Rubric for Evaluating Colorado’s Specialized Service Professionals:
Physical Therapist Simulation

Definition of an Effective Physical Therapist

Effective school physical therapists are vital members of the education team. They are properly credentialed and provide professional expertise in the areas of mobility skills, postural and positioning, gross motor skills, self-help skills and foundational recreational skills for age-appropriate play. Effective physical therapists strive to support growth and development in the least restrictive environment, close achievement gaps and prepare diverse student populations for postsecondary and workforce success. Effective physical therapists facilitate achievement of student goals by implementing a plan of care that utilizes evidenced-based evaluation methods and intervention strategies. They design interventions to promote skill acquisition, accessibility within the school environment and participation in typical activities and routines. They understand the interconnectedness of the home, school and community and collaborate with all members of the education team to facilitate meaningful student participation. Through reflection, advocacy and leadership, effective physical therapists enhance the academic achievement and personal/social development of their students.

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<th>QUALITY STANDARD I</th>
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<td>Physical therapists demonstrate mastery of and expertise in the domain for which they are responsible.</td>
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<td><strong>ELEMENT A:</strong> Physical therapists demonstrate knowledge of current developmental science, the ways in which learning takes place and the appropriate levels of intellectual, social and emotional development of their students.</td>
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**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
✓ Identifies developmental motor milestones and their relation to learning.

... and

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
✓ Implements developmentally appropriate strategies based on strengths and needs of individual students.

... and

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
✓ Applies knowledge of intellectual, social and emotional development to ensure student access and participation in the school environment.

... and

**SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
☐ Understand the impact of motor delays for students regarding mobility, safety and school participation.

... and

**STUDENTS:**
☐ Actively participate in the school environment with the support of significant adults with consideration of their skills and abilities.

**ELEMENT B:** Physical therapists demonstrate knowledge of effective services and/or specially designed instruction that reduce barriers to and support learning in literacy, math and other content areas.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
✓ Understands connections between physical therapy and the student’s ability to learn.

... and

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
✓ Provides therapeutic interventions or adaptive technologies to reduce barriers to learning.

... and

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
✓ Collaborates with others to reduce barriers to learning and support student growth.

... and

**STUDENTS:**
☐ Practice in a structured setting using strategies to reduce or address barriers.

... and

**STUDENTS:**
☐ Are supported in academic learning as a result of reduction of identified barriers.
**QUALITY STANDARD I**
Physical therapists demonstrate mastery of and expertise in the domain for which they are responsible.

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**ELEMENT C:** Physical therapists integrate evidence-based practices and research findings into their services and/or specially designed instruction.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Identifies sources of evidence-based practices to obtain relevant current research.
- Remains current on evidence-based practices to provide services to meet student needs.
- Implements evidence-based strategies to meet the individual needs of students.

**STUDENTS:**
- Use learned skills in structured settings with support from significant adults.
- Generalize learned skills to a variety of school environments with support from significant adults.

**ELEMENT D:** Physical therapists demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of home, school and community influences on student achievement.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Is aware of the interconnectedness of home, school and community and its impact on student learning.
- Utilizes student, family and staff priorities and knowledge of their interconnectedness to develop the plan of care.
- Provides resources and strategies to promote improved student participation in the home, school and community.

**STUDENTS:**
- Practice skills embedded in typical school activities and routines with support from staff or significant adults.
- Demonstrate improved participation as a result of the interconnectedness of home, school and community involvement in their care with support from significant adults.
QUALITY STANDARD I
Physical therapists demonstrate mastery of and expertise in the domain for which they are responsible.

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**ELEMENT E:** Physical therapists demonstrate knowledge of and expertise in their professions.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- **✓** Holds a basic professional knowledge and expertise as a physical therapist.
- **✓** Adheres to the standards of practice for physical therapy.
- **✓** Delivers services that are meaningful to the student, centered on functional skills and lead to improved student learning.

**... and**

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- **✓** Adheres to the standards of practice for physical therapy.
- **✓** Delivers services that are meaningful to the student, centered on functional skills and lead to improved student learning.

