



**Community Handbook  
Student/Parent Guide  
2017-2018**

**124 North Virginia Street  
Prescott, AZ 86301  
Telephone: (928)  
445-5100**

**School Operations  
Monday - Thursday  
Office: 7:45 am - 4:00 pm  
Classroom Instruction:  
Kindergarten 8:15 am - 3:00 pm  
First, Second and Third Grades: 8:15 am - 3:15 pm  
Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Grades: 8:15 am - 3:30 pm**



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## INTRODUCTION TO LA TIERRA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Dear La Tierra Parents,

Welcome to our school year 2017/2018!

We are very grateful that you chose our small community school as a place of your child's learning. We promise to deliver our love, expertise, genuine inquiry, and environment filled with rich and integrated learning opportunities.

I am thrilled about our potential and future. We worked very hard this summer to establish some elements of the nature- place-based outdoor learning environment. As we were hauling stumps from my house, I had images of myself running through the woods, playing sports with my friends, building forts or creating mini shelters for all sorts of critters. I, as many of my other friends, grew up in the forest school and learned through experience. Yes, it is the experience that creates inner motivation and life-long love for learning.

We are determined to create our school in a spirit of deep learning that is connected to our real life. We now see so much push for natural spaces for our children and read scientific literature that supports nature environment as the best way of education, especially in younger grades. The natural living systems offer interconnectedness that helps us to understand the bigger picture and think in creative perspectives. Our students need to be able to use their intellectual capacities in practical and solution-oriented approaches. The old saying theory without praxis does not solve much is pertinent.

Our students will have opportunities to work with amazing teachers who not only have their general education degree, but also hold additional knowledge in ecology, adventure and wilderness education, social justice, and sustainability. Our professional development will focus on spatial awareness in the context of educating in the naturally designed learning environments that help students to develop strong bodies, mental resilience and higher cognitive functioning. We will focus on brain research behavioral strategies and explore how to improve our instructional practices.

As you will see, our school grounds have improved tremendously. The building is freshly painted, the peace garden and fences installed, boulders placed inside the incredible obstacle course, lunch area created, benches assembled, and many other creative spaces implemented.

We are embarking on a new and exciting path at La Tierra. We warmly welcome your family to share this exciting journey with us. Please stop by anytime. My door is always open!

Sincerely,

*Lenka V. Studnicka*

Lenka V. Studnicka, Ph.D.  
School Director



## **La Tierra Staff**

School Director: Lenka V Studnicka, Ph.D.

Operations Officer: Beth Cottle

Office Secretary: Theresa Lode

Kindergarten: Mary Layman & Denise Germaine LeGoullon Bennett

First Grade: Dawn Klaiber

Second Grade: David McNelly

Third Grade: Elise Anderson

Fourth Grade: Barbara Braswell

Fifth and Sixth Grade: Cal Seabaugh & Gelisa Senteno

Special Education: Cyndi Reynolds

Spanish Teacher: Trinidad Pecho

Art Teacher: Ashley Darling

Music Teacher: David Wise

## **La Tierra Board**

Board President: Julie Baker

Board Secretary: Sierra Wilson

Board Treasurer: Russell Erickson

Board Member: Katelyn Esquibel

Board Member: Megan Merchant

Board Member: Paul Keegan

Board Member: Chuck Budinger

## **La Tierra Parent Volunteer Coordinator**

Kelsey Johnson



## **OVERVIEW: VISION AND DESIGN**

La Tierra Community School is committed to providing a rich learning environment for students from diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and students with a range of abilities, affinities, and strengths. We encourage enrollment by all members of the community.

### **Mission Statement**

La Tierra provides active, transformative and integrative educational experiences that respect diverse learning styles and approaches. Our educational philosophy is inspired by the expeditionary learning model and covers a spectrum of experiential education elements that are inclusive, progressive and value-based. We value academic rigor, diversity and provide a developmentally appropriate, student-centered learning environment that encourages growth in all developmental areas, fosters natural curiosity and promotes critical thinking and reflection. Our highly qualified teaching faculty is committed to fostering each student's uniqueness while promoting their sense of curiosity, exploration and discovery. Our curriculum is centered on a differentiated instructional approach assuring that each student's needs are met. Students are involved in many experiential projects that explore diverse cultures, local and global perspectives, and environmental and social justice issues. Each semester students celebrate learning and in-depth knowledge through school wide expeditions.

### **Ethics of Care as Sustainable Education Philosophy**

Sustainable education strives for engaging the whole person: students that are able to think critically and can ask pertinent questions, are ecologically literate and knowledgeable about the current local and global issues and are willing to actively participate in the problem-solving processes. Students who know that learning is a responsible and personal choice that becomes the gateway to a meaningful and fulfilling life. This requires a model of education that is transformative and challenging to students on many levels and that welcomes and understands the interconnected and diverse world we live in. La Tierra students understand that to be able to take care of others, they need to first learn how to take care of themselves by respectfully voicing their needs without imposing on or hurting needs of others. This requires continuous self-development that is supported by teachers and the whole La Tierra community. La Tierra teachers practice a mindful approach to responsible role modeling, problem-solving and their professional development that provides a framework for collaborative and participatory classroom environments.

### **Peace Education Elements**

The key to more sustainable and peaceful future is learning. Peace education and its vision promotes education that honors multiple intelligences and nourishes healthy social and emotional levels in all involved. It is transformative, meaning it encourages change toward a fairer society and a better world. Peace education involves what's called 'learning for responsibility,' which manifests in response-ability to feel deeper, be more empathetic to people and to the non-human living world. Peace education promotes critical engagement and effective action. It is future oriented, respect-driven and aimed at learning peacefully and constructively.



## **Progressive Critical Pedagogy**

Pedagogy means the way teachers approach and implement instruction. The progressive pedagogy consists of providing students with instruction that is rooted in critical thinking, values, reflection, reciprocity, and vision. It provides authentic education that recognizes the best of past thinking and practices, but also re-vision education and learning that help assure the sustainable future. Students are encouraged to ask questions, learn in small and large group settings, pursue their deep interests, explore alternative ways of achieving their learning outcomes, and deeply reflect on their learning process. These outcomes manifest in authentic learning experiences and balanced approach to diverse instructional practices.

## **Nature and Place-based Pedagogy**

One of the ways to engage in deep learning is to explore significant relationships of humans with nature. Nature- and place-based learning encourage powerful perceptions and emotional connections to the place. Once students feel the love for the place they live in, their participation becomes sincere and their connection to others and the place they live in deepens. This can help them to understand ways to preserve the place and work toward its future cultural preservation and sustenance.

## **Expeditionary Learning Model and Experience**

The expeditionary learning model fosters children's natural tendency toward lifelong love for learning. It promotes meaningful, participatory and engaged instruction that nourishes students' natural curiosity, knowledge, skills, and personal qualities they need for successful adulthood. Learning expeditions - journeys into the unknown for a definite purpose - are the heart of this learning model. Students gain knowledge and skills primarily through learning expeditions that are multidisciplinary and interconnected. Instruction is experientially-based and meets the individual needs of every student.

It encompasses:

1. Literacy rich learning that focuses on developing reading and writing skills in alignment with state and national educational standards.
2. Applied mathematics that is inquiry-based and aligned with state and national education standards.
3. Fieldwork that is service oriented and community based.
4. Adventure and environmental education that fosters ecological literacy, Earth stewardship and respect for all living beings.
5. Integrated fine arts curriculum that supports differentiated instruction, creativity and authenticity.
6. Southwest studies that are place-based and connect past with the present, teaching students about the management of the local natural resources and community sustainable development.
7. Foreign language curriculum that supports diversity and cultural awareness.
8. Social and environmental justice issues that provide a larger window of future opportunities and



ability to design and make positive social changes in students' communities.

## **PROGRESSIVE LEARNING MODEL**

La Tierra trusts the inherent creativity of every student and understands that education is a lifelong process of skill building that embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth. It strives to provide education that is holistic and rooted in values, tradition, collaboration, and informed decision-making.

### **Flexible Classroom Spaces and Instructional Delivery Model**

La Tierra classrooms are designed to accommodate small and/or large group instruction. Each classroom has a variety of seating arrangements and spaces designed for specific and/or differentiated instruction. Students are encouraged to treat their classroom spaces with care and attention. Each classroom environment provides rich learning resources that encourage a balanced approach to movement, focused explorative time and group work. Classroom wall material consists of messages and supportive symbols that foster culture of collaboration, respect, initiative, constructive problem-solving, and productive time management.

### **Project-based Activities**

One of the La Tierra instruction delivery models consists of a variety of project-based learning opportunities that are rooted in direct experience and can be designed for a short and /or long-term instruction.

Project-based learning consist of elements of investigation, observation, manipulation, and manifestation. For example, through building a marble run, students learn specific mathematical and scientific concepts that support spatial planning, geometry, collaboration, engineering, physics, and testing out their hypothesis. Project-based learning helps students understand concepts and the relationships among objects of study on a much deeper and integrated levels.

