

Testimony
Submitted to the
Education Committee

March 16, 2009

Raised Bill No. 6666 ***An Act Concerning Teacher Certification.***

Good afternoon Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleishmann, and members of the Education Committee.

My name is Dr. Craig Edmondson, and I serve as the Executive Director of Area Cooperative Educational Services, ACES serving the twenty-five districts in South Central Connecticut.

I am submitting testimony today in support of Raised Bill No. 6666, An Act Concerning Teacher Certification with the endorsement of the RESC Alliance. I appreciate the work of the General Assembly during these unprecedented times of fiscal challenges and I thank you for the work you do.

Commissioner of Education Mark McQuillan's stated in the High School Reform document introduction:

"We have a responsibility to our children to prepare them for the demands of the 21st Century. Outdated structures and approaches in our high schools must be replaced with engaging, content-rich experiences that will enable our students to achieve at higher levels...."

Proposed "new language" to this bill will allow for the continuation of these content rich experiences for almost 300 students in our school and others students around our state. Highly qualified professionals in the areas of music, art, theatre, dance and writing have shared their gifts and expertise for more than thirty years at the Educational Center for the Arts, ECA, an ACES operated part-time magnet school. These part-time instructors are supervised by a certified administrator and a certified department chair. They are highly qualified enough to teach at many of the finest colleges and universities in our state including Yale, University of New Haven and several of our State Universities to name a few.

Section 5 of this bill creates a new certification "adjunct instructor certificate" for "any applicant with specialized training, experience or expertise in the arts." This is important legislation for our school and the other arts magnet school in our state and if enacted will allow for these highly qualified practitioners in the arts to continue to teach our students. Without it, a traditional certification requirement would prevent these professionals from sharing their talents and expertise and potentially put our school in risk of closing.

Once again, thank you for your work on behalf of the public school students in Connecticut.