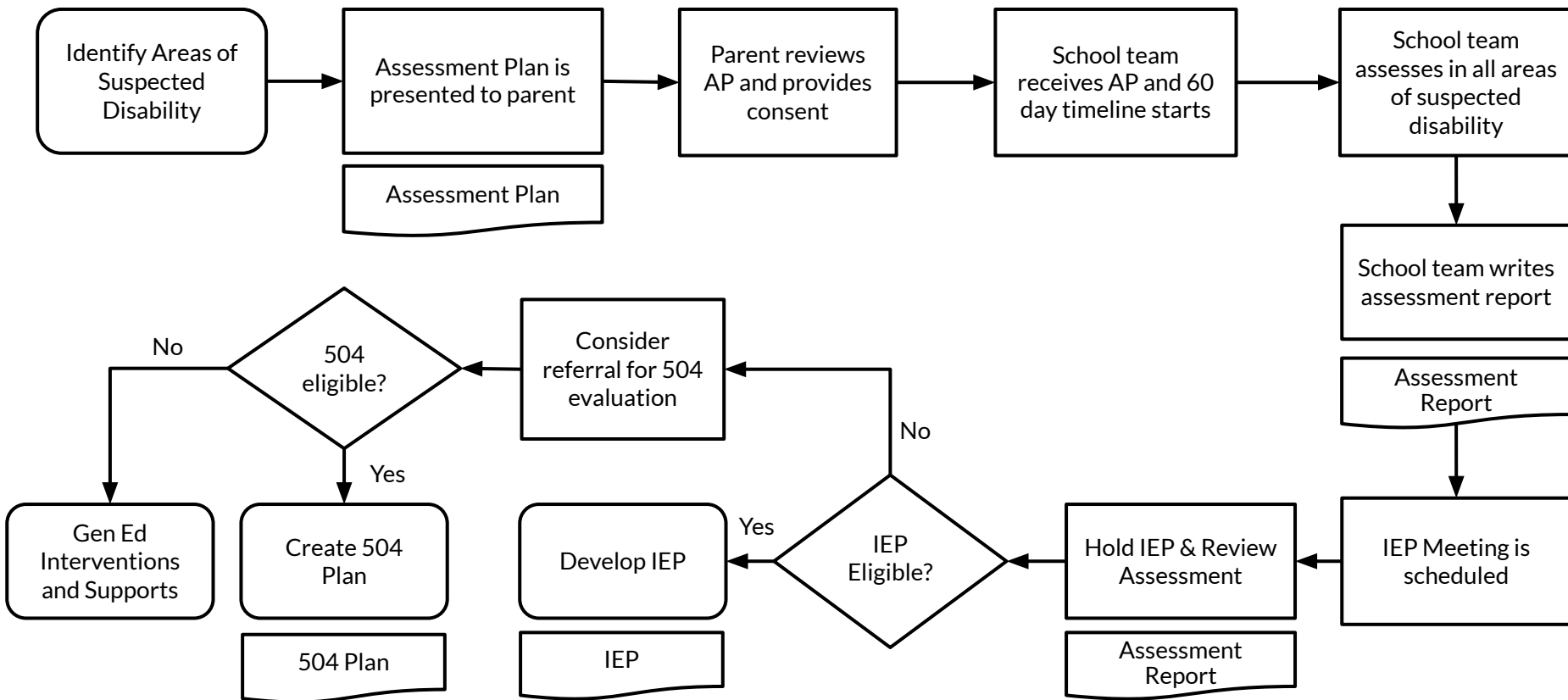


Assessments and Staff Roles

November 16, 2023

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Process Map: IEP Assessment Process



The IEP Process: Guiding Questions

Assessment

- What do the assessments tell us about the student's strengths? Areas of need?
- What information from the assessment report can we find that will help us best understand how this student learns best in the classroom?
- What recommendations are provided for accommodations? Modifications?

Present Levels

- Do these descriptors provide a clear understanding of how the student is performing in each of these areas? Do we understand how the student is performing in relation to grade level standards/expectations?
- Have we identified areas of need to focus on for the student? Are these areas of need based on data?
- Will focusing on these areas provide access for the student to grade level curriculum or appropriate functional skills?

Goals

- Do these goals align with the identified areas of need? (Note: Each identified area of need needs to have a goal)
- Are the goals aligned to grade level standards? If not, are they aligned to identified functional, social, emotional, or behavioral needs?
- Are the goals specific? Are they measurable? Are they appropriate and actionable? Are they rigorous? Are they time-bound?
- How will these goals be implemented? Who will work with the student on them?

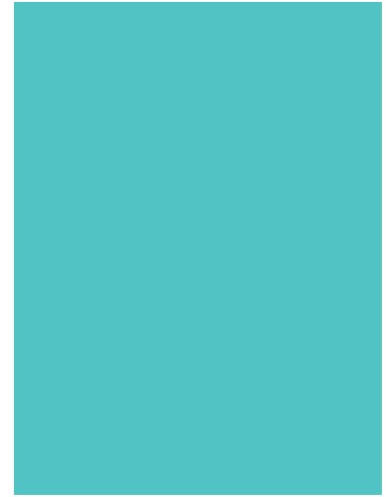
Services

- Are service minutes uniquely designed to meet the needs of the students?
- Are service minutes designed to ensure goals can be met?
- How will service minutes be delivered (Co-teaching, push-in, pull-out etc.)?
- How will the student benefit from these services?

