

Testimony of Theodora Doyon
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My name is Theodora Doyon and I'm a sophomore at Wilbur Cross High School in New Haven. I have attended ECA for two years and I'm in the music department. The experience at ECA has been wonderful. My home school's music and arts programs are definitely lacking, and ECA makes up for them.

The good thing about ECA is the environment. The fact that all the kids attending are arts driven and friendly made me comfortable in the program immediately. The teachers are professional artists and you really feel like your getting almost a college education. My teachers are inspiring and great. As a teenager, most adults talk down to us, but ECA teachers are more like mentors, they treat you like equals and respect your creative ideas. They inspire you to push past the ordinary and think of your art in a completely original way. I play the Bassoon, a classical instrument by nature, but in the fall of 2008, I was placed in a Jazz ensemble that not only increased my playing ability, but my confidence. I was persuaded to solo in a few pieces, which took me out of my comfort zone. After a few tries, I got the hang of it and now I can solo. I thank Jeff Fuller, the Jazz teacher for teaching me how to have confidence in myself.

Next year I will switch to the ECA writing department. I decided to switch because I was inspired by Caroline Rosenstone, the head of the ECA writing department, who taught my elective class in the fall of 2008 to start writing again, something I have always loved to do but never felt very talented at.

Not only are the teachers at ECA great supporters of our creativity and character, they are extremely qualified to teach us. My Orchestra teachers at ECA teach at Wesleyan. The string teacher, Marvin Warshaw is the first chair viola in the New Haven Symphony and teaches at Neighborhood Music School, among other things. My Composition teacher is having her doctoral composition performed at Yale in the spring. My Jazz teacher at ECA has played with many "jazz gods" as my father likes to call them, such as Dizzy Gillespie, and Gerry Mulligan who have inspired whole schools of jazz (bebop and California cool jazz).

Its devastating to think that ECA might not be open for future generations of teenagers. If teachers are forced to go back to school to be certified, they will quit. My composition teacher would have to go back to school after Yale to learn how to teach band, even though she will never teach anything other than composition, a field that she will have a doctorate in later this year. Without the teachers, kids who live for ECA will suffer. We go to schools each day, which are so fast paced that there is no time to talk with teachers and mull over ideas. ECA is the thing many of us get up in the morning for, and for some of us, its vital.