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

Name of Center: The Early EDGE **Enrollment:** 12 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52262

Street: 1550 Hawkeye Drive **City:** Hiawatha Iowa **Zip** 52233 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address:

Director's Name: Tammie Tomash **Phone Number:** 319-892-4340

On-Site Supervisor(s): Tammie Tomash **E-Mail:** learn@theearlyedge.com

Date(s) of Visit: 11-09-2023

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:** 08-03-2023

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

Date Inspected: 10-23-2023

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: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 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			14		14
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-05-2023 to 09-05-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 12-11-2023

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

Not applicable. This is a new program which received Permission to Open (PTO) on 9/5/2023 for 120 days pending a full license inspection.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

The Early EDGE is located inside The Dancer's EDGE. This preschool program commenced operations on 9/5/2023. The Early EDGE provides preschool programming for children age 3 to 5-years-old. Current enrollment is 12

The Early EDGE's combined director/on-site supervisor and lead preschool teacher is Tammie Tomash. Ms. Tomash has an MA degree in collaboration learning and teaching, over 32 years of teaching experience at a local school district and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 11/9/2023, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The Early EDGE is a newly established preschool offering a 3yo and 4yo preschool program to help meet the educational needs of families and children in the community. The program is located in a residential neighborhood in a predominantly urban community.

The Early EDGE has the following website for families and persons in the community learn more about their programs: https://www.theearlyedge.com/mission.

The Early EDGE's mission is to "...strive to provide an unmatched early childhood education by helping instill social, emotional, and school-readiness skills that allow students to begin their educational journey with an early edge..."

The history of how The Early EDGE came to fruition in September of 2022 in impressive! Owners Charlie and Stephanie Vogl are local entrepreneurs with a passion for dance and children. They began by opening a small two-studio facility in 2008. In 2017, that dance studio relocated and expanded to the current facility on Hawkeye Drive in Hiawatha. With over 30,000 square feet, The Dancer's EDGE is currently one of the largest private dance studios in the country. Shortly thereafter, Mr. and Mrs. Vogl began exploring a desire to add preschool programming into the experiences offered at The Dancer's EDGE. As a result, the Early EDGE was formed is now located inside The Dancer's EDGE.

The Early EDGE is a profit preschool. The property is pristine both inside and out - spacious, sanitary, and very well-maintained. Owners, preschool staff, program administration, and building maintenance persons help ensure the program space is sanitary and hazard free each day. The facility is equipped with medical-grade UV-C Air Scrubbers in all HVAC units to continuously bring in fresh air passing through a UV-C light to sanitize which has proven to provide each room hospital-grade air quality within 5 minutes. The space is also ADA accessible and an AED machine is on-site.

Director Tammie Tomash and assistant staff are professional - organized, educated and experienced. Ms. Tomash has over 32 years teaching experience at a local school district. Ms. Tomash is extremely organized and brings a wealth of educational knowledge to the preschool. Ms. Tomash continues to develop noteworthy systems of organization to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a confidential manner. Ms. Tomash continues to

familiarize herself with licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Tomash discussed how the program does have annual professional development days built into the academic year including an opportunity for staff to attend the IAEYC conference in October 2023. Future goals for the preschool include participation in quality initiatives and outdoor playground enhancements.

The Early Edge has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. During the 2023 monitoring visit, a successful tornado drill occurred.

The Early Edge is working to build and maintain optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The preschool has an organized parent-staff/program communication center, offers regular program newsletters (e.g. The Early Edge Edition), utilizes technological communication resources, has an established social media page for families, and supports family programming activities.

