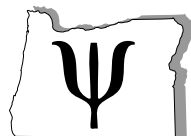


Twenty-One Reasons Why English is Hard to Learn

1. The bandage was wound around the wound.
2. The farm was used to produce produce.
3. The dump was so full that it has to refuse more refuse.
4. We must polish the Polish furniture.
5. He could lead if he would get the lead out.
6. The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
7. Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
8. A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
9. When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
10. I did not object to the object.
11. The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
12. There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
13. They were too close to the door to close it.
14. The buck does funny things when the does are present.
15. A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
16. To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
17. The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
18. After a number of injections my jaw got number.
19. Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.
20. I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
21. How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend.

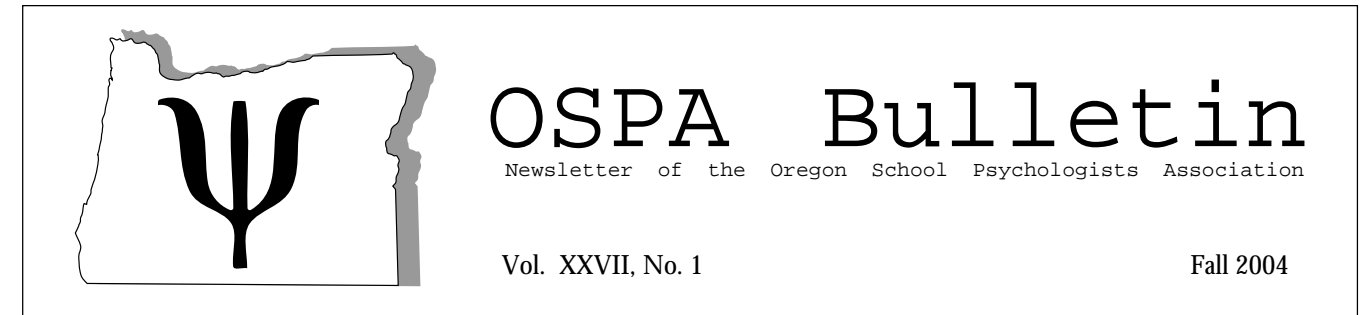
(Reprinted from South Carolina's School Psych Scene, April 2004)

Oregon School Psychologists Association



OSPA
#419
25 NW 23rd Place, Suite 6
Portland Oregon 97210-5599

The Oregon School Psychologists Association provides leadership in creating a brighter future for all Oregon children through professional affiliation, collaborative problem-solving, and promotion of practices that are both innovative and based on solid psychological and educational research.



OSPA Fall Conference Features National Figures

"THE CHANGING HORIZON OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY" is the title of this year's fall conference, as prepared by co-chairs Vinny Martin and Mark Downing and their conference committee. The meeting will take place in Lincoln City, at The Inn at Spanish Head.

The schedule has a different look in 2004. What in the past has been a one- or two-day event (Friday, or Friday-Saturday) will begin Wednesday this year with an optional preconference workshop on Wednesday. The event will feature Woodcock-Johnson batteries co-author Kevin McGrew, who will address the topic of assessment methods using the Cattell-Horn-Carroll theory, especially in light of recent research and the most recent national education policies.

Events Thursday and Friday will feature Randy Kamphaus (co-author of the BASC scales), the University of Oregon's Jeff Sprague, and Kansas school psychologist Dawn Miller.

Kamphaus will make two presentations on Thursday. In a morning session he will offer research data showing that the services most schools provide relate little to children's actual behaviors in schools; he will propose solutions that better meet children's emotional and behavioral needs.

In his afternoon session Kamphaus will acknowledge the difficulties many school practitioners face in working with different systems of classification (e.g., DSM and IDEA), and offer strategies to facilitate the work. In a Friday session, Kamphaus will address directly the issues of interpretation and application of the newly-revised Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC-2), which is due to be available to schools this fall.

