B.4.2 Contracted Services

La Tierra Community School plans to contract with a number of individuals and organizations for specific services. Contracted services will include assistance with Special Education, identifying a Director, a person to do psych evaluations, speech therapy, and possibly OT and or PT. Surrounding schools average between 8-12% for their Special Education identified population. La Tierra has built its Special Education service budget based on an 11% enrollment population. Besides Special Education, La Tierra Community School will contract for Legal Services, Accounting / Payroll, Grants Management, Nursing, Tech Services, and Student Data Management.

Providing Of Special Education Services to Qualifying Students
As a public school, La Tierra Community School (LTCS) will provide special education services to all qualifying students. The services we will provide will be designed to serve every disabled and school aged child who attends our school. The special education services at LTCS will offer the following:

• First 45 days of school screening.

• Pre-referral process, whereby students suspected of requiring special education services will be identified. A request for this assistance may come from school staff, a family member, or the student.

• LTCS will have a Child Study Team. The Child Study Team will develop, implement and evaluate interventions designed to address the needs of the student. The Child Study Team will meet to assist classroom teachers in responding to students who are experiencing difficulties at school.

• A full and individual comprehensive evaluation that is fair and non-discriminatory for any student who is suspected of requiring special education services. This evaluation will be conducted by the Child Study Team.

• A free and appropriate individualized educational program will be designed to meet the specific needs of students with disabilities.

• An Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will be tailored to support the strengths and address the weaknesses for each student identified as having a special educational need with the IEP having at least an annual review.

• Transition plans will be developed by the team, at the appropriate age, for all students with IEPs.

Placement Options
Students at LTCS will be provided services specific to the student's needs as identified in their IEPs, 504's, or other accommodation plan. The school will provide such services in the least restrictive environment and in an inclusive model to the greatest extent possible. We believe that students are best served alongside their classroom peers and within the context of their already differentiated curriculum currently offered in their classroom. There will not be a resource room. All students will be expected to participate to the fullest extent possible in the general classroom. Supports will be provided in the form of a certified special education teacher, hired hourly through a certified provider, who will work closely with the regular classroom teacher to modify expectations/assignments and materials in order to meet the needs of the student. The Expeditionary Learning model is well-suited to students needing accommodations as it appeals to a wide variety of learning styles. Due to the unique nature of the model, students will be expected to participate in all field work and projects in order to meet the standards of each course. Accommodations and modifications will be made as identified in the IEP in a collaborative manner between classroom teachers and special education personnel. Outside therapists will also be employed to

serve students, as in the case, for instance, of students requiring speech and language therapy.

Training of Staff
LTCS will provide time for professional development for classroom teachers and other personnel who interact with either the special education student, or the special education procedures. The special education teacher and agency contracted to facilitate the special education program, will oversee and manage all cases and act as the director of special education in collaboration with the school principal. The special education teacher(s) will meet regularly with the regular education teachers for all curriculum planning sessions and will work alongside them in the classrooms and during fieldwork. The Special Education contractor will review the procedures, methods and the inclusion model. Review of placement timelines, notification requirements, child study, 45-day screening, Home Language Survey (PHLOTE), Accommodation Check Sheets, ELL requirements, test batteries and Special Education legislature IDEA will be initially done in the summer period prior to the opening of school, and will also be sustained and on-going throughout the year. In addition to the comprehensive in-service training that regular education teachers will receive regarding the specific methods of instruction at LTCS as an Expeditionary Learning School, our general education teachers will receive annual in-service training regarding accommodations and intervention strategies providing them with the knowledge and skills to deliver scientifically based instruction that is likely to improve outcomes for children with disabilities. The Special Education agency will also work with all collaborative planning teams to develop appropriate accommodations for all learners. The LTCS Director will participate in the yearly Directors Institute Conference of the Arizona Department of Education. LTCS will also work with the special education representative assigned from the Arizona Department of Education to provide professional development workshop at least once every two years for all teachers and administrators. LTCS will also take advantage of workshops available through the Arizona Department of Education and the Yavapai County ESA for teacher training and will make teachers aware of the funding opportunities available through that office for training to become certified in Special Education and effective at meeting the needs of IEP students.

Resources:
• **Information:** LTCS will utilize a number of readily available information resources to implement successfully its model for delivery of special education services. The school will continually monitor the ADE and US Department of Education websites for IDEA updates, as well as for information on best practices and other relevant research. The school Principal and the Special Education contracted agency will compare learning gained by annually attending the Director's Institute, organized by ADE.
• **Financial:** Special Education will be financed mainly through equalization funds and formula entitlement grants, as described in the Budget. We will have sufficient resources to meet the needs of our special education population. Our projections for the percentage of special education students enrolled at the school are at 11%, which is within the national average (8%-12%).

