

Senate Finance Committee
Re: Repeal of Ohio Revised Code Section 3319.223, the Resident Educator Program
June 7, 2017

Good afternoon, Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Skindell, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, my name is Jessica Wilson and as the Executive Director of the Human Resources Department for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, I am appreciative of the opportunity to testify on House Bill 49.

I am sharing our opposition to the elimination of the Resident Educator program as proposed in HB 49. CMSD is in the midst of reforming our schools to better serve our students and families. Programs like Resident Educator and the Resident Educator Summative Assessment have helped to shape our workforce to generate a cadre of educators who are far more prepared than their predecessors. A student's teacher is the most influential indicator determining a scholar's success. At a time in Ohio when job training and college preparedness are critical to keeping our state competitive, quality educators who can adapt, reflect and are resilient are needed more than ever.

In 2016-17 alone, CMSD had 526 Resident Educators, all who received regular coaching and feedback through the Resident Educator program. We know that comprehensive, regular feedback and support is critical for beginning teachers to be successful, and ensuring that our large numbers of beginning teachers get this support has been critical to CMSD's success. Ohio's investment in the Resident Educator program signals the state's commitment to the success of beginning teachers and, in turn, the students they serve. Eliminating Resident Educator and the mentoring and induction it provides would deprive beginning teachers across the state, and in Cleveland, of the resources and support they need to be successful.

Requiring that teachers meet a meaningful, minimum level of quality before they are granted a professional license helps to ensure that all children are taught by an effective teacher. Eliminating the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) effectively removes an objective assessment of quality before a teacher earns a professional license. If a teacher successfully passes RESA, CMSD can be confident that the teacher has demonstrated a standard of effectiveness, which is critical to success in our schools. RESA also provides a structured opportunity for teachers to reflect on their practice, and an unbiased view of their progress.

CMSD regularly assesses our implementation of the Resident Educator program and the support we provide to beginning teachers through the program. We urge you to retain the Resident Educator program to allow for continuous improvement, and to ensure that this vital resource for beginning teachers remains available to our district.

Thank you for considering this testimony and for all that you are doing to serve Ohio families.

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