



LA TIERRA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2023-2024

LTCS

124 N. Virginia St.
Prescott, AZ 86301
928 - 445-5100

www.latierracommunityschool.org

La Tierra Community School shall be referred to as LTCS for the remainder of the handbook.

EMPLOYEE POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS 2022-2023

This employee handbook is provided to help you understand the policies, procedures and protocols of LTCS.

Because understanding and complying with school policies, procedures and protocols are important, you will be asked to sign an employee acknowledgment. Please review this handbook, address any questions and sign by August 12th, 2022. Your signature acknowledges your acceptance.

This handbook does not alter the at-will nature of your employment. You have the right to terminate your employment at any time, with or without cause or notice, and the school has the same right. While the school believes in the procedures, policies and protocols contained in this handbook, they are for informational purposes, and they do not constitute an express or implied employment contract.

If you have any questions about your employment obligations, rights or benefits, speak to the Director.

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On October 28, 2020 La Tierra Community School Governing Body 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 "either the Director or a person designated by the Director."

Staff Directory

<p><u>Kindergarten Co-Teacher- Tricia Arnts</u> 58 N. Silverbow Circle Prescott, AZ 86303 928-499-5159 tarnts@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>Kindergarten Co-Teacher- Kat Hallowell</u> 213 N. Virginia Street Prescott, AZ 86301 603-425-8020 kat@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>1st Grade- Mary Layman</u> 928-420-9138 mlayman@latierracomunityschool.org</p>
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<p><u>2nd Grade- David McNelly</u> 1508 Central Trace Ln Prescott, AZ, 86303 928-273- 2448 dmcnelly@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>3rd Grade- Grace Kinney</u> Chino Valley, AZ 86323. 352-585-7546 gkinney@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>4th Grade- Barbara Braswell</u> 684 E. Robinson Dr. Prescott, AZ 86303. 928-710-5232. bbraswell@latierracomunityschool.org</p>
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<p><u>5th Grade- Marley Olson</u> Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 520-419-4631 molson@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>6th Grade- Teri Lynn Stout</u> 930 Old Stage Rd. Prescott AZ 86303 702-772-7610 tstout@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>7th/8th Grade - Samantha Westphal</u> Prescott, AZ 86301 414-477-1717 swestphal@latierracomunityschool.org</p>
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<p><u>Special Ed Aide/Custodial - Chelsea Plantega</u> Prescott, AZ 951-378-6706 cplantega@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>7th/8th Grade Aide - Cynthia Owens!</u> Chino Valley, AZ 86323 937-336-9039 cowens@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>P.E Instructor - Marty Weeks</u> Chino Valley, AZ, 86323 928-707- 1712 mweeks@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>Art- Isabelle Martin</u> 928-442-6612 imartin@latierracomunityschool.org</p>
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<p><u>STEM/Outdoor Ed-</u> Prescott, AZ 86304 @latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>Special Education- Cyndi Reynolds</u> P.O. Box 11448 Prescott, AZ 86304 928-460-0826 creynolds@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>Title I-Cora Fry</u> 856-472-3248 cfry@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>School Counselor - Cristal Barko</u> 4327 N. Chadds Ford Rd. Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 419-575-0490 cbarko@latierracomunityschool.org</p>
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<p><u>Director- Julie Jongsma</u> 383 Venus Drive Prescott, AZ 86301 928-713-1166 julie@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>Academic Program Coordinator- Dawn Klaiber</u> 1525 Mile High Drive Prescott, Arizona 86305 402-980-6797 dklaiber@latierracomunityschool.org</p>	<p><u>Administrative Assistant - Heather Sheetz</u> 8336 E. Lakeshore Drive B Prescott Valley, AZ. 86314 928-420-5759 hsheetz@latierracomunityschool.org</p>
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The Employment Relationship

At-Will Employees

Employment with LTCS is terminable at-will. This means that you or LTCS may terminate the employment relationship for any reason, or no reason, at any time and without notice. Any modification with respect to the term of an individual's employment must be in writing and approved by the director. This employee handbook is not a contract and does not create any rights for employees or obligations for LTCS. LTCS reserves the unconditional rights to modify, delete, or make any changes or exceptions to anything contained in the Employee Handbook without notice. Oral statements and representations or promises that contradict this Employee Handbook, including promises of employment for any specified period of time, are not binding on LTCS.

Job Classification

It is the intent of LTCS to provide definitions of employment classifications so employees understand their job responsibilities and benefit eligibility. Employees are classified as exempt or nonexempt in compliance with federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's status will be determined by the guidelines by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

The FLSA establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting employees in the private sector and in Federal, State, and local governments. Covered nonexempt workers are entitled to a minimum wage of not less than \$13.85 per hour (Arizona - current wage January 2023). Overtime pay at a rate not less than one and one-half times the regular rate of pay is required after 40 hours of work in a workweek for non-exempt employees.

Fingerprinting Requirement

All required school personnel must have a valid State of Arizona fingerprint clearance card (IVP). This personnel includes classroom teachers, supervisory teachers, occupational and speech therapists, tutors and non-certified personnel who provide services to students.

- The employee is responsible to renew their fingerprint clearance cards no less than 90 days before expiration. In the event the renewal is not received prior to expiration of the card, the employee must prove that she or he submitted a completed application to the Fingerprinting Division of the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) for a new FCC within 90 days before the expiration date on his or her FCC; and she or he is not awaiting trial on and has not been convicted of a criminal offense that would make him or her ineligible for a FCC. The employee will need to sign the Expired Fingerprint Clearance Card Affidavit (A.R.S. § 41-1758.08). The Charter Representative or Designee is required to complete an administrative section as well. The employee may submit a renewal application any time up to six months before the card expires.

