

Friis, John

From: eliza.caldwell@huskymail.uconn.edu
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2009 9:33 AM
To: Friis, John
Cc: eca_pace@yahoo.com
Subject: HB6666, Section 5

To Whom It May Concern,

I attended ECA from 2004-2006 as a theater student. I came from Amity Region #15 and my parents paid my tuition because Amity didn't cover it. I understand the inequality that results from those who can afford the tuition being the only ones able to attend ECA. However, if parents are no longer allowed to pay tuition, the school will close for lack of funds and no one will be able to attend. I hope another method of establishing equal access to the school can be found.

ECA provided me with an essential confidence boost during my high school years, through performance opportunities and contact with peers who shared my interests. At my sending school I felt stifled, but at ECA I thrived. I made many friends from different ethnic and economic backgrounds who I would not have met otherwise. In the theater department, I participated in three plays: The Tempest, A Dream Play, and Fools, as well as classes in theater history, directing, movement, scene study, and improvisation. These performance opportunities and classes were unavailable at Amity. My teachers were actors. They had rich theater experiences to recount, and were still involved in theater outside of teaching. I believe they taught acting more effectively than someone trained as a teacher who decides to concentrate on theater. ECA teachers' deep connection to their art allows them to teach it passionately and efficiently.

I'm now at the University of Connecticut studying elementary education. Though I didn't become an actress, I never doubt for a second ECA's overwhelmingly positive effect on my life. ECA gave me confidence and taught me to express myself creatively, which has made me into an interesting, well-rounded person. I know that the creativity instilled in me by my teachers at ECA will make me an entertaining, effective elementary school teacher.

I wouldn't trade my memories and life-long friendships made at ECA for anything in the world. I know times are hard, but please don't rob any potential ECA students of the chance to benefit from ECA as much as I did.

Thank you so much for your time,

Eliza Caldwell