

# Best Practice in the Schools

Donna Case PhD OTL  
Cooke School – Northville Public Schools



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## Goals for the Session

- Participants will experience a variety of tools and resources for successful school based practice.
- Participants will identify constraints of school based practice.
- Participants will identify resources for questions, problems and opportunities.



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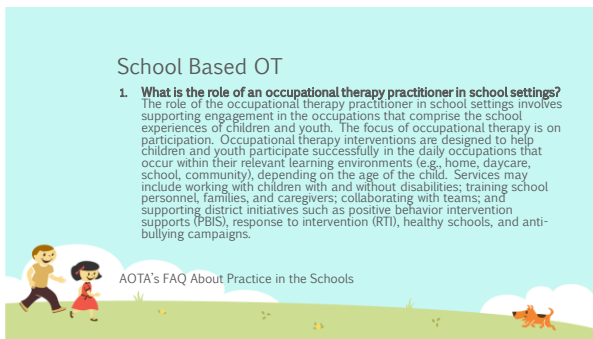
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## School Based OT

- 1. What is the role of an occupational therapy practitioner in school settings?**  
The role of the occupational therapy practitioner in school settings involves supporting engagement in the occupations that comprise the school experiences of children and youth. The focus of occupational therapy is on participation. Occupational therapy interventions are designed to help children and youth participate successfully in the daily occupations that occur within their relevant learning environments (e.g., home, daycare, school, community), depending on the age of the child. Services may include working with children with and without disabilities; training school personnel, families, and caregivers; collaborating with teams; and supporting district initiatives such as positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS), response to intervention (RTI), healthy schools, and anti-bullying campaigns.



AOTA's FAQ About Practice in the Schools

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## How do we determine Effective School Based Occupational Therapy?

Look at Best Practice - Values

- continuing competency
- performance assessment
- outcome measurement
- coupled with explicit, systematic, and intentional professional development opportunities

- AOTA (2013) Performance Evaluation School Based Therapists



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## Effective OT Practice in the Schools

- Builds relationships and work collaboratively and flexibly with all stakeholders
  - Assess access, participation and occupational performance needs
  - Prioritize and make decisions based on the strengths and weakness of the student, data progress, expectations of the environment and expected outcomes after school
  - Interventions are embedded in everyday routines and occupations
  - Facilitate capacity of stakeholders to promote student engagement



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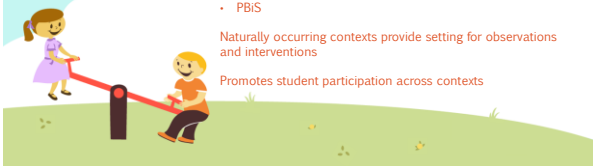
## What does this look like?

Adapts/modifies school environments and instruction to promote access and optimal participation and learning for all students: classroom, building, district, intermediate (county) and state levels

- Physical setup of classrooms
- Universal Design for Learning
- Response to Intervention
- PBIS

Naturally occurring contexts provide setting for observations and interventions

Promotes student participation across contexts



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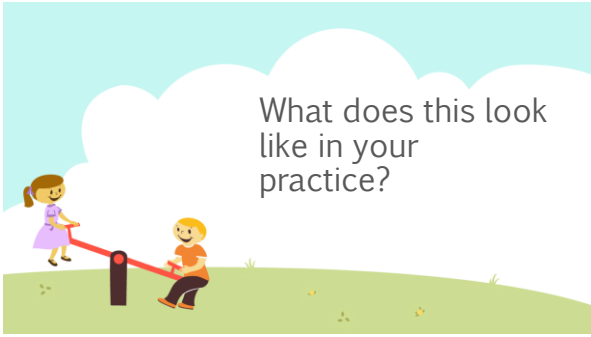
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What does this look like in your practice?

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### What Doesn't It Look Like?

