South Dakota Department of Social Services

Strong Families - South Dakota's Foundation and Our Future

Office of Licensing and Accreditation

LICENSING STUDY
for GROUP CARE CENTERS FOR MINORS

ARSD 67:42:01, 67:42:07

[June 08, 2026]

Falls Academy/Brighter Transition

46560 264th St, Sioux Falls, SD 57107, USA

Jon St. Pierre, Director

1.	**Licensing Requirements** - **67:42:07:11.01, SDCL 26-6-11**	**Requirement Met**
A.	The following have been submitted to the Department:	
	1. Application materials for license.	Yes
	2. Documentation of need.	N/A
	3. A copy of the building plans (approved by the Fire Marshal and Department of Health).	N/A
B.	A statement of compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is included in the agency's policies or is a part of the purchase of service contract with the Department.	Yes
	COMMENTS: Application materials were submitted with the application on May 12, 2026.	

2.	**Agency Responsibilities** - **SDCL 26-6-11**	**Requirement Met**
A.	The building and equipment needs of the organization are adequately met.	Yes
B.	The agency has sufficient funds to meet the needs of the community.	Yes
	COMMENTS: The facility is adequately furnished and maintained for residents.	

3.	**Insurance** - **67:42:01:35**	**Requirement Met**
A.	Vehicles used to transport clients have appropriate passenger liability insurance.	Yes
B.	The agency carries public liability insurance.	Yes
	COMMENTS: A copy of the certificate of insurance showing coverage through September 30, 2026 was submitted with the application.	

4.	**Accounting Systems** - **67:42:01:34**	**Requirement Met**
A.	An audit of the accounts has been done in the last year by a CPA.	Yes

4.	**Accounting Systems** - 67:42:01:34	Requirement Met
	COMMENTS: A copy of an audit completed October 1, 2025 was submitted with the application.	

5.	**Staff Qualifications** - 67:42:07:02, 67:42:07:07	Requirement Met
A	Program Director	
	1. Bachelor's degree in an accredited behavioral or social sciences area, or	Yes
	2. An equivalent combination of education and experience.	Yes
	3. At least two years of relevant alternative childcare experience.	Yes
B	Other Staff	
	1. At least eighteen years of age.	Yes
	2. If under age twenty-one, is under direct supervision of an experienced childcare staff; and 3 years older than any children supervised.	Yes
	COMMENTS: Files reviewed contained documentation to support the items above.	

6.	**Staff/Child Ratio** - 67:43:07:03	Requirement Met
A.	1:8 during waking hours.	Yes
B.	1:25 in the building during sleeping hours.	Yes
C.	One staff member present in each separate sleeping unit during sleeping hours.	Yes
D.	Arrangements made for substitute staff during vacations, illness, or off-duty time of regular staff.	Yes
E.	Certified special ed teachers are employed (when appropriate).	Yes
F.	Provisions are made for auxiliary staff members, i.e., mental health professionals, physical therapist, and/or occupational therapist (when appropriate).	Yes
G.	A shelter care facility maintains a staff/child ratio of 1:4 for children under the age of four years during waking hours.	N/A
H.	Facility has a written plan to ensure that staff, law enforcement, or appropriate emergency responders are available at the center within a reasonable time in the event of an emergency.	Yes

6. Staff/Child Ratio - 67:43:07:03

Requirement Met

COMMENTS:
Files reviewed contained documentation to support the items above. Staff interviewed stated the agency complies with the staff to child ratio at all times. If the staff schedule submitted with the application is followed, there is sufficient staff to meet the staff to child ratio requirements.

7. Personnel Records - 67:42:07:07, 67:42:07:08, 67:42:07:09

Requirement Met

A. Personnel records are maintained and contain the following:

1.	Resume or application that includes educational background, personal, and employment history.	Yes
2.	Job description.	Yes
3.	Annual Performance Appraisal.	Yes
4.	Verification of contact with at least three former employers or professional references if former employers not available	Yes
5.	Verification of screening for substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect.	N/A
6.	Verification of submission of fingerprints to the DCI/FBI within fourteen days of employment.	Yes
7.	Verification of sex offender registry checks.	N/A
8.	Verification of current certification in basic 1st aid and CPR.	Yes

COMMENTS:
Files reviewed contained documentation to support the items above.

