

**TITLE:** *Improving Practice through the Use of CHC Theory and Research: A “Third Method” Approach to SLD Identification*

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**BIO:** *Dr. Dawn P. Flanagan* is professor of Psychology and Director of the School Psychology training programs at St. John's University in Queens, NY. She is also Clinical Assistant Professor at Yale Child Study Center, Yale University School of Medicine. In addition to her teaching responsibilities in the areas of intellectual assessment, psychoeducational assessment, learning disability, and professional issues in school psychology, she serves as an expert witness, learning disability consultant, and psychoeducational test/measurement consultant and trainer for organizations both nationally and internationally. She is a widely published author of books, book chapters, and articles. Her most recent books include the forthcoming *Essentials of Specific Learning Disability Identification* and the second editions of 1. *Contemporary Intellectual Assessment: Theories, Tests, and Issues*; 2. *The Achievement Test Desk Reference: A Guide to Learning Disability Identification*; 3. *Essentials of Cross-Battery Assessment*; and 4. *Essentials of WISC-IV Assessment*. Dr. Flanagan is a Fellow of both APA and the American Board of Psychological Specialties. She is a past recipient of APA's *Lightner Witmer Award* - in recognition of her early contributions to the field of School Psychology. Dr. Flanagan also received an *Outstanding Faculty Achievement Award* from her university in recognition of her dedication to teaching, mentoring students, publishing, and conducting research. Dr. Flanagan is perhaps best known for the development of the CHC Cross-Battery Approach and the development of an operational definition of specific learning disability. One of Dr. Flanagan's most recent contributions to the field is a 6-hour multi-media professional development training program entitled, *Agora: The Marketplace of Ideas. Best Practices: Applying Response to Intervention (RTI) and Comprehensive Assessment for the Identification of Specific Learning Disabilities*. [DVD].

**DESCRIPTION and LEARNING OUTCOMES:** This workshop will demonstrate how the broad and narrow abilities and processes that comprise CHC theory and their relations to specific academic outcomes, have begun to transform our current understanding of the definition of and methods for indentifying SLD in the school setting. The manner in which CHC theory has been used to guide evaluation of the academic and cognitive capabilities of students who are suspected of having SLD is described. Current psychometric methods for identifying SLD that have a foundation in CHC theory are highlighted. These newer methods are based on what is known as the “third method,” a provision for SLD identification included in the federal regulations (34 CFR 300.540-543) accompanying the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) that permits the use of alternative, research-based approaches. A method based on an integration of existing third method approaches called, the *Hypothesis-Testing CHC Approach (HT-CHC)* will be presented. The HT-CHC method is expected to be carried out within the context of an RtI service delivery model. Benefits of this approach over ability-achievement discrepancy and RtI-*only* methods for SLD identification are discussed.

Participants will (a) gain an understanding of how the HT-CHC method circumvents the limitations of existing methods of SLD identification; (b) understand how the HT-CHC method can be applied readily in districts that already have an RTI service delivery model in place; (c) gain insight into how norm-referenced tests may be used throughout a tiered service delivery system to inform intervention; (d) gain an appreciation of the current

literature on how SLD manifests in various areas of academic performance (e.g., reading, writing, mathematics, oral language); and (e) be able to integrate data from multiple sources via multiple methods across multiple settings to support the need for interventions that are appropriately tailored to the student who struggles academically.

The main message of this workshop is that when interpretations are guided by CHC research, the unique constellation of cognitive and academic abilities of students who demonstrate intractability in the learning process may provide insights into: a) why certain methods of instruction or intervention were not effective; b) what interventions, compensatory strategies, and accommodations might be more effective; and c) the most promising means of delivering instruction and implementing intervention.