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Twice Exceptional Students: Identifying and Advocating for Gifted Students with Speech/Language Disorders

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-- [Amy] And at this time, it is a pleasure to introduce Angie Knoop this afternoon, who is going to be speaking on Twice Exceptional Students, Identifying and Advocating for Gifted Students with Speech/Language Disorders. Angie is an SLP with nearly 20 years of experience. She's worked in a school setting for 14 of those years, where she has developed a passion for gifted and twice exceptional children. Through extensive research and experience, she has developed the knowledge to advocate for such students and help educate parents, teachers, and students as well. So thank you so much for joining us, Angie, you can go ahead and turn on your mic.

- [Angie] Hello. So my name is Angie Knoop and I am a speech therapist who has worked with kids for about 20 years, and I have developed a passion for working with kids who are twice exceptional and gifted. We actually, I have a family history of giftedness, and I know saying family history sounds like it's a disease. I think some people would say that, instead of gifted, you could call it cursed just as easily. There are a lot of challenges that go along with being gifted. And through working at a school, I've realized that these kids who are twice exceptional, which means they have a learning disability of some type and they are gifted, they're often unrecognized, so they're not challenged, they're not accepted oftentimes.

And so I kind of have used my role as a speech therapist to advocate for these kids in different ways. I have looked into getting some kind of gifted certification, but, and Ohio, which is where I am, I can't add it to a speech therapy license. So I just basically have done a bunch of research, gone to the library, used Google, talked to a lot of people. And a lot of times what I find with these students is that kids will say things about them, like, he's so annoying, or, he's weird, do not invite him, or, he thinks he's funny. And I kind of feel like these kids are left out, and that's kind of why I have developed my passion for working with these kids. So the first couple slides I'll go through are student examples. So I just included the teacher report, kinda to show you their perspective. And my experience, a lot of times teachers don't fully understand

giftedness, and especially when it comes to twice exceptionality. And then, because this is speech related, I included some of the assessment from their speech therapist, and then a little bit of psych assessment just to kind of talk about the IQ and discrepancies in that, and then what the team ultimately determined. And so the first one, Dmitri Thawne, that's not his real name. I actually sent a message to the mom and said, "Hey, do you think he might have an alias," and she immediately responded and said, "He wants to be called Dmitri Thawne." So it didn't surprise me that he had a name. I think it's a good representation of his character.

This particular student, as you will learn, was very interested in language and words, word roots, and he actually explained to me, he picked this name because Dmitri has, he said, "A bunch of Russian roots," and Thawne is the last name of some superhero which was interesting to him. So, looking at the teacher report, he was described as imaginative and personable. He failed to submit assignments on time on a regular basis, to the point where he was almost withheld or held back in eighth grade. He would disregard suggestions for editing his writing assignments, and he often used vocabulary words that were unfamiliar to students or to his peers, making peer editing problematic.

And again, his assignments are rarely on time, although he was eager to participate in class. And then he currently had a grade of an F at the time of his evaluation. He didn't see the importance of deadlines and didn't often follow directions. In that particular class, he was the only student failing. He got along with his peers, but he wasn't particularly close to anyone. He never really had any emotional outbursts or questionable behavior, but he did lack self-help skills and he often had excuses, or he would just lie when he was confronted about missing assignments or deadlines for turning things in. And a lot of these characteristics are, they exemplify what twice exceptionality is, and we will get into those characteristics later. As far as the speech and language evaluation, in 2016 he was given the CELF-4. He was a fifth grader, his

receptive language was scored at 118, expressive was 105, and they determined that he had average speech and language skills at that time, and he did not receive speech therapy. And then, in 2019 he was reevaluated as part of his three-year reevaluation. He was an eighth grader, and this is the year where writing became a huge issue. They were saying he cannot write, he doesn't know how to write, kids won't and can't peer edit his papers because they don't know what he's saying. So, knowing that, I was the one who did his reevaluation, so I thought, well, I knew that his scores on language test, at least the CELF-4, was in the average to above average range. So I just gave him two words, I gave him one abstract noun, mundane, and then a concrete noun, cat, and I asked him to write a sentence.

And so he sat, and thought, and thought, and thought. It took him seven minutes to write a sentence using the word mundane. And on that particular word, he didn't know the meaning, so he asked me and I explained it, gave him a couple of examples. So I am gonna read his sentence, because it fascinates me. So what he came up with was: The common, mundane aspects of what humanity is known to neglect the base objective of when fused as a unitary subject are frequently visualized and registered under the commonplace aliases labor, undetermined effort quotas, and the orthodox theory as to why they commit themselves to such factors. To me, that makes zero sense.