- A.R.S. §15-512 requires contractors, subcontractors, vendors, or any of their employees who are contracted to provide services on a regular basis at an individual school to obtain a valid fingerprint clearance card.
- Student teachers must obtain a fingerprint clearance card before they participate in field experience in which they provide services directly to students. A.R.S. § 15-534.
- The employee is responsible for the cost of the fingerprint clearance card and/or its renewal.
- Any person who is employed by LTCS or who is an applicant of LTCS, who is arrested for or charged with a non-appealable offense listed in A.R.S. § 15-183(c)(8), and who does not immediately report the arrest or charge to the Director shall be immediately dismissed from employment with LTCS
- Janitors must be fingerprint checked pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-512. The director reserves the right to require the employee to obtain a fingerprint clearance card.

GCFC: Professional/Support Staff Certification and Credentialing Requirements

Discrimination

LTCS operates with a non-discriminatory policy, both for the hiring of staff members and for the acceptance of students to the program. LTCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, skin color, religion, gender, gender orientation, national origin, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions/hiring policies, or any school-administered program.

AC: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity

GBA: Equal Employment Opportunity

Sexual Harassment

All individuals associated with this School, including, but not necessarily limited to, the School Governing Body, the administration, the staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defines “sexual harassment” as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: A. Submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment; or B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's educational or work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to: A. Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, derogatory comments, slurs, jokes, epithets, assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement, leering, gestures, or display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons. B. Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome. (Reciprocal attraction between peers is not considered sexual harassment.) C. Implying or

withholding support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment; suggesting that a poor performance report will be prepared; suggesting that probation will be failed; D. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, and/or work environment of another employee. E. Offering or granting favors or employment benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assignments, favorable duties or shifts, recommendations, reclassification, etc., in exchange for sexual favors.

Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment, or who knows of the occurrence of such conduct, should inform the compliance officer, as provided in ACA. A substantiated charge against a staff member in the School shall subject such staff member to disciplinary action. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible.

ACA: Sexual Harassment

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy

As part of its commitment to providing its employees a work environment free from harassment and discrimination, LTCS will provide qualified disabled individuals with reasonable accommodations that enable those employees to fulfill the essential functions of their jobs. If, while employed with LTCS, you have a physical or mental condition that you believe constitutes a disability, and you believe that there is a reasonable accommodation that LTCS could provide to assist you at work; you should inform the Director.

Employee Health Insurance (30 or more hours weekly)

Each year, La Tierra will select a “Base Plan” and a “Health Savings” plan from which employees may choose. The full monthly premium will be covered for each full-time (over 30 hours) employee. Employees may choose to extend coverage for their spouse, children and families, as per the guidelines of the insurance provider, at an additional charge. If payments for either type of additional coverage are not received then the coverage shall be terminated. Employees that select no coverage will not be eligible to collect the cost of coverage.

Employee Dental and Vision Insurance (30 or more hours weekly)

The full monthly premium will be covered for each full-time employee. Employees may choose to extend coverage for their spouse, children and families, as per the guidelines of the insurance provider, at an additional charge. Employees who select no coverage will not be eligible to collect the cost of coverage.

Employee Life Insurance (30 or more hours weekly)

A term life insurance policy will be maintained for each full-time employee.

All insurance benefits described herein are subject to cancellation and may cease at any time. Employee benefits will stop on the last day of the month of termination or resignation or upon completion of duties.

Employee Injury/Workers Compensation

Any employee of the School who suffers a job-related injury/accident must file a report with the School business office within five (5) days after the date of occurrence.

Employees are covered under the State of Arizona's Workers' Compensation laws.

Premiums paid by LTCS on your behalf entitle you, if eligible, to receive payments if you miss work due to an on-the-job injury.

In order to ensure you are eligible for Workers' Compensation coverage, you must report all on-the-job injuries to the director. That should be done immediately following the injury.

EBBB: Accident Reports

GBGD: Workers Compensation

Employee Workweek Hours

Teachers are expected to be on campus in adequate time to prepare lessons and the classroom for the school day and are expected to stay until their students go to aftercare, to participate in Child Study and IEP meetings as necessary, and to meet with parents or guardians as necessary to manage student needs.

Fridays teachers are expected to be present in their classrooms or attend professional development workshops and mandatory staff meetings from the hours of 9:00 am -3:00 pm. Please refer to your contract for specific job hours.

Employee Absences/Leaves

Employees are hired because LTCS needs the services that they provide.

Excessive absences, full or partial missed days, including tardiness and early departures, for reasons other than requirements of your assigned duties, places an undue hardship on your colleagues. An LTCS Leave Request Form must be completed for any absence from the school grounds. Leave Request Forms must be submitted at least one week prior to absence. No more than two employees may take a personal day on the same day. Personal leave will not be granted during the following periods:

- On the day immediately preceding or following a holiday or vacation
- During the first 2 weeks or last 2 weeks of the school year

GCCB: Professional/Support Staff Personal/Emergency/Religious Leave

JCCC - Employee leave/absences

Sick Day and Sick Pay

LTCS salaried employees have a total of ten (10) paid sick/personal days to be used as necessary. These days will not carry forward to subsequent years of employment, are not transferable and will not be refunded if unused. Administration has final approval of all leave requests paid vs. unpaid. Professional development requested by or approved by administration does not accrue toward 10 sick/personal days of paid leave.

