

National Lutheran School Accreditation
Early Childhood
Validation Team Report
Revised September 2022

Open Arms Christian Childhood Center

Bloomington, MN

April 28-30, 2024

Stacey LaMere, Captain

Heather Bielec

Kim Essington

Rachel Jeppesen

Sean Martens

Sara Mulso

Amy Triplett



FOREWARD

Becoming accredited is a strenuous process. The school and its administration are highly commended for their efforts in this ongoing accreditation process. The preparation and the arrangements for the Validation Team were well done. It is the hope and prayer of the members of the Validation Team that the enclosed document is accurate and helpful for the continued improvement of **Open Arms Christian Childhood Center**.

The members of the Validation Team express sincere gratitude to the administration, staff and community of **Open Arms** for the opportunity to serve on the Validation Team and for the kindness shown during the visit.

Open Arms Christian Childhood Center is a good program. This was reflected not only in the Self-Study Report but also in the comments and observations of the Validation Team. The school effectively represents the Christian faith and values not only to its children and families, but also to the surrounding community.

The Self-Study Report is carefully written and includes specific recommendations to be considered seriously by the school and all constituents of **Open Arms** and its sponsoring congregation, **Holy Emmanuel Lutheran Church**. Not every suggestion must be followed, however, each is to be considered and addressed in follow-up reports, specifically the annual ongoing cumulative report submitted to the school's district office.

The report was written collaboratively and edited by the Validation Team with minor editing completed by the Team Captain. The report reflects the talents and expertise of all team members. Wherever possible, specific and practical recommendations were made to help address concerns.

The Team Captain, Team Members and the Consultant pledge their continued support and assistance in the implementation process and look forward to hearing about and/or seeing the progress of the School Action Plan.

May the Lord richly bless the staff and constituents of **Open Arms and Holy Emmanuel** so that with the power of the Holy Spirit they might continue to proclaim His Gospel ever more effectively to the children and families they serve.

In His Service,

Stacey LaMere
Validation Team Captain

DISCLAIMER

Limitations on the distribution, use and scope of this document.

It is the official intent of the National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission that this report is considered a privileged document, to be submitted by the Team Captain of the Validation Team directly to the administration of the school. The distribution of the report and its availability for public consideration rests solely in the hands of the school administration.

Neither the Team Captain nor the other members of the Validation Team are authorized to release any of the information contained in this report without the approval of the administration of the school.

The primary purpose of the Validation Team was to examine the educational ministry of the school, including curriculum, learning materials, student needs and interests, staffing and facilities. The Validation Team assessed the effectiveness of the total school program in meeting the educational objectives and National Lutheran School Accreditation Standards.

It is not the purpose of the Validation Team to evaluate individual teacher performance. The use of this report as an official assessment of any staff member's professional competency is a violation of the process and is not the intent of the school evaluation. Such use is inherently invalid since at no time during the Validation Team Visit was the team concerned with the evaluation of individual teacher performance.

The Validation Team and the Validation Team Report assist the school in its own process as a guideline for continuous growth. Neither the team nor the report is presumed to be the authority for validating any claims regarding health, safety or personnel issues. Such matters are the sole responsibility of the school.

VALIDATION TEAM MEMBER BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Stacey LaMere (Team Captain) Stacey Lamere, currently serves as the Director of Cross View Early Childhood Center in Edina, MN. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in third through tenth grade with a minor in Math from Concordia in Portland, Oregon. Her professional experience includes teaching middle school math for four years in Lutheran schools and being at Cross View for over 16 years working as a Toddler teacher, Infant teacher, Assistant Director, and now Director. Her experience with National Lutheran School Accreditation includes serving as a team member.

