

High School Partnership Program

A proposed program for occupational therapy community partnership

A proposal for the development and implementation of the
High School Partnership (HSP) Program

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Executive Summary

The following paper outlines and summarizes a program proposal for the High School Partnership (HSP) program developed by occupational therapy student, Carlie Ross. The program has been developed for professional occupational therapy schools to use in creating partnerships with local high schools through the implementation of postsecondary transition services. These services aim to assist all students in developing the skills and inner characteristics needed for success in adult life, but specifically students who have been identified as being at-risk or in need of additional assistance.

From the start of American public education in 1635, the national ideal has been that education is the country's "great equalizer" (Rhode, Cooke & Himanshu-Ojha, 2012). However, this concept is in constant tension with the dynamic relationships that exist in today's schools. Teachers and administrators work to find balance between the demands of policy makers, parents, students, and governing bodies which attempt to dictate the educational markers and content covered in the classroom. Idealistic decisions are often made without consideration of students' diverse learning needs or the supports in place to meet them. This can create a chaotic system in which struggling students are overlooked and slip through the cracks.

The result of this approach is reflected in the number of programs and services which aim to address the need of young people *after* they have already dropped out of school, become involved in the corrections system, or are unemployed. The HSP program has been developed as a first step in breaking this cycle; it has been developed in line with preventative and public health philosophies which aim to decrease reactive spending and increase proactive spending. The HSP program promotes the reallocation of funds, which can better support young people as they transition to life after high school by demonstrating the effects of supportive school-based occupational therapy services.

The need for these types of services has been widely recognized by federal and state departments of education in response to continued budget cuts which impact services in public schools. A recent report from the United States Department of Education explained the immediate need to reprioritize national spending to invest more in education and supports for young people. Previous senior advisor to President Obama, Valerie Jarret, reports that these services "...could improve skills, opportunities and career outcomes for at-risk children and youth..." (2016). In compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states are required to submit a state plan which outlines their efforts to support students in public education to increase graduation rates and a successful transition to employment or higher education. The HSP program can assist schools in fulfilling their state plan by increasing the engagement and academic outcomes of high school students as well as the likelihood of a successful postsecondary transition, especially for at-risk youth.

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Introduction

The High School Partnership (HSP) program is designed to be used as a template for accredited occupational therapy schools to use in creating partnerships with local high schools while implementing a postsecondary transition program for students needing additional supports. The program will be run by supervised professional occupational therapy students. These students will work with high school adolescents and young people in the community who have been identified as needing additional assistance with postsecondary transition planning by teachers, staff, parents, or self-report. Students do not need to have a diagnosed disability, or meet specific eligibility criteria, to receive services through this program. Specific services will vary depending on the needs, strengths, and goals of each client but will be related to the development of skills necessary to transition toward independent life after high school.

The HSP program is unique in that its benefits can be widespread and profoundly reciprocal. For example, implementing a high school partnership program allows professional occupational therapy programs to better prepare occupational therapy students for school-based practice while simultaneously filling a gap in postsecondary transition services available to secondary education teachers, staff, parents and students, especially at-risk youth. In this program, occupational therapy students collaborate with high school students and staff to identify appropriate goals, develop treatment plans, and implement relevant interventions. Through this process, high school students receive increased assessment and monitoring of academic needs, personalized mentorship and increased opportunities to develop life skills which may improve the likelihood of a successful postsecondary transition.

School-based occupational therapy programs are currently limited by reduced federal and state education budgets and the prioritization, or allocation, of school district spending. As a

result, occupational therapy resources are commonly shared within a district—funded using the federally mandated special education budget as a *related service* under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). However, students with disabilities in secondary education seem to receive less services when compared to primary education (Mankey, 2011); and there are even fewer (if any) school-based occupational therapy services available to students who do not qualify for services under IDEA (Shea & Giles, 2012). This program offers a first step in implementing and advocating for a long-term solution to this multifaceted issue.

Strategic Fit

The proposed High School Partnership (HSP) program supports high schools in providing a comprehensive, *free and appropriate education* for all students in compliance with laws such as Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The HSP program aims to enhance student and staff collaboration, access to innovative postsecondary transition resources, and overall school culture while providing needed services to support the success and engagement of all students. High school students do not need to meet specific eligibility criteria to qualify for occupational therapy services in this program. The program expands opportunities for school staff to identify and address the diverse learning needs of individuals who demonstrate disengagement, poor educational outcomes, and related challenges.

