

Typologies of Long-term English Learners

LTEL Typology #1

Thu is a 10th grade student at a suburban high school. He has attended schools in the same district for his entire schooling career. He is well-liked and can be found with his group of friends during breaks, lunch, or other school activities. However, Thu is much different in his classes. If given the choice, he sits quietly in the back of the class. He is careful not to draw too much attention to himself. Consequently, he rarely contributes to classroom conversations. He is friendly with his teachers, but his teachers would describe him as a student who lacks the motivation and often fails to turn in work. Thu's CELDT scores have identified him as Advanced overall, but his reading and writing scores are lower. The school was considering redesignating Thu, but he failed to reach the other requirements for the state test results. Each year, Thu is surprised when he receives a call slip requiring his attendance at the annual CELDT testing. However, he attends the testing. He does not understand what the test is measuring but it does give him the opportunity to see many of his friends. He has never seen his test results and his progress has not been explained to him. Thu's school emphasizes a college-going culture. The school proudly displays college flags and pennants and Thu expects to go off to college with his peers. However, a look at his transcripts would show a different story. He failed his 9th grade English and general science courses. As a 10th grader, he lacks credits needed for graduation. This year, Thu was recommended for Read 180 as a way to provide additional support. Thu started off the year well in his courses, but by the first reporting period of the year he was struggling academically.

LTEL Typology #2

Oscar is a 4th grader and has attended the same elementary school for all five years of school. When Oscar began school, he tested very low on his kindergarten readiness. Despite this, he made academic progress; although, he has always lagged behind most of his English speaking peers. During first and third grades, Oscar continued to grow, but still scored below grade-level. During this time, he received ELD instruction for a portion of each day when a bilingual aide worked with English learners from his grade level. On the annual CELDT he showed growth, but has plateaued at Early Advanced for the last two years. Since he achieved Early Advanced he no longer attended ELD instruction. His state test scores also indicated that he has fallen further behind the average expectations for students at this grade-level. His teachers have noticed a difference in Oscar this year. He has become much more reluctant to participate in class and he has not been turning in his work. His teacher says that Oscar is smart and is able to do the work, but lacks motivation and work ethic. He is often on that bench at recess as punishment for not completing or turning in assignments. However, this has not contributed to greater work completion for Oscar. When asked to complete reading assignments in history, science, or ELA, Oscar often pulls up his hoodie and lays his head on the desk. His teacher is concerned and wondering if she should call home and see if there are problems as well as consider starting the SST process.

LTEL Typology #3

Sara is an 8th grade student attending an urban middle school. Her family has moved several times and she attended two different elementary schools within the same district. Presently, she has been at the same middle school for the last two years. During this time, Sara's progress in school has been a concern. She is failing her academic courses and has been in the office several times for behavior. Lately, Sara's absences have increased. Her counselor has talked with both Sara and her family. Sara has indicated that she does not want to go to school anymore; she wants to drop out and find a job. Sara's parents say they want her to stay in school and get an education. They tell her she must attend school, but Sara often chooses not to go. Sara is at the Intermediate level on the CELDT assessment and has been at this level since fourth grade. She attained Early Advanced score in 5th grade, but fell back to Intermediate in 6th grade where she remains. A look at her report cards show she made adequate progress until 2nd grade. After that year, grades show lack of progress and even some declines. This year, Sara was placed in an EL support program her school created for EL students academically at-risk. Initially, she was unhappy and protested the placement. However, many of her friends were assigned to the class. The teacher works to help students complete assignments from their content area classes. Additionally, they are reading a popular novel to the class. Sara rarely asks for help and her numerous absences have not allowed her to make positive academic progress.