



Community Handbook Student/Family Guide  
2023-2024

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

**School Office  
Monday - Thursday  
7:45 am - 3:45 pm  
Friday  
9:00-3:00**

**Classroom Instruction  
(Monday-Thursday):  
Kindergarten 8:15 am - 3:00 pm  
First through Eighth Grades: 8:15 am - 3:15 pm**



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION TO LA TIERRA COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

Policy Manual Information.....4  
La Tierra Staff.....5  
La Tierra Board Members.....5

**OVERVIEW**

Vision and Mission Statement.....6  
Expeditionary Learning Model and Experience.....6  
Fieldwork and Adventure Learning.....6  
Teacher & Family & Student Team.....6

**LA TIERRA ACADEMIC PROCESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Curriculum and Instruction.....7  
Assessment.....7  
Homework.....8  
Gifted Program.....8  
La Tierra Character Traits and Design Principles.....8  
3rd Grade Reading Requirement.....9  
Title I Supplemental Reading and Math Program.....9  
Special Education Services: Child Find/Identification.....10

**SCHOOL ROUTINES AND PROTOCOLS**

Daily Schedule.....12  
Arrival and Dismissal.....12  
Drop off and pick up protocol.....13  
Inclement Weather (Snow) School Closure.....13  
Fire Drills and Emergency Procedures.....13

**ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

Attendance.....13  
Tardiness.....13  
Absences.....14  
Early Departure.....14  
Make-up Work.....14

**DRESS CODE PROTOCOL**

General Dress Code Standards.....14

**TRANSPORTATION AND FIELD TRIP PROTOCOL**

Field Trip Protocol.....15



**STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY**

Student Health and Wellness Policy.....17  
Student Health: Medication Policy.. .....18  
Student Health: Immunization Policy.....18  
Student Injuries and Accidents/Student Allergies.....18  
Student Lunch/Snack Expectations .....18

**WEAPONS/ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES**

Weapons/Illegal Substance.....19

**SCHOOL WIDE DISCIPLINE PROTOCOL**

School Wide Discipline Protocol/Ethics of Care.....19  
LTCS Classroom Management and Behavior.....20  
LTCS Discipline Protocol Steps.....21  
LTCS Student Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Policy.....22

**ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY**

Technology Policies and Protocols for Acceptable Use.....25

**FAMILY VOLUNTEER SERVICE**

Family Volunteer Service.....29

**HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Communication Protocols.....29  
Family Concerns/Students Concerns, Complaints and Grievances.....30

**TAX CREDIT PROGRAM**

Tax Deductible Donations.....31

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Student Records/Withdrawal/Transfer of Records.....31  
Cell Phone Use Protocol.....31  
Students Staying with Another Family.....32  
School Calendar.....32  
After School Care.....32  
Lost and Found.....32  
Birthday Celebrations.....32  
Fundraising.....32  
Thursday Morning Circle.....32  
Pledge of Allegiance..... 33  
Family Directory.....33

**HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH INTRODUCTIONS..... 33**

**FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA).....33**

Non-discriminatory Policy.....34

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICIES, PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES.....36**



## LA TIERRA POLICY MANUAL

On October 28, 2020 La Tierra Community School Governing Board adopted the La Tierra Community School Policy Manual. The manual contains the policies of the Governing Body and administrative regulations and exhibits of the Directors.

### **How to Use the Policy Manual**

The La Tierra Community School is operated in accordance with policies established by the Governing Body and regulations developed by the Executive Director. The Governing Body, which represents the state and local community, adopts policies after careful deliberation, and the School administration implements the policies through specific regulations and exhibits. The Governing Body and administration evaluate the effects of the policies, regulations and exhibits and revise them as necessary.

**The Entire Policy Manual will be accessible in the School office, on the La Tierra Community School Website under the School Information tab and through the Arizona School Boards Association website at <http://azsba.org/>.**

### **How the Handbook is organized:**

The Handbook is organized according to the classification system of the National School Boards Association. The system provides an efficient means of coding, filing, and locating policies.

*Please note:* All copies of this Handbook are the property of the La Tierra Community School.