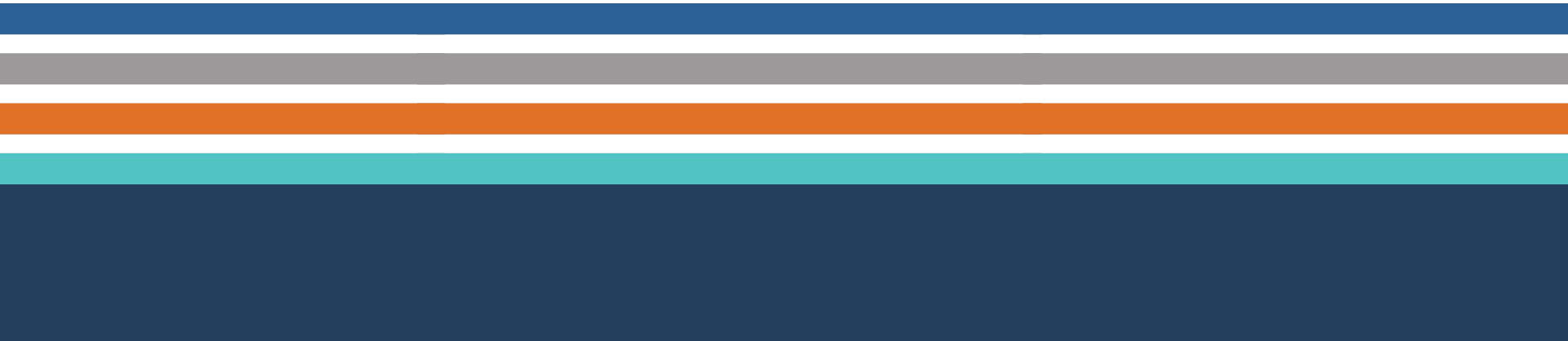
Placement

- Based on the student's goals and services, what placement does the student require in order to meet their needs?
- Did we consider what placement is the most appropriate and least restrictive in which these services should be delivered?
- In which placement will the student have the most access to their typical peers and still be able to achieve their goals?

Staff Roles During the Assessment Process



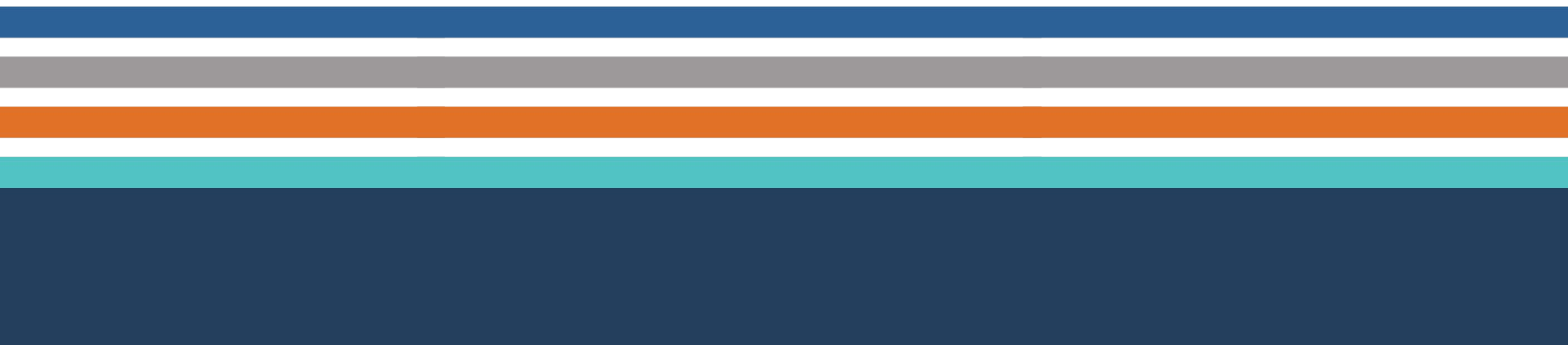
School Psychologist



School Psychologist Role During Assessment Process

- School Psychologist reviews assessment data and considers special education eligibility based on California Education Code criteria
- School Psychologist prepares multidisciplinary assessment report and shares it with parents, school team members
- Based on assessment data, School Psychologist supports with identifying strengths and challenges, goal areas, accommodations and/or modifications, services, educational setting
 - If student demonstrates social-emotional challenges that are impacting their educational progress, School Psychologist may recommend education-based counseling services

