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

Name of Center: Singing Cedars **Enrollment:** 15 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51137

Street: 2149 N. B ST **City:** Fairfield Iowa **Zip** 52556 **County:** Jefferson

Mailing Address: 2149 N. B ST, Fairfield, IA, 52556

Director's Name: Jill Weber **Phone Number:** 641-632-2230

On-Site Supervisor(s): Erin Levi **E-Mail:** info@singingcedars.com jill@singingcedars.com

Date(s) of Visit: 04-25-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 05-03-2024

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

Date Inspected: 08-22-2023

Comments : completed by State Fire Marshall Fratzke, noted in the report the wood burning stove is not to be used, due every 3 years

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 X Other NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General		12	14		26
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

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: Jill Seibert **Date:** 05-03-2024

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Singing Cedars is a 501(c)3 non-profit, independent preschool, inspired by Waldorf education, located on the edge of Fairfield, IA. The childcare program is part of the school. The childcare program is housed in a single one story building on the school campus but not attached to the other school buildings. The program has operated in the past as a private school and became licensed in 2020.

The director of the program is Jill Weber. Director Weber has a BS in Anthropology and has a 2 year teaching certificate in Waldorf education. She taught preschool for 5 years. The preschool was under operation in the same location under a different name for many years prior to becoming licensed in 2020. Erin Levi has been appointed On Site Supervisor. On 4/26/24 I made an unannounced licensing visit to Singing Cedars Preschool and met with Director Weber. Director Weber will be leaving this position at the end of the year. The program is searching for a new Director.

The program consists of two buildings, one for younger children and one for preschool/school age children. Each space contains a small kitchen area, a restroom and open space for the classroom. The buildings are clean, bright, open, attractive and equipped with a wide variety of child sized furniture, equipment, and Waldorf style toys and learning activities. The program website reads, "The foundation for the curriculum is an understanding of the child as an intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual being. Our belief is that a fulfilled and creative life involves considerably more than mental development in service of the ability to earn a living. Important as that is, children also need the balance provided by the strong and healthy development of their emotional life and physical bodies."

All program areas were observed during the visit. 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.

Program Nutrition Practices Observed:

The program provides a mid-morning snack and children go home for lunch or bring their own. The Director prepares the snack before children arrive. Children bring pm snack. The Director documents snack records which indicate minimum nutritional requirements are met. The program supplements lunches and snacks if they do not meet CACFP requirements.

Food allergies will be posted if they arise. We discussed the Allergy Action Plan and where to access it if need be in the future.

Sufficient refrigeration and storage is available in the kitchen area to facilitate food services. I inspected the refrigerator and freezer. No opened food items were observed. Recommended temperatures for cooling are 40 degrees or lower and zero degrees and lower for freezing. The refrigerators were clean.

Other food storage (dry) was appropriate. No food was stored on the floor. No dry food had been opened which was not placed in a sealed container. No expired or outdated food items were observed. Dishes are washed by hand. Children do

not have access to the oven since small barricades are in place.

Program Health and Safety:

The program does not administer daily prescription or non-prescription medication on a regular basis. They will administer emergency medication if necessary. Medication procedures were reviewed. The center has sufficient forms for getting parent authorization and documentation of medications to be given if needed or prescribed. Medications (including sunscreen) will be stored in their original containers with physician/pharmacist directions and label intact when on the premises.

Regulations regarding storage and maintenance of a first aid kit were reviewed. A labeled First Aid Kit is onsite and kept inaccessible to children. First-aid supplies were sufficient to address minor trauma. A quiet area for ill or injured children should be designated.

Environmental testing and the maintenance of any necessary detection equipment were reviewed. Radon testing is due every five years. Testing has been completed. Results from testing in October 2020 were 1.6 pci/L. An annual fuel burning appliances inspection is not required since the buildings are all electric. Carbon monoxide detectors are also required and the preschool has purchased one for each building. It must be a non-battery operated UL approved unit. The packaging on the unit should have an expiration date for the unit. The building was constructed after 1971 so a Visual Lead Based Paint Assessment is not required. The mud room was added in 2009/2010 so is exempt from a lead based paint assessment. The program is on city water, therefore a water analysis is not required.

General regulations regarding safety policies and procedures were reviewed. No employees of the center are under 18 years of age. The program team consists of the Director and two other staff. Ratio was observed and not maintained according to license standards for all children the day of the visit. The rooms have free flowing arrangement that allows the children space and movement. An appropriate amount of program equipment, toys and activities were noted and materials are present and frequently rotated.

Staff should have children broken into care groups so supervision is easily achieved. Children shall be supervised and be observable by staff at all times. Children should not wander around the premises without adult supervision. Children should be assigned to staff for primary care.

