

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of licensing Outdoor Preschool programs in Oregon. Three of my four children spent their formative years in an Outdoor preschool/kindergarten program in Eugene, OR. At Hazelwood Outdoor Kindergarten my children learned, early on that nature is accessible, approachable, and one of life's greatest wonders. They worked on their social emotional skills while also learning what it feels like to climb trees and catch rain drops on their tongue. They experienced early literacy activities during circle time while under the canopy of a great beautiful tree. Their play things were those items found in the forest and orchard meadow and they developed a rich and varied imaginative life that was not dependent on toys or ready made activities. Our children received the highest quality of care while also learning early lessons that will surely promote community oriented and ecological thinking as they age. Our family was lucky enough to access this incredible preschool experience due to the preschool's generous financial aid policy, otherwise we would not have been able to afford an experience like it. By making outdoor preschool programs licensable, more children will have access to quality instruction and unique programming the way my children were. Their experience at Hazelwood is, without a doubt, one of the hallmark experiences of their childhood and we regularly witness the gifts they received even now at ages 10, 8, and 6.