- Therapy only occurs in therapy room or contrived setting
- Only therapist directed interventions and activities
- Work done in isolation without input from other team members

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### What Does It Look Like

- Understands regulatory, guidance and policy requirements
  - Influence of legislation and regulation such as IDEA, ESSA, Section 504 and licensing
- Understands and can explain the unique value of OT in the schools
- Data based decision making (should be reviewed more frequently than IEP and progress report periods)
- Evidence based assessment and intervention

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## Assessment and Intervention

- Thorough Background Analysis
- Collaboration to design evaluation process looking at strengths in various settings, environments and contexts
- Understands the factors that influence access, participation and occupational performance
- Addresses meaningful school roles, routines and activities and how a students strengths and needs impact these



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## Intervention

- Should not be the same for everyone
- May include:
  - Direct
  - Group
  - Push-in
  - Consultation
  - Collaboration



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## School-based Occupational Therapists demonstrate leadership, advocacy, and collaborative and ethical practice.

- **Element a. Leadership.** School-based Occupational Therapists support and promote high professional standards for themselves and for their colleagues. They are knowledgeable of and actively implement school, department, LEA, State, and professional goals and provide guidance to others in doing likewise.



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### School-based Occupational Therapists demonstrate leadership, advocacy, and collaborative and ethical practice.

- **Element c. Vision.** School-based Occupational Therapists embrace, communicate, and contribute to the strategic vision of the local district, department and assigned schools to help ensure that all students are equipped and prepared with life skills for the 21st century. School-based occupational therapists articulate core beliefs and values of the profession, department and local district. They establish standards of excellence to create a professional learning community.




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Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished	Not Demonstrated (Comment Required)
<p><b>Element c. Vision.</b> School-based Occupational Therapists embrace, communicate, and contribute to the strategic vision of the local district, department and assigned schools to help ensure that all students are equipped and prepared with life skills for the 21st century. School-based occupational therapists articulate core beliefs and values of the profession, department and local district. They establish standards of excellence to create a professional learning community.</p>				
<p><b>The Occupational Therapist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Is aware of the department/school/LEA vision that all students are prepared for the 21st century</li> <li>❑ Is aware of national professional vision, core values, and beliefs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Participates in implementing the department/school/LEA vision.</li> <li>Articulates a vision for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Students</li> <li>❑ Occupational therapy department/program</li> <li>❑ EC department</li> <li>❑ School/District</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Monitors progress toward achieving the department/school/LEA vision.</li> <li>Assists others in:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Adhering to professional standards and values.</li> <li>❑ Achieving professional goals.</li> <li>❑ Adjusts programs in order to address local trends and issues.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Participates in developing the department/school/LEA vision</li> <li>❑ Instills in others a desire to improve student outcomes.</li> <li>❑ Articulates and develops goals for the department and LEA.</li> <li>❑ Anticipates and prepares for current and future professional trends on state or national level.</li> </ul>	




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### School-based Occupational Therapists demonstrate leadership, advocacy, and collaborative and ethical practice.

- **Element d. Ethics.** School-based Occupational Therapists exhibit high ethical standards. School-based Occupational Therapists demonstrate honesty, integrity, fair treatment, and respect for others. They uphold relevant codes of ethics and standards of professional practice.




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### School-based Occupational Therapists demonstrate leadership, advocacy, and collaborative and ethical practice.

- **Element f. Supervision and Oversight.** School-based Occupational Therapists value supervision that provides support, education, monitoring of service delivery, and creates a safe forum to reflect on professional practice to positively impact student learning outcomes.




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Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished	Not Demonstrated (Comment Required)
<b>Element f. Supervision and Oversight:</b> School-based Occupational Therapists value supervision that provides support, education, monitoring of service delivery, and creates a safe forum to reflect on professional practice to positively impact student learning outcomes.				
... and				
<b>The Occupational Therapist:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Understands the importance of the supervision process.</li> <li>❑ Seeks feedback from supervisors and colleagues.</li> <li>❑ Modifies behavior based on supervisory feedback.</li> </ul>	<b>The Occupational Therapist:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Participates in the supervisory process to increase professional knowledge and skills.</li> <li>❑ Supervises and provides feedback to assigned staff, fieldwork students, and volunteers.</li> </ul>	<b>The Occupational Therapist:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Provides education and training of staff, fieldwork students, and volunteers.</li> <li>❑ Positively impacts the work of colleagues by sharing best practice strategies.</li> </ul>	<b>The Occupational Therapist:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Develops and oversees fieldwork student and/or mentoring program.</li> <li>❑ Supervises/oversees occupational therapy generated programs.</li> <li>❑ Assists other staff in identifying professional goals.</li> </ul>	




