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

Name of Center: Stepping Stones Early Learning Center Inc **Enrollment:** 104 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 23962

Street: 300 Panther DR **City:** Knoxville Iowa **Zip** 50138 **County:** Marion

Mailing Address: 300 Panther DR, Knoxville, IA, 50138

Director's Name: Keri Garrison **Phone Number:** 641-828-7837

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** kgarrison@knoxvillesteppingstones.com

Date(s) of Visit: 11-06-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 10-31-2022

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

Date Inspected: 08-09-2021

Comments : 8/18/21 -compliance date

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 X Other NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	60	36	121	108	325
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2022 to 12-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Melinda Larson, Child Care Licensing Consultant **Date:** 12-14-2023

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Stepping Stones Early Learning Center has been in operation since August 2006. The center provides child care services for infants through preschool age. The building has a secured entrance. The licenses for this center and Stepping Stones Kids Klub, which serves school age children, is under one license. The school age children have program areas in West Elementary School and this school building is located right beside the Stepping Stones Early Learning Center. The gym and a few classrooms are used for programming. Keri Garrison is the program director. She began in this role in August 2014. Previously, Keri was the On Site Supervisor and oversaw the school age program for nineteen years. Keri has a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education.

An unannounced visit was completed on today's date. All areas subject to HHS licensing rules were reviewed. Mandatory postings are in place at the entrance. Class schedules and lesson plans are posted by classroom entrances. Each classroom has age appropriate supplies and furnishings in place. Classrooms that serve children ages two and up have labeled interest centers within the classrooms.

Keri was present and she assisted with today's visit. The center has ten classrooms in the main center. Nine classrooms were in operation today. Kids Klub was not in operation during today's visit. Children were observed during staff led activities and individual play activities. Some classrooms were observed during lunch. Some children were sitting at tables doing staff directed activities, such as letter recognition activities and crafts. Circle group time was observed, where staff were reviewing letters and numbers. Staff were reading books to children as group activities.

The center has a full kitchen and full time cook. The center participates in CACFP. The center serves breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. Menus are on a six week rotation. Lunch served today was chicken strips, carrots, Sun Chips, peaches and milk.

The center has a fenced playground. Rubber tile is used for surfacing material. There are a few climbing structures. Kids Klub uses the school's playground also. The center completes monthly playground checks.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Keri has been in a leadership with this center for many years. This center participates in the IQ4K and has a one star rating. The classrooms are well furnished with age appropriate toys and learning materials. The center has security monitor cameras placed in the classrooms and playground areas.

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

109.7(1): All staff(within first 3 months of employment)Two hours of approved training FOR the mandatory reporting of child abuse.At least one hour of training regarding universal precautions and infectious disease control.Certification in American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health institute or MEDIC First Aid infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) OR equivalent certification approved by the department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid that uses a nationally recognized curriculum or is received from a nationally recognized training organization including the American Red Cross,American Heart Association, American Safety and Health Institute or MEDIC First Aid or an equivalent certification approved by the department.A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Minimum health and safety trainings, approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed.
Some newer staff hadn't completed some mandatory trainings in required time frame.

109.8(2): Ratio maintained in center as required by age.
Children under 18 months of age were in classrooms were 2 year olds.

109.9(1)a: All files contain statement signed by staff indicating whether they have a criminal conviction or founded child/dependent adult abuse.
This form was missing in some staff files.

109.9(1)b: All files contain:A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information.Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.
A staff with a transgression was working without management following protocol to get permission for this staff to work in child care.
A few staff didn't have record checks completed prior to them starting employment at the daycare.

109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
The center had over twenty children's files with expired physicals or children who didn't have physicals on file.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The center has a full license.

Due to the licensing violations and the seriousness of criminal record check violations, this worker requested follow up communication from the director.
The director did send emails with updates with progress and resolution with the licensing violations. The staff was put on leave and hasn't been allowed to work until HHS makes a decision.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact me (phone (515-362-7823 mlarson@dhs.state.ia.us) so that we may discuss the issue. If necessary, I can make a notation in your record. You may also send a letter that will be included in your licensing file noting any disagreement you may have with this report. If you have the need for any additional information discussed during my visit, please contact me and I will forward the information to you. Thank you.

*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.

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