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H.B. 151
134th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

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Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Jones

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill's elimination of the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) will decrease Ohio Department of Education (ODE) non-GRF expenditures by approximately \$600,000 each year based on the ongoing costs of the contract to administer the RESA.
- The bill also may decrease ODE's administrative costs by eliminating the need to allocate internal resources in support of the RESA and by replacing the Ohio Teacher Residency Program, which was jointly established by ODE and the Department of Higher Education, with locally established new teacher mentorship programs.
- The bill likewise may increase costs for school districts and other public schools to design and manage the new teacher mentorship programs. However, any new costs are likely minimal.
- In addition, the administrative costs for school districts and other public schools related to teacher evaluations may increase for districts and schools that currently opt to forego evaluating a teacher during the year in which the teacher takes the RESA. Under the bill, this option is no longer available.

Detailed Analysis

Current law – Ohio Teacher Residency Program

The Ohio Teacher Residency (OTR) Program is a four-year, entry-level program for teachers that must be completed in order to qualify for a professional educator license issued by the State Board of Education. The OTR Program currently is comprised of two years of mentoring, followed by the completion of the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) during a participant's third year, and then one year of leadership opportunities or other activities

determined by the school district where the teacher is placed. During this fourth year, a designated “colleague” works with a teacher and the district’s local resident educator program to establish the activities that the teacher will perform as the teacher transitions to the professional educator license. The OTR Program was initially established in 2011 by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and the Department of Higher Education (DHE).

H.B. 442 of the 133rd General Assembly reduces the length of the OTR Program to two years, effective April 12, 2023, while maintaining the RESA and the mentoring and counseling components. It requires the State Board of Education to determine a method to condense the program from its current four-year form to a two-year program and develop a timeframe by which individuals already enrolled in the OTR Program will complete it.

The bill – Ohio New Teacher Mentorship Program

The bill replaces the OTR Program with locally developed, two-year Ohio new teacher mentorship (ONTM) programs beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. The bill directs an ONTM program to be established by the local professional development committee (LPDC) that a school district or other public school must operate under current law. The bill shifts responsibility for determining the method of condensing the four-year program into a two-year mentorship program from the State Board to each LPDC. According to ODE, an LPDC generally reviews the coursework and other professional development activities proposed and completed by educators in a district to determine if they have met the requirements for renewal of their licenses. As alluded to above, it also assists a resident educator in the transition to a professional educator license.

An ONTM program under the bill is similar to the first two years of the current OTR Program. The bill requires entry-level teachers be assigned a mentor teacher who has at least five years of teaching experience in the district and has renewed their professional educator license at least once. The bill’s requirements for mentors appear to require a higher level of minimum teaching experience than under current practice. Under the OTR Program, a mentor generally must possess a five-year professional license or permanent license (or have previously held such a license, if the teacher is retired), complete a district application process and be selected, and attend a two-day mentor academy for training.

Participants in ONTM programs are required to observe professional and senior professional educators in the classroom. The observations cannot be limited to the participant’s mentor or the building in which the participant teaches. To facilitate these observations, districts are required to provide a participant with at least one day of professional development leave in each year of the program. Additionally, upon each participant’s completion of the program the LPDC must provide corresponding documentation to the State Board of Education.

While LPDCs are developing a method to transition to a two-year mentorship program, they must also develop a timeframe by which individuals who are already enrolled in the OTR Program will complete it.

The bill eliminates the requirement that participants complete the RESA.

Fiscal effects

Department of Education

The ongoing cost of the vendor contract to operate the RESA amounts to about \$600,000 each year, according to the state accounting system. The vendor contract includes maintaining the RESA website, assessment scoring, telephone and online support to RESA candidates, and other duties. ODE pays for the operational and technical costs for the RESA using educator license fees appropriated from Fund 4L20 line item 200681, Teacher Certification and Licensure. According to ODE, there are additional administrative costs associated with supporting the RESA and the OTR Program, such as staff time and other internal resources. Thus, the bill's changes may lead to lower administrative costs for ODE.

School districts and other public schools

Accordingly, the new format and requirements of an ONTM program may increase costs to school districts and other public schools to design and operate them via the district or school's LPDC. However, any new costs are likely minimal. While school districts and other public schools must currently provide mentoring and support to resident educators aligned with state standards and guidelines established by ODE, school districts and schools generally have flexibility to develop their own policies, expectations, and activities for resident educators in both years of the program. For example, ODE indicates that mentoring and leadership development activities are already tailored based on the individual needs of the resident educator, school, and district.

However, the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA) noted that the additional responsibilities the bill assigns to LPDCs may require an increased time commitment by committee members. This may lead to an increase in the supplemental compensation districts and schools pay teachers for service on the committees, whether they receive a flat amount (which could be negotiated to a higher level) or an hourly rate for the additional work performed. In any case, BASA indicated the change in compensation would likely be minimal, with each LPDC member that is a teacher and paid hourly for their service receiving perhaps no more than \$250 or \$400 more over the course of a school year to initially develop the programs and likely less each year thereafter. LPDCs are required to have at least five members, the majority of who must be teachers. The rest are either central office employees or building administrators, who would not receive any additional supplemental amount.

Additionally, the requirement that participants receive at least one professional development leave day in each year of the program for observations may result in a minimal increase in substitute teacher costs to districts and schools. According to BASA, most of these activities are already happening in the current OTR Program. As a point of reference, BASA indicated that a substitute teacher costs about \$125 per day, including benefits. Ultimately, the cost of this provision to districts and schools will depend on the extent to which similar observation days are already part of the local program and how many resident educators will participate in any given year.

School district administrative costs also may increase to conduct additional teacher evaluations. The bill eliminates a school district board's option to forego performance evaluations for teachers participating in the OTR Program for the year during which those teachers take, for the first time, at least half of the RESA since it is no longer required.

Career-technical workforce development educator license

Under current law, an applicant for a two-year initial career-technical educator license must be enrolled in a teacher preparation program offered by a college or university that meets various conditions, including the use of a summative performance-based assessment. The bill eliminates the condition that the applicant's teacher preparation program use such an assessment effective with the 2023-2024 school year. This provision potentially increases the pool of institutions that an applicant may enroll in and, thus, may improve the ability of school districts and other public schools to meet certain staffing needs with respect to career-technical education courses.