A.2 Target Population

The Prescott area will be well served to have a school like La Tierra Community School in its midst. The boundary area for this school will be the Prescott Unified School district although we hope to draw students from the tri-city area (Prescott, Prescott Valley and Chino Valley). There are several quality elementary schools within the Prescott Unified School District boundaries, but none of these have partnered with Expeditionary Learning Schools (ELS) and none offer the type of program intended for La Tierra Community School. Additionally, none of these schools have a partnership with a college to the degree that La Tierra Community School has an affiliation with Prescott College, a school already connected to ELS.

External stakeholders, such as parents, city officials, school leaders, and local business owners have publicly expressed interest in seeing La Tierra Community School come into existence. Many of these community members have already donated resources to help La Tierra become a reality. Because La Tierra Community School will provide educational opportunities that no other elementary school in Northern Arizona is offering, public support has been high.

La Tierra Community School is designed for any and all students who want to be fully engaged in their learning. It is the goal of the school to attract a diverse population of students to enhance the learning community. Using the Expeditionary Learning framework, which focuses on learning that is relevant, interesting, and hands-on, rigor is built throughout with community at the core. ELS has been in existence for sixteen years and works with thousands of students around the United States. The school reform model has been applied and implemented in new and existing schools. Currently, there is one public school (no elementary) in the Prescott area partnering with ELS, a charter high school (Northpoint Expeditionary Learning Academy.)

Demographics

Demographic data for the community show that on average over 89% of the population residing on the Tri City Prescott area has a high school diploma (exceeds the state average of 84.6%) and the average percentage adults with at least a bachelor's degree (20.5%) in slightly lower than the state average (26%) with some of the areas such as Prescott Unified geographic area, that percentage exceeding the state average.

As a rural community, families face many economic challenges that are experienced by small, rural communities around the nation. On average, 11.5% of the population makes less than $15,000 a year (slightly higher than the state average of 10.5%) and over 19% of the population makes less than $30,000 a year, which exceeds the state average of 15.9%. Prescott is the largest community in Yavapai County, which has precious economic opportunities, despite the relatively high unemployment rate of 6% (before the economic crisis of 2007-09).

Demographic information supports the fact that Prescott is a snapshot now of what the United States population will resemble in 2020, 2025 and 2030 – thus La Tierra is in a location and in a community that is working to bring the multigenerational aspect of our country together. Within the Prescott Community there is teamwork, courage, craftsmanship, perseverance and compassion for the roots of Expeditionary Learning. Prescott is a community where the ability to discover one's self is applauded and cultivated. LTCS is in the midst of outdoor venues that push each person who comes here to experience them in the best way they can. Prescott is a responsible community providing much needed support to those in need. While not extremely racially diverse, in the traditional cultural sense, Prescott lies in the midst of ancient Native American cultures. La Tierra Community School plans to tap into the rich diversity that Prescott offers, including the colleges, strong community organizations, and variety of service opportunities. Undoubtedly, a school like La Tierra Community School would be a great fit within this proud and prosperous environment.

Try-City Prescott area (Prescott, Prescott Valley and Chino Valley) has been steadily growing in population for the last 5 years. The enrollment trends in the 3 school districts within the 10 mile targeted market area – between 2003 and 2007 – reflects that population growth and shows a steady upward trend – the student enrollment in the target area has increased from 12,595(2003) to 14,954 (2007) – this represents nearly 20% increase for the last 5 years.

Enrollment Trends

	2003	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Prescott Unified	5,083	5,241	5,392	5,558	5,688
Humboldt Unified	4,908	5,236	5,757	6,210	6,408
Chino Valley Unified	2,604	2,640	2,729	2,703	2,858
Total Enrollment	**12,595**	**13,117**	**13,878**	**14,471**	**14,954**

Yavapai County is the second fastest growing county in the state of Arizona and Prescott is the largest urban area within the county. The city's growth rate has been a steady 4% during the last decade and it is expected to continue at this rate. 95, 600 people live within the tri-city area of Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Chino Valley. The majority of these residents live within a ten-mile radius of downtown Prescott.

