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

Name of Center: Step Ahead Child Care & Preschool **Enrollment:** 65 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 47932

Street: 2555 Berkshire Pkwy Ste B **City:** Clive Iowa **Zip** 50325 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 2555 Berkshire Pkwy Ste B, Clive, IA, 50325

Director's Name: Crystal Steffen and Anna Zwiefel **Phone Number:** 515-987-6991

On-Site Supervisor(s): Cheryl Halas **E-Mail:** stacey@stepaheadchildcare.org

Date(s) of Visit: 10-22-2024

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:** 10-07-2024

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

Date Inspected: 10-02-2023

Comments : Clive Marshal Marshal . Fire Marshal inspections are due at least every three years for licensing.

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

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age 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	24	36	30	0	90
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2024 to 12-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper **Date:** 10-22-2024

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

N/A.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

A licensing visit was conducted on 10/22/24. The owner/director and assistant director were both present for this visit.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Step Ahead Child Care and Preschool was given permission to open on 10/24/16. The center is located in a strip mall in Clive. The center serves children six weeks in age to five/six years in age using the Iowa Creative Learning Curriculum. Hours of operation are 6:30am - 5:30pm Monday through Friday and year-round.

The owner and head director of the program is Crystal Steffen. Crystal has an AA degree in Business Administration. Crystal also has past experience working in child care. The assistant director is Anna Zwiefel. Anna has a BA degree as well as past experience working in child care. Cheryl Halas is the on-site supervisor and meets the qualifications for her position.

There are six classrooms. Capacity of the rooms are 8 (freshman) , 16 (sophomores), 18 (juniors), 18 (seniors), and 24 and 6 (preschool and Pre-K).

During the visit, children were observed being held by staff, napping in cribs, engaged in large motor activities with community partnerships, and playing outside on the playground. Staff were engaged with children and all of their activities.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center utilizes CCR&R and their nurse consultant on a regular basis.

Monthly staff meetings are held.

The center has a website, Facebook page, and Instagram page. The center also utilizes the application, Slack, for internal communication and Brightwheel and Mid Sioux for parents.

Several of the staff have worked together in the past at different centers. Overall, staff work well together per management. Management stated they have a great staff.

There is a secure entrance into the building.

The center was clean and nicely decorated. Staff were actively engaged with children.

One parent-teacher conferences is held each year. Parents are highly encouraged to participate in center activities and questionnaires on ways to continue to make the center a good experience for parents.

The center has good community partnerships.

Assessments are recorded at specific times throughout the year for children ages three to five.

Enrollment remains steady.

Within the past few months, the center has hired a Director of Early Learning Development.

The owner is a member of the Child Care Success Academy.

The center has done some interior remodeling over the past year and also installed a new fence around the playground.

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

109.9(1)e: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
Number not in compliance: 1 staff member was two hours short for 2023 professional development training.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing was last conducted 10/14/21 - 10/18/21. Radon levels came back below the 4.0 cutoff. Because levels were below 4.0, the center can move to testing for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing, levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years.

The annual furnace inspection is done twice a year at the center and was last completed 3/19/24 and 9/4/24.

It was previously noted that the center does not go on field trips other than to the nearby park behind the building. The center will bring agencies into the program for presentations to children.

Two toilet seats should be replaced.

One bolt on along the playground fence will need to be capped so that no more than two threads are showing.

The daily schedules for children three and older should be more detailed.

I-Power and IQ4K were discussed at the visit. The center has initiated the IQ4K process. Staff appear to be uploading their training into I - Power. Hard copies of certificates should also be kept in staff files.

A new, full, two-year license is recommended.

*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.