### **Value-based Collaboration and Freedom of Expression**

La Tierra classrooms foster a culture of open dialogue, reciprocal discussion and knowledge sharing. The social collaborative learning happens when students feel safe to share their perspectives, perceptions and knowledge. This climate of openness supports the culture of respect where students feel heard, invested and respected. Deep learning takes place when students challenge one another, ask questions, share ideas, and build on one another's knowledge. La Tierra classrooms are full of the sound of learning as children are encouraged to consult with one another, discover answers to questions through reference resources, movement, and consulting available information on the walls. Learning becomes purposeful, engaging and dynamic.



## **Student Involvement and Accountability for Learning**

La Tierra students are encouraged to take initiative in their classroom discussions and in accountability for their learning. Each classroom collaboratively establishes their unique classroom culture that is rooted in respect, responsibility, active listening, and accountability which manifests in a written classroom protocol. All classroom members are encouraged to abide by this protocol and modify it as the classroom community grows and develops.

## **Fieldwork and Adventure Learning**

La Tierra views indoor and outdoor as one rich and interconnected learning environment. Learning is extended beyond the walls with purpose, clear intentions and focus. For example, students learn values of collaboration and respect through outdoor cooperative group games or study plants by growing them in the outdoor gardens and investigate local place by organizing focused field work and explorative field trips. La Tierra fieldwork is deeply woven into each grade level's curriculum where theory and praxis manifest in real applications that help students to make authentic connections for lifelong learning.

## **Teacher & Parent & Student Team**

La Tierra understands that family and community involvement are critical to its success. As a community school, La Tierra encourages and expects high levels of family involvement. A variety of research states that families that are involved in their child's learning and school happenings help children toward their lifelong love for learning and self-efficacy. Being an active participant in your child's education through harnessing an active interest in their school activities, academics, celebrations of learning, musical performances, fieldwork, long term learning projects, and homework is essential to the well-being of La Tierra students. Parents are welcome to use school facilities to meet with teachers and as a gathering place to develop relationships with other La Tierra families.



## LA TIERRA ACADEMIC PROCESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Curriculum and Instruction

La Tierra strives to create an environment of academic rigor that is integrative and takes into account a variety of instructional learning models. Academia does not exist separate from the learning experience and its practical application; those make learning personal, engaging, meaningful, and integrated. Teachers effectively utilize progressive strategies that allow for formative and summative assessments. In addition to those, La Tierra students create their own portfolios that demonstrate progress towards meeting long-term learning targets and manifest in student's learning outcomes.

La Tierra learning expeditions support curriculum design in areas of experiential, nature-, place-, value-, and project-based learning. This integrated instructional delivery model is aligned with AZ State Standards and National Academic Standards. La Tierra teachers provide learning delivery through cultural framework that supports their chosen learning expedition and includes reading, writing, social studies, science, Spanish, art, and music within that framework. Fieldwork, service, adventure and working with experts are embedded in the learning expedition and provide multiple opportunities for students to recognize the relevance of their learning. Each long-term expeditions work culminates into a day-long celebration of learning where students have an opportunity to showcase their work, research and deep learning.

### Assessment

La Tierra teachers keep assessment practices at the forefront of their teaching. The approach to assessment is holistic, multi-faceted and takes into a consideration the whole child elements. The assessment is rather a process consisting of several parts.

- A. **Learning Targets:** Teachers write both long-term and supporting learning targets (explicit objectives for learning) that reflect standards for learning and are written in student-friendly language. The focus is to clarify the purpose for learning with space for student's self reflection and a system that tracks their progress.
- B. **Habits of Work:** La Tierra students receive a habits of work assessment that accounts responsibility for learning (work completion, participation, collaboration, following expectations and craftsmanship).
- C. **Portfolios:** La Tierra students create portfolios that display evidence of learning and align to long-term learning targets. Portfolios are developed and shared with parents during portfolio presentations.
- D. **Student-Led Conferences:** La Tierra student/parent conferences are scheduled twice during the



school year (October and March). Parent attendance is mandatory.

- E. **Communicating Results:** La Tierra practice is to communicate student's academic and social progress through rubrics, learning target evaluations, self, peer, and teacher feedback, portfolios, student-led conferences, and quarterly assessment reports.

## **Progress Reports**

La Tierra students' progress reports utilize the language; Beginning, Developing, Accomplished and Exemplary. Students receive quarterly progress reports and two formal report cards at the end of each semester. Student reports are written in learning target language. For example: I can demonstrate my knowledge of the writer's process through the development of a creative and complete narrative. Within the classrooms teachers will use ongoing anecdotal, formative and informative assessments. The use of positive feedback is built into our assessment protocols as well. Rubrics are tools teachers and students develop, based on state and national standards to develop quality work and work habits.

## **Portfolios**

La Tierra students will collect work samples tied to specific learning targets they accomplish throughout the year. These work samples will be organized and compiled into a student-learning portfolio as a testament of their learning. Students will have a specific opportunity at the end of the school year to present their portfolios to a portfolio panel (parents, a community member and a teacher). This portfolio presentation is part of their passages as they transition to the next grade level.

## **Primary Sources Documents**

La Tierra promotes a literacy rich learning environment. Students are consistently encouraged to connect to content and skills through exposure to authentic literary resources. By exploring primary source documents, trade books, publications, literary treasures and a variety of stories, students gain knowledge and develop information-gathering skills. Literary resources are collected by classroom teachers to enhance expeditions, develop word study classes, entice book clubs and reader's workshops.

## **Revisions for Enhanced Learning**

La Tierra works on improving a finished product through guided feedback and the rigor of multiple drafts. This practice reaches across grades and disciplines. Teachers guide students from draft to draft. Students collaborate to assess the work of their peers. Rubrics establish high standards for finished products and guide students to develop their best work.

## **Presentations and Celebrations of Learning**

La Tierra students showcase their learning through many opportunities such as; school-wide classroom exhibitions, author's circles, classroom presentations, guided seminars, performances, and discussion circles. Celebrations of learning consistently inspire quality work with high standards.



## **Title I Supplemental Reading and Math Program**

La Tierra implements a supplemental reading and math program for students who are struggling to meet the grade level proficiency and could benefit from additional instructional support. La Tierra's Title I program provides a small group skill-based instruction during the scheduled school day for grades K-6. Title I reading and math intervention groups meet Monday-Thursday during the day as well as after school group sessions.

### **Program Emphasis:**

- The Title I interventionist/reading and math teachers facilitate small group of individualized instruction in pull out sessions. The lower 25% of students when assessed are identified as students needing Title I interventions.
- All students, grades K-6 are benchmark assessed using the Galileo Benchmark Assessment standards-based academic measurement tool for reading, writing, math, in fall, winter and spring of each school year.
- All newly enrolled students are given the Galileo Benchmark Assessment during their first two weeks of attendance at La Tierra.
- All students, grade K-5 also take the DIBELS and DIBELS Next reading fluency and reading comprehension assessment in fall, winter and spring of each school year.
- Running records are used for all identified students in Title I intervention groups to assure steady progress and individual learning growth. The Title I system is fluid and as soon as the student demonstrates sufficient growth, she/he may exit the program. Students may enter this program at any time throughout the year.

### **Parent/Teacher Communication:**

- The school Data Team and Intervention Specialist/Title I teacher will share assessment results and a compiled list of students who are recommended for Title I with classroom teachers;
- The Intervention Specialist/Title I teacher will send home letters explaining La Tierra's Title I reading and math intervention program, as well as a consent form, to all parents with children who are eligible to receive services;
- Upon receipt of the parent consent form, the Title I teacher will contact each parent to review our Title I reading and math intervention program and answer questions;
- Intervention Specialist/Title I teacher will offer two informational meetings during our school's scheduled Parent Meeting weeks at the beginning of each semester (twice annually), for Title I parents;
- The Intervention Specialist/Title I teacher will communicate quarterly with classroom teachers, parents, and the school director regarding the progress of each child receiving Title I reading intervention services.



### 3rd Grade Reading Requirement

Arizona Revised Statute § 15-701 requires that Arizona students in third grade who score ‘far below’ the third grade level on the AZMerit assessment be retained in the third grade. Exceptions to this rule include

- English Language Learners (ELL) or Limited English Proficient (ILEP) who have received less than two years of English language instruction
- Students with disabilities with an individualized education plan (IEP) and the IEP team recommends promotion
- Students who are currently being evaluated for an IEP
- Students who have been diagnosed with reading including dyslexia

### Special Education Policies and Procedures

The following is an abbreviated list of La Tierra Community School’s Special Education Policies and Procedures. A detailed and thorough list of policies and procedures can be obtained in the office.

#### 1. Child Find

Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires charter schools to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within their population who are in need of special education and related services. In compliance with federal legislation, La Tierra has established the following policies and procedures for Child Find purposes.