I have no idea what he's saying. I think it's because he didn't understand the word mundane. He did ask once, but he did not ask for additional clarification or examples. So, rather than saying he didn't know, that's what he came up with, and I think that's part of the reason his peers were having trouble editing his papers. And then, when given the word cat, he came up with this sentence, and it took him five minutes to write just the first few words. And then finally I said, "How about you make up the sentence, I'll write it down?" So he said, "The subjective biologically present unit "is stereotypically motivated "at the reward of visualizing a digital image "of a juvenile cat."

So I kind of tried to pick that apart, and I said, "Are you saying that people are motivated "by looking at kittens?" And he said yes, like that was a perfectly acceptable sentence. And so then he went on to explain that he enjoys thinking of the most advanced and sophisticated words he can. He wanted to challenge himself. He read the dictionary for fun. And again, he was not identified as gifted, he was not seen as even smart, you know, by a lot of teachers, and so he was kind of doing this I think to prove he was intelligent, to show he was smart. And he described himself as disliking being bound by time and preferred to work at his own enjoyable pace. And then he would often make up words, like biopresence.

And I actually had to look it up. I thought, "I'm pretty sure that's not a word," but he said, "Well, bio means life, "and presence means exists, so it's the existence of life," which makes sense, but it's not a word, so you can't really judge that or grade it. When the psychologist did his, I guess his achievement test on the vocabulary portion, we actually kinda scored it together, because a lot of his words were made up or very sophisticated and that made sense, but we had to look up the answers.

And then, just an example, on his IQ score his verbal comprehension was 130, which is considered in the gifted range, his visual spatial was 117, and then working memory was 85, so there's a big discrepancy there, and then processing speed was 92. So I don't know how familiar you are with looking at those scores, but his full scale IQ was 107, so it looked like he was in the average range, when really he had much better verbal comprehension skills than that. And so that was one of the reasons he was not identified, because he didn't have good grades and he didn't score in the gifted range. So basically the team determined that he needed to improve functional communication, attention, social interactions, communication, and effective written expression skills. And he did have a diagnosis of ADHD, so his category was other health impaired. And then the next student is Baron von Human Shield, and this was a representation of his sense of humor, which in gifted kids is often unique. And he

thought the feudal system was funny. He had another student that he would joke around with about kind of how people ranked, and they called me a human shield. They thought that was funny. I was the lowest of the low. So his teachers identified him as someone who was tender-hearted and tried hard. He was unwilling to accept help, and in some classes he participated, in some he did not. Some he would ask questions and others not, so it really depended on the teacher. He also struggled with written language. He was a good speller, but would write in fragments, and reading comprehension was also an area of concern for him. He did not like to take notes, he wanted to do it in his head. He was organized and completed his work, he did turn his work in on time, but in this particular class he did not speak up if he didn't understand. And his grades were at or above average compared to classmates. He struggled with focus, complex or higher level reading skills, processing, social language, maturity, hypersensitivity, self-motivation, and social skills, and that was what the teachers had reported. So the team determined...

Oh, no, sorry, let me go over his WISC profile, this was his IQ. So his verbal comprehension was 121, which is high, but not quite at the gifted range, which is typically 130. Perceptual reasoning was 135, which is in the gifted range, processing speed 112, and working memory was 107, and his full scale IQ, 126. And 130 is typically the number that people look for, but if you see that 135, that's in the gifted range, and then he has some discrepancies there. His speech and language evaluation was very interesting. So in 2014 he had a 114 for core language, 119 for receptive, 112 for expressive. But the speech therapist who evaluated him also gave him the test at problem solving, and his total test score was 72, inferences were 61, and determining causes 54. I spoke to her and she said it was like a different kid, that she was shocked at his scores. And so, when he was due for reevaluation, I did the TOPS as well, and this time he had improved to 119 for total test and inferences, and then determining solutions, the domains are a little different, was 112, and that was his lowest subtest score. So he had improved quite a bit, and I believe he was dismissed at that time from

speech. But the, oh no, I'm sorry, I did the Pragmatics Profile because there were social concerns. So basically what it came down to was that he had difficulty asking and accepting help, initiating, maintaining, and terminating conversation, using gestures, facial expressions, and using humor. And again, some of this was based on what the teachers were describing, and so a lot of them did not get his sense of humor I think, but I did see that he had a sense of humor.

He would laugh, he would joke, he was sarcastic. So the needs that were determined were written expression, map calculation and application, reading comprehension, social language, and accepting help, and then he was identified as having a specific learning disability. So both of those two, as I said, were examples of two kids that I worked with who had some kind of language or social skills deficits, but also, they should have been identified as twice exceptional. And so just some general characteristics of gifted kids are asynchronous development, so that's basically an uneven development of cognitive, emotional and physical skills. And all kids vary, but I think within the gifted population you're gonna see a little more variance, a little more extremes.

