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Case Study – Patrick H.

Disability – Otherwise Health Impaired

(Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Seizures)

Age – 13

SED 5600

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# Student Profile

## Background

Patrick is a soon-to-be fourteen-year-old boy who is age appropriate for the 8th grade. He is a special education student who has Fetal Alcohol Syndrome as well as a history of seizures and anxiety issues. Patrick appeared to be testing within a fairly normal academic range prior to the onset of seizures at age nine. He receives social work services as well as speech services. Occupational therapy services are on a consultation basis. Patrick is usually friendly and outgoing. He enjoys helping others and has a wonderful, sarcastic sense of humor.

Due to an incident at the local middle school at the end of last school year, his IEP team decided that a non-traditional setting was the most appropriate placement for Patrick. He is currently being educated in his home using an online curriculum (Calvert and Verticy Learning Programs) with the assistance of a special education teacher. Presently, he is enrolled in a mixed grade program that includes 4th grade reading and 3rd grade mathematics. He tests even lower in spelling and phonics. He is considerably below the 4th grade level in grammar and composition.

Patrick was born in Russia and adopted by American parents as a very young child. He has two brothers (including a biological half-brother) and a sister all of whom are Russian adoptees. His oldest brother is currently deployed with the Marines. His sister is a freshman in college and living at school. His biological half-brother is a sophomore in high school. His parents are well-educated professionals – a doctor and a lawyer. They are very loving and supportive. They work hard at providing for their children not only materially but also to give them a loving, stable and structured environment in the home.

## Dreams of the Student

Patrick dreams of being an integral part of Star Wars. He likes to fight with his light saber with his brother, pretending to defeat evil with the power of good.

## Needs for Support and Assistance

Patrick needs support and assistance in all academic areas. At this time, he is several years behind his peers academically. He struggles to maintain focus for more than twenty minutes at a time, especially if the task is not preferred. He is currently being taught one-on-one with a special education teacher working directly with him. His teacher, Nancy, makes additional accommodations to the online programs such as reading aloud and scribing for Patrick. Patrick also needs to have assignments chunked into small sections.

Mathematically, Patrick does better when he can utilize manipulatives. He can do very basic addition and subtraction without using them. Patrick reads fairly fluently but at a fourth grade level. His biggest struggle in Language Arts is grammar and composition. He really enjoys science, especially when it is hands-on.

Behaviorally, Patrick has needed a very strong Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) to improve his ability to understand rules and societal expectations of behavior. He responds better to positive attention than negative. The most recent BIP was developed for the middle school setting he was in last year. A new plan is currently in the works to adapt it to a non-traditional setting.

## Strengths

Patrick’s greatest strength is his imagination and sense of humor. His humor is often sarcastic and quirky. When Patrick is engaged in learning, he works hard and gives it his all. Patrick generally likes to interact with both peers and adults. He sees himself as kind, empathic**,** and helpful.

## Successes

While Patrick was in a traditional middle school, he participated in the Positive Behavioral Support program. He really enjoyed collecting tickets from teachers and aids for his positive behavior that were turned in for rewards such as candy and gift cards to local businesses.

## Likes/Dislikes

Patrick loves building with Legos, playing video games on the iPad, listening to music on his iPad**,** and texting his siblings. He also enjoys helping others.

Patrick does not like change. He struggles when he transitions between tasks. He is reticent to try things that he perceives as more than he can handle or that he may not perform well.

## Biggest Challenges

Patrick’s behavioral issues are his greatest challenge as he gets older. He is becoming increasingly more physical and threatening in nature when agitated and/or escalated. With the home setting, Patrick has access to knives, hammers, and screwdrivers that he would not have access to in a school location.

