

# Peer Assistance and Review in Columbus City Schools: Combining Residency, Mentorship and Evaluation for Teacher Success

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By *Mickie Sebenoler, Professional Learning & Licensure, Columbus City Schools*

The Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program is designed to improve the quality of instruction in the classroom. For students to succeed in learning, teachers must succeed in teaching. Through Race to the Top, Columbus City School teachers have worked to combine the state's Resident Educator program and the district's Peer Assistance and Review program to create a new vision of teacher induction.

Peer Assistance and Review has had two components:

## Internship

The intern component of the Peer Assistance and Review program is designed to offer new teachers the support, advice and direction necessary to make their first year experience in the classroom as successful as possible. Peer Assistance and Review consulting teachers (Master Educators) work with the interns, providing mentorship and serving as their evaluators. Columbus City teachers have often cited the Peer Assistance and Review program as the best support in their first year of teaching.

## Intervention

The intervention component of the Peer Assistance and Review program is designed to assist experienced teachers in the district exhibiting difficulties in the performance of their professional classroom duties. In cooperation with the building principal, a Peer Assistance and Review consulting teacher serves as the teacher's evaluator, develops specific performance goals, offers support and monitors progress.

"In a big district, you can lose your way – the principal doesn't always have time to give that attention the first year teacher needs. With PAR, we can support new or struggling teachers and provide due process to all teachers at the same time."

– Rhonda Johnson, Columbus Education Association president/Peer Assistance and Review panel co-chair

"PAR combines evaluation feedback with the assistance teachers need so that our students can reach their full potential. From their first days in our schools, PAR sets our teachers on a path of success, shows them that they are an appreciated member of our professional community, and prepares them to be skilled instructional leaders in their classroom and beyond."

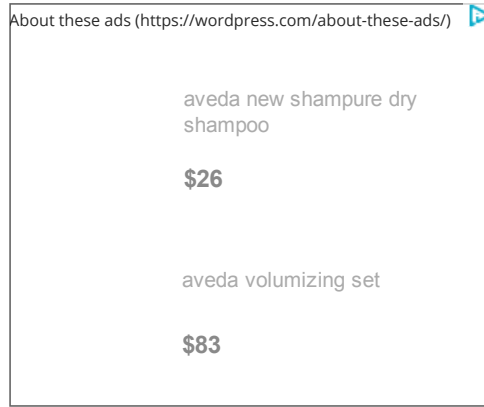
– Mickie Sebenoler, Professional Learning & Licensure, Columbus City Schools and Administrative Co-chair of the PAR Panel

Currently, the Peer Assistance and Review program exceeds the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System specifications with consulting teachers conducting at least 20 observations/walk-throughs and at least 18 conferences with each teacher during the year.

Columbus City Schools has utilized their already nationally recognized Peer Assistance and Review program to meet the requirements of Ohio's Resident Educator program. Peer Assistance and Review consulting teachers also serve as Resident Educator mentors and facilitators for teachers seeking five-year licensure. Mentors and facilitators organize and lead professional development using state-designed formative assessment tools, protocols and processes to support teachers in the program. The Resident Educator program under the umbrella of Peer Assistance and Review allows support to extend beyond a teacher's first year, preparing them for professional success throughout their career.

The vision for the Peer Assistance and Review program continues to evolve and will include supporting teachers in attaining the next level of their practice. Peer Assistance and Review is uniquely positioned to provide support and evaluations for all Resident Educators in Years 1-4 and encourage the pursuit of National Board Certification for those who are successful on the Resident Educator Summative Assessment in their third year.

For more information on the Columbus City Schools Peer Assistance and Review program please contact Mickie Sebenoler at (614) 365-5039 or [msebenoler@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:msebenoler@columbus.k12.oh.us) (<mailto:msebenoler@columbus.k12.oh.us>).



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