



BEYOND THE AVERAGE

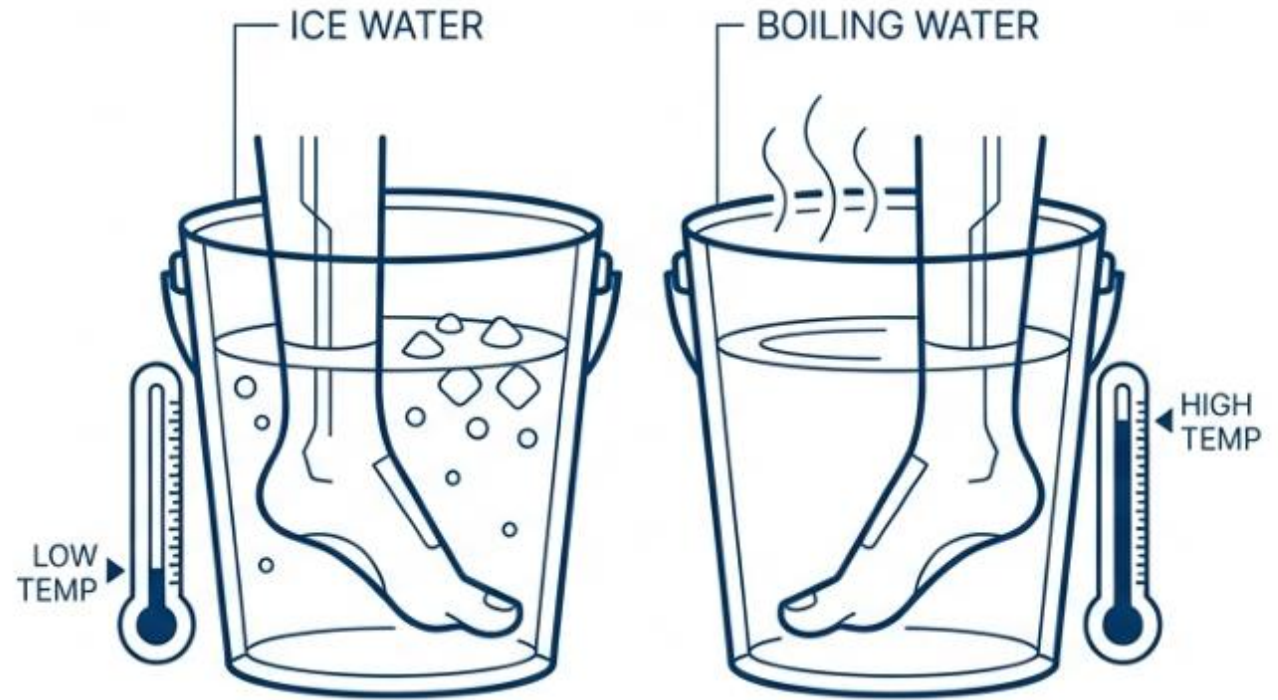
Decoding Your Child's Evaluation Report

Why 'doing fine' on paper doesn't always
match the struggle you see at home

Trust the Mismatch. Decode the Data. Advocate for Fit, Not Fix

The Average Trap

If you have one foot in ice water and one foot in boiling water, your average temperature is comfortable. But that average tells you nothing about what you are actually experiencing



THE STATISTICAL REALITY: An average score suppresses the extremes. It does not describe a child; it compresses them

The Conflict: What the Scores Say vs. What You See

THE REPORT



- Standard Score: 95 (Average)
- Eligibility: None
- Conclusion: No services needed