Please notify the **Director by 6:00 am in the event of an illness.** If you expect that you will be

ill before the following school day, please notify as soon as possible. The more time we have to arrange a substitute teacher, the more likelihood of success.

Please submit your lesson plans to the Director by 7:30 am so they can be made available to the substitute teacher.

Each teacher is responsible for providing emergency sub plans and having them available in your classroom by August 11. Plans should cover the extent of the school day from 8:15am-3:15pm.

Arizona Paid Sick Time

ENTITLEMENT AND AMOUNT:

Beginning July 1, 2017, employees are entitled to earned paid sick time and accrue a minimum of one hour of earned paid sick time for every 30 hours worked, subject to the following limitations:

- Employees whose employers have less than 15 employees may only accrue or use 24 hours of earned paid sick time per year.
- Employees whose employers have 15 or more employees may only accrue or use 40 hours of earned paid sick time per year. Employers are permitted to select higher accrual and use limits.
- **TERMS OF USE:** Earned paid sick time may be used for the following purposes: (1) medical care or mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or (2) a public health emergency;
- Arizona Earned Paid Sick Time and (3) absence due to domestic violence, sexual violence, abuse, or stalking. Employees may use earned paid sick time for themselves or for family members. See Arizona Revised Statutes § 23-373 for more information.
- **RETALIATION & DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED:** Employers are prohibited from discriminating against or subjecting any person to retaliation for: (1) asserting any claim or right under the Act, including requesting or using earned paid sick time; (2) assisting any person in doing so; or (3) informing any person of their rights under the Act.

ENFORCEMENT:

Each employee has the right to file a complaint with the Industrial Commission's Labor Department alleging that an employer has violated the Act. Certain time limits apply. A civil action may also be filed as provided in the Act. Violations of the Act may result in penalties.

INFORMATION:

For additional information regarding the Act, you may refer to the Industrial Commission's website at www.azica.gov or contact the Industrial Commission's Labor Department: 800 W. Washington, Phoenix, Arizona 85007-2022; (602) 542-4515

Jury Duty

It is recognized by the Governing Body that no employee is exempt from jury duty and that leaves of absence for such duty must be granted.

Only the regular salary may be received by an employee on jury duty

1. It is the responsibility of the employee to reimburse the School for jury duty pay when such payment is made directly to the employee. Failure to reimburse the School at the completion of the jury duty service will result in a full deduction equal to the number of contract days missed.
2. An employee excused from jury duty after being summoned shall report for regular duty as soon as possible. Failure to report for duty will result in a deduction equal to that portion of a contract day missed.

Death in the Family/Funeral Leave

If an eligible employee should suffer the death of an immediate family member, the employee will be entitled to up to 10 days of leave, deducted from sick leave.

GCCH: Professional/Support Staff Bereavement Leave

Compensation

Employment contracts go July 1-June 30. Pay periods are from the 1st-15th and the 16th-the last day of the month. Paydays are on the 5th and 20th monthly.

Employee Evaluations

Classroom Teacher Observations will be completed 2x/year by the Instructional Director with an evaluation 1x/year..

Support Staff Members Evaluations will be completed 2x/year for new employees and annually for returning employees by the Director.

New Employee Evaluations will be completed 90 days following the start of employment.

GCO: Evaluation of Professional/Support Staff Members

Time sheets

Timesheets are due to the Director by the 16th of the month and the first day of the month unless notified otherwise.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)

Requires employers to provide up to twelve weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees. In compliance with FMLA,

LTCS allows eligible employees to take up to twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid leave for various family and medical reasons.

In order to be eligible to take family or medical leave, an employee must be employed by LTCS for at least twelve (12) months and must have worked at least 1,250 hours in the immediate past year before the date of requested leave. LTCS Family and Medical Leave will be granted to eligible employees for the following reasons:

1. Family leave for the birth of the employee's child

2. Family leave for the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
3. Medical leave to care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition
4. Medical leave due to the employee's own serious health conditions.
5. Employers must also allow up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave in a twelve month period to the spouse, son, daughter, or next-of-kin of a veteran who was a military service member injured in the line of duty. If you are the spouse, son, daughter or parent of a military son active duty, or on notice of an impending call to active duty, LTCS will grant up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave in a twelve month period based on any qualifying exigency. Qualifying exigencies include short-term notice deployment, military events and activities, urgent childcare, financial and legal arrangements, counseling, rest and recuperation to spend time with the service member on short-term leave, post-deployment activities.

Conduct with Students

All LTCS employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and appropriate manner at all times. Language which is considered foul, cussing or inappropriate communication with minors is prohibited at all times. Relationships between staff and students that would be considered 'dating, courtship, or romantic involvement' are strictly prohibited and cause for immediate dismissal. Staff is strongly encouraged to refrain from participating in electronic communication including texting, email, video chat or chatting, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat except as communication relates to academic pursuits.

GBEB: Staff Conduct

GBEA: Staff Ethics

Drug & Alcohol Use

LTCS is dedicated to maintaining a safe educational environment and work environment. Thus, LTCS has implemented a drug and alcohol free work environment policy.

- No employee shall report to work while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- The use, sale, transfer or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, sedatives, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia on LTCS property is prohibited.
- This includes the misuse of prescription drugs or any mood altering substances while on LTCS property, LTCS paid time (i.e., conferences, training sessions, fieldwork), or in circumstances the school believes will adversely affect the LTCS's operations, safety, or reputation.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment and/or notification of law enforcement authorities. Employees of LTCS shall not be under the influence of prescription or nonprescription drugs during the school day or at other times when acting as a representative of LTCS, if such medication impairs the employee's ability to perform their job.

