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

Name of Center: Tri-County Head Start-Lowell **Enrollment:** 21 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 21732

Street: 1707 Williston Ave **City:** Waterloo Iowa **Zip** 50702 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: PO Box 1050, Waterloo, IA, 50704

Director's Name: Dr. Latisha Smith **Phone Number:** 319-433-1900

On-Site Supervisor(s): Jennifer Roberts **E-Mail:** lsmith@teamtricounty.org

Date(s) of Visit:

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 02-19-2020

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	0	0	20	0	20
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 05-01-2021 to 05-01-2023
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 12-07-2022

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 04/14/22 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Tri-County Head Start-Elk Run. I met with Jennifer Roberts, the on-site supervisor. She started with the program in November 2015. Angela Balestra is the lead Head Start teacher. Elona Gorman is the Head Start assistant. Diane Bonnette is the lead teacher from the Waterloo School System for the special education children. Kelly Hansen is the Para educator in the classroom. She is employed by the Waterloo School System. Ashley Caldwell is the program manager. LaToya Kinard is the family worker for Head Start. She meets with families in the home to provide support and assist with community resources. Dr. Robert Welch is the director of the early childhood programs operated by Tri-County Head Start. His office is in the administration office in Waterloo. This is an inclusion program.

Tri-County Head Start-Elk Run is in the Elk Run Preschool Building. One classroom is licensed. The building also houses the Waterloo school system voluntary preschool classrooms and AEA classrooms. The three-year-old preschool program operates Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The morning session is 8:30 am until 12:00 pm and the afternoon session is 12:30-4:00 pm. There are currently 21 Head Start children enrolled.

An inspection of the room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The room is decorated with the children's art projects and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, computer, art, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, science/discovery, play dough, sensory table and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level so they were easily accessible to the children. There were electrical cords for the smart board and other items that need to be secured so that children do not have access to them. There were fans in the room. One fan was sitting on a heat register and another fan was sitting on a shelf used to hold center activities. These fans must be placed on the floor and the electrical cords secured so children do not have access to them.

There is one sink in the classroom and two bathrooms in the classroom. Each bathroom had one toilet and one sink. Handwashing procedures were posted in all locations.

The program uses the Creative Curriculum to prepare lesson plans and complete the GOLD assessments. Activities are based on weekly studies. Lesson plans are prepared by the two lead teachers. The classroom has a Promethean Smart Board to assist in learning activities. Head Start uses the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) program in their classroom. Head Start partners with Central Rivers AEA and they come to classrooms to work with identified children.

The center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The morning program is served breakfast and lunch. The afternoon class is served lunch and a snack. The Waterloo school system prepares all the food for the program and delivers it to the Elk Run site. Disposable products are used so dishwashing is not necessary. The meals are typically

served family style, but staff members are now serving the children their food due to the pandemic. Staff members sit with the children at each table to model appropriate behavior and assist, as necessary. Menus were posted in the classroom. There is a refrigerator in the room and thermometers were present.

The program uses Purell Food Surface Sanitizer on the food tables. Disinfecting wipes are used on toys.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in the classroom. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and the evacuation diagram were posted by the main program door in the classroom. A daily schedule was posted and a lesson plan was available for review.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Fire and tornado drills should be practices on separate dates. The program was conducting fire and tornado drills every other month. They now understand both drills must be practiced for each class every month.

I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in August 2021 and is good for two years. The results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspections were completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site and located near the entrance in the classroom. Outlets were covered. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 02/19/20.

The parent information is located outside of the classroom and outside of the family worker's office. The child care consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. The mandatory reporter poster is posted on a bulletin board outside of the Head Start family worker's office. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

Staff members were observed to have great interaction with the children. Staff members were on the floor engaged in activities in the room. Staff members maintained positive conversations with the children and provided them with praise. Staff members were patient and positive redirection was used when necessary. They introduced activities to the children. Staff members encouraged the children to use their imaginations. Staff members provided one on one interaction to the children. They were spread out in the room to provide supervision. The children seemed to enjoy and feel comfortable in the program.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Balestra states that she and Diane Bonnette work great together as lead teachers. She states she loves working with Ms. Bonnette and Kelly Hansen, the paraeducator in the room.

Ms. Balestra states they had a great turnout for parent conferences. She states the parents are involved and concerned with the children's education. She states they are able to have open communication with the parents.

Ms. Roberts states they have an inclusion room that incorporates Head Start children and special needs children from the Waterloo School System.

Ms. Balestra states they are teaching the children social/emotional skills right now so the children can communicate with one another and express their needs and feelings. They encourage children to talk with their friends to solve their problems.

Ms. Balestra states their children are independent. They have worked with them so that they can zip their own coats, open their own packages for food, etc.

Ms. Roberts states the staff members work hard to do what is best for the children and the families. She reports that is why they are there.

There is a health assistant in the school most of the time to assist with medication and other health concerns.

The Head Start program employs a family worker to go into the home of each family and assist them with support and community resources.

The level of education and training of the Head Start staff is exceptional. They exceed what is required to meet DHS licensing standards.

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

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

An administrative change is being made to change the name of this program to Tri-County Head Start-Lowell and the phone number to 319-433-1900.

An administrative change is being made in December 2022 to name Dr. Latisha Smith as the new director of the Tri-County Head Start programs. She is the Educational Services Director for Tri-County Family Development Council. She started this position in September 2021. She has a BA in early childhood and elementary education, an MA in Education and a Doctor of Education in curriculum and instruction.

*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.