Education Specialist



School Psychologist Role During Assessment Process

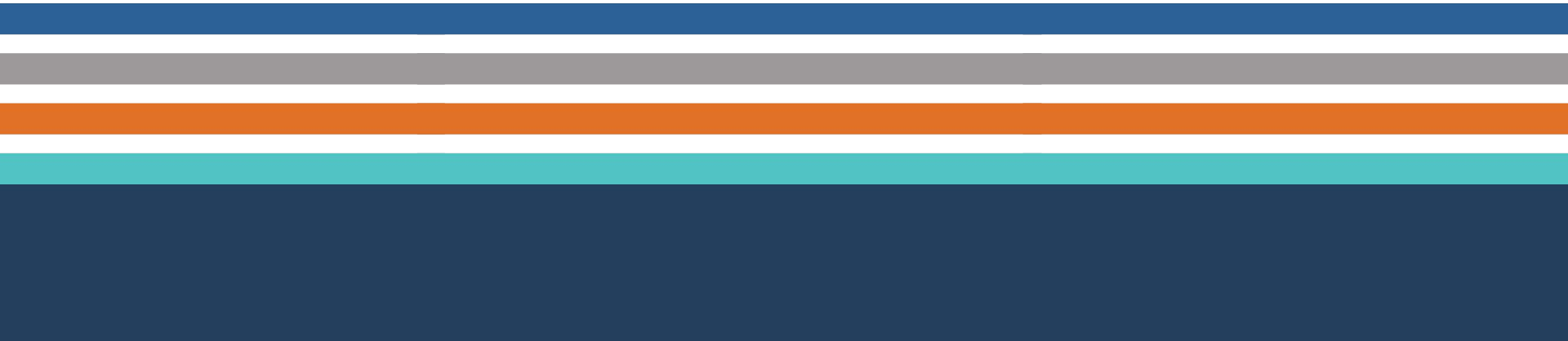
School Psychologist may assess in one of the following areas:

- Cognitive functioning (this includes processing areas such as auditory, visual, and memory)
- Social-emotional functioning (how the child understands/manages emotions and builds relationships)
- Behavioral functioning (child's observable actions)
- Adaptive functioning (conceptual, social, and practical skills that help with daily living)

Education Specialist Role During Assessment Process

- The Education Specialist assesses in the area of academic achievement as just one component of the final multidisciplinary assessment report
- The Education Specialist may complete rating scales for other applicable service providers, as part of their assessment component, if they are the teacher of record or have strong knowledge of the student
- Typically coordinates and facilitates IEP meeting to review assessment report and potential IEP document
- In most cases, if student is determined eligible for special education services, the Education Specialist will be the case manager
- IEP development
 - Based on assessment data, identifies strengths and challenges, writes goals, collaborates on and determines accommodations and/or modifications, services, and educational setting

Speech-Language Pathologist



Speech-Language Pathologist Role During Assessment Process

School-based Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) may assess one or more of the following areas:

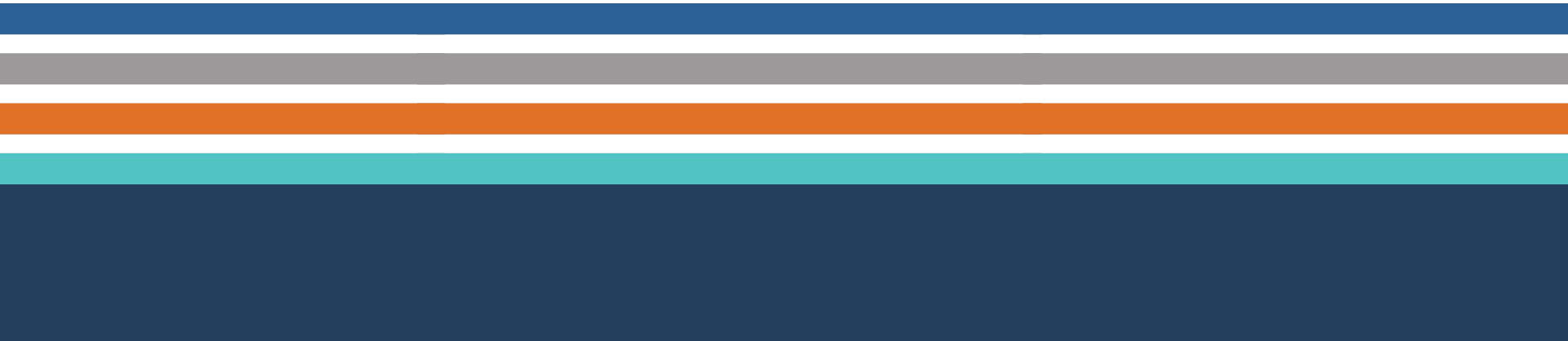
- Communication skills (receptive and expressive language, functional skills and social communication)
- Articulation
- Voice
- Fluency

SLPs utilize a variety of assessment tools including but not limited to observations, interviews, questionnaires, and standardized assessments.

Speech-Language Pathologist Role During Assessment Process

- School-based SLPs review their assessment data and considers special education eligibility based on California Education Code criteria
- Based on assessment data, SLP supports with identifying strengths and challenges, goal areas, accommodations and/or modifications, services, and educational setting.
 - If a student demonstrates a communication disorder that is impacting their educational progress, the SLP may propose education-based speech therapy services