So, for example, you might have a kid who's really, really good at math but not so great at reading. They may have advanced intellectual ability but they are behind on social or fine motor skills, or at least a discrepancy. So you might have a seven-year-old who is working at a sixth grade math level, a fourth grade reading level, and she might be second grade for fine motor skills. So that's just kind of that variation within the same kid, they don't develop evenly. They tend to be perfectionistic, and that doesn't mean that they do everything perfectly, that means it's a form of anxiety where they want everything to be perfect, so they procrastinate, they may be unhappy if things aren't up to their level of what they consider perfect, they have a keen sense of humor. They could be underachievers, because they're not always concerned with grades, they're more interested in learning about what they're interested in especially. And then there

was one term, overexcitabilities, and I do have a handout at the end that kind of goes into this a little more, but it's just, sometimes these things can be confused with ADHD, but it's psychomotor, sensual, imaginal, intellectual and emotional are the five categories. And so these are the main domains of giftedness, so you have cognitive, affective, behavioral, and creative characteristics. So for cognitive, abstract thinking ability, and the downfall of this is that they can be seen as disruptive or disrespectful toward authority and traditional thinking.

They're highly inquisitive, they ask a lot of questions, they love learning, they're typically early readers and often self-taught, excellent memory, they quickly learn and recall facts, and in the classroom you might see kids become bored with regular curriculum, they're impatient waiting for others. Another characteristic is advanced comprehension. They see and understand things more differently. So in the classroom they may dislike repetition, they may have poor interpersonal relationships because they're seen as a know-it-all, and they lack tolerance maybe for someone who isn't contributing in a meaningful way, someone who doesn't seem to be able to contribute validly.

They have a large vocabulary, and then independence in work and study. And then, for the creative domain you'll see that keen or unusual sense of humor. Sometimes it's almost, they can be critical, and again, that results in poor interpersonal relationships. They can be very sarcastic, sometimes it comes across as mean. Original thinkers, so they can be frustrated by inflexibility and conformity, and even penalties for not following directions because they think things should be a different way. They typically have an independent attitude and social behavior, and again, that kinda supports the idea that they don't like to conform, and they're inventive. Unwilling to accept authority without critically questioning, so kids who are gifted may be seen as a challenge to authority or tradition, which a lot of teachers don't like or may be uncomfortable with. They can formulate several solutions to a problem, and usually very quickly, so they

may ask lots of questions. I've been in classrooms where I've heard teachers say, "Stop asking questions," or, "We're not talking about that." So the kids kind of then begin to internalize that they're not supposed to ask questions, or that they're annoying. And then, lastly, they often have unique and clever responses. Affective, they have intense and deep emotions, which causes them to sometimes misinterpret their feelings or situations.

They're sensitive to feelings of others, which can make them vulnerable to criticism, and because of that intensity in their emotions, they internalize that and they feel like even the slightest criticism is a major negative comment. And then they have an increased need for success and recognition, which I think you could kind of see in the first student example especially. And then, high expectation of self and others, which may be frustrating, heightened sense of self-awareness. They tend to feel different, and so they may isolate themselves and they may have decreased social and emotional growth because they feel different, and so they don't maybe always interact with other kids. They have advanced moral judgment and a passionate sense of right and wrong. So they end up having unrealistic expectations, and the peers typically don't tolerate that type of thinking.

They can come across as bossy, so that leads to rejection and isolation. And the second student I gave you as an example, he would argue for days on end about something that he believed in, and there was no convincing him otherwise. As far as behavioral, they often have high energy, require less sleep. As a toddler, they may give up naps early, they have constant questions, always curious, spontaneous, limitless enthusiasm. They can be seen as weird, as strange, and kids who are gifted can become dissatisfied with not feeling challenged, and they become bored with what they consider mundane tasks. Highly frustrated due to high standards for themselves and for others, and then a volatile temper, especially as it relates to perceived failure. So I don't know that the, I have not experienced a lot of a volatile temper towards other

people. I have seen kids get very, very frustrated and angry if something doesn't go their way, and then nonstop talking. Again, I think that nonstop talking is curiosity, constant thoughts, making lots of connections. So if you think about twice exceptional and what that means, well, the word exceptional means unusual, not typical. I thought some of the synonyms were interesting. Uncommon, abnormal, atypical, extraordinary, rare, singular, strange, odd, anomalous. I think those are all really good descriptions of kids who are not only gifted, but especially twice exceptional. So if you look at average IQ standard scores, they're typically 85 to 115, or one standard deviation.

A gifted IQ standard score is typically accepted at 130 or above, or starting at two standard deviations above. And special education standard score, if you go just by that, is 70 or lower, or again, two standard deviations the other way from 100 as the mean. And then, twice exceptional, those are kids who meet the criteria for both giftedness and a special education category. So they have extremes at both ends. So some examples of coexisting disabilities could be dyslexia, specific learning disability, autism, emotional behavioral, ADHD, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, or speech and language. And I have had two kids, I didn't put all their information in this presentation, but they were articulation-only kids.

