EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR LONG-TERM ENGLISH LEARNERS

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In the following report, Hanover Research explores strategies and interventions that school districts can employ to support long-term English learners. These best practices are presented following a description of the current state of language acquisition for non-native speakers in middle and high school.

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INTRODUCTION

English learners (ELs) represent one of the fastest-growing student populations in the United States. During the 2014-2015 school year, ELs made up more than 9 percent of public school attendees. Many states have EL student populations that exceed this national average and show signs of continued growth, including California where 22.4 percent of students were ELs during the 2014-2015 school year.[1] Given that this population of students represents an increasingly prominent and important stakeholder group in U.S. public schools, districts are seeking ways to implement dedicated and specialized programs that effectively bolster EL performance outcomes. However, as experts in the field explain, ELs are a highly heterogeneous group of students and educational interventions can be developed to target any number of specific characteristics or learning needs.[2]

To this end, this report examines one particular subset of the EL population: Long-Term English Learners (LTEL). These students remain in specialized EL programming, or continue to require English-language support, through middle and high school and are often overlooked by support systems. Thus, this report reviews best practices and evidenced-based literature that address ways that schools and districts can support LTELs and encourage full language proficiency by graduation. It is presented in two sections:

- **Section I: Overview of Long-Term English Learners** reviews the current state of English learners in the United States and outlines common ways that non-English speakers acquire LTEL status. This section also examines the importance of early intervention in preventing ELs from stalling.

- **Section II: Effective Strategies for Addressing the Needs of LTEL Students** explores ways that schools and districts can support LTELs through dedicated supports and intervention strategies.

KEY FINDINGS

- **There has been a steadily increasing population of LTELs in U.S. schools as a percentage of all English language learners.** In California, the population of LTELs grew from 62 percent of all secondary school English learners in 2008 to 82 percent in 2016. Despite these growing numbers, many school districts lack dedicated programs or support services to aid this specific group of students. This is particularly alarming given that LTELs underperform relative to their peers in every grade level.

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[1] "English Language Learners in Public Schools." National Center for Education Statistics, March 2017.
https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp

[2] "English Language Learners: A Policy Research Brief Produced by the National Council of Teachers of English." National Council of Teachers of English, 2008. p.1.
http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/PolicyResearch/ELResearchBrief.pdf

- **The needs of English learners in middle and high school—after they have been in the school system for several years—are distinct from other groups of EL or struggling students.** Although these students may share some characteristics with newcomer ELs (e.g., low English language proficiency) or English-only struggling students (e.g., low achievement scores), supports should be specifically designed and implemented with LTELs in mind. Thus, it is not sufficient to group LTELs with other similar student groups, nor should they be placed entirely in mainstream programs. These students require specialized English language development courses that are separate from other EL students.

- **Most LTELs are socially bilingual, meaning that it can be difficult to identify English learners in later grades who continue to need English-language support.** Indeed, these students may be able to interact in English, but they remain "stuck" at intermediate English proficiency levels that are often inadequate to succeed academically. Schools need to develop ways to monitor and track student progress and to inform teachers of which students in their classes have LTEL status. This will help these students receive the dedicated support they continue to need.

- **Despite proficiency in social English, LTELs typically lack proficiency in academic language and thus require dedicated support in developing vocabulary needed for academic settings.** This means that all classes with LTELs should be designed for explicit language development that integrates subject-matter content, English literacy and language, and academic vocabulary. Studies show that developing academic vocabulary can play an integral role in helping LTELs achieve full proficiency and succeed across content areas. In mixed-ability classes, teachers are encouraged to develop explicit content and language goals for all students.

- **A common strategy for helping LTELs master literacy goals is to incorporate topics and activities that allow students to connect with issues of personal interest.** For example, when designing English development courses, schools should seek high-interest materials and create units around issues of relevance for these students. This strategy can also be incorporated into explicit academic vocabulary lessons, where teachers can select engaging, informational texts in areas of student interest. This will also help students more fully engage with course material as well as with their peers.

- **Schools should provide some native language literacy development to complement English language acquisition courses.** Developing literacy in a student's native language is often seen as a positive influencer of English proficiency. These course sequences need to be articulated and ideally lead to Advanced Placement (AP) or other higher-level coursework. For example, Escondido Union High School District developed "Spanish for Native Speakers" courses that funnel into AP Spanish classes. For districts with high populations of students with less common language needs, schools can offer "language-based electives" (e.g., journalism) or partner with local community organizations for after-school programming.

- **School districts are responsible for ensuring that teachers of LTEL students receive dedicated and ongoing professional development.** This professional development should include teaching techniques that can be applied in classrooms and incorporate

some element of peer coaching. This training also needs to review strategies for differentiating instruction between LTEL and English-only students. Additionally, regular time for collaborative planning can ensure that LTEL supports are embedded across different content areas.

- **Addressing the needs of English learners within three years of program participation can help close achievement gaps that may be evident in later grades.** That is, EL students who complete and exit a language program within three years achieve the best results in terms of math and reading proficiency among all non-native English speakers. Districts should promote early EL interventions in elementary school to capitalize on initial English language acquisition. Perhaps the most important elements of this early intervention strategy are daily English Language Development classes and coherence and consistency between grades.

SECTION I: OVERVIEW OF LONG-TERM ENGLISH LEARNERS

In this section, Hanover provides an overview of the long-term English learner (LTEL) student population across the United States and examines the problems that schools are facing in meeting the needs of these students. This section also describes some key preventative measures that districts can take to help ensure that non-native English speakers do not acquire LTEL status in later grades.

LONG-TERM ENGLISH LEARNERS: AN ISSUE FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

English learners (ELs) are the fastest growing student population in the U.S. public school system; per the National Education Association (NEA), this population of students has doubled over the last 15 years.[3] By 2014, there were almost five million EL students enrolled in public schools across the country. The significant majority of these students are young children (i.e., Kindergarten through Grade 5), with proportionately smaller populations as they progress through middle and high school (Figure 1.1). **Research repeatedly shows that as ELs enter later grades, it becomes harder and harder for them to achieve at grade-level standards.** Indeed, English learners who continue to require dedicated English-as-a-second-language instruction for five or more years regularly lag in *every grade level*.[4] These students, classified as LTELs, require specialized supports to make up these performance gaps.

Figure 1.1: English Learners Enrolled in U.S. Public Schools by Grade Level, 2011-2014
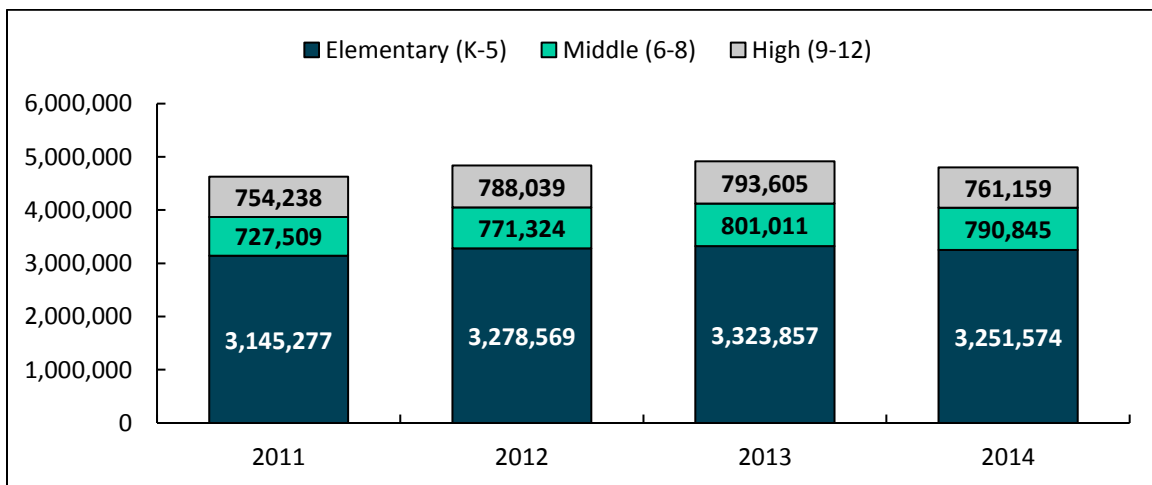
Source: National Center for Education Statistics[5]

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[3] "English Language Learners Face Unique Challenges." National Education Association, Fall 2008. http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/EL_Policy_Brief_Fall_08_(2).pdf

[4] Flores, S.M., J. Batalova, and M. Fix. "The Educational Trajectories of English Language Learners in Texas." Migration Policy Institute, March 2012. p.1. http://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/TexasELs.pdf

[5] Adapted from: "Digest of Education Statistics: Table 204.27." National Center for Education Statistics, March 2017. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_204.27.asp

Although most states and education agencies define "long-term" differently, a commonly accepted timeframe for traditional EL students to exit English-language programming is less than six years. **After six years of receiving dedicated EL or English-as-a-second-language services, students are often classified as LTELs.** Thus, schools must continue to work with these students to develop key literacy skills that are needed to succeed in mainstream programs. Adequate support for LTELs becomes even more important given the traditionally lower academic outcomes of these students compared to their shorter-term EL peers.[6] As shown in Figure 1.2, less than half of all LTELs graduated within four years in Arizona over the past 10 years; importantly, ELs who are reclassified within the mainstream system (from meeting academic proficiency targets) graduate at higher rates. Compared to LTELs (49 percent graduation rate), their peers who have recently been reclassified graduate at a rate of 67 percent.[7]

Figure 1.2: Four-Year Graduation Rates by English-Language Status in Arizona, 2003-2013
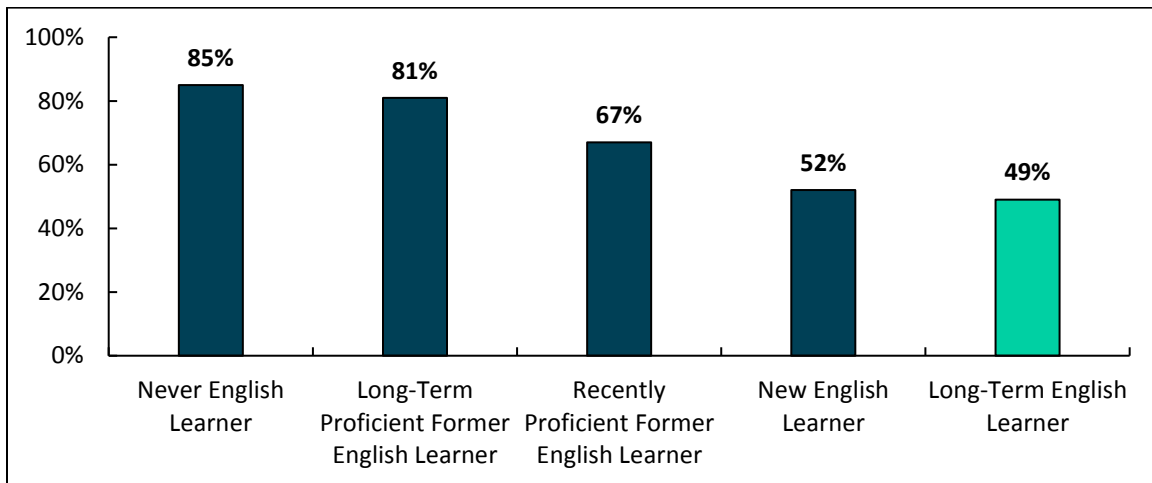
Source: WestEd[8]

The academic deficiencies experienced by LTELs are further highlighted by the fact that the population of these students is growing in most states across the United States. Indeed, researchers in the field of English-language instruction note that "English Language Learners are the nation's fastest-growing student population, yet they are disproportionately underserved and underachieving."[9] LTELs represent a major group within this population. In major metropolitan areas, such as New York City and Chicago, as well as several states with traditionally high EL populations like Colorado and California, the percentage of LTELs ranges from 23 percent to 74 percent, with experts projecting a continued increase in these numbers in the coming years. **In California, specifically, the population of LTELs grew from 62 percent**

