Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: HACAP Head Start - Johnson STEAM

Provider No.: 52957

Address: 355 18th St SE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52403

County: Linn

Director's Name: Lacy Blackhawk

On-Site Supervisor: Katie Rippe

Phone Number: 3195582174

E-Mail: cregan@hacap.org
lblackhawk@hacap.org

HHS Visit Date: 09/23/2025

Licensing Period: 09/01/2025 to 09/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 07/29/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			32		32
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

HACAP is a community action agency currently providing head start services throughout 9 Iowa counites. HACAP began in 1968 serving families in Johnson, Jones, and Linn Counties. From 1973-1981, HACAP expanded to provide services in Benton, Iowa, and Washington Counties. Then, in fall of 2020, HACAP again expanded to provide services in Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson Counties. Specifically, HACAP Head Start (HHS) - Johnson STEAM (JS) is located inside Johnson STEAM Academy an elementary school which is part of the Cedar Rapids Community School District. HHS-JS received permission to open and commenced operations on 9/2/2025.

Multi-site HHS early childhood program executive director is Christi Regan. Ms. Regan has a BA degree in elementary education with early childhood reading, has been employed with head start for over 20 years, and continues to participate in much child development related training. Specific multi-site director is Ms. Blackhawk. Ms. Blackhawk has been a director with HHH since December 2020. Ms. Blackhawk has a BA degree in early childhood education, a plethora of experience working with children, and continues to participate in child development related training. HHS - JS's specific on-site supervisor is Katie Rippe. Ms. Rippe has been an HHS on-site supervisor since March 2020. Ms. Rippe has an AA degree in early childhood education, a plethora of experience working with children, and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 9/23/2025, building, grounds and program space were observed to all be in good repair. Primary programming occurs in one classroom #134 with enclosed restroom and hand washing facilities. Morning group circle observed included music and song with mild calisthenics, a review of day's events, a reading-exploring of the book "Jalapeno Bagels", and discussion of the day's play plan. Curriculum on the day of the monitoring visit allowed for a variety of play experience (e.g. imaginative play with home living and baby dolls, puzzles, suction cup table toys, building blocks) that were observed to peak child interest as well as encourage social emotional growth, innovation and child choice. On 9/23/2025, staff were observed to be in ratio and actively engaged with the children in a variety of activities that included breakfast rituals, group circle events, enter play experiences, and routine transitions. Children appeared comfortable with staff and to be enjoying the day.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

HACAP's mission and goal is "...helping people develop skills to become successful and build strong communities..." and "...to bring about a greater degree of social competence in the young children..."

HHS has the following website for families and the community to learn more about the program: https://www.hacap.org/headstart.

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As of 9/23/2025, HHS locations continue to be overseen by a board of directors. The program's management team (e.g. Ms. Regan, Ms. Blackhawk, Ms. Rippe) are invested in the community and are mentors helping connect families and children with various community resources and events. The management team continues to have a system of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained in a secure manner. The management team remains knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. On 9/23/2025, Ms. Rippe discussed how enrolled children and families as well as their team of staff have become quickly acclimated to this new location. Licensing observed program storage closets to be extremely and wonderfully organized with administrative supplies and child materials! Even though this is a new location, staff are seasoned and reported celebrating over 40 years, 21 years and 3 years with HHS.

As of 9/23/2025, HHS - JS has a newly established area for required postings and parent-staff-program information. HHS - JS is utilizing technological communication resources and offering family programming activities. HHS childcare programs have a Parent Committee, Policy Council, and family support workers. Curriculum continues to include Creative Curriculum, teacher-inspired ideas and regular program-family conferences.

As of 9/23/2025, HHS childcare locations continue to have and update as needed policies and procedures that include those for safety, daily health checks, hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. On the day of this monitoring visit, staff discussed how they help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day by following their current policies and procedures as well as maintaining checklists for cleaning and maintenance. Staff also talked about having support from their board, support from their HHS maintenance person and new increasing supports from the school district (e.g. school kitchen staff, school administration, school maintenance, school custodial team) as to daily building and grounds conditions and repairs.

HHS locations including HHS - JS each have emergency plans, policies, and procedures. While HHS - JS is a new location having commenced operations on 9/2/2025, other HHS childcare locations have successfully navigated through flooding events, relocations, January 2019 Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, air quality alerts (2013, 2015) and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Diapering surfaces are required to be non-porous for proper cleaning and disinfecting to occur between each diaper change. Wood and diapering pads are porous and shall not be used. Remedy.

Licensing strongly supports installing a secure entry system (e.g. doorbell with camera system) to help increase program safety.

Ensure there are supplies to support sweeping, mopping and vacuuming if this has not been completed as requested.

While facilitating independent rest rooming activities, the restrooms doors are heavy and hinder good staff-child communication when needed. Please consider replacing with dutch-split doors.

Increase sensory items (e.g. individual sensory play experiences, sensory spinning seats, sensory cushions, light table with transparent materials, sensory tiles).

Outdoor play equipment needs to help children develop new skills but also be in scale with their sizes, abilities, and developmental levels. Regarding the outdoor play space used by your program, please contact the manufacturer of the outdoor climbing structures to document intended ages of use. If all climbing equipment is not intended for usage by preschool-age children, install an additional section of fence with a gate-latch panel to separate the preschool-age climbing

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equipment from other equipment.

Tree roots with a patch of cement on the outdoor playground are currently presenting as a tripping/head injury hazard. Remedy.

Increase cushion surfacing depth underneath outdoor child climbing play equipment.

To help with the items noted in the special recommendations section of this report, please apply for the "Growing Iowa" fund designed to support childcare in Iowa by connecting with CCR&R (https://iowaccrr.org/staff/; Region 5 Director Becky White at 563-484- 4587).

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

Date: 10/02/2025

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**.