

SIoux CENTER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

JUNE 2023

CONNECTION

630 First Ave SE /// Sioux Center, IA 51250 /// 712.722.0777
www.siouxcenterchristian.com /// sccsoffice@siouxcenterchristian.com



OUR MISSION

Disciple God's children by equipping them with a knowledge and understanding of Christ and His creation so that they can obediently serve God and others as they work and play.

TREASURED, TRAINED,
TRANSFORMED

Class of 2023



On Wednesday, May 24, **fifty-two 8th graders celebrated their journey of faith and learning at Sioux Center Christian School** in a ceremony at Centerpoint Church. Dr. Josh Bowar, head of school, challenged the graduates to choose courage over comfort as they go forth in the promises of Christ and continue to be active in the process of restoration. Each graduate also shared, through a video, their deep hope, storyline, and reflections on how they have demonstrated God's love in word and deed.

Joe Bakker, board vice president, handed diplomas to the graduates and, in closing, the faculty and staff gathered around all the graduates to send them off with prayer and a song by Mrs. De Weerd and Mr. Postma. Everyone was invited to stay for refreshments and a time of celebration.



Graduates, we praise God for His mighty work which is already evident in each of you. We pray that God will continue to work through you as you live His Story! May you serve Christ and work as His lifelong agents of restoration and transformation in the world!

Class of 2023: Natasha Aalbers, Eva Alvarez, Hailey Ammons, Benjamin Bailey, Jocelyn Bakker, Vitalii Baturin, Jenna Calkhoven, Trevan De Boer, Addyson De Boom, Olivia De Hoog, Eliana De Jong, Isaac De Jong, Morgan De Jong, Hadley Dekkers, Jax Dekkers, Jocelyn Feekes, Eli Geleynse, Sean Hannigan, Eden Hawley, Jesse Heynen, Sydney Hoogland, Carissa Hulstein, Dylan Kramer, Annika Kroeze, Sasha Mishchenko, Joshua Mouw, Rose Mulder, Kaleb Obbink, Caleb Okumura, Brady Olson, Mikiah Pennings, Sevriena Postma, Gage Roorda, Jacob Ross, Lucas Sandbulte, Ryan Schaap, Jenna Scholten, Elena Te Krony, Olivia Ten Napel, Levi Tintle, Olivia Van Beek, Payton Van Beek, Anneke Van Bruggen, Isaac Van Den Berg, Adler Van Essen, Lane Van Holland, McKinzie Van Middendorp, Owen Vanden Berg, Willem VanDerVliet, Bohdan Vinichenko, Cade Wynia, Dylan Zomer.

Class verse: "But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not grow faint." Isaiah 40:31

From the Board of Trustees by Greg Van Dyke, president

Greetings from the Sioux Center Christian School Board of Trustees!

On March 30, 2023, **SCCS held its annual society meeting**. Thank you to those who were able to attend! Here are some highlights from the meeting:

BOARD UPDATE: Greg Van Dyke, board president, gave an update regarding **board education** that happens each month (this year they focused on the SCCS mission/vision/values/faith statement), **inclusive education, art, education savings accounts (ESAs), new hires, vertical curricular alignment** work being done by the faculty, **the IGNITE campaign, finalizing the next strategic plan, ISASP student test results, dyslexia services** being added to the school, **record enrollment** at SCCS, and the **school's strong financial situation**.

NEW TRUSTEES: We want to thank outgoing trustees, Michael De Boer and Dennis Vander Plaats, for the time, talent and wisdom they have given to our board! Mary Beth Pollema and Nathan Tintle will serve as incoming trustees, officially beginning in August.

BUDGET: Joe Bakker, finance team trustee, walked through the various line items of the budget, answered questions, and the 2023-24 budget was approved.

Other updates from the board...

KITCHEN RENOVATION: In November, the board decided to **separate our kitchen renovation from the Blazer Center campus expansion**, since the needs in this area have become more immediate – aging equipment, space limitations, plumbing and refrigeration issues, and more were combining to create costly repairs and maintenance.

After a competitive bidding process, the board approved the bid from Hoogendoorn Construction, which came in a little over \$1 million. The funds for this portion of the project are already in place. **Construction began on May 22 and has a projected finish date in August, so it will be ready for the 2023-24 school year. The updated kitchen will have an immediate impact on every student** in the school while making the best use of our resources.

