

September 2023

Occupational Therapy

Service Delivery Model



Who are Occupational Therapists?

Occupational therapists (OTs) are regulated health professionals who deal specifically with human occupation, or the activities that a person engages in because of the meaning the activity has to that person. In schools, occupational therapists work with the school team to understand students, with a focus on needs and abilities in self-care, productivity and leisure tasks. They look at physical (including sensory and motor domains), developmental, and emotional aspects of students. They then work with educators to use this knowledge to ensure educational plans are safe, appropriate and challenging enough that each student has a chance to achieve an optimal level of development in school. OTs may provide expert advice with regards to: facilitating safe and accessible environments; tools; adaptations to tasks; and ways of relating with and physically handling students, where this is a part of the student's school day.

What Will the Occupational Therapist Do?

In our Collaborative Team Model, OTs work in collaboration the school team with an emphasis on capacity building in providing student supports. The OT will provide education and resources to teachers and parents about how children typically develop, how atypical developmental paths may affect learning, what sorts of accommodations can be reasonably provided, and sometimes how to access needed supports that may help with issues that are also available in the home.

Specific types of supports offered by OTs are detailed below:

Consultation

OTs will often be asked for their input within the Collaborative Team as to possible changes or accommodations within the following areas:

1. School Spaces (safe, accessible, supporting full inclusion)
2. Equipment and Resources (safe, maintained, effective, and supporting the education plan)
3. Student's Education Plan and Goals (safe, realistic based on actual student abilities and needs, sustainable at the home school)
4. Relationships (safe, dignified, supportive of student empowerment and independence, attachment-focused, least restrictive methods possible where physical handling is necessary, supporting an education plan)

Capacity-Building Coaching

Some students require accommodations in spaces, tools, plan, or methods of relating that are unfamiliar to the educators in that student's school team. Where this requires specialized skill building on the part of the education team, OTs may be asked to provide intensive coaching to specific staff members so that student needs are met with the highest level of safety and respect, and taking into account their developmental needs and next steps.

Professional Development

Supporting inclusion is a team effort. OTs have specialized knowledge in normal development, particularly of sensory, motor, and relational domains, and how these impact learning. Some types of problem-solving are broadly applicable and so OTs may occasionally provide professional development to groups of teachers dealing with similar problems in inclusive education.

Assessment

OTs may be asked to observe a student, take part in regular educational activities with education providers and the student, or even interact with the student directly in order to better understand how the student is dealing with the challenges of school. The OT may want to access health care records or information from health care providers, with parent consent, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the student's needs. The OT may also provide standardized or one on one assessments (again, with parent consent) to obtain specific information that may help in creating a realistic but challenging education plan.

How to access the support of an Occupational Therapist?

When a classroom teacher has identified a student or a group of students whose needs are not being met, despite adaptations and differentiation strategies implemented by the teacher with the support of the school's Inclusive Education Coach (IEC), the following process should be followed to access possible OT supports:

1. Classroom teacher consults with the school's IEC to confirm that initial adaptations and differentiation strategies are not having the desired effects on student growth.
2. IEC consults with their Intensive Supports Consultant to summarize current situation, provide history of adaptations and accommodations and explore options for supports.
3. Intensive Supports Consultant consults with their Intensive Supports Coach and OT to determine what supports can be directed to the school team.
4. Intensive Supports Coach and/or OT connects with the school team to begin consultations and determine next steps in the provision of support for the student(s)

Parental Consent Requirements

Implied Consent

Upon registering a child in a SRPSD school, parents are providing implied consent for supports and services that are offered by our team of educational professionals, including occupational therapists, to support the classroom teacher in providing universal strategies that are of benefit to all students in the classroom. This type of support does not have any interaction between the OT and an individual student.

Informed Consent

Informed consent, as confirmed by a signed [Consent form for OT services](#), is required by a parent or legal guardian for the following types of OT services:

- Modelling of strategies with an individual student or a targeted group of students;
- Formal assessment of an individual student; or
- Direct services and supports provided by the OT to an individual student or a targeted group of students.

SRPSD Occupational Therapists (Contracted Services)

	Currently Recruiting Vacant Position	PreK – Grade 3 Supports
		All Schools
	Currently Recruiting Vacant Position	Grades 4 to 12 Supports
		All Schools
	Kelly Van der Merwe KVandermerwe@srsd119.ca	Complex Mobility Supports
		All Schools

Other Documents Associated With OT Service Delivery Model:

Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division Documents

- [SRPSD Lifts and Transfers Manual](#)
- [SRPSD Feeding Tube Manual](#)
- [Occupational Therapy Consent Form](#)
- [SRPSD Inclusive Education: IEC Orientation Manual](#)

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education Documents

- [Inclusive Education \(2021\)](#)
- [Inclusive Education: A Guide for Classroom Teachers](#)
- [Inclusive Education: A Guide for Inclusive Education Coaches](#)
- [Inclusive Education: A Guide for School-Based Leaders](#)
- [The Adaptive Dimension](#)
- [Inclusion and Intervention Plan Guidelines](#)

Saskatchewan Society of Occupational Therapists

- [Use of Weighted Items – Position Statement](#)

References

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