Rachel Jeppesen (Consultant, Team Member): Rachel Jeppesen serves at Willmar Public Schools as an Early Childhood Instructional Coach. She previously worked as the Director/Teacher at Redeemer Lutheran Preschool in Willmar for 20 years. She received a Bachelor of Arts and Lutheran Diploma from Concordia, St Paul. Her first ten years of teaching was in NE at St. Paul's Lutheran School in Arlington in 5 & 6 grade and all grades of music. She spent a few years substituting from preschool - 12th grade and was a Parent Educator in an ECFE program. She has worked on 9 accreditation teams as member, consultant and team captain as well as leading her preschool through the process three times.

Kim Essington (Team Member) Kim Essington currently serves as Preschool Director and teacher at Prince of Peace Lutheran School in St. Cloud, MN. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in K-6 with a minor in Early Childhood at Mankato State University. Her professional experience includes working in Early Childhood Centers for 6 years as a Toddler Teacher, Preschool Teacher and Assistant Director. She was a Child Educator for an ECFE program for 2 years. She's been teaching at Prince of Peace Lutheran School for 21 years and has been the Preschool Director for 11 years. This is her first experience being a team member for National Lutheran School Accreditation.

Amy Triplett (Team Member) Amy Triplett currently serves as the Preschool Teacher at Immanuel Lutheran School in Lewiston, MN. She earned a Master's Degree in Education with K-12 Reading Specialist Endorsement as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education from Concordia University in St. Paul, Minnesota. Her professional experience includes 10 years of teaching in multiple Lutheran schools Preschool through 3rd grade with most of that experience in Preschool. 3 of those years of teaching were as Preschool Teacher and Director at St. John's in Corcoran, MN. She has been at Immanuel for 4 years and has been the preschool teacher for the last 3 years. This is her first experience being a team member for National Lutheran School Accreditation.

Heather Bielec (Team Member) Heather Bielec currently serves as Preschool Director and Teacher at Redeemer Christian Academy in Wayzata, MN. She earned her B.A. in K-6 from the University of Sioux Falls, Sioux Falls, SD. She later went on to become a Commissioned Minister through the Colloquy Program. Her professional experience includes teaching preschool for nearly 20 years in LCMS Early Childhood Centers and Preschool Programs. Prior to accepting a Call to Redeemer this past year, she was a Preschool Teacher at Trinity Lone Oak in Eagan, MN for 5 years, where she also served as Preschool Director for 3 of those years. This is Heather's second experience being a team member for national Lutheran School Accreditation.

Sean Martens serves as the Education Executive for the Minnesota South and North Districts of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He has been a Lutheran school principal, instructor, and coach in Minnesota, Nebraska, and Nevada at the elementary, high school and college levels. He earned bachelor's degrees in chemistry and biology, secondary education, and master's degrees (2) in curriculum and instruction and administration from Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. Martens is a certified Reconciler, a 2003 graduate of the School Leadership Development (SLED) program and has been a SLED program mentor. Martens has served as a Consultant, Team Captain, or team member on more than 50 accreditation teams and serves on the Minnesota South District Accreditation Commission. Martens also serves on COGNIA (AdvancED) accreditation teams and is ELEOT certified.

Sara Mulso (Team Member) Sara Mulso currently serves as Preschool Director at Woodbury Lutheran Preschool. She earned her B.A. in Early Childhood/Elementary/Early Childhood Education from Concordia University in St Paul. She later went on to earn her Master's degree in Early Childhood. While she completed the coursework and has been in called positions, her current position is contracted due to her husband's pastoral status. Her professional experience includes teaching preschool and serving as an assistant director prior to working many years at Concordia University in various roles in the operations area including human resources, safety and insurance. This is Sara's first experience being a team member for national Lutheran School Accreditation.

REPORT SUMMARY

The Validation Team’s Overall Impression of the School - Open Arms Christian Early Childcare Center is committed to sharing Christ’s message to their students and families. This can be seen through the mission of the school, the Pastor’s presence in the center, the outreach activities that are done every year, the love and care that the staff and director show each day, and the addition of the curriculum One in Christ. Open Arms Christian ECC has recently struggled with enrollment due to many circumstances. However the families that attend love the relationships that are built between their children and the staff. The families feel blessed that they can call Open Arms ECC an extension of their family.

