**Press release**

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**Montessori Beginnings School**

**Receives National Certification as**

**Nature Explore Classroom**

Sandwich, Ma. (August 12, 2014) Montessori Beginnings School, located at 180 Farmersville Road in Sandwich, MA has earned national certification as a Nature Explore Classroom from Dimensions Educational Research Foundation and the Arbor Day Foundation. “We couldn’t be more thrilled to accept this honor. We are excited to partner Montessori’s STEM based curriculum with Nature Explore’s program both indoors and out,” said Kathleen Raymond, Montessori Beginnings Head of School.

Montessori Beginnings School joins a growing network of organizations and institutions that have created effective nature-based outdoor learning environments for children. This network allows for idea-sharing, peer support and continuous development. More information on Montessori Beginnings School may be found at <http://www.natureexplore.org/certified/MontessoriBeginnings.cfm>

Nature Explore Classrooms are part of the [Nature Explore](http://www.natureexplore.org/) program, a collaborative program of the Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation developed in response to the growing disconnect between children and nature. Certified Nature Explore Classrooms help fill the void by integrating research-based outdoor learning opportunities into children’s daily lives.

“Montessori Beginnings School has shown tremendous leadership in growing the next generation of environmental stewards,” said Susie Wirth, Nature Explore Outreach Director. “Their commitment to providing research-based and nature-rich learning offers a wonderful example to educators throughout the country.”

The classrooms, which are being developed across the country, offer interactive elements such as musical instruments made of natural materials, garden or pathway areas and natural materials for building and creating art. Children who learn and grow in Certified

Nature Explore Classrooms enhance concentration, develop creativity and problem-solving, relieve stress and improve skills in many areas of development.

Outdoor classrooms that are designed according to standards and principles described in Dimensions Educational Research Foundation’s *Learning With Nature Idea Book* are eligible to become certified Nature Explore Classrooms. A new guidebook, *At Home With Nature: Creating Nature Explore Playscapes for Families,* helps parents bring the same research-based approach to learning in nature to their own children at home.

The first Nature Explore Classroom is located in the Tree Adventure attraction at Arbor Day Farm, the Arbor Day Foundation’s interactive conservation venue in Nebraska City, Nebraska. More information on the programcan be found at [natureexplore.org](http://www.natureexplore.org), on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/#!/natureexplore) or on the Nature Explore community [blog](http://community.natureexplore.org/).

**About Arbor Day Foundation:** Arbor Day Foundation is a million member nonprofit conservation and education organization with the mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees.  More information on the Foundation is available at [arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org/).

**About Dimensions Educational Research Foundation:** The mission of the non-profit [Dimensions Educational Research Foundation](http://www.dimensionsfoundation.org/) is to inspire children, families and educators to connect more deeply with the world around them by providing innovative, research-based programs and resources.