There are twelve (12) major classifications, each identified by an alphabetical code:

- A FOUNDATIONS AND BASIC COMMITMENTS
- B SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS
- C GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
- D FISCAL MANAGEMENT
- E SUPPORT SERVICES
- F FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT
- G PERSONNEL
- H MEET AND CONFER
- I INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
- J STUDENTS
- K SCHOOL - COMMUNITY RELATIONS
- L EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

***How to find a policy.*** To find a specific policy in the Handbook, determine where the policy would be found in the twelve (12) major classifications. Open the electronic Handbook on the Association Home Page. Select the icon to the left of the School name to open the table of contents. Select the policy section you want to access. All documents in the Handbook are coded in the center of the top page.

*The current manual is approximately 650 pages long. Due to the depth of information in the manual we have referenced specific policies contained in the Policy Manual for your convenience following the section of the Student Handbook that it pertains to. Again the entire policy manual can be accessed here:*

<https://policy.azsba.org/asba/browse/latierra/latierra/root>

***Whenever the term Executive Director or Administrator appears in this Handbook it is to be interpreted as Director or a person designated by the Director.***



## INTRODUCTION TO LA TIERRA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

### **La Tierra Staff**

Director: Julie Jongsma

Administrative Assistant: Heather Sheetz

Academic Program Coordinator: Dawn Klaiber

Kindergarten Co-Teacher: Tricia Arnts

Kindergarten Co-Teacher: Kat Hallowell

First Grade Teacher: Mary Layman

Second Grade Teacher: David McNelly

Third Grade Teacher: Grace Kinney

Fourth Grade Teacher: Barbara Braswell

Fifth Grade Teacher: Marley Olson

Sixth Grade Teacher: Teri Lynn Stout

Seventh/Eighth Grade Teacher: Sam Westphal

Seventh/Eighth Grade Aide: Cynthia Owens

Art Teacher: Isabelle Martin

P.E. Instructor: Martin Weeks

STEM/Outdoor Educator:

Special Education Director: Cyndi Reynolds

Special Education Aide: Chelsea Plantega

Title 1 Instructional Aide: Cora Fry

Aftercare:

Custodial: Chelsea Plantega

### **La Tierra Board**

Board Co-President: Anne Boettcher

Board Co-President: Charles Mentken

Board Secretary: Kathryn Montoya

Board Treasurer: Bee Sena

Board Member: Matt Hart

### **La Tierra Family Volunteer Coordinator**

Jackie Goodin



## **OVERVIEW: VISION AND DESIGN**

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

### **Vision Statement**

Working together to nurture the whole child and inspire passion for learning.

### **Mission Statement**

La Tierra Community School provides an experiential approach to learning and values respect for diversity, the whole child, and a commitment to social and environmental justice. Our program uses natural and cultural resources to foster relevant connections for children through learning expeditions. We value children's sense of curiosity and discovery: their ability to think critically, reflect upon their world, and promote positive change in their community.

### **Expeditionary Learning Model and Experience**

LTCS was founded on the principles of the expeditionary learning model which 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 needed for successful adulthood. Learning expeditions 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.

### **Fieldwork and Adventure Learning**

La Tierra views the indoors and outdoors 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 places by organizing focused field work and explorative field trips. La Tierra fieldwork is deeply woven into each grade level curriculum.

### **Teacher & Family & 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.



## LA TIERRA ACADEMIC PROCESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Curriculum and Instruction

La Tierra strives to create an environment of academic rigor and takes into account a variety of instructional learning models. La Tierra learning expeditions support curriculum design in core content areas to create interdisciplinary thematic units of study that are hands-on and project-based. This integrated instructional delivery model is aligned with AZ State Standards and National Academic Standards. La Tierra teachers provide learning delivery through a cultural framework that supports their chosen learning expedition and includes reading, writing, social studies, science, and art 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 expedition's work culminates into a celebration of learning where students have an opportunity to showcase their work, research and deep learning.

