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

Name of Center: KCE Champions LLC @ West Willow Elementary School **Enrollment:** 60 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51758

Street: 6225 First AVE SW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52405 **County:** Linn

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

Director's Name: Setara Sous **Phone Number:** 319-488-9028

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kristy Blanchett **E-Mail:** ssous@discoverchampions.com

Date(s) of Visit: 03-12-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **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: 10-27-2023

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 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
Summer					0
General			50	190	240

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 03-01-2024 to 03-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 03-15-2024

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

Not applicable.

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 @ West Willow Elementary School commenced operations on 6/6/2022. KCE Champions LLC @ West Willow Elementary School is located inside West Willow 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. Current enrollment is 60.

Multi-site director is Setara Sous. Ms. Sous has been the director since January 2024. Ms. Sous has a BA degree in criminology, 6 years experience working within this childcare corporation, and participates in much child development related training. On-site supervisor is Kristy Blanchett. Ms. Blanchett has been employed with Champions since fall 2022 and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 2/5/2024, licensing attempted to complete the annual inspection. No one was present on-site and no communication regarding changed program hours had been provided.

On 3/12/2024, licensing returned and program space was observed at that time.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

KCE Champions LLC @ West Willow Elementary 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 @ West Willow Elementary 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 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.

Multi-site director Ms. Sous has been with the KCE Champions LLC in an upper management role since commencing operations within the Cedar Rapids Community Schools in 2022. Ms. Sous became a multi-site director in January 2024. Management continues to report hiring staff who have prior experiences working with children and display a strong worth ethic. KCE Champions LLC indicates having professional staff hiring and onboarding practices as well as holding regular staff meetings to review rules and policies while offering staff supports and appreciation. Management discussed being proud of the relationships their site has built with their enrolled children and families.

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. On 8/16/2023, KCE Champions LLC sponsored a "Champions Family Night" at Morgan Creek Park with food, face painting and more to welcome new and returning families to the 2023-2024 school-year. Management discussed how enrollment for summer 2024 programming is underway. The theme of 2024 summer camp is "Judy Moody and the Champions Not Bummer Summer".

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.

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. 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.

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, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children. Theme of the week was "The Way to Wellness". Activities observed included full-day spring break programming, self-selected play experiences (e.g. building materials, crafting, stampers, board games, book reading, imaginative play items), large gross motor play and many routine transitions (e.g. clean-up). One staff was observed to provide a child with minor first-aid in the form of comfort and a bandage. Ms. Blanchett discussed the week's spring break events including upcoming scavenger hunt, tie-dye shirt experience, and movie day. Staff were observed to be actively engaged with the children, providing positive redirection when needed and encouraging social graces. Children appeared to be enjoying their day.

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.
- Staff file (CG) reviewed lacked documentation of the required physical exam.

109.9(2)g: Any child with allergies, a written emergency plan. Copy shall accompany child if they leave the premises.
- Child file (JJ) reviewed noted a special health need with written emergency plan noting required rescue medication. Rescue medication is not on-site when child is in attendance.
- Child file (KK) reviewed noted a special health need with written emergency plan. Child is being allowed to carry rescue medication in back-pack during childcare hours. Staff are not verifying the child has the rescue medication upon arrival each time and not storing the back-pack with rescue medication inside in an inaccessible area.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please provide a written note of correction (e.g. email) within 30 days of receipt of this report. If you need assistance with

making corrections, please contact Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R; Name Ashley Cram; Phone 563-362-8224; Email acram@caeiowa.org) and our local child care nurse consultant (CCNC; Name Angela Easley; Phone (319) 538-4458; Email AEasley@hacap.org).

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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.