

JUAN ELL STUDENT (actual evaluation – names have been changed – Questions? Michael Self-Bence mselfben@fwps.org 253-945-4135)

EVALUATION SUMMARY & OVERVIEW:

Juan ELL Student is a bilingual kindergarten student in the dual-language (English-Spanish) program at Exampleton Elementary who currently receives speech-language therapy to address expressive communication skills. Juan initially received speech-language therapy through the Birth To Three Developmental Center in Federal Way. He was last evaluated at age 2 years 11 months prior on 3/11/2010, just prior to his transition to district services. At that time, he demonstrated listening comprehension comparable to most children his age, with a significant delay in expressive communication or talking. Juan received speech-language therapy at his Head Start preschool, before entering kindergarten at Exampleton in September 2012, where he has continued to receive speech-language therapy.

Children receiving special education services must be reevaluated at least every 3 years. When Juan's IEP team was planning his reevaluation, his kindergarten teachers, L. Garcia and M. Goode, expressed concerns with very limited learning and asked that he be evaluated for learning disabilities. Ms. Garcia and Ms. Goode observe that Juan is experiencing greater challenges learning than is typically observed by similar English language learners (ELL).

Juan was referred for this evaluation to determine his continued eligibility and need for special education. This evaluation included record review, parent and student interview, gathering information and observations from teachers, and testing of Juan's cognitive, communication, and academic skills.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS:

- 1) **STRENGTHS:** Juan is a friendly student who gets along well with peers, and is respectful of teachers. Juan shows fluid reasoning, visual processing, and auditory processing comparable to most children his age.
- 2) **CHALLENGE AREAS:** Juan is experiencing significant challenges learning how to read, write, and perform mathematics. Part of this is due to the fact that he is a dual-language learner who is still learning English, but this is not the only contributing factor. Juan demonstrates generalized delays in his acquisition of receptive and expressive language skills, in both Spanish and English. Also, Juan's short-term memory and associative long-term memory skills are not as strong as most children his age. Together, these weaknesses in cognitive "brain" skills for learning are making it very difficult for Juan to learn how to read, write, and perform mathematics.
- 3) **RECOMMENDATIONS:** It is recommended that an "Individual Education Program" (IEP) be developed for Juan with instructional goals that target reading, writing, math, and communication skills. It is recommended that he continue to attend his general education class, and receive these IEP services through a "Resource Support Program" and weekly speech-language therapy.

HEALTH & DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION:

EXAMINER: School Psychologist

OVERVIEW: Information about Juan's health and developmental situation was obtained from record review, and parent interview.

FAMILY: Juan lives with his mother, father, two older brothers (ages 17 and 20), and older sister (age 16). There is no reported family history of learning disabilities, special education, or learning difficulties.

LANGUAGE: Juan's family speaks English and Spanish. When Juan was 2 years old his family was reported to speak about 50-50 English and Spanish. At about 3 years old his family was reported to speak about 70-30 English and Spanish. Now, Juan's family is reported to speak mostly English.

BIRTH HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT: Juan's early history is positive for delayed language development. When he was 2 years old he was referred to Birth To Three by his WIC nurse due to concerns with his speech skills. Otherwise, Juan was a healthy full-term baby delivered in the U.S. without complication from a normal pregnancy.

HEALTH: Juan's health history is unremarkable. He is reported to be in good general health, with no history of ear infections, allergies, serious physical illnesses, seizures, serious accidents, head injuries, operations, or continuing medical problems.

HEARING & VISION: Juan's hearing and vision were screened this school year to be satisfactory.

EDUCATION: Juan received speech language therapy through the Birth To Three Developmental Center from about 32 months of age until his 3rd birthday. Then he received speech language therapy through the Federal Way Public Schools at his Head Start Preschool at Truman. In September 2012, Juan entered kindergarten at the dual-language program at Exampleton Elementary. Juan receives half-day instruction in Spanish from Ms. Garcia, and half-day in English from Ms. Goode. Juan also receives speech-language therapy once a week from C. Speech-Therapista.

STUDENT INTERVIEW: Juan was interviewed by School Psychologist, as part of developing rapport before testing. He was able to answer questions about himself, including saying his first and last names, gender (but not his age), and sharing information about his family, including who he lives with. Juan's favorite food is hotdogs and favorite color is black. Juan reported that he likes school, but that school is "hard." When asked what is hard, Juan said "working."