GBEC: Drug-Free Workplace

Smoking

LTCS is a non-smoking campus. The non-smoking policy applies to all school events and activities.

GBED: Smoking By Staff Members

Dress Code

La Tierra Community School employees serve as a role model for students and as representatives of La Tierra Community School. As such the following should serve as a guideline for acceptable clothing choices during school days.

Shorts/skirts should be as long as your hand when it is resting by your side

Undergarments of any kind should be covered with clothing

Shoes should be closed toe or have a back strap

Employees are expected to wear attire that is clean, fresh and in good repair. If this poses a hardship to an employee, please discuss it with the director to make other arrangements.

Changes to this policy will be clearly communicated in writing to all employees.

GBEBA: Staff Dress Code

Weapons

Weapons are prohibited on school grounds. Any employee who is aware that a student or employee is carrying a weapon must report it immediately to the director.

JICI: Weapons in School

Employee Discipline

A staff member may be disciplined for any conduct that, in the judgment of the school, is inappropriate. Minor disciplinary action includes, without limitation, verbal or written reprimands, suspension with pay, or suspension without pay for a period of five days or less. A staff member who wishes to object to a minor disciplinary action shall submit a written complaint to the Director who will review the complaint and may confer with the staff member and other persons that are deemed necessary.

GCQF: Discipline, Suspension, & Dismissal of Professional/Support Staff Members

LTCS HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

It is the policy of LTCS to provide safe working conditions for all employees and to establish the safety regulations necessary to ensure that safe working conditions are maintained. It is also our policy to comply with all federal, state, and local regulations.

- Some of the best safety improvement ideas come from employees. Individuals with ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to address them with the Director.
- Each employee is expected to follow all safety rules, and to exercise caution in all work activities.

- Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the director.
- Employees who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, who fail to report them or remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
- In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees must immediately notify the Director and complete an incident report.

Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures.

Child Abuse Reporting

Any school personnel or any other person who has responsibility for the care or treatment of a minor and who reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense or neglect that appears to have been inflicted upon the minor by other than accidental means or that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental in nature or who reasonably believes there has been a denial or deprivation of necessary medical treatment or surgical care or nourishment with the intent to cause or allow the death of an infant who is protected under A.R.S. [36-2281](#) shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of such information to a peace officer or to the Department of Child Safety (DCS) of the Department of Economic Security, except if the report concerns a person who does not have care, custody, or control of the minor, the report shall be made to a peace officer only. Such reports shall be made immediately either electronically or by telephone.

The Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Children, Youth and Families, has determined that all mandated reporters may now electronically submit non-emergency reports via a secure online reporting website. Non-emergency reports are those in which a child is not at immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in serious harm. Mandated reporters will be able to submit non-emergency reports twenty-four (24) hours a day without wait times.

All reports made via the online website will *require the person making the report (reporting source) to provide contact information*. A representative from the Child Abuse Hotline may contact the source for additional information, if necessary. This process will make it more convenient to meet the mandated reporting requirements and help ensure child safety.

All *emergency situations* where a child faces an immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in serious harm must still be reported by calling 911 or 1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445). If a reporting source is unsure as to whether or not the report is an emergency situation, the reporting source should call the Child Abuse Hotline to make a report.

Any concerns for the safety of a child due to abuse, neglect or abandonment, must be

reported, by:

Calling 1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445),

TDD: 602-530-1831 (1-800-530-1831), or

Submitting *non-emergency* concerns via the Online Reporting Service for Mandated Reporters at https://www.azdes.gov/dcyf/cps/mandated_reporters/ (effective November 2013).

Pursuant to A.R.S. [13-3620](#), such reports shall contain:

- A. The names and addresses of the minor, the parents, or the person or persons having custody of such minor, if known.
- B. The minor's age and the nature and extent of the minor's abuse, child abuse, or physical injuries or neglect, including any evidence of previous abuse, child abuse, physical injury or neglect.
- C. Any other information that such person believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the abuse, child abuse, physical injury or neglect.

A person who furnishes a report, information, or records required or authorized under Arizona Revised Statutes or a person who participates in a judicial or administrative proceeding or investigation resulting from a report, information or records required or authorized under Arizona Revised Statutes is immune from any civil or criminal liability by reason of that action unless such person has acted with malice or unless such person has been charged with or is suspected of abusing or neglecting the child or children in question.

A report is not required under A.R.S. [13-3620](#) for conduct prescribed by A.R.S. [13-1404](#) and [13-1405](#) if the conduct involves only minors who are fourteen (14), fifteen (15), sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age and there is nothing to indicate that the conduct is other than consensual.

A report is not required if a minor is of elementary school age, the physical injury occurs accidentally in the course of typical playground activity during a school day, occurs on the premises of the school that the minor attends and is reported to the legal parent or guardian of the minor and the school maintains a written record of the incident. The school will maintain a written record of the physical injury as part of the student's health file as required by Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records (ASLAPR).

A person who fails to report abuse as provided in A.R.S. [13-3620](#) is guilty of a class 1 misdemeanor, except if the failure to report involves a reportable offense, the person is

guilty of a class 6 felony.

Any certificated person or Governing Body member who reasonably suspects or receives a reasonable allegation that a person certificated by the Department of Education has engaged in conduct involving minors that would be subject to the reporting requirements of A.R.S. 13-3620 shall report or cause reports to be made to the Department of Education in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable but not later than three (3) business days after the person first suspects or receives an allegation of the conduct.

