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

Name of Center: Kessel Kids Child Care & Learning Center **Enrollment:** 197 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 19073

Street: 1135 Canterbury ST **City:** Cresco Iowa **Zip** 52136 **County:** Howard

Mailing Address: 1135 Canterbury ST, Cresco, IA, 52136

Director's Name: Melissa Vobr **Phone Number:** 563-547-3006

On-Site Supervisor(s): Melissa Vobr **E-Mail:** kesselkids@iowatelecom.net

Date(s) of Visit: 02-05-2024

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **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 X **State** **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 12-17-2021

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	28	15	51	43	137
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 03-01-2023 to 03-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 02-05-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 02/05/24 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Kessel Kids Child Care and Learning Center in Cresco. I met with Melissa Vobr, the director. Ms. Vobr has been the director since 2008. She has a BA in psychology and business administration. She was an assistant director for two years at the center prior to becoming the director. Ms. Vobr has received her National Administrator Credential (NAC). She is also a NAEYC member. Ashley Shimek is the assistant director and is in charge when Ms. Vobr is away from the center. There is 52 staff members employed at the center.

Kessel Kids Child Care and Learning Center operates out of a free-standing building. The program operates Monday through Friday from 5:00 am until 6:00 pm. They care for infants through school-aged children. The childcare program started in 1993 and they moved to their current location on 06/02/08. The building was a partnership between the Howard-Winneshiek School District, Head Start, HAWC and Keystone AEA. There are currently 197 children enrolled.

The center operates out of the following rooms: two infant rooms (one for mobile and non-mobile children), a room for younger one-year-old children, a room for older one-year-old and younger two-year-old children; a room for two-year-old children, a room for older two-year-old children and three-year-old children, a room for three through five-year-old children, and a school-aged room. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with multiple pictures of the children and their families, the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There are areas for circle time.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, puppets, art, dramatic play, Play Doh, Ipads, writing, math, science/discovery, woodworking, sensory table and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they were easily accessible to the children.

The preschool classroom uses Creative Curriculum to develop lesson plans and GOLD assessments are completed on the children. The other program rooms use the Dr. Terrie Rose PLAYbook curriculum and a variety of other resources to create lesson plans. Activities are based on themes. Each teacher prepares their own lesson plans. Newsletters are prepared monthly by each room and provided to the parents. A lesson plan was available for review in each room. The program is using ProCare to complete daily sheets and to communicate with all the parents. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is used in the classrooms to redirect behaviors and meet the needs of the children.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in each of the classrooms. The center's phone number and address were posted. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and emergency evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program and outdoor exits throughout the center. A daily schedule was posted for each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in January 2023 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The entire

building is electric so the fuel burning inspection and the carbon monoxide detector are not required. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 12/17/21, with compliance on 12/27/21.

The center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Lunch is prepared by the Howard-Winneshiek School district during the school year. During the summer months the school provides the food items to the childcare center and the cook makes lunch. The center prepares breakfast and the morning and afternoon snack for the children. The center dishes food out on the plates for lunch and serves them to the children at the table. Family style is sometimes used for breakfast and snack for the older children. The meals and snacks are served in the rooms. The kitchen area has an industrial refrigerator and freezer. Thermometers were present. There is also a refrigerator in the infant room and thermometers were present. There are two milk coolers and thermometers were present. An industrial dishwasher is used for dishes. The kitchen staff washes the dishes by hand before running the dishes through the dishwasher to sanitize them. Dishes are then allowed to air dry. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines.

The center provides three different types of formula, jar food and cereal to the infants. If parents want a different brand, they provide it. Bottles are returned to the kitchen and put through the dishwasher. Food was stored according to NHSPS guidelines in the room. There is a lactation room next to the infant room for nursing mothers.

Menus are posted in the kitchen and in each of the rooms. The school provides a new lunch menu each month and the center has a six-week rotation of menus for breakfast and snacks. Allergies are confidentially posted.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the diaper changing tables.

I observed and discussed diaper changing procedures with staff members. In the infant room a staff member did not wash the child's hands following the diaper change. Children's hands must always be washed with soap and water following a diaper change. Additionally, she sprayed the changing table with bleach, but did not clean the table with soap and water first. The table must always be cleaned prior to being disinfected. There was not a pattern of disregard so this will not be cited.

Each classroom has access to a bathroom in their room and there are multiple sinks in the classrooms. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted.

Infants use cribs to nap. Children start transitioning to cots when they turn one-year-old.

The childcare center has two fenced in outdoor play areas. There is a large naturalistic playground. There is a hill built into this area that has two slides. There is a large sandbox, a rock path and concrete path for riding toys, a stage for the children to perform on, a music center, balance beams, sensory center and a large shade shelter. There are flower and vegetable gardens and trees provide shade. Picnic tables are available.

The second area recently added a new fall surfacing. They added Poly Extruded Matting (PEM) for cushion surfacing. The PEM Playground Matting has shredded rubber contained in chambers. This area is divided into two spaces to accommodate a space for infant and toddlers. The area for the older children has climbing equipment with slides and other activities, a sandbox, a stationary bus to sit in, climbing ropes and a balance beam. There is also a grassy area for the children and a picnic table. The area for the infants and toddlers has a treehouse with a slide, pushing toys, rocking toys and a small piece of climbing equipment with slides. Shade is provided by the building and a shade structure with a tarp. There is a tree for shade. There is also a large multi-purpose room available for indoor activities.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

Several staff members are experienced and have worked together as a team for a long time. They have fun and creative activities for the children to help teach them learn. Staff members provide clear and easy to understand directions to the children. Staff members are enthusiastic and provide the children with praise. Staff members provided great reminders for the children to cover their coughs and to wash their hands. Staff members sang with the children while they washed their hands. They had conversations with the children about sharing. Staff members provide the children with choices and were actively engaged in activities with the children. Staff members used play to teach the children about colors and counting. Positive redirection was used when necessary. The children enjoyed their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Vobr states the professional development they have received over the last two years through NICC has been really good. It was great having the trainer come to the center to provide training to all the staff members. The trainer was great at

talking to the staff members in easy to understand terms.

Ms. Vobr states the staff members are willing to take trainings.

Ms. Vobr states they have longevity with several staff members.

Ms. Vobr states they have had two staff members recently complete TEACH classes with AA's and two staff members are starting.

Ms. Vobr states they have nine staff members who receive WAGES.

Ms. Vobr states the staff members work together well and they have enough staff members to provide floaters for breaks and strong enough staff to step into any room where they are needed.

Ms. Vobr states that both parents and staff members like the use of ProCare for communication. Staff members can send messages and pictures.

The classrooms and hallways are decorated with children's art projects and their pictures.

Ms. Vobr has her National Administrator Credential (NAC) and she is a NAEYC member.

The program installed cameras in each of the classrooms and in the hallways in August 2018. There are also cameras in the common areas and parking lot. The classrooms have started locking their doors.

The program has an IQ4K level of 1 that expires in September 2025.

The program partners with Keystone AEA for resources.

Ms. Vobr is an incredible director. She is always thinking of her staff and providing them the best work environment possible. She thinks outside of the box and is creative. She truly wants to improve childcare for families and for centers everywhere.

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

N/A

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

*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.