Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Special Services Providers: School Occupational Therapists

**QUALITY STANDARD I**
Special Services Providers demonstrate mastery of and expertise in the domain for which they are responsible.

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**ELEMENT A:** Special Services Providers provide services aligned with state and federal laws, local policies and procedures, Colorado Academic Standards, their district’s organized plans of instruction and the individual needs of their students.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Is aware of standards, regulations, and laws that impact therapy practice in the educational setting.
2. Understands the role and responsibilities of the School Occupational Therapist in the education system.
3. Manages and delivers services in accordance with state, federal, and local plans and procedures and the needs of students.
4. Complies with timelines for state, federal, and local policies related to documentation and communication.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

. . . and

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

. . . and

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**

. . . and

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**

. . . and

**SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**

6. Consult with the School Occupational Therapist as a resource regarding state and federal laws and local policies and procedures.

**ELEMENT B:** Special Services Providers demonstrate knowledge of effective services that reduce barriers to and support learning.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Identifies potential barriers to student participation in academic and non-academic content areas.
2. Develops and provides interventions and strategies to reduce barriers and increase student participation.
3. Collaborates with others to reduce barriers and increase student participation.
4. Participate in the educational environment at their developmental level as a result of a reduction of barriers to learning.

**STUDENTS:**

. . . and

**SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**

5. Consult with the School Occupational Therapist to reduce barriers to and support student participation.
**QUALITY STANDARD I**  
Special Services Providers demonstrate mastery of and expertise in the domain for which they are responsible.

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**ELEMENT C:** Special Services Providers demonstrate knowledge of their professions and integrate evidence-based practices and research findings into their services.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

1. Identifies sources of evidence-based practices to obtain relevant current research.
2. Remains current on evidence-based practices to provide services to meet student needs.
3. Designs and implements evidence-based interventions to meet the individual needs of students.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

4. Use learned skills in structured settings with support from significant adult(s) to improve participation.

**STUDENTS:**

5. Generalize learned skills to a variety of school and community environments.
QUALITY STANDARD II
Special Services Providers support or establish safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments for a diverse population of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element A: Special Services Providers foster a safe, accessible, and predictable learning environment characterized by acceptable student behavior and efficient use of time in which each student has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults and peers.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Articulates the importance of a safe, accessible environment in which students experience a caring relationship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Provides expectations and rules that guide student behavior.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Collaborates to promote the safety of students, staff, and self in all interactions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Delivers supports and/or services in a way that maximizes classroom learning time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Uses a continuum of service delivery options to support students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Modifies services in response to student needs.</td>
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<td>7. Access the school environment using identified supports and/or activity and environmental modifications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Consult with the School Occupational Therapist to maintain a safe and accessible environment for students in all settings.</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Element B: Special Services Providers understand and respond to diversity within the home, school, and community.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Identifies individual differences, cultural beliefs, customs, and their influence on occupation and participation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Considers individual differences, cultural beliefs, customs, and their influence on occupation and participation when planning occupational therapy services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Implements services that honor individual differences, cultural beliefs, customs, and their influence on occupation and participation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Recognize diversity among others and the influences of student and family backgrounds, cultures, and experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Demonstrate respect for the backgrounds, cultures, and experiences of others in the school setting.</td>
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### QUALITY STANDARD II
Special Services Providers support or establish safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments for a diverse population of students.

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#### ELEMENT C: Special Services Providers engage students as individuals with diverse needs and interests, across a range of ability levels by adapting services for the benefit of students.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

1. Identifies each student’s strengths, interests, and needs.

2. Collaborates with the team to establish priorities and goals based on student strengths, interests, and needs.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

3. Collaborates with the team to design and modify interventions to reflect student strengths, interests, and needs.

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**

4. Understand the importance of student strengths, interests, and needs.

5. Advocate for supports based on strengths, interests, and needs of the student.

#### ELEMENT D: Special Services Providers work collaboratively with the families and/or significant adults for the benefit of students.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

1. Recognizes the value of building relationships with students, families, and significant adults.

2. Establishes effective relationships with students, families, and significant adults.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**

3. Uses a variety of methods to communicate with students, families, and other significant adults to promote sharing of pertinent information.

4. Educates others about disability awareness and the importance of inclusion.

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**

5. Communicate pertinent information (medical, home, and community) with the School Occupational Therapist that may impact student participation across all educational activities.

6. Seek the School Occupational Therapist as a resource to support student needs.
QUALITY STANDARD III
Special Services Providers plan and deliver effective services in an environment that facilitates learning for their students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element A: Special Services Providers apply knowledge of the ways in which learning takes place, including the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of their students.</th>
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<td>1. Understands the relevance of child development to their work.</td>
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<td>2. Plans services with an understanding of the School Occupational Therapist’s distinct contribution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Applies knowledge of child development across multiple domains to support student access and participation in the school environment.</td>
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<td>4. Understand the School Occupational Therapist’s unique role in helping students to access and participate in their school environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Understand information provided by the School Occupational Therapist related to the student’s developmental trajectory.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Identifies multiple forms of informal and formal assessment related to occupational performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Utilizes multiple forms of assessment (informal and/or formal) related to occupational performance to inform intervention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Accurately interprets and communicates evaluation findings with student, family, and school team members.</td>
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<td>4. Uses clinical reasoning skills to develop intervention(s) informed by evaluation results.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Contribute pertinent information to the evaluation process.</td>
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<td>6. Demonstrate an awareness of how system level data can inform decisions.</td>
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**Level 1 Practices** | **Level 2 Practices** | **Level 3 Practices (Meets State Standard)** | **Level 4 Practices** | **Level 5 Practices**
**QUALITY STANDARD III**
Special Services Providers plan and deliver effective services in an environment that facilitates learning for their students.