The HSP program also supports professional occupational therapy programs in better preparing future practitioners for school-based practice and working with the at-risk youth population. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' most recent survey (2016), approximately 10% of occupational therapy practitioners work in the school setting which is the third most common practice area following hospitals and rehabilitation facilities. Yet many

professional programs still graduate students who feel unprepared to work in this setting (Chandler, 2013; Mankey, 2011). Fieldwork placements and similar opportunities can be more difficult to secure in the school setting due to the complex system regulations and logistical barriers. The HSP program may bridge this gap for occupational therapy programs by addressing a critical need within high schools and creating a mutually beneficial partnership as a foundation for future involvement.

Situational Analysis

Research Methods

Information was gathered from primary and secondary sources using a variety of search methods. Site visits and meetings with community partners and stakeholders were completed to gather qualitative information using informal interviews and observation. A thorough review of the literature was completed to synthesize findings from existing research on the topic and extract themes for further consideration. A SWOT analysis was used to compile primary research findings while identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of this proposed program at the community and societal level (see Appendix A of this section). Personal experience of the author and contributors was also considered.

Trends and Environmental Issues

There are many trends and environmental issues which affect this proposed program because the services are multidirectional and aim to address layered issues within a complex educational system. A comprehensive [review of the literature](#) surrounding the transition from adolescents to adulthood provides background information related to the markers of adulthood, barriers and supports for youth, and a framework for considering the essential skills needed for a successful postsecondary transition. The trends and environmental issues mentioned here build

on this information and relate specifically to the implementation of the HSP program. A societal outlook will be provided, as this is meant to serve as a template for other professional programs, followed by an outline of relevant state considerations.

Societal Level Impact

The overarching trend and environmental issue to consider for this proposal is the effect of maladapted young adults on society; a trend which can be reflected in high school dropout rates, incarceration rates, and unemployment rates in the United States. According to a report published by the U.S Department of Education in 2016, “state and local spending on prisons and jails has increased at triple the rate of funding for public education” in the last three decades (1979-1980 to 2012-2013). This equates to a 107 percent spending increase, from \$258- to \$534-billion, for education compared to a 324 percent spending increase, from \$17- to \$71-billion, for correction services. This source reports an even starker contrast at the postsecondary level with a rise in state and local spending on corrections of 89 percent with no increase in spending for higher education. The 2016 U.S. Department of Education report continues by outlining the connection between decreased supports in education and increased incarceration rates and expresses the immediate need to reprioritize federal, state, and local spending to invest more in education and preventative efforts for young people. Valerie Jarret, previous senior advisor to President Obama said “we can no longer afford this failure to invest in opportunity, only to lock up people once they’ve dropped out of school and turned to crime. These misguided priorities make us less safe and betray our values, and it is time we came together as a country to invest in our people and their capacity to contribute to society” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

An emerging response to this issue highlights the need to reorganize public education to better support young people as they transition to life after high school. This is particularly

important when considering the lack of available resources for at-risk youth and youth with disabilities who may need more intensive supports. Two main themes within this emerging trend include: 1) the need to make school more academically rigorous with a focus on college and career readiness, and 2) the need to make school more personalized and engaging with a focus on real-world relevance and hands-on experience. Although both themes promote important initiatives, a continued decrease in state and federal K-12 education funding appears to be a major barrier in the implementation of related programs which could support student success in these areas. Innovative alternative education organizations, including Big Picture Learning, are gaining popularity by helping schools transition toward a more personalized, relevant, and engaging model of education. This type of education model allows students freedom to explore their interests, collaborate with teachers and community mentors, and gain hands-on, real-world, experience in community internships. These opportunities can support the development of college and career readiness skills along with the skills identified as being essential for a healthy transition to adult life. Adopting philosophies similar to that of Big Picture Learning may help schools to better support young people in achieving personal, professional, and academic goals while increasing attendance, meaningful educational engagement, and high school graduation rates.