- Child Find must include children who are suspected of being children with a disability and are in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade or they are highly mobile children, including those who are migrant children. La Tierra will inform the parents or guardians within its population of the availability of special education services for students and how to access those services.
- La Tierra will maintain a confidential record of children who are receiving special education and related services in the Special Education Office.
- La Tierra will establish, implement, and disseminate to its school-based personnel and all parents written procedures for the identification and referral of all children with disabilities within the student population. As a public agency, it will require all school-based staff to review the written procedures related to child identification and referral on an annual basis and will maintain documentation of the staff review. **A detailed and thorough description of La Tierra Community School’s Special Education Policies and Procedures is available in the school office.**
- Identification (screening for possible disabilities) shall be completed within 45 calendar days after the entry of each new student. La Tierra will review enrollment data and educational performance in the prior school. If there is a history of special education for a student not currently eligible for special education or a history of poor progress, the name of the student shall be submitted to the Special



Education Coordinator for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services. All students with concerns identified through screening procedures (including any student enrolling without appropriate records of screening, evaluation, and progress in previous school) will be brought to the attention of the parent or guardian within 10 school days and informed of La Tierra's procedures to follow up on the student's needs.

- Screening procedures shall include vision and hearing status and consideration of the following; cognitive, academic, communication, motor, social, behavioral, and adaptive development.
- La Tierra will maintain documentation of the identification procedures utilized, the dates of entry into school or notification by parents of a concern, and the dates of screening. The dates shall be maintained in students' permanent records.
- If the screening indicates a possible disability, the name of the student shall be submitted to the Special Education Coordinator for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services. A parent or a student may request an evaluation of the student.
- If evaluation data determines that a student qualifies for special education or related services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed following federal and state guidelines.
- If, after consultation with the parent, the LTCS determines that a full and individual evaluation is not warranted, the public agency shall provide prior written notice and procedural safeguards notice to the parent in a timely manner. Procedural safeguards are available in the Special Education Office.

## **2. Confidentiality**

La Tierra will ensure that protection of the confidentiality of any personally identifiable data, information, and records collected or maintained by the agency will be in accordance with IDEA Regulations §§300.611 through 300.627.

## **3. Discipline**

A child with a disability may be disciplined for a violation of the student code of conduct, including removal from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, suspension, or expulsion in accordance with IDEA Regulations §§300.530 through 300.536.

## **4. Evaluation And Eligibility**

A full and individual initial evaluation will be conducted by La Tierra before the initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability in accordance with §§300.300-300.311 of the IDEA regulations. A reevaluation of each child with a disability will be conducted by La Tierra Community School in accordance with §§300.300-300.311 of the IDEA regulations.

## **5. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**

A free appropriate public education (FAPE) will be available to all children within the boundaries of responsibility of La Tierra Community School, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school as provided for in §300.530(d) of the IDEA regulations.



## **Homework**

La Tierra parents are encouraged to read and spend time with their children and help them to complete their assigned homework. Each classroom has modified homework protocols and students are expected to follow them. Completing homework as assigned is a responsibility of each learner and parents are asked to support their children in doing so. Homework does not have to be painful. On the contrary, it helps students to reflect on their learning process, retain information and ask for support when needed. It helps students to attain healthy study and organizational habits.

## **Parent Volunteer Service**

There are significant opportunities for involvement: helping with classroom instruction and fieldwork, serving on committees, supporting the office, serving as reading volunteers, facilitating fundraising opportunities, and helping during long-term fieldwork. La Tierra invites you to join us this year and share ideas and ways to improve our collaboration. Your ideas, feedback and reflection are very important. La Tierra families are expected to volunteer 30 hours in a given school year. Parents are asked to respect and follow expectations and protocols when volunteering in a classroom or completing a task such as recess supervisor; lunch coordinator; janitorial support, reading buddy, fieldwork chaperone, or others. Parents must sign in with the office when on campus. All volunteering should be organized ahead of time with the classroom teachers and approved by administration. Volunteers must be in the company of a La Tierra staff member unless the office has record and a copy of their current fingerprint authorization card from the state of Arizona.

La Tierra hopes to provide parents with meaningful and fulfilling volunteer opportunities. The recent research points at the importance of parental involvement in their child's education and their school community. Parents are encouraged to talk to their classroom teachers and ask for information on how to be the most helpful. La Tierra is a community school that strives for collaboration and engagement of all, understanding that all lives are equally busy. Nonetheless, active parent volunteer service is encouraged and appreciated.



## **SCHOOL ROUTINES AND PROTOCOLS**

### **Daily Schedule**

School hours begin at 8:15 am and end between 3:00 pm and 3:30 pm, depending on student's grade, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Students should not be in classrooms before 8:15am unless they have an appointment and are accompanied by a parent or guardian. Children are not to be dropped off at school before 7:45am and should be picked up at their designated dismissal time unless after school care has been arranged.

### **School Operations**

#### **Monday - Thursday**

**Office: 7:45 am - 4:00 pm**

#### **Classroom Instruction:**

**Kindergarten 8:15 am - 3:00 pm**

**First, Second and Third Grades: 8:15 am - 3:15 pm**

**Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Grades: 8:15 am - 3:30 pm**

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

#### **Arrival**

The La Tierra front gate is unlocked at 7:45 am and monitored by two staff members from 7:45am-8:15am. Students may arrive at school anytime after 7:45 am and can play on the playground. Students are not to be anywhere else on campus at this time unless accompanied by a parent or teacher. School starts promptly at 8:15am.

#### **Dismissal**

La Tierra has staggered dismissal times, depending on which grade they are in. The school day for Kindergarteners ends at 3:00pm. The lower grades of 1st-3rd grade have a 3:15 dismissal. The upper 4th-6th graders are dismissed at 3:30pm. Students will be waiting to be picked up in a designated location with their classmates and classroom teacher. Please be sure to find your child and connect with their teacher if you are personally checking them out. Parents using the drive through will be acknowledged by a staff member at the gate, their child's teacher will be notified and the student excused to leave with their parent or guardian. If the students are not yet picked up by their designated pickup time, they will be enrolled in aftercare. Students who are pre-enrolled in aftercare will have a designated meeting location and be supervised by school staff until aftercare begins.

Students with siblings in lower grades are expected to remain in their classrooms until their class is dismissed. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to 'check-out' a sibling from class.



For each child's safety, if a parent or guardian is not able to pick up her or his child, only those who have written permission to pick up the child will be allowed to do so.

## **Drop off and Pick up Protocol**

Please follow our protocol to ensure safety of us all. We staggered our pick up times in order to make our school dismissal safe, organized and consistent. Ideally, we encourage parents to come and pick up their students in person.

Students who are **walking and/or riding bikes** will need to check out at dismissal with their classroom teacher. Students must have a written note of parent permission recorded in the office to walk and/or ride their bikes to and from school. There will be a zone inside of the gate at La Tierra to park bikes until we acquire a bike rack.

### **Morning Driving Drop Off: 7:45am – 8:15am all grades**

#### **WEST** side of N. Virginia

Please drive through La Tierra drive through, pull up to gate, drop off child, and staff will greet child at the gate. Please do not park directly in front of school during drop off and pick up times. The drop off lane is a through lane only. Please park curbside and or in a La Tierra parking spot if you are going to get out of your vehicle (including cabs). If your child is running late, please be considerate of other traffic and make a loop, allowing traffic to flow, and return to the pick up lane or park in designated areas.

#### **EAST** side of N. Virginia and/or adjacent streets

Please park your car and walk your child across the street and to the sidewalk to the front gate.

**Children may not cross the street without an adult.**

### **Afternoon Pick Up Protocol**

#### **3:00 pm - Kindergarten**

#### **3:15 pm - 1st, 2nd & 3rd Grades**

#### **3:30 pm 4th, 5th and 6th Grades**

#### **WEST** side of N. Virginia

Please drive through La Tierra drive through, pull up to gate, drop off child, and staff will greet child at the gate. Please do not park directly in front of school during drop off and pick up times. The drop off lane is a through lane only. Please park curbside and or in a La Tierra parking spot if you are going to get out of your vehicle (including cabs).

If your child is running late, please be considerate of other traffic and make a loop, allowing traffic to flow, and return to the pick up lane or park in designated areas.

#### **EAST** side of N. Virginia and/or adjacent streets

Please park your car and come over to La Tierra campus.



You may check your child out with staff at the gate or come in and check your child out with their classroom teacher.

**Children may not cross the street without an adult.**

### **Inclement Weather (Snow) School Closure**

La Tierra closes for snow when the Prescott Unified School District closes for inclement weather or at the discretion of the Director. If PUSD runs a two hour delay schedule, so will La Tierra Community School. Parents are asked to tune in to the radio or any of the local network TV stations for the latest school closure information. School closure information is found on the PUSD website. Once PUSD announces that it will be closed, La Tierra will be closed. La Tierra will notify parents by Phonevite system and email that will announce the closure. Once it is announced that PUSD is on a late bus schedule, La Tierra will also be on a two hour delay schedule. Dismissal will be at regular times. In both cases, the school office will notify parents via the Phonevite system. Parents are encouraged to listen to their phone messages.

### **Attendance Procedures**

Every child who has attained the age of six years and is under the age of 16 is required to attend school, with such exceptions as provided by law. According to state law, Arizona laws chapter 8 article 1 code section 15-802: Compulsory Attendance Law, it is the obligation of every parent, guardian, and legal custodian to ensure that every child under his/her care and supervision attends school. This Student/Parent Guide serves as La Tierra's notification to parents, guardians, and legal custodians of their obligation under state law to ensure their child's attendance at school.

