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

Name of Center: Eichacker Center **Enrollment:** 24 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 21180

Street: 3433 Avenue O **City:** Fort Madison Iowa **Zip** 52627 **County:** Lee

Mailing Address: 2850 Mt Pleasant St Ste 108, Burlington, IA, 52601

Director's Name: Matthew LeClere **Phone Number:** 319-372-4471

On-Site Supervisor(s): Jennifer Mehmert **E-Mail:** matthew.leclere@caofseia.org

Date(s) of Visit: 02-02-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 03-03-2023

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

Date Inspected: 10-21-2022

Comments : completed by Joey Herren Inspector Fort Madison Fire Department, due annually

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 X Other NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care X Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			36		36
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 05-01-2023 to 05-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert **Date:** 03-03-2023

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

The Eichacker Center is located in an older, single story masonry building in a residential area of Ft. Madison. The center provides a Head Start program designed for two separate classes of 15 children each. The center is owned and operated by Community Action of Southeast Iowa, a not for profit community action corporation headquartered in Burlington, IA. The building also houses the Neighborhood Community Center for that agency. The community center is separated from the child care area by a closed door. The Director (2019) for the program is Matthew LeClere. Mr LeClere has a BA in Elementary Education, a BS in Education Administration, with an endorsement in Special Needs. He has worked for many years (17+) in the capacity of teacher and principal at a public school district. Director LeClere is director of several Head Starts in the area for Community Action. He has held this position since 2019.

On 2/2/23, I made unannounced licensing visit to the Eichacker Center and met with staff members and Heather Harris. Ms. Mehmert qualifies as On Site Supervisor at the program. She was formerly OSS at another licensed childcare program. I typically meet with Heather Harris, Family Development Specialist. Ms. Harris has been employed at the center since 2006 and is a former teacher. Jennifer Mehmert has been employed with Head Start since 2018 and qualifies as OSS. She or FDS Harris are typically both present.

Observations of Program Area:

The visit consisted of classroom and building area review and observations of activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

The center is comprised of a main floor classroom and a basement classroom that also doubles as a cafeteria. A full kitchen is also located in the basement. Teachers have an office on the main floor. The classrooms are functional and clean. The building is clearly nearing the end of its useful life as a child care center. The main floor classroom provides most of the curriculum area. The basement classroom is used for large group activities and for meals. Restrooms are available on both levels for the children. The classrooms are self-contained with phones, restrooms and emergency exits to the outside. The classrooms are furnished with a satisfactory variety of child sized furniture, equipment, toys, games, and activities for the children.

Off of the main program area downstairs is another small storage room. It is cluttered. The children do not have access to this area.

Center Nutrition Practices:

Meals and snacks are prepared on-site by a cook specifically hired for that function. I met with the cook, Denise Mahoney on this and many past visits. Ms. Mahoney has been a Head Start employee since 1997. She also prepares meals for the nearby Richardson School Head Start site. Meals are served family style and menu patterns indicate that minimum nutritional requirements are met.

Lunch, breakfast and snacks are prepared on site. Food was stored per code. There was no food stored on the floor. Food is ordered weekly. Menus were noted to have very little processed food and the cook should be recognized for the extra work she must commit to which I believe meets best practice standards. Due in part from weekly ordering and very little processed items, there were no expired food items. Drawers were very organized. The Center cook cleans and washes dishes by hand (3 step method). The kitchen area contains a sanitizer in the kitchen area for post washing. I observed thermometers in the refrigeration/freezer units. They read recommended temperatures.

The children must go downstairs for lunch. A gate separates the upstairs and downstairs by a secure railing. The children utilize these stairs daily. The stairs are somewhat steep, as the building is older.

Children eat in the basement area. A dining space is attached to but separated from a kitchen area where all meals are prepared. Cabinets are located in the basement room for extra storage and have been anchored as recommended last year. All electrical outlets in the main center room were covered. A small water fountain is available for use near the bathroom (not currently being utilized due to covid 19). All waste containers were covered.

The menu for the month was posted in the main preschool room. Menus meet CACFP requirements. Food allergies are kept in files. They are also posted in the kitchen.

The kitchen basement window has been covered to keep bugs out of the food preparation area.