8. In-service Training - 67:42:07:04

Requirement Met

A.	There is a written plan for orientation and training for staff and volunteers.	Yes
B.	Each employee has a documented record of an initial orientation to the center within one month of the date of hire that includes the facility's functions, services, community resources, and specific job functions.	Yes
C.	Each employee has a documented record of a minimum of twenty-four hours annual in-service training.	Yes
D.	Each employee receives in-service training during the first year of employment that includes all of the areas required in 67:42:07:04.	Yes

8.	**In-service Training - 67:42:07:04**	**Requirement Met**
E.	Training for all employees after the first year of employment is determined by an annual evaluation and is competency based.	Yes
	COMMENTS: Files reviewed contained documentation to support the items above.	

9.	**Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect and Change in Circumstances - 67:42:01:12, 67:42:07:15, 67:42:07:16**	**Requirement Met**
A.	The facility has a written procedures for handling and reporting suspected in-house CA/N. It includes:	
	1. A definition of what constitutes CA/N;	Yes
	2. Immediate reporting to DSS or law enforcement;	Yes
	3. A procedure for assuring the incident will not recur pending the investigation;	Yes
	4. A procedure for evaluating the continued employability of any staff member involved in an incident of CA/N.	Yes
B.	Each employee has signed a statement acknowledging and understanding the reporting procedure.	Yes
C.	The facility is aware of its need to report any changes of circumstances that may affect its licensed status	Yes
	COMMENTS: Files reviewed contained documentation to support the items above.	

10.	**Treatment - 67:42:01:01(3), 67:42:01:21, 67:42:07:01, 67:42:07:01.01, 67:42:07:01.02, 67:42:07:05, 67:42:07:10, 67:42:07:28, 67:42:07:29**	**Requirements Met**
A.	There are written procedures relating to:	
	1. Intake.	Yes
	2. Treatment.	Yes
	3. Discharge.	Yes
	4. Discipline	Yes
	5. Confidentiality.	Yes
	6. Health care of children	Yes
	7. Emergency procedures in case a child is injured.	Yes
	8. Reasonable and prudent parent standard.	Yes
B.	Children attend a local school.	Yes
C.	Case records are maintained and include the following:	

1. Face sheet/application form with identifying information; Yes
2. Development of the treatment plan must involve the child in care, the facility staff working with the child, the placement agency and, if appropriate, the parents; Yes
3. Treatment plans are developed within one month of placement and updated at least every three months; Yes
4. Treatment plans must contain the child's needs and strengths; Yes
5. Treatment goals for the child and family including a description of how family and aftercare services will be provided and projected times for achieving goals; Yes
6. A discharge plan that includes the projected length of stay and the conditions under which the child will be discharged; Yes
7. Monthly progress reports submitted to placement agency; Yes
8. Progress reports reflect the treatment plan; Yes
9. Physical exam (twelve months prior to or thirty days following admission); Yes
10. Current immunization record; Yes
11. A signed authorization for medical care; Yes
12. On-going records of medical/dental/eye/hearing care; Yes
13. Signed statement verifying the child's parent or guardian was informed of agency written policies; Yes
14. Evidence of application of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard. Yes

D. Records are kept in a locked file. Yes

E. A shelter care facility that does not provide short term assessment services is exempt from numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 but submits a summary report to the placement agency upon discharge of the child. Yes

F. Children do not remain in a shelter care facility longer than thirty days unless an extension of time is needed not to exceed thirty days for the plan to be implemented or needed assessment services completed. Yes

G. The interstate compact administrator has been contacted before acceptance of an out-of-state child. Yes

H. A facility that provides alternative services to children in custody of the department has a signed alternative service agreement with the department. Yes

COMMENTS:
Files reviewed contained documentation to support the items above.