**IGA: Curriculum Development**

**IGD: Curriculum Adoption**

**IHBB: Gifted Program**

### Assessment

La Tierra teachers keep assessment practices at the forefront of their teaching. The approach to assessment is holistic, multi-faceted and takes into 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. **Student-Led Conferences:** La Tierra student/Family conferences are led by the students and held in October. **Family attendance is mandatory.**
- 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 families during portfolio presentations at the end of the school year in May. **Family attendance is mandatory.** This portfolio presentation is part of their passages as they transition to the next grade level.
- D. **Report Cards:** La Tierra students' report cards utilize a grading scale of 1-4 with each number represented below:
  1. Beginning: beginning to explore concepts, far below grade level standard
  2. Developing: Developing grade level standards, making progress
  3. Accomplished: At grade level standard, on target and proficient
  4. Exemplary: Work accelerating beyond grade level standards

Students receive two formal report cards at the end of each semester.



E. **Celebrations of Learning:** La Tierra students showcase their knowledge and understanding during Celebrations of Learning. These school wide events are held in December and May.

### **IKA: Grading and Assessment Systems**

#### **Homework**

Students will be doing most of their schoolwork during school hours. Each classroom will provide families with their specific homework policies. While homework will be assigned, the biggest expectation is that students and families take time to read together every night.

#### **Gifted Program:**

The Governing Body requires that appropriate instructional programs be conducted to meet the needs of the exceptionally gifted student of school age, in keeping with the School's goal of developing the special abilities of each student.

The framework for said programs shall encompass the following objectives:

- A. Expansion of academic attainments and intellectual skills
- B. Stimulation of intellectual curiosity, independence, and responsibility.
- C. Development of originality and creativity.
- D. Development of positive attitude toward self and others
- E. Development of desirable social and leadership skills.
- F. Career exploration and awareness.

Ability of candidates for this program shall be evidenced by:

- A. Achievement in schoolwork
- B. Scores on tests measuring intellectual ability and aptitude.
- C. The judgments of teachers, psychologist, administrators, and supervisors familiar with the demonstrated abilities of the students.

Procedures shall be established by the Executive Director for identifying students of demonstrated achievement or potential ability.

### **IHBB: Gifted and Talented Instruction**

## **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. It is equally 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.

**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.

## **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 AASA 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 challenges including dyslexia

## **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 1-8. Title I reading and math intervention groups meet Monday-Thursday during the day.



### **Program Emphasis:**

- The Title I Director/Specialist helps to identify the lowest 25% of the student body in reading and math using Galileo Benchmark Assessments, Dibels Assessments and teacher input. Once identified, students are pulled out in small groups for individualized math and reading instruction facilitated by a Title I Specialist.
- All students grades K-8 are assessed using the Galileo Benchmark Assessment 4x per year. Grades K-8 take benchmarks in Reading and Math and grades 3-8 take Reading, Math and Science. Dibels Reading Fluency Assessments are also given 3x per year.

### **Family/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 Title I reading and math intervention program, as well as a consent form, to all families with children who are eligible to receive services.

### **Special Education Policies and Procedures**

The following is an abbreviated list of La Tierra Community School 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 families 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 families 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 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 family 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 families 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 family 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 family, 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 family 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 regulation

### **IHB: Special Education Policies**



## SCHOOL ROUTINES AND PROTOCOLS

### Daily Schedule

#### Classroom Instruction:

- **Kindergarten 8:15 am - 3:00 pm**
- **First through Eighth Grades: 8:15 am - 3:15 pm**
- **Aftercare: 3:30-5:15**

Children are not to be dropped off at school before 7:45 am and should be picked up at their designated dismissal time unless after school care has been arranged.

#### School Office:

- **Monday - Thursday: 7:45-3:45**
- **Friday: 9:00-3:00**

### Arrival and Dismissal

#### Arrival

The La Tierra front gate is unlocked at 7:45 am. The upper playground and gate is monitored by two staff members from 7:45 am-8:15 am. 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 family or teacher. School starts promptly at 8:15 am.

#### Dismissal

La Tierra has staggered dismissal times for kindergarten and 1st through 8th grades.

**Kindergarten (3:00-3:15):** Kindergarten students will be picked up in the kindergarten cottage by family/guardian between 3-3:15. If the students are not yet picked up by their designated pickup time, they will be enrolled in aftercare. Aftercare will have a designated meeting location and be supervised by school staff.

**1st - 8th grades (3:15-3:30):** 1st through 8th grade students will be waiting to be picked up in a designated location with their classmates and classroom teacher. **We encourage families to come and pick up their students in person.** Please be sure to find your child and connect with their teacher if you are personally checking them out. Families 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 family or guardian. If the students are not yet picked up by their designated pickup time, they will be enrolled in aftercare. Aftercare will have a designated meeting location and be supervised by school staff.