However, even after adopting this more flexible model, a need to identify school-based supports for high school students who are struggling to engage in class, or meet academic goals, still exists. For students under the age of 21 in foster care, or with qualifying disabilities, there are federal and state transition programs available to support the development of postsecondary life-skills (i.e. money management, work readiness and attainment, community integration and skills to support independent living). For students who do not qualify for these services, school-

based supports can be limited or non-existent. Schools can provide *Response to Intervention* (RTI), a 504 plan, or related programs but these services must come out of the school or district budget and are therefore determined by specific state and county funding sources. For schools without access to those resources, encouraging at-risk students to rely on their school counselors and teachers for their mental health and learning needs may not be enough. Increasing supportive student services may require schools to hire additional personnel to run programs or meet one-on-one with students needing additional assistance. Some schools hire a career counselor, mental health specialist, behavior support specialist, or wellness specialist; but in some cases, these positions replace a different role, and therefore do not actually provide additional resources to support the needs of students. This need for additional, or expanded, student support services in secondary education provides an opportunity for the HSP program to demonstrate occupational therapy's unique fit and contribution to the success of at-risk youth in postsecondary transitions.

Community Level Impact

The 2017-2019 Oregon Youth Authority budget totals \$405.5 million, which reflects a steady increase over the last 14 years despite a continued decrease in incarcerated youth over the same time span. This budget roughly equates to one million dollars per incarcerated youth and includes funding for facility expenses, services, and community/transition programs to reduce recidivism. However, these funds may be better spent providing preventative mental health and transition services prior to offence and incarceration. If only 10 at-risk youth were to be adequately supported and redirected in secondary education that could allow for the potential savings and reallocation of \$10 million. These funds could then support additional programs and positions within secondary education to support at-risk youth in developing the skills needed for adapting to the demands of adult life.

According to the Oregon Youth Authority January 2018 report, there are currently 1,330 youth in the Oregon state corrections system; almost 99 percent of which are within the age range of secondary education enrollment. Considering the connection between education and incarceration, the most recent dropout report from the Oregon Department of Education was reviewed. This report shows a total of 6,962 students (or 3.9 percent) who dropped out of high school in the 2016-2017 school year but does *not* include students who are enrolled in a juvenile detention facility. The education demographics for incarcerated youth have been more difficult to find, which may be due to the privacy laws surrounding the release of minor education records.

The Oregon Department of Education's 2016-2017 *Oregon statewide report card* presents data to assist in identifying educational challenges and opportunities for future improvement. When considering statewide graduation rates, a total of 76.7 percent of four-year Oregon high school students graduated in the 2016-2017 school year, including those who graduated with a modified diploma. This total is below the current national average graduation rate of 84 percent (U.S. Department of Education, 2017b). In compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Oregon has developed a State Plan which outlines how the state Department of Education is committed to "prioritizing and advancing equity; ensuring students have access to a well-rounded education; strengthening district systems; [and] fostering ongoing engagement" (2017). In achieving these goals, students may need to be provided with alternative opportunities to participate and succeed in their educational experience.

In Oregon, alternative education programs are designed to better support students' educational needs, interests, and academic success in alignment with state and school district standards (ORS 336.615). However, according to the 2016-2017 statewide report card,

alternative services are only accessed by a small portion of students (2.4 percent, or 13,808 students). The statewide report card also states that alternative services have decreased due to “reductions in district resources” (Oregon Department of Education, 2017). This reduction in spending on alternative services, which often serve the most at-risk population, may not be supportive of the Oregon State Plan or reflective of efforts to provide more equitable educational opportunities. Occupational therapy practitioners, programs, and students can start to fill this void by implementing low- to no-cost programs, such as the HSP program, in alternative schools as a way to demonstrate the unique value and impact of occupational therapy services on the academic engagement of at-risk students. Occupational therapy practitioners can then use measures of this impact to advocate for increased funding through the state or county to expand transition services in school-based practice on a broader scale.

Note: This section reflects the type of relevant information which may be helpful in advocating for the need of a High School Partnership program. Practitioners and professional occupational therapy programs in different states can use this section as a guide when identifying the respective state or district statistics.

Why Occupational Therapy?

Occupational Therapy’s Unique Fit in Secondary Education

In secondary education, occupational therapy practitioners help students to “develop self-advocacy and self-determination skills in order to plan for their future and transition to college, career/employment, and community living” (AOTA, 2016). They value a strengths-based approach which utilizes the unique skills and supports an individual already possesses to create opportunities to overcome barriers and increase performance and/or engagement in daily life.