Dawn Miller will explain how academic and behavioral concerns have been addressed in Kansas, via a carefully thought out problem-solving process. The state has worked to link the process to their safe schools initiatives and their special educa-

tion identification process, as well as other programs. In a follow-up session, Miller will illustrate how the process can be, and is being, extended to Positive Behavior Support and Reading First projects.

Jeff Sprague's two sessions, on Friday afternoon, will address issues of supporting positive school discipline for all students and enhancing school-wide discipline programs that incorporate support for high risk students. Sprague will address the need for schools and families to work together to diminish issues like bullying and other anti-social behaviors.

The OSPA Conference Committee has spent considerable time—since shortly after the 2003 meeting—working on this program, which is the largest and best-funded state conference OSPA has yet to offer. The schedule and additional information are available on the OSPA web site, at www.ospaonline.com.

The Conference Committee spent months working on this program.

Using the WISC-IV to Assess Students With a Learning Disability No Cause for Concern

by Milton J. Dehn

With the release of the WISC-IV in the fall of 2003, anecdotal reports that LD students' WISC-IV FSIQ scores were much lower than their previous WISC-III FSIQ scores led some practitioners to question the use of the WISC-IV for assessing students with a specific learning disability. Given the concerns reported by some school psychologists, [the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction] issued a temporary memo in the fall of 2003 telling school psychologists to discontinue use of the WISC-IV for learning disability evaluations. Reports of sig-

nificantly lower FSIQ scores for children with LD seemed plausible, given that more processing subtests (Digit Span, Letter-Number Sequencing, and Symbol Search) are used in the computation of the WISC-IV FSIQ.

Revisions of intellectual scales, such as the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), usually produce significantly lower IQ scores than their predecessors (Slate & Saarnio, 1995). For example, studies of the WISC-III (Carlton & Sapp, 1997; Lyon, 1995; Wechsler, 1991) after it was released consistently found its mean

FSIQ to be several points lower than the WISC-R FSIQ. Lower IQ scores on revised tests have often been attributed to the Flynn effect, even with LD populations (Truscott & Frank, 2001). Flynn (1999) reported an increase in IQ of approximately three IQ points per decade. Paradoxically, the increasing IQ of the population results in lower individual IQ scores when norms are updated (Lewis et al., 2004). When IQ scores of children referred for learning disabilities drop, the result can be a lower placement rate, especially when a simple difference or regression method

continues on p. 4

From Oregon's NASP Delegate

NASP NEWS by Karen O'Brien, NASP Delegate

Summer Delegate Assembly: This year we met as a group in Nashville, Tennessee to conduct the business of NASP, make plans for the year and we received some professional development in the areas of "Knowledge Based Decision Making" and the "Will to Govern Well." President Lee Huff stated his goals for the year: to increase minority membership in NASP; update and further develop the training program database to understand better the shortage of school psychologists; improve responsiveness to the needs of membership; and develop the concept of "Will to Govern Well" to improve leadership effectiveness.

The Delegate Assembly approved a \$4.8 million dollar budget. Most of the revenue for this budget is generated by your membership dues (52%) as well as convention revenues (17%), publication sales (12%) and certification dues (7%). Monies are spent on salaries and benefits for the NASP office staff, leadership meetings and services to members.

NASP Elections: The NASP primary elections are coming up at the end of September. You must be a member by September 1, 2004 to vote in the primary that starts on September 30th. This year we will be voting on-line (or by paper ballot, if you request one) for secretary and president-elect. Your September Communiqué Lists the persons who are interested in running for those positions. You may vote for one of them or you may write in a name. Please participate in the NASP primary and elections. The election will be held in February 2005. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about this process.

Position Statements: The Delegate Assembly approved revisions of two position statements: "Periodic Reevaluation for Students with Disabilities" and "Comprehensive Service Delivery". We also approved a new position statement entitled "Sexual Minority Youth". All NASP position statements can be found on the NASP website at www.nasponline.org and then click on NASP & School Psychology on the home page and go down the row of items to position statements.

