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

**Name of Center:** Montessori System School **Enrollment:** 44 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22786

**Street:** 3220 Terrace Dr **City:** Cedar Falls Iowa **Zip** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

**Mailing Address:** 3220 Terrace Drive, Cedar Falls, IA, 50613

**Director's Name:** Candy Naaktgeboren **Phone Number:** 319-266-0745

**On-Site Supervisor(s):** Candy Naaktgeboren **E-Mail:** montessoricf@gmail.com

**Date(s) of Visit:** 12-01-2023

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

**LICENSING VISITS**

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

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

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

**Date Inspected:** 07-17-2023

**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:** X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 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 | 16 | 18 | 54 | 0 | 88 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**QRS Rating:** 3

| RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE: | |
|---|---|
| X | **FULL** license from 01-01-2023 to 01-01-2025 |
| | **PROVISIONAL** license from |
| | **DENIAL** of initial application |
| | **SUSPENSION** of license |
| | **REVOCATION** of license |

**Licensing Consultant:** Becky Frost **Date:** 12-05-2023

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

N/A

**II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:**

On 12/01/23 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Montessori System School in Cedar Falls. I met with Candy Naaktgeboren, the director. She has been the director for thirty-one years and has been employed by Montessori System School for over thirty years. She has worked for the center in several capacities. Ms. Naaktgeboren has a BA in Human Services and has completed Montessori training. Jennifer Tetmeyer, Russ Forcum, Cassie Naaktgeboren and Amanda McCray are in charge when Ms. Naaktgeboren is away. There are 24 staff members employed by the program.

Montessori System School is in St. Timothy's United Methodist Church. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 5:00 pm. It operates only during the school year and serves infants through children up to six-years-old. There are currently 44 children enrolled.

The program operates out of the following rooms: infants, the young preschool class operates out of two rooms for children ages two through three and one-half years old, the preschool class operates out of two rooms for children ages three and one-half through five-years-old and a daycare room. Daycare is provided for children who attend the preschool programs before and after preschool. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. There is an area for circle time in the rooms.

Montessori materials are classified in five major areas: Practical Life, Sensorial, Number Work, Language and Cultural. The program also focuses on Writing and Science. Workstations are established in each of these areas and children move at their own pace. The workstations were arranged so there was plenty of space for the children move between activities. Most materials were in good order and offered a lot of choices and variety for the children. There are vinyl steps in the infant room that have areas of exposed foam. This makes them unable to be properly sanitized. Repair these areas.

The older infants engage in a Toddler Enrichment program within the room so the children can begin manipulatives, colors and simpler works. Children are typically eighteen months old when they begin this class.

The young preschool class has the option of a four-day program and five-day program. They both run from 9:00-11:30 am.

The preschool program offers a four-day program Monday through Thursday and a five-day program Monday through Friday, both from 9:00-11:30 am. There is an extended day preschool class offered for children over the age of four-years-old based on readiness from 12:30-3:00 pm, Monday through Thursday.

The daycare room is used as a transition room. The children are brought to the room before and after preschool classes and before nap time.

There is a bathroom located on each floor of the center. The bathroom on the lower level has one toilet, one urinal, and one sink. There is also a changing table. Diaper changing procedures were posted. You must post handwashing procedures in this area. The bathroom on the upper level has two toilets and one sink. Procedures were posted. There are additional bathrooms available in the church.

Cots are used to nap. All the children nap in the fellowship hall. Bedding was stored appropriately.

The curriculum is based on the Montessori principals of teaching, and they also incorporate other childhood teachings. The preschool room is using Heggerty Phonemic Awareness. They have more group activities than other Montessori schools. According to the parent handbook, "The goals of Montessori for children are several: it encourages self-discipline, self-knowledge, and independence, as well as enthusiasm for learning, an organized approach to problem-solving, and intellectual and social skills." Co-lead teachers plan the units together. They both bring ideas for activities and add them to unit/activity calendars. The calendars are used as lesson plans to outline the programs activities each day. The program teaches a different culture each holiday to accommodate the various nationalities that are enrolled in the program. Works are changed out about every two weeks.

