

**Eastern Illinois Area of Special Education
5837 Park Drive
Charleston, IL 61920
217-348-7700 www.eiase.com**

POSITION DESCRIPTION: Occupational Therapist

PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT:	Department of Rehabilitation Services
HOURLY/SALARY:	Salary
JOB CLASSIFICATION:	Confidential Employee
SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:	District students being served
REPORTS TO:	Program Supervisor-Rehabilitation
TERM OF EMPLOYMENT:	180 days or per individual contract

JOB SUMMARY:

The Occupational Therapist is responsible for the planning and implementation of educational occupational therapy services and clinical supervision of therapy assistants. The occupational therapist is responsible for student growth and development to enable students to benefit from their educational experience; motivate pupils to develop skills, attitudes, knowledge, and habits needed as a foundation for future learning; and must establish a good relationship with parents and with other staff members.

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS:

The occupational therapist shall:

1. Be able to communicate effectively and professionally with students, parents, teachers and the general public including persons from diverse cultural backgrounds and especially those with varying degrees of abilities including those with disabilities.
2. Be able to make involved and varied mathematical computations rapidly and accurately involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division in all units of measure, using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals. This employee must be able to calculate figures and amounts such as rates, ratios, and percentages, be able to draw and interpret graphs, and be able to work with mathematical concepts such as probability and statistical inference.
3. Be able to use reasoning ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. This employee must be able to solve complex and ambiguous problems in both predictable and unpredictable situations and be able to interpret and apply a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, diagram, or schedule form.
4. Be able to relate, understand, and communicate with others in a way that contributes to harmonious relationships and goal accomplishment. This employee must establish order,

maintain discipline, and provide a safe and nurturing environment for pupils. This employee also must be able to maintain purposeful activities in an atmosphere of mutual respect in the therapy sessions.

5. Be emotionally, mentally, and physically capable of performing the essential functions of the job. This employee must be free of any dangerous, infectious, or communicable disease that is likely to be transmitted to children or others in the course of employment. This employee must be physically and emotionally able to assist children with disabilities and others in an emergency.
6. Be dependable, honest, and trustworthy. This employee must have never been convicted of a felony or other crime involving dishonesty, alcohol, drugs, or sexual misconduct. This employee must be committed to the service of others and always act in the student's and the district's best interest.
7. Have a valid certificate of licensure, issued by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

To perform this job successfully, an individual must satisfactorily perform each of the essential job requirements listed below. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform his or her job functions. A qualified individual is a person who, with or without reasonable accommodations for his or her disability, meets the essential qualifications and can perform the essential job functions of his or her position of employment.

The occupational therapist shall:

- 1.a. Be able to read, comprehend, and apply complex, multi-step written instructions that are characteristic of textbook manuals, curriculum guides, computer programs, memos, technical manuals, and other written materials, job descriptions, work rules, special education rules and regulations, and Board of Education policies and regulations.
- 1.b. Be able to talk, listen, and understand conversations and effectively present information and respond to questions from students, staff, or the general public. This employee must be able to effectively communicate in including multidisciplinary staffings, IEP meetings, and special education due process hearings.
- 1.c. Be able to write understandable, logical, sequential, and well-organized special education reports, correspondence, IEPs, etc.
- 2.a. Possess knowledge of the role of school based occupational therapy and be able to apply occupational therapy principles of practice to solve problems and express ideas across disciplines. This employee must be able to plan, prepare, and implement occupational therapy diagnostic and intervention procedures in accordance with the IEP; and evaluate students' growth and achievement in line with IEP goals.
- 2.b. Be able to perform mathematical operations in order to calculate levels of achievement.

- 2.c. This person must be able to interpret occupational therapy standardized assessment results, including statistical data in chart or graph form, draw valid conclusions, and communicate complex statistical measurements in simple terms.
- 3.a. Closely supervise students, being especially alert and responsive in unstructured situations such as transitions between classes, etc. Be able to maintain student safety in physically challenging tasks and circumstances.
- 3.b. Implement low-profile strategies for correcting minor or major instances of misbehavior in a variety of situations.
- 3.c. Assume responsibility for the safety, well-being, and productivity of students.
- 3.d. Be prompt and thorough in completing assignments and attend to details accurately and efficiently. This employee must be flexible; able to tolerate frequent interruptions and changing demands in an active work environment. This person must be able to see the total picture and to prioritize tasks in order of importance and alter and refine plans quickly when the need arises.
- 3.e. Make reasonable and prudent judgments in regard to mandated child abuse reporting to DCFS.
- 3.f. Make reasonable and prudent administrative decisions in the absence of an administrator regarding student injuries or illness, consulting with building staff/administration in cancelling treatment in order to protect student health/safety.
- 3.g. Anticipate problems and apply knowledge in predictable and unpredictable situations. This person must be able to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions.
- 4.a. Demonstrate an approach of warmth, patience, good humor, and understanding with students and others especially those with severe social, emotional, physical, behavioral and learning disabilities.
- 4.b. Instruct students in a professional manner in the acquisition of fine motor skills.
- 4.c. Demonstrate a positive attitude, good humor, and a reasonable sense of control over situations that help convey the attitude that school can be fun and rewarding.
- 4.d. Work in a courteous, cooperative, and professional manner with co-workers and other employees, parents, and the public, continuously meeting multiple demands from several people.
- 4.e. Be attired in clothing appropriate to the position and be clean and well groomed.
- 5.a. Use vision, hearing, and other senses to instantly assess situations in regard to student's safety, observe individual student performance, and monitor student progress.
- 5.b. Be able to hear and understand conversations in an environment where the noise level is usually quiet, but occasionally moderately loud.
- 5.c. Be able to reach with hands and arms and fingers, handle or feel objects, instructional materials, tools, equipment, or controls such as, pencils and pens, telephone, technical manuals, computer keyboards, etc.
- 5.d. Be physically capable of independently lifting instructional materials and equipment weighing up to 25 lbs., repeatedly throughout the work day, and occasionally lifting

