Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Summit Schools Inc

Provider No.: 45341

Address: 1010 Regent St NE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52402

County: Linn

Director's Name: Erin Valarezo

On-Site Supervisor: Erin Valarezo

Phone Number: 3192942036

E-Mail: kathleen.reinwart@summitschools.org
erin.valarezo@summitschools.org

HHS Visit Date: 10/06/2026

Licensing Period: 11/01/2025 to 11/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/22/2026

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [X] Year-Round
- [ ] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	7:15 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	7:15 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	7:15 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	7:15 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	7:15 AM to 5:30 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			20	30	50
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Summit Schools is an accredited, private, independent, non-parochial PreK-Middle School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Summit Schools was founded in 1998. Specifically, Summit Schools Inc (the school's childcare program) first became DHHS licensed in May 2015. This license includes before and after school/preschool childcare program.

Summit School Inc combined director and on-site supervisor (OSS) is Erin Valarezo. Ms. Valarezo has been the program since November 2011 and since it first became DHHS licensed in May 2015. Ms. Valarezo has a degree in Early Childhood Education, has experience working with children, and participates professional development.

On 10/6/2026, program space was observed. Primary programming occurs in the school cafeteria. Sufficient restrooms including hand washing sinks are available to accommodate total capacity. The program also has some access to the school's outdoor play areas. On 10/6/2026, staff were observed warmly greeting children as they arrived for after-school/preschool programming. Curriculum on the day of this monitoring visit included individual book reading, puzzle work and small group activities. Ms. Valarezo discussed how she's introduced some new materials and activities since the last review including crochet. On 10/6/2026, staff were observed to be in ratio, utilizing positive redirection when needed, actively engaged in programming with the children and encouraging the use of social graces. Routine transitions were observed to go well. Children appeared comfortable with staff and to be enjoying their morning.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The mission of Summit Schools and Summit Schools Inc "empowers each student to exceed their academic, social, and emotional goals to ensure a lifetime of success and personal fulfillment." The history of how Summit Schools and Summit

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Schools Inc came to fruition and evolved to present day (including location changes, ownership changes stemming back to 1985, name changes, survival of the 2008 flood, and so on) is impressive.

Summit Schools Inc has the following website for families and the community to learn about the program: https://summitschools.org/about/.

As of 10/6/2026, Summit Schools Inc continues to operate under a board of trustees. The program's management team (e.g. Ms. Valarezo, office manager Kathleen Reinwart, school principal Ashley Weaver) continues to be consistent and seasoned. The management team maintains system of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained in a secure manner. The management team is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Valarezo acknowledged her hard-working team of employees comprised of seasoned staff as well as some new ones.

On 10/6/2026, Summit Schools Inc was again found to be maintaining required posting, maintaining a family-staff-program information center, utilizing technological communication resources, and offering family programming activities. Curriculum continues to include social-emotional learning with opportunities for problem solving, smaller group activities based upon age for homework time, quiet reading activities, teacher inspired ideas and child focused interests to peek child curiosity and innovation. Older enrolled children are encouraged to take leadership roles within the program providing positive role modeling for younger students.

Summit Schools Inc continues to have and update as needed policies and procedures that include those for safety, daily health checks, hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. On 10/6/2026, Ms. Valarezo acknowledged how their team of staff help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day by following the policies and procedures. Ms. Valarezo also talked about having support from their trustees and the school (e.g. school kitchen staff, school administration, school maintenance, school custodial team) as to daily building and grounds conditions and repairs. It's noted that the school kitchen is inspected by the local health department.

Summit Schools Inc has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The program successfully navigated through flooding events (2008 historic 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, air quality alerts (2023, 2025), and repeated technology outages (7/19/24 global technology outage, 10/10/2025 AWS outage, 10/29/2025 Microsoft outage) and 2026 nationwide cyclosporiasis outbreak.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

None noted.

4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance

Not applicable.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Please note: Each staff and volunteer (including those under 18yo) is required to complete an Iowa/SING record check prior to involvement in childcare. The Iowa record check is required to be updated every two years thereafter or sooner if a transgression occurs. Each staff and volunteer (including those under 18yo) is required to submit to a federal/DCI/fingerprint record check prior to involvement in childcare. The federal record check is required to be updated every four years thereafter or sooner if a transgression occurs. If a transgression is noted do not file away the results but ensure the entire record check process is followed including what to do when there is a noted transgression.

Continue to increase large gross motor materials as well as improve the outdoor large gross motor areas (e.g. river stones, stacking stumps, parachute, active play kit, balancing items, secure shed to preserve the integrity of supplies). To help with these items, please connect with Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) and apply for the "Growing Iowa" fund (https://www.iowaccrr.org/child-care-providers/iowachild-care-funding-opportunities/) designed to support regulatory compliance and quality childcare in Iowa.

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Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management
Licensing discussed with management oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) understand expectations, 2) manage frustrations, and 3) monitor performance. Ms. Valarezo discussed how she is present at the program talking with staff. Ms. Valarezo indicated how they strategically arranging the cafeteria tables to help encourage good interactions, seek supports from school personnel including the school principal, communicate with parents, complete written incident reports, establish child specific behavior plans when needed, consider changing routines or the daily schedule, utilize their curriculum, ensure there's an area for calming whenever needed, send children home when needed, and exercise their required polices for enrollment and disenrollment of children as needed. Licensing and management also talked about resources available through the CCR&R behavioral specialist position and our CCNC as well as the local Tanager Place Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) program.

The program's license remains in full status. Thank you for the visit.

Date: 10/30/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.