For each child's safety, if a family 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. Students who are **walking and/or riding bikes** will need to check out at the end of the day 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.



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

### **WEST side of N. Virginia (NO PARKING)**

Please drive through the La Tierra drive through, pull up to the gate, drop off the child, and staff will greet the child at the gate. **Please do not park or exit your vehicle in the drive through during drop off and pick up times.** The drop off lane is a through lane only. Please park curbside if you are going to get out of your vehicle.

### **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.

**For student safety children may not cross the street without an adult.**

**U-turns to enter or exit the pull through are prohibited.**

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

In the event of inclement weather the Director will determine the need for a school closure or delay by 6:30am. La Tierra will notify families by text and email that there is a closure or delay. School closure information can also be found on La Tierra Facebook page. In the event of a 2 hour delay all classes at LTCS will begin at 10:00am. Dismissal will be at regular times.

## **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 for their safety

## **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/Family Guide serves as La Tierra's notification to families, guardians, and legal custodians of their obligation under state law to ensure their child's attendance at school.

Families, guardians, and legal custodians must note that adventure activities, including camping trips, are a required part of La Tierra's curriculum. If a student has physical limitations, accommodations will be made with input from the teacher and the families/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.

## **Tardiness**

Tardiness is the arrival of a student at school after the scheduled time that a class begins. Families need to make sure that their children arrive on time to ensure their success in learning and to limit classroom disruptions. Students may not enter the building after school start time for their class without checking in at the office first and receiving a pass to take to their teacher acknowledging that they have been signed in.



**Families/guardians are required to go to the school office to sign-in their children in the event of tardiness.** The Sign In/Out notebook is in the school office.

### **Absences**

When a student is absent, the student's family or legal guardian is to notify the school of the absence by calling the office at 928-445-5100 and/or emailing [hsheetz@latierracommunityschool.org](mailto:hsheetz@latierracommunityschool.org) before 9:30 am on the day of the absence. Families have 24 hours to call in an absence in order for it to be marked as excused. When a student is absent, we will make a reasonable effort to notify families, guardians, or legal custodians as quickly as possible. Any student who misses more than 10% of instruction due to absences will be reviewed for appropriate grade placement in the following year which may include repeating the current grade.

### **Early Departure**

When a student needs to be excused early, she/he should bring a note from her/his family/guardian to inform the teacher of a specific time and approximate time of return. The family/guardian will need to go to the office and sign the student out. The Sign In/Out notebook is in the school office.

### **Make-up Work**

In the event of an absence the family/guardian should arrange to pick up assignments and make-up work from the classroom teacher to make sure that the student does not fall behind.

### **JH: Student Absences and Excuses**

### **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. Closed-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 every Thursday and on outings into the community.**

### **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 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.
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. Students should come to school with adequate clothing to allow them to be outside up to 30 minutes.

### **JICA: Student Dress**

## **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:

- Families/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 and a cell phone at all times.
- If traveling in a motor vehicle, all are required to wear their safety belt at all times.
- Students will abide by all La Tierra policies and behavior guidelines and respect community family personal protocols for respectful vehicle behavior while in the vehicle or on the field trip.

### Guidelines and Expectations for Family Drivers

A. To ensure the safety of all students, volunteer drivers must meet the following requirements when driving their own vehicle:

1. Hold a valid Arizona Driver's License and be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
2. Have only one (1) moving driving violation in the past twelve (12) months.
3. Have no "Driving Under the Influence" (DUI) violations and felony convictions involving the use of a motor vehicle.
4. Drive a safe vehicle with as many passenger seat belts as passengers.
5. Have insurance coverage with minimum of:

One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) Bodily Injury per person





Three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) Bodily Injury per accident

Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) Property Damage per occurrence

*(Note: many insurance companies will charge a minimal fee for increasing the liability amount for one [1] day).*

B. Families driving students on field trips, including their own child(ren), are required to provide the following:

1. Proof of Insurance: due at the beginning of each school year or at time of renewal for all drivers, including families driving their own child. When driving other children a one hundred thousand/three hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000/\$300,000) liability per person/occurrence is required.

