



Chairwoman Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and Members of the House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to House Bill 96, which eliminates the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) and related resources and supports for beginning teachers.

My name is Matt Verber, and I am the Chief Operating Officer for TeachForward, the vendor for Ohio's Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA), which is a part of the Resident Educator Program.

The Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) is a performance-based assessment for beginning teachers based on the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. This Committee does not need to be reminded of the extensive research base – more than thirty-years in the making – that confirms that the single greatest determinant of student achievement in K-12 education is the quality of the classroom instruction students receive.<sup>1</sup> The Resident Educator Program was created to help bring the very best classroom instruction to Ohio students, and the RESA was designed to provide the public with a reliable measure that their students were receiving high-quality instruction. Since the RESA was first implemented statewide in 2013-2014, it has evolved based on the thoughtful feedback provided by Ohio educators and policymakers. The RESA today bears little resemblance to the RESA first piloted more than ten years ago. Unfortunately, the feedback on the RESA generally references the earliest versions of the assessment that have long since been improved to better meet the needs of Ohio students and educators.

The current version of the RESA is significantly streamlined, when compared to the original version, greatly reducing the burden on busy educators. Despite the streamlined format of the current version of the RESA, it continues to require teachers to analyze and reflect on their

---

<sup>1</sup> See Hanushek, E. A. (1992). The Trade-off between Child Quantity and Quality. *Journal of Political Economy*, 100(1), 84–117. <https://doi.org/10.1086/261808>; Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A., & Kain, J. F. (2005). Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement. *Econometrica*, 73(2), 417–458. <https://hanushek.stanford.edu/publications/teachers-schools-and-academic-achievement>; Rockoff, J. E. (2004). The Impact of Individual Teachers on Student Achievement: Evidence from Panel Data. *American Economic Review*, 94(2), 247–252. <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/0002828041302244>; and Chetty, R., Friedman, J. N., & Rockoff, J. E. (2014). Measuring the Impacts of Teachers II: Teacher Value-Added and Student Outcomes in Adulthood. *American Economic Review*, 104(9), 2633–2679. <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.104.9.2633>

teaching practice, which research confirms is critical for beginning teachers to grow as professionals. Through reflection, teachers carefully consider the content they are teaching, recognize the specific teaching strategies that enable all students to develop a deep understanding of that content, and develop the tools they need to improve the execution of those strategies in future lessons.

Over the years, the RESA technology platform has evolved to meet the needs of the evolving RESA assessment. Last year, the RESA was moved to an entirely new software platform, which eliminated the video upload process and other technical processes that Resident Educators sought to revise. The new RESA platform now provides all Resident Educators, mentors, facilitators, and program coordinators with access to a library of professional development resources and a collection of RESA sample videos from Resident Educators teaching all grade levels and a wide range of subject areas. These new features have greatly enhanced the educative aspects of the RESA for Ohio educators. Resident Educators also have more flexibility around the times of year when they can submit the RESA. They also receive their results much sooner.

The RESA assessment is only scored by Ohio educators who have at least 10 years of classroom teaching experience. The Ohio educators who review the RESA submissions must complete a training program and pass a rigorous certification test on an annual basis. Within 30 days of submitting the RESA, Resident Educators receive a score report with comprehensive feedback to help them improve their practice. The RESA score and feedback are based solely on the Resident Educators' instructional practices. Each year, a handful of Resident Educators submit videos with no audio or other issues that prevent assessors from scoring their submission, and they receive a report that explains why their submission could not be scored; however, starting last year, Resident Educators had the opportunity to resolve the issue and resubmit their RESA assessment before the submission deadline.

A recent enhancement to the RESA grants every Resident Educator who receives a "Not Pass" result on the RESA with an opportunity to meet for one hour with a virtual instructional coach, who is an experienced Ohio educator and a certified RESA assessor, (at no cost to the Resident Educator or their school), to discuss their RESA submission, and receive coaching and additional professional resources as to how they can improve their teaching. This coaching and feedback substantially increase the likelihood that the Resident Educator who did not pass the RESA on their first attempt will garner the skills necessary to pass on their second attempt, which now can be taken in the same school year, as time permits. This program feature has contributed to an overall higher pass rate and provided critical professional development for beginning teachers who are most in need of support.

If the RESA were eliminated, the quality of classroom instruction in Ohio would gradually deteriorate as districts scale down their mentoring programs and beginning teachers no longer receive consistent instructional support. Veteran Ohio educators who were involved in mentoring beginning teachers before Ohio introduced the RESA provide valuable insight into the potential consequences of eliminating it:

Lori Knisley, the 2015 Ohio Teacher of the Year who previously served as a Resident Educator Program Coordinator and lead mentor in her district, said, “Elimination of the RESA will undermine the efforts of educators to elevate the profession and may, inevitably, lead to a disintegration of support resources and programming to nurture entry year teachers.”

Connie Ball, who was the Resident Educator Program Coordinator at Worthington City Schools from the initiation of the Resident Educator Program until her retirement last year, shared, “I was the program coordinator during the Resident Educator Program “transition” years when it was a two-year program with no summative assessment. The growth I observed in our teachers was not as deeply imbedded into their everyday practice as it became when the summative assessment was introduced as an integral part of the program.”

According to Carol Theis, who served as the Resident Educator Program Coordinator, a mentor, and a facilitator for Solon City Schools from the initiation of the Resident Educator Program until her recent retirement, “The Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) has evolved since its inception through extensive feedback from all stakeholders. It has been refined and streamlined yet still includes the accountability so necessary to guarantee that all Ohio students have competent teachers. It has always included what I consider to be the building blocks of good instruction: planning, implementation, and reflection of lessons and assessments.”

Most importantly, if the RESA were eliminated, teachers would advance to a professional license, even if they could not demonstrate the skills necessary to be an effective educator. Sadly, those teachers would most likely be in front of students who have the greatest need for a high-performing teacher – and are least likely to recover academically if they have an ineffective teacher.

While most Ohio administrators take the necessary steps to ensure that all teachers in their schools effectively implement the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, hundreds of RESA submissions from the past several years show that a concerning number of teachers escape administrator scrutiny and enter the profession woefully underprepared to teach Ohio children. The RESA serves as an essential safeguard against the risk of harm to Ohio students, while also providing essential feedback and professional growth opportunities to all Ohio educators. Without the RESA, many early career teachers in Ohio will be stranded without the support they need and deserve, and Ohio’s students will suffer the consequences.