

## Occupational & Physical Therapy

Occupational therapy and physical therapy should be identified as a resource only when the therapist's unique expertise is needed to support a student who is eligible to receive special education services to meet their individualized goals. Identified needs and goals for a student should be identified prior to the IEP team's determination of what therapy is needed.

School-based occupational therapy and physical therapy help define student's strengths, needs, and their impact on school performance. The occupational and physical therapists work in collaboration with the student, general education team and special education team, which includes the student's legal guardian. Services may be provided directly to the student or in consultation on behalf of the student as determined by the IEP team.



For additional information related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: [www.IDEA.gov](http://www.IDEA.gov)

For additional information on the Exceptional Children's Education Act of Colorado: [www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us)

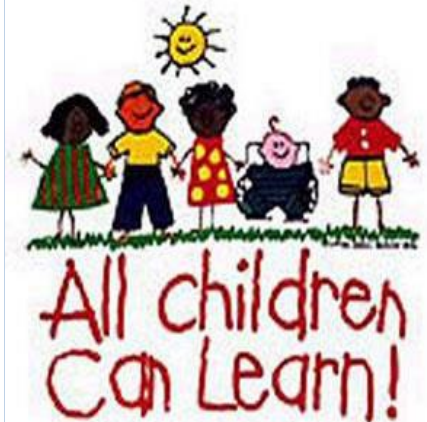
For additional information on Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy, visit the Colorado Department of Education website: [www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/rs-main](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/rs-main)

State of Colorado

Department of Education  
Revised March 2014

Colorado Department of Education  
Exceptional Student Services  
1560 Broadway, Suite 1175  
Denver, Colorado 80202

## Colorado School-Based Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy



# Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and IDEA 2004

## Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy under 504

The Individuals with Disabilities Act, also known as “IDEA,” is a federal law, with state education agency oversight, that supports the provision of public education for all children, regardless of the nature or severity of their disability.

Part B of IDEA mandates the education of children, 3-21 years old, who have a disability that interferes with their educational performance and their ability to benefit from their educational program. The law guarantees provision of special education and related services, as necessary, to meet the unique needs of each child.

IDEA defines the process by which children are identified as having a disability. The process includes referrals, consents, evaluation, and if appropriate, eligibility determination for special education, and the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

School-based occupational therapy and physical therapy is considered a related service under Part B of IDEA that may be provided to support a student’s IEP. Occupational and physical therapy within the public school system are governed by federal and state special education law, which includes IDEA and Colorado’s Exceptional Children’s Education Act (ECEA).

A student with an IEP is eligible to receive a related service such as occupational therapy and physical therapy if that student requires the related service in order to benefit from their special education programming.

For more information about school - based physical therapy and occupational therapy services please contact your local school district special education department.

Occupational and physical therapy services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibit discrimination based on disability for any program receiving federal funds. Students with disabilities who do not qualify for special education and related services under IDEA may qualify for accommodations under Section 504.

Occupational and physical therapists may be part of the team that determines a student’s eligibility under Section 504 and aid in the development of a student’s 504 plan to ensure access to the school environment.