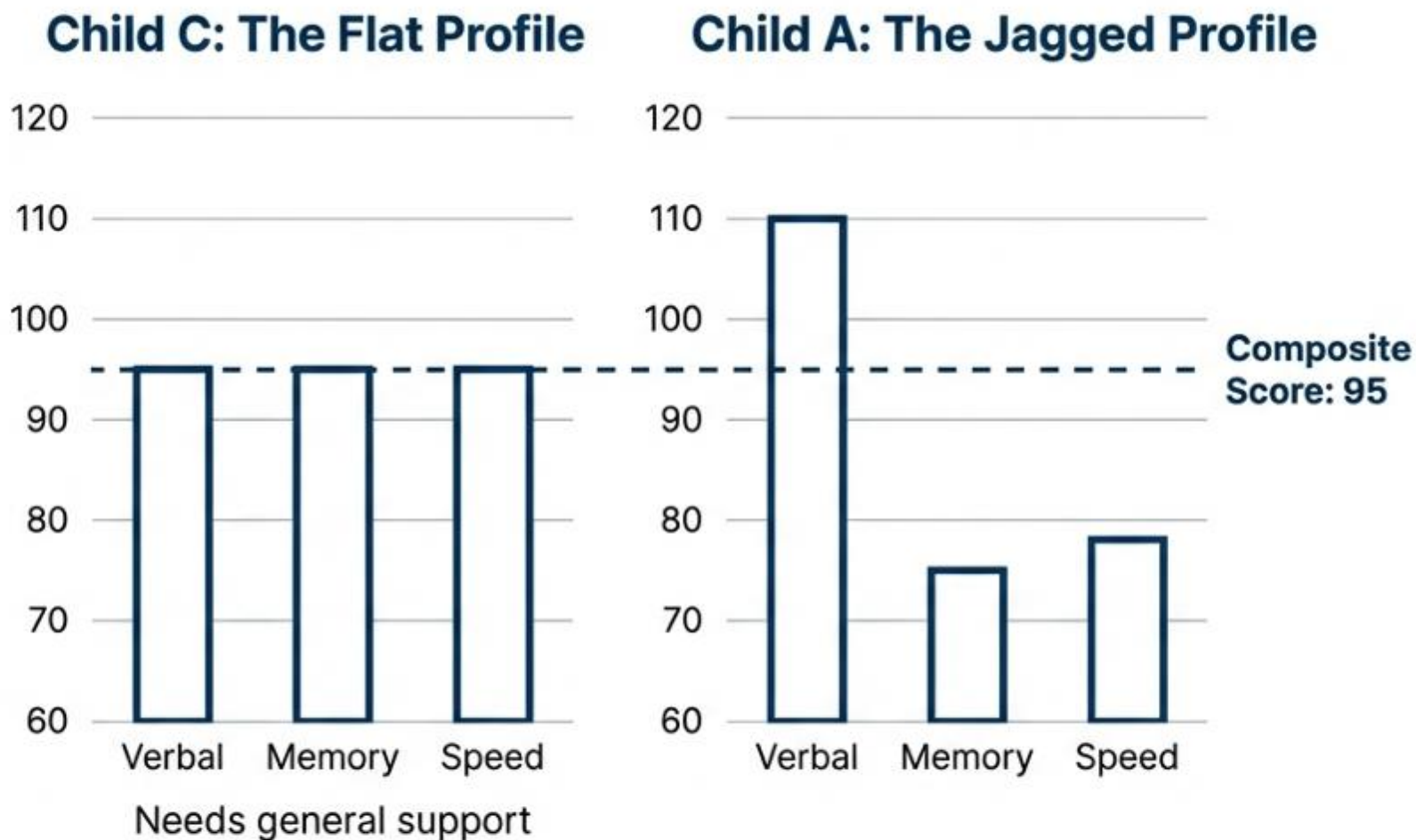
THE REALITY



- Homework: 3 hours (Peers: 30 mins)
- Nightly meltdowns & exhaustion
- Careless errors on simple tasks

INSIGHT: We are often measuring the *result*, but ignoring the *cost* of achieving it
What looks like inconsistency is pattern. What looks like laziness is exhaustion

