

Lisa Cataldi

From: Marty Sprague <martysprague1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 3:43 PM
To: House Education Committee
Subject: re: testimony in support of H-7020

From: Martha Sprague
Re: H-7020
January 24, 2024

Dear House Education Committee Members,

My name is Martha Sprague, a resident and voter in the town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island. I am a dance educator, who retired from the Providence School District after over 30 years of service. Currently I am a dance education consultant for program and curriculum development. I support H-7020 the Transparency in Arts Education Access and Proficiency Act

I am writing to strongly encourage you to move H-7020, the Transparency in Arts Education Access and Proficiency Act to the full house and to recommend its passage.

Arts Education (Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts) has long been recognized as core subject areas by the federal government of our country. H-7020 will ensure that districts are working towards providing to ALL STUDENTS course work that meets the National Core Arts Standards which the state of Rhode Island has adopted. In this way, districts' progress towards meeting the Arts Proficiency mandates of the BEP and the updated High School Graduation Requirements will be transparently reported to the public and especially the parents of our students.

If H-7020 is not passed, once again the students of Rhode Island will be bereft of their full comprehensive educational opportunities that students from other states receive. Judging by the last four contracts that I have received, there is a movement in the U.S., despite these difficult times, to provide rigorous arts curriculum and to develop full arts programming in all the arts areas.

Educators and parents know that the inherent skills and abilities of the artistic process will serve our students throughout life. Ideation (coming up with ideas), exploration and experimentation, problem recognition and solving, risk-taking, persistence, remain floating in the uncertain or stuck places (waiting for the ah ha or delayed gratification), revision and refinement of the artwork are all survival skills. Testimonies from former students speak to how these thinking skills and abilities helped them succeed in post-secondary education and careers.

H-7020 also requires that RIDE employs an Art Education Curriculum Coordinator, just as it does other content coordinators. Again, I remind you that the federal government that the arts are considered as core subjects and should be funded and supported as such. I also respectfully remind you, our honorable State Representatives, that there must be equal educational opportunities across all subject areas and these be available to ALL STUDENTS.

Thank you for your service to our state.

Respectfully,

Martha Sprague