Occupational therapy practitioners can provide skilled assessment and interventions for instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) which include: community mobility, meal preparation, financial, home, and health management (AOTA, 2014). The development of practical skills in these areas may contribute to, and promote, a successful transition toward independence in adulthood. For example, occupational therapy practitioners can assess the various factors which impact an individual's ability to engage in a task or occupation such as taking the bus to an interview, managing their mental health challenges, or fulfilling the role of a student. See Table 1 for examples of goals and targeted performance areas.

Targeted Areas of Occupational Performance	Specific Goals
Social participation	To develop awareness of self and others, empathy, effective and appropriate communication strategies.
Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)	To increase “attention to and independence in self-care” (AOTA, 2012).
Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs)	To increase independence in community mobility, financial management, home and health maintenance, and postsecondary activities (i.e. budgeting, career and college preparation and planning, attainment of new housing).
Leisure/Play	To develop healthy coping strategies, resilience, social connectedness and social interaction skills.
Education	To support increased executive functioning (i.e. organization, time management), engagement in classroom and extracurricular activities, and increase skills to optimize academic performance.
Work	To increase problem solving, sense of autonomy, judgement and reasoning skills, adaptability, “persistence and dependability” (AOTA, 2012), initiation, and leadership skills.
Rest & Sleep	To provide education to support general physical and mental health and interventions which support health promoting daily routines.

Table 1: Modified from American Occupational Therapy Association (2012) *Promoting Strengths in Children and Youth: Occupational Therapy's Role in Mental Health Promotion*,

Prevention, & Intervention with Children & Youth to reflect goals of the high school partnership program.

However, school-based occupational therapy practitioners are limited in who they can work with based on the legal pressures of district funding sources. Since occupational therapy practitioners are currently hired using special education budgets, they are required to prioritize working with students who qualify as having a disability or needing services under IDEA, or the Rehabilitation act (section 504). Due to the high demand of these services and the low volume of school-based practitioners, occupational therapists may struggle to see all students with disabilities, let alone a student who is struggling but not yet evaluated or determined to qualify for services. If an occupational therapy practitioner was hired using alternative funding, they would be able to work with students who may have mental health challenges, unidentified disabilities, or who are at-risk of not graduating or staying in school. Additionally, this role would allow occupational therapy practitioners to provide short term interventions for students demonstrating learning challenges as a way to better address the underlying barriers; an approach similar to RTI. This preventative approach to student support services may better prepare young people for life after high school by allowing them to more fully engage in meaningful educational opportunities. The need for these services could support a new role for occupational therapy in the school system. These services would simultaneously provide students and staff with additional resources for those who may not qualify for services under IDEA yet still need further evaluation and intervention.

With their unique training, occupational therapy practitioners can provide valuable insights, opportunities, and modifications which promote success for all youth as they develop skills and personal characteristics essential for adult living. A pillar of the profession, which can set school-based occupational therapy services apart from other supports, is that "although much

of what is done to support student accomplishment in the school is done without the student, much of what occupational therapy practitioners do is done with the student, working from a strengths-based perspective" (Chandler, 2013, p. 12). This perspective can empower students to make decisions which support their personal and academic goals while providing youth with the scaffolding they need to gain confidence and increased self-awareness—a key support most at-risk youth do not have access to (Swartz, Kim, Uno, Mortimer & O'Brien, 2011).

Occupational Therapy and the High School Partnership Program

Pacific University, School of Occupational Therapy, has developed a partnership with a local alternative school to provide school-based services for at-risk youth which inspired the HSP program. This alternative school happens to be in the process of transitioning to adopt the Big Picture Learning philosophy, which appears to be an educational structure complementary of this type of program. Over the past few years, services have remained highly valued by the staff who report a significant need of support for this student population. Similarly, the students report finding the services helpful in achieving their academic goals and in preparation for life after high school. Occupational therapy services have provided organizational, self-regulation, and stress management strategies to increase executive functioning; career exploration, problem-solving, resume development and mock interviews to develop job readiness skills; as well as opportunities for self-discovery, healthy leisure exploration, and community mobility to increase social interaction skills and self-authorship.

However, the true role of the HSP program is to provide a foundation for sustainable policy change and increased supportive student services, including occupational therapy wellness and transition programs. As a first step in creating a new student support position, the HSP program provides remedial services for secondary education students and staff who may

otherwise not have access to other resources while demonstrating a valuable effect on the wellness and engagement of students. This effect can then be measured by occupational therapy students and used to help occupational therapy practitioners advocate for funding from relevant sources. For best results, these sources should come from outside the K-12 education budget (i.e. state or county wellness, mental health, transition or similar initiatives, grants, or scholarships).