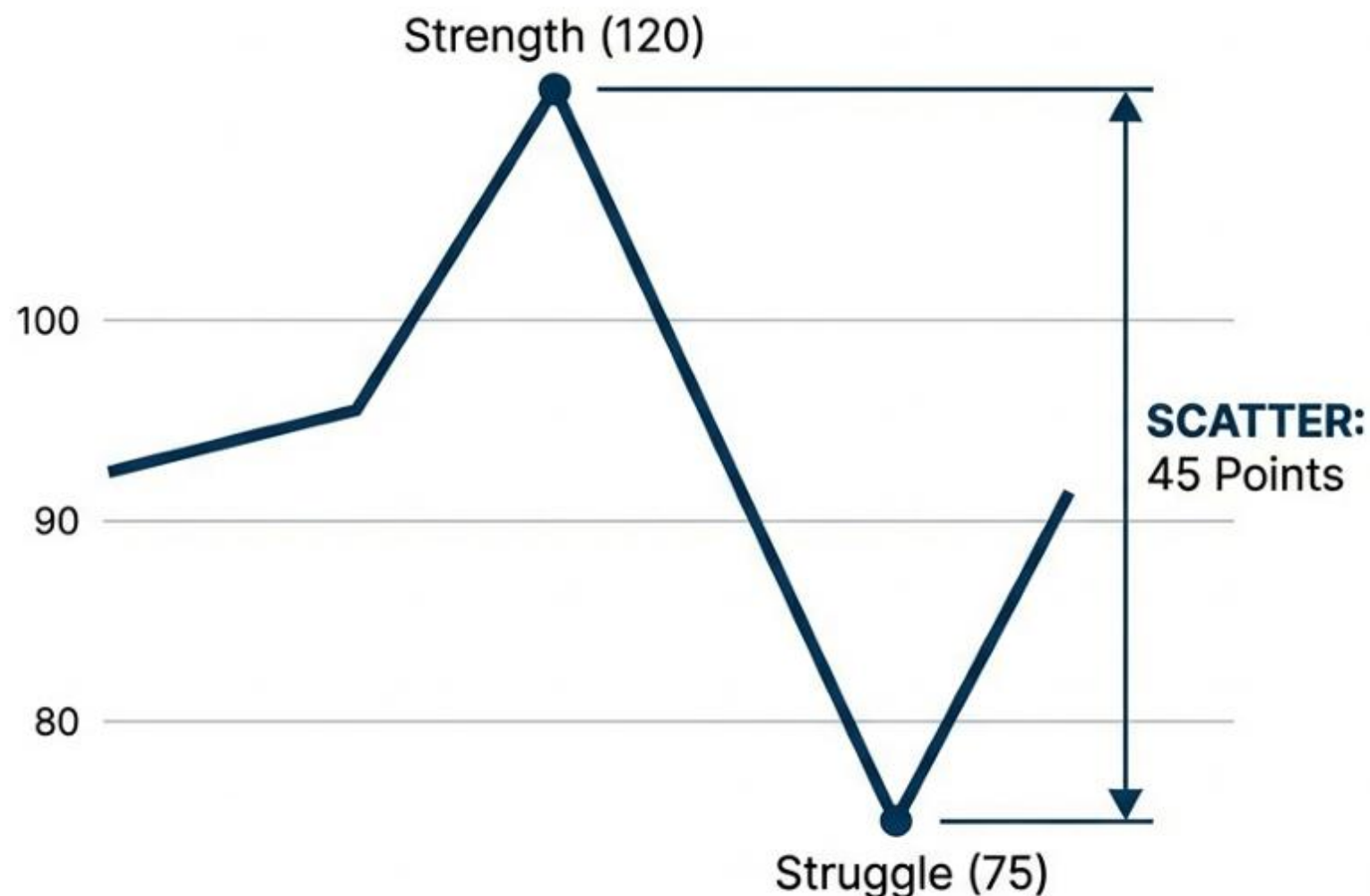
Identical Averages, Opposite Needs



The Trap: When schools look only at the composite, they treat Child A and Child C as identical

The Truth: Child A has specific functional impairments that require legal accommodations

The Clue is in the Scatter



Rule of Thumb

THE RED FLAG ZONE:

1. A gap of 15-20+ points between subtests
2. A percentile gap of 50+ points (e.g., 75th vs. 9th)

Significant scatter indicates an uneven profile. This inconsistency is often misinterpreted by schools as "not trying"

