



OT PT School Credential Initiative

*OTs and PTs Identify Hidden Potential in Students
Fostering Expected and Unexpected Postsecondary Education Opportunities
Independent Living and Competitive Employment*

The Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC) and California Physical Therapy Association (CPTA) support action of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to expedite the development of a pathway for a Credential for occupational therapists (OTs) and physical therapists (PTs) practicing in California's public schools.

There is currently a glaring unsolved problem with the inability of OTs and PTs who are essential IDEA mandated related service professionals in the public schools to take on leadership roles that benefit families, children, school districts and the educational system. A basic credential is required for OTs and PTs to gain access to an administrative credential.

History of Contact with CTC

2007	Dr. Jan Jones Wadsworth, Consultant Professional Services Division - OTAC Letter
2016	Terry Clark, Director of Professional Services - Meeting with OTAC President Mary Sandy, Executive Director - Letter of support CDE
2017	CTC Meeting, Public Comment Erin Dolin, EdD, OTR/L OTAC Member
2018-2021	Michelle Perrault, CTC Director, Administrative Services Division- Ongoing communication OTAC Capitol Advocacy
2021	Erin Skubal, Director, Certification Division Tine Sloan, CTC Commission Chair -Meeting Julie Bissell OTAC Co-Chair School-Based Practice and OTAC Credential Initiative David Simmons, CTC Commission -Email Lisa Test OTAC Co-Chair School-Based Practice Tine Sloan, Commission Chair - Letter from Assembly Member Blanca Rubio Tine Sloan, Commission Chair - Letters from OTs and PTs School-Based Practice (>100)

Benefits to Students and Families

CTC Mission: *To ensure integrity, relevance, and high quality in the preparation, certification, and discipline of the educators who serve all of California's diverse students.*

OTs and PTs bring unique perspectives to the educational teams that benefit children and their families with and without disabilities. These professionals possess a background in medical and psycho-social science, which adds a unique lens to the educational teams. OTs and PTs foster self-determination, inspire and prepare children to achieve their highest potential enabling them to succeed in unexpected ways in postsecondary education opportunities, independent living and competitive employment.

The educational system is missing the expertise of two key educators at the leadership planning and decision-making levels to address the complex needs and successful outcomes of children in schools.

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Benefits to the School System

CTC Vision: *All of California's students, preschool through grade 12, are inspired and prepared to achieve their highest potential by well prepared and exceptionally qualified educators.*

A basic credential certifies well prepared and exceptionally qualified educators to inspire and prepare students to reach their highest potential. An OT PT credential will acknowledge the existing high-quality professional standards inherent in OT PT accredited educational standards and licensure requirements to serve the complex needs of children in California schools. The credential has the potential to expand the scope of leadership and administrative expertise in the public education system.

Benefits to the public school system include increased opportunities for recruitment and retention of occupational therapists and physical therapists (current shortage of OT and PTs) who often leave school-based practice to devote expertise to rehabilitation and university settings where the barriers to advancement and leadership do not exist.

Benefits to OTs and PTs

- Acknowledgement of a highly qualified professional OT PT personnel standard
- A pathway to leadership opportunities which are currently unavailable
- Enhanced opportunity to influence student and education systems outcomes at administrative levels.
- Professional gains in the advancement of the profession outweigh temporary challenges
- Increased integration of medical and educationally relevant intervention
- Any recommendation for the development of a credential would take into consideration the overall economic burden on an OT or PT or hiring school district and will not will not have a negative impact.
- A potential CTC workgroup of stakeholders may develop a method for credentialing for currently employed OTs and PTs without disrupting existing provision of services.
- OTs and PTs are the only IDEA related services without a basic credential. A credential would afford professional equity with peers (psychologists, speech therapists, school nurses, counselors, social workers) in school-based practice.

History of OTAC CPTA Stakeholder Meetings 2007 to Present

California Assembly Education Committee - Support 2017- Present
Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) 2016
California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) 2007- Present
California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) 2016
California Department of Education (2016 - Present)
California School Boards Association (CSBA) 2016
California School Employees Association (CSEA) 2016- Present
California Speech Language Hearing Association (CSHA) 2016
California Teachers Association (CTA) 2016- Present
Physical Therapist Association of California (CPTA) Partnership 2016-Present
SELPA Administrators (SELPA) 2016- Present

AB 1087 (Jacqui Irwin) 2017

Requested inclusion of OT and PT in Education Code 44268, mandating the CTC to design a services credential for OT and PT. Due to opposition from California School Employees Association (CSEA, Classified Union), it was advised that the bill be revised and submitted with a new author.

AB 2386 (Blanca Rubio) 2018

Initially submitted a bill to authorize CTC to design a services credential for OT and PT. The terms of the bill were amended to mandate the CTC to form a workgroup of stakeholders to study whether a credential is warranted and make recommendations. Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes
Local Program: no

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2386

AB 2684 (Blanca Rubio) 2020

An act to add Section 44268.2 to the Education Code, relating to school employee credentialing. This bill would have required the commission to convene a workgroup, as provided, to consider whether the development of a services credential with a specialization in occupational therapy or physical therapy services is warranted. Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB2684

Examples of positions that OTs or PTs are not able to hold without a basic credential:

- Supervisory position in which evaluation of personnel is part of the job description
- Program Specialist (manages delivery of multidisciplinary services)
- OT or PT Program Coordinator (OT and PT services are often managed by other disciplines)
- Inclusion Specialist (integrating special education and general education)
- Transition Program Director (early intervention to public schools, junior high to high school and high school to college)
- Preschool Program Specialist (special education, developmental specialist)
- Special Education Local Plan Area Director (SELPA)
- Director of Special Education

Examples of committees where OT and PT would have a positive impact

- COVID Relief Funding Committees <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/cr/relieffunds.asp>
- Mental Health Task Force
- Special Education Common Core Curriculum Committee
- Instructional Technology Task Force
- Drop Out Task Force Committee
- Accessible Playground Task Force
- Inclusion Support Committee
- Concussion Awareness/Education Task Force

Additional resources regarding the role of the OTs and PTs in school settings:

American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

<https://www.aota.org/Practice/Children-Youth/School-based.aspx>

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) <https://pediatricapta.org/pdfs/IDEA%20Schools.pdf>

(CDE) *Guidelines for Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy in the California Public Schools*

https://www.marinschools.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=15216&dataid=15843&FileName=OTPT_Guidelines_Final1.pdf