Evaluation of the Ohio Resident Educator Program
Year 5 Summative Evaluation Report, August 2016
Executive Summary

Findings in the Year 5 summative report follow a comprehensive, statewide external study of the first five years of implementation of Ohio's Resident Educator (RE) Program. Between Fall 2011 and Fall 2015, more than 30,500 Resident Educators entered Ohio classrooms during a time of sweeping educational change. As a key element of Ohio's coordinated efforts to improve teacher quality, the Ohio RE Program was designed to improve teacher retention, enhance teacher quality and effectiveness, and result in improved student achievement. Following five years of rigorous investigation, the External Evaluation team reports the following impacts on Ohio's educators, their schools, districts, and students.

What are the contributions of the Resident Educator Program to teacher effectiveness?

Since RE Program inception, 97% of REs have completed program requirements each year, indicating that a great majority of REs are making progress toward expected levels of teaching effectiveness. Several sources of evidence inform questions regarding the extent to which REs' increased effectiveness can be attributed to their participation in the RE Program.

During all five years of the evaluation, Resident Educators in their first year of teaching have reported very high levels of confidence in their own teaching effectiveness, and more than 90% of REs completing their first year indicated that their teaching practice had improved during their participation in the RE Program. REs' perceptions of their effectiveness decreased slightly during Years 2 and 3 but improved following their attempts on the RE Summative Assessment, regardless of their individual assessment outcomes. All cohorts of REs who took RESA during their respective third years in the RE Program reported both more satisfaction with their current teaching situations and more confidence in their own teaching effectiveness compared to those who did not attempt RESA when they were first eligible to do so.

Resident Educators have consistently reported the most benefit to their professional growth in the areas of reflective practice and collaboration with other teachers; two foundational components of the RE Program. Further, a majority of RE Mentors and Program Coordinators agreed that they had observed improvements in REs' teaching practice during their time in the RE Program and believed that the RE Program had accelerated REs' professional growth. Congruent sources of evidence regarding REs' teaching effectiveness include observations by RE Mentors and principals. Improvements in REs' teaching practice reported most frequently by RE Mentors included improvement in use of assessments and data to inform instruction and in planning for differentiated instruction; and use of an enhanced range of instructional strategies. REs' principals reported improvements in REs' professional practice such as high levels of self-confidence; superior ability to reflect on instruction; higher expectations for students and self; creativity, resourcefulness, and collaboration skills. Evaluators' review of REs' artifacts found evidence demonstrating substantial progress in REs' understanding how students learn, and how to individualize instruction.

Resident Educators in the evaluation impact study group performed as well as, or better than, their more experienced colleagues with regard to their annual Ohio Teacher Evaluation System ratings. No study group REs reported being rated as "Ineffective" between 2012 and 2016. By 2014-2015, as relatively inexperienced educators, all REs in the study group were rated either "Skilled" or "Accomplished." REs in the study group maintained their effectiveness ratings during their fourth or fifth years of teaching in 2015-2016.

Evidence regarding RE Program impact on students' achievement is inconclusive at this time. Overall, about half of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 evaluation study group REs' students exceeded state and local performance standards on assessments during each year of their teaching. One trend of note was the improvement of Cohort 2 REs' students as measured against local performance standards (from 27% exceeding in 2012-13, to 59% in 2014-15).[1] REs in

[1] The number of REs in the study is very small compared to the total number of teachers in their districts and statewide. For this reason, no conclusions should be drawn from these data at this time. Further, changes in state assessments during this time period make valid year-to-year comparisons of students' performance difficult.

each of the three state-assessed content areas (ELA, mathematics, and science) indicated similar levels of student achievement, though more teachers of mathematics and science reported 100% proficiency for their students in multiple years than did ELA teachers. Further analyses found no statistically significant differences among the performance of REs' students on state assessments by academic content area. Cohort 1 REs' perceptions of their RE Program experiences with their RE Mentors (i.e., instructional mentoring, mentor relationship) and with their principals were significantly correlated with their students' performance in years 1 and 5 of their teaching.

REs' success on RESA is a key indicator of their improved teaching effectiveness. From the first RESA administration in 2013-2014, the percentage of REs passing all RESA tasks on the first attempt improved from 54% to 60% in 2014-2015; while the percentage passing all RESA tasks on two attempts improved from 78% for Cohort 1 to 84% for Cohort 2. By the end of their fourth year of teaching, 80% of Cohort 1 REs had passed all RESA tasks. REs' perceptions of their experiences with their RE Mentors and with their principals were significantly correlated with their success passing RESA tasks on the first attempt and with their composite scores. REs' reports of the quality of the RE/RE Mentor match (i.e., same grade level, content area) were significantly associated with their success passing RESA Task 2 (i.e., assessment) on the first attempt. REs who passed all 5 RESA tasks also reported significantly more use of instructional cycles, tools for assessment of student learning, collaborative conversation materials, and mentor observation of REs' teaching than did those REs who did not pass all RESA tasks.

What are the contributions of the Resident Educator Program to district and school effectiveness?

Changes in teacher collaboration, new teacher retention, and local policy and practice that support new teachers were studied to determine the nature and extent of Resident Educator Program impact on district and school effectiveness.