NASP Website: The NASP "Members Only" area has been revised! There are links to past issues of the Communiqué and School Psychology Review; PowerPoint presentations you can download and use in your schools; and a variety of electronic communities. Any NASP member has access to a

variety of state and topic area communities. Using the "Members Only" area is a great way to communicate with colleagues across the country. You can subscribe to any community and receive emails whenever a posting has been made. Give this a try and check out all your other member benefits! Feel free to contact me if you have difficulty with this part of the website - I have great directions, although I think it is user friendly. You will need your NASP member number and your password to access the site, as always.

NEED MONEY FOR A PROJECT???: The NASP Children's Fund has two funding sources - one for service projects that directly benefit children. You can receive up to \$5,000.00 for a service project OR \$500.00 for a "Youth Empowered Mini-Grant" that is student driven and helps students and a supporting adult (school psychologist) develop one or more of the 40 Developmental Assets. Go to www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/childfund.html for proposal information. Let's see some Oregon grant projects listed in the Communiqué next year!

Convention: The 2005 NASP Convention will be held in Atlanta, Georgia at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel March 29-April 2. Convention rates are \$155 by February 25th for members and \$55 for student members. After February 25th, the rates increase to \$205 for members and \$60 for student members. Non-NASP members pay \$305 and \$375, respectively. Hotel rates are \$155 single; \$165 double and \$101 student, plus taxes, of course! You can find more information about the convention on the NASP website at www.nasponline.org/conventions. Hope to see you there!

New Publication: The second edition of *Helping Children at Home and School* (the hardout notebook) is ready. NASP has put the hardouts on a CD-ROM (PC and Mac compatible) that also has live web links. You can buy both in a package for \$125 or separately \$79 for the binder and \$63 for the CD-ROM (these are member prices). You can call NASP at 866-331-6277 or order on-line. I will also have order forms for you at the OSPA Fall Conference, if you want to wait until then.

Membership: Please remember to renew your membership if you have not done so already. Thank you to those who have renewed! If you would like a membership application, please feel free to contact me or you can join on the web at www.naspweboservices.org.

Contacting Me: Email at home is kbrien@harborside.com or at work kbrien@rossburg.k12.or.us. You may also call me at home 541-247-2740 (Fridays-Mondays); 541-679-3576 (Tues-Thurs eves) or at work 541-440-4038.

Association Membership Information

Oregon School Psychologists Association END OF FISCAL YEAR 03-04 TREASURER'S REPORT September 8, 2004

ACCOUNT STATUS:	
Checking Account(6-30-04)	\$ 4,104.03
Charles Schwab Money Market (6-30-04)	\$10,138.40
Domini Social Equity Fund (6-30-04)	\$ 4,029.94
Liz Gullion Funds (6-30-04)	
Vanguard Fixed Income GNMA	\$ 3,603.25
Wellington	\$ 6,122.29
TOTAL ASSETS:	\$18,272.37

EXPENDITURES BY AREA (Expenses to date 7-1-03 to 06-30-04)

Areas	Allowance	Spent	Balance
Board Meetings	\$ 500.00	244.23	255.77
Contingency	\$ 500.00	120.94	379.06
Fall Conference 03	\$12,625.00	12,848.32	(-223.32)
Future of Sc. Psy	\$ 500.00	0	500.00
Mailbox/phone	\$ 300.00	251.73	48.27
Membership	\$ 750.00	187.57	562.43
NASP	\$ 1,000.00	972.24	27.76
Public Relations	\$ 325.00	16.80	308.20
PR: Bulletin	\$ 600.00	120.25	479.75
PR: Web/Listserv	\$ 1,000.00	850.00	150.00
Travel	\$ 2,400.00	920.00	1,480.00
TOTALS	\$20,500.00	\$16,532.08	\$3,967.92

NOTE: We have spent \$4078.64 so far in preparing for the 2004 Fall Conference and it is not reflected in the above expenses. OSPA has spent \$20,610.72 total during this fiscal year and has put \$3,306.85 into savings.