COGNITIVE EVALUATION:

EXAMINER: School Psychologist

OVERVIEW: How does Juan's profile of cognitive "brain" skills for learning compare with others his age? What are his strengths and weaknesses?

To answer these questions, on 1/15, and 2/12/2013, Juan completed a tailored battery of individually administered, cognitive tests that included portions of the Differential Ability Scales (DAS-2), Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (KABC-2), and Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP). Juan's results are judged to be valid and reliable as interpreted. He demonstrated an appropriate level of interest and cooperation with the standardized testing procedures, did not require any modifications to the standardized protocol, and appeared to be showing his best effort overall.

- The results show how well Juan performed compared to a group of students the same age from across the United States.
- Most children (68 in 100, or 68%) demonstrate skills in the "Average" range with Standard Scores (SS) from 85 to 115.
- Scores below 85 indicate a possible "Normative Weakness" that may impact school learning.

GENERAL INTELLECTUAL ABILITY: Formerly referred to as "IQ" (intelligence quotient), general intellectual ability is a one-number average that attempts to quantify the mental ability underlying results of various tests of cognitive ability. General intellectual ability scores below 70 are relevant to identifying "Intellectual Disability" (formerly called "Mental Retardation").

Because Juan is a dual-language learner with a history of communication delays, nonverbal measures may provide a more accurate estimate of general intellectual ability. Juan obtained nonverbal composite on the KABC-2 (Nonverbal Index or NVI) comparable to most children his age (SS=94; 95 percent confidence interval 85-103; 34th percentile rank). He also obtained nonverbal composite on the DAS-2 (Special Nonverbal Composite) comparable to most children his age (SS=96; 95 percent confidence interval 89-103; 39th percentile rank). Children who score in the average range (85 to 115) can generally be expected to be successful in school.

IMPACT OF LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DEMAND: Because Juan is a dual-language learner it is important to consider the impact of culture and language on test results. For example, if Juan performed better on cognitive tests with low cultural loading and linguistic demand, and less well on tests with more demands, this would suggest that his performance is more impacted by linguistic and cultural test demands than on his true profile of cognitive strengths and weaknesses. The Culture-Language Interpretive Matrix (C-LIM; Ortiz & Alfonso, 2001) was used to address this important issue. The results indicate that Juan's performance did not vary with cultural loading and linguistic demand, so more likely reflects his profile of cognitive strengths and weaknesses.

PROFILE OF COGNITIVE ABILITIES: Juan completed assessments of seven broad cognitive abilities relevant to school learning (See “Profile of Cognitive Skills for Learning” at end of report).

- 1) CRYSTALLIZED KNOWLEDGE includes the breadth and depth of a person's acquired knowledge, the ability to communicate one's knowledge, and the ability to reason using previously learned experiences or procedures.

Juan's crystallized knowledge and language skills are not as well developed as most children his age. The results of the communication evaluation (see “Communication Eval” section) indicate that Juan's skills for using and understanding language are very delayed in both Spanish and English. Juan also demonstrated “normative weaknesses” on two measures of naming vocabulary (KABC-2 Expressive Vocabulary SS=70; DAS-2 Naming Vocabulary SS=76). He also demonstrated some language skills on the lower cusp of the “average” range, including listening to and answering riddles (KABC-2 Riddles SS=85), following verbal directions (DAS-2 Verbal Comprehension SS=84), and pointing to pictures to show his understanding of language and concepts (KABC-2 Verbal Knowledge SS=85). Overall, Juan's limited language skills, in both English and Spanish, could be contributing to the learning challenges he is experiencing.

- 2) FLUID REASONING includes the ability to reason, form concepts, and solve problems using unfamiliar information or novel procedures.

Juan's fluid reasoning skills are as well developed as most children his age. He demonstrated inductive fluid reasoning in the “average” range on several measures (DAS-2 Matrices SS=94, Picture Similarities SS=103). Overall, Juan is as capable as most children his age at reasoning, forming concepts and solving problems.

- 3) MENTAL PROCESSING SPEED is the ability to fluently perform mental tasks automatically, especially when under pressure to maintain focused attention or concentration.