The rooms communicate with hand-held, portable, two-way radios. There was a phone with emergency numbers in the daycare room, office and kitchen. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits in the program rooms. Evacuation diagrams must be placed near all the exits in the fellowship hall/gym. A daily schedule was posted in the preschool room. Post a daily schedule in the young preschool room and the childcare room. Unit/activity calendars were available for review in the preschool rooms.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Documentation for fire and tornado drills is maintained in each room. I reviewed the documentation of monthly playground inspections. The program did install a radon mitigation system in the past and it required additional work in 2013. They have a device to read radon levels attached to the system. A radon test was completed in July 2021. Results were within EPA guidelines. Because the program has a radon mitigation system, they are only required to do a radon test every five years. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site on the lower level in the daycare room on the bookshelf, however, it did not have any batteries. This has been corrected. On the upper level it is in the office. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 07/17/23.

The program does participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The center provides the children with lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. The school has lunch delivered from a local Hy-Vee Store. The cost of this is included in their tuition. Snacks are provided by the program. A new menu is prepared each week. Menus and allergies/special diets were posted. No outside food is allowed to be brought into the program.

Meals are served to the children already dished out on trays. The children eat lunch in the fellowship hall. Snacks are stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Snacks are mostly eaten in the rooms. Dishes are put through an industrial dishwasher. There is a refrigerator and thermometers were present but did not appear to be working. Please check these to make sure they are working and if they are not, replace them.

There is a refrigerator in each of the classrooms and thermometers were present.

In the infant room the parents bring bottles that are already prepared to the program each day and bottles are sent home each day to be washed. The parents also provide the infants with baby food and cereal. There were crackers and cereals in the infant room that were not stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Once a food item is opened it must be stored in a sealed plastic, metal or glass container and be labeled. The room asked for Ziploc bags prior to me leaving to correct this so this will not be cited.

The center uses Oxivir Tb to sanitize the food tables and to disinfect the changing tables. I discussed diaper changes in the infant room. Remember that gloves are considered soiled and should be taken off prior to the new diaper and dressing the child.

The infant room uses Brightwheel for daily sheets. Brightwheel does not specifically address the child's disposition. Make sure this is being documented daily under notes. The entire program uses the app for communication with parents. They can take pictures of the children to send parents throughout the day. Parents also sign in and out with the Brightwheel app.

The school has two separate fenced outdoor play areas. One is for the younger children and one is for the older children. Woodchips are used as cushion surfacing in both areas. Additional woodchips are added each year. In the area for the younger children there is climbing equipment with a tunnel and slide. There are also playhouses, riding toys, benches, sensory tables and picnic tables. In the area for larger children there is climbing equipment with slides, rings and other activities. There are picnic tables, a playhouse and a second climbing structure. Trees and the building are used to provide shade in both areas.

The fellowship hall is also used for gross motor activities when the children are unable to go outside.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the

entrance.

Staff members were observed to have amazing interaction with the children. The leads in the classrooms have been with the program for years and provide stability. They were observed to have great teamwork the day of my visit. Staff members provide individual attention to each child. They offer the children choices and are flexible. Staff members were observed to be nurturing and patient. They held children on their laps as they read books to them. They sat on the floor and interacted with the children at their level. Staff members removed toys when children put them in their mouths. They encouraged children to use their imaginations. The children appeared to enjoy themselves at the program.

**III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:**

The program has a Quality Rating System (QRS) level of 3 that expires on 02/28/24.

Ms. Candy Naaktgeboren states the staff members have been great this year. Several of her staff members have longevity and the college students who work for the program have been wonderful too.

Ms. Candy Naaktgeboren states they serve great families.

Ms. Cassie Naaktgeboren states she is teaching musical yoga to all the children in the program. She has a You Tube channel for musical yoga.

Ms. Candy Naaktgeboren states their strength is they offer a lot of new and different activities for the children.

Ms. Cassie Naaktgeboren states they have a great language immersion program. They have a lead who is teaching the children Spanish. They hope to offer enrollment in the spring for small group or one on one classes for Spanish and musical yoga.

Ms. Cassie Naaktgeboren states they have community involvement. One business donated food for an ice cream social they had for families. They are going to host an event at the Cedar Falls Community Theater allowing families to see what they do in class for musical yoga and this also allows families to mingle with one another. They are also going to partner with Wilbo Burgers to have a two hour window where Montessori families can go eat and 20% of what is purchased will be donated back to Montessori.

Ms. Candy Naaktgeboren states they hired Amanda McCary to be part of their administrative team and she has been a great addition.

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

109.12(1): Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served.Program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum.Schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents.
Post a daily schedule in the young preschool room and the childcare room.

**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.

*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.