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

Name of Center: KCE Champions LLC @ Trailside **Enrollment:** 80 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52597

Street: 320 27th ST NE **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52402 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: PO Box 171, Palo, IA, 52324

Director's Name: Bethany "Bree" Hogue **Phone Number:** 319-210-7833

On-Site Supervisor(s): Courtney Clarke-Monroe **E-Mail:** Bree.Hogue@discoverchampions.com SSous@discoverchampions.com

Date(s) of Visit: 02-14-2025

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** **Local** X **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 08-01-2024

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General				140	140
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 08-23-2024 to 08-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 02-17-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

In 2022, KCE Champions LLC opened several licensed childcare programs in Linn County expanding into nonmetropolitan areas in 2024 and also allowing for some program relocations into newly constructed buildings. Specifically, KCE Champions LLC @ Trailside commenced operations on 8/23/2024. KCE Champions LLC @ Trailside is located inside Trailside 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 @ Trailside serves only school-age children. Current enrollment is 80.

Senior regional director of field operations is Kymberly Norrick. Multi-site regional manager Setara Sous has a BA in criminology, has 6 years experience working within this childcare corporation, participates in child development related training and been director qualified since January 2024. Multi-site director Bethany "Bree" Hogue has been with the program since operations commenced in 2022. Ms. Hogue is completing an AA degree in early childhood education, has several years of experience working in children, and continues to participate in child development related training. On-site supervisor (OSS) is Courtney Clark-Monroe. Ms. Clark-Monroe has been in the OSS role since October 2023, has an AA degree in medical billing and coding, has experience working with children and continues to participate in child development related training.

On 2/14/2025, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

KCE Champions LLC @ Trailside 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 @ Trailside 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.

In 2021, KinderCare Education earned a fifth Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award - one of only four companies worldwide to receive this aware 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.

Management (e.g. senior regional director of field operations Kymberly Norrick, regional manager Setara Sous, multi-site director Ms. Hogue, OSS Clark-Monroe) has systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained as required. Management is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own policies and procedures. Management has reported holding regular staff meetings to review rules, policies and procedures. Ms. Hogue acknowledged how her team of staff have started volunteering quarterly at St. Luke's Hospital helping prepare and provide home cooked meals for patients.

KCE Champions LLC has established and is working to maintain optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has a parent-staff/program information center, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities. Prior to each school-year commencing, KCE Champions LLC sponsors a "Champions Family Night" at a local park with food and various activities including face painting to welcome new and returning families to the upcoming school-year. Summer camp enrollment begins in early January each year. 2025 summer programming will include experiences in swimming, hiking, kindness, wellness, arts and crafts and program built boat races.

KCE Champions LCC 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. Ms. Clark-Monroe discussed how curriculum is shared nationally and locally through the use of "chalkboard" or internal sharing portal.

KCE Champions collaborates well with many community partners including local school districts, local businesses, CCR&R, and health professionals. 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 food service personnel prepare and provide all food items for the childcare program. The school kitchen is inspected at least annually by the health department. There is an AED onsite. This program is located in a newly constructed school building which has many enhanced modern features. School building is in excellent repair. Childcare is located in an area of the building which is also storm rated/their tornado shelter.

Each KCE Champions LLC location has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The program has successfully navigated through 2022 food supply and infant formula shortages, 2023 air quality alerts and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

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 for handwashing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

On the day of the monitoring visit, on-site materials and furnishing were observed. Area of study included "American Fold Music". Staff were observed warmly greeting children and families as they arrived for the morning's childcare. Activities observed included free choice (e.g. large gross motor games in the gym, free crafting, games, book reading). Routine transitions (e.g. clean-up, restroom breaks, face-to-name checks) were observed. Staff were engaged with the children, provided positive redirection when needed and encouraged social graces. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be enjoying the program.

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

109.6(6)d: Record checks
- One staff file reviewed (ER hired December 2024) lacked documentation of federal record check results.

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 reviewed (ER hired December 2024; SW hired October 2024) lacked documentation of a physical exam on required form 470-5152.

109.9(2): All files are updated at least annually and when a change occurs.
- Two child files reviewed (MF, JF) lacked documentation of an annual update.

109.8(2). Ratio
- Children accessed the school hallway without staff and careful supervision.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

On the day of the monitoring visit, some children arrived to the childcare area alone and with no written parental authorization to self-supervise arrival procedures. The allowance of a self-supervised arrangement for a child to enter and/or exit child care services warrants careful consideration. Parent participation and communication in childcare is critically important to be able to communicate required elements. Licensing strongly supports each child arriving and leaving childcare services with their parent and/or parent authorized drop-off and pick-up person. Licensing also strongly supports collaboration with the program's legal and insurance persons regarding drop-off and pick-up policies and practices.

Please ensure posted lessons/curriculum plans have the current week's dates rather than just a week with number(s). To have otherwise, makes it difficult to know if the posted lesson/curriculum plan is current.

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

It is beneficial to note, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) and the nurse consultant are excellent resources to access training opportunities and support in the area.

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.