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

**Name of Center:** St Thomas Aquinas PS & BLAST After School Prog **Enrollment:** 15 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 18095

**Street:** 624 Dubuque St **City:** Webster City Iowa **Zip** 50595 **County:** Hamilton

**Mailing Address:** 624 Dubuque St, Webster City, IA, 50595

**Director's Name:** Theresa Schleisman **Phone Number:** 515-832-1346

**On-Site Supervisor(s):** Lana Crawford **E-Mail:** tschleisman@stswc.com

**Date(s) of Visit:** 09-03-2024

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

**LICENSING VISITS**

**New Application** X **Re-Application** **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:** 01-27-2023

**Comments :** E-mail confirmation received on 01-27-23 from the fire marshal that the facility had been inspected and was compliant.

**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 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 | | | 24 | | 24 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**QRS Rating:** N/A

| RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE: | |
|---|---|
| X | **FULL** license from 09-01-2024 to 09-01-2026 |
| | **PROVISIONAL** license from |
| | **DENIAL** of initial application |
| | **SUSPENSION** of license |
| | **REVOCATION** of license |

**Licensing Consultant:** Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 09-11-2024

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

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

An unannounced annual visit was made to the St. Thomas Aquinas program on 09-03-24 where I met lead teacher Lana Crawford, and school principal and program director Theresa Schleisman. Both are well qualified for the positions they hold based on their experience, education, and on-going professional development. Lana started with the program at the start of the 2023 school year, but has worked as a program director and preschool teacher with another program prior to that. The center offers preschool programming to 4 year old children T, Th,F, 8:30 am to 12:00 pm as part of the Statewide 4 Year Old Preschool Grant program which has a teacher from the school district, which Lana is the classroom assistant. The center then offers afternoon "wrap around" daycare programming for children that remain until the end of the school day at 3:30 where Lana is the lead teacher, and she has an assistant, Cailen Krusemark. The program also offers a 3 year preschool M,W 8:30 am to 11:30 am with Lana as the lead teacher for that program. The preschool is operated in one classroom located in the St. Thomas Aquinas church and school. There are currently 15 children enrolled in the 3 year old preschool class, and 13 of the children enrolled in the 4 year old class that remain at the end of the day for the wrap around daycare programming. All aspects subject to Licensing Standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout of the building and classroom remain the same as in prior reports. The physical facilities were observed to be in good repair and clean. The preschool classroom is an interior space that does not have any windows and so also serves as a designated storm shelter. There are two sinks in the classroom that allows for one to be used for hand washing, and the other to be used for food preparation or drinking water if needed. Restrooms are located off the main hallway outside the classroom and the children are escorted when needed given the multiple use nature of the facilities. The room is divided into activity centers through the placement of low shelves and furnishings which are arranged to provide the children with room to play and not create any blind areas.

The program did make some changes to the classroom with painting, and rearranging and reducing some of the equipment in the room. Activity centers include options such as reading, large/small manipulatives, math/science, art/crafts, dramatic play, and group learning. The changes to the equipment include removing some of the shelving and large manipulative items that were more of a general toy option and increasing the space for tables and materials with more of a learning focus. Each activity center was well stocked with materials that were was observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children. A copy of the daily schedule and curriculum were posted in an area readily accessible to parents, and is also provided to parents in a newsletter. The planned curriculum was "Welcome Back To School" with a focus on introductions to each other, routines, and expectations. Good interactions were observed during the time of my visit with the teachers presenting the planned curriculum, engaging with the children in their play, and attending to the children's needs. Good behavior management techniques were observed with the teachers talking about expectations, using routines, recognizing positive behaviors, and redirecting the children when needed to encourage positive behavior choices. For those situations when children did become upset, or had behavioral issues the teachers continued to use calm encouraging tones, and worked with the children to help them identify choices and behaviors that would help the child with problem solving and regaining control of their behavior.

Good health and safety practices were observed during the visit. During the visit the teachers did ensure that the children washed their hands after restroom use, and prior to snack service. First aid kits are maintained in the classroom, and the

program also has access to additional supplies maintained in the school office. There were no children taking any medications. There were children with diagnosed allergies and Lana identified that they are still waiting on parents to return allergy plan forms but the center is implementing practices such as limiting food certain food items, and having all children wash their hands upon arrival to reduce the risk of exposure. Good cleaning practices were observed with the teachers waiting for the children to be engaged in activities in other areas before treating surfaces to be cleaned. Chemical cleaners and other items that could pose a safety risk to children are stored in areas where they are not accessible.

The school has a large playground space that includes a climbing structure, swings, paved area, and a green space. The climbing structure and swings were observed to be in good repair. The pea gravel used for fall surfacing beneath the structures has developed a hard pan layer and needs to be aerated or have additional rock added to ensure a proper depth of material before the equipment is used. It was reported that a parent who has construction equipment has volunteered to both aerate and supplement the fall surfacing later this fall. Shade is available from large mature trees along the edges of the playground, the building, and the climbing structure. A storage shed is present where additional toys and materials are stored.

Snacks for the 3 year old preschool program are provided by parents who rotate responsibility each day, and the school provides snacks for the 4 year old children. A list of suggested items is provided to parents that includes credible snack options. A limited supply of snack items is kept in the classroom to supplement as needed. Good food storage and handling practices were observed on the day of my visit with teachers washing their hands for serving snack. For those children who remain in the wrap around program lunch is prepared by the school. Lunch is served in the school cafeteria but the children do sit at a separate table and the teachers sit at the table to provide supervision. A menu of served items is maintained for the snacks, and the school lunch menu is posted. The snack served on the day of my visit included prepackaged single serving cheese and pretzel packs, and milk. The teachers did not eat with the children but did provide supervision and assistance at the tables.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices and postings were present and located in an area readily accessible to parents and visitors. The program is within the first 30 days of operation and still gathering child physicals but most were complete. All staff files were reviewed and were generally complete with the exception of 1 which needed a pre-employment physical, and the physical for Lana had just expired and needed to be renewed. All inspection certificates and logs were current and available.

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

The center has updated a number of elements of the physical facilities with painting the classroom, new flooring, and plans to improve the fall surfacing of the playground.

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

109.9(1)d: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
-- Number not in compliance: 2

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
-- The fall surfacing of the outdoor playground is insufficient and either needs to be aerated or supplemented to ensure a proper depth of loose material as required by the CPSC Public Playground Safety Handbook (https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf) before children are allowed to use the climbing structures.

**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.