

To Senator Hite,

I am a middle school music teacher from Cincinnati. I completed the Summative Assessment this year, and will find out on June 1st if I will be granted my professional license. I am writing today to encourage you to keep the mentorship aspect of the Resident Educator Program, but to remove Resident Educator Summative Assessment from the state budget.

In order to get my provisional licence and acquire a teaching job, I attended four years of college, student-taught, obtained my bachelor's degree, took two Praxis exams (general education and in my specific area), and went through a rigorous interview process. In order to renew my contract as an educator every year, I undergo the Ohio Teacher and Principal Evaluation System (eTPES) to ensure that I am continuously held to the high standards of the teaching profession.

While working on my Summative Assessment this year, my attention was focused only on how to fulfill the requirements - not on how to become a better teacher. Anecdotal evidence of others supports my own experience. For example, respondents most strongly disagreed (35.84%) with the statement "My experience with the Resident Educator Program improved my ability to "treat all students fairly and establish an environment that is respectful, supportive and caring," which is within Standard 5: Learning Environment. There was little agreement from participants that the Resident Educator Program improved the ability to "maintain an environment that is conducive to learning for all students" (also within Standard 5: Learning Environment) or to "communicate clearly and effectively," with over 70 and 60% choosing one of the disagree responses, respectively, to these prompts. In summary, the participants believed their experience with the Resident Educator Program helped them improve their ability to meet the learning environment and assessment standards the most and the professional responsibility and students standards the least.

As a result of the data analysis, the researchers learned that resident educators do not believe the Ohio Resident Educator Program improved their ability to meet the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession and their predominantly negative comments explained their perceptions: For example, the resident educator participants in this study reported that the requirements of the program, specifically the large amounts of paperwork, actually impeded their ability to improve in the seven areas of OSTP. The requirements of the OREP should instead be modified to strengthen these standards and move away from the reported "stressful busywork."

The one positive aspect of the program was the one-on-one connections I made with veteran teachers throughout the first two years of my teaching career. I observed them in their classrooms and had monthly meetings with them where we analyzed my challenges as a new educator. I strongly urge you to keep, and perhaps even expand, the mentorship aspect of the Resident Educator Program.

Thank you for your time,

Jessica Steuver
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