Occupational Therapist



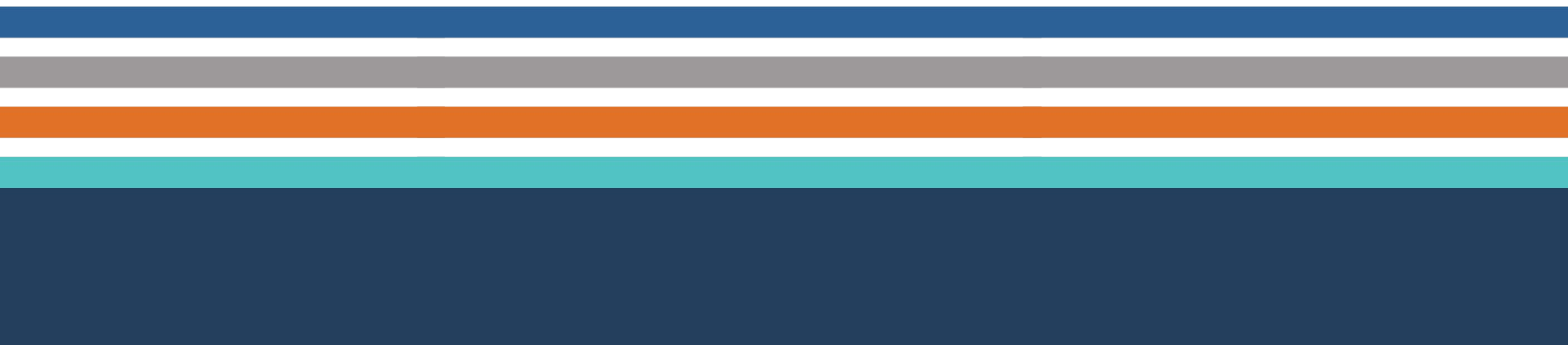
Occupational Therapist Role During Assessment Process

- During the assessment process, the OT is observing the student in their natural environment and observing what the student's current skill level is in the areas (as related to the school setting):
 - fine motor
 - visual motor
 - self-care skills
 - sensory/self-regulation

and determining if any accommodations or supports are needed to support the student's access, consistent with evidence-based practice.

- During the assessment, the OT considers the input received from parents, staff/stakeholders who work with the student on a regular basis and work collaboratively with the team members to determine appropriate goal area(s).
- While the assessment is conducted, the OT is observing for the level of independence or the level of supports needed to complete the above mentioned skills and concerns in the student's current environment and looking at areas of strengths and areas of challenges impeding access.

Physical Therapist





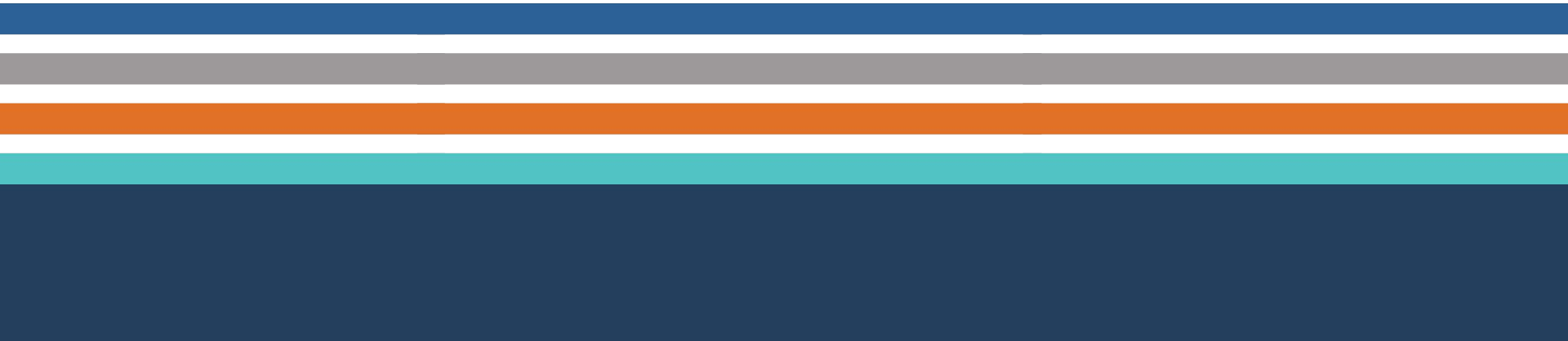
Physical Therapist Role During Assessment Process

- Primary role of the school PT: Help students attain functional skills required to participate and benefit from their special education program within the school environment
- Determine if accommodations or supports are needed to support the student's access to the educational environment
- School-based therapy is not intended to meet all of the therapeutic needs of a student; rather it is intended to ensure that a child can have physical access to his or her education

Physical Therapist Role During Assessment Process

- The physical therapist will gather input from parents and teacher(s), as well as observe and evaluate the student in the following areas:
 - Learning Environment- classroom set-up for accessibility
 - Transportation Access- access to school bus when eligible
 - Classroom Mobility- physical ability to negotiate the classroom
 - School Campus Mobility- physical ability to navigate the school campus
 - Gross Motor Functional Skills- motor skills needed to participate in school routines
 - Playground Access- ability to access playground activities to interact with peers
 - Equipment, Positioning, and Transfers- appropriateness of equipment used for school access and related staff training needs