One was recognized as highly gifted. He was reading Harry Potter in the second grade, and he was a very, very smart kid, everyone knew that, but he was unintelligible for a long time. He was not worried about his speech. He was a challenge, because he didn't understand why he wanted to work on it. He would present, this was up through eighth grade, he would present in front of class, he would read, he would talk in front of the whole school, and he actually was chosen to participate in a program where I think one eighth grader was chosen along with a couple high school kids to work on a project with resident doctors and research doctors, and then present to a group of physicians, and he did that with no hesitation. He was actually the one chosen out of all the students to be the one to present, because he was so, I was gonna say

articulate, but not in his speech, but he was able to explain things very well. And then, another student I worked with was articulation only, but he also had reading difficulty. And so I was very frustrated by him, because he was such a smart kid. He was so creative, he wanted to write a book. So that's kind of how we worked on his articulation, because he wouldn't just sit and work on drills or things that I wanted to do, he wanted to work on something he was interested in. So we wrote a book, and we would identify words with his sounds and practice those. But he was placed in the lower reading group and a lower math group because of his scores. And just an example, his verbal comprehension was 153, which was extremely high, that was above the 99 percentile. Perceptual reasoning was 125, but then, working memory was 99 and processing speed was 91. So those are both in the average range, but that's a huge discrepancy between his 153 and really his 125. So his full scale IQ came out at 126, which is not at that 130.

And actually, I read back through his evaluation report, and the focus was all on his weaknesses. There really wasn't much mention of his strengths, and how creative he was, and these high scores. So I actually followed up with his school today, and he was not placed in any high classes. He's in a resource room for reading, and so he's one who I worry about being bored and maybe dropping out of school later. But I still, so they were on my caseload for articulation, but I used speech therapy as a way to advocate for him.

And when it came time for him to transition into the junior high, which was a different building, the teachers and his intervention specialist invited me to come to that meeting, because they wanted me to help advocate for him, saying that he does need to be in higher reading especially. Because, even though he cannot read at grade level, he can comprehend, and ask questions, and move at a faster pace. So that would have been a benefit for him, but he's not getting that, unfortunately. If you think about a kid who is two standard deviations below average, requiring specially designed

instruction, why wouldn't a student who is two standard deviations above average also require specially designed instruction? And I think they do. They need to have their challenges and their weaknesses met. So why does it matter to us? Why should we consider twice exceptional students? And so what research shows is that twice exceptional students are often overlooked when it comes to identification, and that could be because they're performing at or above grade level. There's a lack of comprehensive assessment, again, because they are performing at or above grade level, so they see maybe no reason to do an IQ test or an achievement test, and then there's a lack of understanding of giftedness.

In one of the schools I work for, I was working with a mom trying to get some gifted programming at that school. And so the principal was on board, and she sent an email to all the teachers saying, "If you have a student "you think may qualify for our gifted program, "please refer them to our school psychologist "and we'll do a screening test." So anyway, I think about 20 kids were referred, and not one of them qualified. They were all very bright kids, they had really good grades, they were the ones who volunteered to ask questions and answer questions, but they were not gifted.

They were very bright, but not gifted. I think, and from talking to teachers and parents, it seems like kind of the general understanding of giftedness of kids who are really, really smart, and they'll be fine on their own, and they stand out in some way for being really good at something, or exceptional at something. Twice exceptional kids are often not included in gifted programs or advanced placement courses, and that's the course now that that second articulation kid I was telling you about, that's where he is right now. He's in the lower level reading and math classes, so there's a good chance he will not reach his potential. Kids are often, twice exceptional kids are often retained and suspended more than other students. And then there are federal laws to protect students with disabilities, but there are no federal requirements for gifted students. There are some state and local guidelines, but overall, I think gifted kids and especially

twice exceptional kids are, their needs are not being met. In working with these kids, I think they need someone to recognize their strengths and to advocate for them. I think I'm very honest with kids, and I'll kind of say, you know, "Hey, yeah, you're different, so what? "There's nothing wrong with you, you're just different. "You think differently, and here's why." And so, whatever I know about a kid, I'll say, "You seem like you really understand this," or "You're very passionate about this," or "You might be," and then I'll kind of go through some of the characteristics of giftedness that I see in them. And they just will stare at me when we talk about it, and I think it's because, oh, somebody understands, somebody gets me.