This preschool commenced operations only a short time prior to this first license visit. However, within that short-timeframe, it's quite evident as to the owner's and director's passion, care and keeping of the preschool! The one-room preschool is aesthetically pleasing with having been arranged in a thoughtful, inviting manner keeping learning at the forefront! Curriculum will "...immerse children in engaging thematic activities to enhance their learning based on the Iowa Early Learning Standards...." Throughout the academic year, The Early EDGE offers a variety of program/family events (e.g. preschool-family conferences, fall open house, seasonal celebrations), on-site guest speakers (e.g. fire fighters, community helpers, gymnastic classes), and dance classes.

The Early Edge collaborates well with community agencies including local businesses, various school districts, local higher education entities, and health professionals.

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 in place for hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Staff were able to verbalize and engage in these processes. Cleaning and sanitation reminders were observed to be posted in various areas of the center.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Areas of November preschool study include turkeys, Thanksgiving, food and farms. Engaging classroom discussions incorporating daily events (e.g. calendar, weather outside), phonics (e.g. Letter "E" work with clever hide the "E" behind the "E" words!), music with movement and literacy (e.g. book reading, where our delicious Thanksgiving foods come from) was observed! Activities also included small group work (e.g. Unique turkey skilled craft!), free choice play (e.g. caring and reading to babies, sensory with playdough, painting), and outdoor large gross motor play. Center play experiences were found to be inviting as well as carefully and cleverly planned to peak child interest (e.g. 3 Little Pigs, pumpkin farm). Children had access to a plethora of materials and activities that encouraged innovative play. Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Routine transitions (e.g. clean up activities, snack routines) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement and engaging children in much meaningful discussion. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their day.

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

109.11(7)c. To reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, all centers shall, on an annual basis prior to the heating season, have a professional inspect all fuel-burning appliances, including oil and gas furnaces, gas water heaters, gas ranges and ovens, and gas dryers, to ensure the appliances are in good working order with proper ventilation. All centers shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor of the center that is listed with Underwriters Laboratory (UL) as conforming to UL Standard 2034.
- Documentation of an annual all fuel burning appliance inspection was not found on-site on the day of the license visit. If the building does not have any fuel burning appliances, written documentation from a heating and cooling professional shall be secured and maintained with licensing paperwork.
- A UL standard 2034 (plug-in with battery back-up) carbon monoxide detector shall be in use on each level of the building.

109.11(3)a(10) Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce the risk of injury or harm to children and reduce the transmission of disease.
- Each child's personal items shall be stored separately and off the floor from every other child's personal items. One such remedy could be individual cubbies.

109.9(2)b. Child’s file. Appropriate emergency medical and dental services can be secured for the child while in the center’s care.
- Two child files (EC, FH) reviewed lacked documentation of authorization for permission to treat in the event a child’s parent is not able to be reached and a child is in need of emergency treatment.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Review rule 109.11(7)b and ensure radon testing is conducted within the first year of operations or by 8/20/204.

Review rule 109.10(3) regarding medications. Ensure any rescue medication (e.g. epi-pen, asthma inhaler, seizure medication, diabetic medication) is stored in an inaccessible area that is readily available when the child it's prescribed to is in attendance. Licensing encourages you to have a locked box for any and all other kinds of medication as well as for the rescue medication when the child prescribed the rescue medication is not in attendance.

Ensure no smoking signage is posted on-site.

Emergency instructions were observed to be posted the preschool classroom's primary entrance/exit door. Ensure these are also posted the classroom's secondary exit door.

On the day of the licensing visit, a tornado drill was conducted. Tall shelving in the tornado shelter area was observed. In reviewing Comm. 204 Licensing Standards and Procedures, the rationale part of the rule states "…Each county in Iowa has an emergency management coordinator. The coordinator can help plan appropriate polices for health and safety needs, given the hazards that may be specific to your location. Communication also allows the coordinator the opportunity to know where the children will be located during an emergency…" Please collaborate with Linn County Emergency management coordinator B.J. Dvorak (phone 319-892-6500; email bj.dvorak@linncountyiowa.gov) regarding the safest area to be, in your unique building, in the event of such a weather related occurrence.

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A full license is issued. 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.