

## Occupational Therapy Services

### Frequently Asked Questions

(continued)

Outpatient OT is broader in scope and addresses people of all ages focusing on gaining independence with activities of daily living at home and in the community.

***My child has a prescription for occupational therapy. Can he/she get services at school?***

A diagnosis or referral made by a physician does not guarantee OT services within the school setting. A student must meet eligibility requirements for OT at school. If a student meets the criteria, the amount and frequency of service will be determined by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team. If there is no impact on accessing and progressing in the educational curriculum, OT services will not be provided in the school setting.

***My son/daughter has been receiving OT services for years and now they say he/she is not eligible. Why?***

Occupational therapists design and modify students programs to meet their current needs. If a program can be established that meets a student's ongoing needs and allows them to function in the educational environment, OT services are discontinued.

## Information Resources

American Occupational Therapy Association  
[www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

Michigan Occupational Therapy Association  
[www.mi-ota.com](http://www.mi-ota.com)

Michigan Alliance of School Physical and  
Occupational therapists  
[www.maspot.org](http://www.maspot.org)



### Van Buren Intermediate School District

490 South Paw Paw Street  
Lawrence, MI 49064  
269-674-8091  
269-674-8030 FAX  
Michigan Relay Center - 800-649-3777  
[www.vbisd.org](http://www.vbisd.org)

*It is the policy of the Van Buren Intermediate School District that no discriminatory practices based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, marital status, disability, genetic information or any other status covered by federal, state, or local law be allowed during any program, activity, service, or in employment. Inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies should be directed to the Director of Finance & Operations or Building Principals, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064, 269-674-8091*

Van Buren Intermediate  
School District

Providing Educational  
Services For A Better  
Tomorrow

# Occupational Therapy Services

in the school setting



# Occupational Therapy Services

## What is an Occupational Therapist?

The goal of school-based occupational therapy can be defined as follows:

1. Supporting directly a student's access to educational activities and the school environment;
2. Collaborating with teachers and others to improve a student's participation and performance in curriculum-based activities identified by the teacher;
3. Educating teachers, family members, and others about the impacts of disability on educational performance, the potential benefits of adaptations or accommodations, and how to request support from related service professionals.



## Occupational Therapy and IDEA 2004

School based occupational therapy is a related service to special education. Within public schools occupational therapy is governed by federal and state special education law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004.

In a school environment, a child's occupation is defined as any of the tasks or activities they must perform or complete in order to be a successful student within the school environment.

School-based OT's help students with various types of disabilities function in the school setting most efficiently, access the educational services, and benefit from their special education programs.

OT's may recommend environmental modifications and assistive technology in order to remove any barriers to learning and to ensure that the students with disabilities can access the educational environment most efficiently.

## Who is Eligible for Occupational Therapy Services?

Students who are eligible for special education services may receive OT as a related service following an occupational therapy evaluation and determination of need.

## How is Eligibility Determined?

OTs perform evaluations to assist the diagnostic team in determining special education eligibility as well as qualification for occupational therapy services. Therapists use standardized testing, functional assessments, and observation to determine a student's ability to access and participate in the educational curriculum.

## Frequently Asked Questions

***What is the difference between school-based occupational therapy and services received in an outpatient/medical setting?***

School-based OT is limited to addressing the obstacles interfering with attaining academic goals. The service enhances the student's ability to learn and function at school.