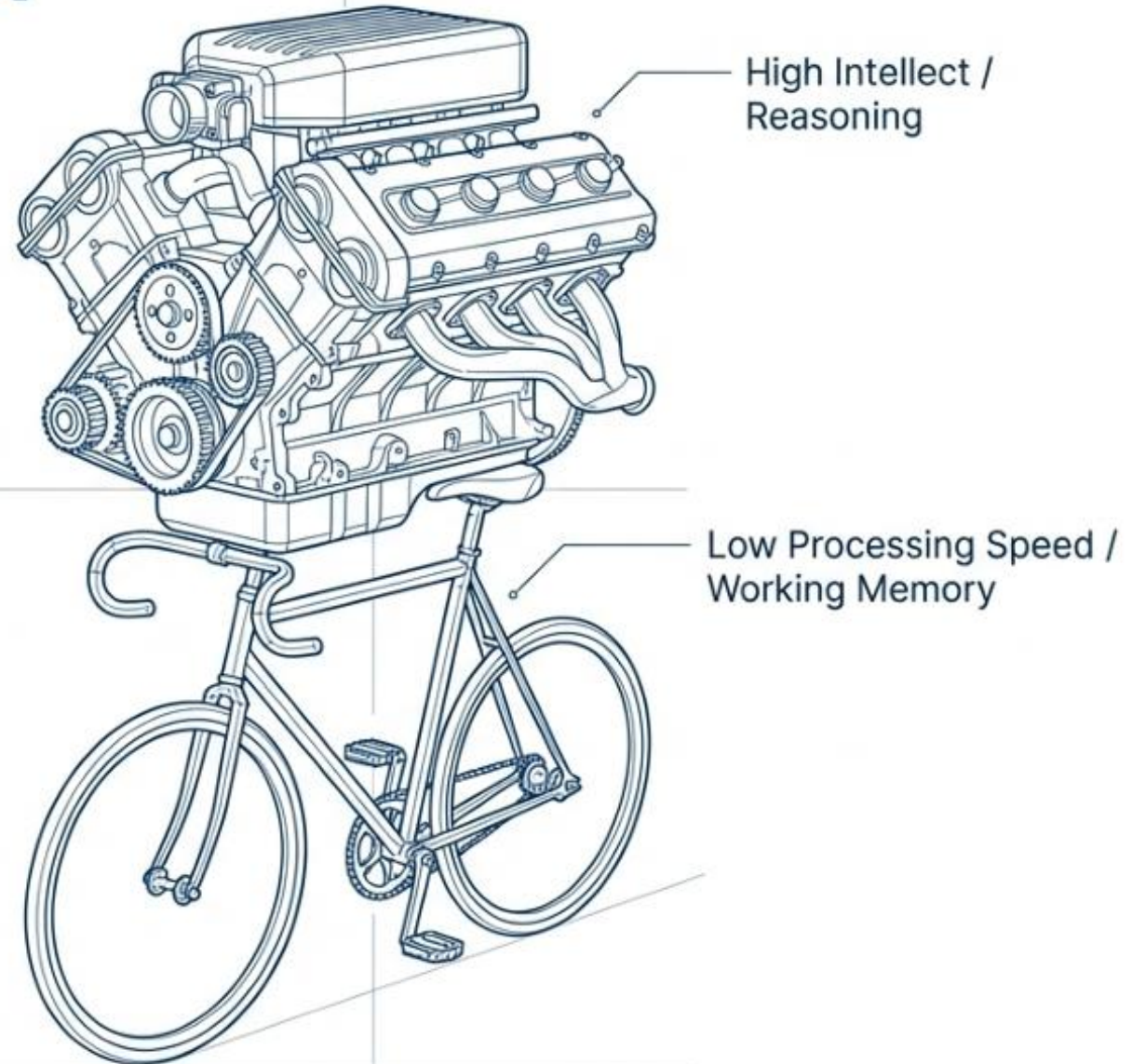
Profile A: The Compensator

The Ferrari Engine on a Bicycle Frame

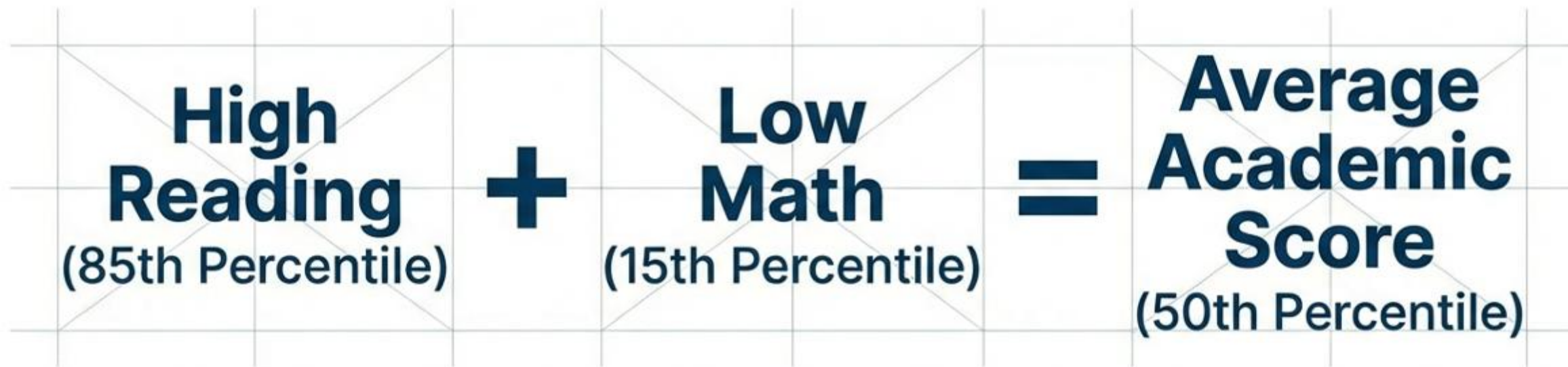
The Mechanism: The child uses superior reasoning to mask slow processing