Any person who is employed as the immediate or next higher-level supervisor to or administrator of a person who is statutorily required to report is not required to report if the supervisor or administrator reasonably believes that the report has been made by the person who is required to report.

Any school employee who has orally reported to DCS or a peace officer a reasonable belief of an offense to a minor must provide written notification to the administrator of the oral report not later than the next workday following the making of the report.

Arizona law requires school personnel, in addition to parents and a number of other professionals, to report suspected child abuse to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services whenever there is a reasonable belief that a child has been abused, regardless of who the perpetrator is. School personnel include any individual who works for LTCS.

- A “reasonable belief” is when there are facts that cause an employee to form the suspicion that a child is or has been the victim of abuse.
- Employees are required to make a report “immediately” once it is believed that a child has been the victim of abuse.
- Employees must inform the Director of reports of suspected abuse after the report has been made to the appropriate authorities.
- Failure to report suspected child abuse can result in criminal and civil penalties.
- Abuse can be inflicted on a child by a parent, a relative, another adult, a school employee, and even another child.
- If you believe the perpetrator is the child’s parent or guardian, report suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services (1-888-SOS-CHILD).
- All other reports should be made to law enforcement.
- If you suspect that an adult is being abused (e.g., an 18 year old student or an adult student on an IEP), report the suspected abuse to Adult Protective Services (1-877-SOS-ADULT).
- Employees will participate in a Child Abuse Reporting training annually.

JLF: Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection

CPR and First Aid Certification

All employees are required to have current CPR and First Aid Certification.

Child Supervision

Under no circumstances will students be left unsupervised. This is especially pertinent to the classroom environment, lunch and playground areas. Teachers are responsible to track the timely return of students sent to the office or to the bathroom. In case the students take more time than required, teachers will notify the office to check on the student's whereabouts.

Playground Duty

Be sure to check the duty schedule and be on the playground/lunch area for your assigned times and actively watch students while on duty. Find a replacement if you need to leave the area. Under no circumstance there will be only one staff supervising students. Two staff members have to be present at all times.

Accident Report

In the event of a student accident/injury, please fill out an accident report, create a copy and notify the office. Accident reports must be filled out the day of the accident and by the person witnessing the accident. In the event of a serious injury, the supervising adult will report the injury to the office. Accident reports must be filled out even if the injury is not visible. All physical discomforts and injuries must be recorded.

INTERNET AND EMAIL USE

Internet and Email Acceptable uses

LTCS provides Internet and email access for school usage. All communications media, including computer passwords, are school property. No computer, copier, fax, or other school equipment may be used for personal business.

Unacceptable uses

The school e-mail and Internet access may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storage of any communications of a discriminatory or harassing nature or materials that are obscene or X-rated. Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, sex, national origin, physical attributes or sexual preference shall be transmitted. No excessively abusive, profane or offensive language is to be transmitted through the school's e-mail or Internet system. Electronic media may also not be used for any other purpose that is illegal or against school policy or contrary to the school's best interest. Solicitation of non-school business, or any use of the school e-mail or Internet for personal gain is prohibited.

Communications

All employees are responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that they place or send over the school's e-mail and Internet system. No e-mail or other electronic communications may be sent that hides the identity of the sender or represents the sender as someone else or someone from another school. All messages communicated on the school's E-mail and Internet system should contain the employee's name. Any messages or information sent by an employee to another individual outside of the school via an electronic network (e.g. bulletin board, online service, blog or Internet) are statements that reflect the school's image. While some users include personal "disclaimers" in electronic messages, there is still a connection to the school and the statements may be legally tied to the school. Therefore we require that all communications sent by employees via the school's e-mail and Internet system comply with all school policies and not disclose any confidential or proprietary school information.

Security

All messages created, sent, or retrieved over the school's e-mail and Internet are the property of the school and should be considered public information. The school reserves the right to access and monitor the content of all messages and files on the school's email and Internet system at any time with or without notice. Employees should not assume electronic communications are totally private and should transmit highly confidential data in other ways. E-mail messages regarding sensitive matters should warn that such communications are not intended to be secure or confidential.

Violations

Any employee who abuses the privilege of school facilitated access to the issued laptop, e-mail or the Internet will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination. If necessary the school also reserves the right to advise appropriate legal officials of any illegal or suspect violations.

GBEA: Staff Ethics

Personal Communications

Personal phone calls, texts and emails may be made and received during break times. This communication should not take place during student supervision times.

Staff Communication

LTCS is a professional work environment, and it is expected that communication among staff will be professional and polite. Speak of others as though they are present. When in doubt, practice the Golden Rule. In the event of a grievance or issues with another employee, be professional. Under no circumstances will gossiping be tolerated. Staff shall be responsible for reading school emails for timely information.

LTCS EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Snow Delay

In the event of inclement weather or other emergency situations which requires La Tierra Community School to close, the following procedures shall be followed:

- The Director will notify staff via group text by 6:00am of school closure.
- The School will utilize Phonevite, text messaging or similar notification system that will notify all parents by phone of school closures. This notification shall occur by 6:30am.
- The school will also post this information on the LTCS facebook page.

2-Hour Delay Schedule

In the event of a 2 hour delay, all classes will begin at 10:00am. Staff arrival by 9:30am.

