

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LIFELONG EDUCATION, ADVANCEMENT, AND POTENTIAL
CHILD CARE LICENSING BUREAU

In the matter of

License #: DC820411874
SIR #: SI-00129306

4K Learning Center-Southgate Inc.

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ORDER OF SUMMARY SUSPENSION
AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO REVOKE LICENSE

The Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential, by Division Director Erika Bigelow and Acting Bureau Director Courtney Adams, Child Care Licensing Bureau, hereafter referred to as “the Bureau,” orders the summary suspension and provides notice of the intent to revoke the license of Licensee, 4K Learning Center-Southgate Inc., to operate a child care center pursuant to the authority of the Child Care Organizations Act, 1973 PA 116, as amended, MCL 722.111 et seq., for the following reasons:

1. On or about September 8, 2022, Licensee was issued a license to operate child care center, 4K Learning Center-Southgate, with a licensed capacity of 80 at 11355 Reeck Road, Southgate, Michigan 48195. Isatou Whitfield and Carllisle Jovone Whitfield are both licensee designees for the license.
2. Prior to the issuance of the license, and during subsequent modifications of the statutes and rules, Licensee received copies of the Child Care Organizations Act, the licensing rule book for child care centers, and the Child Protection Law.

These rules and statutes are posted and available for download at

www.michigan.gov/mileap.

3. Licensee, Licensee Designee and Owner Isatou Whitfield, Child Care Staff Member (CCSM) 1, and CCSM 2 are not conducive to the welfare of children as evidenced by the following:

- a. In approximately 2021, Licensee Designee and Owner Isatou Whitfield physically assaulted and screamed at Child A, then age 12 or 13 years. This incident took place inside a van while Child Care Staff Member (CCSM) 1 was in the driver's seat and CCSM 2 was in the front passenger seat. CCSM 1 is also Child A's Mother.
- b. On October 24, 2024, the Bureau received a complaint that included three videos showing Ms. Whitfield hitting, kicking, strangling, and screaming at Child A. Specifically:
 - i. The first video was 29 seconds long and shows Ms. Whitfield and Child A in the van. The video shows Child A in the rear seat screaming and crying while curled into a ball and covering/protecting his head with his arms and hands. Ms. Whitfield got out of the middle seat, lifted her right leg and stomped the child seven times in his right arm and shoulder area, stomach, back of his head, and face while shouting, "You like that [REDACTED] do you like that [REDACTED] do you like that?" Ms. Whitfield then turned to the two individuals in the front seat off-camera and requested her inhaler, exclaiming, "Let me hit that one more time." She then looks at the

camera that is filming her and says, “Woooo, hey” and then smiles. One of the unknown individuals in the front says, “That’s enough.” CCSM 1 and CCSM 2 were both off-camera during the incident and did not attempt to intervene or protect Child A.

- ii. The second video is 30 seconds long and shows Ms. Whitfield straddling Child A and holding him down in the back seat. She is holding his head against the driver’s side passenger window with both hands, and Child A is screaming, “No more, no more,” as Ms. Whitfield yells, “What the [REDACTED] you gonna do?” She continues to hold his head down while he flails his legs trying to get away from her. Child A screams, “My ear, my ear!” Ms. Whitfield screams back, “My little [REDACTED] is gonna [REDACTED] your [REDACTED] up.” CCSM 1 and CCSM 2 did not attempt to stop Ms. Whitfield or protect Child A.
- iii. The third video is 28 seconds long and shows Ms. Whitfield straddling Child A while choking him with both hands around his neck, using a piece of fabric of some sort. Child A rolls over on his stomach on the seat with his knees on the floor of the vehicle. Ms. Whitfield straddles his back and then rolls onto her backside while strangling Child A. Ms. Whitfield and Child A are facing the same way with Ms. Whitfield behind Child A, strangling and pulling on his neck. Ms. Whitfield yells, “Are you going to keep doing the [REDACTED] you do?” Child A gasps for air and screams, “No, no.” Ms. Whitfield tells Child A, “I will kill your [REDACTED], do you hear me?” Child A

responds, “Yes, yes.” Ms. Whitfield continues to strangle him, yanking back and forth by his neck. Ms. Whitfield screams, “Do you know I will kill your [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?”, while Child A screams, “Yes.” Ms. Whitfield continues restraining him with her legs. CCSM 1 and CCSM 2 did not attempt to stop Ms. Whitfield or protect Child A.

