

SCS and Students with Special Needs: What Parents Need to Know

As a small private school, Smithtown Christian School (SCS) does not have a special program designated for students with special needs (e.g., learning, emotional, developmental, or physical). It is therefore possible that, given a student's specific needs, SCS may not be able to provide the optimal learning environment for some students. We believe that God has a great plan and purpose for each of His children (Jeremiah 29:11), and we also recognize that this plan is unique for each child. We therefore urge parents to prayerfully consider and investigate the best educational options available for meeting their students' needs.



Juarline Stavrinis, ARC Director

At both the primary and secondary levels, SCS has a challenging curriculum that requires academic work and performance that exceeds that of public schools. SCS does not offer alternate diploma options and significant modification of the curriculum at any level is not feasible.

Our resource room model is designed to accommodate students whose placement is designated by their IEP/IESP for small group setting. This is defined as one period per day, five days per week. The resource room teacher will provide support in accordance with the goals and accommodations as it is written in their IEP/IESP.

We do realize the limitations in supporting students beyond the SCS resource room model and are prayerful that one day God will enlarge our scope.

Please note SCS does not offer supports for students in need of a more restrictive environment, e.g. Special Class in district 12:1/15:1, 12:1+1, 8:1+1, 6:1+1 or NYSED-Approved Non-Public School – Day or NYSED-Approved Non-Public School – Residential.

In addition, SCS does not have full-time counseling staff on premises, and therefore cannot support students with significant emotional needs that impact learning and/or their success at school.

Applying for Admission

Given the rigor of the academic program at SCS, it is important to know that the student's best interest and opportunity for success is at the heart of each admissions decision. This means that students are accepted if they can succeed academically given the limited academic support offered at SCS.

All families apply for admission via SCS's online application. In order to be considered, all potential students must complete and submit the application in its entirety including the application fee. On this application, parents must indicate whether students currently or have ever received special education services, an IEP/IESP/504, educational or psychological evaluation, and/or counseling services. For students with special needs,

additional documentation will be required to complete the application, as follows:

- Those with current IEPs/IESPs/504s will need to submit all related documentation at the time of admission. This includes
 - Psychological testing
 - Academic testing
 - Speech and Language evaluation
- If your student has participated in any additional evaluations, Neurological, Occupational, Physical and/or Visual, you will be required to submit these reports as well.
- Those students who are receiving counseling or other psychological services will need to provide documentation from a licensed mental health professional describing the student's history, treatment, and school-related needs, as well as any medication and behavioral/emotional protocols. This includes, but is not limited to, any psychiatric reports. A signed release (HIPPA Form) allowing SCS to contact the treating physician(s) must also be provided.
- Those students who have been declassified, please provide us with all information listed above that applies, including the declassified documents.

Please note that applications must be complete, with all required materials submitted, before students can be considered for admission. The Academic Resource Center (ARC) coordinates entrance testing for students who need testing accommodations.

Services for Students Entering SCS with IEP/IESPs or 504 Plans

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) coordinates special education assistance and services for SCS students. The ARC works directly with the Smithtown Central School District's Committee for Special Education (CSE) for evaluation of students, writing of the IESP or 504 plan, and servicing of students. If the result of district evaluation is the establishment of an Individualized Education Services Program (IESP), outside service providers from the district will be scheduled to meet with the student on campus and during the school day to provide support. Students with a 504 plan are provided their accommodations by their individual teachers and the ARC.

Please note: For students who are coming from other schools and who previously had an IEP, IESP, or 504 plan, SCS does not automatically accept/implement IESP or 504s from other school districts, but works internally and/or with the Smithtown Central School District to provide special education services at SCS. Parents supply such documentation to SCS during admissions, but at the direction of the ARC, will also need to transfer students' records from their previous school to Smithtown Central School District. Please note that often school districts will transfer only academic records, so it is imperative that parents request transfer of both academic and special education records.

ELEMENTARY (K-5) Students Experiencing Academic Difficulty

Current elementary students without identified special education needs but who are experiencing academic difficulty are first assisted by their classroom teachers for a minimum of six weeks. During this time, teachers work with students and families to identify adaptive learning strategies. If after this time period students continue to have difficulty, teachers may refer students to the ARC. As a result of this referral, students may then receive a range of services, which include first in-class, teacher-

facilitated support, then individual or small group assistance outside of the class, and subsequent to teacher- and ARC-provided interventions, referral for intellectual/psychological evaluation by the school district (please note that interventions may overlap/occur simultaneously; for example, a student may receive in-class assistance from a teacher, while also meeting with ARC staff). The decision to refer a student for district testing is coordinated by the ARC Director (in consultation with teachers, administrators, and parents). This includes the managing of paperwork, coordinating special education committee meetings, informing parents and teachers throughout the process, and so forth.

SECONDARY (6 - 12) Students Experiencing Academic Difficulty

Current secondary students who are experiencing academic difficulty may be referred to the ARC in one of two ways. The first is through parental concerns about student performance. The second is through routine monitoring of all students' grade progress, which occurs mid-quarter and at the completion of each quarter; at these intervals, the ARC will request teacher reports for those students who are failing three or more classes. Once these reports are completed and reviewed by ARC staff, students may receive a range of services, including small group assistance and/or referral for intellectual/psychological evaluation by the school district.

Questions?

Questions regarding the admissions process for your student should be directed to Mrs. Lisa Eichenlaub at 631.265.3334.