And it helps them understand how they learn, and know that there's nothing wrong with them, they just think differently. But then that also opens the door, then, to talk about social skills, or behavior, and maybe how they're perceived. And so there are characteristics of twice exceptional students, so you typically have the same characteristics that you have in gifted kids, but when they have that twice exceptionality, you may see some of these other characteristics, such as unmet emotional needs. They never reach their potential, because they're not given the opportunity to take advanced placement classes, they're not challenged, only their disabilities are addressed, if that is even addressed.

They feel dumb, they have poor social skills or interpersonal relationships, and they don't understand why, they may not recognize it. They tend to reject activities at which they don't excel. So those can contribute to unmet emotional needs and never reaching their potential, so they're frustrated. They could be unmotivated because something, you know, reading may be difficult for them, math may be difficult, and so they just avoid it. Or they don't wanna do it because of their high expectations for themselves, they tend to not do things that would be expected of them. They could come across as lazy. They have lower expectations from teachers, and parents, and peers, because their talent is not recognized, and so they don't expect them to be able

to write a novel, or make these major connections. Kids often think school is a waste of time, so there's an increased risk of dropping out of high school, and there's almost an immobility created from frustrations. I talked to one adult who had dropped out of high school as a sophomore, and this was someone in their 50s. And he said, at that time, he thought school was stupid, he thought he knew more than the teachers, it was a waste of time, so he was just gonna get a job. Which, in hindsight, wasn't a very good decision. He later went on and got his GED so that he could work. And so he was an example of someone who did not meet his potential, but he wasn't challenged in school, he wasn't recognized as being highly intelligent and capable. And then you have an increased risk of unemployment. Again, if they're high school dropouts, it's probably gonna be harder to find a job. People who are twice exceptional tend to have difficulty focusing on practical goals, which would also contribute to that, and then they're at higher risk of getting into trouble, or doing drugs, or going to prison.

And so these are all reasons why these kids really need someone to advocate for them. So some additional characteristics, they tend to question their strengths, they doubt themselves, they become anxious about challenges. They work hard, but their teachers or parents may not characterize them, or they may characterize them as bright but lazy, not trying, missing that the student is struggling because their grades are average, which can negatively impact their self esteem. So they know they're having difficulty, but if you look at them on paper, judging by their grades, it looks like they're doing okay. So their strengths are not seen, and really, their disability sometimes is not seen, too. They can cancel each other out. And kids who are twice exceptional often fail to make the connection between effort and results. And if you have done any reading about growth mindset, I think that's a really good resource for helping these kids too, kind of realizing that the harder you work, the more successful you will likely be. And then, as academic demands increase, deficits typically become more evident for twice exceptional students. So if they're not identified in grade school, maybe junior high or high school, or really college, even, they may finally start to show some of their

disability. And then, as far as needs, the giftedness and disability can mask each other out, and so they do end up looking average, which is why they're not identified. And in fact, twice exceptional students are the most frequently under-identified population in schools, and they do need learning supports and advanced learning opportunities or challenges. So again, they have needs at both ends of the spectrum, and typically, neither the difficulties or the talents are addressed. And then social and emotional challenges, which is another area which relates to speech.

They're frustrated because neither their talent nor their weakness is addressed and they have lower self esteem. They isolate themselves because they don't fit in, or feel as if they don't, they feel that they're different, they lack social skills that would be similar to what people their age have, they have difficulty relating to kids in both gifted and remedial classes, and they often relate better to adults. I actually just spoke to one mom whose son does much better with adults or younger kids, but kids his age don't seem to accept him or include him, they kind of see him as someone who they feel sorry for because he has difficulty in school. And he is not right now identified as anything, he was tested, and he did not qualify for anything, so.

But he also did not have an IQ test, so that's part of that comprehensive test that helped identify these kids. So I just took this quote from the Twice Exceptional Children's Advocacy page, but it's kind of the importance and reason for advocating and accommodating students who are twice exceptional. The benefit from an approach to prevention that provides enrichment opportunities to challenge their areas of strength, and support and skill-building for areas of difficulty. One of the key concepts of twice exceptionality is to promote success by focusing on what kids can do, rather than what they can't do. Changing the focus from disability to ability makes sense for high-potential learners and promotes success, which in turn fosters good self-esteem and self-efficacy. Areas of difficulty should be supported, but they should not be the main focus. And that second articulation student I gave you the example of

earlier is a perfect example of someone who, he is the pure focus on him is disability, and very few if any people to my knowledge will acknowledge his ability, his creativity. It's always, well, he can't read, he can't read, he is slow at math. But he does math in his head, but he is slow at writing, so he has fine motor issues as well. But again, his main, the main focus for him is his disability. So when it comes to doing IEPs and qualifying these kids, how do we go about that, especially if their grades are average? I know I've always been taught in the schools that I've worked in that they have to have low grades. If they're in the average range or if they have good grades, then they don't need special education. And so the Individuals with Disability Education Act, or IDEA, is the federal law that defines and regulates special education.