NET INCOME BY ACCOUNT

Membership Dues for 03-04	\$ 4,935.00
Fall Conference 2003	\$18,605.00
NASP Minority Scholarship Donation	\$ 25.00
Dividends: Charles Schwab accounts (7-03-6-04)	\$ 18.19
Interest: Charles Schwab account (7-03-6-04)	\$ 3.68
Dividends: Liz Gullion accounts (7-03 to 6-04)	\$ 330.70
NET INCOME TOTAL:	\$23,917.57

Respectfully submitted on September 8, 2004
Karen O'Brien, Treasurer

From the Membership Chair

Thanks to all who have renewed membership. For those who still need to renew, the easiest way to do so is to go to the OSPA website. For those who would rather pay by check, you can mail me a check along with your up-to-date address and phone.

Attendees at the Fall Conference should know that having membership be up-to-date makes the registration process quick and easy. If you have questions or concerns about membership, please contact Todd Nicholson at todd_nicholson@parkrose.k12.or.us.

Todd Nicholson
8330 SW 2nd Avenue
Portland 97219

Volunteers Needed!!

OSPA is currently in need of volunteers for a variety of positions. Please let Shannon Van Horn, OSPA's current Chairperson know as soon as possible if you are interested by e-mail at: shannon@workshed.com

- Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Membership Chairperson
- Conference Committee Co-chairperson

Any time you can volunteer would be greatly appreciated!

OSPA Bulletin electronic edition?

An increasing number of state newsletters are being published in PDF format, to be read on-line or printed out at home or at the office. It saves both paper and time. If you have comments about this idea, please let the editor know (streight@rsiss.net)

OSPA ONLINE SERVICES

The Oregon School Psychologists Association currently offers two types of online services. The Association provides a website, and online discussion groups (aka "listservers.")

The website is available at <http://www.ospaonline.com>. Here you can find answers to commonly asked questions, such as "When is the next training session?" and "How do I join OSPA?" We also maintain an archive of old newsletters on the website.

Listservers are a nifty way for school psychologists to keep in touch. To join an on-line discussion group, you send an email to webmaster@www.ospaonline.com and indicate an interest. The webmaster then adds your email address to the list and gives you the email address to use to access the list. After that, any email sent to this general list address will be forwarded automatically to all members of the list. So, for example, you could ask a lot of OSPA members for their opinions with only one, teeny email.

Listservers are also a nifty way for OSPA to keep you informed of late-breaking news. So the Association encourages all members to join the on-line discussion group. Currently, less than half the OSPA membership has signed up for the discussion group.

If you have any ideas for improving the online services, or if you notice bugs in the way these services function, please contact Philip Bowser, the OSPA Webmaster at webmaster@www.ospaonline.com. Thanks for your help!

New/Revised Test Versions: When to Get On Board? Best Practices in Assessment

by Betsy C. Greier, PhD, NCSP

(Adapted from South Carolina Association of School Psychologists
School Psych Scene, ol XXXVI, No. 4)

The year 2003 introduced several revised tests that are commonly used by school psychologists for assessment of students' cognitive abilities including the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales: 5th Edition (SB-V) in February of 2003 and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children: 4th Edition (WISC-IV) in the summer of 2003. Also fairly recent, in the spring of 2002 the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI-III) was released. These revised assessment tools create several important ethical and legal issues that are important for school psychologists to consider.

As trained professionals, we know the utility and significance of using the most recent tests to adequately and appropriately assess a child's cognitive abilities. All of our professional organizations include these mandates in their ethical standards. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) code of ethics entitled Principles for Professional Ethics (2000) maintains this directive: "School psychologists... [choose] instruments and techniques ... that have up-to-date standardization data and are applicable and appropriate for the benefit of the child."