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[6] Chen-Gaddini, M. and E. Burr. "Long-Term English Learner Students: Spotlight on an Overlooked Population." WestEd, November 2016. p.1. https://relwest.wested.org/system/resources/236/LTEL-factsheet.pdf?1480559266
[7] Ibid.
[8] Adapted from: Ibid.
[9] Olsen, L. "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators." National Education Association, March 2014. p.2. https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/15420_LongTermEngLangLearner_final_web_3-24-14.pdf

of all secondary school ELs in 2008 to 82 percent of the ELs by the 2015-2016 school year (Figure 1.3).[10] School districts will thus need additional dedicated resources and strategies to help this growing student population in the coming years. However, top researchers in the field suggest that "in spite of their numbers, long-term English language learners mainly go unnoticed in schools or, worse yet, are misunderstood and perceived as failures. By better understanding the characteristics and needs of this student population, schools can do a better job of supporting their learning."[11]

Figure 1.3: Proportion of Secondary School Students Classified as ELs by Time in Program in California, 2008-2015
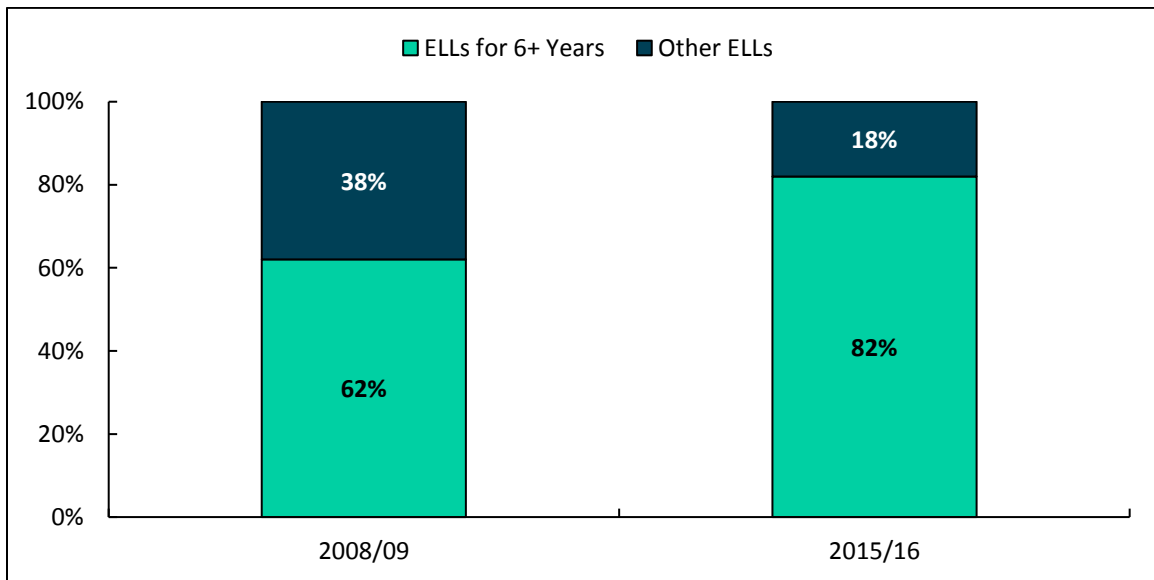
Source: WestEd[12]

Californians Together, a California-based coalition of teachers, administrators, parents, and board members dedicated to improving the outcomes of EL students across the state,[13] conducted a statewide survey in 2010 to better understand the LTEL population. In total, this survey gathered data from 40 school districts with more than 175,700 EL students (31 percent of all of California's ELs), representing all regions across the state.[14] Echoing WestEd's findings (above), Californians Together found that most ELs in the state's secondary schools were long-term English learners (here defined as more than six years). The organization further suggests that "an estimate based on California Standards Test results disaggregated by language

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[10] Chen-Gaddini and Burr, Op. cit., p.2.

[11] Menken, K. and T. Kleyn. "The Difficult Road for Long-Term English Learners." *Supporting English Language Learners*, 66:7, April 2009. http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/apr09/vol66/num07/The_Difficult_Road_for_Long-Term_English_Learners.aspx

[12] Adapted from: Chen-Gaddini and Burr, Op. cit., p.2.

[13] "Who We Are." Californians Together. https://www.californianstogether.org/about-us/

[14] Olsen, L. "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings." Californians Together, 2010. p.9. http://www.ctdev.changeagentsproductions.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ReparableHarm2ndedition.pdf

proficiency indicates that 10 percent of students in Grades 6-11 are reclassified [i.e., Redesignated Fluent English Proficient]. It appears that half of the students who were English learners together in elementary grades are reclassified by secondary school, and half continued as Long-Term English Learners" (Figure 1.4).[15]

Figure 1.4: California's Secondary School Students, Grades 6-12
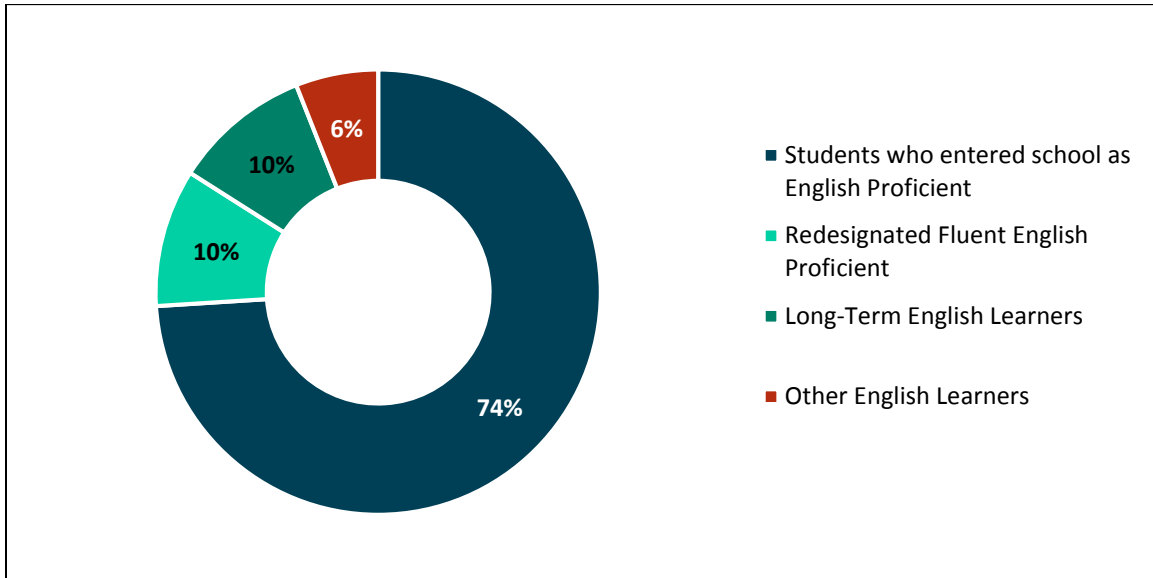
Source: Californians Together[16]

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) similarly found that the percentage of EL students in public schools has been consistently increasing since 2002, and that LTELs fair worse than both their EL and English-only peers.[17] In the organization's examination of these students, they reached four central conclusions:

> ➢ Nearly one in 10 K-12 students in public schools is an English language learner;
>
> ➢ Many preschool programs are not equipped to adequately serve English language learners;
>
> ➢ **Long-term English learners suffer worse outcomes than other English learners**; states generally do not monitor how long students spend in English language programs; and
>
> ➢ In spite of the prevalence of English learners, many general classroom teachers receive little to no training in addressing the needs of ELs.[18]

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[15] Ibid., p.11.
[16] Adapted from: Ibid.
[17] Zinth, D. "English Language Learners." *The Progress of Education Reform*, 14:6, December 2013. p.1.
   https://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/10/20/11020.pdf
[18] Bullet points taken verbatim from: Ibid.

The uniformity of these findings across sources—namely that the population of ELs, generally, and LTELs, specifically, is growing across both California and the United States and that these students consistently perform at lower levels than their peers—suggests that schools will continue to need to develop ways of supporting these students. In 2012, California took a major step forward in this regard, developing standardized definitions for "long-term English learner" and "English learner at risk of becoming a long-term English learner" and directing state agencies to "annually determine the number of students in all schools, including charters, who are or are at risk of becoming long-term English learners."[19]

In the remainder of this section, Hanover explores what it means to be a LTEL and how schools are currently addressing their needs. This review will inform Section II of this report, where Hanover provides some notable strategies that schools and districts can implement to better serve the growing population of LTEL students.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LTELS

Given the growing EL population in the United States, it is perhaps unsurprising that there are so many students in middle and high school that continue to require English-language support. However, for many experts, these students—who have been enrolled in the public education system since early childhood, yet who still have not transitioned out of EL services—serve as evidence that districts are "too unaware, ill prepared, and inadequately focused on the needs of English Language Learners."[20] Broadly, LTELs are defined by three key traits:

- They are students who have been **enrolled in U.S. schools for six years or more**;
- Are **stalled in progressing towards English proficiency** without having yet reached a threshold of adequate English skills; and
- Are **struggling academically**.[21]

Most importantly, "'being stuck'—academic struggles and lack of progress toward English proficiency—is the key to defining Long Term ELs, not the number of years it takes them to become English proficient."[22] This suggests that LTELs are consistently achieving below grade-level standards and are unable to make progress from year-to-year in the school system.

It is important to note that many LTELs are fully bilingual, meaning that they have mastered spoken English and sound like native speakers in most cases. However, "they typically have limited literacy skills in their native language, and their academic literacy skills in English are not as well-developed as their oral skills are."[23] This means that school systems must employ measures to identify LTELs beyond relying on traditional (or stereotypical) indicators of

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[19] [1] Ibid., p.5. [2] "Assembly Bill No. 2193: Chapter 427." State of California, September 2012. http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/asm/ab_2151-2200/ab_2193_bill_20120921_chaptered.pdf
[20] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.3.
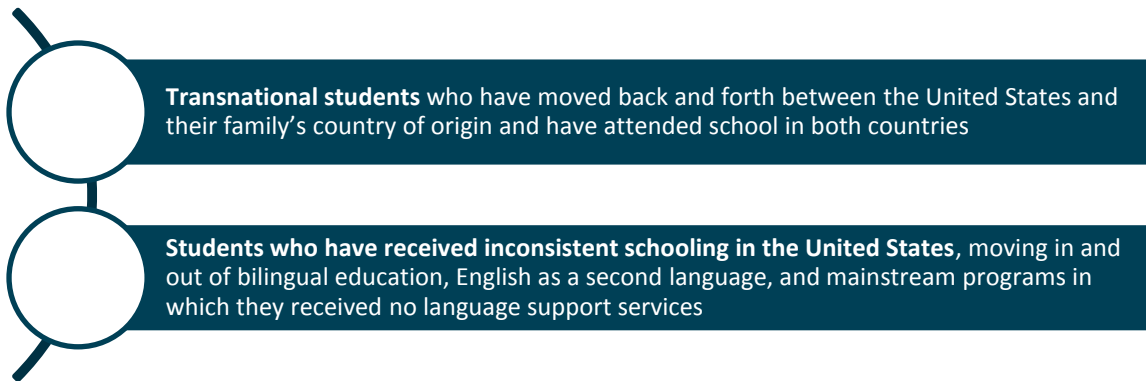[21] Bullet points adapted from: Ibid., p.4.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Menken and Kleyn, "The Difficult Road for Long-Term English Learners," Op. cit.

English language fluency. Per the NEA, "LTELs function socially in both English and their home language. However, their language is imprecise and inadequate for deeper expression and communication."[24]

In general, experts classify LTELs into two primary groups:

Figure 1.5: Primary Types of Long-Term English Learners

Transnational students who have moved back and forth between the United States and their family's country of origin and have attended school in both countries

Students who have received inconsistent schooling in the United States, moving in and out of bilingual education, English as a second language, and mainstream programs in which they received no language support services

Source: Menken and Kleyn; "The Difficult Road for Long-Term English Learners"[25]

Regardless of the reason that LTEL students have not reached grade-level proficiency or acquired necessary language skills, **the primary defining characteristic of a LTEL student is that he or she struggles academically, rather than an inability to communicate in English more broadly** (as may be the case with newcomer EL students). These students are not "progressing in English language development as would normatively be expected, and they struggle with the academic work expected of them. Typically, grades plummet, and the general profile of a [LTEL] is a student with a grade point average of less than 2.0."[26] By Grade 11, some data suggest that most ELs (who at this point are classified as long-term) are "below" or "far below" levels in Algebra I (74 percent) and Language Arts (78 percent).[27] This points to the fact that LTELs have unique language issues that are often not addressed in standard English-as-a-second language programs by the time these students reach later grades – the gaps in performance are usually too wide to overcome using standard means.

