



Dyslexia Services FAQ

1. What is the purpose of SCCS providing dyslexia support services? Why is the school doing this?

Sioux Center Christian School has been working to provide a robust inclusive education framework for its students for the past several years. As a result, the school has continually increased the number and depth of services available for students, including support in the following ways: sensory, speech, school counseling, 1:1 and small group instruction and remediation, paraprofessionals, talented and gifted (we call it Discovery), fine motor, behavior, and more.

We believe that a whole child education is important because all students are created in God's image. That's where they get their worth. Providing dyslexia services is one more step the school wants to take to serve students. We see a need and feel called to meet that need. Beth Bleeker will be leading these efforts as the SCCS reading specialist.

2. What interventions will be offered? How, when, and where will these services be offered?

Interventions are based upon what a student needs. One of the primary interventions that will be offered will be the Wilson Reading System, which includes a multisensory approach to reading instruction. The approach includes explicit, systematic instruction that features constant review of past concepts that have been mastered. It is a research-based approach that has been found to be effective with many children having dyslexia or struggling with reading.

We also plan to implement Foundations, another Wilson curriculum. Depending on student needs, we will also implement curricula that helps children develop stronger verbal skills and organize their thinking. Our goal is to provide various interventions to best meet the needs of our students.

Some services will be given in one-on-one sessions with a teacher or a Thrive staff member for 30 minutes per child per day. Some students may benefit from small group instruction. All services will happen during the school day at SCCS. Current SCCS students will continue services they are currently receiving, unless they make progress that is in line with grade-level expectations.

3. How will students be screened? How will decisions be made regarding student services and support?

Students can be referred for services by teacher recommendation, through test performance scores, and/or through parent referral. Guidelines for placement will follow criteria recommended by the curriculum.

We are committed to providing students with the services they need. We will screen SCCS students starting at the end of first grade and will continue the screening process for students who demonstrate need. We will also provide screening services for new students to the school.

4. What does the Thrive Center for Achievement partnership look like? What benefits are there?

The Thrive Center for Achievement will be partnering with SCCS to support program design and implementation, screening services, and providing services to students. Highly qualified and trained Thrive faculty and staff will be working with SCCS faculty and staff.

Dr. Gwen Marra, the Thrive Center director, will be actively involved at SCCS, as will several trained Wilson tutors. Gwen is a Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner and is continuing her Wilson Level 2 training. She has been mentoring and training tutors since the Thrive Center for Achievement opened in 2022.

Beth Bleeker, the SCCS reading specialist, is currently studying to be a Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner. She has been working with Thrive Center for Achievement since 2022. Both Beth and Thrive Center tutors will provide SCCS students services.

Thrive Center for Achievement of Dordt University is a teaching center. Dordt University professors and students are involved in numerous aspects of services provided. This unique relationship allows future teachers to get a supervised hands-on learning experience. The partnership with SCCS enables Dordt to serve the community in a new, exciting way.

5. What would you suggest regarding having my child diagnosed for dyslexia?

Parents have several options regarding diagnostic services. Locally, the Thrive Center provides a comprehensive literacy evaluation. Families could also choose to visit Apples of Gold in Pella or Pathways Literacy Center or the Scottish Rite in Sioux Falls.

Other provider information is also available by contacting Decoding Dyslexia Iowa (<https://www.decodingdyslexiaiowa.org/evaluation/>).

Costs associated with diagnosis are the responsibility of the parents.

6. Are summer services available?

Although school is not in session in the summer, we do not want learning to stop. Summer services are available at the Thrive Center. SCCS families are offered a reduced rate for tutoring due to our partnership with Thrive. Thrive Center for Achievement is offering tutoring on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays during the summer.

To learn more, contact Dr. Gwen Marra, Thrive Center for Achievement director, at Gwen.Marra@dordt.edu.

7. Is there an extra cost for services provided at SCCS?

No. All services that are provided during the school day are included in the cost of tuition at SCCS. Families are responsible for any diagnostic testing and/or summer tutoring costs.

Eligible families can use education savings account (ESA) funding to pay for tuition to receive these services.

8. Who should I contact to learn more?

We are happy to answer questions and help!

Please reach out to Beth Bleeker, SCCS reading specialist (bbleeker@siouxcenterchristian.com); Dr. Josh Bowar, SCCS head of school (jbowar@siouxcenterchristian.com); or Dr. Gwen Marra, Thrive Center director (Gwen.Marra@dordt.edu).