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

Name of Center: Humboldt County Head Start **Enrollment:** 15 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 18083

Street: 401 Main St **City:** Dakota City Iowa **Zip** 50529 **County:** Humboldt

Mailing Address: 214 S 13th St, Fort Dodge, IA, 50501

Director's Name: Michelle Carden **Phone Number:** 515-332-3193

On-Site Supervisor(s): Nichole Kading **E-Mail:** mcarden@yourhs-ehs.org

Date(s) of Visit: 01-08-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

FIRE INSPECTION X **State** **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 01-20-2022

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 X NAEYC NSACA Other NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			20		20
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2025 to 02-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 01-21-2025

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Humboldt County Head Start program on 01-08-25 where I met with the lead teacher Nichole Kading. Nichole took over the lead teacher position for the 2022 - 23 school year and is well qualified based on her experience and education. The program is operated under the oversight of Y.O.U.R Inc. and its board of directors. The program is located in a free standing modular building on the main street of Dakota City and is the only occupant of the building. The program offers preschool services only to children 3-4 years of age. There are currently 15 children enrolled in the program served by 2 teachers, and an on-site cook. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during this visit.

The layout and design of the building, and programming remains the same from prior visits. The building has two rooms connected by a short hallway with the primary classroom on the west end of the building and the other room used for large motor skill activities, and for early intervention socialization programming. There is a bathroom located off the main programming space of both rooms with child sized toilets so that children do not need to leave the room. Sinks are located in the classrooms to facilitate hand washing. Both rooms have windows on the exterior walls that provide natural light, ventilation, and a view of the outdoors. Each room has a primary entrance so that they can be accessed independently, and both also have a secondary exit that provides direct access to the playground. All doors opened fully although the secondary exit of the large motor skill room opening on to the playground did drag when opening. While it did require some extra effort to open it did not rise to the level of needing immediate repair but should be monitored for maintenance needs. The classrooms were observed to be clean with no immediate maintenance concerns noted. The primary classroom is a large open space that is divided into activity centers through the placement of play structures and furniture which are arranged so as not to create any blind areas. The center had a good variety of activity centers designed to help the children build gross and fine motor, cognitive, language, and social skills. Each center had a good selection of toys and materials that were appropriate to the ages of the children present and in good repair. The large motor skill room is used primarily when weather conditions do not allow for outdoor play. The room was generally left as an open area where children could use toys that require more space or otherwise engage in more active play.

A copy of the daily schedule and curriculum was posted. The center uses a general learning focus theme, and specific number, letter, color, and shape concepts. The general theme on the day of my visit was "Roads". This theme was implemented throughout the day with specific activities such as line tracing where the children were practicing "drawing roads", books that were read, and in general discussions during activities such as when the children were engaged in center play, or eating lunch. The class did move through the planned schedule during the visit with doing small group activities, large group reading and music and movement, child directed center play, and large motor play. Both teachers and the cook were very engaged with the children both in formal actions of leading activities, and informally by joining the children in their play. Good behavior management techniques were observed during my visit with the teachers using positive engagements techniques of routines, redirection, and guided problem solving. These approaches were very effective with one example being a child that was having a difficult time sitting still where Nichole had the child get a chair to sit in which might be more comfortable. In another incident one child was observed become upset and went to sit in a "calm down" space. Nichole did use a guided problem solving approach to help the child identify what was upsetting them, and resolve the issue so that the child was able to rejoin the class. All of the teacher had a very positive and energetic manner of

engaging with the children, and used calm and supportive tones when speaking with the children.

Good health and safety practices were observed on the day of the visit. The teachers did ensure that children not only washed their hands as needed but that they did so in an effective manner either redirecting the children, or providing hand-over-hand assistance. The program also practices other personal hygiene activities such as having the children brush their teeth. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other materials that could pose a safety risk to children were kept in storage where they were not accessible to children. Tables were cleaned and sanitized after various learning and group activities prior to lunch service. The cook did wait for the children to be out of the immediate area and engaged in a teacher lead group activity before cleaning the tables. First aid kits were present and stocked with materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. There were no children taking any medications, having identified allergies, or other identified health concerns but the center does have policies in place should it become necessary in the future.

The center does have a small kitchen and breakfast and snacks are prepared on-site. Lunch is prepared by the high school and brought to the center in temperature controlled containers. The center does have a refrigerator and stove that can be used to ensure that proper temperatures are maintained until meals can be served. A copy of both menus were posted and identify a good variety of nutritious meal options. The kitchen was observed to be clean with no indication of rodent or insect infestation. Good food handling and storage practices were observed with the children helping to set the table for lunch and teachers ensuring that they washed their hands, and wore food service gloves and hair nets before doing so. Meals are served family style in the classroom with the teachers sitting and eating with the children. Measured scoops are used to ensure that each child receives a full serving, and children are provided with additional servings if they are still hungry. The lunch that was served during the time of my visit included a chicken patty on a bun, mashed potatoes and gravy, oranges, and milk.

The center playground is fenced and contains climbing structures and dramatic play equipment. Riding toys, balls, and other equipment are also available and maintained in a storage shed. The playground makes use of foam tiles for cushioning ground cover below the climbing structures. The playground is fully enclosed by fencing which was observed to be good condition. The climbing structures and other equipment was observed to be in good repair. Shade is provided by the climbing structures, a large neighboring tree that would provide shade in the early morning hours, and the building which is located on the southern edge of the playground. Due to weather conditions the children made use of the large motor room and engaged in teacher lead activities using a parachute.

All required notices were posted in an area readily visible to parents and visitors. All child files were reviewed and found to contain all required information and documentation. Staff files are reviewed annually at the program administration central office and any issues identified are addressed with the administration at that time. All Inspection certificates and logs were available and current. The center does not have any fuel burning appliances, but does maintain a carbon monoxide detector as required.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Nichole identified that the program has been very stable with no new changes to the center. She, her assistant, and the cook were all with the center last year. They were observed to have a very strong working relationship as they effortlessly moved between activities and engaging with the children both in presenting the planned curriculum and addressing behavioral issues. This level of familiarity and consistency allowed them to easily address any concerns that arose and created a program in which the children were engaged and responded well to the teachers.

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

None Cited

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*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.