The Cost: They maintain "average" grades but pay with exhaustion and anxiety

The Risk: The frame cannot handle the power of the engine. This leads to burnout as academic demands increase



Profile B: Average by Cancellation



THE TRAP: Strengths don't erase weaknesses; they hide them

THE CONSEQUENCE: The school sees "Academics are fine" and denies math intervention. The weakness remains invisible until it becomes a crisis

The Suspect: Working Memory

The Mental Sticky Note

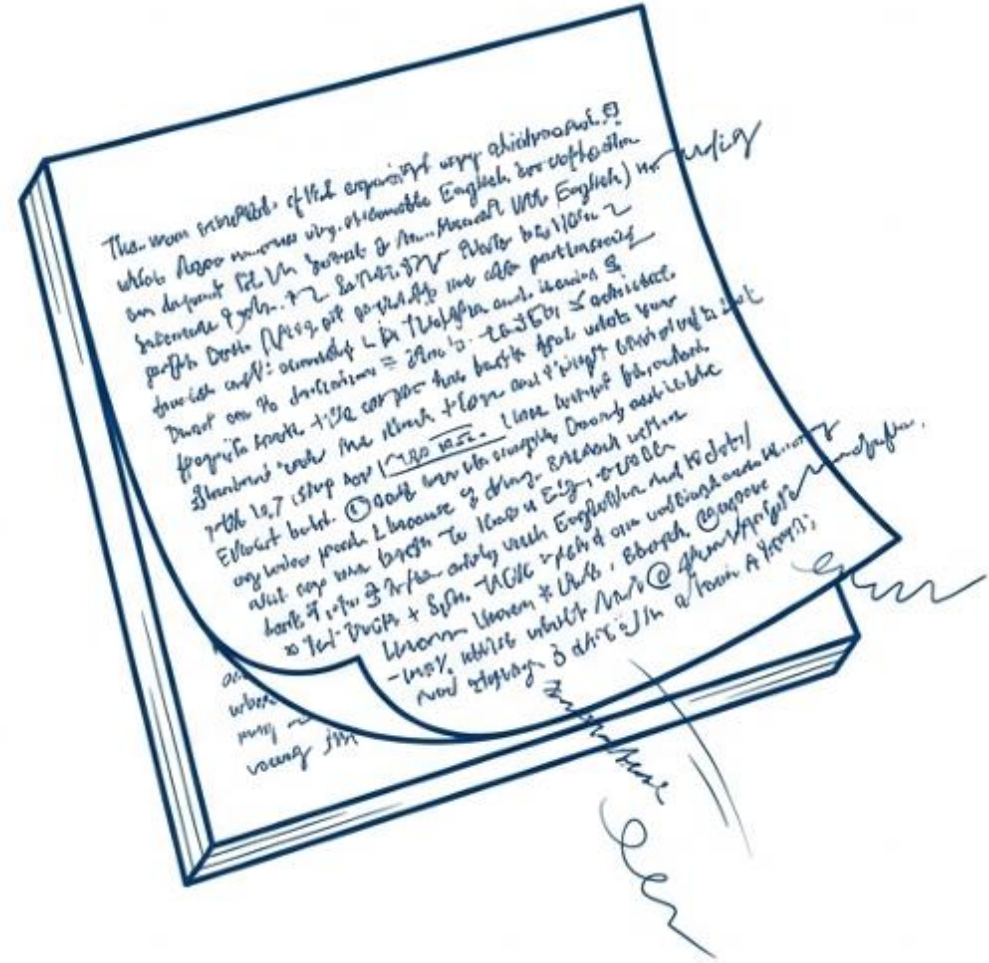
Definition: The ability to hold information in your head while using it

Impact: Research shows Working Memory at age 5 predicts literacy outcomes more reliably than IQ

Symptoms of a Deficit (Score <85)

- Cannot follow multi-step directions
- Forgets what they were writing mid-sentence
- Shortens written responses to reduce cognitive load

The Ask: Written instructions, task checklists, and graphic organizers



The Suspect: Processing Speed

The Bottleneck

The Desk Analogy:

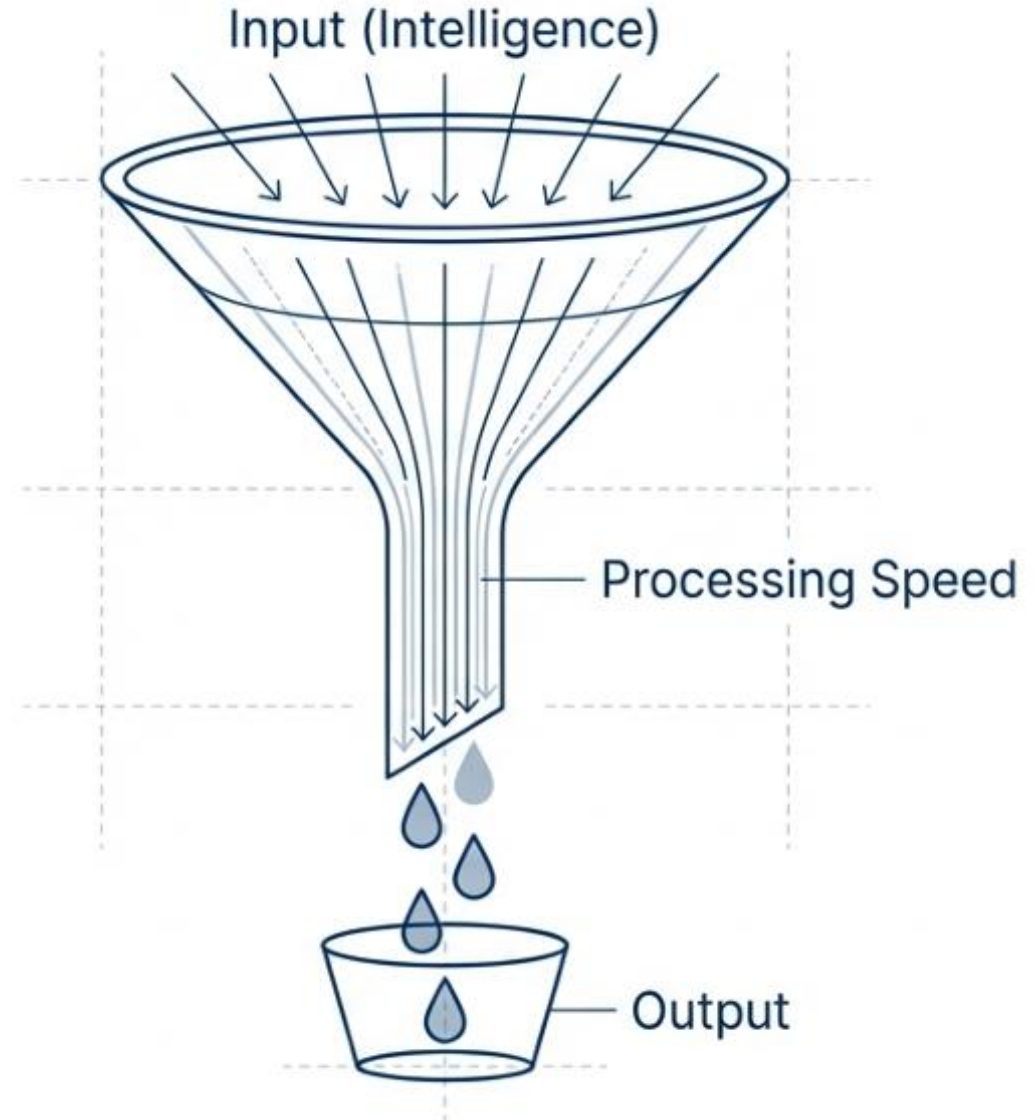
If Working Memory is the size of the desk, Processing Speed is how fast you can move papers. A cluttered desk + slow movement = overwhelmed child

Real World Impact:

If Processing Speed is in the 7th percentile, homework takes 3x longer than peers

The Ask:

Extended time (1.5x - 2x), reduced volume of work, untimed assessments



The Assessment Reality Gap



THE TEST (The Quiet Room)

Testing happens 1-on-1, in a quiet vacuum, with zero distractions and a supportive adult. Measures potential under ideal conditions