Emergency Response Plan/Safety Plan

LTCS has a comprehensive safety plan in place. All employees are to be familiar with the plan and their roles within that plan. Emergency procedures for proper evacuation of the facility are reviewed regularly. The Emergency Response Plan is available in each classroom and the office for your review. By signing the acknowledgement at the end of this handbook you are stating that you have reviewed the Emergency Response Plan.

After Hours Emergency Procedure

Should an emergency occur outside of school hours contact the Director.

Fire Drill

Fire drills are held monthly as outlined by state law. Teachers will instruct students how to behave during a fire drill.

LTCS FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

LTCS is committed to high standards of ethical, moral and legal business conduct. This policy aims to provide a clear definition and policy regarding cash handling.

Cash & Checks

All cash and checks collected must be turned into the office on a daily basis. Staff are responsible for tracking money collected for specific events (per student). At no time are cash or checks to be left in a classroom. Should the occasion arise that it is impossible to get the money to the office (weekend fundraising, etc), the money must be secured by the responsible staff member. Monies collected for student activities MUST be fully accounted for by the office. At

no time will cash be used for expenditures, even if related to the activity for which it was collected.

Debit & Credit Card Use

Debit Card is available for use by staff, for **approved purchases**. Approved purchases include, but are not limited to: fieldwork and educational items.

Card is secured in the office and checked out as/when needed.

ALL CARDS must be returned to the office as soon as possible after use. The corresponding, detailed receipts must be turned in at the same time! Each receipt must have the name of the person doing the transaction(s) and the reason for the purchase. (If this is a foreign exchange the US dollar exchange rate needs to be on EACH RECEIPT, please). If using a school card for online purchases, receipts must be forwarded to the Director immediately upon completion of the transaction. The reason for the purchase must be clearly indicated. At no time are the cards to be used for personal transactions.

DGD: Credit Cards

Reimbursement

While this procedure is strongly discouraged, we understand that there may be times that staff must use their own funds for school purchases.

In order to be reimbursed, the staff member must complete a reimbursement form. All reimbursement requests **MUST** have a copy of the original receipt attached. Absolutely no reimbursements will be made without a copy of the original receipt(s) showing detailed purchases.

All reimbursement requests require the director's approval and signature. This process may take up to two weeks to return reimbursement to the employee.

Travel Expenses and Per Diem Allowances

Employees must submit a "Travel Expense Claim" prior to their travel to receive reimbursement for mileage, lodging and meal expenses.

Mileage

Please go to the following website if you have any questions regarding such rates and/or come see the Director. <http://www.gsa.gov/>

Please provide a logged mileage report and any fuel receipts you may have. NO money will be reimbursed without such documentation. <http://www.gsa.gov/>

Lodging (for single day sessions) will not be reimbursed within 100 miles of the Campus unless prior approval has been given by the Director and/or uncontrollable circumstances should arise. <http://www.gsa.gov/> Lodging for conferences will be limited to the cost of the conference facility unless prior approval is arranged. Lodging for multi-day sessions within the state of AZ / or lodging outside of the state of AZ will be permitted pending approval of the director.

Meals You will not be reimbursed for any meals/drinks over the approved three meals a day. Should meals be provided with said class/meeting/conference no reimbursement will be given.

Airfare or other transportation If an event requires more than school or personal transportation, the most reasonably priced route and mode of transportation is required. The school will not pay add-on charges such as seat requests, early boarding, insurance or additional baggage. All transportation receipts must be submitted with the claim form and reviewed prior to payment.

DETAILED RECEIPTS SHOWING EACH ITEM PURCHASED ARE REQUIRED FOR TRANSPORTATION & LODGING(summary style receipts are not valid for this purpose)

LTCS EMPLOYEE ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance

Teachers will submit attendance to the office by 9:00 am every day.

Classroom Newsletters

Teachers are to prepare a classroom newsletter and distribute weekly.

Off Campus Travel with Students

Never leave campus without notifying the office.

Teachers must carry classroom first aid backpack whenever the class is off campus

Political Activity

The Governing Body recognizes the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in political activity. However, school time, personnel, equipment, supplies, materials, buildings or other resources may not be used to influence the outcomes of elections.

GBI: Staff Participation in Political Activities

Photo Permission Protocol

LTCS takes many photos of the students throughout the year. Photo Release Forms are completed by parents upon enrollment and kept in the office. Please check with the office before publishing student photos for use in the public.

Community Handbook

Additional school policies and procedures are contained in the LTCS Community Handbook. All employees are responsible for knowing and abiding by the policies contained therein.

Field Trip Protocol

In order to help keep our students and campus safe, and to make sure your fieldwork is as successful as possible, please follow the timeline and protocols listed below:

For Guest Speakers/Visitors:

Please notify the office at least one day before the scheduled visit. Please ask your guest to sign in when they arrive and get a 'visitor sticker' to wear while they are on campus. They should also sign out when they leave.

For Walking Field Trips (no transportation needed):

Families complete and sign the generic LTCS walking permission slip during enrollment. This covers students anytime they leave campus on foot (Library, Community Connections, etc).

5-7 days in advance:

Please notify the office where you are going, the date and time you are leaving, and your estimated return to school. Library visits are the exception since they are already on the school calendar.

Notify parents of the event through email. Request and select parents to help chaperone. Write your field trip on the master calendar in the office.

1-2 days before:

Remind families about the field trip and request important/necessary items such as lunches, appropriate clothing, shoes, etc.

Day of field trip:

Carry your cell phone and class backpack on your outing in case of emergency.