Outstanding Strengths -

1. The Governing board and Pastor support the mission of Open Arms Christian Childcare Center. They see it as a mission to share Jesus' love to families and children.
2. Outreach events are done multiple times a year to invite community members to the church and school.
3. The Director has a great relationship with the Pastor, congregation members, board members, staff, and parents.
4. Open Arms is Christ centered, has a high quality education, and a caring staff.
5. Procure has helped make communication more effective and has been a great way for parents to see what is going on each day at the center.
6. The staff love to be around each other and think of each other as an extension of their family.
7. The facility design allows for effective care of children and support of staff.
8. Adding One in Christ curriculum has strengthened the faith education.
9. Pastor Paul Krentz intentionally takes time to get to know the parents, kids, and staff.

Major Deficiencies

Checklist <MARK YES OR NO FOR EACH ITEM>

YES	NO	
X		The <i>General Information about the school</i> is complete.
X		The Required Responses are complete.
X		The Required Evidence is complete.
X		The Required Indicators of Success are met in full.
X		The General Indicators of Success are rated and reflect the actual practice in the school.

X		The total point value of all applicable Indicators meets/exceeds 80% of the eligible points.
X		Review of the School Action Plan is complete.

Summary Evaluation of Indicators of Success

Standard	Number of Rated Required and General Indicators of Success	Total Number of Points Possible for Rated Indicators <i>(Previous Column x2)</i>	Total Number of Points Earned for Rated Indicators
Standard 1A – Mission and Ministry	5	10	9
Standard 1B – Philosophy	5	10	10
Standard 2A – Home/Family Relationships	17	34	33
Standard 2B – Congregational Relationships	14	28	27
Standard 2C – Elementary School to Early Childhood Center	NA	NA	NA
Standard 3A – The Early Childhood Governing Authority	30	60	55
Standard 3B – The Early Childhood Administrator/Director	28	56	56
Standard 4 – Personnel	14	28	28
Standard 5 – Staff/Child Interactions	18	36	36
Standard 6 – Facilities	23	46	44
Standard 7A – Health and Safety	57	114	111
Standard 7B – Food and Nutrition	22	44	44
Standard 8 – Curriculum	25	50	49
Standard 9 – Infants/Toddlers	85	170	168
Standard 10 – Continuous Improvement	10	20	18
Overall Totals:	353	706	688
Final Percentage Score: <i>(To calculate final percentage score, divide “Total Number of Points Earned for Rated Indicators” by “Total Number of Points Possible for Rated Indicators”)</i>	97% <i>NOTE: An overall score of 80% or higher is required for recommendation of National Lutheran School Accreditation in Good Standing.</i>		

Accreditation Recommendation

Team Captain: **Stacey LaMere**

Signature of Team Captain: **Stacey LaMere**

Date: **4/30/2024**

We, the members of the Validation Team, recommend

Accreditation in Good Standing	X
---	---

Provisional Accreditation	
--------------------------------------	--

Denying Accreditation	
----------------------------------	--

for **Open Arms Christian Childcare Center of Bloomington, Minnesota**

Standard 1: Purpose

Standard 1A: Mission and Ministry

The Lutheran early childhood program must be an integral part of the congregation’s ministry to young children and their families. As such, it concerns itself with the ministry of the whole church in order to fulfill its purpose as a Christ-centered early childhood program.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms Christian Childcare Center shares the good news of Jesus Christ daily with families and children. They have also made great strides in the last five years by inviting the community to church or school events. (ex: Harvest Festival, Car Club, Trunk or Treat)

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Open Arms Christian ECC, with the support of Holy Emmanuel, does multiple community outreach projects.	1, 2, 4
The mission statement is in the handbook, given to families, and posted in the classrooms.	1, 3, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
The mission statement is not reviewed annually by the congregation.	At each voter’s meeting in the spring, on the agenda, it states that the mission statement is viewed.	1, 2, 4	1A:03

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

Change 1A:03 from Met in Full to Partially Met because the mission statement was not reviewed annually by the congregation but was reviewed by the governing board.

