

# BELL CURVE of Student Speech & Language Skills

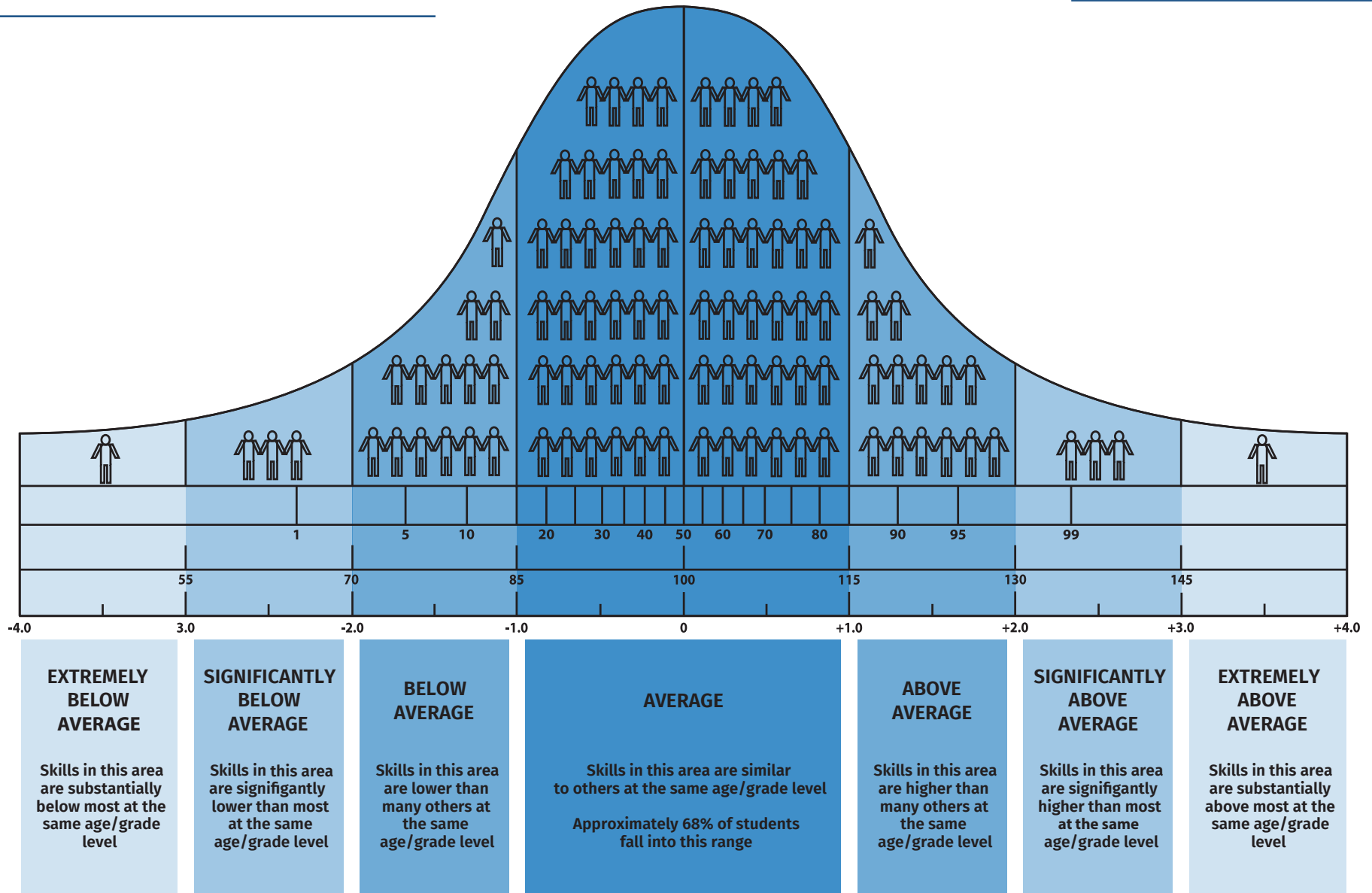
CSHA 2020 - Booth 10

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of IEP: \_\_\_\_\_



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## TIPS FOR CLINICIANS

This bell curve will clarify student skill levels and encourage parent/teacher participation in the IEP process. For a step-by-step script of how to present this bell curve in a way that clarifies why we even USE a bell curve, and how to interpret it for the benefit of the student, go to our website!