11. Medications - 67:42:07:19, 67:42:07:20, 67:42:07:22, 67:42:07:23 — Requirement Met

11.	**Medications** - 67:42:07:19, 67:42:07:20, 67:42:07:22, 67:42:07:23	Requirement Met
A.	The facility has written procedures relating to the storage and administration of medication which include:	
	1. Conditions under which medications may be given.	Yes
	2. Procedures for documenting the administration of medication.	Yes
	3. Procedures for immediately notifying the facility's nurse in cases of medication errors or drug reactions. The nurse assesses the situation and determines whether there is a need to report the incident to the attending physician.	Yes
	4. Procedures for evaluating and recording each child's reactions to prescribed medication.	Yes
B.	A licensed nurse is responsible for administration of medications.	Yes
C.	Psychotropic drugs are prescribed by a MD, CNP, or PA with ongoing quarterly follow-up.	Yes
D.	Medicine is kept in a locked cabinet.	Yes
E.	A medication record is kept on each child.	Yes
	COMMENTS:	
	Files reviewed contained documentation to support the items above.	

12.	**Seclusion and Restraint** - 67:42:07:05, 67:42:07:24, 67:42:07:25, 67:42:07:26, 67:42:07:27	Requirement Met
A.	The facility has written procedures relating to the use of seclusion and restraint.	Yes
B.	Use of seclusion and restraint is included in the treatment plan.	Yes
C.	Placement agency/parental/guardian approval of seclusion and restraint is obtained prior to its use.	Yes
D.	Staff continuously observes and monitors a child who has been placed in a room for the purposes of seclusion	Yes
E.	Placement in seclusion or restraint does not exceed two hours if the child is age 9 to 17 or one hour if the child is under the age of 9.	Yes
F.	Placement in seclusion or restraint is documented.	Yes
G.	A room used for seclusion meets the physical specifications of 67:42:07:25.	Yes
	COMMENTS:	

13.	**Volunteers** - 67:42:07:14	Requirement Met
A.	Have a written job description with specific responsibilities.	N/A
B.	Supervised and evaluated by an experienced staff member.	N/A

13. **Volunteers** - 67:42:07:14		Requirement Met
C.	Three documented non-related references.	N/A
D.	Documented orientation.	Yes
E.	Documented in-service training as per 67:42:07:04 if volunteer works thirty plus hours per week.	N/A
F.	Informed of obligation to report suspected CA/N.	N/A
G.	Verification of screening for substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect.	N/A
H.	Verification of submission of fingerprints to the DCI/FBI within 14 days of employment.	N/A
I.	Verification of sex offender registry checks.	N/A
	COMMENTS: The use of seclusion or restraint was listed as a goal, rather than an intervention. It was recommended information regarding the use of restraint and seclusion be moved to the Client Collaboration and Treatment Approach or Safety Planning section of the treatment plan.	

14. **Physical Facility** - 67:42:07:11, 67:42:07:12		Requirement Met
A.	There is a current fire inspection.	Yes
B.	There is a current health inspection.	Yes
C.	A fire escape plan is posted.	Yes
D.	A minimum of four fire drills held annually.	Yes
E.	Children of opposite gender over the age of six have separate sleeping facilities.	Yes
F.	Sleeping children are monitored.	Yes
G.	Each child has their own bed with linens, blankets, and pillows.	Yes
	COMMENTS: Items noted on the fire and health inspection were corrected.	

15. **Nutrition** - 67:42:07:13		Requirement Met
A.	Meals are of sufficient quantity to meet children's nutritional needs.	Yes
B.	Arrangements are made for children with a special prescribed diet.	Yes

15. Nutrition - 67:42:07:13	**Requirement Met**

COMMENTS:
Staff and youth reported the food to be sufficient quantity and quality. All of the youth surveyed either strongly agreed or agreed that they enjoy the food.

Recommendations

COMMENTS:
It is recommended a satisfactory license be issued to provide group care services.

Signatures



Kevin Kanta,
Program Specialist

June 04, 2026
Date

May 28, 2026
Date of Site Visit



Muriel Nelson,
Program Manager

June 05, 2026
Date