*(Note: many insurance companies will charge a minimal fee for increasing the liability amount for one [1] day).* A parent driving only their child must show proof of insurance meeting the Arizona legal liability limits.

2. Copy of valid Driver's License: due at the beginning of each school year for all drivers.

3. Copy of Vehicle Registration: due at the beginning of each school year for all drivers.

C. Field Trip Policies and Procedures:

1. Drivers will be given a field trip packet with student information, directions and other pertinent information for the trip, and a list of all field trip policies and procedures. We ask that drivers read this packet carefully to avoid any misunderstandings. *Note:* Student information is confidential and should only be accessed in the event of an emergency.

2. Teachers are responsible for oversight of the entire group and for facilitating the excursion. Adults participating in the field trip are asked to assist wherever needed and are expected to chaperone the group of students they have driven, as well as be aware of safety concerns for all students.

3. Drivers must drive directly to and from the field trip destination. Stops for food, gasoline (except in the instance of a long distance trip), and other activities outside of the trip itinerary are not permitted. Personal errands are not permitted at any time.

4. School policy states that only movies rated "G" may be shown without parental permission. Parents with DVD players in their vehicles may only show movies rated "G" when driving on a field trip.

5. Students will abide by all La Tierra policies and behavior guidelines and respect parent





personal protocols for respectful vehicle behavior while in the vehicle or on the field trip. Parents are asked to avoid discussing students with others. Discipline issues should be brought to the teachers' attention for appropriate follow-through. Other concerns regarding the field trip should be brought to the teacher or Director.

6. Seatbelts (and carseats when necessary) must be used at all times.
7. Drivers may not use cell phones while transporting students.

### **EEAGRB: Student Transportation in Private Vehicles**

#### **STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY**

La Tierra strives to provide a clean learning environment for its students. Teachers, staff and families 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 familial work responsibilities and the lack of child care. La Tierra asks families to assess their child's condition first thing in the morning.

Students are expected to stay home:

- If the student has had a fever of 100°F or above, 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.
- 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.
- Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the above criteria for when to stay home may be modified. If you have any questions please contact the office.

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 family/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 family'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.

- families 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.

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.

### **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/family/guardian will be notified. Staff are required to fill out a detailed accident report form that will be sent home.

### **Student Allergies**

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

### **Student Health: Student Lunch/Snack Expectations**

La Tierra Community School is committed to helping improve the health of students by providing an environment that is supportive of overall health and well-being. Poor eating habits can negatively affect children's health and their ability to learn. Research shows that teachers and school staff can positively shape students' food preferences and eating habits by supporting healthy food policies and role modeling healthy habits. (Baxter, 1998; Birch, 1999; Kubik, 2002; Meyer, et al, 2004). To this end students are expected to eat the main course of their meal prior to eating any sugary treats and will be reminded to do so by staff. Drinks including a high amount of sugar are not allowed at any time during school hours (including chocolate milk, sports drinks, etc.). Any drinks high in sugar will be stored in the office refrigerator until dismissal time. To support students we have healthy snack choices available in the office for any student who needs an alternate choice or needs additional snacks.

**JL: Student Wellness**

**JLC: Student Health Services and Requirements**

**JLCB: Student Immunization**



## WEAPONS/ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

The possession and/or use of a weapon or illegal substance 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 or illegal substances on school property, when being transported in vehicles utilized by the school during a school-sponsored activity or event, and off school property when the conduct has a reasonable connection to school curricular or non-curricular event without the authorization of the school is prohibited.
- “Dangerous weapon” includes but is not limited to 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; 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.
- “Illegal substances” includes illegal or unknown drugs or drug look-alikes of any kind, including tobacco and marijuana
- The board and the director may initiate expulsion proceedings for students who carry, bring, use or possess a weapon or substance 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.
  - **JICH: Drug and Alcohol Use by Students**
  - **JICG: Tobacco Use by Students**
  - **JICI: Weapons in School**

## SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE PROTOCOL

One essential mission of La Tierra Community School (LTCS) 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. LTCS 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 LTCS 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 LTCS 6-week Grace and Courtesy period where we consistently model, practice, and remind students of the La Tierra school-wide ethics of care expectations.