## Reading

His scores on SuccessMaker from the last academic year indicated that vocabulary was an area of strength. His scores this year using Spelling City bears this out. According to SuccessMaker scores, Patrick continues to struggle with phonics and comprehension. According to his last IEP, Patrick is able to recall who, what and where, as well as major ideas, events, and supporting information within and across texts at 70% accuracy at ability level (3rd grade or below). When Patrick was tested this summer for placement in the Calvert program, his areas of weakness included: vowel teams**,** silent letters**,** and ‘r’ controlled vowels**.**

## Writing

Writing is a significant weakness for Patrick. He struggles with: knowing the rules of capitalization/ punctuation; sentence structure; paragraphing; logical sequencing; and expression of ideas. Letter reversals/letter orientation; sight words; and omitting vowels are areas of spelling that are an issue for Patrick.

In a recent analysis using the Six plus One Traits of Writing, Patrick’s writing was found to be as follows: ideas – developing; organization – experimenting, voice – experimenting; word choice – developing; sentence fluency – developing; conventions – developing; and presentation – developing/ effective.

## Math

Patrick is capable of doing one and two-digit subtraction and addition with manipulatives. While using ipad-based math games, Patrick has a hard time doing this level of adding and subtracting in his head especially if the game forces him to process the information quickly. When he can take the time need to process the same problem in his head, generally he is correct in his answers. He is able to distinguish various shapes and understands putting items in a smallest to largest and largest to smallest order. Patrick enjoys iPad based math games. These tend to hold his attention for a longer period of time than work sheets.

## Work Habits

Patrick works well when he is engaged. He likes working with the iPad. There is a lot of work avoidance when he is feeling overwhelmed or scared of a task. When this happens, he will walk out of the situation, whether it is appropriate to do so or not.

## Communication

Patrick has about a two-year delay in semantics and following spoken directions. There are issues with pragmatic language skills including topic maintenance and organization. These issues may be related to his focus issues.

## Social

Currently, he has a very limited social life. He is isolated from his peers by being at home. He does attend church and Sunday school, but there are very few interactions with others outside of his family.

Patrick enjoys communicating and interacting with others especially on a one-to-one basis. He, however, can be reticent to join into group activities. He is likely to stand off to the side and observe before he enters into the situation. This is especially true in a school setting.

## Behavior

Per Patrick’s IEP, Patrick’s disability makes it difficult for him to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct as well as maintain behaviors that are expected of a student his age. Additionally, Patrick can make comments that are disparaging or threatening in nature towards staff when overwhelmed or escalated. At times he has become physically aggressive toward staff and teachers who he perceives to have control over the changeability of his day. He has difficulty understanding the hierarchy of authority or the consequences of his behavior.

Additionally, he doesn’t understand appropriate expectedand verbal and physical expression. This is one of his social work IEP goals. He is currently working with a social worker once a week. However, there is resistance on Patrick’s part to attend these sessions.

## Motor

Patrick’s gross motor skills appear to be fine. His fine motor skills, especially his handwriting seems to be delayed. He is not currently receiving any physical therapy. Occupational therapy is consultation based. A sensory diet, including heavy lifting and other gross motor activities, is recommended to be integrated into Patrick’s day to help him stay focused and on track. This does not appear to be happening on a regular basis.

# Educational Profile

## Background

Patrick is now being educated in a non-traditional environment, in this case his home. Patrick is on his second teacher/learning guide since the beginning of September. His first guide did not have the background to deal with his behavioral issues. His current teacher, Nancy, has a Master’s in Special Education – Learning Disabilities. This, however, was not a requirement for the position. The curriculum is set up so that it can be taught by just about anyone. Nancy is with Patrick from 8 to 3:30 Monday through Friday.

## General Approach to Curriculum

He is currently being educated using an online curriculum (Calvert and Verticy Learning Programs). The Verticy programs utilize the Orton-Gillingham approach to learning which gets its name from the two pioneers who worked with students who learned/acquired language differently, especially students who struggled with decoding and encoding. The curriculum includes: core subjects like language arts and math on a daily basis with social studies and science on alternating days. They also include computer and art topics as well. The approach is more multi-sensory.