Juan's mental processing speed may be slower than most children his age, but results are inconclusive at this time. On the DAS-2 Speed of Information Processing test (SS=72), Juan was asked to quickly make quantitative comparisons (i.e., use a pencil to cross off the circles with the most number of squares in them). Juan may have been slow to perform this task because he is still learning quantitative comparisons.

- 4) VISUAL PROCESSING is the ability to use visual information to learn, including perceiving, remembering, manipulating, and thinking with visual patterns.

Juan's visual processing skills are as well developed as most children his age. Juan demonstrated “average” performance on several measures of visual processing, including visualization skills (KABC-2 Conceptual Thinking SS=105, Pattern Reasoning SS=110) and spatial relations for copying patterns from a model (KABC-2 Triangles SS=90; DAS-2 Pattern Construction SS=96). Overall, Juan is capable of using visual information to learn.

- 5) AUDITORY PROCESSING is the ability to use sound information to learn, including perceiving, analyzing, and synthesizing auditory patterns. This includes the ability to identify, isolate, and mentally analyze speech sounds (i.e., phonological awareness), which is important for reading development.

Juan demonstrated phonetic synthesis skills (in English) like most English speaking children his age. On the CTOPP Sound Matching test (SS=100), Juan demonstrated emerging skills in the “average” range for matching the sounds at the beginning and ending of words (e.g., What word ends the same sound at ‘leg’? leaf, rug, or pen?). This is an important skill children use when reading new words.

Juan also demonstrated phonetic synthesis skills (in English) like most English speaking children his age. On the CTOPP Blending Words test (SS=105), Juan demonstrated emerging skills in the “average” range for synthesizing auditory patterns (e.g., What word do these sounds make? /sh/ /ee/ /p/ = sheep). This is an important skill children use when reading new words.

- 6) SHORT-TERM MEMORY is the ability to take in and hold information in memory, and then use it within a few seconds. This includes memory span (remembering elements in order) and working memory (holding information in memory while mentally processing that information). All thinking occurs in working memory, so it is critical to all school learning.

Juan demonstrates significant deficit in short-term memory, including “normative weaknesses” in memory span for repeating sentences (CELF-4 English SS=60, Spanish SS=60), for repeating sequences of demonstrated hand gestures (KABC-2 Hand Movements SS=80), sequences of orally presented words (KABC-2 Word Order SS=75), and sequences of orally presented digits (KABC-2 Number Recall SS=70; CTOPP Memory for Digits SS=80; DAS-2 Recall of Digits Forward SS=82). Adults, on average, can accurately hold sequences of about 7 elements in short-term memory. Across a variety of tasks administered at different times, Juan demonstrated accurate memory span of about 2 elements.

- 7) LONG-TERM MEMORY is the ability to store and efficiently retrieve newly learned or previously learned information. This includes recall memory, associative memory, and rapid naming.

Juan demonstrates weaknesses in his long-term memory skills, specifically in his encoding of new information into long-term associative memory. On the KABC-2 Atlantis test, Juan was taught nonsense picture names for fish, plants, and shells, and then was required to point to each picture from an array of pictures when it was named by the examiner. Juan demonstrated a “normative weakness” (SS=70) in learning this new information. On the KABC-2 Rebus test, Juan was taught the word or concept associated with a particular rebus (drawing), and then was required to “read” phrases or sentences composed of these rebuses. Juan also demonstrated a “normative weakness” (SS=75) in learning this new information.

Although Juan appears to be limited in the amount of information he can initially encode into long-term memory (possibly due to short-term memory limitations), Juan appears to retain the information that does get stored in long-term memory. About 20 minutes after Juan had been taught the sea information, he demonstrated strong memory for the information that he had learned (Atlantis – Delayed Recall SS=90). And about 20 minutes after he had been taught the rebus information, Juan demonstrated memory performance on the lower cusp of the “average” range for children his age (Rebus – Delayed Recall SS=85). Overall, Juan’s low performance on these measures of associative memory may explain the challenges he is having learning, because associative memory can be important for reading development.

Juan also appears to demonstrate slow retrieval of information from long-term memory. On the CTOPP Rapid Picture Naming test (SS=80), Juan was asked to quickly name a series of common pictures. Juan’s performance was not as fast as most children his age. Additional confirmation of this result was attempted with the Rapid Color Naming test, but Juan does not yet know color names. Future cognitive assessments will want to test Juan’s skills in this area, because deficits in rapid automatic naming are associated with reading fluency problems and reading disabilities.