Thorough inspections of the rooms (restroom, classroom, mudroom) were conducted. Space requirements of 35 square feet of usable floor space should be met at all times. The rooms (classroom and mudroom) are open which allows staff to supervise children from across the room. Ventilation was adequate.

Ceilings are high creating a great amount of light and space. Windows can be opened when weather is appropriate to assist in ventilation. Tornado and Fire drills were discussed observed and complete with the exception of March.

General regulations regarding sanitation policies and procedures were reviewed. Waste containers were covered. One restroom is available for the children and staff in each building. The bathroom was clean and had an adequate amount of toileting supplies. For further guidance on general sanitation issues IDPH CCNC may be consulted.

During rest after lunch children are spaced at least 2 feet apart.

Red building (ages 3-6): 14 children with two teachers
Grey building (ages 2.5-4): 9 children with two teachers
All EC staff have been informed of the ratio requirements, and it is understood that subs need to have completed all required trainings/ volunteers do not qualify to meet ratio. The Director is requesting an Exception to Policy to allow the mixing of children ages two and up.

All volunteers to the center should have the following requirements met:
Volunteers should always be under the direct observation of staff. All volunteers and substitutes shall sign a statement indicating whether or not they have one of the following:
a. (1) Conviction of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state.
(2) A communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the children.
b. (1) Complete form 595-136 DHS Criminal History Record Check, Form B
(2) Complete Form 470-0643, Request for Child Abuse Information.
(3) Sign a statement indicating the volunteer or substitute has been informed of the volunteer’s or substitute's responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.
Any visitors to the Center shall complete the tasks above.

Program Playground:

The outdoor play area is naturally shaded with many trees behind the building. The area is open and grass surfaced for gross motor activities. The area is a natural play scape inviting children to explore.

No safety hazards were observed in this area, on equipment other than low mulch. This has been corrected. The playhouse in the outdoor play area should be monitored at all times if more than one child is inside. During gross motor activity each child should have at least 75 square feet of space each.

Outdoor play inspections were observed and completed with the exception of March.

Preschool Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

The preschool does not own a vehicle and provides no transportation. Field trips are not taken. The program ay take walks on school campus.

Preschool Administrative Records:

Required written policies are provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook. Required notices and postings were present after the visit. These were provided by CCR&R. A No Smoking sign and all other mandatory postings included Mandatory Reporting, Consultant Contact Information and the Center license are now present. Poison Control and 911 are also posted.

Staff files are reviewed annually including CPR/First Aid training (2 years), Mandatory Reporter training (must be updated every 5 years), physicals (every three years), signed statements of criminal conviction (only one time at beginning of employment), Fingerprints (due every 4 years) were reviewed. Professional development updated annually was present. Iowa Criminal Background checks (due every 2 years) were current. Staff are taking CPR/1st Aid this month.

Child files and all annual updates including field trip authorizations, emergency contacts and pick up authorizations were reviewed. Physicals should be updated annually. Immunizations are in the files. The CCNC with the Iowa Department of Public Health can conduct an immunization audit annually. Children with allergies have allergy action plans on file. Staff supervising the children should be trained on the plan.

Annual emergency procedures training should be held and documented annually. The Emergency Preparedness Plan is complete and specific for both buildings. Staff will sign and dated acknowledgement of annual training on the plan.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The class size is small and teachers are very interactive.

The Director has consulted with Child Care Resource Consultant Malia Love and Referral services and Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Mandi Lauderman on a number of issues.

Waldorf Education has at its foundation, recognition of the wholeness and connectedness of human beings with all life. One way in which this connectedness manifests is through the observance of the changes in the seasons. Our community festivals connect us with traditional cultures the world over, who have for centuries marked the turning points of the year, the equinoxes and solstices, with ritual and celebration. These events become opportunities for outward observances of nature's seasonal changes, but they can become opportunities to learn about one's own inner movement through the seasons of change as well.

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

1. 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. Emergency postings should be placed by each door. March drills were missed.

109.10(15)c: Center shall develop procedures for annual staff and volunteer training on emergency plans. Staff should sign and date acknowledgement of training once completed.

2. 109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic

conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary. Physicals are not tracked during the school year. Several physicals are overdue.

3. 109.6(6)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs. The Director emailed on 5/3/24 indicating fingerprints had been rolled and sent in the mail on 5/3/24

A technical referral was made to CCR&R on 5/1/24 to assist the program with these tasks.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Mandi Lauderman performed an Injury Prevention Checklist both outside and inside. This is best practice and is duly noted.

The program has been working with the IJK Early Childhood Iowa Board in quality initiatives and maintaining licensing.

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this preschool remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to continue to monitor day to day practice and adjust accordingly to continue to ensure licensing rule is met consistently. It is important to note, all DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant. 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. Please visit the following website for more information. http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants.

HHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral consultant. They 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. Please visit the following website for more information: http://www.iowaccrr.org Malia Love is the facility consultant.

*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.