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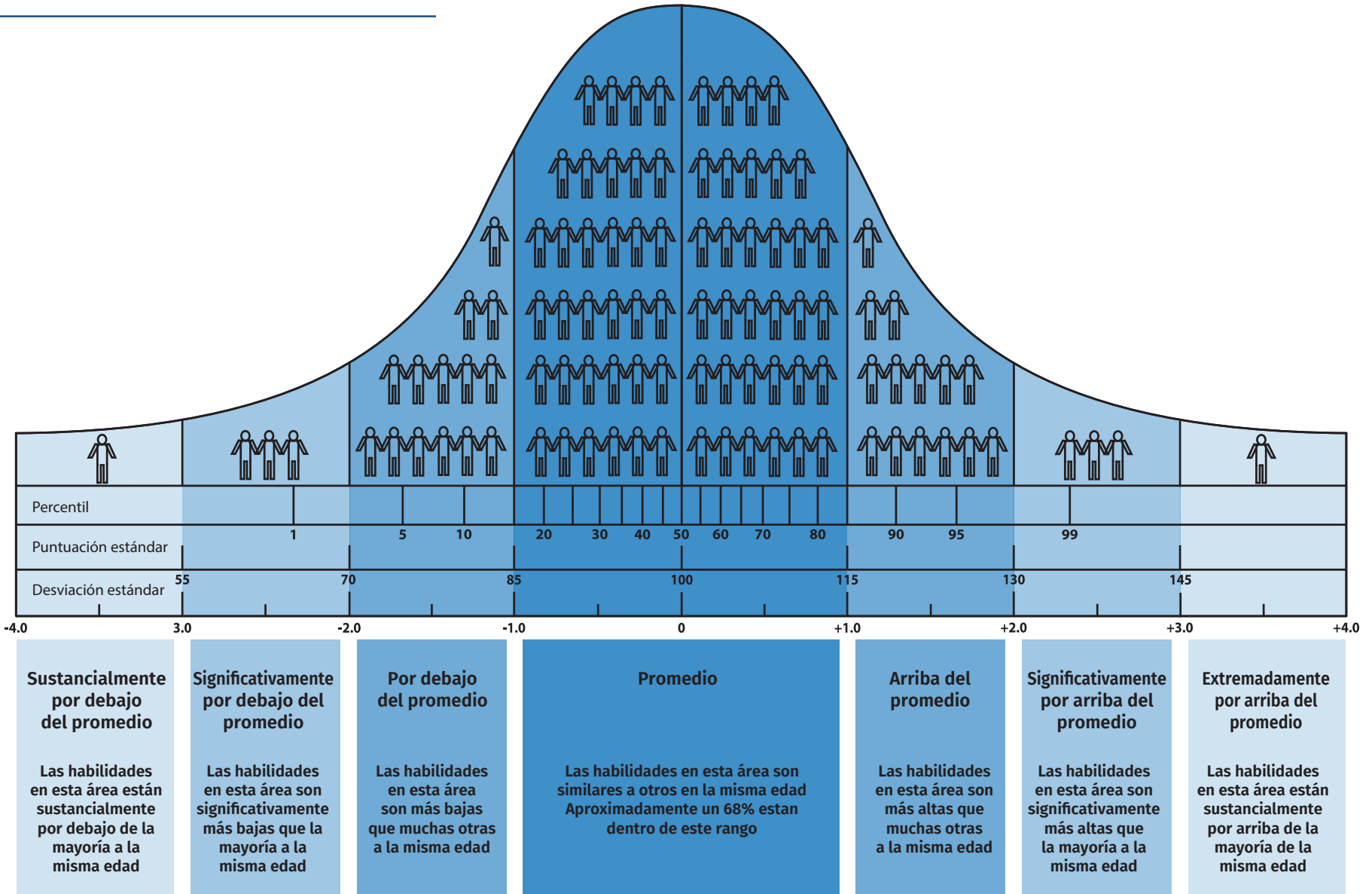
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Nombre del Estudiante \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha de nacimiento: \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha de PEI: \_\_\_\_\_



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# BELL CURVE OF STUDENT SPEECH & LANGUAGE SKILLS

## TIPS FOR CLINICIANS

Use this full-sized bell curve to help IEP meetings flow more efficiently. As IEP team members speak, point to the student's current skill level in each area tested. You can also make a copy and suggest parents take notes directly on the curve to help them to see the student's strengths and weaknesses.

## PRESENTING A BELL CURVE FOR SUCCESS

This bell curve was designed with three goals:

- To help parents understand the “big picture” of how we decide who needs specialized instruction
- To help the team identify the specific student strengths and weaknesses visually
- To help the team develop appropriate accommodations and services to meet student goals

Note: Eligibility is a team decision, and not specifically addressed on this script. The use of this curve for students who are severely impaired is not recommended.