SUMMARY: Juan’s profile of cognitive skills was assessed in January 2013 using a cross-battery approach. Juan is a dual-language learner, and nonverbal indicators of Juan’s general intellectual ability are well above the range indicative of an intellectual disability.

Juan’s profile of cognitive “brain” skills for learning indicates many important skills like most children his age, including his fluid reasoning, visual processing, and auditory processing

However, in the area of crystallized knowledge and language skills, Juan demonstrates skills for using and understanding language, in both Spanish and English, that are not as well developed as most children his age. Juan also demonstrates short-term memory and long-term memory skills well below most children his age. Juan’s weaknesses in short-term memory may explain why he is having difficulty learning language skills, as well as the school learning challenges he has been experiencing.

OBSERVATION:

Juan was observed by his classroom teachers, M. Goode and L. Garcia, in December 2012, and School Psychologist, in January 2013 to document his academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty.

Juan, who is in mid-kindergarten after attending Head Start preschool, is observed by his classroom teachers showing reading, writing, and math skills well below grade level expectations. Compared with similar English language learners, Juan is not learning at the same rate. Between September and December, Juan learned how to identify no letters and no letter sounds in English, whereas his classmates learned from 11-52 letters and 14-31 sounds. In Spanish, Juan also learned no letters or letters sounds. Juan has learned to rote-count to 2 in Spanish, and 3 in English, but he does not yet count objects consistently. Juan has also learned to write his first name, but his writing development is delayed compared to his peers.

In both the English and Spanish portions of his school day, Juan presents as friendly student who tries to participate, but during instruction he contributes little to classroom discussions, and cannot complete any kindergarten activities without one-on-one teacher support. Without teacher support, Juan often appears to be off-task and distracted, apparently because the learning activities are too challenging for him. When asked questions, Juan often says "I don't know" or "I don't remember," and he has started crying to his teachers telling them "I can't do it" and "It's too hard."

Juan's teacher observes that his academics are not significantly impacted by any maladaptive behaviors. Observations by the school psychologist confirm that there are no behavior problems, but that Juan does appear to be struggling greatly with all areas of the kindergarten curriculum.

READING EVALUATION:

EXAMINER: School Psychologist

OVERVIEW: Juan's reading skills were evaluated using a combination of classroom assessments and teacher observations, and standardized testing.

CLASSROOM/TEACHER OBSERVATIONS: Juan's classroom teacher are very concerned with his limited development of reading skills. He is not learning letters and letter sounds like his classmates are, including similar peers who are also learning English. Juan's teachers have provided him with additional instruction to teach him letters and sounds, but since September he has made no growth and currently identifies no letters or sounds.

TESTING: Juan completed select tests of the Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ-III) on 2/6/2013 with C. Sewell, Special Education Teacher. Juan's results are judged to be valid and reliable as interpreted. He demonstrated an appropriate level of interest and cooperation with the standardized testing procedures, did not require any modifications to the standardized protocol, and appeared to be showing his best effort overall.

- The results show how well Juan performed compared to a group of students the same age from across the United States.
- Most children (68 in 100, or 68%) demonstrate skills in the "Average" range with Standard Scores (SS) from 85 to 115. Scores below 85 indicate a possible "Normative Weakness."
- Grade equivalent scores (GE) are also given, which are the least reliable of scores, and should be viewed only as general estimates of the level at which Juan might be instructed.

SCORES:

WJ-III Basic Reading Skills Composite: SS=70, GE<K.0

- Letter Word Identification: SS=64, GE<K.0
- Word Attack: SS=83, GE<K.0

WJ-III Reading Comprehension Composite: not yet

- Reading Vocabulary: not yet reading words
- Passage Comprehension : SS=87, GE<K.0

WJ-III Oral Expression Composite: SS=68, GE<K.0

- Story Recall: SS=84, GE<K.0
- Picture Vocabulary: SS=68, GE<K.0

WJ-III Listening Comprehension Composite: SS=68, GE<K.0

- Understanding Directions: SS=77, GE<K.0
- Oral Comprehension : SS=67, GE<K.0

SKILLS DEMONSTRATED: Juan demonstrated that he can recognize the letter X, but he does not yet recognize even basic letters, such as A, which is in his name. Understandably, Juan does not yet recognize or read simple kindergarten words, nor does he read words or phrases with comprehension, but he does show understanding that a rebus symbol can tell about a picture.