## Physical Environment/Setting

The setting is Patrick’s home. Lessons may take place in many different locations within the house from the living room to the kitchen to Patrick’s sister’s room. A desk with a computer has been set up in a spare bedroom. However, the bed is still in the room. Currently, there is no space in the house that is solely dedicated to Patrick’s schooling.

The environment has been a serious problem as it is hard for Patrick to shift from “home” to “school”. The home setting also gives him lots of places to escape to when he is avoiding work.

## Content

Patrick’s teacher generally uses the provided curriculum. She will supplement and make accommodations to it as necessary. She also incorporates outside activities and lessons to stimulate Patrick’s learning process.

## Student Participation

Patricks’ participation varies dependent on the day, the time of day, and interest level. He appears to be more engaged and willing to work in the morning. He is more likely to participate if the work is iPad-based and is of high interest.

Days immediately before and after a vacation period can be tricky and filled with oppositional behavior as he works through the transitions from “vacation” to “school”.

## Teacher Presentation/Facilitation

Nancy presents the lessons through teacher-directed lessons as well as modeling and exploration. Presentation is determined by the type of lesson and usually includes a hands-on component.

## Tests, Assignments, and Evaluations

Each day there are daily evaluations through the online curriculum. Generally these are multiple choice and only a few questions in length. Every twenty lessons there are more structured tests to evaluate the level of learning.

Informal observations and assessments are also used on a daily basis to judge the level of learning and to make modifications in materials as necessary. IEP goals are evaluated as indicated in the IEP document.

Patrick is also required to take part in the MI-Access tests as part of the annual MEAP tests.

## Classroom Climate and Management

Nancy is wonderful at finding ways to encourage Patrick to stay on task and get his work started and completed. She tries to meet him wherever he is at that particular time. There are times when Patrick’s avoidance and wandering become an issue and he will go to areas of the house that Nancy is not comfortable following him. Patrick’s avoidance issues also can wreak havoc with his schedule. A daily schedule is in place, but often gets changed to deal with the behavioral issues that are occurring.

## Home-School Communication

Communication is very direct. Nancy and Patrick’s mother talk on a daily basis. If needed during the day, Nancy will contact mom via email or text.

# IEP Goals and Objectives

1. The student will be able to note people’s facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice within specific contexts to determine how that person is feeling**.**
   1. When presented with a sample, Patrick will identify a selected person’s facial expressions, body language, and/or tone of voice to determine how said person is feeling.
   2. Patrick will begin to understand how his words and actions have an effect on the feelings of others by paying attention to the verbal and non-verbal cues presented.
2. The student will attend to the lesson presented and follow directions through task completion without negotiation.
   1. Patrick will complete various tasks assigned during intervention sessions followed by 3-4 step direction sequences without negotiation.
   2. Patrick will attend to a task for 8-11 minutes without trying to change the task given no more than one verbal or visual prompt.
3. The student will improve semantic skills.
   1. During tasks of increasing difficulty, identify/express categories according to function and attribute**.**
   2. Express synonyms related to curriculum.
   3. Express antonyms related to curriculum.
   4. Express figurative language forms (I.e. idioms).
4. The student will demonstrate correct production of phoneme(s)/features(s).
   1. Produce /r/ in words.
   2. Produce /r/ in sentences.
5. The student will develop/increase reading comprehension skills.
   1. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
   2. Determine central ideas to themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
6. The student will develop/increase number and operational skills.
   1. Add and subtract whole numbers fluently.
   2. Read and write numbers to 1,000,000, relate them to the quantities they represent; compare and order.

