

Submitter: Morgan Garner
On Behalf Of:
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Occupational Therapy is an important and required related service for many students with disabilities. Occupational Therapists, by broad definition, help students access their "Occupation" which in the school setting, is being a student. While Occupational Therapists do help address fine motor skills, such as writing and adaptive needs, they also have expertise in sensory processing and self-regulation in the school environment. Our team of OT's help identify students not only with fine motor deficits but also sensory processing deficits. Our team of OT's also provide consultation to teams and work hard to integrate their work by partnering with our learning specialists to minimize student removals and provide more inclusive practices for our students. This might include individualized evidence-based sensory strategies or routines that help the student participate in academic tasks that are challenging or non-preferred. Given the current size of caseloads per occupational therapist, which vastly exceed recommendations of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), our current team is often unable to fully address these needs due to lack of time and need to address other workload tasks. On average each OT on our team is responsible for 90-113 students. AOTA recommends that caseloads do not exceed 55-60.