Juan demonstrated that he can retell details from very simple 2-sentence stories, and name pictures, but his overall skill levels are not as strong as most children his age. He also demonstrated that he can follow simple verbal directions, but it is difficult for him to demonstrate comprehension of what he listens to.

MARKERS FOR LEARNING DISABILITY: Juan demonstrates normative weaknesses in cognitive skills important for reading development, including short-term memory, associative memory, and crystalized knowledge and language skills. Juan may also demonstrate normative weaknesses in his rapid retrieval of lexical or word information from long-term memory. Juan may be struggling with reading because he is limited in the amount of information he can hold in short-term memory, and because his vocabulary and language skills are not as well developed as most children his age. Juan also demonstrates significant weaknesses in his associative long-term memory which is associated with reading development.

IEP RECOMMENDATIONS: Juan requires a Special Education "Individual Education Program" (IEP) with goals for increasing his reading skills, including:

- 1) Recognizing all uppercase and lowercase letters when named by the teacher
- 2) Identifying all uppercase and lowercase letters by naming them
- 3) Identifying all alphabet letter sounds
- 4) Applying his phonics letter-sound skills to support fluent decoding of grade-level words and text
- 5) Increasing automatic sight word recognition of grade-level high frequency words. As basic reading skills develop, Juan may require specially designed instruction to increase reading fluency and comprehension.
- 6) Increasing use and understanding of vocabulary, including words within categories (e.g., types of foods, clothes, vehicles, animals, and colors).
- 7) Increasing oral comprehension of stories that have read to him, such as retelling basic details and answering questions. Juan may need increased processing time, as well as modeling of vocabulary and answers.

MATHEMATICS EVALUATION:

EXAMINER: School Psychologist

OVERVIEW: Juan's math skills were evaluated using a combination of classroom assessments and teacher observations, and standardized testing.

CLASSROOM/TEACHER OBSERVATIONS: Juan's classroom teacher are very concerned with his limited development of early math skills. He is not learning letters numbers and counting like his classmates are, including similar peers who are also learning English.

TESTING: Juan completed select tests of the Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ-III) on 2/6/2013 with C. Sewell, Special Education Teacher. Juan's results are judged to be valid and reliable as interpreted. He demonstrated an appropriate level of interest

and cooperation with the standardized testing procedures, did not require any modifications to the standardized protocol, and appeared to be showing his best effort overall.

- The results show how well Juan performed compared to a group of students the same age from across the United States.
- Most children (68 in 100, or 68%) demonstrate skills in the “Average” range with Standard Scores (SS) from 85 to 115. Scores below 85 indicate a possible “Normative Weakness.”
- Grade equivalent scores (GE) are also given, which are the least reliable of scores, and should be viewed only as general estimates of the level at which Juan might be instructed.

SCORES:

WJ-III Math Calculation Skills Composite: not yet

- Calculation: not yet
- Math Fluency: not yet

WJ-III Math Reasoning Composite: SS=34, GE<K.0

- Applied Problems: SS=53, GE<K.0
- Quantitative Concepts: SS=62, GE<K.0

SKILLS DEMONSTRATED: Juan can show small quantities on his fingers of one hand. He also counts to 10 by rote, and shows knowledge of some size/comparison concepts and shapes. Juan does not yet recognize, identify, or write any single digits numbers (even simple numbers like 1). He also does not yet count objects with one-to-one correspondence.

MARKERS FOR LEARNING DISABILITY: Juan demonstrates weaknesses learning grade level arithmetic. Juan also demonstrates weaknesses in his short-term memory and language development which may be impacting his math development.