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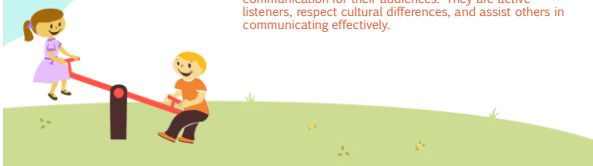
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### School-based Occupational Therapists promote a respectful environment for diverse populations

- **Element a. Communication.** School-based Occupational Therapists use language that is appropriate and easily understood by the listener, and they adapt their communication for their audiences. They are active listeners, respect cultural differences, and assist others in communicating effectively.




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## School-based Occupational Therapists promote a respectful environment for diverse populations

**Element c. Embraces diversity.** School-based Occupational Therapists recognize the influence of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, health, culture, ability, and other factors on development and personality. They adapt professional activities to reflect these differences among the students, families, and staff they serve. School-based Occupational Therapists create and encourage an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible for every student.




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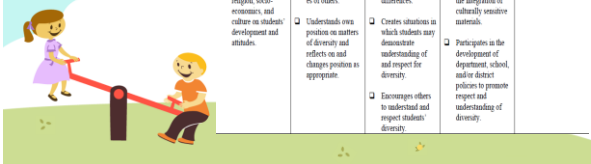
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Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished	Not Demonstrated (Element Required)
<p><b>Element c. Embraces diversity.</b> School-based Occupational Therapists recognize the influence of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, health, culture, ability, and other factors on development and personality. They adapt professional activities to reflect these differences among the students, families, and staff they serve. School-based Occupational Therapists create and encourage an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible for every student.</p>				
... and				
<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledges the influence of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic, and culture on students' development and attitudes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respects and embraces diversity perspectives of others.</li> <li>Understands one's position on matters of diversity and reflects on and changes position as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Models understanding and respect for cultural differences.</li> <li>Creates situations in which students may demonstrate understanding of and respect for diversity.</li> <li>Encourages others to understand and respect students' diversity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes a deep understanding of diversity through the integration of culturally sensitive materials.</li> <li>Participates in the development of department, school, and/or district policies to promote respect and understanding of diversity.</li> </ul>	




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## Standard 3: School-based Occupational Therapists apply the skills and knowledge of their profession within educational settings.

**Element a. Program Administration and Management.** School-based Occupational Therapists effectively structure work tasks in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements and best practice guidelines. School-based occupational therapists assume professional responsibility for safe, effective, and timely delivery of occupational therapy (OT) services; and the oversight and/or improvement of occupational therapy systems and services.




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### Standard 3: School-based Occupational Therapists apply the skills and knowledge of their profession within educational settings.

- Element **c. Work behaviors.** School-based Occupational Therapists are flexible, efficient, timely, reliable, and competent. They are engaged and responsive team members, as evidenced by adhering to deadlines, setting priorities, and setting appropriate limits. They are productive and complete assigned work with a positive attitude. They demonstrate safe, healthy, and ergonomically correct work practices.




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Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished	Not Demonstrated (Comment Required)
<p><b>Element c. Work behaviors.</b> School-based Occupational Therapists are flexible, efficient, timely, reliable and competent. They are engaged and responsive team members, as evidenced by adhering to deadlines, setting priorities, and setting appropriate limits. They are productive and complete assigned work with a positive attitude. They demonstrate safe, healthy, and ergonomically correct work practices.</p>				
... and				
<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <p>Demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Safe work practices.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A positive professional approach to the work.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Healthy and ergonomically correct work practices.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Eagerness to learn.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Completes assigned work with a positive attitude.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Is self-directed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses time and resources efficiently.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates flexibility, adaptability and agility in approach.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promotes a positive attitude in colleagues</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Is valued by peers, colleagues, and leadership as being an example of excellence with respect to attitude, skills, and professionalism.</li> </ul>	




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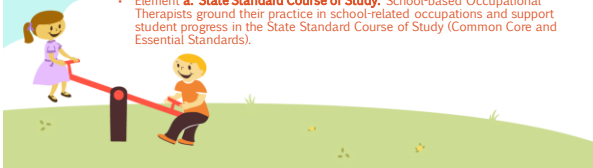
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### Standard 4: School-based Occupational Therapists facilitate student learning for optimal student performance and functional independence.

