

My name is Dom D'Andrea. I'm a sophomore at the ACES Educational Center for the Arts (ECA), and I'm here to support providing adjunct instructor certificates to part time professional artists in arts magnet high schools as defined in H6666, Sec. 5.

ECA is not just another school. It's a place to learn, yes, but it's also a place to experiment and explore the arts. Excelling in the arts is not easy, and constantly we're told that succeeding as a professional artist is nearly impossible. But at ECA we learn this is not always the case. Our screenplay teacher, for example, has had nine feature films produced, as well as over seventy hours of live television. Our poetry teacher has had two poetry books published, and judges writing competitions. Everyone who teaches at ECA has been a success in their art, and is passionate about allowing students to express themselves and discover their own style and voice, and ultimately, succeed.

Last year my screenplay teacher told his students to write a short film. Some ideas bubbled up, and finally I put mine to paper. Over the semester the short film I wrote grew, and at the end of the year my teacher proposed that we work together on it over the summer and eventually have it filmed. Using his prior connections directing plays, he found a producer who proposed rewrites and script changes. By the end of the summer, my short movie was filmed. This proved to be an excellent experience, as I got to learn what it was like working for a producer, and having to constantly revise, and this led to a dramatic change in the way I look at writing.

ECA is not just another high school: it's a school of the arts. The arts themselves are almost impossible to define, and difficult to teach, which makes those who have succeeded, and those who are passionate about their work, the perfect candidates to teach young artists.