Standard 1: Purpose
Standard 1B: Philosophy

An early childhood program philosophy is a cooperatively formed statement of beliefs that reflects every aspect of the program. Practices of the program align with the philosophy. Reflection and review of the philosophy is an on-going process.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms Christian Childcare Center offers a Christ centered approach to learning. The school communicates the philosophy in a variety of ways and it is supported by the families, congregation, and staff.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Open Arms Christian ECC is committed to the development of the whole child with Christ at the center.	1, 2, 3, 4
The schools philosophy statement is posted and communicated using different media to staff, parents, and congregation.	1, 3, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

Standard 2: Relationships

Standard 2A: Home / Family Relationships

Ministry in the Lutheran early childhood program is directed toward young children and their families. The early childhood program has strategies for teaming with and engaging families through effective communication, active parent involvement and parent education.

Validation Team Overview: Families who attend Open Arms are very appreciative of the open communication through the use of the ProCare Ap and that the staff and church genuinely care about them and their children.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Open Arms provides families with many resources to develop their parenting and faith development.	1, 3, 4
Open Arms staff greeted families by name and were genuinely interested in what was going on in their lives.	2, 3
Families are invited to be a mission to the community around them.	1, 2, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
Parent's have not been completing an annual survey to evaluate the purpose, goals, and objectives	Provide and complete an annual survey each year.	1	2A:07

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

N/A

Standard 2: Relationships

Standard 2B: Congregational Relationships

The Lutheran early childhood program is an integral part of the congregation’s ministry to young children and their families. The early childhood program commits itself to participate in the ministry of the whole church in order to fulfill its purpose as a Christ-centered early childhood program.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms and the Congregation both seem to have the goal of planting seeds of faith to the community around them.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Pastor in an asset to Open Arms	1, 2, 3, 4
Pastor Krentz and the director work together to give staff time for adult faith instruction.	1, 2

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
Not all staff have a church home	Continue to offer opportunities to staff to grow their faith and relationship with Jesus.	1, 2	2B:25

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

N/A

Standard 2: Relationships

Standard 2C: Elementary School to Early Childhood Center

A close relationship between the early childhood level and additional levels of the school is vital. The early childhood director and school administrator(s) work together closely to carry out the shared vision.

Validation Team Overview: <INSERT WRITTEN RESPONSE HERE>

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

<INSERT RESPONSE HERE>

Standard 3: Leadership

Standard 3A: The Early Childhood Governing Authority

The school operates under governance and leadership that promote family involvement and support the spiritual, social/emotional, cognitive, physical and creative development of young children. The governing authority guides, steers, directs and oversees the strategic direction of the early childhood center.

Validation Team Overview: The school board supports the leadership and mission of the school and is strategic regarding new ideas for the future of Open Arms.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Lead teachers have 2 hours of planning time per week and assistant teachers receive 1.5 hours per week.	1, 2, 3, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
The monthly meeting is held in executive session.	For accountability and transparency non-profit boards, and committee meetings should be held in open sessions for constituent members.	1, 2, 4	3A:06
The facilities Maintenance Coordinator does not have a job description	Create a job description for the new Facilities Maintenance Coordinator position	1, 2, 4	3A:12
The governing authority does not provide an annual evaluation of the director.	Add into the Board's manual a month that the director's evaluation will be conducted.	1, 2, 4	3A:13
There is no evaluation process for the food services supervisor, the facilities coordinator and the custodians	Develop an evaluation process for the Food Services supervisor, the facilities coordinator and the Custodians.	1, 2, 4	3A:15
There is confusion between Open Arms leadership and Church leadership over the total costs and revenues associated with Open Arms ministry apart from church ministry. This separate	No one entity can make decisions without the other in regard to school financial revenue and expenses. Consider utilizing an outside consultant to advise on a budget spreadsheet structure	2, 3, 4	3A:26

accounting is necessary to determine the true cost of educating a child and to determine tuition costs and grants.	that can help Open Arm's and Holy Emanuel's current realities and ease planning for the future.		
--	---	--	--

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

X	YES
	NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

Change 3A:06 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Meetings need to be held in open sessions

Change 3A:26 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Concern that the school and church leadership are not in agreement about budgets and making decisions in regard to financial revenue and expenses.