However, despite the growing LTEL population and the documented need for differentiated supports, "there has been practically no research conducted about them to date, nor do specialized educational programs exist to meet their needs."[28] Thus, to develop these kinds of specialized programs, it is imperative that school districts understand why LTELs are struggling academically, even after six or more years in the education system. The NEA finds

[24] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.5.

[25] Adapted from: Menken and Kleyn, "The Difficult Road for Long-Term English Learners," Op. cit.

[26] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.21.
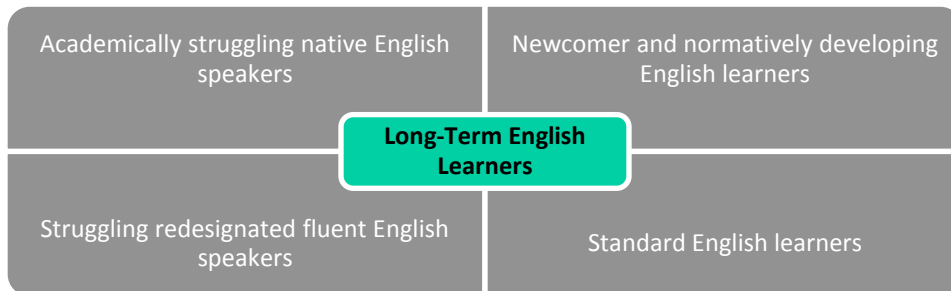
[27] Ibid.

[28] Menken, K., T. Kleyn, and N. Chae. "Spotlight on 'Long-Term English Language Learners': Characteristics and Prior Schooling Experiences of an Invisible Population." *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 6, 2012. p.122. Accessed via Routledge.

that LTELs' different language issues, as compared to traditional EL students, can include the following themes:

- Even though English tends to be the language of preference for these students, **the majority are "stuck" at intermediate levels** of English oral proficiency or below;

- **LTELs lack oral and literacy skills needed for academic success** – they struggle reading textbooks, have difficulty understanding vocabulary, and are challenged by long, written passages;

- Because they perform below grade level in reading and writing, and lack academic vocabulary, **they struggle in all content areas that require literacy**; and

- Despite coming from homes in which a language other than English is spoken, many LTELs use their home language only in limited ways – **fossilized features of their home language are superimposed with English vocabular**y in what is commonly referred to as "Spanglish" or "Chinglish."[29]

Importantly, while other student groups may struggle with the same or similar issues, **LTELs typically reside at the nexus of all these issues in a unique way** (Figure 1.6). For example, although their EL profile may look similar to traditional English learners (e.g., based on the California English Language Development Test), "they have spent most or all of their lives in the United States and do not share the newcomer's unfamiliarity with the culture or lack of exposure to English."[30] Likewise, because they struggle academically, their standardized test scores "might look similar to struggling adolescent native speakers […] yet they are still English learners – with gaps in the basic foundation of the English language."[31] **This suggests that LTELs will typically need support from a wider range of services to address the varied elements of their status.**

Figure 1.6: LTELs' Overlapping Characteristics with Other Groups

Academically struggling native English speakers	Newcomer and normatively developing English learners
Long-Term English Learners	
Struggling redesignated fluent English speakers	Standard English learners

Source: Californians Together[32]

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[29] Bullet points adapted from: Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.5.

[30] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.22.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Adapted from: Ibid.

Many LTELs also tend to be non-engaged and passive in schools, leading several sources to call these long-term English learners an "invisible group" in schools.[33] Due to their challenges with English, and the associated struggle of achieving at grade-level competency levels, many LTELs are hesitant to participate regularly in classes – indeed, "over years, non-participation becomes a habit for LTELs, and some remain silent for much of the school day."[34] Californians Together found that many teachers may *misinterpret this non-engagement*, with focus group participants in one study explaining that many LTELs in their classrooms try not to cause any trouble or "stay under the radar."[35] Often, the students themselves do not see their behavior as problematic either. For example,

> They say they are being courteous, respectful students. Primarily, they see themselves as "well-behaved" in school. To the surprise of administrators, counselors, and teachers who conducted interviews and focus groups with Long Term English Learners, many said that they enjoy school, do [not] find the work hard, and feel they are being successful students. **A closer look indicates that they do not understand the behaviors associated with academic success and engagement.**[36]

Schools need to actively engage LTELs in classes, even if they do not display problem behaviors or obvious signs of language deficiency. This is because, in many instances, "LTELs have not been explicitly taught the study skills or behaviors associated with academic success and engagement. They are passed from grade to grade by educators who do [not] know how to engage them."[37]

BECOMING A LTEL STUDENT

For the most part, **English learners become LTELs based on the quality and quantity (or lack thereof) of English language services that they receive over time.** The NEA asserts that "the quantity, quality, and consistency of programs and instruction [ELs] receive can move them towards English proficiency and content mastery or relegate them to long-term status."[38] LTEL students' academic progress and literacy development can be impeded for a range of reasons, including:

- Receiving **weak English language development services** at some point in their schooling;

- Experiencing **a narrowed curriculum** (in which English language development classes supersede subject classes – this narrowed curriculum may impede their progress toward proficiency in both academic content and English);

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[33] [1] Menken, Kleyn, and Chae, Op. cit., p.122. [2] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.6.

[34] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.6.

[35] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.24.

[36] Ibid. Emphasis added.

[37] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.6.

[38] Ibid., p.8.

- Attending **multiple schools**, each with different—and possibly unrelated—curricula, support programs, and teaching practices;

- **Missing school**, also known as "interrupted formal education," due to mobility and family obligations; and/or

- Being enrolled in inappropriate courses and programs due to **unidentified or misidentified learning disabilities**.[39]

Of these factors, **ineffective and inappropriate English language development services is the most commonly cited reason that young non-English speakers become LTELs by the time they enter middle and high school.** The NEA finds that "the *strength of educator training* and *approach to language development*—and the *consistency* and *coherence* of the program a student receives across grade levels—greatly impacts students' long-term academic outcomes."[40] Despite this, many LTELs receive no formal language development program at all. For example, in California, data suggest that as many as 12 percent of LTELs may have spent their entire schooling in mainstream settings with no dedicated services. Further, since 2000, the number of students who receive primary language instruction has gone down (Figure 1.7).[41]

Figure 1.7: California English Learner Services and Instructional Settings, 2000-2008

SERVICE	SCHOOL YEAR		
	2000-01	*2004-05*	*2008-09*
No Services	5%	2%	1%
Mainstream	34%	41%	--
Primary Language Instruction	11%	7%	5%
Alternative Course of Study	12%	8%	--
English Language Development (ELD) Alone	11%	11%	10%
ELD plus SDAIE Instruction	48%	47%	49%
Structured English Immersion Setting	35%	50%	55%

Source: Californians Together[42]

As will be explored in more detail later in this section, it is important that English learners receive early and consistent instruction and dedicated EL services at a young age.[43] Moreover, these services and supports need to change in conjunction with the evolving language and content-area demands as students progress into later and later grades. Normally, "as [LTELs] continue on to upper elementary grades and secondary schools where language demands

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[39] Bullet points taken almost verbatim from: Chen-Gaddini and Burr, Op. cit., pp.2–3. Emphasis added.

[40] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.8. Emphasis added.

[41] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.14.

[42] Adapted from: Ibid., p.15.

[43] Zinth, Op. cit., p.3.

increase significantly, they fall further and further behind."[44] This indicates that gaps in language and content proficiency may compound into middle and high school, further emphasizing the need for specialized supports that consider the needs of LTELs as different from their more traditional newcomer EL peers.

GAPS IN LTELS' SELF-PERCEPTIONS

A common problem cited by educators with LTEL students is a gap between their expectations and their reality based on perceptions of their English proficiency. For instance, the NEA finds that "the majority of Long Term English Language Learners want to attend college despite significant gaps in academic preparation."[45] In a mixed-method study of LTELs, researchers similarly found that **there is a "gap between [LTELs] postsecondary aspirations and the reality of their academic performance, which raises questions about the adequacy of educational programs and identification of ELs.**"[46]

In most cases, LTELs appear to view themselves as motivated, active, and proficient English learners – across interviews with these students, in fact, experts in the field found that they have strong aspirations to attend college and feel that they have been successful self-advocates throughout their time in high school. Unfortunately, "their stories and academic profiles revealed that they were performing at grade level during their early elementary years and, despite subsequent language and academic struggles, they remained eager to succeed. As a result, we are compelled to ask whether their teachers and counselors were aware of these students' aspirations, work ethic, and perseverance."[47]

By focusing too narrowly on graduation, for example, many schools may inadvertently limit LTELs' access to challenging courses that would prepare them for higher education. Several factors may contribute to this expectations gap:

- **Adequacy of general education programs:** Many LTELs may not be sufficiently proficient in English to do well academically, which raises questions about the adequacy of bilingual education programs and ESL services, and the rigor of the academic curriculum to which they have access.

- **Bilingual education and ESL programs:** Many of these programs do not sufficiently develop students' native language and English language fluency; further, many high school EL students do not feel that English programming meets their needs.

- **Lack of academic rigor:** LTELs' English-learner status and lower academic performance are generally considered to be indicators of academic risk, and many

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[44] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.10.
[45] Ibid., p.6.
[46] Kim, W.G. and S.B. Garcia. "Long-Term English Language Learners' Perceptions of Their Language and Academic Learning Experiences." *Remedial and Special Education*, 35:5, 2014. p.300. Accessed via SagePub.
[47] Ibid., p.309.

districts thus place LTELs in low-level classes in high school, which can limit their opportunity to learn.[48]

These findings point to the importance of discussing academic achievement and goal-setting with LTELs. If schools do not provide these students with opportunities for or exposure to academically rigorous material—and consequently do not prepare them effectively for higher education—then these students will continue to experience gaps between their perceived and actual abilities.[49]

PROBLEMS WITH CURRENT APPROACHES

Given the rising numbers of LTELs enrolled in schools across the United States, there is a gap in programming for these students in secondary schools. According to the NEA, "**few districts have designated programs or formal approaches designed for [LTELs] in secondary schools, leaving LTELs to sink or swim with inadequate support.**"[50] In fact, in their survey of over 40 school districts in California, Californians Together found that only four districts had designated programs or formal approaches for addressing the needs of LTELs. Instead, the most common current approach to helping these students is simply placement in mainstream classrooms that are designed for English-proficient students and "there is nothing about these classes (instruction, pacing, curriculum, grouping) that addresses the language development or access needs of Long Term English Learners."[51] Many problems stem from this inappropriate placement, which are outlined in Figure 1.8 on the following page.
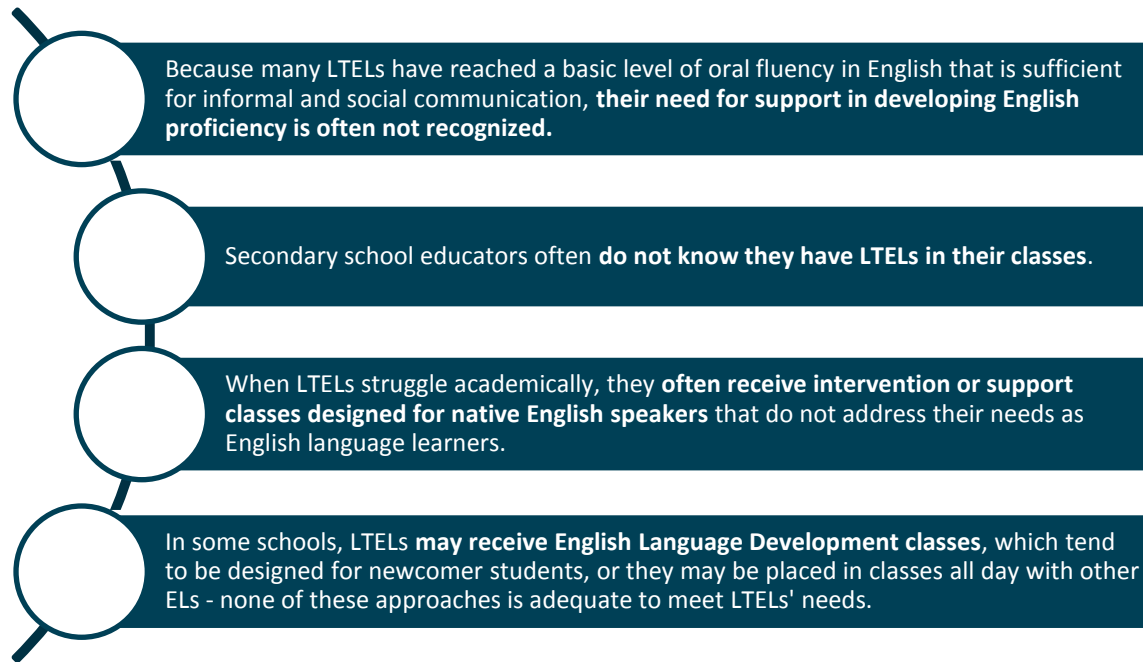
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[48] Bullet points adapted from: Ibid., p.310.
[49] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.6.
[50] Ibid., p.14.
[51] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.27.

