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

Name of Center: KCE Champions LLC @ Grant Wood Elementary School **Enrollment:** 28 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51875

Street: 645 26th ST SE **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52403 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: PO Box 171, Palo, IA, 52324

Director's Name: Bethany "Bree" Hogue **Phone Number:** 319-432-3608

On-Site Supervisor(s): Thomas Reinier **E-Mail:** SSous@discoverchampions.com
Bree.Hogue@discoverchampions.com
KNorrick@discoverchampions.com

Date(s) of Visit: 02-05-2025

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

Date Inspected: 02-15-2022

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: X Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years 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				100	100
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2024 to 02-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 02-05-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

KCE Champions LLC has been operating multiple school-age childcare programs within the Cedar Rapids Community School District since 2022. Specifically, KCE Champions LLC @ Grant Wood Elementary School is located inside Grant Wood Elementary School which is part of the Cedar Rapids Community School District. The program primarily operates Monday through Friday before and after school hours 6:30am to 6:00pm. KCE Champions does have the ability to extend hours on scheduled early release days, emergency late start days, and emergency early-out days. During the summer, full days of emergency closing (example snow day), and some breaks (holiday and spring), this site has the ability to operate full days and/or combine for full days of care at another KCE Champions LLC location. KCE Champions LLC @ Grant Wood Elementary serves only school-age children. Current enrollment is 32.

Senior regional director of field operations is Kymberly Norrick. Multi-site regional manager Setara Sous has a BA in criminology, has 6 years experience working within this childcare corporation, participates in child development related training and been director qualified since January 2024. Multi-site director Bethany "Bree" Hogue has been with the program since operations commenced in 2022. Ms. Hogue is completing an AA degree in early childhood education, has several years of experience working in children, and continues to participate in child development related training. On-site supervisor (OSS) since December 2024 is Thomas Reinier. Mr. Reinier has prior experience working with children and continues to participate in child development related training.

On 2/5/2025, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

KCE Champions LLC @ Grant Wood Elementary is located inside an elementary school in a predominantly urban neighborhood. The profit program provides a variety of early learning and childcare opportunities as well as accepts many different of funding sources to help meet the needs of children and families throughout the community.

KCE Champions LLC @ Grant Wood Elementary has established the following website for families and the community to learn more about the program: https://crschools.us/students-and-families/quick-links/champions/.

According to the family and employee handbook, the philosophy of KCE Champions LCC is that "...learning is meant to be a natural, joyful experience. Our goal is to help your child develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. Children thrive when the process of discovery is lovingly encouraged and gently reinforced..." KCE Champions LCC is a division of KinderCare Education. The history of how KCE Champions LLC came to fruition and evolved to present day (including 1969 KinderCare Learning Centers founded, 1998 corporate headquarters moved from Montgomery Alabama to present-day Portland Oregon, 2003 KCE Champions LLC joins KinderCare Education, 2013 KinderCare launches its Early Foundations proprietary curriculum) is impressive. KinderCare Education serves more than 186,000 children in 40 states, and Champions specifically serves more than 40,000 of those children in 21 states and Washington, D.C. Champions partners with principals, teachers, and parents to create more than 600 before- and after-school and year-round learning environments.

In 2021, KinderCare Education earned a fifth Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award - one of only four companies worldwide to receive this aware five years in a row. Champions has made a continuous commitment to earn and re-earn Corporate Accreditation from Cognia a global leader in advancing excellence in education through accreditation.

Management (e.g. senior regional director of field operations Kymberly Norrick, regional manager Setara Sous, multi-site director Ms. Hogue, OSS Mr. Reinier) has systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained as required. Management is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own policies and procedures. Management has reported holding regular staff meetings to review rules, policies and procedures. Ms. Hogue also acknowledged how her team of staff have started volunteering quarterly at St. Luke's Hospital helping prepare and provide home cooked meals for patients.

KCE Champions LLC has established and is working to maintain optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has a parent-staff/program information center, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities. Prior to each school-year commencing, KCE Champions LLC sponsors a "Champions Family Night" at a local park with food and various activities including face painting to welcome new and returning families to the upcoming school-year. Summer camp enrollment begins in early January each year. 2025 summer programming will include experiences in swimming, hiking, kindness, wellness, arts and crafts and program built boat races. Very clever "Who Wants to Be at Champions (A Millionare)" themed flyer for 2025 summer camp!