Parents, guardians, and legal custodians must note that adventure activities, including camping trips, are a required part of the La Tierra's curriculum. If a student has physical limitations, accommodations will be made with input from the teacher and the parents/guardians. La Tierra utilizes adventure experiences to promote growth in intellect, character, and social responsibility. Students are required to attend all adventure activities. Failure to appear for an adventure activity or camping trip will constitute an absence from school and will be treated according to La Tierra policies on student attendance described below.

School starts at 8:15 am. Teachers will mark attendance records with either a "present" or "absent". If no mark is by the student's name when the attendance roster is collected, the student will be counted tardy for that day unless s/he has an acceptable reason from a parent or guardian for being late. Administrative personnel will make the determination as to whether the student will be counted as tardy. In any case, students may not enter the building after 8:15 am without checking in at the office first and receiving a pass to take to their teacher acknowledging that they have signed in.

### **Daily Sign In/Out**

Parents/guardians are required go to the school office to sign-in their children in the event of tardiness or



if picking up for an appointment during normal school hours. The Sign In/Out notebook is in the school office.

### **Absences**

An absence consists of failure to appear at school by 8:15 am and remain there throughout the entire school day unless dismissed by La Tierra staff. A student is expected to arrive and remain throughout the entire time of a scheduled class period. When a student is absent, the student's parent or legal guardian is to notify the school of the absence by calling the office at 928-445-5100 and/or emailing [office@latierracommunityschool.org](mailto:office@latierracommunityschool.org) before 9:30 am on the day of the absence. Parents have 24 hours to call in an absence in order for it to be marked as excused. When a student needs to be excused early, she/he should bring a note from her/his parent/guardian to inform the teacher of a specific time and approximate time of return.

### **Tardiness**

Tardiness is the arrival of a student at school after 8:15 am or after the scheduled time that a class begins. Parents need to make sure that their children arrive on time to ensure their success in learning and to limit classroom disruptions.

### **Notification of Absences**

When a student is absent, we will make a reasonable effort to notify parents, guardians, or legal custodians as quickly as possible. If a student's academic progress is compromised because of absence, reasonable effort will be made to notify the parents/guardian in advance so remedial action can be taken.

### **Make-up Work**

Parents and guardians should arrange to pick up assignments and make-up work from the classroom teacher to make sure that the student does not fall behind.

### **Recess - Playground Protocol**

La Tierra fosters ethics of care that includes indoor and outdoor school environments. The mottoes, "Put things back the way you found them" and "Leave no trace" shall be modeled and practiced anytime the playground is used. La Tierra staff cares about treating the outdoor and indoor environments equally, with respect, care and promise to continuously maintain them in healthy and safe conditions for the benefit of peaceful, safe and creative play.

Two teachers are present at all times. One teacher supervises the permanent area while the second teacher oversees the loose parts area. Teachers are advised to spread out and monitor all areas at all times! Teachers will be consistent in modeling, implementing and monitoring the Playground Safety Protocol.

La Tierra's playground is divided into areas of both permanent installations and loose parts play areas. The following includes the expectations for each.



## **Permanent Installations**

In these spaces, all objects stay permanently attached and students are not allowed to move them. Students are required to use caution and treat all objects with care and gentleness.

### **Peace Garden and Fenced Garden**

- Students are not allowed into the peace garden (chicken habitat) unless they are with their teachers working on related activities.
- Students are not allowed into the fenced garden area unless they are working with teachers on garden-related projects.

### **Obstacle Course:**

- 6 kids at time will be allowed to use the course.
- No climbing, jumping on, or hanging from the tree or its branches.
- Leave lichen on the rocks to grow.
- For safety, pushing one another off the course elements is not acceptable.

### **Sand Circle**

- Sand tools and sand must remain in the circle of stumps at all times.
- Stumps are permanent fixtures that may not be removed or loosened.
- Students in the circle may remove their shoes while playing in the sand.

### **Jungle Gym**

- Approximately 10 students will be allowed to be on the jungle gym at a time.
- Children will not be permitted to stand on monkey bars.
- Students will not be allowed to jump from the top of the web.
- The fence surrounding the jungle gym is not safe to sit, kick, or climb on.
- The wood chips need to remain in the jungle gym area.

### **Spinner**

- No more than 8 people can be in the spinner at one time.
- Students are expected to sit down and keep their bodies inside the spinner at all times.
- The wood chips need to remain in the spinner area.

### **Sandy Sport Area**

- This area needs to remain free of loose parts that may be dangerous to children in-motion.
- This is the designated area for sporting events that require a large space to move and run. This is a build-free zone.

### **Gazebo / Pergola**

- These are designated areas for calm activities.
- Students are not allowed to climb on the inside or outside of the gazebo or pergola.
- If the gazebo is being utilized as an outdoor classroom by another class, it is considered off limits for that time. Children on the playground will speak softly and avoid distracting the class in the gazebo.
- Any materials that are brought into the gazebo must be removed upon dismissal.



- The chairs and stumps under the pergola are permanent installations and may not be removed or loosened.

#### Trees

- Students may not hang upside down from branches or jump out of trees. Climbing is limited to three designated trees.

#### **Loose Parts Play Area**

This area is comprised of loose parts that include building material, stumps and small objects. Students are encouraged to use all objects and asked to put them back into their proper spaces after they use them. For safety reasons, all objects stay within this area and are not allowed to travel to the permanent areas.

#### Natural Loose Parts

- Students are expected to put away all large loose parts on one pile in the loose parts playground area.
- Although it is near the loose parts area, the dry creek bed is a permanent feature to be handled with care. The rocks are intentionally placed for safety and water flow, and should stay in place.
- Students are not allowed to move rocks or any other objects into the sandy sport area.
- 5 minutes before dismissal, students will be reminded to pick up loose parts and put them back in their designated spaces.
- Special creations will be labeled “under construction”, and preserved at teacher discretion.

#### Sporting Equipment

- Before dismissal, sporting equipment needs to be put back into the brown all-weather wicker trunk. This is a storage trunk and is not safe for seating or climbing.
- Jump ropes are for jumping only. Students will not play tug of war or other games due to safety concerns.

#### **Snack and Lunch Protocol**

La Tierra schedules uninterrupted periods for eating snacks and lunch on a daily basis. La Tierra classrooms provide students with healthy nutrition guidelines to make sure that students bring healthy snacks and lunches. Teachers stress importance of maintaining health by developing good eating and exercise habits and making healthy lifestyle choices. Students have an opportunity to make good nutrition choices by bringing well-balanced lunches from home everyday that include healthy snacks, such as fruits, vegetables, cheese, crackers, etc. La Tierra prohibits students from bringing sugary snacks, soda and fast food and strongly encourages parents to avoid sugar cookies and/or cupcakes for classroom birthday celebrations and parties. The lunch or bistro area refers to the tables, benches, labyrinth and planters that are found in the gated area behind the office. The playground refers to the open space on the ground floor, contained within the entrance, office, and parking lot gates.

- Students will keep the gate leading to the office building closed at all times.
- Students may use quetzalcoatl labyrinth one at a time, at teacher discretion. Students may not walk on the labyrinth bricks.
- The sensorial herb garden contains edible plants that may be used under staff supervision. All plants in the lunch area are fragile and need to be treated with care.



- Each class has been designated tables for eating- family style - with their teacher and crew. Students will be expected to remain seated on benches while eating.
- Students will be expected to use 10 minutes at recess, and 15 minutes at lunch for eating.
- A student's entire area must be picked up before being dismissed to play. All litter and micro-trash is also expected to be disposed of prior to dismissal.
- Students will line up along terrace while waiting for a staff to accompany them to the playground area. Otherwise, terraces are under construction, unsafe, and off-limits.
- Any student still finishing their food will move to the playground tables in order to continue to be supervised by the staff members on duty.
- When students are dismissed to play, they will walk and place their lunch items in a designated class location.
- A student may only be upstairs with staff permission and supervision. Students must remain in a line of sight of a staff member at all times.
- A bell will ring when recess is complete. Students are expected to line up at their designated class location quietly and respectfully.
- If a student needs to use the restroom while eating or at recess, he or she must notify a teacher before leaving the area. One student may use the restroom at a time.

## **Dress Code Protocol**

Restrictions on a student's hairstyle or manner of dress will be imposed when there is a "clear and present danger" to the student's health and safety or when the behavior causes an interference with work and learning or creates classroom disorder. Students must dress appropriately for whatever activities are called for on a given day. Close-toed shoes or shoes with secure back straps are required. Arizona weather can be unpredictable, therefore it is advised to send students to school in layered clothes. Another suggestion is to send them with an extra bag of clothes in case of storm or rain. Children who come to school dressed inappropriately for their learning and/or outings will not be allowed to participate in specific learning activities (including outdoor recess). Students are encouraged to wear La Tierra t-shirts on every Thursday.

### **General Dress Code Standards:**

1. Reasonable cleanliness of wearing apparel is expected.
2. Children may not wear makeup and may not have body piercing (except for earrings).
3. Shoes, sneakers, boots, and/or sandals with the back strap must be worn in the building (no flip flops).
4. Dress will not be worn that is likely to cause disruption of the educational process/classroom activities including, but not limited to, hats that obscure a student's face or clothing that may be deemed to be provocative or offensive or which promotes illegal activity such as the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco. The decision as to the safety or unsuitability of the clothing is a matter for the judgment of La Tierra staff.
5. Any kind of underwear needs to be covered (this includes bra straps).