Adapted PE Specialist



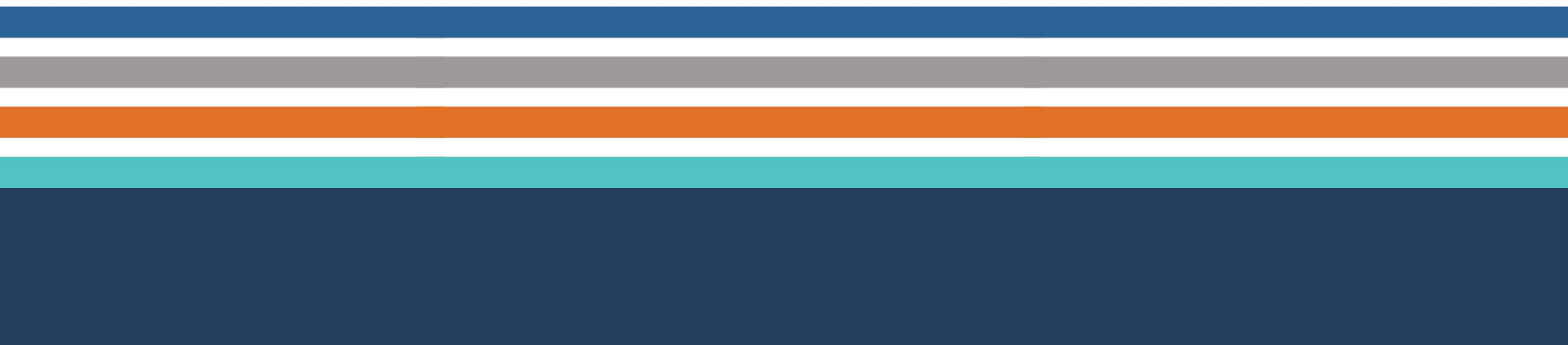
Adapted PE Specialist Role During Assessment Process

- The Adapted Physical Education Specialist assesses in the area of gross motor physical education skills as just one component of the multidisciplinary assessment report
 - Body management skills
 - Locomotor skills
 - Object manipulation skills
 - Physical fitness skills
 - Motor fitness (improving motor coordination of skills)
- The APE Specialist will utilize a variety of assessment tools including but not limited to observations, interviews, questionnaires, and standardized assessments.

Adapted PE Specialist Role During Assessment Process

- IEP development
 - Based on assessment data, parent & IEP team input, and observations, the APE specialist:
 - Determines if the student qualifies for APE services
 - Identifies strengths and/or challenges
 - Establishes goals
 - Collaborates with IEP team to determine PE accommodations and/or modifications, services, and the child's least restrictive physical educational setting

Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) Specialist



ERMHS Specialist Role During Assessment Process

What is ERMHS? What is an ERMHS Specialist?

- ERMHS = Educationally Related Mental Health Services
- ERMHS Specialists = Licensed clinicians, usually LMFT or LCSW

When might an ERMHS Specialist complete an assessment & what does it entail?

- Social Emotional Assessment → utilized as a supplement and completed in conjunction with the school psychologist's assessment; usually taking a deeper dive into the social emotional portion
- ERMHS Specialist often complete 1) an extensive review of records, 2) multiple interviews, 3) observations and 4) collaborate with the school psychologist in the interpretation of social emotional assessment as it pertains to impact on accessing education.

ERMHS Specialist Role During Assessment Process

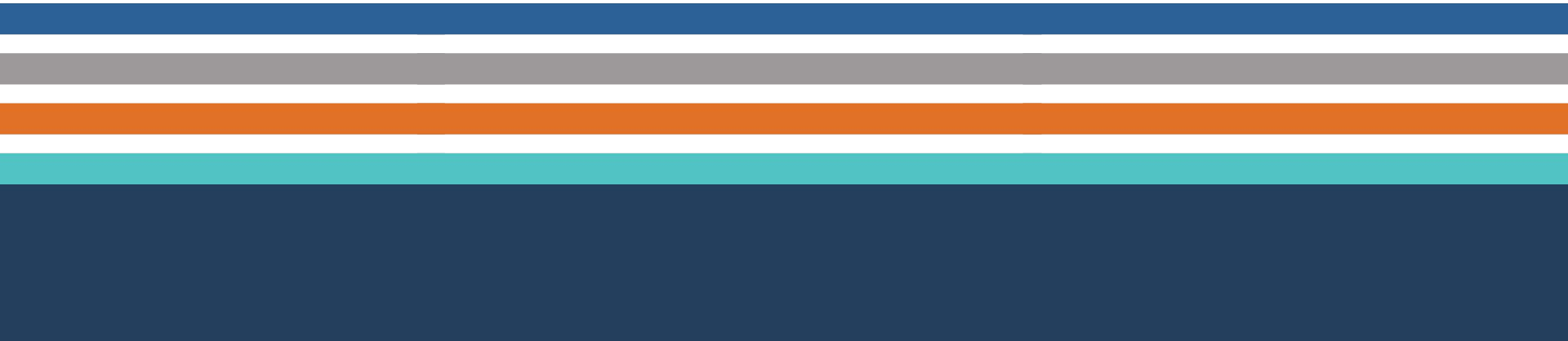
What does that data gathered provide?

- Data from the social emotional assessments conducted by the ERMHS Specialist is used, in conjunction with information collected by the school psychologist, to determine if there are mental health or social emotional-related challenges which impact a student's ability to access their education and may be used in eligibility analyses.
- Additionally, if the student is found to be eligible, the data is used to generate goal areas to be addressed through an IEP.