**... and**

**SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
- **☐** Support the student in activities to improve participation in school and community.

**... and**

**STUDENTS:**
- **☐** Participate in the least restrictive environment and in therapeutic interventions to positively impact their role in the school and/or community with support from significant adults.

*Evaluator Comments: (Required for Ratings of "Basic" or "Partially Proficient" and recommended for all rating levels.)*

*Comments of Person Being Evaluated: (Please indicate the element for which the comment applies if not for the standard as a whole.)*
QUALITY STANDARD II
Physical therapists support and/or establish safe, inclusive and respectful learning environments for a diverse population of students.

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**ELEMENT A:** Physical therapists foster safe and accessible learning environments in which each student has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults and peers.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- **✓** Understands the importance of a safe, accessible and caring environment for students, staff and self.
- **✓** Promotes the safety of students, staff and self in all interactions.
- **✓** Collaborates with others to improve safety and accessibility within the school environment.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- **✓** Identifies diverse perspectives of students, families and the community in designing and implementing care.
- **✓** Understands the importance of and recommends equal access to programs and facilities for all students.

**STUDENTS:**
- **✓** Express comfort with the physical care they receive from significant adults using verbal and/or nonverbal methods.
- **✓** Safely access the school environment using identified supports and/or activity and environmental modifications with assistance from significant adults as needed.

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
- **✓** Express informed preferences for methods of inclusion.

**ELEMENT B:** Physical therapists demonstrate respect for diversity within the home, school and local and global communities.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- **✓** Identifies diverse perspectives of students, families and the community in designing and implementing care.
- **✓** Understands the importance of and recommends equal access to programs and facilities for all students.
- **✓** Educates others about disability awareness and the importance of inclusion.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- **✓** Identifies diverse perspectives of students, families and the community in designing and implementing care.
- **✓** Understands the importance of and recommends equal access to programs and facilities for all students.

**STUDENTS AND SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
- **✓** Express informed preferences for methods of inclusion.
- **✓** Facilitate student participation in educational opportunities with their peers with support.
### QUALITY STANDARD II
Physical therapists support and/or establish safe, inclusive and respectful learning environments for a diverse population of students.

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**ELEMENT C:** Physical therapists engage students as unique individuals with diverse backgrounds, interests, strengths and needs.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Identifies unique student interests, strengths and needs.
- Establishes priorities and goals based on unique student interests, strengths and needs.
- Designs and modifies interventions to reflect unique student interests, strengths and needs.
- Uses a variety of methods to communicate with students, families and significant adults to promote sharing of pertinent information.
- Understand the importance of students’ unique interests, strengths and needs in achieving goals.

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
- Understand the importance of students’ unique interests, strengths and needs in achieving goals.
- Willingly share information that may impact student participation.
- Indicate preferences and/or make choices regarding functional activities.

**ELEMENT D:** Physical therapists engage in proactive, clear and constructive communication and work collaboratively with students, families and other significant adults and/or professionals.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Recognizes the value of building relationships with students, families and significant adults.
- Establishes respectful relationships with students, families and significant adults.
- Uses a variety of methods to communicate with students, families and significant adults to promote sharing of pertinent information.
- Willingly share information that may impact student participation.
- Indicate preferences and/or make choices regarding functional activities.
QUALITY STANDARD II
Physical therapists support and/or establish safe, inclusive and respectful learning environments for a diverse population of students.

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**ELEMENT E:** Physical therapists select, create and/or support accessible learning environments characterized by acceptable student behavior, efficient use of time and appropriate behavioral strategies.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Recognizes the need for rules to guide student behavior in the therapeutic setting.
- Establishes acceptable student behavior that will improve access to the learning environment and efficient use of time.
- Implements effective strategies to promote student engagement in functional activities and/or therapy sessions.

**STUDENTS:**
- Abide by established rules during functional activities and/or therapy sessions.
- Demonstrate behaviors that positively contribute to functional activities and accomplishing their goals with support from significant adults.

Evaluator Comments: (Required for Ratings of "Basic" or "Partially Proficient" and recommended for all rating levels.)

