Health and Human Services

# Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: KCE Champions LLC @ Van Buren Elementary School

Provider No.: 51886

Address: 2525 29th ST SW, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52404

County: Linn

Director's Name: Paul Pressler

On-Site Supervisor: Dylan Hines

Phone Number: 3195120563

E-Mail: paul.pressler@discoverchampions.com
ssous@discoverchampions.com

HHS Visit Date: 02/06/2026

Licensing Period: 12/01/2026 to 12/01/2028

**Fire Inspection:**

Date Inspected: 10/23/2023

Comments:

**Report Visit Type:**

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

**License Type:**

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

**Quality initiative:**

- [X] Accrediation — Comments: Corporate Accreditation from Cognia a global leader in advancing excellence in education through accreditation

**Program Duration:**

- [X] Year-Round
- [ ] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

| HOURS: | *Year-round* | *School-Year* | *Summer Only* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM | | |
| Tuesday | 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM | | |
| Wednesday | 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM | | |
| Thursday | 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM | | |
| Friday | 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM | | |
| Saturday | | | |

**Program Population Served:**

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [ ] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

| LICENSE CAPACITY | Infants | 2 Years | Preschool | School-Aged | Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | | | | 32 | 32 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**1. Basic Overview**

KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. was founded in 1969 and has grown to become one of the largest providers of childcare in the United States. KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. is currently primarily owned by Partners Group a Swiss private equity firm as well as other shareholders and investors. KCE Champions LLC is a division of KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. and included as a core brand along with KinderCare Learning Centers and The Creme School. Specifically, this license and inspection report pertains to KCE Champions LLC @ Van Buren Elementary School which commenced operations on 8/22/2022. This location includes childcare for school-age children outside of school hours including the option to provide full days of childcare on no school days and extended school breaks including winter, spring and summer breaks. Total enrolled and attending children were reported to be 27 on 2/6/2026.

KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. has a regional manager named Setara Sous. Ms. Sous has a BA in criminology, has experience working with children and continues to participate in child development related training. Ms. Sous qualified for an Iowa director role in January 2024. KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. has an area manager named Paul Pressler. Mr. Pressler qualified for the Iowa licensed childcare director role fall of 2023. Mr. Pressler has a MA degree in educational leadership, has experience working with children and continues to participate in child development related training. Mr. Pressler is not only the director of this specific KCE Champions LLC location as he is also the director of several other Iowa locations. As a result, this location is required to have at least one Iowa qualified on-site supervisor (OSS). Dylan Hines has been in the Iowa qualified OSS role for this location since October 2025, has experience working with children and continues to participate in child development related training.

On 2/6/2026, program space was observed. Primary programming occurs in the school gymnasium. The program also has some access to the school cafeteria and outdoor school play areas. Sufficient restrooms including hand washing sinks are

available to accommodate total capacity. All foods offered to the childcare children are stored and prepared by the Cedar Rapids Community School District in the on-site school kitchen. On 2/6/2026, staff were observed warmly greeting children and families as they arrived for the day. The area of study included American Folk Music. Activities included before school center play experiences (e.g. games, crafts, book reading, imaginative play) and large gross motor events (e.g. group games) in the school gymnasium. Curriculum allowed for a variety of experiences that were observed to pique child interest as well as encourage social emotional growth, innovation, good sportsmanship, the use of social graces and child choice. A morning group discussion included Happy Friday, verbal reassurance as to following program expectations and upcoming reminders about events for next week. On 2/6/2026, staff were observed to be in ratio and engaged in programming with the children. Routine transitions were observed with staff wishing children well as they transitioned from childcare to school for breakfast and/or school learning. Children appeared comfortable with staff and to be enjoying the mornings' events.

**2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program**

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 LLC @ Van Buren Elementary 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/.

As of 2/6/2026, KCE Champions LLC programs remain for profit and operate under a board of directors having several Chief Operators including ones specific to operations, finance, curriculum and branding. The local management team (e.g. Ms. Sous, Mr. Pressler, Mr. Hines) remains primarily consistent. Management is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own policies and procedures. Mr. Hines discussed being fairly new to the program and having future goals related to building good communication with families and the school as well as increasing administrative organization. Mr. Hines acknowledged the very new program App that rolled out the beginning of February. Mr. Hines acknowledged having much gratitude for this assistant staff who works hard and is supportive. Mr. Hines talked about "...how lucky am I to get to wake up every day and enjoy coming to work with children..."

On 2/6/2026, KCE Champions LLC @ Van Buren Elementary School was found to have an area for required postings as well as other information. Curriculum continues to focus on six content areas that research shows enhance children’s growth and development as well as help build the essential skills needed to be successful in 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. Extended school-summer break curriculum continues to be enhanced with guest speaker events and off-site field trips. It is noteworthy that Mr. Hines established a twice a week on-site store for children to spend "tickets" earned for positive choices!

KCE Champions LLC continues to have and update as needed policies and procedures that include those for safety, daily health checks, hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. On 2/6/2026, Mr. Hines acknowledged how their location continues to help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day by following their policies and procedures. Mr. Hines also talked about having support from the school (e.g. school kitchen staff, school administration, school maintenance, school custodial team) as to daily building and grounds conditions and repairs. School kitchen is inspected by the local health department. There is an AED on-site.

KCE Champions LLC locations including this specific location have emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The programs have successfully navigated through air quality alerts (2023, 2025), repeated expansion and acquisition events, and repeated technology outages (7/19/24 global technology outage, 10/10/2025 AWS outage, 10/29/2025 Microsoft outage).

**3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard**

109.6(4)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.

**4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance**

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

109.6(4)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.
- Staff file reviewed (HB hired January 2025) lacked documentation of federal record check results.

**5. Special Notes/Recommendations**

One child file reviewed (NH) indicated there was a special need requiring a written doctor's note of allergy-emergency action plan as well as possible rescue medication. Remedy.

The main level doorbell was sometimes found to have been mistakenly pushed by various persons not associated with the childcare and sometimes the doorbell was rung by persons arriving to drop-off childcare children. The program is operating in the lower level school gymnasium. When asked, staff reported this happens daily. Licensing supports the installation of a childcare camera doorbell entry system and/or staff over ratio to ensure ratio, careful supervision and safety.

Please note - capacity is based upon the program having access to the school gymnasium as well as required number of restrooms during all days and hours of the program's operation. If part of the space is unavailable due to others' stored materials and/or uses on a particular day, capacity has to decrease. As a reminder, please review the following two rules related to capacity:
109.2(5)b. Determination of capacity. The licensing consultant must determine center capacity by dividing the amount of usable space by the amount of space required per child as specified in subrule 109.11(1). Upon approval by the department, the final determination of center capacity may include evaluation of other factors that influence capacity, as long as physical space requirements per child as defined in subrule 109.11(1) are maintained.
109.11(1) Room size. The program room size must be a minimum of 80 square feet of useable floor space or sufficient floor space to provide 35 square feet of useable floor space per child. In rooms where floor space occupied by cribs is counted as useable floor space, there must be 40 square feet of floor space per child. Kitchens, bathrooms, halls, lobby areas, storage areas and other areas of the center not designed as activity space for children cannot be used as regular program space or counted as useable floor space.

Ensure the dates are posted on the current lesson plans.

Continue to collaborate with the school district regarding maintenance of the outdoor playground (e.g. sufficient cushion surface depth, chipping/rusting equipment, power washing of outdoor equipment). If any area of the outdoor play space becomes unsatisfactory, the childcare shall refrain from accessing those areas until remedies are made.

A full license is issued. Thank you for the visit.

Date: 02/16/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.