Although occupational therapy services are not currently structured this way, Vision 2025 challenges the profession to be leaders in changing “policies, environments and complex systems” (AOTA, 2017). AOTA president Amy Lamb’s 2017 presidential speech explains, “innovation is less about generating brand-new ideas and more about knocking down barriers to make those ideas a reality.” Providing schools with expanded occupational therapy services may not only strengthen occupational therapy’s collaborative role within the schools but may also support all youth in the transition to life after high school. Just as preventative health measures can decrease medical expenses and healthcare spending, preventative mental health and life-skill programs can decrease federal spending which support incarcerated youth and those out of work utilizing services through funding initiatives (i.e. Pell Grant Program, Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants, Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, and Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act [WIOA]). Together, school-based practitioners and professional occupational therapy programs can be leaders in creating innovative institutional change.

Guiding Theoretical Models

The following theoretical models were used to guide the development of the High School Partnership program proposal:

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Although there are many variations of this popular proactive educational framework, a general overview was used in developing the HSP program. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) approach promotes the universal screening and continued monitoring of all students' needs to allow increased targeted support for students who are struggling (Rosen, 2018). Response to intervention (RTI) and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) are elements of this model and contribute to decreased specialist referrals, decreased special education referrals, and increased student success (Rawe, 2018). The integrated elements of this model function within a multi-tier system of intervention to maximize the impact and efficiency of provided services. Tier 1 utilizes a universal approach by considering "the whole class." Services in this tier aim to affect all students and allow for the identification of those needing further assistance. Tier 2 provides "small group interventions" where students who have been identified as needing more specialized assistance are able to access more intensive supports. Tier 3 is "intensive, individualized support" and reflects a smaller number of students who need the most intensive level of support compared to students thriving in Tier 1. The goal of all three tiers is to optimize each student's ability to engage in meaningful educational activities which support progress toward academic goals in the least restrictive environment.

This approach helps to outline the proposed HSP program referral process as well as the model of delivery for services which provide the just right challenge for high school students. Students who are struggling in the classroom, or have otherwise been identified as needing additional school-based supports, can be referred to the HSP program for assessment and graded intervention. In this program, services can fall within a range from less intense to more intense depending on the student's needs and the identified barriers.

Occupational Adaptation

Occupational Adaptation (OA) describes the internal process of adaptation an individual experiences in response to overcoming personal, environmental, or contextual barriers. This approach explains how the various demands which arise through interactions between the *person* and the *occupational environment* impact the individual's response to a challenging situation and his/her desire to optimize the outcome (*desire for mastery*) (Schkade & Schultz, 1992). This model is influenced by developmental and learning theories, which encompass the belief that a person has the ability to grow, adapt, and acquire new skills. A person may experience dysfunction when the demands of their daily life exceed their ability to adapt efficiently or respond appropriately to internal and external expectations.

Occupational Adaptation is a good fit for the HSP program because it focuses on addressing the person's internal process required for resilience and mature growth toward independence. This process may include adjusting to a new role, learning new skills and strategies to overcome barriers (including deficits or dysfunction), and learning appropriate responses to challenges which increase engagement in meaningful roles (occupational activities). The HSP program aims to equip students with postsecondary transition skills which may carry over to other areas of their life and future transitions while developing the skills they need to increase function and overall wellbeing. The OA perspective guides practitioners in considering how they can facilitate adaptiveness, and resilience, within each person's unique personal, environmental, and contextual situation to increase their overall functioning and engagement in meaningful roles. Occupational therapy is fundamentally client-centered, but OA can help to further customize each individual treatment session by reminding practitioners that the outcomes lie in the individual's internal process.

In addition to these primary models, trauma informed care, harm reduction principles, restorative justice in schools, and universal design for learning all contributed to the development of the HSP program. Trauma informed care and harm reduction principles are similar in that both approaches foster a safe, supportive, judgment- and blame-free interaction between the “client” and “professional” (Trauma Informed Oregon, 2018; “Harm Reduction,” 2008). These approaches can be very effective, especially for those who have experienced prior trauma or abuse (i.e. at-risk youth), because they aim to inflict no additional stress or harm on the individual and to empower them to overcome barriers in their own way/time. From this perspective, practitioners can utilize strategies such as motivational interviewing to help youth come to their own conclusions and offer supportive resources as appropriate. Restorative justice in schools is similar in that it is student-led and aims to foster an inclusive, safe, and bully-free environment. This approach values empowering students to be mindful in the way they communicate with others and to resolve conflict independently through peer-mediated groups and similar school programs (Davis, 2015). Finally, universal design for learning provides a research-based framework for developing educational materials and programs that are accessible to all students and support equitable opportunities for meaningful engagement in school-based activities (AOTA, 2015).

