

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regards to allowing VT pre k students to be able to attend NH preschools. I currently live in Guildhall, VT (2021-present) and previously lived in Maidstone, VT (2011-2021), both towns are part of the NEK school district. My son, now in 2nd grade (attending Lancaster Elementary School), attended two NH preschools, Mount Royal (while we lived in Maidstone) when he was 3, and Little Leopards Learning Center (a learning lab preschool for the Teacher Ed program at Littleton High School CTC) when he was 4 (lived in both towns during this school year). Due to the lack of preschools in the VT area where we live, we did not have many options of where to send our son for preschool in the state.

The reasons behind this were the locations of the VT preschools around as well as the hours available versus our work hours. Because of this, we paid for our son to go to preschool for two years, 3 full days one year, 4 full days the second year. Since I work in a school district I understand the importance of preschool for children to gain not only academic skills, but social skills, in order to succeed in both school and beyond. We are now doing the same thing with our daughter, who is now 4. She has started this year at Little Leopards Learning Center, where we placed her on the waitlist shortly after she was born, as spots at preschools around the north country are also very limited (Both NH and VT). She does 3 full days this year and will attend Little Leopards Learning Center again next year for 4 full days to help her have an easier transition into a 5 day a week school year for Kindergarten.

I am lucky enough to work for the Littleton School district in order to have both my kids attend preschool there as it works with my work schedule. The Little Leopards program is also reasonably priced versus some of the other preschools in the area. Research supports early childhood education (aka preschool) in helping students be more successful throughout their academic careers. Being unable to have financial assistance unless our children go to a VT preschool stops many families from sending their children to preschool not only due to locations of these preschools versus where we live and work but also due to financial restraints that some families have, as well as the hours of these preschools versus work hours of the families.

Since my son's first year at preschool, I have reached out to the district as well as others to see what can be done to assist other families in the future to be able to utilize NH preschools without having to pay. I understand that we choose to live in such a rural location, but that does not mean that our children should not be allowed the same education and luxuries as those VT students who live in urban areas and have ample preschools to choose from. We pay our taxes and should have a say as to where the education money goes for our children's schooling, especially within a school choice district.

Respectfully,
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