

## APPENDIX 1.2 MEET CARLOS—CASE STUDY

### Carlos

#### 10th Grade

#### 15 years old

Carlos is achieving two years below grade level academically and two years below age level socially and emotionally. According to test records, Carlos has intelligence scores within the average range but has not scored proficient on any of the High School Assessments (HSAs). In third grade, the school team met and, suspecting a learning problem, the assessment process began. Carlos was diagnosed and coded as having a learning disability in the areas of reading comprehension, auditory processing, and self-regulation. An IEP was developed and implemented toward the end of third grade. Currently, Carlos receives special education services and his Individualized Education Plan (IEP) includes goals for reading comprehension, auditory processing, self-regulation, and self-advocacy.

Carlos's teachers report that Carlos rarely misses school but is frequently late for first period because he misses the bus. His mother reports that Carlos tends to dally while getting ready for school, losing track of time. This results in his mother having to drive him to school.

Carlos is continually observed in the school hallway chatting with peers and does not head to class until after the final class bell rings because he does not want his peers to know that his classes are co-taught by a general and special education teacher. When he enters the classroom, he is harried and quickly rushes to his desk reaching into his backpack for his disorganized notebook. His notebook consists of loose papers that are wrinkled and hanging out of the notebook. Carlos has difficulty locating papers he has placed in his notebook.

His history teacher reports that he does well in class due to his ability to think analytically, but he does require extra processing and response time. He enjoys sports and plays on the school football team. He is a star on the football field, and his coach reports that Carlos is a quick study in terms of learning new plays and executing them. He asks thought provoking questions in terms of the possible outcomes of certain plays.

Carlos's teachers report that he struggles with tasks that involve reading comprehension and auditory processing. Verbal and written expression are also a challenge. He has difficulty remembering the meaning of new vocabulary words and what he has read. Carlos makes many careless errors, and his writing is difficult to read. He does not use the word processor or organize his thoughts in any way before he begins writing. Checking over his work before handing it in is just a quick look over to Carlos.

He quickly goes into a downward spiral when he is struggling with a concept or assignment. He becomes angry, frustrated or just shuts down and does not complete his work. He often places his head on his desk and makes sighing noises.

Being valued by his peers is very important to Carlos. When he is unable to complete a task or cannot perform on the same level as his peers, Carlos employs avoidance and deflecting techniques such as acting as the class clown, trying to change the topic or task at hand, or simply talking with the peers seated near him. In terms of communication, he finds it difficult to participate when verbally expressing his ideas is required. When Carlos does express himself, it is often with an inappropriate comment at an inappropriate time.

He rarely starts tasks on time even those that are routine such as warm up activities or drill that occur daily at the beginning of each school period. At times, Carlos appears to be daydreaming and often doodles on a piece of paper while his teachers or peers talk. He sometimes asks his peers what they are doing to help him determine what he should be doing. Carlos does not begin tasks when asked, and when after several reminders, Carlos does work on his assignment, he rushes to get it finished and off his desk. Once the task is completed, he announces this to the class. On further inspection, the assignment is often not complete. Attending to more than one task at a time is very confusing for Carlos.

In terms of communication, he finds it difficult to participate when verbally expressing his ideas is required. Multiple conversations or a transition in conversation topics is difficult for Carlos. He is embarrassed to collaborate because others will see the extent of his reading and writing difficulties.

When Carlos does express himself, it is often with an inaccurate, untimely, or inappropriate comment. It is very difficult for him to begin a whole new train of thought. Although it does not happen often, when Carlos is upset about something, it affects the classroom dynamics when collaboration is required.

Carlos has difficulty taking any correspondence to his parents and returning anything that requires a signature. He rarely takes his homework home and does not spend any time studying for tests. School is a topic that is avoided by his parents because Carlos becomes defensive.

During an interview with Carlos, he shared that he would like to do better, but he is frustrated and embarrassed for others to see his learning difficulties. He feels like all the work is just too hard, and it keeps him from reaching his real goal, which is to play professional football. He thinks he needs help but does not know what to ask of the teacher nor what he can do to help himself.