Standard 3: Leadership

Standard 3B: The Early Childhood Administrator / Director

The administrator/director assures that the early childhood education program is distinctively Christian and developmentally appropriate. He/she understands the mission and ministry of the congregation and is responsible to staff, families and children in the day-to-day operations of the program.

Validation Team Overview: You can see that the director loves the Lord and shares that with the families, children, and staff. The director works to find each person’s strength to place them into a position that they excel at.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
There are 4 people providing administrative staff services	1, 2, 3, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

N/A

Standard 4: Personnel

A qualified and competent Christian staff is essential to a quality Lutheran early childhood program. The cohesive school ministry team embodies the shared vision of the early childhood program.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms Christian Child Care Center has a qualified and dedicated staff. They are committed to supporting the children and families in a Christ-centered manner. From a parents perspective they provide a safe and caring environment for the children. The staff is supported with ongoing professional development within staff meetings.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence	
Each staff member demonstrates a commitment to the mission and ministry of the school	1, 2, 3	

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

N/A

Standard 5: Staff / Child Interactions

Teaching staff members recognize and provide opportunities for young children to develop an understanding of self and others. These interactions are characterized by warmth, positive, Christ-centered relationships, respect, positive support and responsiveness.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms Christian Childcare Center provides a fun, loving, friendly, God-centered place. Teachers in the center love the Lord, the children, and the families. This can be seen through daily activities, projects, and conversations that are held during drop off and pick ups.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Open Arms teaching staff uses Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Think to help encourage all aspects of behaviors/self regulation. This makes it consistent for all classrooms.	1, 3, 4
Open Arms staff have a positive Christ-centered relationship with families and the students.	1, 2, 3, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

N/A

Standard 6: Facilities

The school maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for all children and staff. The building, grounds and equipment are designed to provide a developmentally appropriate environment in which young children work, play, explore and learn.

Validation Team Overview: The program is clearly designed to maximize the early learning experience for children and their teachers. Spaces are clean, well maintained and there are processes in place to have plans for ongoing projects and building maintenance.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
The physical environment reflects the Christian philosophy of the program.	1, 3
There are clear processes to submit requests to have maintenance or custodial needs completed. (COAST app)	2
The learning environment is orderly and kept clean and safe as children use the facility.	1, 3

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
Classroom decor has more commercial products than child-centered artwork, writing and creations.	Reverse the percentage of what is displayed so the majority is student created and early writing/literacy attempts	3	6:15
Visual displays do not reflect the activities and interests of the children.	The room should reflect in materials and visuals what is being taught in the classroom each week. Try to keep the visuals at child-level.	3	6:16

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

Changed 6:15 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Based on observations of classroom areas the majority of products displayed were posters not child's artwork/literacy work.

Changed 6:16 from Fully Met to Partially Met. While there was learning that was happening in the classroom, there was not clear evidence of the theme for the week in all classrooms (beyond what was written in the lesson plan). There was not evidence to support the theme for the week in centers throughout the classroom.

Standard 7: Wellness

Standard 7A: Health and Safety

The school maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for all young children and staff. Children receive healthy snacks/meals, participate in physical activity and are introduced to healthy practices.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms has secure entrances into the center and also between the church and ECC. Codes are changed on a regular basis, or as needed. The classrooms are well organized, clean and inviting. Open Arms has been able to add a Health and Safety Coordinator position to focus on health and safety.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Entrances into the Open Arms is secure and also between the church and ECC	1, 3
Addition of Health and Safety Coordinator position	1, 2, 3
Updated shelves and toys. Organized and clean classrooms	1, 2, 3, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
ICCPP's Allergy and triggers are very vague - licensing expects details Numerous formats of ICCPP's used. No label RX label on Epi-Pen	Detailed explanation of allergy and what triggers it. A standardized format should be used throughout the school for posting allergy information. Parents need to give written permission (on newest DHS from) to post allergy information Follow the center plan for food allergies.	1, 2, 3, 4	7A:09
Evacuation routes and alternate routes are not posted in hallways, kitchen, or storage areas	Create and post evacuation routes in hallways, kitchen, and storage areas	1, 3, 4	7A:19

