Iowa Department of Human Services
CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

Name of Center: Graettinger-Terril Preschool **Enrollment:** 16 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52695

Street: 205 S Lincoln Ave **City:** Graettinger Iowa **Zip** 51342 **County:** Palo Alto

Mailing Address: PO Box 58, Graettinger, IA, 51342

Director's Name: Jeremy Simington **Phone Number:** 712-859-3286

On-Site Supervisor(s): Sara Hansen (lead teacher), Staci Girres (asst) **E-Mail:** jsimington@gt.ratitans.org

Date(s) of Visit: 11-14-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

X **New Application** **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 10-15-2024

FIRE INSPECTION X **State** **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 10-04-2024

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			20		20
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 10-28-2024 to 11-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbry **Date:** 11-18-2024

I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced visit was made to the Graettinger-Terril Preschool on 11-14-24. This is the initial licensing visit for the program which offers a 3 year old preschool program. The program has been in operation in the past under the oversight of the Department of Education providing services to children with an Individualized Education Plan (EIP), however for the current year there were no children under an EIP which would require the program to be licensed under DHHS. During the visit I met with where I met with Jeremy Simington who is the program director and school principal, Sara Hansen who is the lead teacher in the classroom, an Staci Girres who is the assistant in the classroom. All are well qualified for the positions they hold based on their education, experience, and on-going training. The program offers a single session 3 year old preschool operating 4 days a week. There are currently 16 children enrolled in the program served by 2 teachers. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The program operates out of a single classroom in a wing of the Graettinger school building. The classroom has a secondary exit providing direct egress to the outdoors and an enclosed playground space. Windows along the exterior wall provide ample natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. A restroom is available directly from the classroom so that children do not need to leave the room. An additional sink is available in the room which can be used for handwashing, and/or food preparation. The room have a large open floor plan which is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture and play structures. Executive desks are arranged to define a teacher work space. The room is arranged so that there are no blind areas. The room was clean with no safety concerns related to maintenance noted. The toys and materials present in the classroom were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children.

As would be expected the focus of the program is developing school readiness skills. A copy of the daily schedule was posted, and while the class does follow an established curriculum plan a copy was not posted. Information on the learning focus themes is provided to parents via a newsletter but a copy should also be posted for those parents/visitors who do not have access to internet, lost the copy, or did not receive a copy. The center uses the Creative Curriculum, and Launch Pad curriculums to establish lesson plans that focus on a general learning theme, and specific learning concepts of letters, and numbers that are emphasized through repetition and activities such as art/crafts, and journaling. Both teachers were engaged with the children during the time of the visit. The class did move through the planned schedule and curriculum. During the visit the class did engage in center play activity with one teacher doing a small group teacher lead journal activity while the other moved through the room interacting with the other children in their play. This did take up much of the morning and one issue that was noted is that the children began to have increasing issues with behavior as they competed for opportunities to play in various centers. The teachers did address this by redirecting the children. One option that was discussed was implementing a system where children can play in a center for a defined time period and then move to another center option which would also support the children moving through the teacher lead activity.

The center does have good health and safety policies in place. The school custodial services are responsible for much of the facilities maintenance including cleaning but the teachers also sanitize tables and other surfaces as needed throughout the day. A deeper cleaning including disinfecting of toys, and laundering of bedding is done by the teachers on weekly intervals. Handwashing practices were mixed on the day of my visit. As noted the classroom has restroom facilities located immediately off the programming space and children were observed to use the restroom but not wash their hands, nor did

teachers inquire if they had washed them or direct them to do so. One option would be for the class to use the additional sink in the classroom for handwashing which would provide for a greater opportunity for the teachers to ensure that the children do wash their hands as needed. In addition prior to lunch the class did wash their hands as a group but children were then directed to sit on the floor to watch a video while waiting for their peers. By sitting on the floor this negated the benefit of washing their hands given that all of the children were touching the floor before leaving for lunch. Having the children stand in a line, or sit at a table would help to reduce the risk of recontamination. Chemical cleaners, first aid kits, and most other items that could pose a risk to children were stored in areas where they were not readily accessible. One issue that was observed were staff purses which were left under or near teacher desks. While it is understood that the classroom expectation is that children do not go into that area they would still have access and purses need to be secured where they are not accessible given that they frequently contain items such as medications that can be a risk to children. The parents provide sleeping mats, bags, and blankets for children that nap, and the program maintains some mats and items for children who's parents do not provide those items. A first aid kit is maintained in the classroom and has supplies to address most common minor injuries. The class also has access to the school office and nurse for additional supplies to address more serious injuries. Emergency contact information for each child is maintained in the classroom.

