

# Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

**A**s a youngster, I was confident that my future was going to be as a professional baseball player. I loved the sport and knew that was all it would take for me to play short-stop for the Cincinnati Reds.



And while life in the majors may have had an appeal, besides my parents, aunts and uncles, the most influential people in my life were my teachers and coaches.

So it makes sense that while in college I pursued an education degree, which has led to a rewarding career for many years. Longer than a ballplayer's, I'm sure.

My parents were supportive of me and I can't imagine where I would be in my career without that support.

So it was disappointing to me to read in PDK's annual poll that while respondents respect teachers they don't want their children to go into the profession.

But respondents do believe that teachers are not paid nearly enough for the job they do.

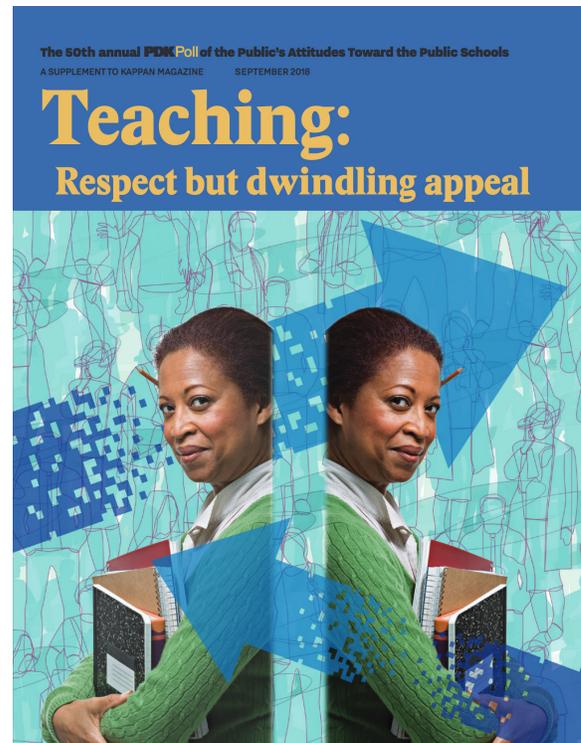
These were among the findings in the 50th annual Phi Delta Kappan poll on the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools. The goal of the annual poll is to provide longitudinal data for researchers on public feelings regarding schools and education policies, PDK says.

When asked if a respondent would want his or her child to become a teacher, 54 percent said no. For those who said they wouldn't want their child to become a teacher, among the reasons given were low pay, a dangerous profession, too much work and too little appreciation, too much bureaucracy and having to deal with rude and disrespectful students.

But 61 percent polled said they trust public school teachers and have confidence in them.

Sixty-six percent of respondents said teacher salaries are too low and 73 percent said they would support teachers in their community if they went on strike for higher pay.

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When asked specifically about the national average for a public school teacher's starting salary — \$39,000 — the response was almost unchanged: 65 percent say it's too low.

This result is a new high since PDK started the poll in 1969.

Other topics that were addressed were school security, school improvement, spending and funding, the quality of education now versus when respondents were in school, opportunities and expectations, college affordability, the value of a degree, school hours and school grades.

Read more about the report and access the full poll at [pdkpoll.org](http://pdkpoll.org).

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