Often, school budgets seem to dictate when school psychologists are able to obtain these new testing materials. However, school psychologists are bound to practice ethically and legally when evaluating students. If schools do not provide these instruments in a suitable amount of time to allow for training, then the agency will be violating the standards outlined by the Regulations from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which clearly state that "the public agency uses technically sound instruments" (Jacob & Hartshorne, 2003, p. 86). The use of old versions of tests using outdated normative data is not considered appropriate. So, "how long" do school agencies and/or school psychologists have to purchase the new testing materials and to receive appropriate training to administer these tests?

Dombrowski (2003) reported that there is limited guidance about "how long" school psychologists have to transition to using the new instruments. However, a proposed standard is offered that states "Psychologists should adopt and use the most recent version of an intellectual assessment instrument within one year of its publication" (p. 12). A one-year timeline is proposed in order to allow for good training to use the tool, to provide additional time to research the technical adequacy of the tool, and to allow for psychologists and school districts to budget the money to purchase the instrument. Thus, all agencies should be using the WPPSI-III at this time considering that it has been available for almost 2 years. Psychologists should be using the SB-V by February of this year and the WISC-IV by the summer. This time allotment is consid-

ered appropriate and the best practice in incorporating these newly revised tests into a psychologists' assessment practices.

As a practicing school psychologist, I see many children who have had previous psychological evaluations that I review as part of my assessment. From time to time, I come across reports that have been completed by psychologists recently using very old versions of the WISC (i.e., WISC-Revised) and/or SB. When discussing this finding among my colleagues, they have had similar experiences. When I spoke with a representative on the Board of Examiners in Psychology through the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation about this issue, I was informed that this problem (i.e., finding that a report was completed using outdated assessment tools) should be reported as soon as possible by sending a copy of the report, with all identifying information removed or blacked out, to the Board as soon as possible through mail or fax (803-896-4687). The complaint would be investigated so that this unethical practice could be ceased. It will be important for us, as professionals, to work together to make sure that the children and students we serve are being assessed in an ethical manner to ensure that their individual needs are met appropriately.

Please feel free to contact me via email (grierb@cdd.sc.edu) if you have questions, comments, or concerns about any of the issues presented within this article. I especially welcome comments and additional questions about assessment issues and/or other topic areas that present possible ethical dilemmas so that we might be able to learn from each other to best help the children with whom we work. I will look forward to hearing from you and collaborating with you to promote best practices in following our professional standards and ethics as we practice school psychology.

References

- Dombrowski, S.C. (2003). Ethical standards and best practices in using new revised tests. *Communique*, 32 (1), 12-13.
- Jacob, S., & Hartshorne, T.S. (2003). Ethics and law for school psychologists (4th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- National Association of School Psychologists. (2000). Principles for professional ethics. Bethesda, MD.

(Editor's note: Betsy Greier is a licensed and certified school psychologist and Assistant Professor in Clinical Pediatrics at USC School of Medicine)

State Association News/Business

Committee Recommends State Dues Increase

At the summer meeting of the OSPA Committee of the Whole, the members assembled decided to propose to the general membership that OSPA membership dues for the 2005-06 school year be raised. OSPA bylaws require that the proposed dues increase be voted on at the annual meeting. That vote will thus take place at the fall conference in October.

The proposed dues increases are:

- \$10 for regular members (this would increase dues to \$50 per year).
- \$5 for Students (this would increase dues to \$15 per year)
- \$10 for Retired members (this would increase dues to \$20 per year)

The decision to propose a dues increase to the membership was based on the following reasons:

OSPA has not been a dues increase for at least five years.

During that time the association has incurred some extra expenses. Some of the increase in costs include the cost of postage and paying for a website and a webmaster to keep the website current.

A survey that took place during the 2002-03 membership year indicated that members supported a dues increase.