- Element **a. State Standard Course of Study.** School-based Occupational Therapists ground their practice in school-related occupations and support student progress in the State Standard Course of Study (Common Core and Essential Standards).




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### Standard 5: School-based Occupational Therapists use all available data to examine their effectiveness and to adapt and improve professional practice.

- Element b. **Outcomes.** School-based Occupational Therapists systematically and critically evaluate the effectiveness of comprehensive occupational therapy services on student performance. They collect and interpret data from a variety of sources to assess student response to intervention and progress, plan future services, and adapt practice to best meet the needs of students, staff, and families.




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Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished	Not Demonstrated (Content Rights, etc.)
<p><b>Element b. Outcomes.</b> School-based Occupational Therapists systematically and critically evaluate the effectiveness of comprehensive occupational therapy services on student performance. They collect and interpret data from a variety of sources to assess student response to intervention and progress, plan future services, and adapt practice to best meet the needs of students, staff, and families.</p>				
<p>... and</p> <p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Monitors and documents student progress.</li> <li>☐ Reports student progress to team members.</li> </ul>	<p>... and</p> <p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Evaluates effectiveness of occupational therapy services using multiple methods, and</li> <li>☐ Multiple data sources.</li> <li>☐ Selects outcome measures related to the student's ability to engage in occupation at school.</li> <li>☐ Identifies and uses progress monitoring tools.</li> </ul>	<p>... and</p> <p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Leads the collection, interpretation, and reporting of student outcome data within multi-disciplinary teams.</li> <li>☐ Synthesizes data on student progress and current research to design and deliver evidence actions.</li> </ul>	<p>... and</p> <p><b>The Occupational Therapist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Creates innovative progress monitoring tools.</li> <li>☐ Publishes or presents an efficacy study or case study in an occupational therapy text or journal.</li> </ul>	




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### How do these categories reflect your school based practice?

- What are you currently doing well?
- What might you change in your current practice as a result of reviewing this document?




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## AOTA Resources



FAQ About Practice in the Schools  
<https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Secure/Practice/Children/Member-Questions-about-Schools-20170413.pdf>

Guidance for Performance Evaluation of School Occupational Therapists  
<https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Practice/Children/Performance-Evaluation-School-based-Therapists10-31-13.pdf>

Occupational Therapy in the Schools  
<https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatsOT/CY/Fact-Sheets/School%20Settings%20fact%20sheet.pdf>

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## AOTA Resources



OT and PT State Guidelines for School Based Practice  
<https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Secure/Practice/Children/State-Guidelines-School-Based-Practice-20170513.pdf>

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## Books

- **Collaborating for Student Success: A Guide for Occupational Therapy, 2nd Edition** Edited by Barbara Hanft, MA, OTR/L, and Jayne Shepherd, MS, OTR
- **Best Practices for Occupational Therapy in Schools** Edited by Gloria Frolek Clark, PhD, OTR/L, BCP, FAOTA and Barbara E. Chandler, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA
- **Occupational Therapy Services for Children and Youth Under IDEA, 3rd Edition** Leslie L. Jackson, MEd, OT, Editor
- **Best Practices for Documenting Occupational Therapy Services in Schools** By Gloria Frolek Clark, PhD, OTR/L, SCSS, BCP, FAOTA, and Dottie Handley-More, MS, OTR/L




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CEU's – AOTA has a full series from **Best Practices for Occupational Therapy in Schools**

Also

- CE Article: Providing Collaborative and Contextual Service in School Contexts and Environments



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Questions?

Add a Slide Title  
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Donna Case PhD OTL  
casedo@northvilleschools.org



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