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

Name of Center: KCE Champions LLC @ Truman Early Learning Center **Enrollment:** 50 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51885

Street: 441 W Post RD NW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52405 **County:** Linn

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

Director's Name: Bethany Bree Hogue **Phone Number:** 319-432-3608

On-Site Supervisor(s): Ashley Ward **E-Mail:** Bree.Hogue@discoverchampions.com SSous@discoverchampions.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-02-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **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: 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: X Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other 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
General			171	10	181
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-01-2024 to 09-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 01-09-2024

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

KCE Champions LLC has been operating multiple school-age childcare programs within the Cedar Rapids Community School District since 2022. Specifically, KCE Champions LLC @ Truman Early Learning Center commenced operations on 8/23/2022. KCE Champions LLC @ Truman Early Learning Center is located inside the Truman Early Learning Center which is part of the Cedar Rapids Community School District. The program primarily operates Monday through Friday before and after preschool school hours 6:30am to 6:00pm (current full days of preschool M-Thurs, with no preschool and full days of childcare on Fridays). 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 @ Truman Early Learning Center serves primarily preschool-age children but has the ability to also serve school-age children as needed. Current enrollment is 50.

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 over 14 years of experience working in children, and continues to participate in much child development related training. On-site supervisor Ashley Ward has been in the role of this program since October 2023. Ms. Stephenson has a history of working with children and continues to participate in much child development training.

On 1/2/2024, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

KCE Champions LLC @ Truman Early Learning Center 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 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.

Multi-site director Ms. Hogue has been with the KCE Champions LLC since commencing operations within the Cedar Rapids Community Schools in 2022. Ms. Ward discussed how she has been with the program since October 2023, how many changes have occurred since she started and how the program has been receiving much positive feedback as to the care staff is providing. 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.

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 upcoming school-year. Management discussed how enrollment for summer 2024 programming will soon be underway.

KCE Champions LCC curriculum focuses on six content areas that research shows enhance preschool-aged 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 and healthy eating are also part of operations. 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. Management discussed how enrollment for summer 2024 programming will soon be underway.

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 @ Truman Early Learning Center 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. Since the last review, an enclosed preschool-age playground area was newly established.

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 supplies, policies and procedures for hand washing as well as cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Children had access to an array of materials (e.g. books, imaginative play options, building materials, puzzles, cozy corner, crafts) that encouraged innovative play. Activities observed included center experiences and indoor/gym 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 activities) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were observed providing many reassurances, high 5s and hugs. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be enjoying their day.

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

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A doorbell camera system for the program continues to be strongly recommended.

It shall be noted, there were a few items requiring attention (e.g. updated lesson plans, updated menu, undated child enrollment form, annual fuel inspection report) which were remedied prior to report completion.

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.