Evidence strongly supports claims that the RE Program has improved educator collaboration in schools. A pilot study of evaluation case study schools in Year 4 found tentative evidence that educators involved in the RE Program had better perceptions of teacher collaboration than did their non-REP colleagues. Further, as the percentage of educators involved in the RE Program increased so did the staffs' positive perceptions of teacher collaborative culture. Findings of a statewide educator survey in Spring 2016 found that, generally, Ohio teachers reported that their schools were highly focused on a common mission, vision, and goals related to improving teaching and learning. When the responses of Resident Educators were compared to the responses of teachers who were not current or former Resident Educators, REs reported significantly higher levels of teacher collaboration than did non-Resident Educators. Teachers who were RE Program participants (i.e., REs, RE mentors, RESA Facilitators) had significantly more positive reports on all aspects of teacher collaboration than did RE Program non-participants. Resident Educators also reported that collegial observations and conversations were valuable in supporting their professional growth and involvement with OTES. Further, the percentage of REs who passed all 5 RESA tasks on the first attempt was significantly, positively correlated with teachers' perceptions of the culture for teacher collaboration in their schools.

Arguably, schools are more effective when they retain effective educators. Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 have followed similar career trajectories during the first two years of teaching, though the 2-year retention rates of Cohorts 2 and 3 are higher than that of Cohort 1. The 4-year retention rate of Cohort 1 is 84%,[2] slightly higher than the national average for new teachers. Resident Educator retention also is measured by REs' reported intentions to remain in their current positions, schools, and in the profession. Reports of REs at the end of their respective first years of teaching are very similar, with only 1% of each cohort reporting plans to leave the teaching profession, and by the end of their third year, only 3% reported that intention.

Districts'/schools' depth of understanding of the RE Program has developed over time, resulting in greater focus on providing local programs that addressed needs of teachers. Local RE Program evolution was expedited by the RESA and concurrent implementation of OTES. Districts/schools with strong local leadership, facilitated by an understanding of RE Program goals, effectively adapted their programs to align with district resources/needs and were experiencing successful implementation. During Spring 2016, more than two-thirds of RE Program Coordinators and RE Mentors reported that they had observed improved support for REs and improved

[2] Retention rate described here includes only the percentage of REs teaching in Ohio districts/schools. REs who no longer teach in Ohio, but may be teaching elsewhere, cannot be tracked with available data.

collaboration and communication in their schools and districts; though fewer than half of the responding RE Mentors and PCs agreed that RE Program implementation had increased involvement of principals and administrators in supporting new teacher development, or led to changes in district or school policies/procedures to support new teacher development. Findings during all five years of the RE Program evaluation suggest that principals are supportive of their new teachers and invested in their professional growth but are not directly and actively involved in the RE Program.

How have changes to the Resident Educator Program impacted local RE Program implementation, stakeholder perceptions of the RE Program, and short-term outcomes of REs and RE Mentors?

Five substantive, legislated modifications were made to the RE Program in Summer 2015; additionally, RE Program Mentoring was revised with new and modified materials and training. A majority of Program Coordinators responding to the Spring 2016 questionnaire agreed that RE Program changes, with the exception of modified requirements for CTE teachers, were equally beneficial for their Resident Educators, mentors, and districts/schools. Likewise, a majority of mentors agreed that most program changes were equally beneficial for their Resident Educators and for RE Mentors. Similarly, to RE Program PCs, RE Mentors were less sure of the benefit of changing requirements for CTE teachers; but RE Mentors also were less sure whether requiring REs to take the RESA in Year 3 and making Year 4 of the program optional were beneficial changes for either REs or mentors.

Of RE Mentors responding to the Spring 2016 survey, 65% had been exposed to at least one new in-person or online RE Mentor training. RE Mentors who had attended the 2-day Mentor Academy during 2015-2016 reported positively on all aspects of the academy. RE Mentors who had taken the online REfresh and REnew courses also reported very positively on the usefulness and clarity of each module. The REnew module regarding working with principals was perceived by mentors to be somewhat less useful than were the other modules.

Data also were collected from RE Mentors' regarding their perceptions of their use of, usefulness, and clarity of revised Mentor Tool Kit materials in 2015-2016. Tools mentors used most often with their REs, included the Self-assessment Summary, Professional Growth Log, and Collaborative Log. RE Mentors reported very positively on the ease of use and clarity of all new state-provided mentoring resources.

During 2015-2016, many REs took the *Learn to Lead* module, completed the Year 4 FPR, and developed a Year 4 Action plan, even though these activities were no longer requirements of the state RE Program. Fewer REs continued their involvement with the RE Program by serving as RE Mentors, RE Colleagues, or RESA Facilitators. Resident Educators also reported a range of different leadership activities following their completion of their required RE Program involvement. A large number of REs engaged in collaborative activities with colleagues such as serving on or leading committee work or participating/leading professional learning communities. Largely, Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 REs did not associate growth in their leadership capacity with their involvement in the RE Program, though REs' viewed their involvement in the RE Program as most impactful on their desire to mentor other REs. RE Mentors in 2015-2016 who were former REs did report significantly higher preparedness to tailor support for their REs than did mentors who were not former Resident Educators.

Program Coordinator and RE Mentor interview data suggest that between one-half and three-fourths of RE Mentors' experienced observable growth as professionals during their involvement with the RE Program. RE Mentors reported greater gains in their teaching and mentoring practices than did Resident Educators or Program Coordinators. Fewer REs reported impact on their instruction from work with their mentor than reported general benefit from their relationships with mentors. During all five years of the RE Program, REs in each cohort agreed less in Year 2 than in Year 1 that their mentors provided opportunities to assess and reflect on their instruction or positively influenced their teaching practice. Analyses of support for RESA also found that REs' perceptions of quality mentor support for improving instruction during Years 1 and 2 was highly correlated with REs' success rate on RESA.