students or pushing, pulling or otherwise moving as much as 50 lbs. Be able to perform physical movements, such as bending, kneeling, and moving to and from the floor, to deliver therapy services. Carry objects of up to 15 pounds across level and uneven surfaces, indoors and outdoors.

5.e. Planning and Preparation

The occupational therapist shall demonstrate knowledge of content and pedagogy by:

- Displaying solid knowledge of important concepts in the discipline, including anatomy and physiology underlying motor skill acquisition and motor function, accurate understanding of the hierarchy of motor development and neurological principles of sensory processing, and familiarity with a wide range of effective therapy approaches.
- Using an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan to guide intervention, develop and implement therapy ensuing from IEP goals that are sequenced to facilitate learning and skill acquisition.

The occupational therapist shall demonstrate knowledge of students by:

- Understanding the active nature of student learning and creating therapeutic relationships based on current levels of development of individual students/ groups.
- Acquiring knowledge from several sources about students development and varied approaches to meet learning, knowledge and skills acquisition, special needs, interests, and cultural heritage

The occupational therapist shall plan for student assessment by:

- Preparing and utilizing occupational therapy assessment methodologies determining appropriate instruments for observation/evaluation of individual students based on known information and referral concerns.
- Administering and scoring of standardized assessments according to published guidelines and professional standards.
- Understanding and following procedures for the referral and eligibility for special education and related services in compliance with state regulation and EIASE policy.

The occupational therapist shall set therapy outcomes by:

- Utilizing results of therapy evaluations to develop realistic treatment objectives, targeting participation in the educational program as the student outcome.
- Creating outcomes that reflect rigorous and important learning in the discipline which are clearly written in the form of student learning, utilizing results of therapy evaluations to develop realistic treatment objectives.
- Developing viable methods of assessment.
- Developing outcomes that reflect different types of learning and opportunities.
- Setting expectations for outcomes which include a differentiated approach to therapy based on individual educational needs.

The occupational therapist shall demonstrate knowledge of resources by:

- Displaying awareness of resources beyond those provided by the school EIASE, including technology/Internet for supporting therapy interventions and for extending one's professional skills, and seeks out such resources.

The occupational therapist shall design coherent therapy services by:

- Preparing activities that are aligned and sequential to therapy outcomes
- Preparing activities with reasonable time allocations
- Planning evidence-based therapy interventions designed to improve independent functioning in classroom positioning, and activities of daily living (hygiene, dressing, and feeding)
- Planning evidence-based therapy interventions designed to improve independent functioning in fine and gross motor coordination, manipulation of classroom materials, and sensory processing.
- Planning evidence-based therapy interventions to designed to address recreational, and social activity needs.
- Appropriate selection, acquisition, and construction of individual materials (such as orthotics and adapted devices) as necessary to implement therapy.
- Preparing learning activities/therapy programs with differentiation for individual student's needs.
- Understanding and appropriately use direct service, monitoring, and consultative models of service delivery in planning therapy.

The occupational therapist shall plan for therapy assistants by:

- Communicating expectations to therapy assistants.
- Distinguishing and delegation of appropriate treatment procedures that may be implemented by therapy assistants. Planning and demonstrating therapy programming as appropriate to the experience and skill level of the assistant.
- Answering questions to guide performance. Maintaining telephone contact with the assistant by completing weekly schedule so therapist can be located.

Therapeutic Environment

The occupational therapist shall create an educational environment of respect and rapport by:

- Demonstrating friendliness, caring and respect in therapist- student interactions.
- Ensuring interactions are appropriate to the ages, culture, and developmental level of students
- Responding to disrespectful behavior between students.

The occupational therapist shall establish a culture for learning by:

- Holding high expectations for both learning and hard work
- Ensuring students understand their roles as learners/ partners in their therapy.

The occupational therapist shall manage therapy sessions by:

- Establishing effective routines and procedures with little loss of therapy time.
- Adequately scheduling student contacts with regard for maximizing student contact and minimizing travel.

The occupational therapist shall manage student behavior by:

- Monitoring student behavior
- Responding to student behavior consistently, respectfully, and effectively
- Collaborating with staff in developing an FBA and BIP when appropriate
- Complying with the implementation of a BIP in therapy sessions.