6. Shorts should be as long as your hand when it is resting at your side.
7. Any manner of grooming or apparel, including clothing, jewelry, emblems, and badges, which by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attribute that is associated with or denotes membership in or affiliation with any gang is not allowed.
8. Parents/guardians should remember that in cold weather, students must come to school with adequate warm clothing to allow them to be outside for up to 30 minutes at a time.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

La Tierra accommodates students who wish to share and celebrate their birthdays. Each classroom has their own birthday protocol and parents need to communicate with the class teacher regarding any food items brought into class for a student's birthday. The birthday invitations for home celebrations shall not be distributed or discussed at school unless the whole class is invited.

### **School-wide Behavior and Discipline Protocol**

One essential mission of La Tierra is to establish a culture of deep care and respect for oneself, one another, the immediate school environment, extended family, and community. This requires self-regulatory skills, problem-solving skills, and value-based approaches that are supported by the whole community involved in the La Tierra student's life. La Tierra applies proactive, preventive, and brain-research strategies that foster respect, responsibility, honesty, accountability, courage, compassion, and kindness. Students are empowered in their choices, encouraged to respectfully resolve conflict, and prepared to receive constructive feedback.

While La Tierra staff need to prepare students to be academically proficient, it is also our responsibility to focus on fostering healthy levels of social and emotional intelligence. Students need to be able to solve conflict in constructive ways. Research shows that students who feel emotionally and socially safe are more likely to progress well academically.

La Tierra community members are encouraged to behave in accordance with the school behavior expectations and norms, which are consistently modeled by staff and clearly established with students. In a positive manner, teachers define clear and firm limits and state consequences during the 6-week grace and courtesy period where we consistently model, practice, and remind students of the La Tierra school-wide ethics of care expectations.

#### **La Tierra school-wide ethics of care expectations:**

- Treat others the way you want to be treated
- Put things away the way you find them
- Speak with kindness
- Practice positive body messages
- Care about others, nature, and school environment
- Before you speak, pause and reflect



Be responsible for your learning and actions  
If it is not safe, think about it and chose a safe alternative

### **Classroom Management and Behavior**

La Tierra staff and community members are encouraged, supported, and expected to practice positive classroom management and attend professional development workshops exploring new ways to effectively address common classroom concerns. Keys to successful classroom management include 1) model, practice, and remind, 2) reflect on the overall feel and flow of the classroom environment, and 3) be open to adjust and try new strategies. Teachers are responsible for clearly stating their expectations, classroom routines, traffic flow, and other logistics that will make their classrooms emotionally safe and organized as a learning environment. The focus will be to empower students to make choices that are responsible, self-regulatory, and aligned with the needs of the individual without negatively affecting the group.

If a student's actions negatively affect the classroom group, she/he will be advised to go to a safe space where the student can reflect, write, draw, and/or practice appropriate strategies to calm down. If the student needs further assistance, staff will send the student to the school office where other positive strategies will be implemented.

Most behavior challenges happen when the learning environment presents a disorganized flow or when long hours of sitting and rigid instructional practices occur. Every classroom environment consists of many students, each coming in with a unique set of abilities, dispositions, intelligences, and preferred styles of learning. By acknowledging and accommodating these unique learning attributes, behavioral challenges will be kept to a minimum. Also helpful are regular morning meetings where students are encouraged to speak up and to be heard in a manner that supports their needs and the well-being of the overall classroom culture. In addition, each teacher models and facilitates a value- and character-based culture by developing age appropriate classroom expectations. These expectations are written and posted in the classroom and communicated to other staff, to the school office, and to parents.

La Tierra reviews norms and expectations on a bi-monthly basis and teaching staff share their strategies and success stories during our Friday staff meetings. Some of the examples of preventive classroom strategies are listed below:

- Adopt a six-week Grace and Courtesy period
- Model, demonstrate, explain and state reasons behind why these norms are implemented
- Clearly state your expectations
- Establish large group meetings where you positively practice constructive feedback and solution-oriented approaches
- Implement a variety of seating that accommodate physical needs of students



- Provide a variety of learning material that student can easily access and manipulate
- Create a safe space where student can go and self-regulate
- Create a safe space where student can articulate and constructively problem solve
- Implement peace education meetings with the Director on monthly basis
- Provide leadership opportunities for students that need to be heard
- Support autonomy and foster collectivity
- Nourish kindness by modeling it first in your tone and body language
- Focus on brain-research supported strategies instead of using punitive approach and language
- Review practices and strategies frequently and include student in the process of making the classroom environment responsible, accountable and responsive instead of reactive

### **La Tierra Discipline Protocol Steps:**

#### **1. Safe Space**

If the student has difficulty to self-regulate and follow usual classrooms routine, a safe space will be designated in each classrooms where the student can go to take time to process, draw, write, and do what is necessary until she/he is ready to join the classroom flow.

#### **2. Office Referral**

If the student cannot self-regulate within 15 minutes, she/he will be sent to the school office to have quiet time. In this case parents will be notified by the school administration with an office referral note.

#### **3. Two Office Referrals**

If the student receives two office referrals, the school will schedule a director/teacher/parent conference where the situation will be addressed and behavior strategies will be discussed and implemented. The student will have 14 days to correct her/his behavior and parents will be notified about the progress. The team develops a solution-oriented contract.

#### **4. In-School Suspension**

If the situation doesn't improve within 14 days, the school administration will make an executive decision whether to implement in-school suspension. In-school suspension varies from ½ day to 1 full day. The student is not counted as absent but is required to work in the office and complete her/his assigned work.

Behaviors that may warrant in-school suspension are:

- Repeatedly leaving the classroom and/or school grounds without permission
- Exhibiting physically aggressive behavior toward other students and/or staff
- Bullying
- Using foul language toward other students and/or staff
- Forgery
- Plagiarism
- Improper use of school computers and/or technology



- Failure to comply with safety norms
- Causing intentional damage to school property
- Not actively seeking solutions to improve behavior

### **5. Off-Campus Suspension**

Unfortunately, in some cases repeated offensive behavior may cause deep distress to the school community. When that happens the school will act appropriately according to the state educational code and take steps to assure the safety of the student and the school community. The school administration may suspend the student for up to five days. When suspension occurs the student will not be readmitted until a meeting takes place with the governing board, administration, and parent to discuss necessary steps to assure that the returning student will abide by the LTCS school-wide discipline protocol.

### **6. School Expulsion**

After suspension has occurred, repeated offenses and failure to change inappropriate behavior will result in school expulsion. The governing board and school administration will notify parents and provide detailed documentation of why such a step was taken.

La Tierra cares and continuously works on finding new and helpful strategies to help students toward their healthy social and emotional skills. In addition to the LTCS Discipline Protocol steps, possible alternatives might be used to help students toward self-regulation and healthy social resiliency:

- Frequent parent/teacher meetings
- Specific individual behavior plans
- Visit to another classroom to observe peer behavior and problem-solving skills
- Designated work in the garden to alleviate frustration and improve focus
- Individual and/or group counseling
- Designated time with the School Director
- Community service

La Tierra is committed to creating an emotionally and socially safe community where administration and teaching staff use alternative and positively-oriented approaches to discipline. LTCS understands that consistent positive role modeling and clear expectation protocols foster a healthy classroom climate and discipline.

## **La Tierra Character Traits and Design Principles**

### **Courage - The Primacy of Self-Discovery**

Learning happens best with emotion, challenge, and the requisite support. People discover their abilities,



values, passions, and responsibilities in situations that offer adventure and the unexpected. In expeditionary learning schools, students undertake tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. A teacher's primary task is to help students overcome their fears and discover they can do more than they think they can.

**Success and Failure** All students need to be successful if they are to build the confidence and capacity to take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. But it is also important for students to learn from their failures, to persevere when things are hard, and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities.

### **Creativity - The Having of Wonderful Ideas**

Teaching in expeditionary learning schools fosters curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide something important to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed.

### **Responsibility - The Responsibility for Learning**

Learning is both a personal process of discovery and a social activity. Everyone learns both individually and as part of a group. La Tierra encourages both children and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.

### **Integrity - Collaboration and Competition**

Individual development and group development are integrated so that the value of friendship, trust, and group action is clear. Students are encouraged to compete, not against each other, but with their own personal best and with rigorous standards of excellence.

### **Respect - Diversity and Inclusion**

Both diversity and inclusion increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and respect for others. In Expeditionary Learning schools, students investigate and value their different histories and talents as well as those of other communities and cultures. Schools and learning groups are heterogeneous.

**The Natural World** - A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and teaches the important ideas of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards of the earth and of future generations.

### **Compassion - Service and Compassion**

We are crew, not passengers. Students and teachers are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others, and one of an Expeditionary Learning school's primary functions is to prepare students with the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service.



