

Outdoor Nature-Based Education Equivalents

This outline shows options for education equivalents for hiring and job role education for Outdoor Nature-Based (ONB) programs and ways to meet ONB hiring education/training requirements. ONB providers must meet the hiring and job role education requirements in WAC 110-302. For more information, visit: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=110-302&full=true#110-302>.



Hiring Education and Nature-Based Training/Education Requirements

Hiring Requirements

Roles	Hiring Education	ONB-specific Education/Training
Lead teachers	High school diploma or equivalent	One college credit or 10 hours of nature-based education or training
Early Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors • Assistant directors • Program supervisors 	10 ECE credits (12 or fewer children) 25 ECE credits (13-24 children) 45 ECE credits (25+ children)	Three college credits or 30 hours of nature-based education or training
School-Age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site directors • Program directors 	12 college credits	Three college credits or 30 hours of nature-based education or training

Job Role Education Requirements

Roles	Full Job Role Education
• Lead teachers	WA State ECE Short Certificate or equivalent
• Directors • Assistant directors • Program supervisors	WA State ECE State Certificate or equivalent
• Site directors	30 college credits or equivalent
• Program directors	45 college credits or equivalent

Hiring education and ONB-specific training/education must be met prior to being hired or promoted into the job role. WAC 110-302-0100 (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=110-302-0100>).



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Job Role Education Requirements

Roles	Required Experience At Time Of Hire/ Promotion	Required Job Role Education	Or Equivalent	Job Role Education Time Allowed From Date Of Hire Or Promotion
Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have two years of experience as a teacher of children in any age group enrolled in an ONB program; and At least six months of experience in administration or management 	ECE State Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-year ECE certificate with minimum of 45-aligned credits or related Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) accredited teacher credential in infant/toddler MACTE accredited teacher credential in ECE Association Montessori International diploma in assistants to infancy (birth-3) Association Montessori International diploma in primary (ages 3-6) American Montessori Society diploma - Infant and Toddler (Birth-3) American Montessori Society diploma - Early Childhood (Ages 2 1/2-6) A current CDA (Child Development Associate Credential) + 35 aligned college credits* 45-aligned college credits* Experience-based competency demonstration (based on eligibility) 	Within five years of being hired or promoted
Assistant Director	Have two years of experience as a teacher of children in any age group enrolled in an ONB program; or Have two years of experience in administration or management; or A department approved plan	Same as Director	Same as Director, options above	Within five years of being hired or promoted
Program Supervisor	Have two years of experience as a teacher of preschool-age or school-age children in any ONB program	Same as Director	Same as Director, options above	Within five years of being hired or promoted
Lead Teacher	N/A	ECE Initial and Short Certificate	Options above or one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PACE 1-4 (preschool or mixed-age group only) 20-aligned college credits A current CDA + eight aligned college credits* Experience-based competency demonstration (based on eligibility) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Certificate - Within five years of being hired or promoted Short Certificate - Within two years of completing the Initial Certificate
Assistant Teacher	N/A	ECE Initial Certificate	Options above or one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 Military Modules A current CDA (earned at a college or in a community-based training) 12 aligned college credits* 	Within five years of being hired or promoted

*College credits must align with the 8 WA State ECE Core Competencies and be verified in the workforce registry (MERIT).

School-Age Only Job Role Education Requirements

Roles	Required Experience At Time Of Hire/Promotion	Required Job Role Education	Or Equivalent	Job Role Education Time Allowed From Date Of Hire Or Promotion
Program Director	Two years of experience as a teacher of preschool-age or school-age children enrolled in an ONB program, and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least six months of experience in administration or management; or • A department approved plan 	45 college credits	Experience-based competency demonstration (based on eligibility)	Within five years of being hired or promoted
Site Director	Two years of experience as a teacher of preschool-age or school-age children in an ONB program	30 college credits	Experience-based competency demonstration (based on eligibility)	Within five years of being hired or promoted
Lead Teacher	N/A	12 college credits	Experience-based competency demonstration (based on eligibility)	Within five years of being hired or promoted
Assistant Teacher	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

College credits must align with the 8 WA State ECE Core Competencies and be verified in the workforce registry (MERIT).

Equivalent Options for Required Nature-Based Education/Training

ONB Hiring Education/Training: If the educator has completed a **three-hour course** in one of the following topic areas, they meet the hiring **ONB-specific education/training requirement:**

- Environmental Studies/Science
- Environmental Education
- Geology
- Conservation Biology
- Anthropology
- Botany
- Sustainability
- Indigenous Studies

Individuals may also complete ECED& 137: Outdoor Learning for Young Children, which is part of the Washington State ECE Short Certificate – Outdoor Learning Specialization.