IGNITE the VISION for God's kids: The school has been meeting with supporters for about eighteen months now, and we are excited to let you know that **\$6.9 million in gifts and commitments have been given toward this next step** (the most SCCS has ever been given during an 18-month period!). Thank you for your tremendous support - **your giving is the fuel that makes a transformational education for God's kids move forward!**

In order to keep the most critical spaces in the planned campus expansion while maintaining the \$14.7 million cost approved by the Board and the SCCS society, the school is **diligently working towards the next milestone of \$9 million**, with the hope we can bid the project this fall in anticipation of construction next spring. ***We would appreciate your prayers as we seek to move forward in this God-sized, giving-driven step for His kids... providing flexible, effective, and updated learning spaces for our kids now and for generations to come!***

Thank you for all the ways you show your love and support for God's growing disciples, who are learning and living His Story at Sioux Center Christian School!

Trustees: Greg Van Dyke (president), Joe Bakker (vice president), Lori Walstra (secretary), Michael De Boer (treasurer), Dennis Vander Plaats (vicar), Renae Calkhoven, Jay Dekkers, Kelly Franken, and Darren Raih.



Dyslexia Services at SCCS

Starting this coming 2023-24 school year, we are excited to **partner with the Thrive Center for Achievement of Dordt University to provide high-quality services for kids needing additional assistance in literacy.**

To prevent summer learning loss, Mrs. Beth Bleeker and Dr. Gwen Marra are currently **providing summer tutoring services** over the course of 8 weeks for many children. Dr. Marra is a Wilson certified Dyslexia Practitioner since 2022. She continues to pursue additional training to help kids with dyslexia. Mrs. Bleeker is finishing up her certification as a Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner and plans to be done in June. These ladies will be partnering this coming school year to **provide research-based, intensive supports at SCCS** for students with dyslexia.



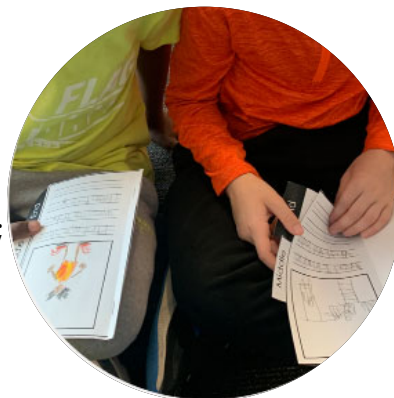
What is dyslexia?

"Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge."
(from the International Dyslexia Association)

Dyslexia **varies in severity** and the **impact depends on the effectiveness of reading instruction and/or remediation.**

How will support services for dyslexia work at SCCS?

Literacy instruction is a tricky thing. God created humans with the desire and ability to communicate. We are born wired to communicate through speaking and listening; however, **reading and writing need to be taught.** Reading and writing and speaking and listening are **complex processes that involve different parts of the brain.** For some people, the pathways between these different parts are not clearly established. This can make reading and writing difficult.



The work we do at Sioux Center Christian School and at the Thrive Center is **brain-based education. We work to retrain our students' brains to establish and strengthen these pathways so that the communication between the different areas of the brain can be strengthened.** We begin with the smallest parts of language (letters and sounds) and then explicitly teach how to combine and blend them into words, sentences, paragraphs, and longer passages for reading and writing. We use a **multisensory approach** that involves movement and interaction so it is easier for students to stay engaged. Each lesson has many steps and is **specifically planned for each student.** Since God created each child uniquely, **individualized instruction is the most effective way to teach them, so that's what we do.** Students will work to complete two lessons each week in a 1:1 setting, with supports tailored to their individual needs. This consistency helps the brain's pathways to be strengthened and the learning to be retained.

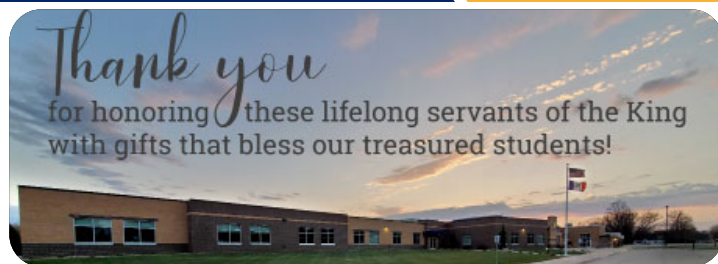
We are excited and thankful for this opportunity to **live out our desire to treasure each child as God's unique design and give them targeted training that will help each child thrive!**

In Memory of God's Faithful Servants

With gratitude to God, we gratefully acknowledge the receipt of the following **memorial gifts:**

Margaret Vander Schaaf – Building Fund

Harriet Snieder – Building Fund



Stories from the Hallways

...sharing how our students are connecting every learning experience to God's Story through our amazing teachers!