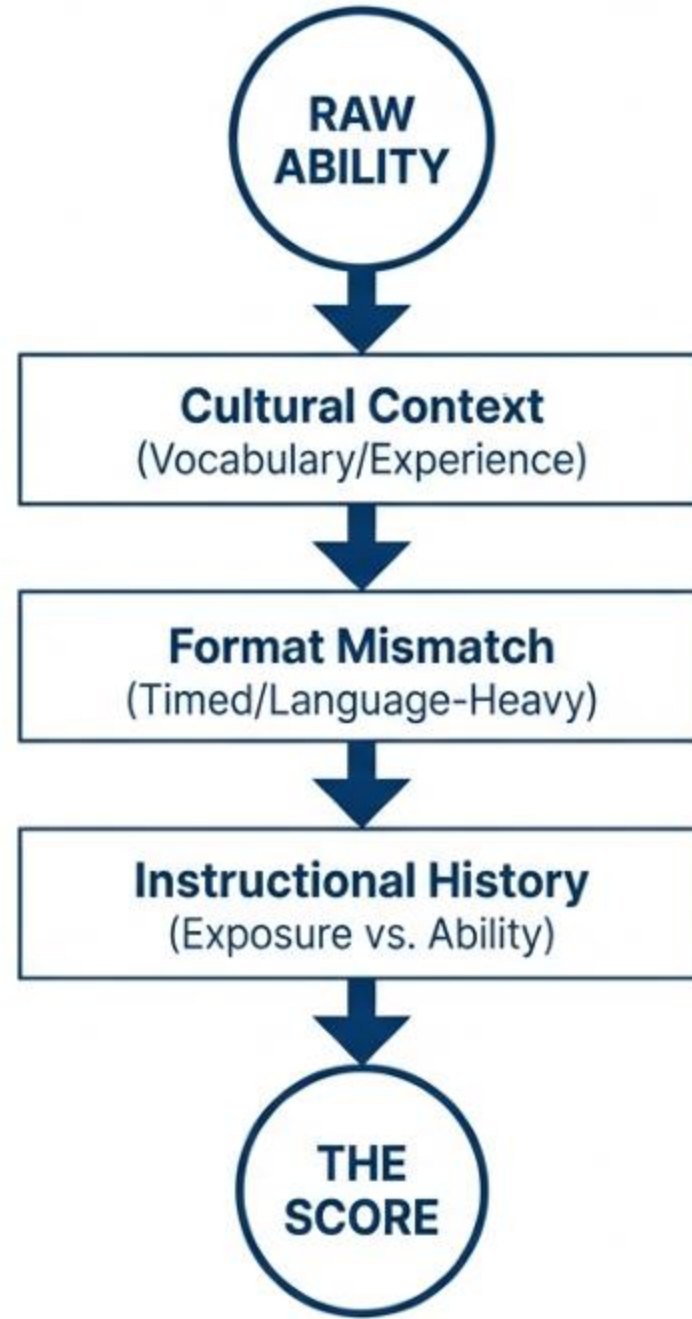
THE CLASSROOM (The Pressure Cooker)

Learning happens in a noisy, fast-paced, social environment. Demands performance under stress

The Verdict: If they can do it in the test but not in class, it is not a skill deficit it is a fragility to the environment

Invisible Filters: Is the Test Biased?

Tests are not neutral. The Question to ask: Does this test measure what my child actually knows, or just how they handle the test format?



