

Ohio Resident Educator Program Evaluation Executive Summary of the Year 2 Annual Evaluation Report

The Year 2 report on the Ohio Resident Educator Program evaluation provides the Ohio Department of Education early findings regarding implementation and impact of the Resident Educator Program in Ohio schools. Key themes and findings are summarized here.

Moving Beyond Compliance

Early findings suggest that Resident Educator Program stakeholders are complying with State directives to implement local RE Programs. Further, the evaluation finds evidence that local programs are meeting the needs of Resident Educators and their mentors and following ODE guidance regarding required RE Program components.

- Resident Educators are completing RE Program activities, and Resident Educator Mentors are attending required mentor trainings and using RE Program documents and materials extensively with REs. Having not yet experienced RESA, many REs and RE Mentors believed that the RE Program requires excessive documentation.
- LEA Resident Educator Program stakeholders recognize that, in contrast to previous induction programs, rigorous expectations of the RE Program have brought increased formality to their induction programs and greater focus on instruction. Resident Educator Mentors and principals also report that the RE Program has resulted in more meaningful and direct conversations about teaching and learning; greater collaboration among teachers; and more consistent support for Resident Educators.
- Few RE Mentors discussed their involvement with Ohio's Resident Educator Program as an opportunity for professional growth. Instead, they tended to frame their involvement as meeting program expectations or requirements.
- LEAs are implementing local Resident Educator Programs based on somewhat different interpretations of State RE Program documents and tools, and communications regarding the program; however, it is not clear that local context, needs, resources, or data have been the drivers of the observed variability among local RE Programs.
- Very few case study LEA stakeholders mentioned having reflected on RE Program Standards and Indicators or having used the Ohio RE Program Standards Planning Tool to inform decisions about local RE Programs; and few were using any local data to inform decisions regarding RE Program implementation.
- A number of LEAs have found innovative ways to enhance local capacity to execute effective and comprehensive RE Programs, primarily by linking the Ohio Resident Educator Program vision, goals, and processes to other critical State education initiatives.
- Most LEAs are concerned about capacity and sustainability of their local RE Programs over time.

Building on Educators' Experiences

Early findings suggest that Resident Educator Program stakeholders feel well-supported and better prepared to fulfill their respective responsibilities related to the RE Program in Year 2 than they did in Year 1. The State has established and is maintaining an infrastructure and system of technical assistance that stakeholders value and believe augments the quality of implementation of the RE Program, locally, and at the State level.

- Local RE Programs are supporting Resident Educators and their mentors in substantive ways.
- REs highly value relationships with their mentors and speak positively about the benefits of observing experienced teachers. Most REs feel well-supported by their mentors and plan to remain in the teaching profession. Many REs indicated that the program has helped them become more reflective on their teaching practices.
- Data from Years 1 and 2 suggest that while Resident Educators value relationships with their mentors, they reported less positively on the extent to which mentors provided support for growth of their instructional practices.

Evaluation of the Ohio Resident Educator Program is being conducted by Miami University Evaluation and Assessment Center, University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center, and Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs.

- Many Resident Educators were observed to be highly reflective on their teaching practices, while RE Mentors were not as focused on either their own or REs' instructional improvement, and many principals reported little involvement with the RE Program. There is little evidence that RE Mentors and principals recognize that the Resident Educator Program requires mentors to work with REs in substantively different ways than they previously have done.
- Principals readily acknowledged the importance of teacher induction; supported REs and mentors in implementing RE Program activities; and frequently noted that mentoring and collegial observations were becoming more highly regarded professional practices among teachers; however, principals appeared to have minimal engagement with the Resident Educator Program in most case study schools.
- Advanced Mentor trainings and Principal Engagement sessions have been well-received by participants but are not yet viewed as significant professional development opportunities by RE Program stakeholders.

Promoting Systems Thinking

Early findings suggest that most RE Program stakeholders view the Resident Educator Program as the primary vehicle for supporting early career teachers, improving teacher retention, and facilitating effective teaching. However, few LEAs have begun thinking systemically about RE Program administration, monitoring/evaluation, and leadership, or given attention to developing systems alignment and linkages to sustain and integrate local RE Programs.

- LEA RE Program stakeholders requested more clarification regarding expectations for Years 3 and 4 of the Resident Educator Program, including explication of relationships among the goals and processes of the Ohio Resident Educator Program, edTPA (pre-service teacher assessment), and Ohio Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems. Most LEAs assumed that the State would explicitly facilitate understanding of alignment across these State education initiatives.
- The State's work in communicating important aspects of the Ohio Resident Educator Program to the field has been laudable, yet LEA RE Program stakeholders still are not as informed as they need to be in order to implement local RE Programs effectively with fidelity to the State's vision of teacher professional induction.
- No case study LEAs reported having developed systematic ways to monitor their Resident Educator Programs using data from the first two years of RE Program implementation.
- Design, development, and implementation of the Resident Educator Summative Assessment are largely on track. Key partners involved in RESA development and implementation recognize that assessment for licensure is high stakes and this shared commitment should result in a quality product for Ohio's teachers.

Looking Ahead

The State has laid a solid foundation for launching a powerful and transformative professional teacher induction system. The Ohio Resident Educator Program vision for changing teachers' induction and professional trajectory has wide-ranging implications for Ohio's teachers and students. Via its focus on instructional improvement, the RE Program is uniquely positioned to strengthen educators' collegial relationships which will contribute to the outcomes of many other Ohio education initiatives, such as implementation of Common Core State Standards, formative instructional practice, school improvement processes, and a new system of state assessments. As Resident Educators, mentors, and principals work collectively to improve instruction and build professional communities in schools, the State is well-positioned to provide essential support: to promote Resident Educators' deeper understanding of professional pathways supported by the RE Program; to prepare mentors to exercise professional judgment in guiding REs; and to empower principals by communicating a clearly defined role and strategies for engaging with REs and mentors. As RE Program stakeholders move their local Resident Educator Programs forward during Year 3, they can begin to generate innovative, cross-initiative solutions to enhance local capacity to execute effective, comprehensive, high-quality RE Programs and reach the goals of improved teaching and enhanced student achievement.