Center Health and Safety:

The classrooms offer small kitchen like furniture and other well-kept leather furniture. A sensory table containing sand is also available. A painting station is available which I observed children using during free time. Interest centers available to the children include: blocks, dramatic play, children's literature, toys and games, puzzles and small manipulatives, art, sensory table, music and movement, science and discovery, and computer area. The room contains coat racks and cubbies for the children. A staff office is attached. The children do not have access to this area.

The center also has a computer center. The restroom contains one small sink and one toilet.

Adequate toileting supplies were available the day of the visit. An appropriate paper towel dispenser is available. Hand washing posters are in plain sight. Cleaning supplies are kept in a child safe cabinet in the restroom area. Walls in the area closer to the floor in the bathroom around the toilet appear to have some leakage/ bubbling. The restroom appeared to be generally clean and hand washing posters were present. Staff assisted the children with hand washing. The main preschool room has an exit door with direct access to the outdoors. This emergency exit area leads to a small fenced area of the neighbor’s property which contains wheelbarrows, ladders and other gardening supplies. This exit is not utilized for fire drills and would only be utilized in case one of the other exits is blocked.

Prescription and non-prescription medication storage procedures were in accordance with licensing regulations, physician directions, and parental consent. If the preschool has medication it is kept in a lock box in the staff office. Any child with allergies must have an allergy action plan on file. Child Care Nurse Consultant Amy Hayes can assist with this plan or other special health care plans. Staff supervising the children should be trained on these plans.

Storage and maintenance of a first aid kit were reviewed. First Aid Kits are downstairs in the top of a cupboard and upstairs hanging on the door. A quiet area for sick or injured children is designated in the main preschool room (pillow area).

We reviewed compliance with environmental testing and maintenance of any necessary detection equipment. A lead based paint review was completed November 21, 2008. At that time the center worked with the Lee County Health Department to resolve lead based paint concerns. Part of the conditions of the environmental sampling of the property was below standards. After cooperation with the IDPH and following specific recommendations from IDPH the property passed clearance in 2008 and was classified as lead safe at that time. It was noted in the report, “However please note that the lead safe classification does not mean that this property is free of lead based paint. You must maintain the painted surfaces in good condition or keep them covered in order to avoid the possibility of future lead based paint hazards. If any painted surface containing lead based paint begins to deteriorate you should repair it immediately.”

In 2014 I met Cyndi Mason, the Iowa Department of Public health Nurse for the area at the facility to observe the windows, walls, carpeting, and pipes for lead paint or mold. Cyndi and Monte Hawley (facilities coordinator for 8 Head Start programs) went over the last lead based paint assessment conducted again by IDPH in 2016. Lead based paint should be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure cracking or chipping paint is not accessible to children. An updated assessment should be completed by maintenance or HS staff regarding any chipping paint.

Windows in most of the program space have been covered. A dehumidifier is in the basement area (was added 4 years ago).

A janitor comes in nightly and spends 3 hours to conduct deep cleaning. Staff also does general cleaning daily. I reviewed the inspection book. The center replaced the furnace several years ago. Furnace inspections have been conducted annually. A non-battery operated carbon monoxide detector meeting UL standards is kept in the furnace area. A detector should be on each floor of the building. I observed such. Units will have an expiration date on the unit itself or on unit packaging.

The preschool is on city water; there for water analysis is not mandatory. The building is cooled by a window air conditioning unit. The basement has little natural light. Light is provided by artificial overhead lighting. Radon testing is completed every two years.

I reviewed regulations regarding safety policies and procedures. The lunch area where the children dine has several child sized tables and chairs. All electrical outlets in this area were covered. The children also practice literacy activities in this area. In the corner a large rug is present where circle time is conducted.

I reviewed emergency plans and drills for fire and tornado. They were documented monthly per my observation (copies in site book and in the room).

I reviewed regulations regarding sanitation policies and procedures. The preschool restroom is the only restroom on the top floor of the entire building. A restroom should be available for every 15 children. Staff throughout the building have access to this restroom. There is an additional restroom in the basement containing two stalls and a small sink. Hand washing posters were noted.

Center compliance with regulations regarding staff and child hand washing were reviewed and in compliance the date of the visit.

Center Playground:

Areas for outdoor play are located in the front, side, and rear of the center. The areas are fenced and naturally shaded. The area features an anchored and relatively low metal/plastic climbing and activity structure on rubber matting surfacing.