Comments of Person Being Evaluated: (Please indicate the element for which the comment applies if not for the standard as a whole.)
QUALITY STANDARD III
Physical therapists plan, deliver and/or monitor services and/or specially designed instruction and/or create environments that facilitate learning for their students.

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**ELEMENT A:** Physical therapists provide services and/or specially designed instruction aligned with state and federal laws, regulations and procedures, academic standards, their districts’ organized plans of instruction and the individual needs of their students.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- ✔ Understands the responsibilities of the physical therapist in the education system.
- ✔ Demonstrates knowledge of relevant organizational requirements.
- ✔ Meets required timelines for documentation and communication.
- ☐ Assists colleagues in understanding and applying the state and federal laws and local plans and procedures.

... and

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- ✔ Manages and delivers services in accordance with federal, state and local plans and procedures and the needs of students.
- ✔ Actively engage in physical therapy services to access educational opportunities.

... and

**STUDENTS:**
- ✔ Participate in the least restrictive environment with support from significant adults.
QUALITY STANDARD III
Physical therapists plan, deliver and/or monitor services and/or specially designed instruction and/or create environments that facilitate learning for their students.

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<td><strong>ELEMENT B:</strong> Physical therapists utilize multiple sources of data, which include valid informal and/or formal assessments, to inform services and/or specially designed instruction.</td>
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| **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | |
| ✓ Identifies valid formal and informal assessment tools to inform practice. | . . . and **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:** ✓ Uses multiple assessments from formal and informal sources to determine participation level, limitations and personal and environmental limiting factors. | . . . and **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:** ✓ Collaborates with team to guide services, goal development and intervention. ✓ Recognizes student needs that require referral to another professional. | . . . and **STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:** ☐ Contribute pertinent information to the evaluation process in order to guide program planning. | . . . and **STUDENTS:** ✓ Are fully and actively engaged in the assessment process. |

| **ELEMENT C:** Physical therapists plan and consistently deliver services and/or specially designed instruction that integrate multiple sources of data to inform practices related to student needs, learning and progress toward achieving academic standards and individualized student goals. | | | | |

| **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | |
| ✓ Identifies intervention strategies based on explicit outcomes. | . . . and **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:** ✓ Determines method of intervention strategies based on student needs. ✓ Employs a variety of intervention strategies to achieve student outcomes. | . . . and **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:** ✓ Monitors effectiveness of intervention and modifies as needed to improve student performance. ✓ Plans and prepares students for transitions into school and community. | . . . and **STUDENTS:** ✓ Participate in challenging activities based on skill level and interest. ✓ Demonstrate progress towards student goals. | |
## QUALITY STANDARD III
Physical therapists plan, deliver and/or monitor services and/or specially designed instruction and/or create environments that facilitate learning for their students.

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### ELEMENT D: Physical therapists support and integrate appropriate available technology in their services and/or specially designed instruction to maximize student outcomes.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
-✔️ Identifies benefits of assistive technology or adaptive equipment to improve functional independence.
-✔️ Recommends assistive technology or adaptive equipment to facilitate student participation.
-✔️ Makes appropriate referrals for assistive technology needs.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
-✔️ Recommends assistive technology or adaptive equipment to facilitate student participation.
-✔️ Identifies sources for obtaining, maintaining, repairing and financing assistive technology or adaptive equipment.

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
-✔️ Express preference for assistive technology or adaptive equipment devices to improve access to the educational environment with support from significant adults.

**STUDENTS:**
-✔️ Utilize assistive technology or adaptive equipment devices to improve access to the educational environment with support from significant adults.

### ELEMENT E: Physical therapists establish and communicate high expectations for their students that support the development of critical-thinking, self-advocacy, leadership and problem solving skills.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
-✔️ Understands the importance of having high expectations for all students.
-✔️ Develops rigorous goals for student outcomes based on student, family and team priorities.
-✔️ Provides opportunities for students to practice self-advocacy and/or problem solving during functional tasks.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
-✔️ Chooses activities that provide an appropriate level of challenge.

**STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
-✔️ Are sufficiently knowledgeable to request environmental modifications or assistance for specific tasks.

**STUDENTS:**
-✔️ Demonstrate problem-solving skills to improve functional independence with support from significant adults.
**QUALITY STANDARD III**
Physical therapists plan, deliver and/or monitor services and/or specially designed instruction and/or create environments that facilitate learning for their students.

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**ELEMENT F:** Physical therapists communicate effectively with students.

- **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
  - Recognizes the importance of a respectful and sensitive approach towards students to enhance communications.

- **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
  - Selects communication strategies including verbal, non-verbal and/or physical cues based on student needs.

- **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
  - Listens effectively and allows time for responses and discussion.

- **STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
  - Understand written or oral instructions to assist in functional and/or therapeutic activities.

- **STUDENTS:**
  - Follow written, oral or other forms of communication to complete functional and/or therapeutic activities in a structured setting with support from significant adults.

**ELEMENT G:** Physical therapists develop and/or implement services and/or specially designed instruction unique to their professions.

- **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
  - Understands task analysis in order to improve a student’s access to education.

- **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
  - Performs an acceptable task analysis or ecological assessment to inform planning and implementation of services.

- **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
  - Identifies barriers to accessing the educational environment using task analyses or ecological assessments and provides strategies to improve access.

- **STUDENTS AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ADULTS:**
  - Integrate recommendations to improve accessibility in the school environment.

- **STUDENTS:**
  - Experience improved participation through implementation of recommended strategies.

**Evaluator Comments:**
(Required for Ratings of "Basic" or "Partially Proficient" and recommended for all rating levels.)

**Comments of Person Being Evaluated:**
(Please indicate the element for which the comment applies if not for the standard as a whole.)
## QUALITY STANDARD IV
Physical therapists reflect on their practice.

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**ELEMENT A:** Physical therapists demonstrate that they analyze student learning, development and growth and apply what they learn to improve their practice.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Identifies methods and tools to collect student data to inform practice.
- Collects and compiles student data on learning, development and growth to inform practice.
- Analyzes and interprets student data to determine the effect of physical therapy intervention on student outcomes.
- Collaborates with others regarding student performance in multiple school settings to determine effects of physical therapy intervention.
- Reflects on the adequacy of the data to inform practice and seeks and uses other information sources as necessary.

**ELEMENT B:** Physical therapists link professional growth to their professional goals.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Uses performance feedback to improve practice.
- Identifies areas of needed growth and learns new skills to improve professional practices.
- Engages in evidence-based professional development activities that address student needs and meet professional goals.
- Applies newly learned knowledge and skills to decision-making about professional growth and goals.
- Develops and follows a professional development plan.
QUALITY STANDARD IV
Physical therapists reflect on their practice.

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**ELEMENT C:** Physical therapists respond to complex, dynamic environments.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Considers the larger learning environment when providing required services documented in the IEP/504.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Understands the nature of the larger environmental context in which services are provided.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Demonstrates flexibility and adjusts priorities based on changing student and team needs.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Collects and disseminates information about changes in the environment for team use in decision-making.

**THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST:**
- Is aware of and responds to changing conditions at the national, state, or local level in order to provide effective services.

Evaluator Comments: (Required for Ratings of “Basic” or “Partially Proficient” and recommended for all rating levels.)

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**QUALITY STANDARD V**
Physical therapists demonstrate collaboration, advocacy and leadership.

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**ELEMENT A:** Physical therapists collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to meet the needs of students.

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<td>✓ Understands the importance of collaboration to meet student needs.</td>
<td>✓ Initiates dialogue with colleagues to exchange professional perspectives.</td>
<td>✓ Establishes and maintains an ongoing collaborative relationship with students to meet individual needs.</td>
<td>□ Collaborates with significant adults to support students, families and significant adults.</td>
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**ELEMENT B:** Physical therapists advocate for students, families and schools.

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<td>✓ Identifies student, family and school needs.</td>
<td>✓ Contributes to teams that advocate for student outcomes.</td>
<td>□ Advocates for changes related to the physical therapy department and/or district policies that will promote student outcomes.</td>
<td>□ Connects students, families and significant adults to school and community resources based on student needs.</td>
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**ELEMENT C:** Physical therapists demonstrate leadership in their educational setting(s).