## **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 choose a safe alternative**

### **LTCS Classroom Management & Behavior**

LTCS teachers and staff are encouraged, supported, and expected to practice positive classroom management and attend professional development workshops exploring new ways to effectively address common classroom concerns.

Teachers are responsible for clearly stating their expectations and verbalizing their 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 and 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.

Every classroom environment consists of many students who come 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.

LCTS 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.



## LTCS Discipline Protocol Steps:

### 1. Safe Space

- a. If the student has difficulty self-regulating and following usual classroom routines, a safe space will be designated in each classroom where the student can go to take time to process and do what is necessary until she/he is ready to join the classroom flow.
- b. There are 3 options available for safe space:
  - i. In the classroom
  - ii. In an alternative classroom (typically the buddy classroom)
  - iii. In the office - safe space will be in the main office area
- c. Students who are in grades kindergarten through 2nd grade who have utilized their classroom safe space 2 times in one day and a subsequent need arises should be sent to an alternative classroom or office. If this does not have a positive impact on their behavior an office referral should be made.
- d. Students in grades 3-8 who have utilized their classroom safe space more than 2 times in one week and a subsequent need arises should be sent to an alternative classroom or office. If this does not have a positive impact on their behavior an office referral should be made.

### 2. Office Referral

- a. If the student cannot self-regulate after the number of safe spaces listed above she/he will be sent to the school office. In this case families will be notified by the school administration with an office referral form. Behaviors that warrant an office referral are as follows:

Repeated class disruptions as listed above

The following are reasons for an immediate office referral:

- i. Throwing objects in the classroom
- ii. Leaving the classroom/campus without permission
- iii. Foul/aggressive language
- iv. Hurting self or others
- v. Physically aggressive behavior
- vi. Inappropriate touching/behavior
- vii. Improper use of computers/technology
- viii. Intentional destruction of school property
- ix. Bullying
- x. Possession of illicit substances
- xi. Possession of a weapon
- xii. Forgery/Plagiarism
- xiii. Failure to comply with safety norms

### 3. Two Office Referrals



- a. If the student receives two office referrals in a one month time span, the school will schedule a director/teacher/family conference where the situation will be addressed and a behavior plan will be implemented. The behavior plan will be monitored by the classroom teacher and the administration and families will be notified if any changes need to be made.

## **JKAB: Discipline Policy**

## **LTCS Student Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Policy**

The Governing Body believes that to be educated in a positive, safe, caring, and respectful learning environment is the right of every student. The Governing Body further believes that a school environment that is inclusive of these traits maximizes student achievement, fosters a student's personal growth, and helps a student build a sense of community that promotes positive participation as a citizen of society.

The School, in partnership with families, guardians, and students, will establish and maintain a school environment based on these beliefs. The School shall identify and implement age-appropriate programs designed to instill in students the values of positive interpersonal relationships, mutual respect, and appropriate conflict resolution.

To assist in achieving a school environment based on the beliefs of the Governing Body, bullying, harassment or intimidation as defined by this policy will not be tolerated.

### **Definitions**

*Bullying:* Bullying may occur when a student or group of students engages in any form of behavior that includes such acts as intimidation and/or harassment that

- A. has the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property,
- B. is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that the action, behavior, or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment in the form of physical or emotional harm,
- C. occurs when there is a real or perceived imbalance of power or strength, or
- D. may constitute a violation of law.

Bullying of a student or group of students can be manifested through written, verbal, physical, or emotional means and may occur in a variety of forms including, but not limited to

- A. verbal, written/printed or graphic exposure to derogatory comments, extortion, exploitation, name calling, or rumor spreading either directly through another person or group or through cyberbullying,
- B. exposure to social exclusion or ostracism,



- C. physical contact including but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, or spitting, and
- D. damage to or theft of personal property.

*Cyberbullying:* Cyberbullying is, but not limited to, any act of bullying committed by use of electronic technology or electronic communication devices, including telephonic devices, social networking and other Internet communications, on School computers, networks, forums and mailing lists, or other School-owned property, and by means of an individual's personal electronic media and equipment.

