

Senate Finance Committee  
Re: Repeal of Ohio Revised Code Section 3319.223, the Resident Educator Program  
June 15, 2017

Good afternoon, Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Skindell, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on House Bill 49.

My name is Todd Stuart, and I am the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development at Nordon Hills City Schools (Summit County), wherein I coordinate the Resident Educator Program. I am writing today to voice my strong opposition to Substitute HB 49. This state needs now, more than ever, a consistent program for beginning teachers that provides a comprehensive, multi-year induction program that guides and supports novice teachers over time, and moves them more deeply into the process of being an effective teacher. We have that program in place, and it is called the Resident Educator program of Ohio.

I have spent 18 years in education, 15 of them as a building or district administrator. I have seen mentoring programs come and go, and unfortunately, this state has led the charge in being consistent in one thing...always changing. If you research successful programs, they are organizations that have a solid core of beliefs that are tweaked (NOT completely overhauled and changed) based on results and data. Unfortunately, too often in the field of education, politics and budgets completely disrupt programming because they are always changing the way we navigate and structure our programs. I urge you to please review and consider the data that Educopia prepares for you and avoid placing support for negative, un-supported opinions of those who are opposed because they were not successful in the program. There will always be nay-sayers, but I urge you to review all of the successes, supported by data, that the Resident Educator program has brought over the last several years.

Through my interactions with our teachers involved in the Resident Educator program, they constantly thank me for the support that the district provides in their development of becoming a better educator. The core values and expectations of the Resident Educator program and RESA are what good teachers do every day in their classroom. The program promotes professional growth, collaboration, and the use of formative and summative assessments in a differentiated teaching environment, supported by the state's learning standards. Supporting a program that has proven success for these core values is imperative.

As a district administrator, I understand balancing budgets and prioritizing monies. I have been at the forefront of all of the recent changes to curriculum, teacher evaluations, new testing environments, and the Resident Educator program. The amount of time, research, energy and money that has gone into these changes has been overwhelming. Educators are exhausted of the changes. Dismantling the existing program and implementing something new will incur way more cost than supporting a successful researched based, data driven Resident Educator program could ever cost to maintain. Our mentors, RESA scorers and support teams make next to nothing to support resident educators. We do the work because we believe that the Resident Educator program is helping our teachers become better in the classroom. The amount of money, time and energy that it takes to get a new program implemented way exceeds what it costs to maintain a successful program like we have in the Resident Educator program of Ohio.

The children and district residents deserve to have excellent teachers. Teachers deserve to have a continuous support system in place to provide differentiated professional development to meet their needs. Ohio already has a proven program in place and is in desperate need for your support to provide consistency and priority (funding). Please prioritize the need to keep our Resident Educator program in place for the future. Making a change will only cost more in the future and will set back our education system further in the development of our most precious commodity in education, excellent teachers for the children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Todd Stuart