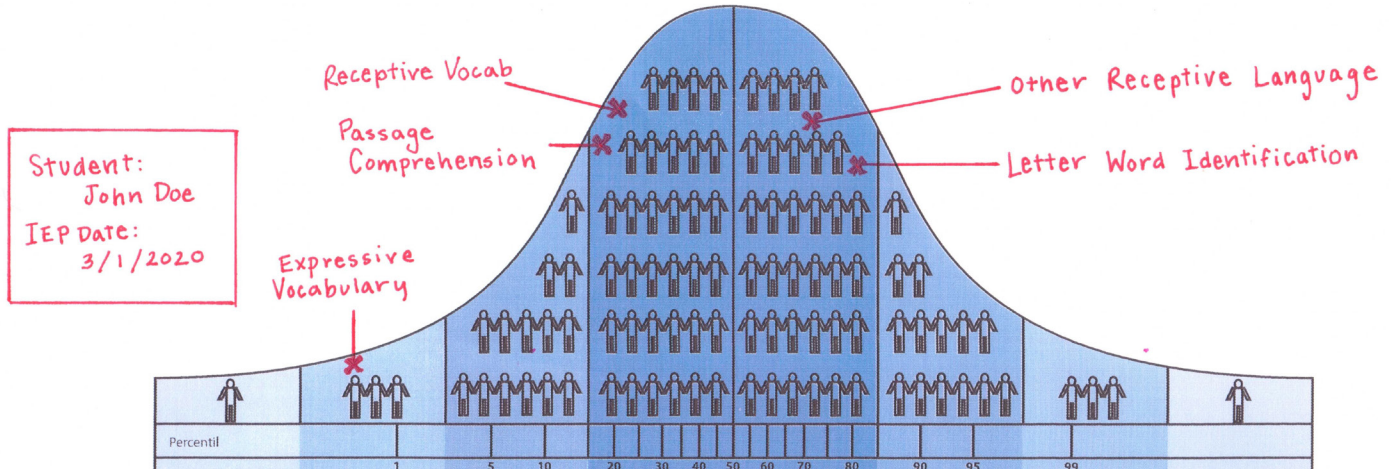
## WHAT IS A BELL CURVE & WHY DOES IT MATTER?

*Present at IEP Meetings to Discuss Initial Evaluations. Consider Presenting an Abbreviated Version at Triennials.*

- 1.** This is a bell curve. Bell curves are used to compare one person's current abilities in a specific area, like reading or running, to the current abilities of a large group of students who are the same age or grade.
- 2.** A simple example is soccer skills. The average U.S. third grader can kick a ball into a net on a field, knows each team goes a different direction, and knows one person protects the net. These students fall into the middle of the curve. This part of the curve is “bigger” because most third graders are here (point to the center of the curve.) Some third graders have been on a soccer team for years, and play soccer every weekend. They can pass with precision, protect the ball with their body, and they fall into this (right) side of the curve. Some third graders struggle with kicking the ball down the field, running, and basic game rules. These students' soccer skills would fall on this (left) side of the curve.
- 3.** As you can see on this bell curve, there are many more kids in the middle range, so that's where coaches and classroom teachers generally target their teaching for reading, math and other topics. The classroom teacher looks for ways to build the skills of the students just below this range and enrich the skills of those just above the middle range. However, sometimes a student struggles with learning one or more areas of the classroom work, and we wonder if the student may do better with some specialized instruction.
- 4.** With your permission, we gave YOUR CHILD a series of tests in different skill areas to compare his current skills to other students in the same grade. Based on this information, we begin to identify which are easy for your child and where more support is needed.
- 5.** Skills here, on the right side, reflect areas that are easy for your child. Skills on the left side require extra help to learn.
- 6.** Next present the student's test results. Tie the results into reports from other providers and parent comments. When presenting the results of testing, always think through the level of detail that would be best for the family. Some parents would do best with a summary of testing that briefly touches on basic areas. Others will ask specific questions, and would benefit from examples. Consider whether providing a written report prior to the IEP would be overwhelming or helpful.

## BELL CURVE OF STUDENT SPEECH & LANGUAGE SKILLS

**7. Summary Sample:** As you can see, your student is in the middle with his classmates in most areas. Your child follows directions, uses appropriate grammar, and effectively interacts with peers and teachers. His areas which require extra help involve vocabulary, especially using it verbally and in writing. This weakness tends to make expressing himself more challenging. Have you observed this? Are there other areas that you are concerned about?



**8.** Now that we all know where your student needs extra help, we want to come up with a plan to build these skills. Do you have suggestions based on what you do at home that works? Your child's teacher sends home a list of new vocabulary words each week and can suggest ways to review the vocabulary at home using pictures or notecards. Within the classroom, the teacher might consider using a study buddy, enriching vocabulary review activities, and computer vocabulary practice programs.

**9.** We also suggest that your child work with a speech pathologist to improve his strategies for learning new vocabulary. The SLP uses both classroom curriculum materials and other more targeted lessons to systematically build strategies for your student to access class materials. This assistance is provided in a small group, with careful goals based on clinical observation. We would like to suggest that the SLP see him once a week to focus on these skills. How does this sound to you?

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