

Little Blue Jay Nest set to provide child care services starting Aug. 18

BY MASAKI OVA
The Jamestown Sun

JAMESTOWN

The James Valley Career and Technology Center's new child care center is officially licensed and will begin providing services on Aug. 18.

"It's been a process to get there but it's pretty exciting," said Teresa Olson, coordinator for the Little Blue Jays Nest and family and consumer science teacher. The hours for the Little Blue Jay Nest will follow the regular school schedule from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Little Blue Jay Nest is accepting applications for children of employees of the James Valley Career and Technology Center's schools and partners — Jamestown Public Schools, Montpelier Public Schools, Pingree-Buchanon Public Schools, Gackle Public Schools, James River Special Education Unit and the University of Jamestown. The child care center also has a limited number of spots for the community.

The James Valley Career and Technology Center operates the child care facility which has been licensed by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Service Department's Early Childhood Licensing Unit. The Little Blue Jay Nest is licensed for 65 children, Olson said.

"Our goal is we don't ever want to hit that much because we want to make sure that we provide the care with a lot of quality," said Heidi Eckart, assistant director of the James Valley Career and Technology Center. "We have enough space that they license us for more, but our goal is to stay where we make sure the kids get that one on one, kids are getting a lot of that independent skills to build independence but also lots of nurturing."

Olson said a committee worked with Verla Jung, start-up and community engagement coordinator at Child Care Aware of North Dakota, who helped guide the committee through the process of getting a child care license.

Olson said the committee prepared handbooks and submitted all the requirements the state needs to license a child care facility.

"As a new center, you have to have background

checks for everybody, which there's a new provider orientation that has to be completed," she said. "We have to make sure you get all of your documents together for inspections for the building. So there's several components that get put together that all get submitted before they even come out to look at your place. Then once the licenser comes out, she walks through and asks some questions, make sure we are hitting the standards that the state has."

Jamestown Public School District staff with children in the Little Blue Jay Nest qualify for the Working Parents Child Care Relief Program, said Adam Gehlhar, director of the Career and Technology Center, in an email to The Jamestown Sun. For the program, the employer provides a monthly child care paid benefit and opts in for a state match of \$300.

"That's per employee, so not per child," Eckart said. "So if you had somebody in the district that both parents were working, they both can take that out. So that would be a huge savings for those that are in those situations."

She said the Little Blue Jay Nest's goal was to help with a need in the community.

"That was never our intention was to make a profit off of it," she said. "It's to offer a service and be able to sustain it."

In 2024, the Jamestown Public School Board approved a proposal to add child care programming and services at the Career and Technology Center.

The renovation of the child care center at the Career and Technology Center was completed using funds from a \$500,000 Regional Workforce Impact Program grant.

The renovation included turning space used for aviation and construction into a child care facility. The child care facility is located on the south side of the Career and Technology Center.

The aviation and construction classrooms were moved to different locations at the Career and Technology Center.

Olson said the rooms for the Little Blue Jay Nest include new cribs, cots, tables, chairs, shelves and toys. An outdoor playground is also planned.

The dropoff and pickup



Masaki Ova / The Jamestown Sun

Teresa Olson, left, coordinator of the Little Blue Jays Nest, and Bonnie Mielke, supervisor of the Little Blue Jays Nest, are ready to start providing child care on Aug. 18. The Little Blue Jay Nest at the James Valley Career and Technology Center in Jamestown was officially licensed by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Service Department's Early Childhood Licensing Unit.

area for the children will be on the south side of the Career and Technology Center.

Olson said students in Career and Technology Center programs helped with the renovation.

"We've had our construction tech kids in there helping," she said. "Our autobody kids helped do some painting in there for the radiators. Our welding precision machine kids helped get some of the desks to kind of set up."

The Little Blue Jay Nest is completely different than the play school that students learn to operate and manage.

"We will still have that where our students still have that experience," Olson said.

The Little Blue Jay Nest has four staff members with more than 85 years of experience in education and child care.

"We've got some phenomenal staff with great years of experience," Eckart said.

Olson said students who have completed the child development class, child care block class and have lab experience can do work-based learning at the Little Blue Jay Nest. She said those students would not be counted as staff members but as volunteers helping out.

"So we'll meet our ratios with our staffing, and then they'll just be extra attention and care and opportunities for the little ones as well as the high school kids," she said.

If you go

What: Little Blue Jay Nest grand opening

When: noon to 3 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 14

Where: James Valley Career and Technology Center, 910 12th Ave. NE

A parent meeting is at noon with refreshments with a public open house to follow.

Olson said staff and students are trained in providing CPR, first aid and using an automated external defibrillator for infants and pediatrics. She said they also have to complete training to be a mandated reporter and for safe sleep.

"There's always continuing ed that happens," she said. "... It's a state mandated requirement but it also keeps you current, and if there's new things coming up to try to provide the best care we can for kids because there's always new ideas that we don't think of that others do."