### **Empathy and Caring**

Learning is fostered best in communities where students' and teachers' ideas are respected and where there is mutual trust. Learning groups are small, with a caring adult looking after the progress and acting as an advocate for each child. Older students mentor younger ones, and students feel emotionally safe.

### **Responsibility for Personal and School Property**

Each student has the opportunity and the right to use school as a means for self-improvement and individual growth. In so doing, she/he is expected to conduct herself/himself in a manner aligned with the school's function as an educational facility. Conduct which disrupts or threatens to disrupt the operation of the school; which interferes in any way with the public or private rights of other students or citizens; which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person; or which damages property, will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

### **Student Due Process Rights**

Students will have clearly established means by which administrative due process is available for the protection of the individual's rights. Due process procedures include:

- A. They must be fair.
- B. They must apply equally to all.
- C. They must be enforced in a fair manner, which involves:
  - 1. Adequate and timely notice with an opportunity to prepare a defense;
  - 2. An opportunity to be heard at a reasonable time and manner;
  - 3. The right to a speedy and impartial hearing on the merits of the case;
  - 4. The right to appeal the decision.

### **Student Involvement in School Affairs**

While on school grounds, in school facilities, at school-sponsored activities, or when being transported in vehicles approved by the school, students will comply with school policies and regulations pertaining to student conduct. Students have the right to participate, as suitable to their age and maturity, in decision-making processes, student government, and student organizations.

### **Acceptable Use Policy for Technology**

This policy outlines the acceptable use of computers or personal technology at La Tierra. These rules are in place to protect the students and the school. Inappropriate use exposes La Tierra to risks including virus attacks, compromise of network systems and services, and legal issues. This policy applies to all students at La Tierra and applies to all equipment that is owned, leased, or approved for use by the school. Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and websites while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. La Tierra provides students with Internet access to further educational goals and objectives and believes the benefits of access to the Internet in the form of information



resources and opportunities for collaboration.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities for using the School's Computer Network**

La Tierra provides access to our computers for all students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. The network is available to conduct research, save work and files, and communicate with others. All students have access to the items above for academic use.

### **Use of Technology Protocol: Student IDs and Passwords**

In some instances, La Tierra provides all students with a unique user ID and password for that person's use only. Students shall not share their passwords with anyone else, nor shall anyone use anyone else's network login information, regardless of how the password is obtained. Students who suspect that someone has discovered their password should contact the media specialist or teacher immediately. Students shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, delete files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.

### **Unacceptable Use**

La Tierra's regulations on student rights and responsibilities demonstrate that the following activities are prohibited on the school's network, Internet, and wireless access systems. These items apply to all students:

1. Sending, displaying, or printing offensive messages, materials, photos and using obscene language
2. Harassing, insulting, discriminating others
3. Offering for sale, purchase, or use of any prohibited or illegal substances
4. Damaging computers, computer systems, computer networks, or wireless systems
5. Downloading games and copyrighted material and violating copyright material
6. Playing unauthorized internet-based games or activities
7. Using another student's password
8. Using a teacher ID as the student's own
9. Trespassing in another user's folders, work, or files
10. Using technology, computers, scanners, or other peripherals to produce counterfeit reproductions
11. Buying or selling on E-bay or similar auction sites
12. Displaying and/or printing instructions for making weapons or conducting illegal activities.
13. Intentionally wasting resources, i.e., printing off 20 copies of an image to distribute to all of your friends
14. Employing the network for commercial purposes, including, but not limited to, posting advertisements to a newsgroup, using e-mail to solicit sales, or using websites to advertise or sell a service

### **Use of Non-District Software and Applications**

Students shall not install any software on La Tierra Community School's network or school workstations. Any external storage or media devices must be scanned by school faculty for unauthorized files before students may use them in district computers. Students may not download inappropriate files onto La Tierra's network drives, into home directories, or onto workstation hard drives unless the student first obtains written



permission from the La Tierra. Inappropriate Internet files include, but are not limited to, games, copyrighted material, or material protected by the district's filtering or blocking software.

### **Filtering Software**

In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the district has installed filtering and/or blocking software to restrict access to Internet sites containing material harmful to minors, such as sexually explicit or other inappropriate materials. The software works by scanning for objectionable words or concepts as determined by La Tierra. However, no software is foolproof. A user who incidentally connects to an inappropriate site must immediately disconnect from the site and notify a teacher. If a user sees another user accessing inappropriate sites, he or she should notify a teacher immediately. Students shall not tamper with the filtering service.

### **Personal Expression**

The following restrictions against inappropriate speech and messages apply to all speech communicated and accessed through La Tierra's Internet system, including email, instant messages, web pages, and blogs. Students shall not send obscene, profane, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful messages. Students shall not post information that could cause damage, danger, or disruption, or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory comments. Students shall not harass another person, or knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

### **Cyber Bullying**

In the interest of school safety, La Tierra shall educate students about appropriate online behavior, including cyberbullying awareness and responses, and interacting on social media networking sites and chat rooms. La Tierra does not tolerate bullying and harassment by computer or in any other form. Students shall not use any Internet or other technology, whether district owned or personally owned, to intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass other students or staff members. Students who engage in such activity on school grounds or who engage in such activity off campus and create material disruption of school operations shall be subject disciplinary action. The severity and pattern, if any, of the bullying behavior shall be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made.

### **Protection of Identifying Information**

When sending electronic messages on La Tierra's network, through e-mail account or to users outside the network, students shall not include information that identifies themselves or other students. Identifying information includes, but is not limited to, last names, addresses, telephone numbers, family information, or any other personal information that could be used inappropriately. Students shall identify themselves by first names only.



### **Student Safeguards – Web Publishing**

Students who publish websites on La Tierra’s network must adhere to district policy regarding student safety:

1. Web documents on La Tierra’s internet servers shall include only first names or initials of students
2. Web documents on La Tierra’s internet servers shall not include student home telephone numbers or addresses nor the names or any personal information regarding family members or friends
3. Web documents on La Tierra’s internet servers shall not include student e-mail addresses
4. No web documents on La Tierra’s internet servers may feature an individual student without student parental notification, with the exception of previously published references
5. Students who publish first names or photographs of other district students are responsible for ensuring that those students have notified the parents.
6. Parents may opt out of allowing their student(s) from being published.

### **Social networking**

La Tierra reviews and allows participation in various online “social networking” applications or sites, in order to give staff and students a variety of collaborative educational resources, while maintaining a level of safety, security, and control by staff and administration. Within this context, as with any use of district software, hardware, or network access, there are no expectations of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files that they send or receive on or from the school computer network or store in any directories. Users should also be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies and should understand them and proceed accordingly.

In order to set foundational principals around the use of social networking applications and sites, we must understand and define the term “social networking” for our purposes.

### **Definition of social networking**

A social networking service is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on facilitating the building of social networks or social relations among people who, for example, share interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections. A social network service consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), his/her social links, and a variety of additional services. Most social network services are web-based and provide means for users to interact over the Internet, such as e-mail and instant messaging. Online community services are sometimes considered as a social network service, though in a broader sense, social network service usually means an individual-centered service whereas online community services are group-centered. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks. Examples of such sites are Facebook, Edmodo, Twitter, YouTube, and various blogging sites like Blogger and WordPress.

### **Acceptable social networking requirements:**

Must be approved by La Tierra staff, must have an educational purpose and, where sites will be used by or



with students, must provide staff full moderator rights to the extent that content will be controlled, reviewed and managed by an approved staff acting as moderator of the site/application. This control must allow the moderator to grant access or delete access of any or all user profiles and submitted content. The moderator should have control over the level and type of advertisement or links a student will be exposed to and the moderator must inform parents of the use of the social network application or site, including its educational purpose. A moderator must be cognizant of and adhere to all H.I.P.A.A. and F.E.R.P.A. requirements when using social networking applications or sites.

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

La Tierra recommends that all staff practice proper professional distancing as it relates to personal social networking sites and the implications of accepting profiles from active K-6 students, whether or not the students attend La Tierra.

### **Monitoring use of district approved social networking pages/sites:**

The moderator does act in the place, or in the absence, of a parent or guardian and is responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of these resources. Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on any approved social networking sites or application. La Tierra recognizes and respects differences in opinion and all interactions will be monitored regularly and reviewed for content and relevancy (before publishing when possible). La Tierra staff reserves the right to remove any posts deemed inappropriate. All postings which contain any of the following will be removed and the poster barred from posting any subsequent messages to La Tierra's approved social networking pages/sites:

- Obscene, racist, sexist or otherwise discriminatory content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized or copyrighted material
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Organized political activity
- Photos or other images that fall in any of the above categories or violate the District's

### **Policy on privacy**

In addition, La Tierra reserves the right to edit or modify any postings or comments for space or content, while retaining the intent of the original post. La Tierra shall also be granted the right to reproduce comments, posts, and messages in other public venues, e.g. a response to a book review may be quoted in a newspaper or on the La Tierra's website. Identifying information, other than first name, will be removed, unless prior approval is granted by the poster. La Tierra assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any school-sponsored social networking service and does not endorse or review



content outside the "pages" created by La Tierra staff. Participation in La Tierra's social networking services implies agreement to follow all La Tierra's policies. La Tierra does not endorse any information, opinions, services or advertisements available for viewing on social networking sites.