For Off Campus Fieldwork (Transportation Required):

3 weeks in advance:

Make a connection with the organization/location you are traveling to and secure details. Let the office know your planned itinerary (place, date, departure and arrival times). Write your field trip on the master calendar in the office.

Confirm parent drivers so they can begin gathering driver required documents listed below.

2 weeks in advance:

Notify families about the field trip via email.

Send home Fieldwork Authorization Forms. A new permission slip is required for each field trip that students attend. Request and select parents to help chaperone. If payment is required, please include the amount on your permission slip and collect fees from parents.

1 week in advance:

Collect signed field trip permission slips (and fees if required). Resend permission slips home for those students who have not turned them in, or make phone calls home reminding parents to sign them. Verbal permission will not be accepted unless under extenuating circumstances approved by the Director. Notify parents via email of any specific gear required by students (other than what they usually bring to school). Confirm fieldwork with the organization or destination to where you are traveling.

1-2 days before:

Collect all signed permission slips and fees from students.

Confirm chaperones. Prepare students for fieldwork protocols and character expectations for going off campus.

Day of field trip:

Prepare emergency backpack with first aid and any specific medications for your students. Carry your cell phone and classroom backpack on your outing in case of emergency.

Students who do not have permission slips will NOT be allowed to attend fieldwork. Please have work for students who are staying behind.

IJOA: Field Trip Policy

Guidelines and Expectations for Parent 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. Parents 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 parents 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 Executive 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

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was enacted to protect the privacy interests of student records. All employees must fulfill the requirements set forth in FERPA.

FERPA establishes:

- The right for parents to access and review the education records of their children, and the right for eligible students to inspect and review their own records;
- The right for parents and eligible students to challenge any records that they feel are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy rights;
- The rights for parents and eligible students to give prior consent before a third party can have access to any education records;
- The right to be informed of the rights granted by FERPA and the procedures for exercising those rights. Pursuant to FERPA, personally identifiable information generally cannot be disclosed to others without the prior consent of the parent. Consent must be obtained in writing and should be signed and dated, specify the records to be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the parties to whom the disclosure is to be made.
- FERPA allows for the disclosure of student records without parental consent in the following circumstances:
 - Directory information,
 - Teachers or other school officials,
 - Officials of another school system where the student seeks to enroll,
 - State juvenile justice systems or their officials,
 - State and federal educational authorities,
 - In compliance with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena,
 - In connection with the receipt or application of financial aid,
 - Organizations conducting educational studies,
 - Accrediting organizations, or
 - Health and safety emergency.

School officials must also maintain records of all requests for student information, except requests made by parent or school officials with a legitimate educational interest. Parents have the right to access and review these records to see who has had access to their child's records.

Confidentiality/Non-Disclosure

It is vital to protect confidential student and business information. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Student Records or Information
2. Family Information

3. Personnel Records or Information
4. Computer Processes
5. Computer Programs and Codes
6. Financial Information
7. Marketing Strategies
8. Educational Strategies
9. Pending Projects

Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential student or business information will be terminated and may be subject to legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information. Employees should be cautioned that casual unauthorized release of information can occur through social networks, discussions with friends/family members, conversations in public places, etc.

Teacher Resumes

Per state law all teacher resumes shall be available to the parents/public upon their request.

Public Records

The public records of LTCS will be open to inspection as provided by law. Public records consist of any recorded information that is made or received by LTCS in the performance of LTCS's business. This includes much of the information contained in personnel files. This also includes emails (which are public documents) and any notes that are shared with another person. Private notes are only private until they are shared with one or more other persons, then they become public documents. Do not prepare a note or an email that you do not want to see displayed in the public.

Personnel Records

LTCS maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records. Personnel records may be subject to public records requests. It is very important for an employee to tell the Director about any changes in name, address, telephone number, number of dependents, etc. this ensures that your personal information will always be up-to-date, which helps LTCS properly handle benefits, pay, and other important matters.

GBJ: Personnel Records and Files

Proposition 301 Performance Pay

Proposition 301 Performance Pay funds will be distributed to eligible staff in accordance with Arizona law. Our distribution of 301 funds is currently being updated. We will supply an addendum to the handbook when completed.

Inappropriate Material/Opt Out

Teachers will not offer material in video, audio or electronic materials that may be inappropriate for the age of the student without written consent from parents (eg- R-rated, PG13-rated, PG-rated movies). Additionally, all teachers should be aware that within SB1453 a parent may request to review learning materials and activities in advance. A parent who objects to any learning material or activity on the basis that the material or activity is harmful may request to withdraw the student from the activity or program.

IJND: Technology Resources

After School Extracurricular Clubs

Approved faculty and staff may sponsor after-school extracurricular clubs with Director's approval. The flat fee for the clubs will be \$15 per session, typically 3:30 pm -5:00 pm. All fees collected for the club will be submitted directly to the business office.

The sponsor is responsible for all aspects of the club, including purchasing supplies. If the sponsor wishes to be reimbursed for the supplies, the purchase must have Director's approval in advance of the purchase. These materials will become the property of the school. Under most circumstances, the cost of the club materials will come from the fees collected from the students. La Tierra submits all monies collected for the club and deposits them into the general fund. The employees must submit a club reimbursement pay form to the business office to receive payment for the club. The employees will receive compensation of 90% of the net proceeds.

Tutoring for Pay

Except with prior written approval from the director:

- School buildings are not to be used for private tutoring or classes for which students pay a fee to a staff member
- A staff member is not permitted to provide tutoring for pay to any student who attends the staff member's class.