Medication administration forms for both prescription and over the counter medications were not with medication	Create a procedure for storing medication and forms together	1, 2, 3	7A:34
---	--	---------	-------

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

Changed 7A:09 from Fully Met to Partially Met. ICCPP's are on a variety of forms and are not specific on the allergy or triggers. The center plan for the allergy children was not followed. There was not a name or picture posted on the table by the child, (as posted in the front of Red Binder) and there was not a teacher or staff seated by the child.

Changed 7A:34 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Parents need to fill out the Medication Administration Form for all medications, including medications listed on ICCPP's.

Standard 7: Wellness
Standard 7B: Food and Nutrition

The school provides children with snacks and meals that adequately meet their dietary needs. Menus are reviewed and approved. Kitchen facilities are inspected by the health department.

Validation Team Overview: Balanced meals are portioned out and delivered by the kitchen coordinator.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Balanced meals and snacks	1, 2, 3
Menus are posted	3, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
See above ICCPP information about food safety for allergies			

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

N/A

Standard 8: Curriculum

The curriculum of the Lutheran early childhood center reflects its philosophy and consists of appropriate learning experiences. The school's curriculum, instructional design and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and support the spiritual, social/emotional, cognitive, physical and creative growth and development of young children.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms Early Childhood Center is a Christ-centered program. The Christian faith is displayed throughout the center and classrooms. One in Christ curriculum helps to strengthen the faith education.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
The STEAM room is an exceptional space and especially beneficial as the lessons and materials are planned for the teachers.	1, 2, 3
The outdoor learning areas and playground	1, 2, 3

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
Curriculum should embrace families' cultures	Implementing family & cultural diversity beyond posters, books and crayons.	1, 2, 4	8:14

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

Change 8:14 from Fully Met to Partially Met because evidence was not given on how this is met beyond posters, books and crayons.

Standard 9: Infants / Toddlers

Research into early brain development and cognition provides clear evidence that early experiences establish the ability to learn throughout life. Experiences and materials are intentionally selected to support learning in all developmental domains: spiritual, cognitive, social/emotional, physical and creative.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms Children Childhood Center has staff members that are dedicated to meet the needs of the infants and toddlers in their care. The staff provide a safe, secure, christ-centered, child oriented classroom that parents can feel confident leaving their little one.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Needs of all the children are meet and Rule 3 guidelines are followed	1, 3, 4
Staff love and nurture the children in their care	1, 2 3, 4
The assessment tools combined with the curriculum create a classroom with goals that help guide the teaching.	1, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
Infant feeding plans are not posted for everyone to see - they are kept private.	Get parents to give permission to post all feeding plans.	1, 4	9:57
Parent-Teacher Conferences are not held every 3 months for infants.	Create a schedule where parents have the option to have a conference every 3 months.	1, 4	9:85

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

Change 9:57 from Fully Met to Partially Met because the infant feeding plans are kept private and they need to be posted for anyone to see.

Standard 10: Continuous Improvement

The school has an improvement planning process that is data-driven and ensures the implementation of the school's purpose, the achievement of learning expectations for children and the provision of high-quality services.

Validation Team Overview: Open Arms Christian Childcare Center uses surveys to determine the effectiveness of their program. These surveys lead Open Arms to better serve the children and families that walk through their doors.