- c. On October 24, 2024, at 1:15 p.m., Licensing Consultant Laura Piacentini, accompanied by Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Worker Akeshia Speight, conducted an on-site inspection at the center and interviewed Program Director at 4K Learning Center-Southgate and CCSM 1. CCSM 1 is also the Program Director at 4K Learning Center Detroit, License #DC820409427, and is also listed as having ownership. Both Program Director and CCSM 1 identified Child A as CCSM 1’s son, now age 16. Child A did not attend this center but previously attended 4K Learning Center, License #DC820397838, in Detroit.
- d. On October 24, 2024, after viewing the three videos, CCSM 1 told Ms. Piacentini and Ms. Speight that Child A was autistic and that the video was taken approximately three years ago. CCSM 1 initially stated that she did not know about the video prior to today. CCSM 1 later admitted that she was driving the van at the time of the incident. CCSM 1 stated she did not recall when or where the videos were filmed.
- e. On October 24, 2024, at 1:50 p.m., Ms. Whitfield arrived at the center, and Ms. Speight showed Ms. Whitfield one of the videos. Ms. Whitfield

immediately identified herself as the person beating Child A in the van. She stated that the van belonged to CCSM 1 and that CCSM 1 was driving the van. Ms. Whitfield stated that the video was taken over three years ago and that she could not recall the location from where they were coming or going. Ms. Whitfield told Ms. Piacentini and Ms. Speight that she thought the other person in the van was CCSM 2.

- f. On October 25, 2024, Ms. Piacentini contacted CCSM 2, who currently works at 4K Learning Center in Detroit. She stated that she has worked for Ms. Whitfield for about five years and admitted that she was the third adult in the videos. She stated that she did not recall who recorded the videos.
- g. Ms. Whitfield, CCSM 1, and CCSM 2 did not report the suspected child abuse to MDHHS despite being mandatory reporters for child abuse and neglect.

COUNT I

The conduct of Licensee, Licensee Designee Isatou Whitfield, CCSM 1, and CCSM 2, as set forth in paragraphs 3(a) through 3(g) above, evidences a willful and substantial violation of:

R 400.8125

(2) All staff and volunteers shall act in a manner that is conducive to the welfare of children.

NOTE: MCL 722.115m

(13) As used in this section:

(b) "Conducive to the welfare of the children" means:

(i) The service and facility comply with this act and the administrative rules promulgated under this act.

(ii) The disposition, temperament, condition, and action of the applicant, licensee, licensee designee, program director, child care staff member, and member of the household promote the safety and well-being of the children served.

COUNT II

The conduct of Licensee and Licensee Designee Isatou Whitfield, as set forth in paragraphs 3(a) through 3(g) above, evidences a willful and substantial violation of:

R 400.8110

(1) The licensee or licensee designee shall do all of the following:

(a) Act in a manner that is conducive to the welfare of children.

COUNT III

The conduct of Licensee, Licensee Designee Isatou Whitfield, CCSM 1, and CCSM 2, as set forth in paragraphs 3(a) through 3(g) above, provides grounds for revocation pursuant to:

MCL 722.115m

(2) ... If the department determines that a service, facility, applicant, licensee, child care staff member, or member of the household is not conducive to the welfare of the children, the department shall deny that application or revoke that licensee's license according to section 11.

DUE TO THE serious nature of the above violations and the potential risk it represents to vulnerable children in Licensee's care, emergency action is required. Therefore, the provision of MCL 24.292 of the Administrative Procedures Act of 1969, as amended, is invoked. Licensee is hereby notified that the license to operate a child care center is summarily suspended.

EFFECTIVE 8:00 p.m., on October 29, 2024, Licensee is ordered not to operate a child care center at 11355 Reeck Road, Southgate, Michigan 48195, or at any other location or address. Licensee is not to receive children for care after that time or date. Licensee is responsible for informing parents or guardians of children in care that license has been suspended and that Licensee can no longer provide care.

HOWEVER, BECAUSE THE Department has summarily suspended Licensee's license, an administrative hearing will be promptly scheduled before an administrative law judge. Licensee MUST NOTIFY the Department and the Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules in writing within seven calendar days after receipt of this Notice if Licensee wishes to appeal the summary suspension and attend the administrative hearing. The written request must be submitted via email, fax, or mail to:

Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules
611 West Ottawa Street, 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 30695
Lansing, Michigan 48909-2484
Phone: 517-335-7519
FAX: 517-763-0155
MOAHR-BSD-Support@michigan.gov

MCL 24.272 of the Administrative Procedures Act of 1969 permits the Department to proceed with the administrative hearing even if Licensee does not appear. Licensee may be represented by an attorney at the administrative hearing.

DATED: 10/28/2024



Erika Bigelow, Division Director
Child Care Licensing Bureau

DATED: 10/28/2024



Courtney Adams, Acting Bureau Director
Child Care Licensing Bureau

This is the last and final page of the ORDER OF SUMMARY SUSPENSION AND NOTICE OF INTENT in the matter of 4K Learning Center-Southgate Inc., DC820411872, consisting of eight pages, this page included.

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