

From: [Deena Amont](#)
To: [University Governance](#)
Subject: Text of statement for discontinuance hearing for VAE program
Date: Sunday, September 26, 2021 3:12:35 PM

I plan to attend the October 14 hearing on the discontinuance of the VAE program at KU. As requested, here is my written statement in advance of the hearing:

My name is Deena Amont. I am an art teacher at Lawrence High School and I am a 25+ year Lawrence resident.

I am here to attest to the importance of not simply maintaining, but also enhancing the VAE program. The VAE program at KU is absolutely critical to the continued success and health of art education in Kansas and wherever Jayhawk art teachers land.

I enrolled in the VAE Graduate Certification (now Licensure) program at KU in 2000 after a 15-year career in adult education administration. I received my teaching license, and a few years later, my Master's Degree in VAE also at KU. I earned my National Board Certification shortly thereafter. I have been teaching art for the past 20 years. I owe my professional success and my personal fulfillment to my education in the VAE program.

In those 20 years I have served my profession as a supervising teacher for many student teachers from KU and other local universities. I have also hosted numerous undergraduate students for classroom observation.

I can tell you without a doubt, hands-down, the KU students are light years ahead of students from other programs. KU VAE students learn art media and pedagogy in depth and breadth that students from other programs do not. KU VAE students have a superior understanding of curriculum development, assessment and classroom management compared to their peers from other schools. KU VAE students are taught and mentored to be professionals.

Others have provided statistical data to support my anecdotal information that KU VAE students go on to be informal leaders and mentors to others in their districts and formal leaders in our state and national professional association.

The success of the KU VAE students is in large part due to the outstanding VAE faculty, who consistently have high expectations for the future educators of our children. The VAE faculty provide art-teaching-specific lessons, assignments, projects, as well as supervision and mentoring that is absolutely critical for the high-quality preparation KU VAE students receive.

I implore you, please do not eliminate the VAE program. Please support the program and fund the faculty positions at previous levels of 3 faculty positions to continue the high quality VAE teacher education for which KU is known.

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