Specifically, it governs IEPs, and it requires public schools to provide special education services to kids three to 21 who meet certain criteria. So having a disability does not necessarily mean a student is eligible for special education. So in order to qualify, they have to meet two qualifications. They must have a documented disability that's covered by IDEA, and those are the 13 categories. Autism, specific learning disability, speech and language, et cetera. But they also have to need special education in order to access the general education curriculum. So the disability must impact the student enough to require specially designed instruction.

So for example, the first articulation student that I mentioned, who was not concerned at all about his speech and it didn't seem to impact him in school, if you just asked him, he didn't care, and like I said, he would present, he would talk. But no teacher, especially when he was younger, could understand what he was saying. And by the time he was in third or fourth grade, you could understand pretty much what he was saying, but he still had a lot of errors. But because the teachers couldn't understand him, we were able to still qualify him for an IEP under speech and language. So needing special education basically means that a student has deficits that adversely impact their educational performance. And when it comes to, again, advocating for

these kids and saying, wait, just because they have average grades doesn't mean that they don't qualify for an IEP or special education. So there are two parts, educational performance and adverse impact. So the legal standards for IEPs regarding educational performance is saying that we must prove that there is a negative impact on their educational performance. And each state can set its own definition of IEP eligibility and what adverse impact on educational performance is, as long as it's in compliance with IDEA standards. And currently only nine states have their own standards, and those are Alaska, Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Montana, Vermont, and West Virginia.

There's no clear national definition of educational performance, so is it just grades, or more than just grades? It kind of depends on your state and sometimes your school district, and eligibility will vary from state to state for that reason, depending on what the definition is. So you may have a student with good grades but serious social or behavioral issues that's adversely impacting their education. Some states will consider grades only, so that particular student may not qualify. Some states have a more broad definition, which would include any negative impact due to functional, social, or behavioral performance.

So, for example, attendance maybe due to Crohn's disease or depression, or social skills, behavior, communication deficits, which are all non-academic, may be considered. So, for example, the broad definition did not hold up in a court in New York, but it did hold up in other courts. In Michigan, Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky, people were able to argue and say, well, their grades are fine but they have poor social skills, and they were then awarded the right to have special education. And then adverse impact, that's another definition that varies from state to state. So it ranges from any negative impact, and that would be the example that was given was West Virginia and Maine, to significant impact, which was Hawaii and Connecticut, for example. And so it really depends on what your state's definition is for educational

performance and adverse impact. And it's things that I think can, it's very confusing. I think it changes from year to year and person to person and their interpretation of it, but there is room for us to argue that someone with social skills deficits or communication deficits like articulation or whatever it is would qualify them for help. Then, which opens the door for us as speech therapists to advocate for these kids, and help them advocate for themselves. And then, so basically you could build your argument through a thorough neuropsych or psychoeducational evaluation that looks at academics, social skills, emotional and behavioral performance, include teacher reports with specific examples of how deficits impact a student's classroom or school-related activities, and then include more than academics so that schools can and will consider more than their grade.

So again, how is their social maturity affecting their ability to participate in school? Can they work within a group effectively? Are they worried that they don't have friends, so they're unable to pay attention? And schools must consider outside help such as tutors and parental support when it comes to judging their grade. So if mom and dad are doing a lot of their homework at night, and yet they're getting an A, then they have to consider that that student isn't doing that work all on their own. And then again, so what does this have to do with us, with speech therapists?

Well, kids who are twice exceptional need someone to help them advocate for themselves, understand what their strengths and weaknesses are, realize how they learn, address speech and language deficits with gifted characteristics or needs in mind, and then advocate for the student by educating teachers, parents, and the student. And in my experience, that's not always an easy thing. Like I said, I was at the meeting, I even had some position statement from, I don't know, the ODE saying that kids who are gifted with a disability need to be placed in a challenging class, basically. I talked to this kid's mom, and it obviously didn't make a difference for him this year, so hopefully they will continue to advocate for him. But he really appreciated, I think, my

working with him and acknowledging his creativity. And we actually, like I said, we wrote the book, and he printed it, and bound it, and he was going to sell it. I don't know how that turned out, but. I think just advocating for these kids, and kind of, especially the social skills part, that can be a big deal for these kids. So as far as speech therapy itself, the therapy doesn't change. Obviously we still wanna use evidence-based practice, but it's keeping the characteristics of these kids in mind. So they will tend to question authority. Why do I need to work on my R, with an eye roll. I'm sorry, but what are we doing here? Shouldn't we be doing therapy? So there's that strong sense of right or wrong, constantly wanting to know why you're doing something.