Figure 1.8: Common Problems with LTEL Services in Secondary Schools

Because many LTELs have reached a basic level of oral fluency in English that is sufficient for informal and social communication, **their need for support in developing English proficiency is often not recognized.**

Secondary school educators often **do not know they have LTELs in their classes**.

When LTELs struggle academically, they **often receive intervention or support classes designed for native English speakers** that do not address their needs as English language learners.

In some schools, LTELs **may receive English Language Development classes**, which tend to be designed for newcomer students, or they may be placed in classes all day with other ELs - none of these approaches is adequate to meet LTELs' needs.

Source: National Education Association[52]

A central cause of this regular misplacement in mainstream classrooms with no EL supports is the fact that **most LTELs have reached a basic level of oral fluency and thus teachers do not recognize their need for continued support.** When their needs are recognized, moreover, many LTELs receive interventions designed for other student groups such as newcomer ELs or academically struggling native English speakers.[53] In California, most English Language Development (ELD) classes are designed for a three- or four-year sequence and only progress through the Intermediate level. For LTELs who are placed in ELD classes for newcomers, "who seem to plateau at an Intermediate level of proficiency, districts and schools with this approach to placement keep [LTELs] in these separate English learner settings indefinitely."[54] This further underlines the importance of dedicated supports and interventions for LTELs that are designed specifically for these students.

Another common problem preventing LTELs from achieving at grade-level and English-language proficiency standards is a **lack of teacher training**. Teachers should be aware of which students continue to need English language support, and school systems should provide avenues for those educators to acquire critical skills and dispositions for helping these

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[52] Adapted from: Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., pp.14–15.

[53] Olsen, L. "Secondary School Courses Designed to Address the Language Needs and Academic Gaps of Long Term English Learners." Californians Together, December 2014. p.6.
http://www.ctdev.changeagentsproductions.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/SecondarySchoolsLTELreport.compressed.pdf

[54] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.28.

students. The ECS recommends that "general classroom teachers need specific knowledge and skills (not necessarily knowledge of the EL student's native language) to bring ELs to proficiency in the four domains of language acquisition: speaking, listening, reading, and writing."[55] Likewise, the NEA finds that teachers play an important role in supporting LTELs, yet few secondary educators receive training in this area. Specifically:

- Few secondary teachers feel they have the tools, skills, or preparation to meet the needs of their EL students, and few have received professional development to do so;

- Even more problematic, LTEL students are disproportionately assigned to the least-prepared educators in the school – in many settings, veteran educators earn the right to "move up" to honors classes; and

- Secondary teachers often are not prepared to teach reading and writing skills and often do not have training in language development – their focus has been on academic content.[56]

Overall, current strategies for helping LTELs succeed in school lack cohesiveness and do not provide support for these students' full range of needs. Most programs today lack urgency and do not consider the unique needs of English learners by the time they enter high school. As explored more in Section II, it is important that supports for LTELs simultaneously address *language, literacy,* and *academic gaps*.[57]

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

Although many non-native English speakers will continue to need support throughout their school careers, an important strategy for school districts to promote is *preventing* ELs from becoming long-term English learners in the first place. This means providing robust supports and services in elementary school that will allow ELs to enter secondary school proficient and able to succeed in fully mainstream classes. Indeed, according to the NEA, "**taking the necessary steps early enough can help prevent an entire new generation of long-term EL students.**"[58]

Data largely support early identification and intervention for EL students. For example, in a longitudinal study of English learners in Texas tracked over a 10-year period, researchers found that ELs "who completed and exited a language acquisition program after three years achieved the best results in terms of meeting Texas basic math and reading proficiency standards among all EL groups."[59] They concluded that:

[55] Zinth, Op. cit., p.4.

[56] Bullet points adapted from: Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., pp.14–15.

[57] Ibid., p.18.

[58] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.29. Emphasis added.

[59] Flores, Batalova, and Fix, Op. cit., p.1.

The longitudinal data presented here also highlight the need to differentiate between short-term ELs—especially those who transition out of EL status after three years—and the long-term ELs whose testing outcomes lag and who were less likely to matriculate to two- or four-year institutions. Our results show that EL students who started in first grade and progressed "on time" to grade twelve and *who exited EL programs within three years* **had much better outcomes than other EL students as well as their non-EL counterparts.**[60]

These results speak to the importance of preventing English learners from stalling in their language progress. Californians Together found that many effective elementary school programs designed to prevent the development of LTEL status in later grades and combat academic underperformance include:

> - **Dedicated, daily standards-based English Language Development (ELD)** addressing specific needs of students at each fluency level supported with quality materials and focusing on all four domains of language;
>
> - Programs that develop the home language (oral and literacy) to threshold levels that serve as a foundation for strong development of English literacy and academic success – **teaching students to read in their first language promotes higher levels of reading achievement in English**;
>
> - Curriculum, instruction, and strategies to **promote transfer between English and the home language**;
>
> - Emphasis throughout the curriculum on **enriched oral language development**;
>
> - Access to academic content facilitated by **modified instructional strategies** and supplemental materials; and
>
> - **Coherence** and **consistency** of program across grades.[61]

In short, because students who develop LTEL status are not progressing adequately in elementary school, **schools need to plan dedicated interventions for students who display the most serious need.** This predominately involves planning and incorporating "project-based learning that emphasizes students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing development in real-world, content-based applications."[62] In Lennox School District, near Los Angeles, educators implemented an elementary intervention program to help curb the number of LTELs in the system. The after-school program involved several pointed activities (Figure 1.9) aimed at increasing engagement and English proficiency through differentiated instruction. Through dedicated professional development, a project-based, student-centered curriculum, and community partnerships, data indicated that students in the program

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[60] Ibid., p.20. Emphasis added.
[61] Bullet points taken almost verbatim from: Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.39.
[62] Lavadenz, Armas, and Barajas, Op. cit., p.29.

showed "higher percentages of attainment of one or more levels of English proficiency for LTELs at the beginning and early intermediate proficiency levels."[63]

Figure 1.9: Sample After-School Lesson Sequence in Preventative LTEL Intervention

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
Warm Up	Reading a current event, reflection about the article.
Vocabulary Lesson	Practice academic language for program and lesson.
Language Skills	Questioning, sentence structure/syntax, taking notes.
Real-World Application	Relevant curriculum that is applicable outside of classroom (e.g., journalism genre with field trips to community locations).
Closure/Culmination	Reflection: incorporate vocabulary (e.g., headline, caption, include a quote).

Source: Lavadenz, Armas, and Barajas; "Preventing Long-Term English Learners"[64]

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[63] Ibid., p.27.
[64] Adapted from: Ibid., p.25.

SECTION II: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF LTEL STUDENTS

In this section, Hanover reviews best practices and evidence-based literature on effectively addressing the needs of LTELs. This section examines both specific intervention programs designed for this student population, as well as broader district- and school-based strategies.

RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

Generally, "few districts have formal evidence-based approaches to serving LTELs, particularly with regard to their English language and literacy development."[65] However, in recent years, research has started to emerge on how LTELs respond best to school-based programs and intervention initiatives, with many districts across California beginning to "dig deeper" into what is occurring with these students.[66] This fledgling literature base allows school systems to start making informed decisions about interventions for LTEL students, whereas previously much of this strategic planning was done on an *ad hoc* basis. For example, the NEA and Californians Together now promote **seven basic research-based principles for meeting the needs of LTELs across the board**:

> ➢ **Urgency:** Focus urgently on accelerating LTEL progress towards attaining English proficiency and closing academic gaps.
>
> ➢ **Distinct Needs:** Recognize that the needs of LTELs are distinct and cannot adequately be addressed within a "struggling reader" paradigm or generic "English Language Learner" approach, but require an explicit LTEL approach.
>
> ➢ **Language, Literacy, and Academics:** Provide LTELs with language development, literacy development, and a program that addresses the academic gaps they have accrued.
>
> ➢ **Home Language:** Affirm the crucial role of home language in a student's life and learning, and provide home language development whenever possible.
>
> ➢ **Three R's – Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships:** Provide LTELs with rigorous and relevant curriculum and relationships with supportive adults (along with the supports to succeed).
>
> ➢ **Integration:** End the "ESL ghetto," cease the sink-or-swim approach, and provide maximum integration without sacrificing access to LTEL supports.
>
> ➢ **Active Engagement:** Invite, support, and insist that LTELs become active participants in their own education.[67]

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[65] Kinsella, K. "Helping Long-Term English Learners Master the Language of School." Scholastic, December 2011. p.1. http://research.scholastic.com/sites/default/files/publications/English3D_ResearchFoundation_2011.pdf

[66] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.31.

[67] Bullet points taken verbatim from: Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., pp.17–18.

Experts in the field explain that the above principles can (and should) be applied across contexts for LTELs at all points throughout the needs spectrum. However, actual programs and other initiatives for LTEL students are often tailored more specifically to the school or district profile. Considerations such as the number of LTEL students, school capacity, and trained EL teachers can impact how school systems develop and roll-out LTEL programs.[68] School-, district-, and state-level stakeholders are also encouraged to all take an active role in selecting and preparing these programs and strategies (Figure 2.1). Administrators at all levels need to know which students are LTELs and what supports these students—and their teachers—need to find success.[69]

Figure 2.1: Key Responsibilities at Each Stakeholder Level

THE SCHOOL	THE DISTRICT	THE STATE
The school is often responsible for developing a comprehensive secondary-level program for LTELs. Key features include many of the principles outlined above (e.g., specialized ELD courses, clustered placement, etc.).	It is the role of the district to ensure high-quality programs for LTELs through clearly defined pathways and research-based program models, professional development, district-wide expectations, and monitoring and articulation between grades.	The state is often responsible for adopting a standard state definition of LTEL and requiring data collection to support early identification and response. It should also provide consistent state messaging and counsel (e.g., accountability, corrective action, etc.).

Source: San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools[70]

In the remainder of this section, Hanover highlights some key strategies and programs that schools and districts can implement to meet the unique needs of LTELs.

SCHOOL-BASED AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

School administrators and teachers play the primary role in ensuring that LTELs in their classrooms are receiving effective support throughout the school day. Indeed, according to an oft-cited study published by the City University of New York (CUNY) and the New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (NYSIEB), "it is critical that school administrators build meaningful programs that support the success of students labeled LTEL. **Any curriculum, strategies, or assessment schemes will only be as effective as the context of a well-thought-out program in which they are implemented.** These structures must be put in place through the support of administrators."[71]

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[68] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.33.

[69] Olsen, L. and Y. Wan. "A Closer Look at Long Term English Learners: A Focus on New Directions." *In the Starlight*, 7, December 2010. p.3. http://apps.sbcss.net/elresearch/downloads/07/Olsen_Color_eng.pdf

[70] Adapted from: Ibid., pp.2–3.