KCE Champions LCC school-age curriculum focuses on six content areas that research shows enhance school-age children's growth and development as well as help build the essential skills needed to be successful in elementary school and beyond: Character Development, Community, Creative Expression, Executive Function, Inquiry-Based Learning, and Literacy. The program provides child interest areas in creative arts, literacy, math and construction, puzzles and games, and science. Daily fitness, healthy eating, and homework assistance (as needed) are part of the program's operations. There are additional opportunities offered for enrichment clubs and Junior Counselor leadership roles for older school age students. Summer/extended breaks curriculum is also enhanced with guest speaker events and off-site field trips. Mr. Reinier discussed how the program has access to the school stage, school gymnasium and school cafeteria during all hours of operation.

KCE Champions collaborates well with many community partners including the Cedar Rapids Community School District, local businesses, CCR&R, and health professionals. School custodial staff, school administration, school nurse, and school food service personnel help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day. The school food service personnel prepare and provide all food items for the childcare program. The school kitchen is inspected at least annually by the health department. There is an AED onsite.

Each KCE Champions LLC location has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The program has successfully navigated through 2022 food supply and infant formula shortages, 2023 air quality alerts and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. The program has policies and procedures for handwashing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

On the day of the monitoring visit, on-site materials and furnishing were observed. Areas of study including "Maps and More Maps". Activities observed included staff warmly greeting children as they arrived before school, daily routines, free choice play (e.g. games, crafts, imaginative play), and large gross motor group games (e.g. Sharks and Minnows, Ghosts in the Graveyard). The child-self-selected crafting happening on the morning of the monitoring visit was impressive! Children were observed painting and creating! Staff were actively engaged with the children, providing positive redirection and encouraging social graces. Children appeared to be enjoying their day.

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

109.8(2): Ratio maintained in center as required by age.
- Children were observed leaving the program space to access the hallways, child storage areas, use the restroom, and so on without being in ratio with careful staff supervision. Licensing and Mr. Reinier reviewed ratio and careful supervision rules.

109.9(1)d: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
- Staff file reviewed (MD) lacked a physical exam on required form 470-5152.

109.10(15)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and

documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.
- Documentation of a monthly fire drill was not found for January 2025.
- Documentation of a monthly tornado drill was not found for December 2024 and January 2025.
- Licensing and Mr. Reinier reviewed rules requiring a monthly fire drill and a monthly tornado drill with assurances these would start happening and being documented again February 2025.

109.11(3)d: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept.
- Documentation of a monthly outdoor playground inspection was not found for January 2025.
- Licensing and Mr. Reinier reviewed rule requiring a monthly outdoor playground inspection with assurances this would start happening and being documented again February 2025.

109.9(2)g: Any child with allergies, a written emergency plan. Copy shall accompany child if they leave the premises.
- Child file reviewed (FK) indicated child has a special medical need (e.g. food allergy). Child file lacked documentation of an emergency medical-rescue plan signed by the treating physician. A copy of the medical emergency plan is not being stored with rescue medication. The child's two rescue medications are not being stored together but part in program cabinet and part in first-aid bag.

109.12(1) Activities. The center shall have a written curriculum or program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and a written program of activities planned according to the developmental level of the children. The center shall post a schedule of the program in a visible place. The child care program shall complement but not duplicate the school curriculum. The program shall be designed to provide children with: a. A curriculum or program of activities that promotes self-esteem and positive self-image; social interaction; self-expression and communication skills; creative expression; and problem-solving skills. b. A balance of active and quiet activities; individual and group activities; indoor and outdoor activities; and staff-initiated and child-initiated activities. c. Activities which promote both gross and fine motor development. d. Experiences in harmony with the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the children. e. A supervised nap or quiet time for all children under the age of six not enrolled in school who are present at the center for five or more hours.
- Open food grazing is not good curriculum. Two children were observed eating foods from home (e.g. chips, Twizzlers candy) at tables with program materials. There was no designated clean and sanitized food table encouraged for children who arrived with food in-hand. Inadequate hand washing practices for children arriving with food was observed.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff file reviewed (MD) lacked documentation of having completed Essentials Module 5.

Continue to collaborate with the school district regarding maintenance of the outdoor playground (e.g. adequate cushion surface depth, chipping/rusting equipment, power washing of outdoor equipment). If areas of the outdoor playground become unsatisfactory, the childcare shall refrain from accessing those areas until remedies are made.

It is beneficial to note, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) and the nurse consultant are excellent resources to access training opportunities and support in the area.

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

*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.