

Friis, John

From: Beth Brownstein [doulab51@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2009 11:39 PM
To: Friis, John
Cc: eca_pace@yahoo.com
Subject: SEC. 5 HB6666

Mr. John Friis
 Education Committee Clerk
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March 14,2009

To Whom it May Concern;

I am an ACES ECA parent writing about the Commissioner of Educations proposal that all part-time instructors in Connecticut become certified. I am adamantly opposed to this proposal because it would deprive ACES ECA of its highly-specialized, extensively-trained core teachersthe professional artist/teachers recognized in their fields, who are responsible for our schools 35-year record of success, including a graduation rate significantly higher than the Connecticut average. Their training is the bedrock of the education that defines ACES ECA. They have already incurred significant time and expense attaining their advanced degrees at the masters and PhD levels, and are concurrently teaching at colleges like Wesleyan, Sarah Lawrence, and Yale. They would not be able to incur the additional time and expense required to become certified, even in the ARC program, and if required to do so (for part-time positions that offer no benefits), they would regretfully be forced to leave their jobs at ECA. Given that there would not be teachers available to hire who would be both certified and, simultaneously, practicing professional artists with college-teaching experience, as required to fulfill the mission of ECA, the end result of the Commissioners proposal is that the school would close.

That would be a huge, devastating lose to both the students and the entire New Haven community. I have two children that attend/attended ECA, one who graduated two years ago and the other is in her junior year. It was and remains an invaluable experience for both of them. The teachers are amazingly gifted and talented and offer a broad range of personal and professional experience to their students and I can not see how certification would enhance their teaching abilities. To have the privilege of being taught by experienced, practicing professionals in their field versus a "certified" teacher with no real life professional experience, what would you choose for your children? The answer seems obvious. I ask you to please reexamine this certification requirement for professionals who have tremendous assets to offer public education, and will be deterred from continuing to teach by imposing this requirement.

Other states have found creative solutions to this problem. The state of Kentucky allows for a waiver of certification requirements for adjunct faculty; the state of New York allows for permits (see <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/typesofcerts.htm>).

The alternative of providing a permit to the part-time professionals at ECA, rather than requiring certification, would be the solution that would best enable the school to continue with its current roster of extraordinary teachers.

The Commissioners present certification requirement would make it impossible to sustain a program that is inspiring our children to highly achieve and readying them for our competitive global economy, as well as fostering their admissions and scholarships to the best post-secondary conservatories and universities. We cannot afford for such a compromise in the education of our children to occur.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.