[71] Ascenzi-Moreno, L., T. Kleyn, and K. Menken. "A CUNY-NYSIEB Framework for the Education of 'Long-Term English Learners': 6-12 Grades." CUNY-NYSIEB, Spring 2013. p.3. Emphasis added. http://www.nysieb.ws.gc.cuny.edu/files/2013/06/CUNY-NYSIEB-Framework-for-LTELs-Spring-2013-FINAL.pdf

The CUNY-NYSIEB framework, taken together with the principles espoused by the NEA and Californians Together, can help schools develop and sustain structures for teachers and administrators to best support their LTEL students. The framework—across its various individual components—is anchored in two "non-negotiable" principles:

Figure 2.2: Foundation Principles of the CUNY-NYSIEB Framework

Utilize students' bilingualism as a resource in their education; use translanguaging strategies (i.e., intentionally building on students' home language practices) to engage students with educational content, challenge students cognitively, and support the acquisition of academic language and literacy skills.

Provide students with a school-wide multilingual ecology where their language practices are visible and valued.

Source: CUNY-NYSIEB[72]

In short, "the needs of LTELs in high school are different from those of other emergent bilinguals, and programming for them must, therefore, be distinctive."[73] Below, Hanover describes some strategies that schools may consider implementing to best help LTELs. However, it is important to keep in mind that this group of students is not a "monolithic population," and that different LTELs may respond best to different supports and approaches.[74] As such, these strategies and programs should be implemented with the school's specific LTEL population in mind.

SPECIALIZED ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT COURSES

The cornerstone to most LTEL initiatives is specialized English Language Development (ELD) courses that *are separate from other EL students.* That is, these ELD courses should be designed specifically for long-term English learners, rather than repurposed or grouped with a school's existing EL classes.[75] Often, these courses are developed in conjunction with a district committee or working group that is dedicated to identifying the school system's needs and designing appropriate coursework. However, per Californians Together, "where and how the courses fit into the overall schedule and curriculum scheme differ."[76] Explaining further, the organization asserts that:

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[72] Adapted from: Ibid.
[73] Menken, Kleyn, and Chae, Op. cit., p.123. Emphasis added.
[74] Ascenzi-Moreno, Kleyn, and Menken, Op. cit., p.2.
[75] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.19.
[76] Olsen, "Secondary School Courses Designed to Address the Language Needs and Academic Gaps of Long Term English Learners," Op. cit., p.9.

> For some, the "bucket" is an English Language Development (ELD) class redefined for this group, or an English support class that now is specifically designated for long-term English learners. In some cases, a new course description is written and approved – an "Academic Language" course. For still others, an existing course title/ code is used that fits as the basic structure for the reworked content. **Thus, while the content across the piloted courses is quite similar, what students get "credit" for and teacher specifications differ.**[77]

In this way, schools need to decide how LTELs will receive dedicated instruction within the wider curriculum. In a conference in Oakland, Californians Together hosted districts from across the state to discuss the ways that they had implemented this LTEL coursework. **Appendix A** presents the full list of "essential components" that districts regularly highlight as being effective across course options. However, beyond these general guidelines, it appears that most districts that pilot programs for LTEL students purchase and/or adopt materials from existing sources (e.g., Scholastic's *English 3D*).[78] Considerations for schools that may seek third-party resources—or that wish to develop their own high-quality LTEL curriculum internally—include:

- **Materials should be relevant.** Teachers should seek high-interest materials, create units around issues of relevance to students, and pay attention to age and grade-level appropriateness. Students are reluctant to read unless they see the real-life applications.

- **It is important to incorporate whole books.** Typically, LTELs have been given excerpts or simplified material, without the opportunity to read whole books and complex, elegant language.

- **Curriculum should explicitly provide opportunities for active engagement,** with a focus on oral and written language development.

- **The course should touch on all of the essential components** and have materials that address these components (e.g., academic language and vocabulary development, multiple genres of text, etc.).

- **Materials should align and connect** to core English and other academic courses.[79]

Regardless of how schools select (or develop) these specialized ELD courses for LTELs, it is thus important that they address several core content areas. The NEA recommends that all LTEL ELD classes emphasize **writing, academic vocabulary, active engagement, and oral language,** for example.[80]

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[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., p.21.
[79] Bullet points adapted from: Ibid.
[80] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.19.

SECTION SPOTLIGHT: VISTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Vista Unified School District (VUSD) operates 29 schools for approximately 22,000 students, representing one of the largest education agencies in the San Diego County area. The district is home to a diverse student population, with roughly 3,000 special education students and 4,000 students who are non-native English speakers.[81] VUSD is recognized by Californians Together as operating a particularly notable ELD course sequence, with a "double-period block [that] combines the regular grade-level English classes with a specially designed ELD IV period, taught by the same teacher who can focus in the second period on the language demands and language development needed for success."[82]

VUSD maintains a dedicated English Language Development department that oversees programming for both students and teachers. According to the department, the ELD programming is "designed to support and promote the academic success of our ELs. At each school site, there is an ELD Coordinator who works to ensure that the site's ELD program addresses the language acquisition needs of students in the process of learning English."[83] The district offers several different EL program models, depending on the demographics of the school; however, across the models (e.g., Structured English Immersion, English Language Mainstream Program, etc.), VUSD actively promotes four goals: **(1) English language proficiency; (2) academic success; (3) bilingual skills for future careers; and finally (4) preparation for community participation.**[84] Moreover, the different programs share several key components to help EL students reach those goals, including ELD (along with primary language instruction, bilingual skills, and specially-designed academic instruction). The district's ELD programs aim to promote English proficiency and academic success through a number of standards:

- ELD instruction is based on the California English Language Development standards and provides a pathway to the English Language Arts (ELA) standards.
- ELD schedules and groups may be organized within a classroom, across grade levels, or school-wide to promote consistency and focused learning groups.
- Students are grouped by ELD proficiency levels for ELD instruction so that no more than two consecutive levels are grouped together.
- Paraeducators may be assigned to assist with ELD instruction under the supervision of qualified teachers.
- ELD is provided on a daily basis for at least 30 minutes per day for elementary students and for at least one instructional period each day for secondary students.
- English Learners may receive their ELD instruction as part of ELA as long as instruction addresses both ELD and ELA standards.[85]

VUSD's English Learner Master Plan, which can be accessed here, further outlines the English acquisition and academic success indicators for each program model for secondary students. For example, VUSD enrolls secondary students with "less than reasonable" fluency in English in Structured English Immersion Programs which require differentiated instruction in core subjects and content taught in the students' primary language.[86]

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[81] "VUSD at a Glance." Vista Unified School District. http://www.vistausd.org/glance

[82] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.34.

[83] "English Language Development." Vista Unified School District. https://vistausd-ca.schoolloop.com/cms/page_view?d=x&piid=&vpid=1356773296076

[84] "VUSD English Learner Master Plan Working Draft for Board Review" Ventura Unified School District, August 2007. p.18. http://www.venturausd.org/Portals/3/Bilingual%20Ed/Master%20Plan/master_plan_8_23_07.pdf

[85] Bullet points taken almost verbatim from: Ibid., p.20.

[86] Ibid., p.32.

EXPLICIT ACADEMIC LANGUAGE AND LITERACY INSTRUCTION

In school, there are two predominant types of language that are used throughout the day: one that reflects a speaker's ability to hold a conversation about everyday topics, and another that involves talking, reading, and writing about school subjects. As has been discussed above, LTELs have typically mastered the former, but often lack the proficiency and/or instructional supports to fully develop the latter.[87] While explicit academic language instruction may not be needed in elementary school—where content does not require as deep a mastery of technical vocabulary—as students progress through middle and high school, this type of language proficiency becomes more and more important for success. "Academic vocabulary" is defined as follows:

> **ACADEMIC VOCABULARY** represents words that are used primarily in the academic disciplines (science, history, geography, mathematics, literary analysis, etc.). These words are much more frequently used in discussions, essays, and articles in these disciplines than in informal conversations and social settings.
>
> Typically, academic vocabulary is broken into two categories: **general academic vocabulary** and **domain-specific vocabulary**. General academic vocabulary words such as *environment*, *factor*, *exhibit*, *investigate*, *transition*, and *tangential* are used in writing across many academic disciplines. A word's meaning may shift slightly in different contexts, although occasionally the shift is dramatic. By contrast, domain-specific academic vocabulary words are unique to a particular academic discipline. Words such as *pi* and *commutative* are linked to mathematics; words like *diode* and *atom* are linked to physics.

Source: Institute for Education Sciences[88]

However, many English learners, and especially those who reach middle and high school without reaching proficiency benchmarks, do not have the opportunities to develop academic language to support reading, writing, and discussing academic topics in school. In turn, this lack of exposure "can, and frequently does, lead to struggles with complex texts that are loaded with abstract content and academic vocabulary."[89] **Thus, schools with LTELs should "infuse a language and literacy focus within and across all content areas.** Content-area courses—such as math, science, and social studies—ought to focus simultaneously on content as well as language and literacy learning."[90]

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[87] Soto, M., Y.S. Freeman, and D. Freeman. "In for the Long Haul." *Language Magazine*.
https://www.languagemagazine.com/in-for-the-long-haul/
[88] Baker, S. et al. "Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School." Institute for Education Sciences, April 2014. p.14.
https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/practiceguide/english_learners_pg_040114.pdf
[89] Ibid., p.13.
[90] Ascenzi-Moreno, Kleyn, and Menken, Op. cit., p.6.

In particular, this explicit academic language instruction centers around two key elements:

- **Design all classes for explicit language development,** with a focus on comprehension, vocabulary development, and advanced grammatical structures needed to comprehend and produce academic language.

- **Design lessons around carefully structured language objectives** for integrating subject matter content, focusing on content-related reading and writing skills and carefully planned activities that encourage students to actively use language, with an emphasis on meaning- making and engaging with the academic content.[91]

In these ways, LTELs are exposed to explicit language instruction throughout the day, and specifically in the context of academic and content-area vocabulary. According to Californians Together, LTELs need "explicit instruction in academic uses of English, with a focus on comprehension, vocabulary development, and advanced grammatical structures needed to comprehend and produce academic language. They also need, however, explicit instruction in the language of the content used in the discipline being studied."[92]

The Institute for Education Sciences (IES) strongly recommends—based on a review of the empirical evidence and standards for study design and effect size—that schools explicitly teach this academic vocabulary to LTEL students throughout the day (Figure 2.3 on the following page).

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[91] Bullet points adapted from: Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.21.

[92] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., pp.34–35.

Figure 2.3: Strategies for Explicitly Teaching Academic Vocabulary for English Learners

Choose a brief, engaging piece of informational text that includes academic vocabulary as a platform for intensive academic vocabulary instruction.

- After selecting the instructional objectives for the lesson, identify content-rich informational material (e.g., magazine articles, Op-Ed columns, etc.) for **anchoring in-depth instruction in academic vocabulary**.
- The text should be brief, yet engaging for students; contain a variety of target academic words to focus on; connect to a given unit of study; and provide sufficient detail and examples for students to be able to comprehend the passage.

Choose a small set of academic vocabulary for in-depth instruction.

- Select a **small set of words to use for intensive instruction** over the course of several lessons. When students are taught a large number of words in a day, they often develop a shallow understanding of a word's meaning that is rarely retained later.
- Words should be central to understanding the text, frequently used in the text, appear in other content areas (where applicable), and have multiple meanings.

Teach academic vocabulary in depth using multiple modalities (writing, speaking, listening).

- Providing students with opportunities to **experience the new academic vocabulary in multiple ways** is likely to make these new words an integral part of students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The goal of instruction is for students to understand the connotation of the words.
- Teachers can provide students with student-friendly definitions of the target academic words and apply these definitions to the context of the text, and explicitly clarify and reinforce the definitions using examples, non-examples, and concrete representations.

Teach word-learning strategies to help students independently figure out the meaning of words.

- Teach students to **independently figure out the meaning of unknown words** by using context clues, word parts, and cognates. This is likely to increase students' understanding of how words work and also provide them with a means by which they can figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words when reading independently.