# Curriculum Matrix

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| IEP Goals | Literature | Phonics | Grammar | Math | Social Studies/Science | Electives |
| Patrick will identify a selected person’s facial expressions, body language, and/or tone of voice to determine how said person is feeling. | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Patrick will begin to understand how his words and actions have an effect on the feelings of others. | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Patrick will complete various tasks assigned during intervention sessions followed by 3-4 step direction sequences without negotiation. | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Patrick will attend to a task for 8-11 minutes without trying to change the task given no more than one verbal or visual prompt. | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| During task of increasing difficulty, identify/express categories according to function, attribute. | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Express synonyms related to curriculum. | x | x | x |  | x | x |
| Express antonyms related to curriculum. | x | x | x |  | x | x |
| Express figurative language forms (I.e. idioms). | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Produce /r/ in words. | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Produce /r/ in sentences. | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. | x |  |  |  | x | x |
| Determine central ideas to themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. | x |  |  |  | x | x |
| Add and subtract whole numbers fluently. |  |  |  | x |  |  |
| Read and write numbers to 1,000,000, relate them to the quantities they represent… |  |  |  | x |  |  |

# Daily Schedule with Adaptions and Evaluations

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Activity | Adaptations | Evaluation Notes |
| 8am | Literature | Books are read to student as necessary. Scribing as necessary. Alter lessons as needed. | Daily Check quiz. Have student recap central themes of the text and summarize the supporting details. |
| 9am | Phonics/Spelling | Scribing as necessary for non-spelling work. Alter lessons as needed | Use Spelling City on iPad or Computer to practice and test spelling words. |
| 10am | Grammar/Composition | Scribing as necessary. Alter lessons as needed. | Daily writing workshop – journal. Use 6 plus 1 writing traits to evaluate writing. |
| 11am | Lunch |  |  |
| 12 noon | Math | Manipulatives are used. Use calculator as necessary. Alter lessons as needed. | Daily Check quiz. Utilize iPad Math games to motivate and evaluate math work. |
| 1pm | Social Studies/  Science | Books are read to student as necessary. Scribing as necessary. Alter lessons as needed. | Daily Check quiz. Have student recap central themes of the text and summarize the supporting details. |
| 2pm | Electives | Books are read to student as necessary. Scribing as necessary. Alter lessons as needed. | Daily Check quiz. Have student give an oral recap of the lesson. |

# Recommendations for Adaptions and Support

1. Patrick’s Behavior Intervention Plan needs to be modified and adapted to alternate sites whether this is home or a segregated classroom.

1. The home setting should be discontinued and a classroom found for Patrick and his teacher. The home setting is not appropriate for many reasons including: it is hard for Patrick to shift from home to school mode; there is no break for the teacher; and if Patrick has a behavioral problem, the safety of the teacher is at risk.
2. Patrick needs to continue to work with the social worker on the first two of his IEP goals. The social worker should help Patrick’s teacher and family to incorporate this into his daily schedule as well.
3. The iPad should be included in his lessons. This is a mode of learning that Patrick connects to and there is less resistance when lessons are presented on the iPad than in other ways (direct taught and/or computer based).
4. Planned interactions with peers need to be reintroduced into Patrick’s life. This lack of interaction is isolating and starting to negatively affect his behavior. This may be more easily configured if Patrick’s self-contained classroom is in a school setting.
5. Lesson modifications need to continue. This may include: chunking assignments into smaller pieces; use of manipulatives and calculators in math; and also reading and scribing assignments as needed.
6. Integrate OT suggestions and sensory breaks as a regular part of Patrick’s schedule to help diminish behavioral issues.
7. Have a consistent schedule on a daily basis to minimize transitional and behavioral issues.

## Collaborative Consultation

Because this is a new situation for both the family and the school district, the collaborative component has not been as developed as it would be in a school setting. Nancy has primarily been on her own with little interaction between her and the other members of Patrick’s team up to this point. At the beginning of the process, a Special Education provider was also engaged to work with Patrick and his Teaching Coach and to act as a liaison to the rest of the team. When Nancy was hired as Patrick’s coach, the district decided that this component was unnecessary due to Nancy’s Special Education background.

It is now up to Nancy and the rest of the team, including the school social worker and the district behaviorist, to develop the Behavioral Intervention Plan that is desperately needed and to find a location that will allow this experience to be successful for all involved.