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

Name of Center: KinderCare West #291 **Enrollment:** 102 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 24451

Street: 310 Burdette DR SW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52404 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 310 Burdette DR SW, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52404

Director's Name: Amanda White **Phone Number:** 319-396-5391

On-Site Supervisor(s): Tania Holdren, Carli Eichelberger, Amelia Berns **E-Mail:** 300291@klcorp.com Amanda.White@kindercare.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-11-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **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: 02-08-2023

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited X NAEYC NSACA Other 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	26	31	38	10	105
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 04-01-2024 to 04-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 01-16-2024

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

KinderCare West #291 is part of the national KinderCare Education enterprise. KinderCare Learning Centers were founded in 1969 and have continued to provide childcare programming for over 53 years. KLC provides educational programs for children from six weeks to 12 years old. These nationwide educational programs include over 1,000 early childhood education community centers, over 500 before-and-after school programs, and over 100 employer sponsored centers in 38 states and the District of Columbia. KinderCare Education enrolls approximately 200,000 children and employs approximately 30,000 people nationwide. This report pertains specifically to KinderCare West #291. KinderCare West #291 has been in operation for many years. KinderCare West #291 operates year-round, Monday through Friday 6:30am to 6:00pm. The profit program serves primarily infants through preschool-age children. Current enrollment is 102.

Director of KinderCare West #291 is Amanda White. Ms. White has been the director of this site since November 2022. Ms. White has been with KinderCare for over 8 years including being the assistant director/on-site supervisor since December 2019. Ms. White has a BA degree in biology, several years experience working with children and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 1/11/2024, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

KinderCare West #291 is located in a predominantly urban neighborhood. The profit program provides a variety of full-time and part-time learning opportunities as well as accepts many different of funding sources to help meet the needs of children and families throughout the community.

KinderCare West #291 has established the following website for families and the community to learn more about the program: http://www.kindercare.com/our-centers/cedar-rapids/ia/300292.

The mission of this KinderCare is "…to provide programs and environments that enrich children's development, promote respect for children, and celebrate the joy of childhood".

KinderCare West #291 has a history of participating in quality initiatives including a national accreditation, QRS, CACFP and local quality initiatives. The program has achieved NAEYC accreditation through 2029, holds a QRS 4-star and participates in CACFP. Ms. White discussed future goals of continued participation in quality initiatives including IQ4K.

Director Ms. White has been an employee of KinderCare for over 8 years, and prior to moving into the director position in November 2022, had been the assistant director/on-site supervisor for almost 3 years. Congratulations on your longevity and first full year in the director role! The KinderCare West #291 management team (e.g. Ms. White, assistant director Tania Holdren, multiple on-site supervisors) is organized and has noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a secure manner. As a result, the program experiences smooth daily operations. The management team is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's

policies and procedures. Ms. White discussed the collaboration that is done among local as well as national KinderCare sites that allows for a sharing of materials, curriculum, ideas/planning, professional development and various cohorts.

Since the last monitoring visit, the program has retained as well as hired some new staff. Staff throughout the classrooms reported celebrating 3 years, 2 years and one year of employment with KinderCare. Ms. White discussed how the program uses a group chat App for staff and management teams to "Shout Out" to one another by sharing successes and unique programming ideas with one another. Ms. White talked about how KinderCare offers retention incentives, additional teacher appreciation/acknowledgment, continued family/staff referral/incentive program, continued no cost staff educational development, and continued partnerships with the TEACH and WAGE$ programs. Ms. White acknowledged one teacher who is currently participating in the TEACH program. Ms. White reported being very "...proud of the little school and their team who works hard everyday...they are appreciated very much..."

KinderCare West #291 has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The local KinderCare programs have successfully navigated through the 2008 Linn County flood, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages and 2023 air quality alerts.

KinderCare West #291 continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. Ms. White discussed how "...family is the number one priority for those we serve and our staff..." The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources (e.g. unique "Grow Me App"), and supports family programming activities. The program does offer family events throughout the year including open houses, parent/program conferences, access to family ambassadors/teams, and program/parent "Care Calls".

To help ensure the building remains sanitary and hazard free each day, KinderCare has maintenance persons (e.g. indoor and outdoor) who assist in maintaining the property. Since the last review, the vestibule area has been updated to sponsor a regular coffee bar (e.g. hot chocolate, snacks) as well as continue to include family/community resources. Many new furnishings (e.g. child tables, child chairs, sensory tables), program materials and rugs have updated. A hamster and fish were added as classroom pets. A new on-site carpet shampooer has been purchased to help keep the carpets/rugs looking their best. Classrooms continue to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning at the forefront. Since the last review, the infant room was completely rearranged to help increase floor space and openness. Children's accomplishments (e.g. artwork) are displayed throughout the program space. Materials are accessible to children. Curriculum includes a combination of learning strategies incorporating KinderCare's unique curriculum, teacher created ideas, social emotional learning, early academics, and physical activity to nurture healthy bodies, happy hearts, and growing minds. Curriculum also incorporates on-site guest speaker events, themed days, seasonal parties and enrichments (e.g. cooking, STEM, music, phonics). Communication between children and staff is done verbally, with picture cues, and through sign language.

KinderCare West #291 collaborates well with community partners including the local school districts, early access persons, local businesses, CCR&R, other childcare programs/directors, NAEYC administration and health professionals. KinderCare West #291 continues to partner with the Cedar Rapids Community School District to provide a 4-year-old statewide voluntary preschool program as well as receive some transportation services.

The infant room has a “no shoe” policy and was observed supporting safe sleep practices.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. Ms. White discussed how KinderCare's exclusion for illness policies were updated since the last review. The program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Staff were able to verbalize and engage in these processes. Cleaning checklists and daily sanitation reminders were observed to be posted in various areas of the center.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were observed to be nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Activities observed included infant cares, center play experiences, small group work and routine transitions. Staff were overheard providing children with words of encouragement and engaging children in discussion. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be enjoying their day.

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

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. Thank you for the visit.

*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.