



CONTACT

For more information regarding OT and PT services within the Oconomowoc Area School District, please contact:

Stacy Yearling - Student Services Coordinator
YearlingS@oasd.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT

- Referral Process
- Fine and Gross Motor Development
- Community Resources

Please visit our website: <https://www.oasd.k12.wi.us/district/therapy.cfm>

WHAT IS SCHOOL-BASED OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPY?

An Occupational Therapist (OT) and Physical Therapist (PT) is a trained and licensed health professional who uses purposeful, goal-directed activities to enable a child with a disability to benefit from their individualized education plan (IEP) or 504 plan. The focus of therapy services in the school setting is to promote functional independence or participation within the natural school setting. Educational OT/PTs are related service providers who serve as part of the IEP team. Their services might include, but are not limited to:

- Addressing fine and visual motor skills;
- Identifying sensory processing patterns and providing strategies to promote increased participation;
- Adapting materials, environment, or learning strategies to maximize participation;
- Developing the skills needed to participate on the playground and in physical education classes;
- Facilitating the development of functional mobility;
- Collaborating with school personnel to create solutions to educational barriers and to promote independence throughout their day.



SCHOOL-BASED OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPY



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HOW IS A STUDENT REFERRED?

Referral for school-based therapy services can be made by anyone, including parents, school staff or outside agencies. Evaluation for therapy services is part of the IEP/504 team process. Before considering referral for therapy services, the following questions help to determine the extent to which a child's disability impacts their educational programming.

- Are the identified problem areas preventing the child from benefiting from his/her education?
- Can the child's needs be met by parents, teachers, or other staff members?
- Do the identified problem areas appear to be caused by limitations in motor or sensory processing?

WHEN WOULD A STUDENT REQUIRE SCHOOL-BASED THERAPY?

A student may be eligible for school-based therapy services if he/she has a disability as defined by IEP/504 and requires the unique expertise of OT/PT to benefit from their special education services. The final determination is made by the IEP or 504 teams, which may include: occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists, school social workers, district administrators, teachers, parents and if appropriate, the student. Although a student may have a diagnosed medical condition or is currently receiving community-based therapy, this does not automatically qualify a student for school-based therapy services. School-based OT and PT services are not intended to satisfy the "medical" needs of a student; instead, they are provided only if the child requires therapy to access their educational setting.



WHAT DOES SCHOOL-BASED THERAPY LOOK LIKE?

If therapy services are required, a therapist will participate in developing the IEP/504 according to the student's education needs. The therapist will develop goals collaboratively with the IEP/504 team. The way in which therapy services will be provided is determined at the IEP/504 meeting. Services can be provided in a variety of ways:

- Directly to the child individually or in a group
- On behalf of the child through consultation with school staff or parents
- Adapting materials, activities or environments
- Support and training for school personnel

Depending on the student's needs, the therapy services will be provided in the least restrictive environment within the school day. "Least restrictive environment" means that we first consider support within the student's classroom before considering other options. The frequency of therapy services is determined by examining the level of support required for the student to participate in the school setting or the amount of training necessary to carry out the intervention plan. Services may be provided by an occupational therapist, certified occupational therapy assistant, physical therapist, or physical therapy assistant.



WHEN TO DISMISS OR DISCONTINUE OT AND PT SERVICES

During any IEP/504 meeting, the IEP/504 team may determine that the student no longer requires the related service of occupational or physical therapy. The decision to discontinue therapeutic intervention occurs when the student no longer needs this related service to benefit from their special education programming. It also happens if the student no longer qualifies for an IEP/504 plan. Dismissal is recommended when one of the following statements occur::

- The student can demonstrate age-appropriate skills;
- Other educational team members can implement strategies as instructed by the occupational or physical therapist;
- The student's functional skills have stabilized to meet the student's maximum participation levels within a specific school environment;
- The problem area ceases to be educationally relevant.