Source: Institute for Education Sciences[93]

Indeed, a number of evidence-based studies have highlighted **the important role that explicit academic vocabulary instruction can play in helping non-native English speakers achieve full proficiency at the secondary level.** As students progress into higher grade levels, this vocabulary knowledge has increasingly noticeable effects on reading comprehension, first language transfer into English, and vocabulary development more broadly.[94] Empirical and anecdotal evidence reinforce that a particularly important strategy is to select a small set of

[93] Adapted from: Baker et al., Op. cit., pp.14–21.
[94] Cisco, B.K. and Y. Padron. "Investigating Vocabulary and Reading Strategies with Middle Grades English Language Learners: A Research Synthesis." *Research in Middle Level Education*, 36:4, 2012. p.1. https://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/rmle/rmle_vol36_no4.pdf

academic terms for in-depth instruction rather than inundating these students with a large number of new words. In one successful secondary-level EL intervention, for example, students focused on only eight or nine new words per eight-week session.[95] The U.S. Department of Education similarly recommends that educators highlight between five and eight words over the course of several lessons so that EL students can develop deep and meaningful mastery.[96]

Researchers reveal that explicit instruction in academic and content-area vocabulary indeed has positive effects on EL students in middle and high school, who, again, often have "fewer opportunities to engage in academic discussions, to be exposed to rich content instruction, and to have good language models" than their native-English peers.[97] For example, in a vocabulary acquisition intervention in a Grade 7 social studies classroom, students received dedicated vocabulary and concept-building instruction for 50 minutes per day for nine to 12 weeks. Specifically, the daily intervention schedule was composed of:

- A brief overview of "big ideas";
- Explicit vocabulary instruction that integrated paired students' discussion of the words;
- Discussion built around a short video clip (two to four minutes) that complemented the day's reading;
- A teacher-led and paired student reading assignment followed by generating and answering questions; and
- A wrap-up activity in the form of a graphic organizer or other writing exercise.[98]

In these ways, the targeted vocabulary intervention addressed both key social studies terminology and how those terms reinforced students' understanding of key unit concepts. According to the researchers, it "shifted the instructional emphasis from the acquisition of historical facts to one in which the *big ideas* provided context for promoting students' using language and understanding the content."[99] For EL students in secondary school, this extended vocabulary instruction contributed to higher measures of curriculum-based vocabulary and reading comprehension.

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[95] Lesaux, N.K. et al. "The Effectiveness and Ease of Implementation of an Academic Vocabulary Intervention for Linguistically Diverse Students in Urban Middle Schools." *Reading Research Quarterly*, 45:2, 2010. p.203. Accessed via ProQuest.

[96] Baker et al., Op. cit., p.16.

[97] Vaughn, S. et al. "Enhancing Social Studies Vocabulary and Comprehension for Seventh-Grade English Language Learners: Findings from Two Experimental Studies." *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 2, October 2009. p.316. Accessed via EBCSOHost.

[98] Bullet points adapted from: Ibid., p.306.

[99] Ibid., p.316.

SECTION SPOTLIGHT: *ENGLISH 3D*

English 3D is a language development program that is "designed to ensure proficiency in the 'language of school' – the academic language, writing, discourse, and demeanor vital to secondary school success."[100] The intervention program is designed explicitly for LTELs and is based on Dr. Kate Kinsella's experiences with San Francisco State University's Step to College Program for adolescent English learners. The program is centered around eight evidence-based principles for language development, which predominately rely on teaching and using academic vocabulary throughout the day:

- Focus on English language development for long-term English language learners;
- Utilize consistent instructional routines;
- Explicitly teach language elements;
- Extend prior knowledge of language and content;

- Model verbal and written academic English;
- Orchestrate peer interactions with clear language targets;
- Monitor language production conscientiously; and
- Provide timely, productive feedback on verbal items.[101]

Importantly, *English 3D* **"helps teachers to leverage the students' prior language learning experiences as strengths and assets in learning English as a second language** [and] the program aligns to the key tenets of rigorous English Language Arts and English Language Development standards."[102]

The program has found success in several school districts in California, which anecdotally supports the evidence-based claims of *English 3D*'s core principles. For example, Moreno Valley Unified School District implemented *English 3D* in 2013 after being awarded an i3 grant to assist middle school ELs. As illustrated in the figure below, over two years, most *English 3D* students (85 percent) increased their performance on the CELDT in one or more domains. Moreover, the students reported feeling more confident using academic language after participation in the program, while teachers indicated that the program increased students' use of academic language, fostered participation in class discussions, and improved the quality of their writing.[103]
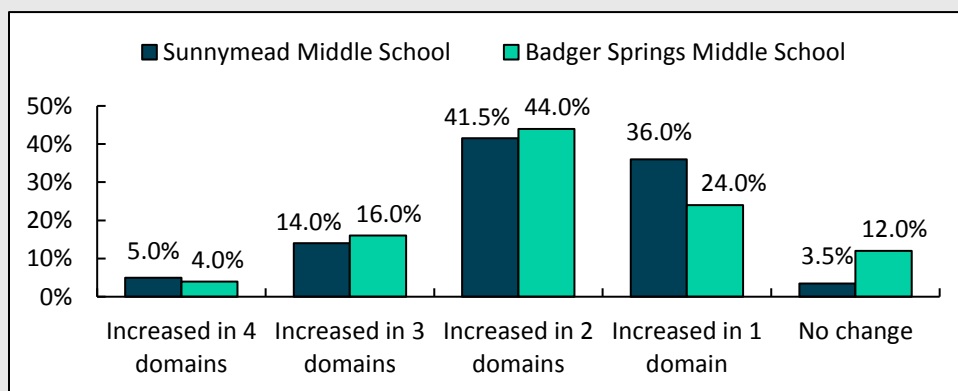
Source: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt[104]

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[100] Kinsella, "Helping Long-Term English Learners Master the Language of School," Op. cit., p.2.
[101] Bullet points adapted verbatim from: Kinsella, K. "Evidence and Efficacy: English 3D." Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, September 2015. p.3. http://www.hmhco.com/products/english-3d/pdf/English_3D_Efficacy_Paper.pdf
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid., p.26.
[104] Adapted from: Ibid., p.27.

CLUSTERED PLACEMENT WITH ENGLISH-PROFICIENT STUDENTS

While it is important that LTELs receive some dedicated ELD classes to specifically develop language and literacy skills, **it is equally critical that they are exposed to a variety of peers that can help them to develop English proficiency.** To accomplish this, schools are encouraged to place LTELs in some clustered, heterogeneous grade-level content classes that allow them to interact with English-proficient peers. This heterogeneous grouping allows LTELs to informally interact with native English peers, while in-class clustering permits teachers to differentiate instruction when needed. Generally, *LTELs should not comprise more than one-third of the class population*.[105]

Previously, this section notes the effectiveness of dedicated academic vocabulary instruction among middle and high school students; several studies that investigate clustered placement for ELs further support that conclusion and determine that integrated approaches to LTEL instruction are the most successful when teachers develop and/or implement interventions that combine English language and content-area instruction. By combining language and content goals for both EL and English-only students, clustered placement classrooms facilitate the transfer of linguistic and academic knowledge between the two groups of students. This transfer has disproportionately positive effects for English learners (as they can practice the language with native speakers).[106]

For example, researchers implemented a middle school science intervention in a large, predominately EL district in Texas. The program provided both specialized instructional materials to teachers (e.g., instructional guide, charts, hands-on activities, etc.) and professional development to help them use those resources. Educators relied on the intervention curriculum for daily 40-minute lessons on science topics over the course of nine weeks.[107] The curriculum focused on experiential learning and explicit vocabulary instruction on 15 keywords per week for both EL and non-EL students. After the nine-week program, all students—regardless of English learner status—demonstrated improvements in vocabulary and science understanding, while the professional development for teachers supported their instructional methods. The alterations made to the science curriculum, such as the use of visuals, modeling, and vocabulary instruction, allowed teachers to meet the needs of EL students in middle school without negatively impacting the achievement of their English-only cohort.[108]

This study highlights the key features of effectively clustered classrooms for LTEL students in middle and high school, **namely the inclusion of language objectives in content lessons, experiential and visual learning opportunities, and teacher support through professional**

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[105] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.20.

[106] [1] Thomas, W.P. and V.P. Collier. "A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement." Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, 2002. p.7. http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/CollierThomasExReport.pdf [2] Baker et al., Op. cit., p.40.

[107] August, D. et al. "The Impact of an Instructional Intervention on the Science and Language Learning of Middle Grade English Language Learners." *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 2, October 2009. p.352. Accessed via EBSCOHost.

[108] Ibid., p.371.

development. This pedagogical approach has been shown to increase not only the achievement of EL students, but also that of their non-EL peers. As such, clustered classrooms are increasingly endorsed by national organizations such as the Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (CREATE) and the National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance.[109]

HOME LANGUAGE LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

When possible, schools should provide opportunities for English learners to enroll in courses in their home language. Home language literacy development has many benefits for LTELs, and there is no evidence that it detracts from proficiency gains in English – in fact, experts suggest that gains in home language literacy can positively influence English language development as well.[110] However, in one qualitative study of three high schools in New York City with high LTEL populations, experts in the field found that most LTEL schooling "has largely been subtractive, with English being taught and developed instead of [students'] native languages."[111] The researchers go on to summarize:

> As a result, the students in our sample have not been able to experience the academic benefits that come when their native languages are developed in schools, because they do not have the advantage of a strong academic literacy foundation established in their native language upon which to build as they acquire English. This is part and parcel of their experiences moving in and out of bilingual education, ESL, and mainstream classrooms, which, **when taken together, have prolonged the length of time it takes these students to acquire sufficient academic English to succeed in school.**[112]

To ensure that LTELs receive this beneficial home language support, schools should offer LTELs the opportunity to develop their native languages "in programs with clear and consistent language policies, which seek to develop bilingualism and biliteracy."[113] However, this relies, again, on schools **explicitly teaching academic literacy skills to LTELs *rather than assuming they enter high school already proficient.*** In general, home language (or native speaker) classes should be articulated and provide solid preparation and a pathway into Advanced Placement (AP) coursework. The articulated courses need to "be designed for native speakers, and include explicit literacy instruction aligned to the literacy standards in English and designed for skill transfer across languages."[114]

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[109] [1] Himmel, J. et al. "Using the SIOP Model to Improve Middle School Science Instruction." CREATE Brief, Center for Applied Linguistics, May 2009. p.9. http://www.cal.org/create/pdfs/create-briefs-collection.pdf [2] Baker et al., Op. cit., p.31.

[110] Menken and Kleyn, "The Difficult Road for Long-Term English Learners," Op. cit.

[111] Menken, K. and T. Kleyn. "The Long-Term Impact of Subtractive Schooling in the Educational Experiences of Secondary English Language Learners." *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 13:4, July 2010. p.412. https://katemenken.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/menken-kleyn-ijbeb-134-july-2010-subtractive-schooling-ltEL1.pdf

[112] Ibid, p.413. Emphasis added.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.35.

For more commonly spoken languages, such as Spanish or Mandarin, creating this pathway may simply mean reworking existing courses to meet the needs of native speakers. However, it is not generally feasible to create native language development classes for LTELs of less common languages. In these cases, schools can help students select "language-based electives" such as drama or journalism, in which there is some freedom and flexibility to work in other languages. [115] Alternatively, schools can develop afterschool programs through community partnerships with local heritage organizations to help these students develop home language skills.[116]

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[115] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.21.
[116] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.35.

