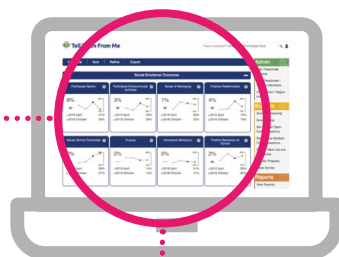
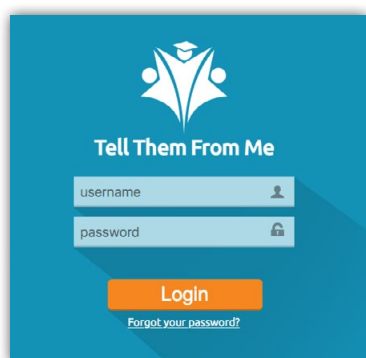
## What support is available for school staff?

CESE's research is accompanied by professional learning reflection guides to support school staff in understanding the findings and their implications for teaching and learning practices. Case studies are published to highlight the practices that effective schools employ to promote students' engagement and wellbeing at school.

Participating schools have access to telephone and email support from the survey provider, The Learning Bar, who also deliver online training during survey periods.

To support schools in understanding and making the most of their TTFM data, CESE also provides in-school training for school executive staff. These workshops help school leaders to use their data to identify priority areas for programs and initiatives designed to promote student engagement and wellbeing and to monitor the effectiveness of these programs as they are implemented.

For more information, contact CESE's TTFM team at [ttfm@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ttfm@det.nsw.edu.au).

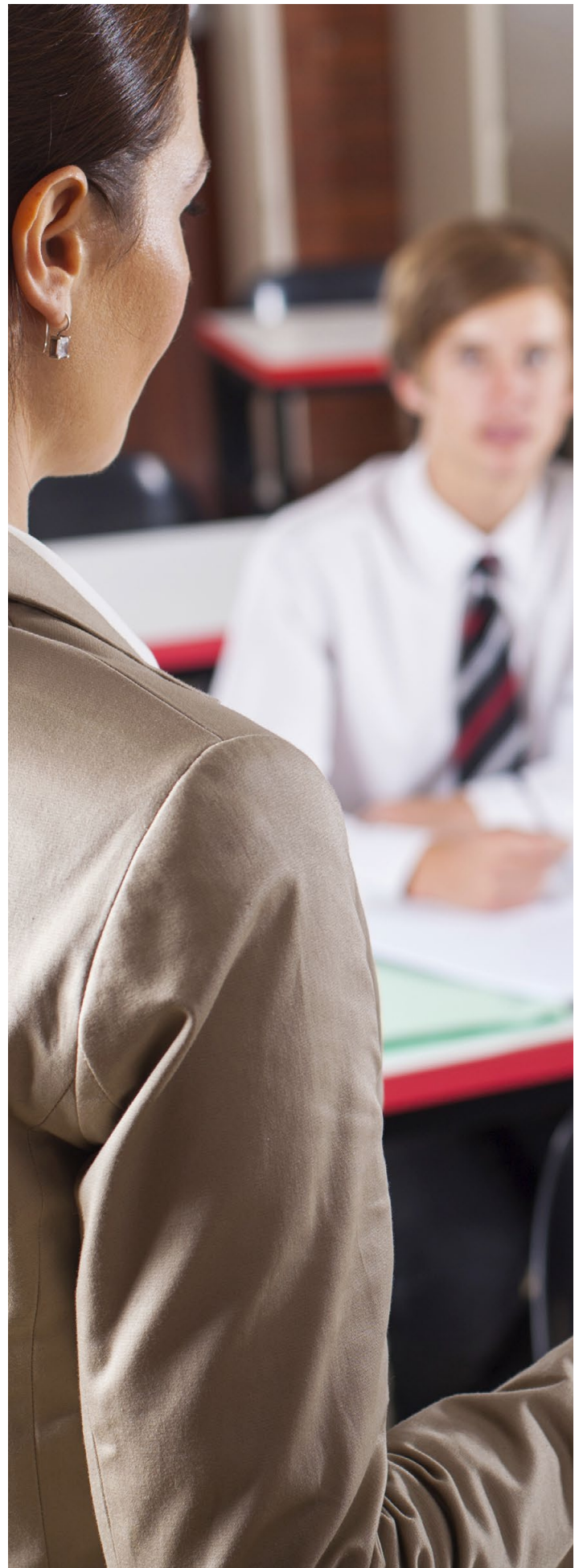


## Where can I find more information?

More information about the TTFM surveys can be found on the website [www.surveys.cese.nsw.gov.au](http://www.surveys.cese.nsw.gov.au).

For all enquiries about the TTFM initiative in NSW Department of Education schools, contact CESE's TTFM team at [ttfm@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ttfm@det.nsw.edu.au) or on 1300 13 14 99.

For technical questions concerning the administration of the TTFM surveys in your school, contact The Learning Bar at [support@thelearningbar.com](mailto:support@thelearningbar.com) or on 1800 823 621.



A network diagram consisting of numerous light blue circular nodes of varying sizes connected by thin white lines, set against a dark teal background. The nodes are scattered across the page, with some larger nodes acting as hubs.

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