

Hi I'm Lisa Holton. I teach JEWELRY/METALS and SCULPTURE at Olathe East HS. I graduated in 2018 from KU with a Bachelor's of ART ED.

I would definitely not be teaching right now, if KU hadn't offered ART ED 6 years ago. I'm not a traditional student (I started at KU when I was 57). I couldn't relocate to get my teachers training and certification. KU was the only program in the KC area that I trusted to get me trained, licensed and certified. UMKC was under reorganization and couldn't guarantee they could get me certified, KCAI was prohibitively expensive, and they have since dissolved their VAE program. So, I drove 4 times a week back and forth from Overland Park to the Lawrence campus. By the Fall of 2018 I was hired full time.

I was surprised to hear is it even being considered that this program be dissolved. I would think you would be trying to grow it!

If you stop offering Visual Art Education, you will be sending the message that K-12 Art Education isn't important. KU shows it believes that Studio Art programs that train fine artists are important. How do we inspire the coming generations to work as professional artist if we don't start inspiring them from a young age? It would seem we have to invest in schooling teachers who are engaging and inspiring.

OK, so I know in my classes I only have about 1 in 20 that will even consider going to college to become artist majors, and maybe 1 in 200 that will become viable working artists. So why spend funds for art classes at all in schools, some say?

We had a suicide at our high school last week. And the art classroom is, in my mind, the best place for young people to talk and think about their emotions and challenges. I learned at KU how art teachers can create lessons that call on students to think about their ideals, the challenges in the world, to be empathetic to others. And I've been told by parents that their student looks forward to my class, as a time to destress and just BE with their thoughts and emotions. To get away for an hour.

That's all, I wanted to say, and also that I will be really sad if this valuable program isn't allowed to continue.

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