La Tierra encourages open, lively debate but the decision to publish comments received by La Tierra is at the discretion of the moderator or staff. Comments that violate any of the above rules will not be published or will be removed and the user's profile deleted.

### **Unauthorized computer or network use subject to prosecution**

La Tierra retains right to terminate access to La Tierra's technology. Staff may deny or suspend a user's network access and alter this agreement at any time. Students who engage in unauthorized computer or network use may be subject to disciplinary measures consistent with the La Tierra's policies and regulations, including suspension and expulsion or referral to law enforcement.

### **Cell Phone Use Protocol**

La Tierra discourages students from bringing cell phones to school. In case of emergency students are advised to use the office and/or classroom phones with the teacher's permission. Parents are asked to support La Tierra cell phone protocol and help students to leave cell phones at home. If a student chooses to bring a cell phone to school, the ringer must be turned off and it must be kept in the student's backpack during school hours. If a student violates the cell phone policy, the cell phone may be confiscated and held in the school office. A parent or guardian must pick up the phone from the school office.

### **Weapons**

The possession and/or use of a weapon by students is detrimental to the welfare and safety of the students and school personnel within the school.

- Carrying, bringing, using, or possessing a dangerous weapon on district property, when being transported in vehicles dispatched by the district or one of its schools during a school-sponsored or school-sponsored activity or event, and off school property when the conduct has a reasonable connection to school or any district curricular or non-curricular event without the authorization of the school or the school district is prohibited.
- "Dangerous weapon" means a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; any pellet, BB gun or other device, whether operational or not, designed to propel projectiles by spring action or compressed air; a fixed-blade knife with a blade that measures longer than three inches in length; or a spring-loaded knife, or a pocket knife with a blade longer than three and one-half inches; any other object, device, instrument, material, or substance, whether animate or inanimate, used or intended to be used to inflict death or serious bodily injury including but not limited to bludgeon, brass knuckles or artificial knuckles of any kind.
- The board and the director may initiate expulsion proceedings for students who carry, bring, use or possess a dangerous weapon in violation of this policy. In accordance with federal law, expulsion shall be mandatory for no less than one full calendar year for a student who is determined to have



brought a firearm to, or possessed a firearm at school in violation of this policy.

- No ammunition is allowed on La Tierra property.

## Home and School Communication

La Tierra asks parents/guardians to take an active interest in communicating with the school and your child's teacher. La Tierra values all community members and understands that communication is the key to the overall well-being of the school and the child's success and safety. There are many ways how to make school/home communication successful. Each classroom teacher communicates via email and weekly newsletters and parents are expected to read them. Additionally, the La Tierra office communicates with families regarding upcoming events and changes via emails, website updates, the school-wide Phonevite system, and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LaTierraCommunitySchool/>. In those communications, valuable information is enclosed and parents are required to read the communication that comes from the school.

La Tierra families are expected to read the La Tierra Community Handbook- Student/Parent Guide and to ask questions if further clarification is needed. Parents are strongly encouraged to join their children for school events, potlucks, field trips, conferences and to check in with the teachers for any upcoming events.

La Tierra channels of communication consists of:

- Classroom weekly newsletters
- Classrooms and office emails
- School website updates
- Quarterly school-wide newsletters
- Monthly board meetings and board meetings minutes
- Daily dismissals
- Informal notes phone calls and office communication
- School-wide Phonevite system

La Tierra teachers are pleased to talk with parents/guardians about their children, their classroom, or other matters, however, when involved with students, their undivided attention needs to be with them. Parents are asked to be respectful of their teachers' time and schedule a meeting at a mutually convenient time.

Communication is essential to the well being of the school and La Tierra welcomes any feedback that is helpful and constructive.

La Tierra follows a Communication Protocol to address any concerns or needs. This protocol is as follows:

- Speak directly to the person.
- If this does not bring resolution, both parties can meet with the Director.



- The Director will work with both parties to negotiate an acceptable resolution. If a mutually agreed upon resolution is not reached, the Director may choose to resolve the matter herself.
- The Director's decision may be appealed to the Board of Directors through the Board President. The Board may either appeal for review or support the Director's decision. The Board's decision is final.
- Concerns regarding the Director, the same Communication Protocol is followed. Should the need arise, the Board President will serve in the Director's role when a disagreement cannot be resolved

### **Transportation and Field Trip Protocol**

Field trips are a vital part of your child's education at La Tierra. Because these field trips may require transportation or walking, we adhere to the following protocol:

- Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of any upcoming field trips.
- A signed permission slip is required for each outing.
- Teachers/Field trip leaders will have an In Case of Emergency card on each child which will include: emergency contact numbers, allergies or food sensitivities and permission for medical treatment should the need arise.
- Teachers will carry a first aid kit at all times.
- Teachers will carry a cell phone at all times.
- If traveling in a motor vehicle, all are required to wear their safety belt at all times.
- Students are expected to treat one another with respect when traveling.
- Students are expected remain in their seats, use a respectful voice level and not be disruptive to the driver.
- Students will abide by all La Tierra policies and behavior guidelines while in the vehicle or on the field trip.

### **Student Health and Wellness Policy**

La Tierra strives to provide a clean learning environment for its students. Teachers, staff and parents are encouraged to teach students proper hand-washing techniques and other personal hygiene habits. When a child is not feeling well, families often wonder when students should stay home from school. For many families, deciding what to do can be even more difficult because of parental work responsibilities and the lack of child care.

La Tierra asks parents to assess their child's condition first thing in the morning and advises not to give their child fever-reducing and/or pain medication before bringing them to school. Often, families are being called in the middle of the day to pick up their child.

Students are expected to stay home:

- If the student has had a fever of 100°F, she/he needs to stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal.
- If the student has a severe cough, wheezing, difficult or rapid breathing, she/he needs to stay home until medical evaluation allows them to return back to school.



- If your student has vomited or had diarrhea, she/he needs to stay home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- If the student has a rash that may be related to a disease, such as chicken pox, etc., or if the cause of the rash is unknown, contact your family physician before sending the student to school.

Students who have infectious illnesses can spread the disease if they're in contact with others.

- If the student has eye discharge and/or Pink Eye, she/he needs to be home until 24 hours after antibacterial treatment has begun.
- If the student has head lice, scabies or other infestations, she/he needs to stay home until 24 hours after treatment has begun. In case of head lice, the student must be nit-free before returning to school.
- If the student has strep throat, she/he needs to stay home until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun.

Students who show any of the above symptoms while at school will be separated from other students, provided a supervised space to lie down and rest while awaiting pick up. La Tierra will make every effort to reach the parents/guardians when a student is ill.

La Tierra will do their best to provide students with assistance to make up the work they've missed, however it is the parent's and student's responsibility to acquire all missed assignments and projects and complete them in a timely manner as discussed with their classroom teacher.

- Parents of students with excessive absences, due to illness, will need to schedule a meeting with their child's classroom teacher to develop a strategy and timeline for their child to complete missed assignments upon (if not prior to) their child's return.
- Students who fail to complete missed assignments in a timely manner after an absence or series of absences may receive marks for those assignments as incomplete or a zero.
- Students may be held back from off campus outings, at the discretion of their teacher, after being out for prolonged absences for illness in order to provide a time and place on campus to complete their missing assignments.

### **Student Health: Medication Policy**

If a student requires herbal remedies, over the counter or prescribed medication during the school day, parent/guardian must complete and sign a medication consent form that is located in the office. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to give the medication to the director and/or office personnel. Medication cannot be left in the backpacks or with the students. Medications needs to be locked up in the medicine cabinet located in the office building.

Parents/guardians must bring the medication to the school office as soon as the student arrives at La Tierra. It must be in the original container labeled with the recommended dosage. School office personnel will dispense the medication at the prescribed times. At no time is a student permitted to have medication in her/his possession unless prior approval has been obtained.

Prescription medicine protocol:

- Must be in the original container.
- Must include the prescription label with the student's name, current date, directions, and physician's



name.

- Parents must complete a medication consent form.
- Medicine cannot be expired.
- Tylenol and/or other fever reducers will not be administered for the purpose of reducing a fever.

## **Student Health: Immunization Policy**

No child will be admitted to school without immunization records.A.R.S. § 15-871-§15-874.

## **Student Injuries and Accidents**

La Tierra personnel are first aid and cpr certified. If your child is injured during the school day, on or off the campus, first aid will be administered as allowed. If there is a serious injury, the parent/guardian will be notified. Staff is required to fill out a detailed accident report form that requires parent/guardian signature.

## **Student Allergies**

Parents and guardians are responsible for notifying of any allergies and if the child needs to carry an emergency device, such as an epi-pen, inhaler or other medical device.

## **Fire Drills and Emergency Procedures**

Fire drills are held monthly as outlined by state law. Teachers will instruct students how to behave during a fire drill. Lockdowns and reverse lockdowns are also held to prepare students to properly prepare for their safety.

## **Safety**

La Tierra has high expectations for safety. It follows safety measures conscientiously and always errs on the conservative side. Every precaution is taken to ensure your child's safety. LTCS staff is safety conscious and follow particular safety protocols as outlined by the Arizona Department of Education as well as the LTCS Staff Handbook.