Comments from OSPA members on the dues increase are invited. You may do so by contacting the OSPA chairperson by going to ospaonline.com and clicking on Contact OSPA. We look forward to hearing from you and/or seeing you at the conference.

Give OSPA Your Email Address!

By Philip Bowser
webmaster@ospaonline.com

Please send your email address to me! Why?

It is time and cost efficient to contact OSPA members via email. Besides speed of delivery, it saves paper and postage expense. Plus it reduces the amount of time that volunteer leaders spend in folding, stuffing, sealing, addressing, stamping, and running to the post office. Yet only a fraction of OSPA members have given their email addresses to the Association and, over time, many of these have gone bad.

All over the world, more and more people use the Internet for communications and business transactions. Just a few weeks ago, the National Association of School Psychologists held an election online. To allow participation by those who do not have access to email, the familiar paper ballot was available upon request. Only two members requested a paper ballot, and only one paper ballot was returned. Thousands of votes were cast at

a secure website. So it appears that it may be time for OSPA to develop our electronic publishing efforts even more. But we cannot do that unless we have an accurate and complete list of member email addresses.

OSPA distributes the list of email addresses to other OSPA members in the directory. But that's it. OSPA does not sell or give away your email address to businesses.

The easiest way to deliver your email address to OSPA is to send some email (using the internet service at which you prefer to receive OSPA communications) to me at: webmaster@ospaonline.com. I can then electronically transfer your address to a database without having to re-type it. That reduces the chance that my clumsy fingers will render your address inoperable.

Let's shoot for 100% participation! All OSPA members—even if you think your current email is OK—send me a note anyway! That will help us to correct errors in the current list.

Thanks for your help with this project



The *OSPA Bulletin*, the official publication of the Oregon School Psychologists Association, is published four times a year and distributed to members as a membership benefit. OSPA is a nonprofit, non-partisan, educational association of professional school psychologists. It is dedicated to providing for the educational and mental health needs of all children and to advocating for their achievement of independence, dignity, and purpose of life.

Spokesperson: Shannon Van Horn
shannon@workshed.com

Co-Treasurers: Karen O'Brien
541.440.4038
kobrien@harborside.com

Phil Bowser
541.440.4308
webmaster@ospaonline.com

NASP Delegate: Karen O'Brien
541.440.4038
kobrien@harborside.com

OSPA Web Site:
<http://www.ospaonline.com>

The contents of this publication and the opinions expressed by its contributors do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of OSPA or the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) or their elected officials. Other newsletters for school psychologists may freely reprint from this bulletin. However, a reciprocal agreement is assumed. If this is not the case, please contact the editor in writing.

The *OSPA Bulletin* invites contributions. Professional issues and news, articles, questions, reviews, letters and graphic works should be sent to David Streight, 7735 SW 87th, Portland OR, 97223, or streight@rsiss.net. Changes of address should be sent to the same address.

Bulletin deadlines for future issues:
Winter, December 15, 2004
Spring, March 15, 2005

WISC-IV in LD, from p. 1

is used to compare IQ to achievement (Gaskill & Brantley, 1996). Among school psychologists, educators, parents, and students, a lower IQ score that prevents placement in special education can be a cause for concern.

Validity studies reported in the WISC-IV Technical and Interpretative Manual (Wechsler, 2003) found the mean WISC-IV FSIQ to be 2.5 points lower than the WISC-III mean in a nonreferred sample of 244. The same study also found the new Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) to be 2.4 points lower than the VIQ, the new Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI) to be 3.4 points lower than the PIQ, the new Working Memory Index (WMI) to be 1.5 points lower than the FDI, and the Processing Speed Index (PSI) to be 5.5 points lower than the WISC-III PSI. Given the 12 year span between the norming of the WISC-III and the WISC-IV, the FSIQ difference of 2.5 points could be accounted for by the Flynn effect (Lewis et al., 2004). The manual (Wechsler, 2003) also reports several studies of children with learning disorders. For example, a sample of 56 children with a reading disability, obtained a mean FSIQ of 89.1 and a composite score profile of PRI>PSI>VCI>WMI. Compared to a matched control group, the largest effect size was for the WMI score of 87 versus the PRI score of 99.8.