Keys and Locking Up

All employees are responsible for the keys issued to them. In the event that a key is lost or misplaced, the employee will be financially responsible for replacing the keys or rekeying of an area. Each employee is responsible for keeping their classroom keys easily accessible when they are not in their classroom. Employees are collectively responsible for the security of the campus at all times. This includes locking classroom doors when unoccupied, locking the building when departing, locking the gate when leaving.

Parking

When school is in session or during a school event, employee parking is located behind the school building or behind the office.

Staff Breaks

If a staff member chooses to leave campus during their break time, they must notify the office. Staff must ensure that all duties and responsibilities are covered for their time off campus.

Kitchen Duties

Put things away the way you found them. Wash, dry and put up any dishes that you use. A monthly cleaning schedule will be rotated among the LTCS staff. This schedule will be determined during the first staff meeting when monthly fundraising events are decided.

Duties include:

- Dispose of expired food and clean the fridge - every Friday
- Check the cupboards and organize what needs to be organized
- Wipe counters and microwave
- Clean dishes and the coffee table area
- Weekly secretary duties at staff meetings

School Property

Employees are fiscally and legally liable to damage or loss of any school property provided to them.

Hazardous Materials

All hazardous materials will be stored, used and disposed of within the guidelines of currently accepted practices. In the classes, activities and situations whereby staff or students will be using hazardous materials, all safety equipment will be worn. Any accidents will be reported as stated above.

Cleaning supplies

Under no circumstances will cleaning supplies be stored in unmarked containers.

All toxic material must be kept out of reach of children.

The janitor's closet will be kept locked at all times.

Heating and Cooling

The staff is responsible for turning the air conditioning and heater off in their classrooms/work rooms when school is not in session including after school and weekends.

APPENDICES

Leave Request Form

Discipline Protocol

Playground Safety Protocol

Accident Report Form



Leave Request /Sick Day Form

Name: _____

If you need to **call out sick**, please notify Julie by 6am the morning of. Do **NOT** come to work if you are symptomatic!

Please fill in the dates you missed due to illness below:

If you are requesting time off:

*Please leave a copy of your lesson plans with supporting materials organized on your desk for your sub.

*Email a copy of your lesson plan to Julie & Heather.

*Make sure your duties are covered

No. of days absent & Dates requested: _____

Substitute Requested: _____ Confirmed? _____

List duties/covered by: _____

For office use only below

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Name:

Your request for the date(s): _____ is/are: ___ (Approved) ___ (Please see Julie)



LA TIERRA COMMUNITY SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE PROTOCOL 2023-2024

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.

Here are the LTCS 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. The staff member sending the student will need to notify the office of the type of strategy to be used. Students may be sent to the office for a safe space or for an office referral.

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 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 3-7 who have utilized their classroom safe space more than 2 times in one week 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 parents 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 three office referrals in a two week time span, the school will schedule a director/teacher/parent 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 parents will be notified if any changes need to be made.

JKAB: Discipline Policy



LTCS Playground Safety Protocol 2023-2024

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

Teachers are advised to spread out and monitor all areas at all times! *Teachers will be consistent in modeling, implementing and monitoring the LTCS Playground Safety Protocol.*

LTCS 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) or fenced garden area unless they are with their teachers working on related activities.

Obstacle Course:

- 6 kids at a 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 on their bottom 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.

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.

Trees

- Climbing is limited to three designated trees.
- Children should not climb past the tape on branches.
- Tree #1 and Tree #3 can have a maximum of 3 students. Tree #2 may only have 1 student and is off limits when students are playing in the sandbox.

LOOSE PARTS PLAY AREA

The second area consists 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.
- 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

- Sporting equipment should return to the equipment box located near the 3rd grade classroom.

LUNCH AREA AND PLAYGROUND PROTOCOLS

The lunch area refers to the tables, benches, labyrinth and planters that are found in the gated area behind the office.

- 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 designated tables for eating. Students will be expected to remain seated on benches while eating.
- Students will be expected to use 20 minutes at recess, and 15 minutes at lunch for eating.
- A student’s entire area must be picked up before dismissal. All litter and micro-trash is also expected to be disposed of prior to dismissal.
- Students will line up in their designated place while waiting for a staff to accompany them to the playground.
- A bell will ring when recess is complete. Students are expected to line up at their designated class location and await permission to walk to their classroom.

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.



PROFESSIONAL / SUPPORT STAFF

HIRING - OATH OF OFFICE

In addition to any other form of oath or affirmation specifically provided by law for an officer or employee, before entering upon the duties of office or employment, any officer or employee shall take and subscribe to the following oath or affirmation:

State of Arizona, County of _____,

I, _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution and laws of the State of Arizona; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, and defend them against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and that I will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of the office of _____ [name of office] according to the best of my ability, so help me God (or so I do affirm).

(Signature of officer or employee)



ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT

I have received a copy of the LTCS employee policies, procedures and protocols handbook. By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read the handbook and agree to follow the policies, procedures and protocols set forth in it, including the anti-harassment policy. I understand that the handbook is a set of general guidelines concerning employment at LTCS. LTCS may modify, revoke, or change any of the provisions of the handbook at any time, with or without advance notice to me. I understand that in the event of an apparent conflict with the policies, LTCS interpretation of the handbook shall be followed. This handbook replaces any previous handbook, manual, or policy statement issued to me before today.

I acknowledge I have reviewed this handbook and will sign by August 4th, 2023. By continuing to work for LTCS, I am signing my consent and agreement to the changes made in policy by this handbook and the school's right to make amendments in the future.

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

School Director _____ Date _____