*Harassment:* Harassment is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that is disturbing or threatening to another student or group of students. Intentional behaviors that characterize harassment include, but are not limited to, stalking, hazing, social exclusion, name calling, unwanted physical contact and unwelcome verbal or written comments, photographs and graphics. Harassment may be related, but not limited to, race, religious orientation, sexual orientation, cultural background, economic status, size or personal appearance. Harassing behaviors can be direct or indirect and by use of social media.

*Intimidation:* Intimidation is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that places another student or group of students in fear of harm of person or property. Intimidation can be manifested emotionally or physically, either directly or indirectly, and by use of social media.

### **Prohibitions and Discipline**

Students are prohibited from bullying, harassment, or intimidation on School grounds, School property, School buses, at School bus stops, at School-sponsored events and activities, and through the use of electronic technology or electronic communication equipment on School computers, networks, forums, or mailing lists.

Disciplinary action may result for bullying, harassment, or intimidation which occurs outside of the School and the school day when such bullying, harassment, or intimidation results in a substantial physical, mental, or emotional negative effect on the victim while on School grounds, School property, School buses, at School bus stops, or at School-sponsored events and activities, or when such act(s) interfere with the authority of the school system to maintain order. All suspected violations of law will be reported to local law enforcement.

### **Reporting Incidents of Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation**

A student who is experiencing bullying, harassment, intimidation, or believes another student is experiencing bullying, harassment, intimidation, is to report the situation to the administrator or another School employee. A School employee who becomes aware of or suspects a student is being bullied, harassed or intimidated shall immediately notify the School administrator. School personnel shall maintain confidentiality of the reported information.

The initial notification of an alleged incident may be provided verbally. A detailed written description of the incident and any other relevant information must be provided on form(s) made available by the School and submitted to the administrator within one (1) school day of the verbal report. Should the





administrator be the employee who observes, is informed of, or suspects a student is experiencing bullying the administrator shall document the incident or concern in writing. Failure by an employee to report a suspected case of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to suspension without pay or dismissal pursuant to Governing Body Policy GCQF.

Reprisal by any student or staff member directed toward a student or employee related to the reporting of a case of bullying, harassment, intimidation or a suspected case of bullying, harassment, intimidation shall not be tolerated, and the individual(s) will be subject to the disciplines set out in applicable School policies and administrative regulations.

At the time a student reports alleged bullying, harassment or intimidation the administrator shall provide to the student who has allegedly been bullied, harassed, or intimidated a written copy of student rights, protections and support services available to the student and shall notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspected incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The administrator shall investigate *all* reports of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. If the administrator determines that bullying, harassment, or intimidation has occurred, discipline will be administered pursuant to Governing Body Policies JK, JKD, and JKE. Regardless of the outcome of the investigation the administrator will meet with the involved students to review the findings of the investigation. Subject to the restrictions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) set out in Policy JR, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the involved students shall also be informed of the findings of the investigation.

Documentation related to reported bullying, harassment, or intimidation and subsequent investigation shall be maintained by the School for not less than six (6) years. In the event the School reports incidents to persons other than School officials or law enforcement all individually identifiable information shall be redacted. Restrictions established by FERPA on disclosure of personally identifiable student information must be observed at all times.

The Director shall establish procedures for the dissemination of information to students, parents and guardians. The information will include, but not be limited to, Governing Body policies, incident reporting, support services (proactive and reactive) and student's rights. The dissemination of this information shall

- A. occur during the first (1st) week of each school year,
- B. be provided to each incoming student during the school year at the time of the student's registration,
- C. be posted in each classroom and in common areas of the School, and
- D. be summarized in the student handbook and on the School website, and

the Director shall establish procedures for the dissemination of information to School employees including, but not limited to

- A. Governing Body policy,





- B. preventive measures,
- C. incident reporting procedures,
- D. available support services for students (both proactive and reactive), and
- E. student rights.

Information will be provided to staff members at the beginning of each instructional year and on the first day of employment for new employees.

The Director shall establish procedures designed to protect the health and safety of students who are physically harmed as the result of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. These will include, when appropriate, procedures for contacting emergency medical services, law enforcement agencies, or both.

Knowingly submitting a false report under this policy shall subject the student to discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion. Where disciplinary action is necessary pursuant to any part of this policy, relevant School policies shall be followed.

Law enforcement authorities shall be notified any time School officials have a reasonable belief that an incidence of bullying is a violation of the law.