Federal Law is on Your Side

IDEA Section 300.304

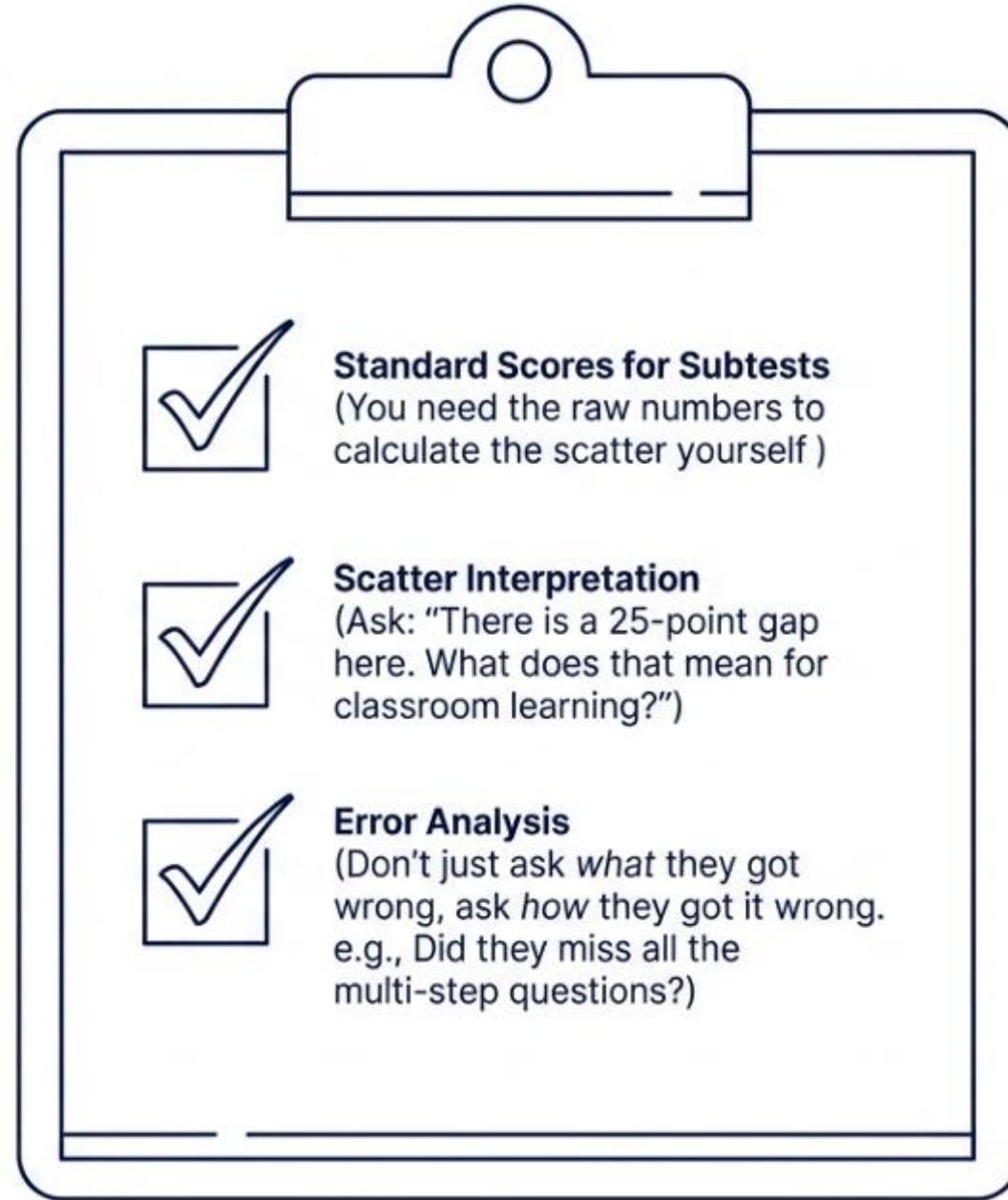
The Mandate: Schools **cannot** use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining eligibility or educational program

The Defense: When a school says "The composite is average, so no services," they are violating federal requirements

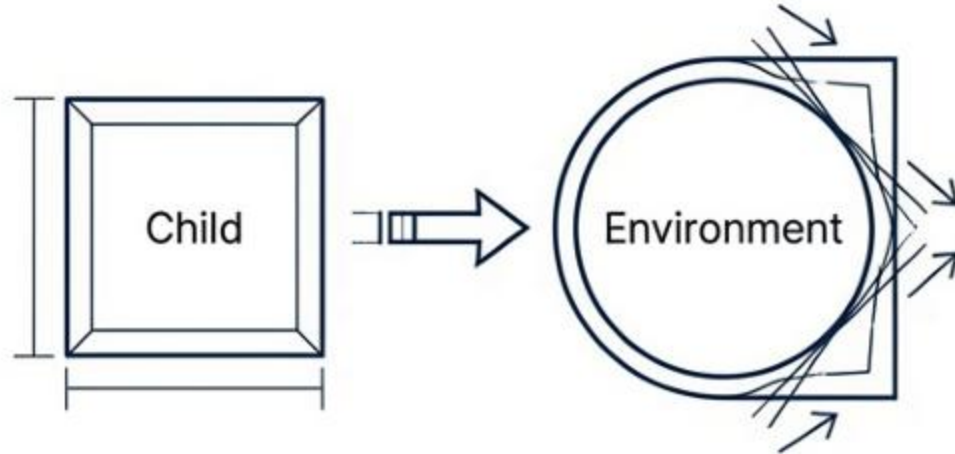
The Script: "Federal law prohibits relying on a single measure. We must look at the subtest patterns that show functional impairment "

The Investigation Checklist

Never accept the summary. Request these three things



The Goal: Fit, Not Fix



Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Shift: Stop asking “How do I fix my child to fit the test?”
Start asking “How do we design the environment so my child can show what they know?”

IF Processing Speed is low → **THEN** Reduced homework volume

IF Working Memory is low → **THEN** Graphic organizers & written instructions

TRUST THE MISMATCH

The report isn't a verdict. It is a data point. You hold the longitudinal data the daily struggles, the tears, and the triumphs

When the data on the paper conflicts with the child in front of you, trust the child

The report is just the starting line