IEP RECOMMENDATIONS: Juan requires a Special Education “Individual Education Program” (IEP) with goals for increasing his math skills, including:

- 1) Counting by rote to 100 (kindergarten target).
- 2) Reading numerals from 0 to 31 (kindergarten target).
- 3) Using a pencil/pen and paper to copy copying numerals from 1 to 10, working toward writing them from memory.
- 4) Counting objects in a set of up 20 (kindergarten target), and solving simple addition story problems (for example, You have 2 cookies and get 1 more; How many do you have all together?).
- 5) Recognizing, naming and describing shapes, including circle, square, triangle, rectangle, oval, diamond, heart, and star (preschool target). Currently, Juan can recognize (in English) star, heart, circle, line, square, cone, diamond, and oval, but not triangle or rectangle. He recognizes only star (estrella), heart (corazon), circle (circulo), and line (fila) in Spanish.
- 6) Recognizing and naming colors, including red, blue, yellow, green, purple, orange, black, brown, gray, pink, and white (preschool target). Currently, Juan can recognize (in English) black and pink, but not red, blue, green, yellow, orange, purple, white, or brown. He does not recognize any colors in Spanish.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE EVALUATION:

EXAMINER: School Psychologist

OVERVIEW: Juan’s writing skills were evaluated using a combination of classroom assessments and teacher observations, and standardized testing.

CLASSROOM/TEACHER OBSERVATIONS: Juan’s classroom teachers are very concerned with his limited development of early writing skills. He is not learning how to write numbers, letters, and simple words like his classmates are, including similar peers who are also learning English.

TESTING: Juan completed select tests of the Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ-III) on 2/6/2013 with C. Sewell, Special Education Teacher. Juan's results are judged to be valid and reliable as interpreted. He demonstrated an appropriate level of interest and cooperation with the standardized testing procedures, did not require any modifications to the standardized protocol, and appeared to be showing his best effort overall.

- The results show how well Juan performed compared to a group of students the same age from across the United States.
- Most children (68 in 100, or 68%) demonstrate skills in the "Average" range with Standard Scores (SS) from 85 to 115. Scores below 85 indicate a possible "Normative Weakness."
- Grade equivalent scores (GE) are also given, which are the least reliable of scores, and should be viewed only as general estimates of the level at which Juan might be instructed.

SCORES:

Written Expression Composite: not yet

- Writing Fluency: not yet
- Writing Samples: SS=80, GE<K.0

Other Writing Tests:

- Spelling: SS=79, GE<K.0
- Spelling of Sounds: SS=65, GE<K.0

SKILLS DEMONSTRATED: Juan demonstrated that he can copy shapes and letters, can write the letter X and his name when asked, with some letter reversals. Juan does not yet know how to spell any letters other than X. When asked to write any letters or numbers that he knows he made a S-shape on turned horizontally and said it was an "ee", a Z-shape and said it was a "co," a 2-shape and said it was a "zee", a B-shape and said it was a "co", and a P-shape and said it was a "zee". When asked to write letters that made specific sounds (e.g., Write the letter that makes the /s/ or /n/ sound), Juan said "I can't."

MARKERS FOR LEARNING DISABILITY: Juan demonstrates a significant weakness in his expressive language skills (in both English and Spanish), as well as, in his short-term memory – all skills significantly related to writing development. He also demonstrates significant weaknesses in his associative long-term memory, and on cognitive tests he demonstrated difficulty learning name-symbol associations. Further, Juan is showing difficulty learning orthographic skills for connecting letters and sounds.

IEP RECOMMENDATIONS: Juan requires a Special Education "Individual Education Program" (IEP) with goals for increasing his writing skills, including:

- 1) Copying all upper- and lower-case letters of the alphabet from a model, working toward doing this from memory.
- 2) Writing his first name without reversals, working toward writing his last name too.
- 3) Copying simple words from a model, working toward using phonemes and letter-sound knowledge to attempt phonetic spelling of simple words. Suggest using a phonics-based spelling curriculum such as "Words Their Way."
- 4) Demonstrating grade level writing, such as drawing a picture and labeling the parts with words.

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & BEHAVIORAL EVALUATION:

EXAMINER: School Psychologist

OVERVIEW: Juan's social-emotional and classroom organizational skills were evaluated with his classroom teachers, L. Garcia and M. Goode, observing him with a modified FWPS Special Services Classroom Academic and Behavior Evaluation in December 2012.

STRENGTHS: Juan is observed to demonstrate many strengths. He has a group of friends, refrains from saying hurtful things to others, and controls his anger or hurt feeling when denied his own way. Ms. Garcia notes that Juan "follows the routine to the best of his ability, transitions well, and sits quietly." Ms. Goode notes that Juan "gets along well with peers and is respectful to staff."