Program Plan

Population Served

Adolescents and young adults who are either enrolled or attempting to enroll in secondary education (including alternative programs and high school equivalency programs) will be considered the target population for the HSP program. More specifically, the target population will include students who have been identified as needing additional services and/or support by a

teacher, staff, parent, or self-report. This can include students identified as at-risk, students with disabilities, students with unidentified disabilities, or general executive dysfunction and occupational performance deficits. However, it is important to note that the transition to postsecondary activities can begin before the enrollment in secondary education programs depending on environmental, cultural, and personal circumstances. Therefore, these services can impact individuals of all ages and could have the ability to follow students through the transition to postsecondary activities—helping to bridge the gap in services experienced by most youth who “age-out” or become ineligible for state and federal assistance (especially youth with disabilities or in foster care).

These services aim to be inclusive of all students by first using a Tier 1, universal design for learning approach, to create an inclusive school culture supportive of students of all needs and abilities through teacher and staff training and consulting. To accommodate students who may need more intensive supports, small group and one-on-one sessions (Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions) will be available through the HSP program. This program is unique, however, because all students will be given the opportunity to benefit and join these smaller group offerings (in the form of work-shops, class activities, or community-outings). By eliminating programs and services that are exclusive in nature, the school can truly provide students with the least restrictive environment rich in opportunities for growth and participation. With the proper supports and school culture, students can be empowered to collaborate with practitioners and teachers to create goals, develop healthy mentor relationships, and work toward skills which better support engagement in meaningful educational activities.

Within the current structure of the school system, if a student needs a high level of additional assistance but does not qualify for an IEP, the needs of this student can fall on the

teacher and staff. In this sense, teachers and staff will also benefit from these services as they aim to support their curriculum implementation in the classroom. The HSP program will help by providing additional resources and opportunities for the student to receive attention one-on-one or small group support. Like the services already provided by occupational therapy practitioners in the school system, occupational therapy students would work with the teacher, student, and parents to identify small changes that could support big differences in performance and/or behavior.

Evaluation

The following tools may assist occupational therapy students in evaluating the needs of youth who have been identified as needing more intensive supports (one-on-one or small group).

1. **Occupational Profile**- The occupational profile guides practitioners in gaining an understanding of the client's background and perspective (AOTA, 2014). In a general sense, the postsecondary transition process can be explained as a period of adjusting to new routines, habits, and roles (Myers, 2008, p 212). This tool helps practitioners to gather specific information related the client's roles, rituals, routines, habits, barriers, and strengths.
2. **Relative Mastery Measurement Scale (RMMS)**- This tool is used by clinicians to guide clients through the self-evaluation process.
3. **Adult Adolescent Sensory Profile-Self-Questionnaire**- This tool can be used to help practitioners evaluate a client's unique sensory processing patterns and preferences. This information can highlight maladaptive responses to stimuli which the practitioner can address by providing client education and strategies to reduce unproductive exposure.

4. Once specific goals have been identified, additional steps may be helpful in determining specific strengths, interest areas, and skills. Including, but not limited to:
 - a. Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment
 - b. Person Centered Planning resources
 - c. Adverse Childhood Experiences Studies (ACES) and Resiliency Questionnaire
 - d. Vocational Interest Inventory (i.e. O*NET Interest Profiler, “My Next Move” career interest profiler)

Intervention

Interventions will vary depending on the student’s unique strengths, barriers, and goals determined in the evaluation process. However, interventions will retain a central focus on postsecondary transitions and aim to promote the development of skills and personal characteristics outlined in the literature as supporting a healthy transition to adult roles and independent life after high school. These skills align with the occupational therapy scope of practice as outlined in the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (AOTA, 2014) and therefore interventions may address:

- Education
 - The development of skills or strategies which support the individual’s engagement in their role as a student
- Work
 - Employment interests and pursuits
 - Employment seeking and acquisition
 - Job performance
- Volunteer exploration
- Volunteer participation
- Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
 - Communication management
 - Driving and community mobility
 - Financial management
 - Health management and maintenance

