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

Name of Center: College Community CVT Preschool & Childcare **Enrollment:** 7 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51904

Street: 3000 J Street SW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52404 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address:

Director's Name: Kathleen "Kathy" Schulte **Phone Number:** 319-200-3456

On-Site Supervisor(s): Interim Responsible Staff **E-Mail:** kschulte@crprairie.org

Date(s) of Visit: 03-21-2023

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: 05-17-2021

Comments :

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

Financial Type: Profit X 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			15		15
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-28-2022 to 04-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 04-06-2023

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

College Community Early Childhood Center (CCECC) has been in operation for many years and operates several program throughout the College Community School District. Specifically, College Community CVT Preschool & Childcare (CCCVTPC) commenced operations in August 2022 and is located inside Cedar Valley Townhomes. The CCCVTPC license includes school-year only childcare for preschool-age children outside of the statewide voluntary 4-year-old preschool program (primarily located in the Community Center within the Cedar Valley Townhomes). During the summer, some full days of emergency closing (example snow day), and some breaks (holiday and spring), this program has the ability to combine with other CCECC sites to provide full day child care. Current enrollment is 7.

Multi-site director Kathleen "Kathy" Schulte has a MA degree in early childhood elementary education. Ms. Schulte has over 25 years of experience working with children including during her work as a school principal and early childhood teacher. The program is currently seeking a new site specific on-site supervisor.

On 3/21/23, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

CCECC operates multiple sites throughout the community that offer a variety of childcare and early learning programming opportunities to help meet the needs of children and families. CCECC is well-established and accepts a variety of funding sources.

CCECC has a history of participation in quality initiatives. Several CCECC sites have achieved NAEYC accreditation and are currently going through renewal.

CCECC has the following website for families and the community to access information about their programs: https://www.crprairie.org/. Specifically, CCCVTPC has the following website for persons to learn about this program: https://www.crprairie.org/news/2022/09/15/four-year-old-preschool-openings-available-at-college-community-schools-no-cost-to-families/

According to the family handbook the mission of CCECC is "...Guided by high expectations, partnerships with our schools and families, and extensive knowledge of child development, Early Learning Staff provide a broad range of educational opportunities that enable students to enter Elementary School with the skills necessary to ensure quality learning today for tomorrow."

CCECC is non-profit and operates under a Board of Directors. Ownership and management of the program has remained consistent. The management team includes multi-site early childhood principal-director Ms. Schulte, assistant director Erin Hill, administrative assistant Jenna Langhurst, billing specialist Hillary Baustian, early childhood instructional coach Sara Kayser, CFO of educational services Angela Morrison, multi-site school-age coordinator Whitney Hinrichs, and site specific supervisor. Ms. Schulte and the entire CCECC management team are organized, and in turn, CCECC programs operate

smoothly. Ms. Schulte and the seasoned CCECC management team have noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are complete as required and maintained in a secure manner. CCECC management team talked about being appreciative of the collaboration that is done among all CCECC sites that allows for a sharing of materials, curriculum, and ideas/planning.

Since the last monitoring visit, CCECC has retained as well as hired some new staff at their sites. Many staff have advanced degrees in education and early childhood development. Since 2009, CCECC has had an immense number of staff participate in the TEACH program. Ms. Schulte discussed how CCECC currently has 6 staff (with an additional 4 staff starting fall 2023) participating in the TEACH program. This is quite impressive! Each new staff is encouraged and given the opportunity to pursue a CDA at no training cost. Documentation indicates that CCECC employees often complete annual professional growth training that exceeds Iowa Code requirements. Ms. Schulte talked about how CCECC values education and understands the link between education and quality programming. The program has a professional orientation system for onboarding new staff and for continuous transfer of knowledge to seasoned staff. Management reported the professional orientation system continues to be reviewed and updated regularly. The program utilizes the Iowa Wages Program. Management acknowledged the hard work their highly qualified team of staff do each day and who continue to show their commitment to the children and families they serve. Management continues to display their appreciation through staff shout-outs, special food days (e.g. soup day, sub lunches, baked potato bar, morning donuts, chocolate, fully stocked ice cream), and classroom door decorating contests. Management described their staff as "...an extension of a family..."

CCECC sites have emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. CCECC successfully navigated through the 2008 historic Linn County flood, 8/10/2020 Derecho Storm, January 2019 Polar Vortex, and 2019 pandemic.

CCCVTPC continues efforts at 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 (e.g. use of App), and supports family programming activities. Inclusive registration events are held. CCECC regularly conducts a family survey and continues to note much program satisfaction with positive family feedback.

CCCVTPC emerged from a collaboration among many community partners including the College Community School District, Cedar Valley Townhomes, Four Oaks, Affordable Housing Network, and head start. The classroom is located inside the Community Center of the Cedar Valley Townhomes which also houses a community resource room, community computers and food pantry. Cedar Valley Townhomes is a vibrant community located in the College Community School District. The property has 186 townhomes, varying in size from one to three bedrooms. Cedar Valley Townhomes is owned and operated by the Affordable Housing Network a partner of Four Oaks. All partners involved have administration and custodial persons that help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day. The program has regular access to additional areas within the Community Center including community resource room on inclement weather days, fenced outdoor space, and restroom areas. Lead staff talked about being located a bit further from the main campus and other CCECC sites and being proud that communication continues to be outstanding.

The classroom is arranged in a thoughtful manner keeping learning at the forefront. Curriculum is designed to help children become lifelong learners. Curriculum is a combination of learning strategies including Iowa Early Learning Standards, Creative Curriculum (e.g. gold, cloud), Everyday Math Enrichment, Second Step, Jolly Phonics, Heggerty Phonics Awareness, and Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports. Curriculum also incorporates on-site guest speaker events and themed celebrations. Communication between children and staff is done verbally, with picture cues, and through sign language. The program has access to some rolling carts so loose outdoor/large gross motor materials can be easily moved from one area to another for use. Lead staff discussed how all the children get along so well with one another.

CCECC sites collaborate well with many community partners including local businesses, health professionals, early access professionals, head start, other local school districts, various non-profit organizations, ECI, and CCR&R. CCCVTPC receives food service from Horizons Family Service Alliance provider. CCECC not only expanded to open this new site in fall 2023, but they applied for and received a grant allowing for the expansion (e.g. additional classrooms, adult restroom) of their main early learning center which will be completed in spring 2023. Management discussed being proud of their continued expansion efforts to help meet the needs of the community and their waiting lists.

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. Since the last review, the program obtained a new medication storage system. The program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing. Cleaning checklists and reminders are posted in various areas.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were observed to be nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Children had access to an array of materials (e.g. books, imaginative play options, building materials, sensory items, craft) that encouraged innovative play. Activities observed were many (e.g. circle discussion with phonic work, small group activity, large gross motor play). Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Routine transitions (e.g. clean-up, food service/breakfast activities, social graces) worked smoothly into the

program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement (e.g. "You're a smart independent woman taking care of yourself", "Good job knowing your letter, kiss your brain") 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:

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ensure each child has an Iowa DPH Certificate of Immunization or Exemption on file (KR).

Ensure a UL Standard 2034 (plug-in with battery back-up) carbon monoxide detector is in full use each day.

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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.