## **Student Emergencies**

If a student becomes seriously ill or injured during instructional hours (on or off campus), the parent/guardian will be contacted. A parent/guardian must keep the school informed of any changes in work, home, or emergency phone numbers. Every effort will be made to inform a parent/guardian quickly. A parent/guardian must notify the school regarding child custody information that affects the release of health



and academic records, or the release of the child from school. Students will be released only to their parent/guardian, unless the school has received written notification of changes.

### **Parental Concerns**

To address a concern or seek resolution to a problem at La Tierra Community School, please address the person with whom you have a concern first and foremost. Please remember that teachers have very full schedules and may not be available to talk anytime. This is especially true at the beginning of the school day and during instructional hours. It is best to schedule a time in advance to meet either in person or to talk on the phone. If you feel having a facilitator might be helpful, you may ask to have the Director or another staff person attend the meeting. If resolve is not reached, please schedule a meeting with the Director to seek further resolution.

### **Students Concerns, Complaints, Grievances**

Conference with staff member: Students who have concerns or complaints, shall discuss it first with the staff member involved to see if the problem can be resolved at this level.

Informal conference: If discussion with the staff member fails to resolve the concern to the student's satisfaction and the student considers the matter serious enough to justify further discussion, an informal conference shall be scheduled with the student, the staff member involved, and the director. The conference should be requested by the student promptly after the conference with the involved staff member and shall be scheduled within two weeks after the student's request.



## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Re-enrollment and Enrollment**

Students entering grades K-6 are invited to apply for enrollment by filling out an enrollment application which can be found on our website. Each new family is then required to attend an information session or a guided tour with our Director after submitting their intent to enroll form. The final step in the application process is to fill out the enrollment packet, which requires immunization record, birth certificate, custody/guardianship papers (if applicable), proof of residency and general information cards.

Students at La Tierra may enroll during the Open Enrollment period. If we receive more enrollment applications than available openings, all eligible students who fill out an enrollment application form and attend an information session will be entered into a lottery. Families will be given 72 hours to respond to the offer of enrollment. If La Tierra does not hear from the family, the spot will be forfeited and another student will be selected. Students may enroll during the current school year if there is sufficient capacity in their particular grade level. Once a student has been enrolled in the school, the student will need to re-enroll each year. Siblings are given enrollment preference.

### **Student Records**

La Tierra, in accordance with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), forwards student educational records to other schools that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. This includes the transfer of any disciplinary records related to an out of school suspension, expulsion, or deferred expulsions to any private or public elementary or secondary school for any student who is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll on a full- or part-time basis in the school.

The following records must be on file in the school office at the beginning of each school year.

- Consent for Medical/Dental Emergency Treatment form
- Pick-up authorization form
- Consent for Off-Campus Activities form
- Release of Student Records form

Failure to have the above records on file by the first week of the school year could prevent the student



from participating in fieldwork and/or other activities.

### **Withdrawal from School / Transfer of Records**

If a parent/guardian and student move to another school district during the school year or summer months, the student's records will be sent to the appropriate school at the request of that school. A parent/guardian should be certain that there are no fees due to the school at the time of withdrawal.

### **Students Staying with Another Family**

If a student is staying with another family in the absence of the parent/guardian for a short term, the school must be notified with a note stating the dates the parent/guardian will be away and the name and number of the designated responsible person. This information will be used in case of an illness or an emergency.

### **School Calendar**

The current school calendar can be found on our website [www.latierracommunityschool.org](http://www.latierracommunityschool.org).

### **Activity Fees**

La Tierra Community School is a free public charter school. LTCS institutes fieldwork and community connections as part of its innovative curriculum. An activity fee of \$175 per year helps offset the cost of these activities.

Expeditions that require extended travel will be paid through class fund-raising and depending on the nature of travel, some activities will require a special payment.

All annual activity fees should be delivered to the office for receipt, or to the classroom teacher to be turned in to the office if no receipt is required. Cash, check and or money order are accepted and checks should be made payable to La Tierra Community School. Your child's activity account will be managed and tracked in the school office.

### **All annual activity fees are due the first day of instruction of a given school year.**

Special fees will be given specific deadlines for payment in order for children to attend specific events and fieldwork outings.

### **After School Care**

La Tierra will offer after school care Monday-Thursday 3:00pm to 5:15pm. The cost is \$10.00 per day. Parents are asked to provide a snack for their child for aftercare. Failure to pay for aftercare fees may preclude a child from participating in the aftercare program. All school protocols will be enforced during aftercare. All children will remain on campus during aftercare hours. Parents or guardians picking up their children must sign their children out with a time and signature. Every effort should be made to pick up the child by 5:15pm. If a child has not been picked up by 5:45pm and the aftercare



provider is unable to contact a parent or family member, the police will be notified to pick up the child.

### **Lost and Found**

The school's lost and found is located in the school breezeway on the lower level. Parents are urged to label children's clothing for easy return. Items not claimed within a month are donated to charitable organizations. As a reminder, please do not allow children to bring valuable items to school.

### **Fundraising**

Throughout the school year, individual classrooms may host fundraisers to earn money for classroom learning, expeditions or for community organizations.

### **Community Gatherings**

Each Thursday morning, 8:15 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. we will have a community gathering. During this time there will be a general greeting, celebration of weekly birthdays, presentations by classrooms, a variety of student and staff performances, a school wide character pledge, singing of our school song and a conclusion with the pledge of allegiance. Parents and community members are encouraged and welcome to attend the gatherings.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

ARS 15-506 requires that publicly funded schools 'set aside a specific time each day for students who wish to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.' La Tierra invites all students who wish to take part in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to meet on the La Tierra playground at 8:15am every school day.

### **Family Directory**

Every year, La Tierra publishes a family directory to facilitate communication among families. Names, phone numbers, email addresses, and addresses are published. This information is to be used solely for communication between families. Please do not use this information to solicit families for commercial or charitable purposes. Families will need to provide consent to the office to have their information listed in the directory.

### **Tax Credit Program**

Arizona residents who pay Arizona income tax are able to donate money to Arizona public schools. Individuals may donate up to \$200 per year to La Tierra and married couples may donate up to \$400 per year. These funds can be used for extracurricular activities, field trips, clubs, camps and after school educational enrichment programs. Donations may be made during any time of the year and may be set up for monthly contribution.



## **Tax Deductible Donations**

Families, businesses and other organizations are welcome to make tax-deductible donations to La Tierra throughout the school year. Donors will receive a receipt with La Tierra's tax ID number so taxpayers can deduct the value of the donation from their income taxes. All donations will be categorized as 'unrestricted' to be used for facility enhancement or to make educational investments, unless the donor specifically designates how the donation is to be used.

## **Homeless Children and Youth Introduction:**

La Tierra Community School is committed to creating equal educational opportunities for all children. Our school strives to ensure that homeless children and youth have access to a free, appropriate public education that is comparable to that provided to the children of any Arizona resident and consistent with Arizona's mandatory school attendance laws.

- All children and youth experiencing homelessness will be immediately enrolled in school based on availability and will have educational opportunities equal to those of their non-homeless peers.
- Homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless.

**Legal Background:** The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), which is included in No Child Left Behind as Title X-C.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

1. **Annual Notification of Rights for Elementary Schools Under FERPA Regulations** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:
  1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Director a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
  2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
  3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's



education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

[NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

**Family Policy Compliance Office U.S.  
Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue,  
SW Washington, DC 20202-4605**

## 2. **Annual Parent Notification of Access to Employee Information**

La Tierra Community School maintains a log of all employee fingerprint clearance cards and resumes. These materials are located in the office and are available for public viewing. Parents may request information on the professional qualifications of all teachers.

A parent may request information on the professional qualifications of staff that work with the requesting parent's child. The following information may be requested:

- Classroom teacher college majors/ degrees and the areas in which advanced degrees are held.
- Classroom teacher status regarding certification, including emergency or provisional certification.
- Instructional aide and paraprofessional qualifications and services offered from a paraprofessional/ instructional aide.

## **La Tierra Non-discriminatory Policy**

La Tierra Community School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability in admission to its programs, services, or activities. La Tierra does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

This notice is provided as required by Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.



Questions, complaints or requests for additional information regarding these laws may be forwarded to the designated compliance coordinator (s):

Lenka V. Studnicka, PhD  
124 N Virginia St  
Prescott, AZ 86301  
928-455-5100  
lstudnicka@latierracommunityschool.org

**Acknowledgement of Policies, Protocols and Procedures**

**Dear Parents and La Tierra Community Members,**

**It is every parent and student's responsibility to become aware of and review the Community Handbook - Student/Parent Guide.**

**In enrolling your child at La Tierra Community School, you acknowledge receipt of this notice and have taken on the responsibility to read and agree to the policies and procedures of La Tierra Community School.**

**Please sign and date this sheet and return to La Tierra Community School acknowledging that you have read and agreed to the policies and procedures of La Tierra Community School as outlined in the Community Handbook - Student/Parent Guide. Thank you!**

**Parent's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_