SECTION SPOTLIGHT: ESCONDIDO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Escondido Union High School District (EUHSD) is a district in Escondido, California that serves more than 7,700 secondary students across a wide range of college preparatory, vocational, and special education courses. The district also enrolls several thousand individuals in adult education classes, many of which are dedicated ESL classes for students' parents.[117] In recent years, EUHSD has attracted notice for increasing the success of its LTELs – indeed, according to one publication, EUHSD's efforts are paying off and "the district's percentage of English Learners passing into [proficiency] has outpaced state and county averages consistently since 2003."[118]

Californians Together recognizes EUHSD in particular for its native speakers classes—the Spanish for Native Speakers series—and articulation pathways through Advanced Placement. This series includes "tools for assessment and placement, and articulation with feeder middle school districts. Across their Spanish for Native Speakers and their English courses in the school, similar curricular and instructional approaches are used."[119] The two-course series (Spanish for Spanish Speakers I and II) allows Spanish-speaking students to develop core literacy skills that then translate to success in AP classes. Together, this helps LTELs accrue college credit and satisfy California's A-G requirements (namely meeting the University of California's "e" admission requirements).[120] The courses are described as follows:

- **Spanish for Spanish Speakers I:** This course, aligned with the California English/Language Arts 9 Standards, is designed to develop Spanish speakers' critical reading, writing, thinking, and other communicative skills, preparing students for the complexities of life within the evolving contextual demands of the 21st century. This course will also support students' achievement on the California High School Exit Exam.[121]
- **Spanish for Spanish Speakers II:** This course, aligned with the California English/Language Arts 10 Standards, is designed to expand on students' previous understanding of the essential elements of literacy and expository prose, research resources and methods, and language handling.[122]

Appendix B in this report presents the course units/topics for these courses along with the primary learning goals of each unit.

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[117] "EUHSD District Overview." Escondido Unified High School District, 2017. https://www.euhsd.org/domain/31

[118] Calvert, K. "New Classes Target Students Who Struggle to Master English." *Fronteras*, March 2013.
http://www.fronterasdesk.org/content/new-classes-target-students-who-struggle-master-english

[119] Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.35.

[120] "Course of Study Outline and Instructional Objectives: Spanish for Spanish Speakers I." Escondido Union High School District.
https://www.euhsd.org/cms/lib/CA01001539/Centricity/Domain/48/Spanish%20for%20Spanish%20Spkrs%20I%20.pdf

[121] Ibid.

[122] "Course of Study Outline and Instructional Objectives: Spanish for Spanish Speakers II." Escondido Union High School District.
https://www.euhsd.org/cms/lib/CA01001539/Centricity/Domain/48/Spanish%20for%20Spanish%20Spkrs%20II%20.pdf

INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

More broadly, finally, it is the responsibility of individual schools and teachers to create an affirming, inclusive environment for LTELs. Not only does a welcoming school climate help LTELs feel more comfortable, but it also helps them to engage more fully in school participation. This, in turn, can lead to "healthy identify development and positive intergroup relationships." [123] **Often, educators can leverage classroom structures and resources to enhance the school climate and limit any social isolation by facilitating relationship-building across peer groups.** These include, for example:

- Group students flexibly considering language and content proficiency;
- Embed opportunities for structured oral language development (public speaking, presentations, role play, sentence frames);
- Build spaces for students to create and reflect upon short- and long-term goals;
- Discuss the "how's" of being a successful student – e.g., study skills, note taking, planning;
- Provide curricular materials that are connected to students' backgrounds and interests;
- Offer books for free reading that are of interest to students;
- Make use of technology as a tool for background and content knowledge as well as demonstrated learning; and
- Provide a text-rich multilingual landscape with academic language and models for mentor text/work.[124]

Many of these activities are designed to facilitate student choice and reflect a wider range of perspectives. Teachers can further use texts and other curricular materials that address the history and culture of LTEL students for whole-class lessons, and schools can diversify extracurricular and club activities to include an international focus or offer multicultural elective options.[125]

DISTRICT PRACTICES

While the school will handle the majority of day-to-day operations related to LTELs, the district plays an important role in setting the expectations and providing resources to allow principals and teachers to effectively lead LTEL students. District leaders are responsible for defining pathways for teachers (through professional development) and students (by differentiating levels of need), as well as researching and rolling out evidence-based program models.[126] Californians Together outlines several key responsibilities that school districts

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[123] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.23.
[124] Bullet points adapted from: Ascenzi-Moreno, Kleyn, and Menken, Op. cit., pp.11–12.
[125] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.23.
[126] Olsen and Wan, Op. cit., p.3.

should assume to ensure LTELs are receiving the resources and instruction they need to succeed:

- **Clearly defined pathways** and descriptions of program models in English Learner Master Plans;

- **Professional development** (including coaching and collaborative time for Professional Learning Communities) for teachers and administrators in understanding the needs of English Learners and implementing research-based program models;

- Published **expectations of growth and achievement** for English Learners by length of time in program and by proficiency levels;

- Systems of **observation and monitoring** student progress;

- **Clear language policy** across the system;

- Emphasis on **articulation between levels**; and

- Increased **access to preschool programs designed for English Learners** and to high quality early foundations for dual language development and school success.[127]

Some of these considerations are explored in more detail below.

DEVELOP POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS

For LTEL programs to be successful, school district administrators must first make the success of these students a priority. District leaders should work to develop a culture of shared responsibility and accountability that promotes high levels of achievement among the entire EL student population. All staff—including district- and school-level administrators and faculty—should understand their responsibilities regarding LTELs and how their support of LTEL students will be evaluated.[128]

Districts may additionally consider creating opportunities for all school staff to communicate about EL students and pedagogies. This communication and collaboration among staff members helps to develop confidence and capacity to meet the needs of LTEL students; for example, providing common planning time for classroom teachers and EL specialists/aides can foster collaboration and improve educator and student outcomes. Often, administrators in schools with high concentrations of LTEL students are tasked with monitoring these strategies at the classroom level to ensure both faculty and EL students are receiving adequate support.[129]

After ensuring that integration of support structures for LTEL students is a district-level priority, **administrators are encouraged to select a program model that best suits the needs,**

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[127] Bullet points taken verbatim from: Olsen, "Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learnings," Op. cit., p.39. Emphasis added.

[128] Stepanek, J. and J. Raphael. "Creating Schools that Support Success for English Language Learners." *Lessons Learned*, 1:2, September 2010. p.1. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED519412.pdf

[129] Ibid.

capabilities, and demographics of their school district. Administrators are responsible for ensuring that staff members and other key stakeholders understand the program model, particularly if the new intervention requires specialists, para-educators, or other additional staff. Without a common implementation and operation strategy for new LTEL programming, difficulties can arise between district administrators, school leaders, and teachers who all have differing ideas about the program model.[130]

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development for teachers with non-native English speakers is critical to effective implementation of English-as-a-second-language programming. The Center for Applied Linguistics, for example, recommends that school districts collect information regularly on staff needs and program strengths and weaknesses to create professional development plans that reflect issues of importance to the staff and schools.[131] To this end, some school districts encourage principals and other administrators to attend English language professional development sessions alongside teachers to gain a deeper understanding of effective teaching strategies for these students.[132]

According to education experts, professional development for EL teachers should be both "intensive and ongoing, with many opportunities for both peer and expert coaching." [133] These training opportunities are often most effective when they **include teaching techniques that can be applied in classrooms, provide in-class demonstrations with students, and include some component of personalized coaching.**[134] Underscoring the importance of this professional development for EL educators, one study of over 5,300 EL teachers in California revealed that teachers who receive professional development dedicated to instructing non-English-speaking students felt significantly more competent in teaching their students across grade levels and content areas.[135]

Another key component of professional development for teachers with LTEL students is ensuring that "when students with language requirements and academic gaps are placed in rigorous courses with high-level content, they [receive] instruction designed and adapted to their needs." [136] In other words, **teachers should receive training on how to adapt their pedagogy in different situations, specifically those that require differentiated instruction or supports for LTELs**. The NEA maintains a list of eight "characteristics of effective educators" that can help districts to define and develop appropriate training opportunities for middle

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[130] Ibid.

[131] Howard, E.R. et al. "Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education." Center for Applied Linguistics, 2007. p.78. http://www.cal.org/twi/Guiding_Principles.pdf

[132] Stepanek and Raphael, Op. cit., p.1.

[133] Calderon, M., R. Slavin, and M. Sanchez. "Effective Instruction for English Learners." Future of Children, Spring 2011. p.109. http://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/21_01_05.pdf

[134] Ibid., p.114.

[135] Gandara, P., J. Maxwell-Jolly, and A. Driscoll. "Listening to Teachers of English Language Learners: A Survey of California Teachers' Challenges, Experiences, and Professional Development Needs." Policy Analysis for California Education; The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning; and The University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute, 2005. p.12. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED491701.pdf

[136] Olsen, "Meeting the Unique Needs of Long Term English Language Learners: A Guide for Educators," Op. cit., p.24.

and high school teachers with LTELs in their classes (Figure 2.4). Many of these characteristics align with best practices discussed above.

Figure 2.4: Professional Development Priorities for Teachers with LTELs

CHARACTERISTIC	DESCRIPTION
Effective educators know their students and identify their LTELs.	■ Good instruction for LTELs starts with teachers and education support professionals having information. Knowing whether LTELs are enrolled in your class, and having access to assessments that pinpoint the specific gaps in language development and academic skills students need to fill, will help you differentiate supports and plan instruction. ■ Because LTELs often feel invisible and unnoticed in class, relationships matter. To the degree possible, make a personal connection and spend time talking with each LTEL.
Effective educators emphasize oral language and active engagement.	■ Oral language is the foundation for literacy. ■ In the most effective classrooms, student talk is more prevalent than educator talk, and active student collaboration abounds. But LTELs typically are not risk-takers in class. They need daily structured opportunities, invitation, and support to share. ■ To help LTELs participate, create a sense of community, and a safe climate in your classroom.
Effective educators provide explicit instructions and models.	■ LTELs often do not understand what they are expected to do in class. Help them by giving clear verbal instructions and information, bolstered by written directions and visuals.
Effective educators focus on the development of academic reading and writing skills.	■ Reading and writing are gateways to academic learning and success, and LTELs struggle with both. ■ Engage students with interesting nonfiction, informational texts that present real-world issues relevant to their lives, as well as with primary sources and literature. ■ Have LTELs write about what they have read, prefacing the writing by talking through their thoughts.
Effective educators focus on key cognitive and language functions required for academic tasks and use graphic organizers to scaffold those functions.	■ Language and thought are deeply connected; they are reciprocal and develop together. Tools that help students think about the world and shape their ideas conceptually support the development of academic language. ■ Effective educators hone in on key language functions (e.g., expressing an opinion, giving complex directions, summarizing, etc.). ■ Effective educators also use graphic organizers to show how information is related, use non-linguistic representations and visuals, and structure hands-on learning experiences.

CHARACTERISTIC	DESCRIPTION
Effective educators build background knowledge, scaffold key concepts, and teach vocabulary.	▪ Educators need to understand the language demands of the content they are teaching. ▪ Lessons often need to include building background knowledge related to key concepts, keeping in mind that LTELs have gaps in academic background.
Effective educators make connections, build relevance, affirm language and culture, and maintain rigor.	▪ The most effective classrooms for LTELs establish an environment that affirms language and culture, invites students to make connections, incorporates relevant issues, and maintains high expectations. ▪ Much of the research literature related to language minority youth cites the importance of "culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy."
Effective educators check for understanding and monitor progress.	▪ It is important to keep a sense of urgency and focus on the progress of LTEL students using samples of LTEL student work to reflect on their academic content and language needs. ▪ Check in regularly with LTELs about how they are doing and what they need; include student self-assessments and goal-setting in this process.

Source: National Education Association[137]

Collaborative planning can also help teachers to effectively embed LTEL supports across the curriculum. Because LTELs require additional support in academic language—and given the importance of literacy instruction across the curriculum—teachers from different subject areas are encouraged to meet and develop a few key themes that can be incorporated into different classes.[138] For example, "teachers at one school chose to incorporate into their instruction a focus on comparisons and the academic language structures that comparing entails – descriptors such as 'larger than,' 'greater mass than,' 'more robust than,' and so on."[139] In social studies classes, students compared and contrasted two different time periods, while students in science classes weighed the differences between sexual and asexual heredity. In this way, the teachers' initial collaboration facilitated consistency across content areas and allowed LTELs to master a key component of academic language through consistent reinforcement.[140]

MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS

Monitoring student progress is an essential component of ensuring that LTELs continue to receive the support and resources that they need from year to year. By monitoring and keeping up with ELs over time, school systems can make sure that students, even middle and high schoolers, are being taught effectively and with regard to their unique needs. In California, state legislation is working to quantify the number of LTELs in schools by directing

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[137] Adapted from: Ibid., pp.24–29.
[138] Menken and Kleyn, "The Difficult Road for Long-Term English Learners," Op. cit.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.