The WISC-IV manual does not report any WISC-III to WISC-IV FSIQ comparisons specifically for children with learning disorders. Thus, the primary purpose of this study was to determine how much of a lower FSIQ would be obtained by children with specific learning disabilities. The study also investigated the profile of composite scores for various types of learning disabilities.

Method

All of the 74 participants were children who were receiving programming for a specific learning disability and were being re-evaluated, in most cases for their three year reevaluation. School psychologists from five school districts in Wisconsin and three in Minnesota submitted test scores. Most of the subjects (88%) were from a large urban district in Minnesota. The children ranged in age from 8.1 to 16.7 years, with a mean age of 11.8. Grade placement ranged from 1st through 11th grade, with a mean of 5.8. Except for two Native Americans and one African American, all of the participants were white, and the majority (59%) were males. Each of the three main types of learning disorders was well represented. Thirty-five of the children had a reading disability, 26 had a mathematics disability, and 30 had a written language disability, with many of the children (42%) identified as having more than one of these specific learning disabilities. A matched control group from the WISC-IV standardization sample could not be used because parent level of education was not available.

Results and Discussion

For the 74 LD subjects, the less than 1 point (.49) difference

between the mean WISC-III FSIQ of 92.08 and the WISC-IV FSIQ of 91.59 was not statistically significant. In contrast, the difference between the WISC-IV Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) and the WISC-III VIQ was significant, but not in the expected direction. The mean WISC-IV VCI of 92.82 was actually 3.40 points higher ($p < .01$) than the WISC-III VIQ of 89.42. There was no significant difference between the WISC-IV Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI) score of 96.86 and the WISC-III PIQ of 96.66. It was not possible to compare the Processing Speed scores and the new Working Memory Index with the WISC-III FDI because WISC-III PSI and FDI scores were not available. The WISC-IV PSI mean was 92.89 and the WMI mean was 90.49. The standard deviations for the composite scores were mostly in the 11 point range, with a low of 10.6 for the WISC-IV FSIQ and a high of 12.6 for the WISC-IV VCI.

Thus, the concern that most students referred for a learning disability skill obtain a much lower FSIQ on the WISC-IV than they would on the WISC-III seems to be unjustified. Of course, the average difference in FSIQ of approximately a half point does not mean that some examinees will not obtain widely divergent scores. In this study the standard deviation of the difference between the two FSIQs was 8.4. WISC-IV FSIQs ranged from 21 points lower to 24 points higher. Twenty-five percent of the subjects had WISC-IV FSIQs that were 7 or more points lower while 25% had WISC-IV FSIQs that were 4 or more points higher.

At first glance, the results seem puzzling. Why would the LD population not experience a decline in FSIQ, as predicted by the Flynn Effect and as seen in the general population (Wechsler, 2003)? The answer may lie in the altered structure of the WISC. Past WISC-R and WISC-III research has consistently found that many children with LD perform poorly on the Information and Arithmetic subtests (Mayes, Calhoun, & Crowell, 1998). Performance on the Information and Arithmetic subtests is related to academic learning and working memory (in the case of Arithmetic). These are usually areas of difficulty for students with a learning disability. Thus, the removal of the Information and Arithmetic subtests from the computation of the new WISC-IV verbal score (VCI) may account for the higher verbal score.

A change in the test's structure may also account for the lack of a decline from PIQ to PRI. The new PRI subtests require more fluid reasoning than the old PIQ subtests. Students with reading and written language disabilities may have strengths in fluid reasoning that were untapped by previous WISC versions. Giving more weight to fluid reasoning when computing the PRI may account for improved scores. However, this may not be the case for students with mathematics disabilities, who tend to perform more poorly on fluid reasoning tasks (Wechsler,

continues on next page

2003). The reduction in bonus points for speed may also account for higher WISC-IV scores than expected.