They fear failure, can be perfectionistic, so I can't do it, they avoid challenges. So I've had kids who were just articulation who don't wanna do it because they can't. It's hard, it's difficult, and so they tend to avoid it, which slows down their progress. They wanna know how I know something is right. How do you know that's right, why do I have to do it that way, are you sure I'm allowed to do it that way? So if you change anything, maybe, say, highlighting or underlining in a book, they want to know if they're allowed to do that, because of their rule-following mentality and strong sense of right or wrong. They may argue everything.

They get bored easily with repetition, and the kids I've worked with, they typically respond well to challenging tasks. They have the asynchronous development, so they may be emotionally mature, even though they're intellectually advanced. And then they could be stubborn and inflexible, they always need to be right, and they argue everything. I actually really like these kids, I really enjoy working with them. They fascinate me, and it challenges me, which I really enjoy. And so I'm on a couple of Facebook pages just to kind of follow gifted and twice exceptional kids, and parents, and comments, kinda see what's going on. And so I asked, I posted a question awhile back and I said, I told 'em I was doing this presentation, and I said, "If there was

something "you would like your speech therapist to know, "or your school to know, what would it be?" And so these are the responses I got, or some of them, at least. So someone from New Jersey said, "The special ed team doesn't know what twice exceptional is "and doesn't wanna hear about it." In Colorado, "We got a 504 plan, but it is not implemented." "Articulation therapy was denied "because his grades were too good." So again, that goes back to that educational performance and adverse impact, so they must have just looked at his academics. "A newly identified twice exceptional child: "You mean I'm smart?" So again, they don't feel smart. They focus on what they can't do. In France, this mom said that "Accommodations ease stress and anxiety, "which improves behavior "and eases the emotional and mental burden. "We much appreciate the OT and SLP "advocating for our daughter."

And then: A speech therapist reported that our son couldn't answer WH questions or use past tense because of advanced reasoning and language. He was asked, "What did you do this morning," and he responded, "I did the same thing I do every morning, "which is watch TV, and then eat breakfast, "then go to the bathroom and get dressed." When they feel accepted and respected for their abilities, then they have the confidence and determination to address their challenges as well, because they're able to have self-awareness that their challenges do not define them.

And again, that's the importance of acknowledging and addressing their strengths as well as their weaknesses. In Ohio, "We had to fight the school for a 504 plan." They said he was fine because he had good grades, and they were denied a 504. So this family filed a complaint with ODE, and they won in mediation. "It's so difficult for kids to be repeatedly told "they're fine because their grades are good." And these kids know they're not fine, they know there's something different, they know that there are things that are difficult and some things that are really easy, they're frustrated. And then this one really kinda got to me. The school journal prompt, if you could read someone's mind, who would you like to read, and a seven-year-old responded, "Someone who

hates me, and everyone hates me." So I think if we are able to step in and in some way advocate for these kids, acknowledge that they have strengths and weaknesses, that we could make a difference in these kids' lives, not only helping them build skills that are related to speech and language, but also just kinda their overall wellbeing. So I listed the references I used for my information, and then I included some additional resources. So this first one is a position statement. I actually, I spoke to Bobbie Jackson Gilman, she's the Associate Director of the Gifted Development Center in Colorado, and she had written a chapter in one of the books I read. And then she's actually just published another book, and she has her background in psychology and child development, but she told me about the first two resources.

One is extended options for using the WISC-V for gifted and twice exceptional identification. So they're just new scoring options that are more sensitive for gifted and twice exceptional kids, because that full scale IQ doesn't always come out into the gifted range because of poor working memory or slower processing speed. Even though they're in the average range, you have these big discrepancies. And so if you're interested, this explains what these new scoring options are and what subtest should be considered.

So that's that one, and then the next one is a teacher-parent checklist, and this was something that they developed at the Gifted Development Center that you could use. It's not an instrument that you're gonna get a score from, but it will kind of lead you to understand if they have gifted characteristics or twice exceptional characteristics that maybe you could then present to your team, to help say, hey, let's maybe look into this a little differently. And then I put a link for overexcitabilities just to kind of explain those. And what I read lately is that now there, are overexcitabilities even a thing, I don't know, but it's there if you wanted to read it. And then there's another one. The gifted kids sometimes are identified as having, being on the spectrum, and so I found a checklist. It's kind of interesting, because the characteristics do overlap a lot. And

actually, the Dmitri Thawne I told you about, they really wanted to identify him as autistic, but the school psychologist and I believed that he was not autistic. And so, some of these kids are misidentified, but there's that that you can look at as well. And then, kind of overall, I just think that if gifted and twice exceptional kids are not identified and not challenged, not meeting their potential, then that's really a loss for our society, because these are the kids who can think outside the box. They are going to invent things, they can solve problems, but if they never meet their potential, then as a society we're losing out.