4Care kids explored the ocean and studied the amazing creatures and plants that **God designed and placed in the ocean.** They can tell you how many brains an octopus has, what a group of dolphins is called, and how many teeth a shark has!

#orderdiscoverers

4Care Specialist: Mrs. Tara Dekkers

In April, **TK students** explored our city and learned about being community builders. They **saw how people work together to make Sioux Center a safe, healthy, and thriving community.** THANK YOU to our local businesses who opened their doors to our students.

#communitybuilders #imagereflectors

Teacher: Mrs. Rebecca Vander Werf



Kindergarteners celebrated their 100th day of school with "100" themed activities, ice cream, plus a **long-promised ride on the school elevator.** They spent time thinking about God's Word in Isaiah 41:10,

"Fear not, for I am with you..." Students reflected on God's faithfulness throughout their first 100 days of kindergarten, but also in **the many days they have left of learning about their story written by the Author Himself,** and His promise to be near, beside, in, and before them.

#Wordappliers #truthfinders

Teachers: Mrs. Beth Bleeker, Mrs. Megan Haan, Mrs. Tammy Nieuwsma

First graders discovered how **God perfectly equipped some of His creatures and plants to thrive in different zones of the ocean.** They celebrated their learning with Beach Day, exploring shells, sand, and water beads. Each student even served as a lifeguard!

#orderdiscoverers

Teachers: Ms. Marcy Holwerda, Mrs. Emily Penner, Mrs. Abigail Van Beek



Third graders learned all about **weather systems**, observing the variety of weather we enjoy in the spring in NW Iowa. They also conducted experiments that demonstrated the water cycle, evaporation, and clouds, giving praise to the Creator for these critical systems. Students also **designed, built, and tested model homes**, using paper fans to simulate powerful winds. They were blown away by the experience of hurricane winds in a simulator at the Washington Pavilion!

#orderdiscoverers #Godworshippers

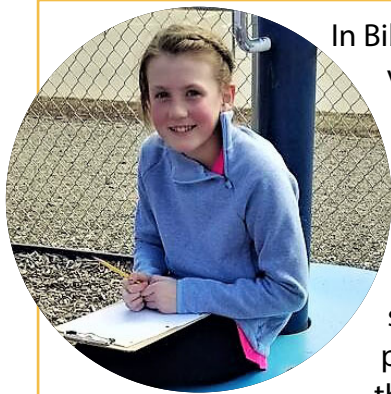
Teachers: Mrs. Anna Bootsma, Mrs. Ellen Korver, Mrs. Andrea Wieringa

Second grade students collected **empty gallon jugs to donate to Hope Food Pantry.** The jugs are used for homemade laundry soap. They also explored the pantry and learned how it serves people in our community.

#communitybuilders
#servant workers

Teachers: Mrs. Sarah Stoub, Mrs. Rebekah Vande Kamp, Ms. Amanda Woudstra





In Bible, **fourth graders** discussed various **ways we can worship God**. They learned what psalms are and how they were written to praise and worship Him. They took time to SEE God in creation by sitting outside, being still, and paying close attention to what they could see, hear, smell, and feel. Then they each **wrote their own psalm of praise** and shared it with their loved ones on Grandparents/Special Friends Day. #Godworshippers #Wordappliers

Teachers: Mrs. Abby Finley, Mrs. Kristi Vander Kooi, Mrs. Megan Winter



In their study of energy, our **fifth graders** explored a source of energy (such as wind, solar, and moving water) through the **engineering design process**.

With that research, they designed a model that solves a problem related to that resource. They practiced their communication skills as they explained their research and demonstrated their models to classmates.

#orderdiscoverers #earthkeepers

Teachers: Mrs. Jayden Pieper, Mrs. Laura Van Ravenswaay, Mrs. Rachel Vanden Hull



Sixth grade students, as part of their partnership with Oak Grove State Park, worked at the park for the third time this school year. Students **built a bridge, installed a culvert for efficient rain water drainage, built a bench, and cleaned the trails** in preparation for the park's summer visitors. Their eager and diligent work through this learning and serving experience will help bikers and hikers enjoy God's creation.

#servantworkers #creationenjoyers #communitybuilders

Teachers: Mr. Al Bandstra, Mr. Nate Breen, Mrs. Gretchen De Wit



As an extension of their science studies, **seventh graders** enjoyed a learning experience at the Omaha Zoo. With their science materials in hand, they **honed their observation and classification skills as they studied the variety of God's creatures at the zoo**, using dichotomous keys to identify the observable traits of the animals and then classifying them by the major groups of taxonomy.