### **JICK: Student Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation**

## **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 in 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**

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 their 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 against 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 Ebay 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 email 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 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 accidentally 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.

### **Protection of Identifying Information**

When sending electronic messages on La Tierra's network, through e-mail accounts 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.

### **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 families 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-8 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 relevance (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 banned 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 the 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 La Tierra's policies and regulations, including suspension and expulsion or referral to law enforcement.

### FAMILY VOLUNTEER SERVICE

There are significant opportunities for involvement both in the classroom and out. **La Tierra families are expected to volunteer 30 hours in a given school year.** Families are asked to respect and follow school expectations and protocols when volunteering on or off campus with a classroom. Families must sign in with the office when on campus. Volunteers must be in the company of a La Tierra staff member unless the office has a copy of their current fingerprint authorization card from the state of Arizona. La Tierra hopes to provide families with meaningful and fulfilling volunteer opportunities. The recent research points at the importance of family involvement in their child's education and their school community. Families 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 thrives on collaboration and engagement of all, understanding that all lives are equally busy. Nonetheless, active family volunteer service is encouraged and appreciated.

### HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

**La Tierra asks families/guardians to take an active interest in communicating with the school and your child's teacher. Communication is essential to the well-being of the school and La Tierra welcomes any feedback that is helpful and constructive.**

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. Communication includes valuable information and families are encouraged to read the communication that comes from the school.

La Tierra families are expected to read the La Tierra Community Handbook- Student/Family Guide and to ask questions if further clarification is needed. Families 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 and daily dismissals
- Emails from classrooms and the office
- School website updates
- Monthly board meetings and board meetings minutes
- Informal notes phone calls and office communication
- School-wide Phonevite system or texting system
- Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LaTierraCommunitySchool/>.

La Tierra teachers are pleased to talk with families/guardians about their children, their classroom, or other matters, however, when involved with students, their undivided attention needs to be with them. Families 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.
- For 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.

### **Family 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. Those wishing to address concerns in writing are encouraged to submit a Student/parent Grievance Form or Bullying Grievance Form. Forms and instructions are available on our website, in the office and in this document.

### **Students Concerns, Complaints and Grievance**

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. 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. Students wishing to address concerns in writing are encouraged to submit a Student/Parent Grievance Form or Bullying Grievance Form. Forms and instructions are available on our website, in the office and in this document. The link to the document can be found here: <https://policy.azsba.org/asba/browse/latierra/latierra/JII-EA>

**JII: Student Concerns, Complaints and Grievance**

**KB: Parental Involvement in Education**

**KD: Public Information and Communications**

**KE: Public Concerns and Complaints**



## **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.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **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/family/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.

### **Cell Phone Use Protocol**

La Tierra discourages students from bringing cellphones to school. In case of emergency students are advised to use the office and/or classroom phones with the teacher's permission. Families 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 family member or guardian must pick up the phone from the school office.

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

If a student is staying with another family in the absence of the family/guardian for a short term, the school must be notified with a note stating the dates the family/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).

### **After School Care**

La Tierra will offer after school care **Monday-Thursday 3:30 pm to 5:15 pm**. The cost is \$10.00 per day. Families 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. Families 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 5:15 pm. If a child has not been picked up by 5:45 pm 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 at the front gate during school dismissal. Families 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.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

La Tierra accommodates students who wish to share and celebrate their birthdays. Each classroom has their own birthday protocol and families 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.

### **Fundraising**

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

### **Thursday Morning Circle**

Each Thursday morning, 8:15 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. we will have a community wide circle gathering on the main playground. 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 the pledge of allegiance. Families 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.

## **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):

Director

124 N Virginia St

Prescott, AZ 86301

928-455-5100

[office@latierracommunityschool.org](mailto:office@latierracommunityschool.org)

**AC: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity**

**JB: Equal Educational Opportunities**





## Acknowledgement of Policies, Protocols and Procedures 2023-2024

Dear Families and La Tierra Community Members,

It is every family and student's responsibility to become aware of and review the Community Handbook - Student/Family 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 by August 17 acknowledging that you have read and agreed to the policies and procedures of La Tierra Community School as outlined in the Community Handbook - Student/Family Guide. Thank you!**

Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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