Staff Roles in Servicing Students



School Psychologist



School Psychologist Role Servicing Students

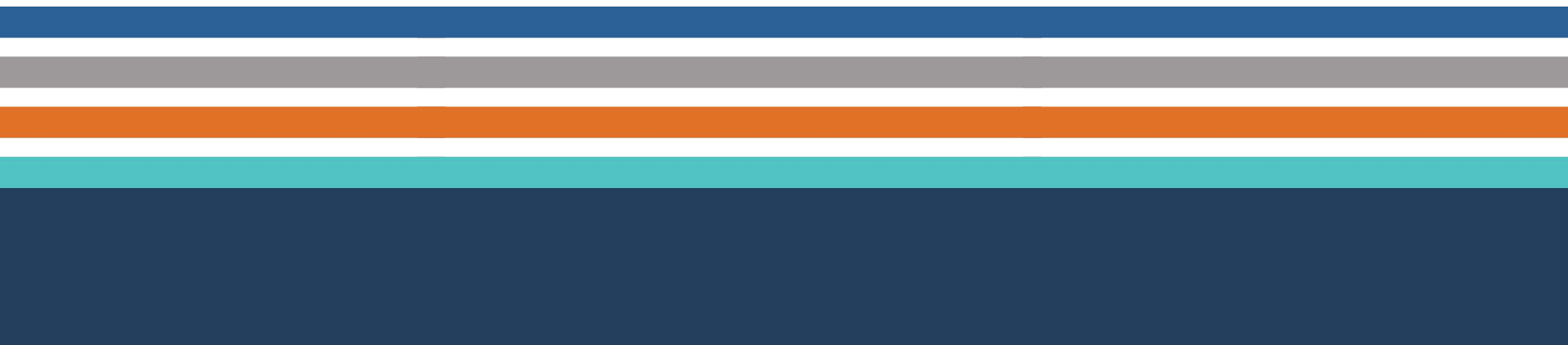
Areas of need that can be targeted during counseling sessions with a School Psychologist include:

- Identifying feelings
- Developing coping strategies
- Challenging negative thoughts
- Recognizing physiological symptoms

School Psychologist Role Servicing Students

- Education-based counseling services address issues that are relevant to the context of a student's academic or social-emotional functioning within the school
 - The goal of education-based counseling services with the School Psychologist is to teach students the skills necessary to function more effectively in the school setting
 - It should not be viewed as a replacement for psychotherapy, which may be a more long-term service that addresses more significant psychological needs
- Services typically occur within an individual setting outside of the classroom
 - School Psychologists will work with school team members to identify days/times

Education Specialist



Education Specialist Role Servicing Students

- The Education Specialist is responsible for implementing and monitoring student IEPs
- Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI)
 - Minutes determined based on student need and goal areas
 - Specialized Academic Instruction support can be provided in the general education class and/or in a separate, group setting
 - SAI support can target the following areas: IEP goals, pre-academic/academic intervention, social-emotional, behavior, vocational, adaptive daily living, and functional skills
- The Education Specialist collaborates with General Education staff regarding curriculum, student supports, and scheduling
- The Education Specialist ensures accommodations and/or modifications outlined in the IEP are being provided across student educational setting
- Communicates student progress to parents and applicable IEP team members

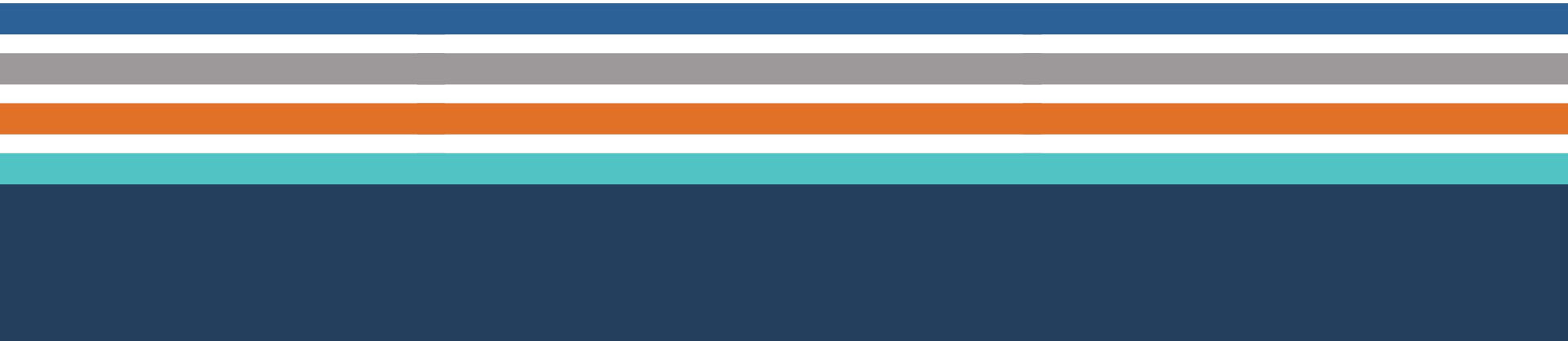
Speech-Language Pathologist

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Speech-Language Pathologist Role Servicing Students

- School-based SLPs support the educational program for students who have a communication disorder involving articulation, language, fluency and/or voice that is impacting their educational progress
- School-based SLPs employ a continuum of service delivery models in the least restrictive environment for a student
- Specific services and supports depend upon the assessed needs of the student (e.g., direct services, consultation, group services)
- Although service delivery models are typically more diverse in the school setting than in other settings, the therapy techniques are clinical in nature when supporting students with disabilities