#orderdiscoverers #creationenjoyers

Teachers: Mrs. Teresa Taylor, Mr. Dan Tinklenberg, Ms. Annetta de Jong

When grandparents and special friends visited their favorite **eighth graders**, they helped **analyze two-dimensional figures** in math class, heard **reports on their study of WWI battles** in social studies class, and helped **delve into the epistles** in Bible class. It is a blessing for seasoned disciples to see how these students have **grown as disciples** as they learned and lived God's Story in their years at SCCS!

#Wordappliers #truthfinders

Teachers:

Mrs. Samantha De Weerd, Mr. Phil Postma, Mrs. Angela Veenstra



5th-6th and 7th-8th grade choirs each shared a **mini hymn festival with our friends at Crown Pointe**. The students planned all aspects of the two hymn events, plus directed, played instruments, read Scripture and sang. They also invited the attendees to join them in worship on the last song.

#Godworshippers #beautymakers

Band and Choir Teachers:
Ms. Allegra Fischer, Ms. Brianna Miedema



Stories from the Hallways, continued

In March, two **6th grade teams** represented **SCCS** at the **Northwest AEA Math Bee** held at Dordt University. The competition consisted of five rounds of individual math tests and one team problem-solving round. Two students scored among the top 20!



In April, **ten SCCS students** participated in the **5th Grade Math Bee** hosted by Sioux Falls Christian. They competed in an individual round and a team round of problem-solving.

The problems at both math bees were challenging, required accuracy, speed, and high-level thinking.



Congratulations to all these math students for demonstrating a positive attitude, determination in solving difficult math problems, and for representing SCCS well!

#orderdiscoverers #imagereflectors

Discovery Teacher: Mrs. Rebecca De Smith

In their last music units of the school year, **third and fourth graders expanded their musical skills** and learned about creating beauty through wind and string instruments.

Third graders learned how to play the **recorder** and fourth graders learned how to play the **ukelele**.

Students had fun learning these instruments! Some even volunteered to **create performance videos** which were shared with parents on Bloomz (our parent communication hub).

#beautymakers

Music teacher: Ms. Brielle Miedema



Congratulations to Mrs. Rebecca De Smith on her retirement!

She taught first grade from 1983-84 and then **developed and taught our Discovery program** from 1991-2023! We are so thankful for her **33 years of service** at Sioux Center Christian and the **MANY** students she has impacted both in her classroom and in her role leading Destination Imagination.

We wish her and her husband, Bob, God's richest blessings as they transition to the next phase in God's Story for their lives.

Thank you, Mrs. De Smith, for your faithful service to God's kids at SCCS!

#imagereflector #servantworker



The **7th and 8th grade track and soccer teams** had excellent seasons this spring!

They practiced and played hard, learned new skills, built their team culture while striving to reflect Christ in their practices, meets, and games.

Thank you to the coaches who gave their time to lead these teams in developing skills, teamwork, and Christ-like attitudes.

*Track coaches:
Bethany Ten Haken
Luke Vander Horst
Cody Groskreutz*

*Soccer coaches:
Liz De Groot (7/8 girls)
David Vander Tuin (7/8 girls)
Tim Klein (7th boys)
Jon Dekkers (8th boys)*



7th & 8th grade track team



7th & 8th grade girls soccer team



7th grade boys soccer team



8th grade boys soccer team

SCCS News At a Glance

We are **so thankful for the support our churches provide our students through the Legacy Plan!**

As of May 31, 2023, we have received **\$1,232,230 in Legacy gifts** from sixteen participating churches, with the total amount pledged for 2022-23 being \$1,252,425. We are blessed to receive 97% of the gifts pledged with two months left in our fiscal year. **THANK YOU for all you do to impact God's kids for life!**



Trail'Raiser Trek 2023

Despite the cool, drizzly weather on Saturday, April 15 we had **85 virtual trekkers plus 880 people who came in person** and walked to unlock sponsor gifts, plus gave their own donations through the trek, brunch, coffee house, and more!



Over \$100,000 was given to help build the gym floor in the future Blazer Center, which will be the **foundation for thousands of God's kids to worship, gather, run, jump, and perform** as they learn and live God's Story! **THANK YOU!!**

IGNITE the VISION for God's kids at SCCS

For the past eighteen months, school leadership has been working diligently to reach out to supporters and businesses, asking for their **partnership in making the promises of the IGNITE campaign a reality**. We have largely been in a "silent phase" as we've met with hundreds of faithful and generous givers.

