



August 18, 2015

The Honorable Probate Judge Forgione
Branford – North Branford Probate Court
1019 Main Street
P.O. Box 150
Branford, CT 06405-0150

RE: Estate in the of Matter of Grace T. Ely (05-071)
FBO John Slade Ely House, New Haven

Dear Judge Forgione,

We write to you in reference to the John Slade Ely House located at 51 Trumbull Street, New Haven. We are quite impressed with the house and its proximate location to our Educational Center for the Arts Magnet School located on Audubon Street which we lease from the City of New Haven and our Little Theater on Lincoln Way. We have reviewed Mrs. Grace Ely's Last Will and Testament and believe that our ECA magnet school's use of the premises for its art programs would meet the intent and spirit of Mrs. Ely's Will as stated in Article V, Part A, "as a center for the use of such art group or groups in New Haven and vicinity", and also states "the trustee will make the best use of it for exhibiting works of art, holding art classes, lectures and recitals."

ACES, the regional education service center, of which ECA is a part, has been providing educational services through its special education programs, professional development center and magnet schools since the early 1970's. ACES was established under C.G.S. 10-66j as the regional service center for twenty five towns surrounding New Haven. We have an annual operating budget of \$85,000,000 among all of our schools and programs. ACES has 944 employees and services 2,300 students and 16,000 educators each year. We are audited annually in compliance with State of Connecticut laws and guidelines. ACES has the human capital and other capacity to be an esteemed tenant of this house. We have included last year's annual report for your review.

We envision using the house as a home for our fine arts department at ECA. We have some 75 students enrolled in grades nine through twelve, hailing from 36 school districts in and around the New Haven area. They take classes in painting, pottery, and sculpture and share their work in periodic openings. What a fabulous environment The Ely House would be for these students to hone their artistic talents and display their works. We also envision that the house could provide a new dimension to our school, ECA, and its environs by providing an international artistic flare to the neighborhood and Greater New Haven community through guest students and lecturers from other countries.

We believe that we could sort through some of the details that would be required in maintaining the property to meet the intent of the Will. We suspect that we would need to hire a scheduler to schedule the space between uses during the school year. As a school we have policies around security for our students so we would need to assure they are followed. Our normal school calendar includes ten months of school from late August to the end of June each

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year. There are other concerns which we raise below; however, we would be honored to be recognized by the Probate Court to be assigned use of the building on a long term basis.

ACES owns, leases and manages some thirteen separate properties and we have a distinguished record of maintaining our buildings to code, maintaining and repairing as needed, and seeking state reimbursements when feasible for larger projects such as roof replacements and building design implementation. To take on responsibilities in managing the Ely House would be quite possible for our Facilities Director, maintainers, custodians, and support staff.

We would be happy to hear from you to further our interest in gaining crucially needed space. This venture appears to be a match suitable to all parties. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Norm Hicks".

Norm Hicks,
ACES Board Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas M. Danehy".

Thomas Danehy, Ed.D.
ACES Executive Director

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