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

Name of Center: Hiawatha KinderCare **Enrollment:** 87 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51965

Street: 1771 Boyson Square Dr **City:** Hiawatha Iowa **Zip** 52233 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address:

Director's Name: Sara Schwerin **Phone Number:** 586-713-6148

On-Site Supervisor(s): Lindsey Rinken **E-Mail:** Hiawatha@kindercare.com SSchwerin@kindercare.com

Date(s) of Visit: 11-09-2022

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

LICENSING VISITS

X **New Application** **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 08-26-2022

FIRE INSPECTION **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 11-22-2022

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: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age 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	18	28	78		124
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 10-29-2022 to 11-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 12-05-2022

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

Not applicable. This is a new program which completed an Application to Operate on 8/26/2022 and commenced programming on 10/29/2022.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Hiawatha KinderCare (new current license #51965) was established after new ownership acquired The Hiawatha Day School (former license #25030). Hiawatha KinderCare completed an Application to Operate on 8/26/2022. The Hiawatha Day School's last day of operations was 10/28/2022. Hiawatha KinderCare's first day of operations was 10/29/2022. Hiawatha KinderCare operates year-round, Monday through Friday 6:30am to 6:00pm. The program serves child age birth through preschool-age. Current enrollment is 87.

Director of Hiawatha KinderCare is Sara Schwerin. Ms. Schwerin had been the director of KinderCare West #291 prior to her transfer to this new location. Ms. Schwerin has been with KinderCare since 2001 and a KinderCare director for over 16 years. Ms. Schwerin has a BA degree in Elementary Education/Middle School with an childhood education endorsement. Ms. Schwerin has a valid Iowa teaching license. Ms. Schwerin has much experience working with children (including being a past lead teacher for the program's statewide 4-year-old voluntary preschool classroom) and continues a goal-oriented professional growth plan. On-site supervisor Lindsey Rinken has a BA degree in art studio and psychology. Ms. Rinken has over 9 years experience (8 of those years with The Hiawatha Day School) working with children and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 11/9/2022, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Hiawatha KinderCare is located in a predominantly urban neighborhood. The profit program provides a variety of full-time and part-time learning opportunities as well as accepts many different of funding sources to help meet the needs of children and families throughout the community.

Hiawatha KinderCare has established the following website for families and the community to learn more about the program:
https://www.kindercare.com/our-centers/hiawatha/ia/302060.

The mission of this KinderCare is "…to provide programs and environments that enrich children's development, promote respect for children, and celebrate the joy of childhood".

KinderCare programs have a history of participating in quality initiatives including national accreditation, CACFP, QRS/IQ4K, and local quality initiatives. Ms. Schwerin discussed future goals of continued participation in quality initiatives including IQ4K, CACFP and TEACH/WAGE$.

Hiawatha KinderCare is now part of the national KinderCare Education enterprise. KinderCare Learning Centers were founded in 1969 and have continued to provide childcare programming for over 50 years. KLC provides educational

programs for children from six weeks to 12 years old. These nationwide educational programs include over 1,000 early childhood education community centers, over 500 before-and-after school programs, and over 100 employer sponsored centers in 38 states and the District of Columbia. KinderCare Education enrolls approximately 200,000 children and employs approximately 30,000 people nationwide.

With having acquired this childcare only 11 days prior to this annual monitoring visit being conducted, Ms. Schwerin shall be commended with the transition progress and goals she has already made for herself and the center! While this is a newly established program for KinderCare, Ms. Schwerin has been with KinderCare since 2001 and is celebrating an impressive 21 years! Ms. Schwerin is an early childhood mentor/educator in the community. Ms. Schwerin continues to holds seats on both the East Central NAEYC board and the Iowa NAEYC governing board. Ms. Schwerin is organized and is working to build noteworthy systems of organization at Hiawatha KinderCare to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a secure manner. Ms. Schwerin is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Schwerin discussed the collaboration that is done among local as well as national KinderCare sites that allows for a sharing of materials, curriculum, ideas/planning, and professional growth training.

Since the acquisition, Hiawatha KinderCare retained several staff from the previous ownership as well as hired some new ones. Ms. Schwerin talked about goals related to IQ4K, professional development, and participation in the TEACH/Childcare WAGES Iowa. Ms. Schwerin discussed how KinderCare made 2022 the "Year of the Teacher" with KinderCare offering more training opportunities, new retention incentives, additional teacher appreciation/acknowledgment, continued family/staff referral/incentive program, continued no cost staff educational development, and the continued partnership with the TEACH program. Ms. Schwerin talked about how she has been working hard to get to know their new facilities, team of staff and families.

Hiawatha KinderCare has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The local KinderCare programs have successfully navigated through the 2008 historic Linn County flood, the 2019 Derecho Storm event, and the 2019 pandemic.

Hiawatha KinderCare continues to build communication between their new program/staff and families. KinderCare historically provides parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities. KinderCare also historically offers family events throughout the year including open houses, parent/program conferences, access to family ambassadors, and program/parent "Care Calls".

To help ensure the building remains sanitary and hazard free each day, KinderCare has maintenance persons (e.g. indoor and outdoor) who assists in maintaining the property. Ms. Schwerin discussed how exciting updates (e.g. a complete "building refresh", possible partnership with local school district, outdoor play area enhancements) are coming as the property fully transitions to KinderCare.

Hiawatha KinderCare collaborates well with community partners including the local school districts, early access persons, local businesses, CCR&R, other childcare programs/directors, NAEYC administration and health professionals. Ms. Sherwin talked about a future goal of child immunization review with the local nurse consultant.

Staff engage each child 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. Staff were observed encouraging and engaging in hand washing at all levels. Staff encouraged children to "catch coughs" and "catch sneezes" in elbows. The program has policies and procedures for cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were observed to be nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Activities observed included infant cares, center play experiences, small group work and routine transitions. Staff were overheard providing children with words of encouragement and engaging children in discussion. 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:

Given the recent acquisition, prompt changes already made, and upcoming "building refresh", much leeway is being granted as the building and program structure continues the transition to the KinderCare way. On 12/6/2022, licensing and Ms. Schwerin discussed corrections that have already been made as well as upcoming all staff meetings to review licensing rules and KinderCare policies/procedures. Items that will be reviewed at upcoming all staff meetings include safe sleep rules,

policies and practices, discontinuing using diaper changing surfaces to store other items (e.g. toddler room dishes), sanitation related to cloth towel usage (e.g. kitchen), storing staff/personal items in areas inaccessible to the children, ensuring materials/supplies (e.g. turned around) are accessible to the children to allow much choice in their play, securing any unstable furnishings, modifying long window coverings, and ensuring secondary exits (e.g. spring rods) are unobstructed each day.

Please remove the half moon infant/toddler feeding tables in which infant legs and feet are left to dangle. These are not best practice as well as not physically and developmentally appropriate. Using such tables can be detrimental to infant hips. Weight-bearing through infant toes for long periods of time, can also put undue pressure on the ligaments and muscles of the feet resulting in mobility delays/problems. The close proximity of the seats creates a greater sanitation and cross-contamination (e.g. food allergy) issue.

The temperature in the building appears to greatly differ from one area to another. Ensure an all fuel appliance inspection is conducted and consider any possible remedies.

Licensing strongly recommends a larger refrigerator and dishwasher be installed in the kitchenette area between the infant and toddler room. If these items were available, infant room staff would have more time to dedicate to individual infant cares and nurturance.

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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.