We are so thankful to share that we are **nearing \$7M given** in gifts and commitments and we continue connect with supporters. To join in helping **turn this vision into real learning spaces for God's kids** - now and for the next generations - connect with Paul Ross, our director of development!
pross@siouxcenterchristian.com /// 712.541.1707



\$3 million

Milestone: Reached March 2022

\$6.9 million

Committed & Given

June 2023

47% towards total

74% towards next milestone

\$9 million

Milestone to break ground

\$14.7 million

4Care for Preschoolers

Sioux Center Christian School offers **4Care, a play-based, childcare opportunity** for 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool. This is a great place for your child during the half day they are not in preschool.

There are still openings for this coming school year!

To learn more and reserve your child's place in 4Care:
siouxcenterchristian.com > Student Life > Extended Care Services



SCCS Calendar

Our calendar is also at www.siouxcenterchristian.com

Summer Hours:

TRIP Office: 8am - 1pm Monday-Friday

School Office: 8am - 1pm M-Th (closed on Fridays)

Both the TRIP Office & School Office are closed

Monday, July 3 through Friday, July 7

Friday, June 30: ESA Enrollment deadline

Thursday, Aug 10: School Registration 2-8pm at school. *ALL parents must register in person at this time or make arrangements with the school office.*

Aug 7-11, 14-18: Teacher Work Days, professional development, flex worktime, and meetings

Thurs, Aug 17: Parent-Teacher Conferences 3-8pm
Meet with homeroom teachers before school begins!

Wed, Aug 23: First Day of School 8:00am-2:05pm

Substitute Teachers Needed

We're looking for substitute teachers and paraprofessionals- people who enjoy working with children, can follow instructions provided, and can be flexible with responsibilities. We will work with your schedule and level of comfort. Teaching degree not required. **If interested, contact Brandon Haan: bhaan@siouxcenterchristian.com**

**Why we do
what we do!
We LOVE all
these growing
disciples!!**



Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

On January 24, 2023, Governor Kim Reynolds signed the **Students First Act into law, effectively creating an Education Savings Account (ESA) for all Iowa families within the next 3 years.** Our desire is to implement ESAs at SCCS with discernment—in ways that align with our mission and Reformed Christian perspective. **We are viewing ESAs as a huge blessing for parents across Iowa and locally** and want to steward that blessing well.

Below is a quick reference to some key details about ESAs, to ensure you know the facts! If you want more detailed information, you can request an information sheet from Dr. Josh Bowar (jbowar@siouxcenterchristian.com) and also go to the Iowa Dept of Education ESA information and application link, located on the home page of siouxcenterchristian.com.

PARENTS: You must complete the online ESA application by 11:59pm on Friday, June 30!

Who is eligible for an ESA?	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026 & forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All kindergarten students • All students transferring from public school or homeschool • Students at or below 300% of the federal poverty level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All kindergarten students • All students transferring from public school or homeschool • Students at or below 400% of the federal poverty level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All K-12 students in Iowa, regardless of income
How much money goes into a family's Education Savings Account each year?	\$7,635 per qualifying student for the 2023-2024 school year. <i>Funding is deposited into the parent's ESA account in two payments (July and January). Parents use these funds to pay toward their tuition at the beginning of each semester.</i>		
What may ESA funds be used for?	Tuition and fees at a nonpublic school must be paid first. If there are remaining funds, they may be used for other qualifying educational expenses.		
Will anything change with our enrollment policy?	We will keep our current enrollment processes and requirements which have been in place for decades and are designed to help everyone understand what is important at SCCS. We want to continue to be accessible to families who desire a Christian education for their children and who meet all admissions requirements. We are also committed to keeping class sizes at a reasonable level.		
How do ESAs impact the public school?	Only state tax dollars follow the child, so for any child who transfers, the public school retains local property taxes and federal funding. The bill also directs that public schools receive \$1,205 annually in state funds for every child who receives an ESA in their district. Our local public school will receive approximately \$750,000 in new funding once fully implemented (considering SCCS, Unity, and Western students). The Sioux Center School District would need to lose almost 120 students for their funding levels to decrease. It is likely their funding levels will actually increase.		
What is the philosophy behind ESAs?	Money distributed by the government comes from the pockets of taxpayers. Educational dollars are for educating students, not supporting schools. Parents in private schools pay taxes just like all other parents. Parents (as taxpayers) in Iowa are now able to choose where they want educational dollars spent.		

We are at the beginning of something that has never existed in the 119 years since our doors opened. Let's join together in fervent prayer, asking our God of all wisdom to give us wisdom as we set standards and practices for how this will bless the training of God's kids for generations to come! May we be found faithful!

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