

Endorsement Checklist Essay

My coursework from the University of Oregon has provided me with strong theoretical foundation that has shaped my passion for becoming a supportive and inclusive elementary teacher. Throughout my studies at the University of Oregon, I have gained knowledge of child developmental stages and how this will help guide me as a teacher. Theories such as the Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Determination Theory have influenced my approach to education, creating a commitment to supporting my students' social, physical, and mental wellbeing alongside their academic pursuits. Beyond coursework, my experiences working in K-5 schools and afterschool programs have allowed real-world settings to apply the theories I've learned. These experiences have fueled my belief in the importance of building reciprocal relationships with students, their families, and coworkers as these relationships are foundational to meaningful learning.

Furthermore, I have taken subject-specific classes in reading, science, and history that have expanded my content knowledge. My Environmental Humanities minor has provided me with tools to teach environmental science and humanities in engaging and relevant ways. I am highly passionate about teaching environmental science in my future classroom, as I believe children deserve to understand the realities of the challenges in our world and the power they hold to face them.

While these courses and experiences have prepared me in many ways, there are still some areas that I seek to further develop. Aside from a math sequence that explored teaching methods for K-8 math, I have limited training in subject-specific teaching methods and strategies due to a focus on educational theories in my current coursework. I am particularly looking forward to the opportunity to observe, collaborate with, and learn from a mentor teacher regarding the specifics and practice of teaching. Through my academic studies, hands-on experiences, and continued desire for growth, I feel well-prepared to take this next step in my teaching journey. I am eager to expand my pedagogical knowledge, refine my instructional skills, and continue developing as a reflective, student-centered teacher.