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: Juan's teachers observe some "great" concerns with his organizational skills, including difficulty completing kindergarten work in group settings without one-on-one teacher support, difficulty in less structured settings, incomplete classroom work, and difficulty keeping track of books and materials.

ATYPICAL BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS: Juan's teachers observe some "great" concerns with behavior, including off-task and distractible behavior. Ms. Garcia notes that "Juan is often distracted and off-task. He meets his basic needs, however, he contributes very little to class discussion. If asked a question, his response is "I don't remember." His lack of progress and engagement is a major concern."

AREAS OF GREATEST DIFFICULTY: Ms. Garcia notes that Juan's greatest difficulty is "participation and retaining/demonstrating learning across all areas, and working independently and completing work correctly." Ms. Goode notes that his greatest difficulty is "completing class work and all academic areas – reading, math, and writing."

IEP RECOMMENDATIONS: Juan requires a Special Education "Individual Education Program" (IEP) with goals for increasing his classroom organizational skills, including:

1) Following classroom morning entry routine (e.g., hang up backpack, get out home-school folder, check-in for lunch) with decreased need for adult reminders and prompting.

2) Following class work routine (e.g., writing name on assignment, turning in to appropriate place) with decreased need for adult reminders and prompting.

Note that Juan may need picture schedules showing the steps in these procedures that he can refer to.

OTHER EVALUATION:

EXAMINER: School Psychologist

OVERVIEW: Juan's knowledge of kindergarten concepts was assessed with the Bracken School Readiness Assessment (Bracken 3) in February 2013. Juan demonstrated receptive knowledge ("Look at all of the colors. Show me which color is...") of concepts important to early learning, including:

- 2 of 10 colors tested (including black and pink, but not red, blue, green, yellow, orange, purple, white, or brown.) He knew no colors in Spanish.
- 2 of 7 letters tested (including X and S, but not A, W, K, H, or Q). He knew X in Spanish, but not S.
- 0 of 13 numbers tested (not numbers 0 to 9, nor the quantities 3-, 6-, or 9-things). Juan knew no numbers in Spanish either.
- 6 of 10 size/comparison concepts tested (including big, small, long, little, short, and match, but not not-the-same, different, tall, or deep). In Spanish, Juan knew the same concepts, including big (grande), small (chiquito), long (largo), little (pequeno), shot (cortos), and match (hacen el par), but not not-the-same (no son iguales), different (diferentes), tall (alta), or deep (profunda).
- 11 of 17 shapes tested (including star, heart, circle, line, square, cone, round, diamond, oval, row, and pyramid, but not triangle, rectangle, check-mark, cylinder, cube, or curve). In Spanish, Juan knew star (estrella), heart (corazon), circle (circulo), and line (fila), but not square (cuadrado), triangle (triangulo), or cone (cono).

Compared with norms for children his age, Juan's performance in English is well below average (SS=45; PR<0.1%). There are no norms for the Spanish version. Juan demonstrated more receptive knowledge of concepts in English than Spanish. His overall performance was typical of children under 3 years of age in the national norm. Specific suggestions for instruction have been incorporated into academic recommendations.

DISCUSSION:

Juan is experiencing significant challenges learning how to read, write, and perform mathematics. Part of this is due to the fact that he is a dual-language learner who is still learning English, but this is not the primary factor. Juan demonstrates generalized delays in his acquisition of receptive and expressive language skills, in both Spanish and English. Also, Juan's short-term memory and associative long-term memory skills are not as strong as most children his age. Together, these weaknesses in cognitive "brain" skills for learning are making it very difficult for Juan to learn how to read, write, and perform mathematics.

The evaluation group, including Juan's mother, carefully considered these results and concluded that Juan has learning disabilities, in addition to English language learning, impacting his learning success. The evaluation group determined that Juan is eligible for Special Education under the "Specific Learning Disability" (SLD) eligibility category based on severe discrepancy with professional judgement (for OSPI compliance) and patterns of strengths and weaknesses diagnostic of a specific learning disability.

SEVERE DISCREPANCY: Although severe discrepancy is not supported by research as a scientifically valid approach to identifying learning disabilities, academic achievement composite scores significantly below a general intellectual ability score (using the published OSPI tables) is one criteria Washington State recognizes for special education eligibility for "Specific Learning Disability."