Occupational Therapist



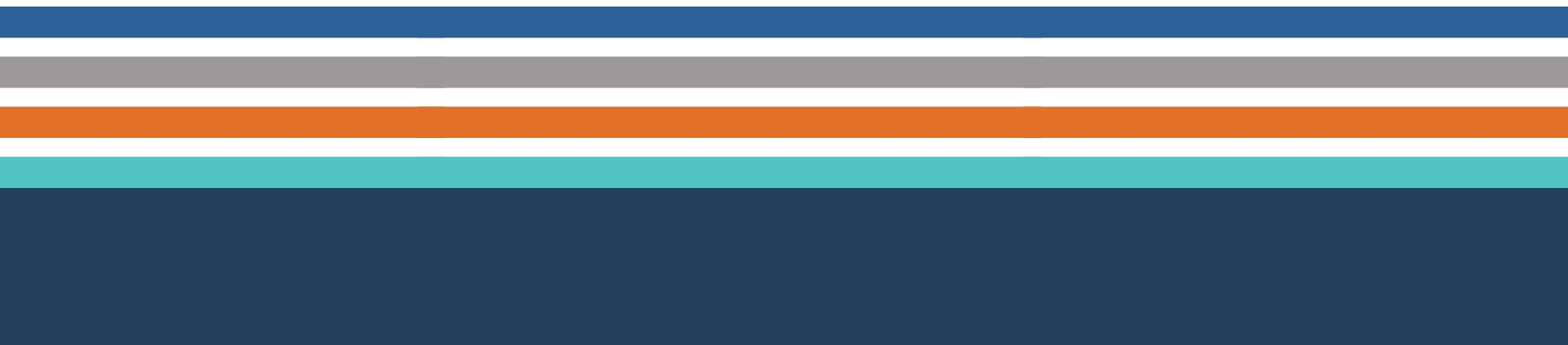
Occupational Therapist Role Servicing Students

Continuum of Occupational Therapy Services:

- General Consultants to the Special Education Program
 - Support teachers with strategies to help all students with physical participation
- Student-Specific Consultation
 - Training staff for practice of skills to carry over throughout the school day
- Push-in Direct Service
 - Classroom- practice in the natural environment, playground, snack tables
- Pull-out Direct Service
 - Separate Therapy Area- discreet practice addressing underlying deficits inhibiting fine motor access to the educational program

When considering where the student falls in the continuum of services, we always look to find the least restrictive environment to support the student, as research supports working with the student in their natural setting as much as possible for best outcomes.

Physical Therapist



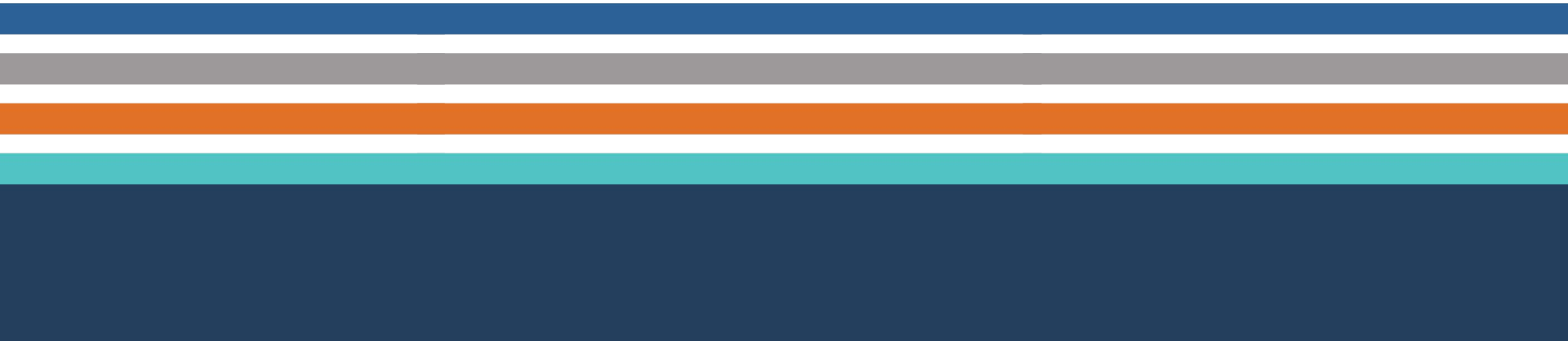
Physical Therapist Role Servicing Students

Continuum of Physical Therapy Services:

- General Consultants to the Special Education Program
 - Support teachers with strategies to help all students with physical participation
- Student-Specific Consultation
 - Training staff for transfers and equipment usage
 - Training staff for practice of skills to carry over throughout the school day
- Push-in Direct Service
 - Playground, Classroom- practice in the natural environment
- Pull-out Direct Service
 - Separate Therapy Area- discreet practice addressing underlying deficits inhibiting gross motor access to the educational program

When considering where the student falls in the continuum of services, we always look to find the least restrictive environment to support the student, as research supports working with the student in their natural setting as much as possible for best outcomes.