In contrast to the LD students' stronger performance on VCI and PRI, it appears that their processing composite scores, PSI and WMI, are lower and are accounting for the slight reduction in mean FSIQ that is occurring. The index profile also indicates that many students with a learning disability are going to have significant individual weaknesses in WMI. The WISC-IV index profile for all types of SLD was PRI>PSI>VCI>WMI, the same profile as that reported in the WISC-IV manual (Wechsler, 2003) for a sample of reading disabled subjects.

Given the current results, one might wonder whether the WISC-III may have been underestimating the general intelligence (g) and learning aptitudes of students referred for learning disabilities. This may have occurred because fluid reasoning was not measured in enough depth and/or because academic skills, math for example, were included in the FSIQ computation. On the other hand, the heavier weighting of working memory on the WISC-IV, which is often a weakness for LD students, may ultimately be shown to result in underestimates of g when assessing children with a learning disability.

Despite the limitations of this study, it provides evidence that the WISC-IV is a valid measure of the intellectual/cognitive abilities of students with learning disabilities. The concerns about the WISC-IV producing underestimates of LD students' IQs do not seem to have merit.

Partly in response to the concerns raised earlier this year, the Psychological Corporation recently made available tables for computing a General Ability Index (GAI) that is based only on the six VCI and PRI subtests, leaving out the WMI and PSI subtests. Ironically, this method may actually produce a higher estimate of general intellectual ability than a child would have obtained on the WISC-III, given the results of the current study. The other concern about using the GAI is that it leaves out the measurement of working memory, a critical cognitive component for all types of learning. Research (Swanson, 2000) has finally established that working memory is often a deficit for students with a learning disability. Not measuring it will not only result in an incomplete assessment but may result in a misleading estimate (too high) of the child's overall learning potential. Obviously, more research on the WISC-IV is needed so that practitioners can make informed decisions.

References

Carlton, M. & Sapp, G.L. (1997). Comparison of WISC-R and WISC-III scores of urban exceptional students. *Psycho-*

logical Reports, 80, 755-760.

Flynn, J. R. (1999). Searching for justice: The discovery of IQ gains over time. *American Psychologist*, 54, 5-20.

Gaskill, F. W., & Brantley, J. C. (1996). Changes in ability and achievement scores over time: Implications for children classified as learning disabled. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 14, 220-228.

Lewis, M., Sanborn, K., McGreevy, S., Tarquin, K., & Truscott, S. D. (2004)- February. What every school psychologist should know about the Flynn effect: Evidence for the use of revised and updated measures. *Communications*, 32, 29-32.

Lyon, M. A. (1995). A comparison between WISC-III and WISC-R scores for learning disabilities reevaluations. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 28, 253-255.

Mayes, S. D., Calhoun, S. L., & Crowell, E. W. (1998). WISC-III profiles for children with and without learning disabilities. *Psychology in the Schools*, 35, 309-316.

Slate, J. R., & Saarnio, D. A. (1995). Differences between WISC-III and WISC-R IQs: A preliminary investigation. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 13, 340-346.

Swanson, H. (2000). Are working memory deficits in readers with learning disabilities hard to change? *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 33, 551-566.

Truscott, S. D., & Frank, A. J. (2001). Does the Flynn effect affect IQ scores of students classified LD? *Journal of School Psychology*, 39, 319-334.

Wechsler, D. (1991). *Manual for the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Third Edition*. San Antonio: The Psychological Corporation.

Wechsler, D. (2003). *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Fourth Edition: Technical and Interpretative Manual*. San Antonio: The Psychological Corporation.

Editor's Note: Milton J. Dehn is president of the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association. This article is reprinted from the Fall, 2004 edition of the WSPA Newsletter

*OSPA Fall Conference
October 6-8, The Inn at
Spanish Head*