The occupational therapist shall organize physical space by:

- Establishing a safe environment, ensuring that the furniture and equipment selection and arrangement is appropriate to the therapy session for individual students.
- Determine appropriate positioning or classroom equipment needed to address individual needs.

The occupational therapist shall supervise therapy assistants' impact on educational environment by:

- Establishing a culture of learning, behavioral expectations, and organization of space within the classroom.
- Consistently setting a positive example for the assistant and addressing any negative issues impacting the educational/ therapy environment.

5.g. Instruction

The occupational therapist shall communicate with students by:

- Clearly communicating the instructional purpose of the activity or exercise.
- Ensuring that the explanation of the activity or exercise is scaffolded, clear, accurate and connects with students' knowledge and experience
- Ensuring that spoken and written language is clear, correct and suitable to students' ages and interests

The occupational therapist shall engage students in treatment by:

- Designing therapy sessions that are aligned with the instructional outcomes and designed to challenge student intellectual and physical engagement.
- Developing therapy sessions that have a clearly defined structure and pacing appropriate to individual needs.
- Understanding and responding to verbal and nonverbal communication expressed by the student.
- Using questions/ discussion as appropriate to facilitate student engagement.

The occupational therapist shall use assessment during therapy sessions by:

- Clearly stating target performance.
- Using assessment and observational skills regularly for evidence of positive change in performance.
- Providing feedback to students that is accurate and specific.
- Engaging some students in self-assessment as appropriate.

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The occupational therapist shall demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness by:

- Making minor adjustments to therapy when needed
- Accommodating students' questions and interests, drawing on a broad repertoire of strategies.

- Persisting in reaching students who have difficulty learning.

The occupational therapist shall supervise others assigned to implement treatment by:

- Frequently monitoring performance of therapy assistants and/or paraprofessionals assigned to implement student programming by scheduling on site supervision, telephone contact, and review of documentation.
- Provide guidance and instruction for occupational therapy assistants assigned to provide services under the occupational therapist's supervision.
- Provide in-service education to staff in support of therapy programs.

5.h. Professional Responsibilities

The occupational therapist shall reflect on therapy services by:

- Accurately assessing therapy effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved instructional outcomes
- Making specific suggestions for improvement.

The occupational therapist shall maintain accurate records by:

- Effectively establishing systems for maintaining information on student completion of short term objectives/benchmarks, student progress in therapy, and non-instructional records, such as weekly schedule, contact hours, student attendance, and third party billing.
- Submitting records in a timely manner
- Requiring all support staff to assist in data collection.

The occupational therapist shall communicate with families by:

- Providing frequent and appropriate information to families about the instructional program and student progress in a culturally sensitive manner
- Making some attempt to engage families in the therapy program by participating in parent conferences, making home visits, or serving as a resource person.

The occupational therapist shall participate in the professional community by:

- Establishing relationships with colleagues characterized by mutual support and cooperation.
- Actively participating in professional inquiry by seeking and using evidence-based interventions
- Voluntarily and substantially participating in and contributing to school events and school and EIASE projects.
- Maintaining professional relationships with medical personnel in order to coordinate treatment and determine student needs. Updating physicians regarding student status and obtaining medical consent for services for students requiring such consent.

The occupational therapist shall grow and develop professionally by:

- Seeking opportunities for professional development to enhance knowledge and skill.
- Actively engaging with colleagues and supervisors in professional conversation and feedback about practice, sharing evidenced-based practice ideas, special talents, and/or experiences cooperatively with colleagues.
- Actively participating in assisting other educators
- Seeking ways to contribute to the profession.

The occupational therapist shall show professionalism by:

- Displaying high standards of honesty, integrity and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students and the public.
- Actively ensuring that all students receive a fair opportunity to succeed
- Maintaining an open mind in team and departmental decisions.
- Complying with school and EIASE regulations.
- Accepting constructive feedback from supervisors and acting on recommendations.
- Being consistently regular and punctual in job attendance, professionally dressed, and practice good hygiene

The occupational therapist shall supervise the professionalism of therapy assistants and paraprofessionals by:

- Consistently monitoring assistant's and paraprofessional's behavior
 - Promptly addressing any unprofessional behavior displayed by an assistant or paraprofessional and reporting unprofessional behavior to the Rehabilitation Department administrator.
- 6.a. The occupational therapist shall safeguard district equipment, materials and facilities; use time and resources effectively by scheduling, completing necessary paperwork, or conferring with other professionals.
- 6.b. The occupational therapist shall respect confidentiality and restricted information such as information found in student records.
- 6.c. The occupational therapist shall be regular and punctual in job attendance.
- 6.d. The occupational therapist shall perform other duties as assigned by administration.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES:

In addition to the essential job functions as listed above, this employee shall perform such additional duties as requested by the supervisor or administrator including, but not limited to the following:

- Be physically capable of lifting loads of up to 50 lbs. independently, and assisting with other staff when the load is over 50 lbs.
- Participate in departmental planning, budgeting, and policy formation regarding occupational therapy services as requested by program supervisor.
- Effectively supervise an Occupational Therapist student, Occupational Therapy Assistant student, or volunteer.
- Create and maintain an efficient itinerant schedule, being flexible to changes