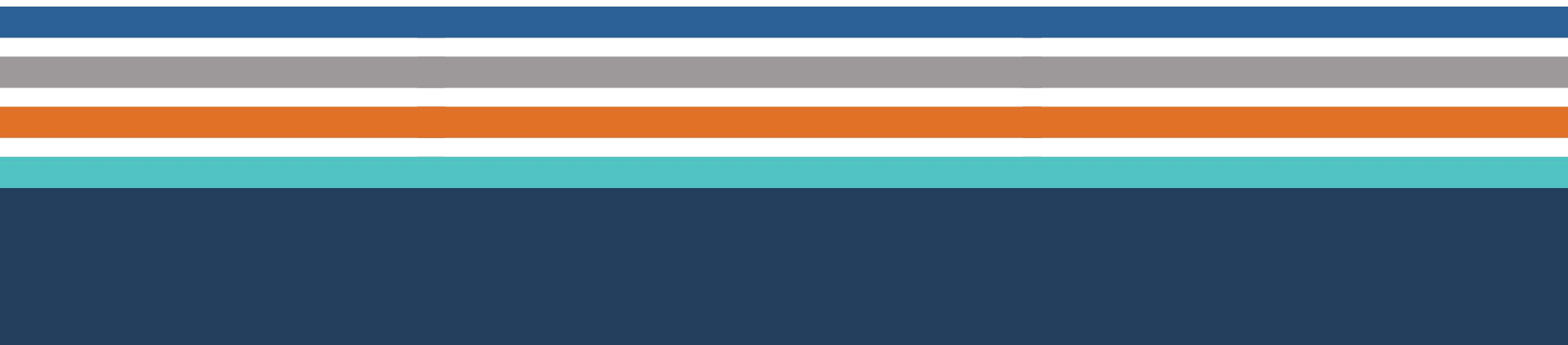
Adapted PE Specialist



Adapted PE Specialist Role Servicing Students

- APE specialists strive to improve gross motor movement performance and facilitate a child's ability to access their physical education in the school environment and to help keep up with their peers in the school setting.
- There can be a continuum of services ranging from
 - Consultation (i.e., the APE specialist interacts and collaborates with the general education PE teacher, classroom teacher, and/or support staff who in turn meets the needs of the student)
 - Direct services (i.e., APE specialist works directly with the student across a variety of environments to meet the identified gross motor physical education needs).
 - Pull-out service
 - Push-in service

Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) Specialist



ERMHS Specialist Role Servicing Students

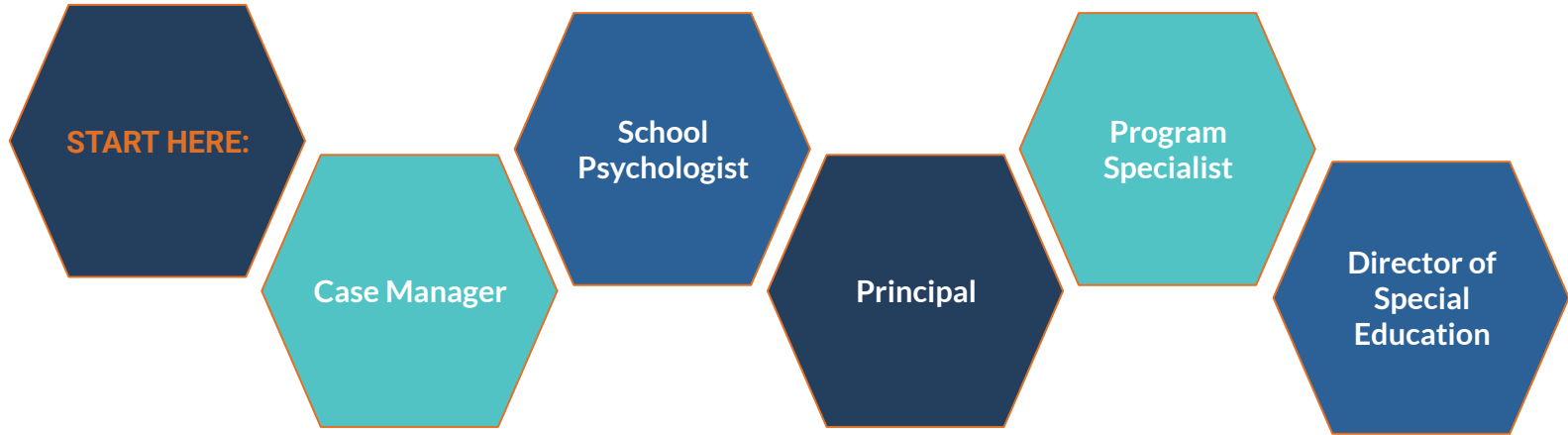
- School Psychologists are qualified to provide educational counseling services as part of a student's IEP to address challenges related to mental health/social emotional needs.
- At times, such as when a student with mental health challenges is not making progress on social emotional goals with the school psychologist, or if the student's mental health needs are extremely significant, individual counseling with an *ERMHS Specialist* might be recommended.
- Goal areas that might be targeted during counseling sessions with an ERMHS Specialist include: *safety related to self/others, coping strategies to address anxiety/depressive symptoms that lead to self-harm, challenging distorted thinking, etc.*

ERMHS Specialist Role Servicing Students

- It is important to note that school-based counseling services are specifically designed to support access to *education* and must be educationally related. They should not be viewed as a replacement for outside services.
- School-based mental health professionals can collaborate with outside/private therapy providers, when given permission from parent, in order to better understand the student's challenges outside of school.

Questions about your child's IEP or school program?

If you are wondering about an aspect of your child's IEP or program, you can contact the following people to help answer your questions. Your child's case manager and school site know them best and can likely answer your questions in the most thorough way.



Thank you!