"the department of education to annually determine the number of students in all schools, including charters, who are or are at risk of becoming long-term English learners."[141]

Beyond keeping track of students' English-language classification, school districts need to ensure that schools are using assessments to monitor LTELs' academic and language progress over time. As found by CUNY-NYSIEB, most large-scale assessment tools—used within the context of LTEL students—only highlight what students lack, rather than "what literacy knowledge they possess and can be used as starting points to launch further learning."[142] **Thus, districts need to select assessment tools that specifically consider the unique characteristics and needs of LTELs** (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5: LTEL Characteristics and Assessment Implications

LTEL Characteristic	Implication for LTEL Assessment	Assessment Practice
Inconsistent Schooling History	Information about new arrivals is usually acquired through intake forms. Since LTEL students do not usually have a new point of arrival, this vital information about their schooling history is lost.	Schools should collect information about students' schooling history and students' attitudes about language learning and use.
Middle and High School Age	Important that students understand the purpose of all assessments, especially high-stakes, standardized tests, so there is student buy-in.	Ensure that all teachers who administer assessments provide a background to students about the purpose of the assessment and what results will be used for.
Demonstrate "Social" Oral Language Skills in Both Languages	Assess oral language in both languages to ascertain the level of academic language that students use orally.	Create interview protocols in which students can demonstrate their oral abilities in content area studies.
Limited Home Literacy Skills	If possible, it is helpful to know LTEL students' reading and writing skills in home language.	For Spanish speakers in New York City, the LENS (Literacy Evaluation for Newcomer SIFE) is available. For Spanish speakers outside of NYC, a variety of literacy assessment toolkits such as the Fountas and Pinnell assessment system can be used.
English Oral Academic Language Less Developed than Oral Social Language	What are reading and writing skills in new language (English)?	Schools may implement a variety of English reading and writing assessments– both kits that are purchased as well as teacher designed assessments.
Struggle in Content-Area Instruction	Teachers should assess reading and writing in non-fiction.	A needs-assessment for literacy for a content area can be devised before beginning new units.

Source: CUNY-NYSIEB[143]

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[141] Zinth, Op. cit., p.5.
[142] Ascenzi-Moreno, Kleyn, and Menken, Op. cit., p.15.
[143] Adapted from: Ibid.

Not only does regular performance monitoring ensure that LTELs receive the supports they need, **but it can also help school districts establish re-designation criteria to help these students move officially into a mainstream program.** In a study considering districts from across California (representing over 50 percent of the state's K-12 students), the Public Policy Institute of California found that "Reclassified Fluent English Proficient" (RFEP) students have significantly higher academic outcomes than ELs and approach native-English-speaker performance levels.[144]

Districts need to establish *clear* and *consistent* reclassification guidelines (i.e., a "minimum agreed-upon standard of success") for ELs and LTELs that can be applied across schools, and research shows that stricter criteria are generally associated with on-time grade progress and higher scores on standardized tests.[145] As ELs enter higher grade levels, mastery of basic skills becomes a more difficult criterion to meet (Figure 2.6), suggesting that school systems need to prioritize learning in this area as LTELs enter middle and high school.

Figure 2.6: Reclassification Criteria by Percent of Districts that Say It is "Most Difficult" for ELs to Meet

CRITERIA	GRADE LEVEL		
	Elementary	*Middle*	*High*
Basic Skills	52.8%	62.3%	67.9%
English Proficiency	40.1%	26.8%	25.6%
Teacher Evaluation	3.3%	6.0%	8.9%
Parent Consultation	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Don't Know	3.7%	4.9%	9.5%

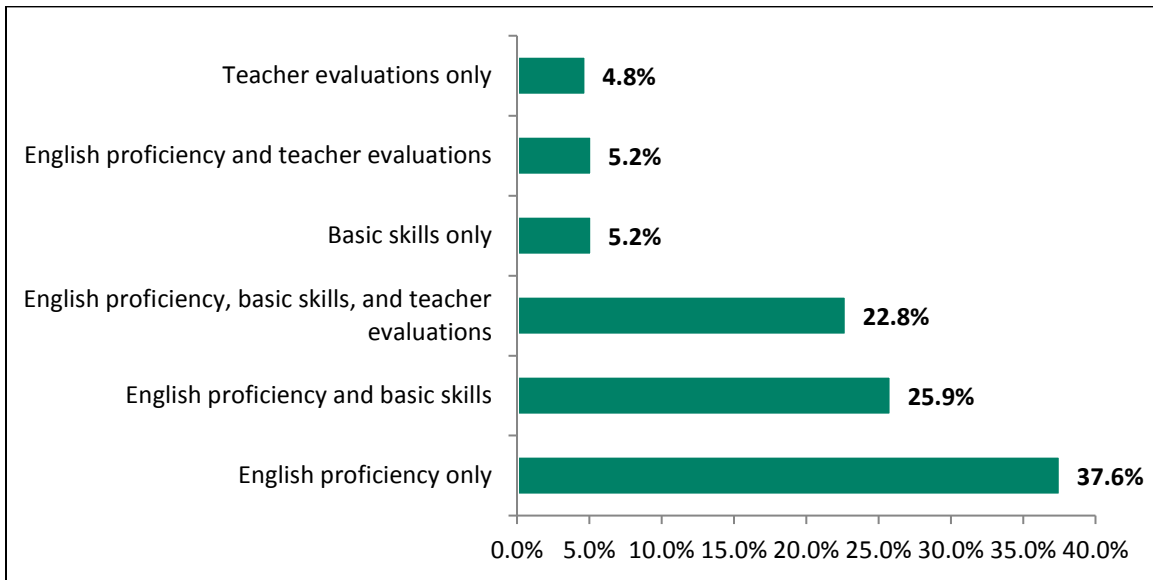Source: Public Policy Institute of California[146]

Despite this fact, most respondents indicated that English proficiency should not be the sole factor in making decisions about reclassification (Figure 2.7). As discussed above, LTELs normally display oral proficiency in English in social interactions; thus, relying on English proficiency as the only criterion in deciding re-designation can adversely affect LTELs by moving them out of English-as-a-second-language support before they are ready. School districts should instead use multiple reclassification criteria for longer-term English learners that capture their unique experiences and characteristics.

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[144] Hill, L.E., M. Weston, and J.M. Hayes. "Reclassification of English Learner Students in California." Public Policy Institute of California, January 2014. p.2. http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_114LHR.pdf
[145] Ibid., p.50.
[146] Adapted from: Ibid., p.31.

Figure 2.7: Teachers' Opinions About Which Reclassification Criteria Should Make "Ultimate" Decision

Source: Public Policy Institute of California[147]

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[147] Adapted from: Ibid.

APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTIONS OF ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF DEDICATED LTEL CLASS

This appendix describes the essential components of a LTEL classroom, as described by Californians Together. These elements were drafted during a statewide conference of school districts across the state with dedicated LTEL programs.

Figure A.1: Essential Components of ELD Classes for LTELs

COMPONENT	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
A Focus on Oral Language	Oral language is the foundation for literacy. A course designed for LTELs must be a classroom in which students are talking. If they are not using the language, if they are not engaged in talking about what they are learning, they are not actually learning it. Structured oral language practice, instructional conversations, and multiple opportunities for speaking are a means of practicing academic language actively participating in authentic academic discussion, and processing the language prior to writing.
A Focus on Student Engagement	An effective LTEL classroom needs to address the entrenched non-participation and non-engagement that frequently characterize LTELs. Teachers use multiple strategies to elicit and support students' engagement in academic discourse and activity. There is a lot of student-to-student interaction.
A Focus on Academic Language	LTELs need to learn the language of academics. Without it, they neither comprehend the texts not are they able to participate in academic discourse and writing. LTEL classes, therefore, have a major emphasis on providing the language structures and forms needed for apprenticeship into academic discourse and academic participation.
A Focus on Expository Text (Reading and Writing)	Engagement with academic learning requires the skills of reading and writing expository academic text. LTELs typically struggle with this – lacking vocabulary to comprehend the information and struggling with the discourse patterns of academic presentations. They need to learn how academic text is structured. LTEL classes teach students reading strategies to make their way through different kinds of informational texts. This support is essential for all of the students' academic classes.
Consistent Routines	LTELs benefit from consistent academic routines. They face the challenge of grappling with rigorous academic content, trying to master new skills and simultaneously wrestling to learn through a language they have not yet mastered. Consistency in a set of routine instructional approaches enables them to lower their "affective filter" and to participate more fully in class.
Goal Setting	LTEL class needs to include a component of academic and language goal setting. Students need the information to understand why they are considered English Learners, what it means to be an English Learner, the levels of English needed for academic engagement and success, where they are along the spectrum of progress toward English proficiency, the CELDT test's role, reclassification requirements, and their own personal progress.

COMPONENT	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Empowered Pedagogy	Students learn through making connections between what they know, what they have experienced, and how they understand the world and the new experiences, perspectives, and information they encounter. Many LTELs feel disconnected from school. To ignite (or reignite) an excitement about learning and a sense of connection to their own education, teachers need to structure the classroom climate, process, pedagogy, and curriculum in ways that help students make connections.
Rigor	LTELs face both linguistic and academic challenges to engaging with grade-level standards, and by secondary school, they have few remaining years to recoup gaps that have accrued over time. It is a pervasive temptation of intervention classes to slow down or water down content, yet what LTELs need most is an accelerated, rigorous approach that overcomes gaps.
Community and Relationships	LTELs have typically become non-participants in school, in part because they have lacked the language to understand instruction, feel uncomfortable about not adequately comprehending and being afraid of making mistakes and being ridiculed. Teachers of LTEL classes find that it is important to build relationships with their students and also to create a climate in the classroom that fosters safe, trusting relationship among students.
Study Skills	LTELs typically have not had explicit instruction in metacognitive skills development and therefore exhibit gaps in study skills and effective study habits. They do not read outside the classroom, struggle with assignments but do not understand how to problem-solve when they face academic challenges, do not complete homework, and seldom ask for help. Building students' study skills such as note-taking, organizing materials, time management, doing independent research, keeping notebooks, etc. is one of the components in many LTEL classes.

Source: Californians Together[148]

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[148] Adapted from: Olsen, "Secondary School Courses Designed to Address the Language Needs and Academic Gaps of Long Term English Learners," Op. cit., pp.16–20.

APPENDIX B: EUHSD COURSE UNITS FOR "SPANISH FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS" SERIES

This appendix presents the full unit/topics for the two-course series for LTELs at Escondido Union High School District, which provides instruction in students' home language to support literacy development.

Figure B.1: Main Units in EUHSD's "Spanish for Spanish Speakers" Course Sequence

UNIT	LEARNING GOAL
Spanish for Spanish Speakers I	
I: Historical Analysis	Analyze the way in which a work of literature is related to the themes and/or issues of its historical period (Historical Approach) and consider author's use of vocabulary, clauses, and phrases.
II: Persuasion	Evaluate the credibility of an author's argument or defense of a claim by critiquing the relationship between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author's intent affects the structure and tone of the text (e.g., in professional journals, editorials, political speeches, primary sources material, and other expository genres.
III: Dramatic Literature	Analyze the relationship between the expressed purposes and the characteristics of dramatic literature.
IV: Narration	Analyze four basic elements of narration (plot, characterization, point of view, and theme) and determine the extent to which these literary elements in a given text shaped the student's own response to the story.
Spanish for Spanish Speakers II	
I: Themes across Genres	Compare and contrast the presentation of theme across genres, including analyzing the significance of choice of narrator and use of literary devices, such as foreshadowing and flashbacks, across genres.
II: Literary Analysis	Analyze the significance of five literary devices, figurative language, imagery, symbolism, irony, and diction and their impact on theme, tone or mood across genres using the aesthetic approach of literary criticism.
III: Informational Text	Critique the logic of functional documents and other exposition genres by examining the sequence of information and procedures in anticipation of possible reader misunderstandings.
IV: Research	Analyzing the craft involved in a primary source research report in order to construct a research project using primary sources, including personally conducted interviews and surveys whenever relevant.

Source: Escondido Union High School District

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4401 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22203
P 202.559.0500 **F** 866.808.6585
www.hanoverresearch.com