

Friis, John

From: Cassandra DeMarco [strawberry_walrus_forever@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2009 11:40 AM
To: Friis, John
Subject: HB6666, Section 5

I am writing to strongly advocate for Section 5 of House Bill HB6666, which will allow for adjunct faculty certificates to be issued to the highly-trained professional artists, who serve as ECA's part-time faculty, to continue their 35-year record of preparing Connecticut's high school students for our competitive global economy. If they are required to become certified for 12-hour per week part-time positions, they will not be able to do so and the school will close. This will be a terrible loss to Connecticut's high school students in 19 school districts.

As a current student at ECA in the theatre department, I cannot even imagine a place like ECA not existing in the future. I have been there for three years and have learned more about my craft, ability, and myself than I have in any program I have attended. The teachers at ECA do more than impart knowledge; they instill value into our lives and give us a place to be who and what we are- artists. At our sending schools, most of us are misunderstood. We are 'the artsy kids' and we tend to be overlooked and passed by. There isn't a strong worth attached to the arts in public schools today. We are taught to be athletes and accountants and mechanics- which is wonderful for athletes and accountants and mechanics, but the square pegs can't fit in the round holes of these schools. ECA provides us with custom education and personal relationships to develop us as artists and teach us how to respect our abilities. I've had my life's focus in mind since I was in third grade. Until ECA, nobody took my passion seriously. Acting was a ridiculous goal that couldn't be reached and most people waited for me to grow out of the phase. ECA demonstrates working artists that made their passion into a career, and inspired me to do the same.

I don't believe that anyone ever truly knows who they are, but I'm much closer than I would have been without my ECA education. Please, don't hurt future generations by stifling their ability to enrich their lives and shutting down this beautiful establishment. Without ECA I don't know where I would be, but I think it would be safe to say that this school has saved my life.

Sincerely, and with great passion,
Cassandra DeMarco
East Haven High School, Class of 2010