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**ELEMENT C:** Special Services Providers integrate and utilize appropriate available technology to engage students in authentic learning experiences.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Is aware of appropriate available technology supports as determined by the educational team.
2. Supports the use of appropriate available technology to maximize student outcomes.
3. Selects, recommends, and/or trains teachers to use assistive technology to support student participation in the educational setting.
4. Express preferences for appropriate available assistive technology.
5. Use appropriate available assistive technology to support their learning and participation in the classroom.

**ELEMENT D:** Special Services Providers establish and communicate high expectations and use strategies to support the development of critical-thinking, problem-solving skills, and self-advocacy.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Understands the importance of having high expectations for all students.
2. Communicates high expectations for all students.
3. Collaborates to develop rigorous goals for student outcomes based on student, family, and team priorities.
4. Collaborates with the team to choose activities that provide the student with an appropriate level of challenge.
5. Provides opportunities for students to practice self-advocacy and/or problem solving during functional tasks.
6. Consult with the School Occupational Therapist on strategies to promote problem-solving and self-advocacy during functional tasks.
7. Demonstrate problem-solving and self-advocacy skills to improve participation with support from significant adults.
QUALITY STANDARD III
Special Services Providers plan and deliver effective services in an environment that facilitates learning for their students.

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**ELEMENT E:** Special Services Providers develop and implement services related to student needs, learning, and progress towards goals.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Maintains student data and/or documentation to plan services.
2. Identifies potential intervention strategies effective for the environment.

... and **THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
3. Conducts task analysis to support the skills needed for a student to engage in an activity.
4. Selects intervention(s) that support(s) student’s engagement in the least restrictive environment.

... and **THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
5. Monitors effectiveness of intervention and modifies as needed to improve student outcomes across school environment.

... and **STUDENTS:**
6. Actively engage in meaningful and challenging activities in the classroom based on their skill level and interests.

... and **SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**
7. Integrate the School Occupational Therapist’s recommendations to provide practice opportunities and progress towards goals.

**ELEMENT F:** Special Services Providers model and promote effective communication.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Uses effective communication skills with students.
2. Recognizes the importance of respectful and effective written (informal and formal) and oral communication.

... and **THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
3. Builds rapport with students and provides positive feedback to student on performance.
4. Selects and uses a variety of communication strategies based on situational needs.

... and **THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
5. Modifies communication based on student, emotional and ability level, and to be culturally relevant.
6. Writes plans that are concise and meaningfully linked to student strengths and needs.

... and **STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**
7. Engage in dialogue and/or collaboration related to student strengths and needs.

... and **STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULT(S):**
8. Understand and follow written and oral instructions to maximize student outcomes.
QUALITY STANDARD IV
Special Services Providers demonstrate professionalism through ethical conduct, reflection, and leadership.

|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**ELEMENT A:** Special Services Providers demonstrate high standards for ethical and professional conduct.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Is familiar with American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Code of Ethics.
2. Demonstrates emerging skills related to AOTA Code of Ethics.
3. Accepts responsibility for actions and decisions that affect student outcomes.
4. Upholds ethical standards of practice as defined by the AOTA Code of Ethics and applicable state laws and regulations.
5. Models ethical standards of practice within the working environment.
6. Promotes ethical standards of practice within school, department and/or district teams.

**ELEMENT B:** Special Services Providers link professional growth to their professional goals.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Uses performance feedback from supervisor and/or colleagues to improve practice.
2. Completes required professional development according to state and/or district/BOCES policies.
3. Participates in professional development opportunities that support professional learning plan.
4. Develops and implements a professional learning plan that builds on strengths and addresses areas of professional growth.
5. Applies newly learned knowledge and skills to decision-making about professional growth and goals.
6. Establishes continuous improvement strategies, including seeking feedback from colleagues, and/or supervisors, to identify and self-monitor professional growth.
QUALITY STANDARD IV
Special Services Providers demonstrate professionalism through ethical conduct, reflection, and leadership.

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**ELEMENT C:** Special Services Providers respond to a complex, dynamic environment.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Is aware of the complexity and dynamic nature of the educational environment.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
2. Actively seeks professional guidance and/or resources to prioritize competing demands within their work environment.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
3. Demonstrates flexibility, priority setting, and effective time management strategies.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
4. Aligns priorities of student, teacher, and other significant adult(s) and makes adjustments to meet student’s needs.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
5. Acts as an agent of change for the department and/or school district.

**ELEMENT D:** Special Services Providers demonstrate leadership and advocacy in the school, the community, and their profession.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
1. Identifies steps for advocating for students.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
2. Actively supports disability awareness at the school and district level.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
3. Assists school staff with identifying appropriate occupational therapy referrals.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
4. Makes contributions from an occupational therapy perspective to school or district teams.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
5. Proposes or implements educational programs for department and/or school staff which advocate for the needs of students.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
6. Provides leadership to school-based teams in order to maximize the skills and knowledge of colleagues.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
7. Shares knowledge through mentorship of colleagues.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
8. Assists staff with interpretation of regulations and policies that impact school-based occupational therapy.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
9. Advocates for inclusion in administrative decision-making to improve access and student outcomes.

**THE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:**
10. Assumes additional duties and/or leadership roles that elevates the occupational therapy profession.