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<td>✓ Recognizes opportunities to develop leadership skills.</td>
<td>✓ Implements established physical therapy program practices to promote professionalism considering school specific priorities.</td>
<td>✓ Assists school staff in identifying appropriate physical therapy referrals.</td>
<td>□ Supervises and evaluates the implementation of physical therapy services within the school and/or district.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Provides expertise to develop information resources and support safe student evacuation and injury prevention.</td>
<td>□ Seeks physical therapist inclusion in decision making and educational reform based on expertise and knowledge of student, school and district needs.</td>
<td>□ Collaborates with community resources to support students, families and significant adults.</td>
<td>□ Confers with administrators to recommend practices to promote accessibility and reasonable accommodations in the school environment.</td>
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### QUALITY STANDARD V
Physical therapists demonstrate collaboration, advocacy and leadership.

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**ELEMENT D:** Physical therapists contribute knowledge and skills to educational practices and their profession.

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<tr>
<td>✓ Shares knowledge and skills with other staff.</td>
<td>✓ Implements effective consultative strategies.</td>
<td>✓ Conducts professional development sessions for staff, students and families to support their involvement in therapy.</td>
<td>Develops program practices to promote professionalism and guide physical therapy services.</td>
<td>Participates in professional meetings to further physical therapy practice.</td>
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**ELEMENT E:** Physical therapists demonstrate high ethical standards.

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<td>✓ Maintains confidentiality of student information as required by law.</td>
<td>✓ Demonstrates ethical behavior, including honesty, integrity, fair treatment and respect for others.</td>
<td>✓ Upholds ethical standards of practice as defined by the American Physical Therapy Association Code of Ethics and applicable state laws and regulations.</td>
<td>Models ethical standards of practice within the working environment.</td>
<td>Promotes ethical standards of practice within school, department and/or district teams.</td>
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**Evaluator Comments:**
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**Comments of Person Being Evaluated:**
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## S.B. 10-191 REQUIRES MULTIPLE MEASURES OF EDUCATOR PERFORMANCE MEASURED ON MULTIPLE OCCASIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

For specialized service professionals this requirement is defined as required measures and optional additional measures (evidence/artifacts). While the rubric serves as the data collection tool for observations, districts and BOCES must determine the method for collecting data regarding required measures and additional evidence/artifacts. This chart serves as a reminder of the required measures that must be discussed annually and evidence/artifacts that may be discussed at the end of the evaluation cycle to confirm the accuracy of ratings.

### SHALL BE BASED ON AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING PERFORMANCE MEASURES, WHEN APPROPRIATE TO THE SSP’S ASSIGNED DUTIES:

- Student perception measures, where appropriate and feasible
- Peer feedback
- Parent or guardian feedback
- Student support documentation

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE/ARTIFACTS:

Evaluation of professional practice may include additional measures such as those listed below. These are provided as examples of evidence the evaluator and/or educator being evaluated may share with each other to provide evidence of performance in addition to observations and evaluator ratings collected on the rubric.

- Collaborative relationships documentation
- Continuing education records
- Culturally responsive training materials
- Data collection and analysis
- Department documents
- Ecological assessment tool
- Ethical standards
- Federal, state and local laws and policies
- Formal and informal assessment tools
- IEP/IFSP/504 documentation
- Lesson plans
- Meeting minutes
- Mentorship of probationary physical therapists and/or physical therapy doctoral students
- Organizational logs/schedules
- Other documentation (home programs, classroom logs, communication logs)
- Physical therapy notes
- Physical therapy reports
- Professional development plan
- Professional development/training materials for school staff
- Professional meeting attendance records
- Progress monitoring tools
- Progress notes
- Publications/presentations
- Research articles and references
- Resources developed
- School/session rules
- Service time
- Student goals and outcomes
- Student and family inventory of needs, interests, goals
- Survey of colleagues
- Workload schedules
- Written goals and objectives