

Arts should be part of core curriculum

The arts are academic. Kudos to MacDuffie student MacKenzie Halpin for her volunteer theater and dance work with her peers at the school (Republican, July 29).

She has found her voice through the arts and wants to help others "tap into their creativity." Halpin states, "At the MacDuffie School, aside from academics, a major curriculum focus is on the arts."

According to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the arts are a core academic subject. Title IX General Provisions, Part D Definitions, Sec. 9101. Definitions (11): "The term 'core academic subjects' means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography."

I commend the leaders in those Springfield schools who have made a commitment to include the arts (Dance, Music, Theater, Visual Arts) in the education of their students, and I long for the day when school district policy will mandate equity in arts instruction to ALL children across the city.

Instruction in the arts needs to be provided through a standard curriculum and a required time allotment (number of minutes per week) as is the case in the other core academic subjects. The arts are core academic subjects - not extra, not enrichment, not an after-school program.

VERA S. BAKER
Springfield