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

Name of Center: Greater Connections Childhood Development Center **Enrollment:** 169 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52225

Street: 1405 N Lincoln ST **City:** Creston Iowa **Zip** 50801 **County:** Union

Mailing Address: 1405 N Lincoln ST, Creston, IA, 50801

Director's Name: Melissa Zellmer **Phone Number:** 641-782-7117

On-Site Supervisor(s): Sara Bovaird, Megan Shinn **E-Mail:** melissa.zellmer@greaterconnections.org

Date(s) of Visit: 02-04-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

X **New Application** **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: 07-05-2023

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 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	40	52	56	30	178
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 2

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 08-01-2025 to 08-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Kathy DeGeorge-Evans **Date:** 02-18-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced licensing visit was made on 2-4-2025. Greater Connections Childhood Development Center opened on 8-1 -2023. The building is owned by the hospital, and is run by a board. I Think I Can Child Care and I Think I Can Before and After School Program closed both locations and are now located at Greater Connections Childhood Development Center. Melissa Zellmer is the director, and she was the Director at the I Think I Can centers. Sara Bovaird and Megan Shinn are the on-site supervisors.
There are 169 children enrolled.

Observation of rooms:
The center looks great and all the rooms have a fun variety of age and developmentally appropriate furnishings, and toys. There are fourteen program room, eleven rooms are being used at this time. There is also a multipurpose room. There are car seat cubbies that are very convenient for parents. The school age rooms are the tornado shelter. Early Head Start is utilizing a program room. The daily sheets looked good. The staff in each program room prepare the lesson plans/activities. The center will be begin using Creative Curriculum. The center also utilizes a gym and pool for swimming lessons at another location - a local business paid the centers membership fee.
All occupied program rooms were observed and were in ratio, the children were observed playing. Staff had excellent interactions with the children, they were nurturing and attentive to the needs of the children.
Melissa has worked with Child Care Resource and Referral and the child care nurse consultant.

Nutrition:
The center has a wonderful kitchen. During the school year the local school prepares and delivers the breakfast and lunch and the center prepares the daily snack. Cindy is the cook, she previously worked at I think I Can for over twenty years. Cindy prepares the meals in the summer. Menus were posted. The center participates in the federal food program. The kitchen is clean and proper food storage was observed.

Health and Safety:
Monthly fire/tornado drills are practiced and documented.
Medication management procedures are followed when a child is prescribed medication. Some staff have taken the medication management training class. The center uses bleach/water for sanitizing and disinfecting. The three step bottles are used 1. Soap/water for cleaning, 2. Water for rinsing and 3. Bleach water for sanitizing and disinfecting. Please discuss other sanitizing and disinfecting product options with your child care nurse consultant.
Fourteen radon tests were completed in October 2024, all radon test results were in the acceptable range. Please refer to your handbook for information on radon and frequency of testing information. The building has all electric appliances. Maintenance issues are taken care of by the hospital maintenance staff.

Playground:
The children have fun in the nature outdoor classroom. There are many fun features i.e. mud kitchen. Construction will begin on a playground area for the school age children soon, they have been using the playground at the school. There is also a grass area, toys are also taken outside. Fencing has been installed. Grants have been received for sun shades. They

have a new shed.

Transportation:
The center doesn't provide transportation services. The school bus provides transportation services. School age children take field trips.

Administrative records:
Staff files were read and were in good order. There are thirty eight employees. Many staff have received their CDA's and are participating in the TEACH/WAGES program.
Child files were read and were in good order.
Melissa has staff monthly staff meetings.
The Brightwheel child care app is used.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Your center is a wonderful resource for the community. Melissa is very confident as the director, she is organized, creative and enthusiastic. Melissa is supportive of the staff. The staff are very excited and proud of the center. Staff have excellent interactions with the children.
Several staff have received CDA's and are participating in the TEACH/WAGES program.
The board is very supportive.
Businesses in the community are supportive of the center.
The center is participates in IQ4K2.
Grants have been received for equipment i.e. sun shades for the playground, staff bonuses etc.

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

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended for 8-1-2025 to 8-1-2027.

*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.