

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

Name of Center: KCE Champions LLC @ Nixon Elementary School **Enrollment:** 38 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51883

Street: 200 Nixon DR **City:** Hiawatha **Iowa Zip** 52233 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: PO Box 39, Swisher, IA, 52338

Director's Name: Mona Williams **Phone Number:** 319-504-3408

On-Site Supervisor(s): Bethany Bree Hogue, Matthew Mayfield **E-Mail:** monawilliams@discoverchampions.com
knorrick@discoverchampions.com

Date(s) of Visit: 08-31-2022

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

LICENSING VISITS

X **New Application** **Re-Application** **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: 10-28-2021

Comments :

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

Financial Type: X **Profit** **Non-Profit** **NA**

Accreditation: 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:	<u>Year-round</u>	<u>School-Year</u>	<u>Summer Only</u>		
LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General				139	139
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	FULL license from 08-23-2022 to 08-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons

Date: 09-06-2022

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

Not applicable. This site commenced operations on 8/23/2022.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

During 2022, KCE Champions LLC is opening 27 new childcare programs throughout Linn County. Specifically, KCE Champions LLC @ Nixon Elementary School is located inside 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 @ Nixon Community School serves only school-age children. Current enrollment is 38.

Multi-site director Mona Williams has an AA degree, over 15 years of experience working with children, and continues to participate in much child development related training. Multi-site co-director Bethany "Bree" Hogue is completing an AA degree in early childhood education, has over 14 years of experience working in children, and continues to participate in much child development related training. On-site supervisor Mathew Mayfield has a BA degree in an unrelated field, experience working with children and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 8/31/22, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

KCE Champions LLC @ Nixon Elementary School 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 @ Nixon School 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. Ms. Hogue talked about how Iowa has made Champion history in that it's the largest number of childcare sites their company has opened in any given state within such a short timeframe.

In 2021, KinderCare Education earned a fifth Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award - one of only four companies worldwide to receive this award 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. Ms. Williams reported future goals include participation in state and local quality initiatives including IQ4K.

The management team (e.g. Ms. Williams, Ms. Hogue, on-site supervisors) is organized. It's evident they are taking great pride in being able to offer new childcare programming throughout the community and in partnership with the Cedar Rapids Community School District. With having commenced operations less than 2 weeks prior to the license visit being conducted, management has already established noteworthy systems of organization to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained as required. Management continues to become familiar with licensing guidelines as well as their own policies and procedures.

Management discussed how KCE Champions LLC continues to hire professional staff (e.g. educated, trained, experienced) who have prior experiences working with children and display a strong work ethic. KCE Champions LLC provides professional staff hiring and onboarding and holds regular staff meetings reviewing rules and policies while offering staff supports. Ms. Hogue discussed the program's recent participation in college hiring fairs to find persons with a passion for and/or professional desire to work with children. Ms. Williams and Ms. Hogue expressed much gratitude towards their team of employees and reported being proud of staff's flexibility and willingness to help out in various capacities as needed.

KCE Champions LLC has established and is working to maintain optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities. Prior to 21 of the 27 new Champion sites commencing operations in fall 2022, a family night for all Champions locations was held at Morgan Creek Park. Ms. Hogue discussed how an estimated 550 families participated in the welcoming event!

KCE Champions LLC 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. 2022 summer field trips included trips to the local nature center, Bloomsbury Farm, local parks, local swimming pools, bowling, local movie theater, mini golfing, and snap-ology. Mr. Mayfield talked about some unique supplies he obtained for Nixon including a plethora of play dough "because the children really enjoy it". He also discussed future goals of creating child inspired I-Spy sensory materials. Mr. Mayfield reported being proud of how their team is highly engaged with the children reading books and playing games while actively supervising.

KCE Champions collaborates well with many community partners including the Cedar Rapids Community School District, Kids on Course, local businesses, CCR&R, and health professionals. KCE Champions LLC @ Nixon Elementary School has a solid partnership with the Cedar Rapids Community School District. 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 kitchen is inspected at least annually by the health department. The school kitchen provides all food items for the childcare program. There is an AED onsite. Mr. Mayfield reported "...we have great families, super great kids, and an excellent relationship with the school..."

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. Staff were observed encouraging and engaging in hand washing at all levels. Staff encouraged children to "catch coughs" and "catch sneezes" in elbows. The program has supplies, policies and procedures for cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. The area of study included "Getting to Know You". Children have access to an array of materials (e.g. books, imaginative play options, building materials, puzzles, cozy corner, journals, crafts, loose large gross motor materials) that encouraged innovative play. Activities observed were many and included arrival/greeting for the day and child interest play. Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Mr. Mayfield reported "...staff are resilient with this being the first week...ready for the joys and challenges each day holds..." Routine transitions (e.g. clean-up activities, breakfast rituals, release from morning childcare to school day) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. It was noted that one staff was observed providing comforting reassurance to one child at drop-off time. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement (e.g. successful de-escalation situation observed), utilizing positive redirection when needed and engaging children in much meaningful discussion.

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

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.

- Two staff files (MM, AD) reviewed lacked documentation of a physical exam report with TB screening/testing.

109.4(3) Required postings.

- Daily schedule and plan of activities were not observed to be posted.

109.10(15)a: The center shall have written emergency plans and diagrams for responding to fire, tornado, flood, and plans responding to intruders within the center, intoxicated parents, and lost or abducted children. Shall have guidelines for responding or evacuating in case of blizzards, power failures, bomb threats, chemical spills, earthquakes, or other disasters that could create structural damage to the center or pose health hazards. If center is within 10 miles of nuclear power plant, center shall have evacuation plan. Emergency plans shall include written procedures including plans for- Evacuation to safely leave the facility- Relocation to a common, safe location after evacuation- Shelter in place to take immediate shelter when the current location is unsafe to leave due to the emergency issue- Lock down to protect children and providers from an external situation- Communication and reunification with parents or other adults Responsible for the children which includes emergency telephone numbers- Continuity of operations- To address the individual children, including those with functional or access needs.

- Written required site-specific emergency plans have not been established.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ensure documentation including verification of all staff training (e.g. MM – Modules 11 and 12), record checks, etc. are maintained on-site, in one location, to ensure each staff has completed all requirements. Failure to do so could result in unfortunate violations simply due to documentation not being able to be located.

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.