Olson said the school district will prepare breakfast and lunch for the children in the Little Blue Jay Nest while child care staff provide morning and afternoon snacks.

For more information on the Little Blue Jay Nest and to fill out an application for a child, go to the James Valley Career and Technology Center at 910 12th Ave. NE in Jamestown or visit <https://shorturl.at/kn4uk>.



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Children will have plenty of activities to do in this room of the Little Blue Jay Nest. The Little Blue Jay Nest is located on the north side of the James Valley Career and Technology Center.

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STUTSMAN COUNTY



For an updated agenda, visit the Stutsman County website at www.stutsmancounty.gov and navigate to Government > Meeting Minutes. If you plan to attend the meeting and need special facilities or assistance relating to a disability, please contact the Auditor's office at (701) 252-9035 prior to the meeting.



Questions, requests for additional information, or public comments can be sent to auditor@stutsmancounty.gov



Conference Phone Number: **(701) 566-9575**

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Reminder: Please place yourself on mute until called on to speak.



Our County Commission & Park Board meetings will be live streamed via Facebook. Stream will be active a few minutes before the start of each meeting. To view, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/stutsmancounty>

AGENDA COUNTY PARK BOARD REGULAR MEETING

AUGUST 5, 2025 – 8:30 A.M.

**STUTSMAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMMISSION ROOM
511 2ND AVE SE, JAMESTOWN, ND 58401**

Last Revised: 07/30/2025 @ 12:22 PM

1. Call To Order
2. Roll Call
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Public Comment
5. Approval of Agenda
6. Approval of July 2025 Meeting Minutes
7. Review and Approval of Monthly Bills
8. Adjourn County Park Board Meeting

AGENDA BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

AUGUST 5, 2025

**TO BEGIN AFTER LAST ITEM ON PARK BOARD AGENDA
STUTSMAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMMISSION ROOM
511 2ND AVE SE, JAMESTOWN, ND 58401**

1. Call To Order
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of July 2025 Meeting Minutes
6. Years of Service Awards
7. Roger Schaffer – Culvert Drainage Issues
8. Dorene Stroh, Jamestown City Assessor – Abatements for Wheelchair Exemptions
9. Sue Koropatnicki, Treasurer/Recorder –
 - a. Introduction of Deputy Treasurer
 - b. Request to Change Signing Authority on County Bank & Investment Accounts
10. Fritz Fremgen, State's Attorney –
 - a. Monthly Report
 - b. Entrance into Opioid Class Action Suit: Purdue/Sackler
 - c. Entrance into Opioid Class Action: Alvogen Zydus et al
11. Jesse Christianson, Highway Superintendent –
 - a. Kidder County Proposed Road Maintenance Agreement
 - b. Request to Purchase Semi After Storm Damage
 - c. LoadPass Township Agreement
 - d. Contract for Road Consultant
12. Jessica Alonge, Auditor/COO –
 - a. Appointment of NDACo Delegate
 - b. 2026 Budget Hearing Date
 - c. 2026 Preliminary Budget Statement
13. Review and Approval of Monthly Bills
14. Adjourn County Commission Meeting

BUSINESS NEWS

Green joins staff of JRMC

JAMESTOWN — Jamestown Regional Medical Center announced that Isabelle Green, licensed speech-



Green

language pathologist, has joined its rehabilitation team. Green will provide treatment options for those seeking speech-language therapy. This may include patients who have experienced speech and language difficulty, swallowing issues and neurologic conditions such as stroke or brain injury.

Green, a Minnesota native, received her Master of Science in

Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Mary in Bismarck. She is also certified in LSVT LOUD, an evidence-based treatment program designed to improved voice and speech in individuals with Parkinson's disease.

Through her education and clinical practice, Green found her passion in helping adults regain their ability to communicate and improve their overall quality of life through speech-language pathology. She will be working with voice, memory or swallowing issues due to conditions such as stroke survivors or neurologic conditions. While JRMC has had several traveling speech-language pathologists in recent years, Green is

looking forward to offering patients the consistency and stability of a full-time therapist.

"We're thrilled to have Isabelle join our team," said Tracy Anderson, JRMC rehabilitation manager. "Her expertise allows us to fully restore our speech-language services and meet the diverse needs of our patients — right here at JRMC."

Green said she finds great satisfaction in seeing patients progress and improve after only a few sessions of therapy and encourages patients and caregivers to seek care.

"Communication is connection," Green said. "Many older adults feel like they're stuck in decline, but even small improvements can

greatly enhance their lives. Helping someone reconnect with their loved ones or engage in daily life again is so fulfilling."

Green will be working alongside occupational, physical and respiratory therapists. Occupational therapy works especially closely with speech-language therapy, as both involve walking patients through executive function tasks, such as following a recipe or planning daily activities.

Green is currently seeing patients at JRMC; a provider referral is required to begin speech-language therapy. For more information or appointments, visit jrmcnd.com/rehabilitation or call JRMC Rehabilitation at (701) 952-4800.