La Tierra Community School is a college preparatory elementary, which means that ALL graduates will be fully prepared to enter middle and high school capable of continuing a college preparatory curriculum. Through specialized learning plans and a culture that is built around quality, La Tierra Community School will be offering something new, innovative and much needed.

School Environment

All three districts LTCS would be drawing from, have a predominantly White student population (75% average) with an average 21% Hispanic population. The poverty level for the districts averages 39.5%. We expect that the student population at La Tierra Community School will have similar demographic characteristics although due to the interest from the Prescott-Yavapai Indian Tribe as well as heavily Hispanic churches, LTCS hopes to attract a diverse population of students.

	Prescott Unified	Humboldt Unified	Chino Valley Unified	Average	State	County
Enrollment of Racial/Ethnic Groups	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007
White (%)	82.5	69.5	73.1	75.0	45.4	72.0
Black (%)	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.2	5.4	1.1
Hispanic (%)	12.1	26.6	24.3	21.0	41.0	22.8
Asian/Pacific Islander (%)	1.9	1.4	0.2	1.2	2.6	1.1
American Indian/Alaska Native (%)	2.6	1.5	1.1	1.7	5.6	3.0
Enrollment of Students with Special Needs						
Economically Disadvantaged (%)	21.5	47.1	49.8	39.5	40.8	43.6
English Language Learners (%)	2.5	8.6	7.4	6.2	12.1	7.4
Students with Disabilities (%)	11.7	14.6	12.5	12.9	11.6	12.7
Enrollment Distribution by Gender						
Female (%)	48.6	48.4	47.0	48.0	48.7	47.8
Male (%)	51.4	51.6	53.0	52.0	51.3	52.2
Enrollment Distribution by Grade						
Pre-K (%)	2.2	0.8	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.5
Kindergarten (%)	6.3	8.4	7.4	7.4	8.0	7.9
Grade 1 (%)	6.7	8.1	7.4	7.4	8.0	8.0
Grade 2 (%)	6.0	7.9	7.0	7.0	7.9	7.8
Grade 3 (%)	6.5	8.0	8.0	7.5	7.7	8.0
Grade 4 (%)	7.2	8.2	8.0	7.8	7.6	8.2
Grade 5 (%)	7.4	8.9	8.1	8.1	7.7	8.6
Grade 6 (%)	7.4	8.1	7.9	7.8	7.6	8.4
Grade 7 (%)	7.9	8.6	8.3	8.3	7.7	8.8
Grade 8 (%)	7.5	7.1	8.9	7.8	7.6	8.1
Grade 9 (%)	9.8	7.2	7.3	8.1	7.9	9.7
Grade 10 (%)	9.5	7.2	7.2	8.0	7.5	9.3
Grade 11 (%)	7.9	6.4	7.5	7.3	6.8	8.4
Grade 12 (%)	7.8	5.2	5.4	6.1	6.6	7.2
Ungraded (%)	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Standard and Poor's SchoolDataDirect/Arizona Department of Education

Students and families that choose La Tierra Community School will be a part of a strong community that supports a rigorous education focused on quality academic work and social / emotional development. Complimentary structures, along with significant teacher professional development, will ensure that the mission of La Tierra Community School will be living and organic. The Prescott area will benefit greatly with La Tierra Community School Community School as an option.

What characteristics do successful La Tierra Community School students possess?

- Desire to be challenged
- Enjoy critical thinking
- Love to read and write
- Interested in and committed to learning a second language
- Love to explore and learn about the Southwest
- Interested in technology
- Interested in social and environmental issues
- Willing to engage in group work
- Value time in the natural world
- Appreciate learning that is hands-on and constructive
- Take personal responsibility for learning
- Welcome opportunities for service

Class Size

La Tierra Community School will maintain a class size between 18-22 students. Keeping class sizes at this number is both manageable for highly effective teachers and desirable in a project-based school. Each classroom will have one full-time teacher. By year 3, there will be a full-time Fine Arts and Foreign Language Teacher. Work Study students will be employed from Prescott College to assist as classroom aides.