The center has added two elevated gardening activity stations. The area has a small amount of grass surfacing and a concrete runway for tricycle and big wheel riding. The front entrance to the building contains a fenced play area. The equipment and surrounding perimeter did not appear to have any safety hazards. A tricycle is available for riding. A locked storage shed is contained in the front concrete play area. The play area contains a sandbox which has a tarp covering it. The tarp has been elevated as to avoid water pooling. The play area has two entrance and exit gates. Both gates (back and front gates were both closed). The area also contains a mirror structure for the children's use. In the back of the building more age appropriate toys are situated on synthetic grass carpeting. An air conditioner is also in this area that has a barrier around it, which is an improvement from years past. This area also contains a storage shed. I would not recommend balls or equipment/toys (jump ropes) that can be thrown in this area as power lines are hanging approximately 25 feet above the play area. Screws on the fence have been cut, capped or turned around.

Monthly playground inspection records were reviewed. A mobile First Aid pack that is taken outdoors. The Child Care Weather Watch is utilized to determine if outdoor play is appropriate due to varying weather conditions.

Center Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

Children are transported to and from the center each day and on field trips by a school bus vehicle owned and operated by Community Action of Southeast Iowa. Transportation is provided throughout the school year.

Center Administrative Records:

Child misbehavior is addressed by careful planning of the classroom structure and the child's daily routine, modeling, positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior, and redirection. Staff and child records are reviewed on licensing visit years. The curriculum utilized is Creative Curriculum.

Staff file information was provided to me by Susan Matton, Administrative Specialist, Community Action of Southeast Iowa Head Start/Early Head Start
Burlington Head Start Main Office on 3/3/23. Information provided includes updated fingerprint results (every 4 years), Iowa Criminal Background checks (2 years), current physicals (3 years) and all training requirements including Universal Precautions, CPR/First Aid, etc... It should be noted the Head Start main office has an excellent history of record keeping. Staff are traditionally well trained and meet all requirements. All staff were fully in compliance with all requirements this year as well.

Child files including updated physicals, immunizations, emergency contact information are reviewed annually including updated physicals, field trip and pick up authorizations, dental and medical information and emergency contacts. This

information is kept in Child Plus.

Compliance with regulations regarding required notices and postings were reviewed. A No Smoking sign is posted on the front door. Emergency information including evacuation exit plans was posted. A mandatory reporting form and instructions are in the hallway. Licensing consultant contact information and the license are visibly posted. A parent board hangs in the upper level room. It contains class schedules and curriculum. Another main parent board hangs in the hallway across from the family development specialist.

Further reviewed were regulations regarding required written policies provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook. The center handbook included a curriculum statement, emergency contacts for the children, as well as universal precautions and evacuation of an immobile child policy.

I reviewed the annual emergency procedures preparedness plan. It is now complete for this specific site. Staff have signed and dated acknowledgement of training on the plan. An emergency preparedness kit is present.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is accredited by NAEYC.

The center provides vision screening services for the children.

The center provides hearing screening services for the children.

The center provides dental screening and fluoride varnish services for the children in cooperation with Lee County Department of Public Health.

The center provides Brigance screenings to the children to monitor height, weight, and social/emotional development.

Head Start has the following procedures in place to address the pandemic.

1. DROPOFF
All children will be met, at the designated entrance door, of the facility by a staff member. Staff will take each child's temperature upon entering the facility. Parents/guardians and the public will not be allowed in the building until further notice.
2. CHILD AND FAMILY SICKNESS AND SYMPTOMS
Parents will be required to answer two questions daily related to child and family symptoms:
1) Has your child or anyone in your household had the following symptoms in the last 24 hours: Temperature of 100.4° or above, new onset or worsening cough, or shortness of breath?
** The health department recommends visiting a primary care physician to determine the source of a fever. Child must be fever free for 24 hours without aid of fever reducing medication.
2) Has your child been exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19?
**If the parent answers 'yes' to one or both questions, the child will be unable to participate in center-based programming that day.
3. CHILD OR STAFF WITH SYMPTOMS DURING PROGRAM DAY
If a child becomes sick during the program day, s/he will be kept in a separate room until parents arrive to pick-up the sick child.
4. PICK-UP
When picking up your child, either use the buzzer at the designated entrance or, if there is no answer, call the posted phone number to let them know which child you are there to pick up. A staff member will bring your child to the designated entrance to meet you.
5. GROUP SIZES
Classes will be limited to no more than 10 children in each classroom.
6. CLEANING AND DISINFECTING
We will follow a strict cleaning and disinfecting protocol throughout all classrooms and buildings.
7. HANDWASHING
All children and staff will wash hands using proper handwashing techniques when entering the building and regularly throughout their day. Hand sanitizer will be provided when handwashing sinks are not available.
8. MASKS AND OTHER PROTECTIVE GEAR
Masks and gloves will be made available for staff.
9. SOCIAL DISTANCING
Classrooms will include the same group of 10 or less children and 2 – 3 providers each day.

10. CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE
If a positive case is identified within a classroom, the health department will be contacted and provide further determinations including program/classroom closure. It is likely that we will be instructed to close that affected classroom for 14 days.

INTERACTIONS:
• What does the director do to ensure positive social interactions occur between children and staff?
To help insure positive interactions, we set up and conducted PBIS training in conjunction with Great Prairie AEA. This training was a 4-part series which was delivered on August 27, October 15, November 25, and November 26.
• Did you see evidence of positive interactions? (role playing, sing, read together, and more).
I make regular visits to the classrooms at all the sites. I see positive interactions on a regular basis in every classroom. Singing, reading together, conversations over mealtime, and IMIL (I am Moving, I am Learning) activities are regular occurrences throughout the program.
• Are there other observations about interactions worthy of reporting?
The teachers use tools such as "Go Noodle" to promote physical activity and positive interactions among the entire class. These activities, along with "Ready Rosie" which encourages and promotes social skills through the modeling of positive adult/child interactions helps our children and families learn to interact and develop school readiness skills.

WORKFORCE STABILITY:
• What does the director do to recruit amazing staff?
We look for the best, most qualified staff through internet posting for job openings, recruitment and placement offices at local colleges, postings on Head Start job boards through Region 7, and efforts to develop talent from within our organization.
• What does the director do to maintain amazing staff?
In an effort to retain staff, we offer a great deal of professional development on a number of topics in the early childhood field. We collaborate with agencies like the AEA to provide training opportunities that are engaging and informative. As an Agency, we have Agency wide training days where we focus on topics germane to the scope of the mission of Community Action. We have a wellness committee to encourage healthy choices and educate the staff on wellness topics including healthy eating, mental health, and financial wellness. We also recognize the outstanding work of our staff through email updates, newsletters, and through recognition assemblies.

WORKFORCE SKILL DEVELOPMENT
• What does the director do to help staff realize the opportunities for greatness as a child care provider? How does the "it factor" get established – more than providing supervision.
Through efforts to make global improvements, we have identified 3 major focus areas that all staff can identify. Improvement of Instruction…Improvement of Performance…Improvement of Attendance. These three focus areas are our guiding principles as we look to the next several years. We have adopted Creative Curriculum in its entirety to ensure consistency and maintain the quality programming we provide. This Head Start's goal of becoming a nationally recognized program has been communicated to the staff as an overarching objective and the pinnacle of success of our program. In the last year, I have begun to focus the coordinators on Leadership more than Management. These efforts continue to bring positive changes to the program and work with our teachers to build trust and excellence throughout.

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

1. 109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted. Child Care Nurse Consultant Amy Hayes with the Iowa Department of Public Health can provide consultation on this matter.

2. 109.9(2)g: Any child with allergies, a written emergency plan. Copy shall accompany child if they leave the premises. Child Care Nurse Consultant Amy Hayes with the Iowa Department of Public Health can provide consultation on this matter.

I phoned CCNC Hayes on 3/3/23 asking her to reach out to the program on these issues

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff are doing the most with the building they are to utilize. They may relocate sometime this year or next.

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to correct the items listed in Section IV. Staff gave me a verbal commitment that the noted rule violations would be promptly corrected. It is important to note, all DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

The center may reach out to CCR&R Consultant Malia Love or Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Amy Hayes at any time for consultation.

Child Care Nurse Consultants work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues.

Child Care Resource & Referral offer centers assistance with meeting the DHS regulations, QRS, infant/toddler concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have.

DHS recommends centers utilize IDPH and CCR&R services.

*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.