The State of Washington Severe Discrepancy Tables could not be used because Juan is in kindergarten and the tables specify that they can only be used with children in 1st grade or higher. Juan's general intellectual ability is estimated by nonverbal indicators, because he is a dual-language learner, to be within the average range (KABC-2 NVI SS=94; DAS-2 SNC SS=96). Children who score in the average range (85 to 115) can generally be expected to be successful in school. And yet, Juan is demonstrating academic achievement in basic reading skills (SS=70) and math reasoning (SS=34) that is well below the average range. Professional judgment is used to conclude that there is a severe discrepancy.

PATTERNS OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:

Reading: Juan demonstrates normative weaknesses in cognitive skills important for reading development, including short-term memory, associative memory, and crystallized knowledge and language skills. Juan may also demonstrate normative weaknesses in his rapid retrieval of lexical or word information from long-term memory. Juan may be struggling with reading because he is limited in the amount of information he can hold in short-term memory, and because his vocabulary and language skills are not as well developed as most children his age. Juan also demonstrates significant weaknesses in his associative long-term memory which is associated with reading development.

Writing: Juan demonstrates a significant weakness in his expressive language skills (in both English and Spanish), as well as, in his short-term memory – all skills significantly related to writing development. He also demonstrates significant weaknesses in his associative long-term memory, and on cognitive tests he demonstrated difficulty learning name-symbol associations. Further, Juan is showing difficulty learning orthographic skills for connecting letters and sounds.

Math: Juan demonstrates weaknesses learning grade level arithmetic. Juan also demonstrates weaknesses in his short-term memory and language development which may be impacting his math development.

LEARNING PROBLEMS ARE NOT CAUSED BY OTHER FACTORS: The evaluation group determined that the Juan's learning difficulties are NOT primarily the result of other factors including:

- 1) A lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math: Juan HAS received appropriate instruction in reading and mathematics provided by qualified personnel, including additional targeted intervention in reading and math skills through differentiated classroom instruction. He HAS received repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals which was provided to parents through his report card and parent conferences.
- 2) A visual, hearing, or motor disability: Juan does NOT have visual, hearing, or motor disabilities.
- 3) Intellectual disability (formerly called "mental retardation"): Juan does NOT demonstrate an intellectual disability.
- 4) Emotional disturbance: Juan does NOT demonstrate any significant emotional or behavioral disturbances.

- 5) Cultural factors: There are no cultural factors that would be the primary cause of Juan's learning difficulties. There are many other children from similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds as Juan, but who are experiencing learning success.
- 6) Environmental or economic disadvantage: There are no environmental or economic factors present that would be the primary cause of Juan's learning difficulties.
- 7) Limited English proficiency: Although this is an important factor, it is NOT the primary factor for Juan's learning challenges. Juan demonstrates generalized delays in his development of language skills in both his first and second languages.

Adverse Educational Impact:

Juan's learning disability, which includes significant weaknesses in receptive and expressive language development, long-term associative memory for learning new information, and short-term memory, has an adverse impact on his learning success in reading, writing, and math.

Relate Results to General Education: *same as Adverse Ed. Impact above*

Because of the identified disability and adverse educational impact, Juan has needs that cannot be addressed exclusively through education in general education classes with or without individual accommodations, and he needs Special Education.

Juan requires SDI in reading, mathematics, writing, and communication.

Specially designed instruction should take into consideration Juan's emerging English proficiency, and use gestures and visuals paired with verbal input to increase understanding, and provide increased time to process verbal input before responding.

Specially designed instruction should take into consideration Juan's short-term memory weaknesses, including:

- 1) Helping Juan focus on the necessary information, for example by projecting the information onto a screen or writing it on a page in front him. It is also important to minimize the factors that will interfere with Juan's attention to the presentation of information.
- 2) Helping Juan get information into working memory by feeding smaller amounts of information at a time, breaking information into smaller parts; by helping him to chunk the information into more meaningful parts; and by directing his attention to the important elements in the presentation, for example, by highlighting key words, by pointing to crucial items, or by saying "Look at this!" or "This is important!"
- 3) Helping Juan keep information in working memory, by rehearsing the information often while the he is working on it, for example, rephrasing key points often enough to keep them active in working memory; by having Juan restate and paraphrase the information (for example, directions or summary of what he just listened to). Presenting information with visual cues can also be helpful.