- Home establishment and management
- Meal preparation and cleanup
- Religious and spiritual activities and expression
- Safety
- Shopping
- Activities of daily living (ADLs)
 - Personal device care
 - Personal hygiene and grooming
 - Sexual activity

- Rest and sleep
 - Identifying healthy routines to promote overall physical and mental health
- Play/Leisure
 - Healthy exploration and participation
- Social participation, in context of:
 - Community
 - Family
 - Peer, friend

Outcomes

The HSP program is designed to provide an initial step in the process toward establishing a new school-based occupational therapy position. Therefore, measuring outcomes will be crucial in demonstrating an effect of these services on the target population. A research study through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) will need to be initiated in order to officially record and interpret data. The high school principle, and potentially school district board members, will have to send a letter of consent to be submitted with the IRB application. The supervising/faculty occupational therapy practitioner will need to agree to be the primary researcher and will oversee all data collection. In compliance with IRB regulations, students and their parents will also have to provide consent to be a research participant.

Participant Recruitment

Outcomes will not be measured until students have already been referred to the program and will not influence participant recruitment for the HSP program. Students needing additional supports will be identified and referred to the HSP program by teachers, parents, staff, or self-report. A written announcement will be given to all students by a school counselor or staff member explaining the opportunity to participate in a research study with information on who to contact if they are interested. Students will not be specifically asked to participate by anyone directly affiliated with the HSP program, unless they express interest and want to know more.

Outcome Measurement and Monitoring System

Because specific performance outcomes will vary depending on each student's unique goals, a survey may capture the most valid measure of the HSP program effect. The survey

should use the Likert scale, or a similar measure, to allow easy comparison of perspectives at the beginning and end of the program. A questionnaire, such as the Relative Mastery Measurement Scale, may also be used to track individual change; completed at the beginning and end of each student's HSP program treatment plan.

Financial Analysis

Budget & Funding

The lack of available funds within educational budgets is what has led to the development of the HSP program. Proposed services are provided by supervised occupational therapy students who volunteer their services while gaining professional school-based experience. Supervising occupational therapists can double as faculty, or adjunct faculty members, of the professional occupational therapy school and therefore, are not additionally compensated for their time. However, specific arrangements can vary widely depending on the institutional resources and contract negotiations.

Summary

The HSP program offers occupational therapy programs a unique opportunity to establish meaningful community partnerships and facilitate experiential learning through integrated occupational therapy coursework. Through the implementation of the HSP program, young adults will be exposed to increased opportunities for self-discovery and self-development in line with goals which support a healthy transition to life after high school. Communities will benefit from the graduation of better adapted young adults who may be more employable and less likely

to engage in risky behavior. Occupational therapy programs will benefit by graduating more well-rounded entry level practitioners who are better prepared to work with the at-risk youth population or implement school-based services. Implementing the HSP program allows professional programs and students to demonstrate the effectiveness of occupational therapy services in this setting as a foundation for advocacy to increase inclusive student support services in secondary education.

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Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a high need for services which support at-risk youth and this need is widely recognized at the state and federal level - The HSP program directly relates to educational initiatives which support compliance with the law - Services are student-led. Students have choice in what they want to work on and how they want to meet their goals - No set of eligibility criteria or pressures from funding sources which dictate who can access the services - Occupational therapy students and high school students can connect through sharing the role of being a student - Occupational therapy students gain school-based experience working with youth developing treatment plans, implementing interventions and documenting progress toward goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are approximately 40 occupational therapy students available within one saturated geographical location, this can limit availability and consistency of services - Hard to grow the program because availability of occupational therapy students will not likely be able to change to meet increasing demands (however this is not really the ultimate goal of the program anyway) - Hard to establish rapport and carry-over of services as occupational therapy students move on/new students participate in the program
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To educate school staff, administrators, teachers, students, and board members on the value of occupational therapy in this setting/with this population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build relationships with schools and staff who can support advocacy efforts to expand services in future - Collect data to demonstrate effect and value of services - This partnership could create opportunities for occupational therapy students to establish fieldwork or DEI/Capstone projects within the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measure 98 in Oregon has created new school-based positions with a similar role, some may feel that these services are redundant and unnecessary - Long-term/sustainable funding for this type of service is limited and unpredictable