

March 8, 2015

To whom this may concern,

My name is Brenda McLaughlin. I am 24 years old, and I am a student at New Directions Academy. I have been going to this school for a few years. I have one credit left to graduate. I have worked so hard to get this far. I have two children, and I work full time.

Before I went to New Directions, I went to Let's Help to try to my G.E.D. Let's Help was not flexible with my hours. Due to having a child and working long hours, I could not continue school. A few years later I heard about New Directions Academy. The teachers at New Directions are unbelievably motivating and helpful. The hours were flexible; I could even work from home. I was very pleased and proud that I was on the path to getting my high school diploma. Although I have worked some late nights and sacrificed time with my children to make a future for them and for myself, I have completed 23 credits through NDLA, and I am now one credit away from graduating! My daughter is 5 years old, and I tell her how important it is to go to school. I tell her that mommy will be graduating this May, and mommy will be going to college next fall to be a veterinarian technician.

When I heard the news from my teachers about the two new bills I was devastated, and I began to cry. I cannot imagine what it will be like for other adults who have the goal of completing their high school requirements if these bills are passed and funding is cut for schools like New Directions. I believe that adults should have a second chance for making a life for themselves and for their families. To me, a diploma is not just a piece of paper I am going to store away, it represents my future and I my commitment to make something of my life—to be somebody. New Directions gives adults the opportunity to work when they can whether it be before work, after work, or just in between taking care of their children. Most adults are unable to attend classes from 8-4 during the day. In addition, most adults have a very difficult time passing a G.E.D test. New Directions gives us a wonderful opportunity to finish our high school requirements, and it provides the flexibility that adults, like me, need.

What I ask is to please reconsider the funding cuts that have been proposed. These cuts could impact the lives of many adults and the families they support.

Thank You,

Brenda McLaughlin,

NDLA student