Lunch is prepared and served in the school cafeteria and follows the planned school menu. While the children do eat at the same time as the high school students they do sit at a separate table. The teachers sit and eat with the children to provide supervision. It was reviewed that while the served lunch was credible there are differences between the school lunch program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that the preschool class would be required to follow. This includes that the CACFP does not count desserts such as brownies as credible items for grain based requirement, nor is flavored (chocolate/strawberry) milk allowed for children under 6 years of age. Snacks are provided by the program and served in the classrooms. It was reviewed that CACFP does require two credible elements to provided for each snack period. It was also observed that bulk packaged items were stored in rolled bags, and some unopened items were stored in a closet on the floor. It was reviewed that all foods need to be stored in air tight sealable food grade containers, and at least 6 inches off the floor to reduce the risk of being an attractant to insects and rodents, and spoilage.

As noted the classroom has a secondary exit that opens directly to the outdoors and a preschool playground space. The space is an inner courtyard enclosed by the building on 3 sides, and fenced on the 4th. The playground has a paved walk area, and an area with climbing structures and swings. The equipment was observed to be in good repair. Rubber mulch is used for fall surfacing and a good depth of material was present in fall zones. There is some displacement creating a limited tripping hazard at the transition between the fall surfacing and the pavement. Additional fall surfacing should be added so that it is a smooth transition, or the edge of the pavement could be painted with a high contrast paint to help delineate the transition. Shade is limited to that which would be provided by the buildings.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices for No Smoking, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting, Consultant Contact, and the Permission To Open letter were posted in an area readily accessible to all parents and visitors. Emergency evacuation plans for fire and tornado with both written and diagram instructions were not posted by all exits from the classroom as required. All child files were reviewed and found to contain all required information. There were no children with any identified allergies attending the program but it was reported that the school nurse does prepare response plans as needed. It was reviewed that response plans are needed for all identified allergies including Food, Environmental, and Medication. Background checks and physicals are maintained at the school district office in Terrill. Prior confirmation of background check completion had been obtained. While both teachers do attending on-going professional development both will still need to complete Essentials Of Child Care though do not need to complete subsections on Shaken Baby, and Safe Sleep. The center will need to obtain Radon Testing for the 3 year old classroom, install a Carbon Monoxide Detector for the 3 year old classroom if a detection system is not integrated into the general fire alarm system, and conduct and log monthly fire and tornado drills for the 3 year old classroom. When conducting emergency evacuation drills the class does not need to sound the alarm system, and can count those drills conducted quarterly for the school in general. The school handbooks were reviewed and the program is still working to expand and develop those policies needed for the preschool program that were identified following that review.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This is a program that has been in operation for sometime under the department of education oversight when providing services to children with an IEP. As a result the program has a very strong curriculum and the teachers do an excellent job of helping the children build school readiness skills.

IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:

109.10(8): Children’s hand washing: Center shall ensure staff assist children in personal hygiene. For each infant or child with a disability, a separate cloth for washing and one for rinsing may be used in place of running water. Children’s hands shall be washed:Immediately before eating or participating in food service activity.After using the restroom or being

diapered.After handling animals.
-- Children were observed to not wash their hands following restroom use. Children were instructed to sit on the floor to wait for peers after washing hands prior to eating lunch which negated the benefit of washing.

109.10(15)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.
-- Evacuation plans for both fire and tornado with written and diagram instructions need to be posted by all exits from the classroom. Drills need to be practiced for both fire and tornado evacuation monthly and documentation of those drills must be maintained.

109.12(4): Sufficient toilet articles are provided for handwashing.Sufficient and safe indoor play equipment, materials, and furniture that conforms with CPSC or ASTM.Play equipment, materials, and furniture meet the developmental, activity, and special needs of the children.Room's arrangement does not obstruct the direct observation of children.Individual covered mats, beds, or cots, and appropriate bedding is provided for all children who nap.Procedures are developed and implemented to maintain equipment and materials in a sanitary manner.Sufficient spacing is maintained between equipment to reduce transmission of disease and allow ease of movement by children and staff to respond to activities and care needs.Sanitary procedures are followed for use and storage of personal hygiene articles.
-- Purses need to be stored in areas where they are not accessible to children. Cots or sleeping mats with appropriate cover sheets/bedding need to be provided for all children who nap.

109.15(1): Center shall serve each child a full, nutritionally balanced meal as defined by CACFP guidelines.Staff shall provide supervision at table during snacks and meals.Children at center two hours or longer shall be offered food of not less than two hours and no more than three hours apart unless child is asleep.
-- All foods were not properly stored in air tight sealable food grade containers once the original packaging seal had been broken, were not stored elevated from the ground, and children were provided meal/snack options that did not meet CACFP guidelines for credibility.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.