

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES

The Austin Independent School District Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy Department supports students with identified disabilities to facilitate their independence, success, and safety in the educational environment. Therapy services are provided within the natural school environment to address the capabilities and challenges presented by a particular disability.

Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy Services Under IDEA

1. **Related Services** are provided under IDEA, *if determined necessary*, in order for a student to **benefit** from special education (make progress towards the student's IEP).
2. The need for services is determined through an evaluation keeping in mind; ***“Is the service needed in order to assist the student with a disability to benefit from special education?”***
3. The ARD committee determines, ***based on evaluation and recommendations from the school occupational therapist and/or physical therapist***, the need for services. The amount, time and frequency provided are specified in the student's IEP.

Services are provided in a collaborative and integrated fashion within the natural school environment. Educationally based Physical & Occupational Therapy services are based on a student's function and performance in the school setting. Eligibility for services depends on educational needs. Occupational therapy services are intended to support the child's ability to develop foundation skills necessary to purposefully interact and benefit from his/her specific educational placement.

- The therapist will work with the student, teachers and other team members to assure a collaborative and coordinated service delivery
- The therapist will collaborate with the educational team to develop and implement strategies and accommodations that support the student's IEP. Strategies could include the following:
- The therapist will assess the student's educational need for modifications in the environment, educationally relevant equipment, technology and assistive devices. Modifications and equipment could include the following: adaptive eating utensils, adaptive writing supplies, adaptive postural supports for walking or sitting, mechanical tools for communication or toy interaction, etc.

Services in the Austin Independent School District

The AISD Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy department provides a continuum of services utilizing a collaborative, integrated approach that may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Working with students, teachers and other team members to assure a collaborative and coordinated service delivery
- Working hands-on, having face-to-face interactions on a regular basis between the related service professional and the student, which may take place in a variety of settings within the educational environment
- Collaborating with the members of the team to develop the student's IEP

- Collaborating with the members of the team to develop and implement strategies and modifications that support student's individualized goals and objectives
- Assessing the student's educational need for modification of environment, educationally relevant equipment, technology, and assistive devices
- Modeling and training classroom staff, students and parents on how to implement educationally relevant therapeutic strategies and use adapted equipment, assistive technology, and devices.
- Liaison with medical professionals
- Assisting the district with modifications of facilities to meet individual student needs to comply with ADA standards.