Strengths:

Strengths	Sources of Evidence
Parent/Staff surveys are used to determine the effectiveness of Open Arms Christian Childcare Center.	1, 4
A variety of assessment types are being used to identify program improvements.	1, 4

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Concerns and Recommendations:

Concern	Recommendation	Sources of Evidence	Indicator
Surveys need to be more thorough: include mission, ministry, program quality, family involvement and satisfaction.	To include more specific questions on surveys (Already listed on their Preliminary Action Plan)	1, 4	10:02
The School Action Plan is not shared with parents and any other stakeholders	To start publishing an Annual Program Report for all parents and stakeholder (Already listed in their Preliminary Action Plan)	1, 4	10:09

(Note: Sources of Evidence are identified using the following: 1=Self-Study Report, 2=Interview, 3=Observation, 4=Written Documentation)

Did the Validation Team change any ratings that were assigned by the school?

YES

NO

If YES, what was the justification for changing the rating?

N/A

Review of the School Action Plan

As a school conducts its Self-Study process, it identifies areas needing improvement. These items are rated as **1 (Partially Met)** showing that the condition is recognized as important by the school but is moderately accomplished. Additional detail, depth and written documentation is required to meet the General Indicator of Success in full. A rating of **0 (Not Presently Met)** indicates that the General Indicator of Success is not present or is emerging (minimally met).

Items that have been identified as **1 (Partially Met)** or **0 (Not Presently Met)** require planned improvement actions. Over the course of the school's accreditation cycle, the items must be targeted (with a completion date), assigned, evaluated and completed. The School Action Plan is the organization's roadmap, guiding the improvement process during the school's accreditation cycle.

In a narrative, please address the following aspects of the School Action Plan:

- What is the Validation Team's evaluation of the realistic attainability of the plan as a whole?
- Were any items not addressed in the School Action Plan that were identified by the school in its Self-Study Report?
- Does the Validation Team identify additional action items not identified by the school in its Self-Study Report?

The Validation Team believes that items in the preliminary school action plan are attainable.

We moved 1A:03 from Met in Full to Partially Met. The mission statement needs to be reviewed annually by the congregation.

We kept 2A:07 - Parents need to complete an annual survey about the purpose, goals, and objectives of the center.

We kept 2B: 25 - To continue to give opportunities to staff to grow their faith.

We moved 3A:06 from Met in Full to Partially Met. Meetings need to be held in open sessions

We kept 3A:12 - Descriptions need to be written for Facilities Maintenance Coordinator and reviewed/approved by the ECC board.

We kept 3A: 13 - Add the director's evaluation to the board calendar to complete annually.

We kept 3A:15 - Create and implement an evaluation procedure for the Food Services Supervisor, Facilities Coordinator, and Custodians.

We moved 3A:26 from Fully Met to Partially Met. A check and balance system needs to be established between the school and church leadership so they can be in agreement about budgets and making decisions in regard to financial revenue and expenses. Maybe consider bringing in an outside source to help start this process.

We moved 6:15 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Make the majority of what is displayed in the classroom student created artwork or writing/literacy work.

We moved 6:16 from Fully Met to Partially Met. The room should reflect in materials and visuals what is being taught in the classrooms each week.

We moved 7A:09 from Fully Met to Partially Met. ICCPP's need to be on a standardized form used throughout the school for posting allergy information. The form should include a very detailed explanation of the allergy and what triggers it. ICCPP information needs to be posted for everyone to see.

We kept 7A:19 - Create and post evaluation routes in hallways, kitchen, and offices.

We moved 7A:34 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Create a procedure for storing medication and all the forms that go with the medication.

We moved 8:14 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Implement family and cultural diversity to the curriculum. (more than posters, books, and crayons)

We moved 9:57 from Fully Met to Partially Met. Infant feeding plans need to be posted for everyone to see.

We kept 9:85 - Schedule infant conferences as parents need or ask for them every 3 months

We kept 10:02 - Develop a more comprehensive survey to include questions regarding mission, ministry, program quality, family involvement, and satisfaction of the program.

We kept 10:09 - Publish the School Action Plan to staff, families, and congregation as well as each year publish the annual survey results.