So not only is it an important role for us to play to advocate for these kids to help them and their families, but also, we're doing society a favor. So I see a couple questions. "So it seems from the examples given, "working memory and processing speed "are often significantly lower "than other measures of intelligence. "Is this commonly the pattern? "What type of intervention helps bridge that gap?" So in my experience, and I actually do have a background in psychology, but I, obviously it's not my area of expertise, but what I see is that working memory and processing speed do tend to be discrepant. Sometimes kids like to think about things, and because they see things in so many different ways and they make so many connections, I think it can slow them down. Because they're perfectionistic and they want everything to be just right, that can slow them down.

And I'm not sure about working memory. What I've read lately, especially with today's kids, is that working memory is not developing as it did in older generations, because kids aren't using it. They are relying on the internet to look up things. They don't have to remember telephone numbers, they don't have to remember much of anything, they can just Google it, or say, hey, Siri, and get their answer. And so, as far as bridging that gap, I think it's a lot of, it could be accommodations, it could be giving them memory strategies as far as how to study for things. Maybe an accommodation could be extra time or extended time to help with the slower processing speed. So hopefully that

answers that question. And then another question, "It sounds like twice gifted students correlate with," yes, "With autism spectrum disorder students. "How do you know the difference, which testing?" So again, I think looking very closely at testing scores. And then, if you look at that checklist, it does kind of differentiate, I think it will show you the difference between, say, someone who's on the spectrum versus someone who's gifted. And kids who are, I do have a student who is autistic, but he's also gifted, and so I've worked really closely with his family. He was just placed into advanced math, finally, which is where he needs to be. And he started off slow. Again, I think partially with the autism, he didn't like the transition and the change, but he's doing great now, he actually is scoring higher.

And so anyway, I think finding someone like a psychologist you work with who is knowledgeable about both giftedness and autism, and then looking at scores. I just use a couple of checklists, kind of see where they are, and that helps differentiate, but there are definite overlaps. Okay, "What are some ways to avoid "misidentifying these students as Asperger's or autistic?" "What made you think "the student you mentioned was misidentified?" Well, when we looked at his scores, he didn't really have the, he didn't really have communication deficits other than written expression, but that was more his trying to prove that he was smart.

And he wanted to socialize. He actually, I spoke to him last night, I asked him how he was doing now that he's in high school, and he was really happy, he's found people that relate to him and he relates to that they can discuss ideas. That's what he was missing. So he wants to be social, he just didn't have the opportunity at a small school, which is where he was initially. "Do you have any recommendations for effective treatments "for working memory for teens?" I actually love working on working memory, but what I do typically is work on memory strategies, teach them how to remember things, and kind of explain what working memory is. I don't spend a lot of time on actually trying to improve working memory itself, but I think the strategies have

been a huge help, and kids really seem to relate to those and enjoy them. Oh, the checklist link, okay. I tried it last night, she said it's not available or it's not working. So I clicked on it, and then a link popped up below that, so I'll figure out how to get that addressed. "The link for gifted," oh, okay, so I'll work on that. "Are there psychologists who subspecialize in this area?" Yes, actually you mentioned that there's much overlap. Yes, I actually have, I actually have my younger son tested with a psychologist who specializes in giftedness. He's in Lexington, Kentucky, his name was Ed Amend, A-M-E-N-D, and he actually, there are a couple books. The one that's listed on my reference page, he has a chapter in that book. And that really talks, that kind of is the whole gamut of working with these kids, identifying them, supporting them. And there's actually a TED talk by Scott Barry Kaufman which is, I loved it, but he talks about how he was not identified, and he missed out on the opportunity to go to an ivy league school because he didn't have the grades, he couldn't get the test scores. So he took a roundabout way, and I think he went into chorus or something, because he was able to sing. And so, once he got enrolled, then he kind of wiggled his way into switching majors to psychology. And he has written a lot of books, and he's had a major impact on the understanding of giftedness and what intellect is. But there are, I don't know of many that specialize in giftedness, but they are out there.

- All right.

- Okay.

- [Amy] I'm just giving it a few more moments to see if there are any additional questions, but in the meantime, thank you so much, Angie, for joining us today. We certainly appreciate you sharing all this really good information to think about. It's a new area for me, and it sounds like for some other folks as well, so we appreciate your input. And if you wanna go ahead and send those two resource links to me, we can go

ahead and update the handout so that they're correct, and provide that to everybody who attended today.

- [Angie] Okay, I'll send those to you.

- [Amy] Sound good, okay, well, it looks like we have addressed all the questions, so we're gonna go ahead and wrap it up there for today. Again, thank you, Angie, for joining us, and thanks to all of our participants for joining us as well. We certainly do appreciate your time, and look forward to seeing everyone again soon. Take care, everyone.

- Thank you.