Understanding of the Financial Responsibility
In the case of enrollment of students whose IEP's placement options require additional high cost services, LTCS understands that it is the school's responsibility to arrange and pay for it. LTCS will give priority in using its reserve funds to cover the costs for placing the special needs student in a hospital, private educational facility, or other environment outside the school. In addition, the school will actively seek funds through grant programs such as IDEA Excess Costs, IDEA Emergency Funds, IDEA Charter School Expansion Act, Department of Economic Security Programs, and other sources.

Plan for Securing Such Placement
In the event that a student may need some level of intervention beyond what is available through LTCS as an LEA, a representative from the school will collaborate with the family or legal guardian to identify resources available to the student. This may include services covered by either private insurance or AHCCCS behavioral health benefits. If the student is currently not enrolled in AHCCCS, but

may be eligible LTCS will assist the family in the enrollment process. In cases when LTCS identifies a student who is not achieving success in his or her current special education placement, due to educational or behavioral health needs, and a more restrictive placement may be needed, LTCS shall initiate an IEP review. This will include a review of existing data and determination of the need for additional data. If the IEP team believes the student's behavior in the educational setting is so severe that a residential placement may be needed, LTCS, with the parent or legal guardian shall initiate a referral to the local Regional Behavioral Health Authority (West Yavapai Guidance Clinic) for a behavioral health assessment and placement in a Residential Treatment Center, approved by Arizona Department of Education. LTCS will follow the guidelines outlined in the *Educations Vouchers Procedure Manual for Students Placed in Residential Treatment Center*, as published by the Exceptional Education Services unit of Arizona Department of Education. LTCS will actively seek cooperation with other public schools and special education services providers in the area, including adjacent public school districts in an effort to utilize placement options beyond what the school has currently capacity to offer.

Duties and Qualifications of Special Education Service Providers
Only appropriately certified personnel who possess current categorical certifications or endorsements will provide related services.

Special Education Teacher/ Director of Special Education:

Utilizing qualified service providers, LTCS will contract for someone to serve as the Director of Special Education. LTCS plans to contract with the current Director of Special Education for Prescott Unified School District for this service. This Highly Qualified individual is currently serving another local charter school, serving as their Director charging $40 / hr.

• **Director Duties:** Trains Board, faculty, and staff on special education policies and procedures and coordinates in-services and professional development on a regular basis Enacts and oversees 45-day screening process; Supervises special education aids; Maintains accurate special education records in confidential student files; Calls, properly notices, and leads MET meetings; Works with families and teachers to design and maintain effective IEPs, 504 plans, and accommodations; Schedules evaluation of students with external providers; Schedules services by external providers; Corresponds with families and teachers in a timely fashion regarding all questions regarding special education at LTCS; Works with the testing coordinator to ensure that all modifications are offered to IEP students during the mandated state testing; Develops and implements transition plans.

• **Special Education Teacher Aide:** La Tierra Community Schools plans to have Special Education students fully integrated in the daily classroom activities. Of course, if an IEP calls for an alternative environment, LTCS will meet the IEP expectations. With most, if not all, of the Special Education students integrated within the traditional classroom, LTCS will hire a Special Education Aide that will serve the students and help meet the IEP requirements. The Special Education Teacher Aide evaluates the progress of each identified student conscientiously and fairly and provides progress reports as required by law, LTCS policy, and administrative regulation. The Special Education Teacher Aide maintains accurate permanent academic and attendance records for students; serves as a resource to school staff members in the development of a balanced program for handicapped students; collaborates with classroom teachers and other staff members to implement behavior management programs and provides suggestions for the student's daily activities. This person also participates in Child Study Team meetings to provide information, and classroom observations.

• **Delivery of Services**: We have made budget projections to spend $12,000 on a Special Education Aide ($10 / hr.) This person would be on campus with students full-time. We have estimated that it would cost $2000 the first year to contract for a director / coordinator ($40 / hr.) Also, we have set aside $1500

for a person to do Psych evaluations and $1200 for Speech. Estimating that we would have four or five Special Education students, and evaluating the cost that other local charter schools are paying for contracted services, these estimates seem to be realistic. The totals would increase with the growth of the student population.

Accounting / Payroll

La Tierra Community School will contract out this service. Currently, several different options have been investigated. One leading candidate is teligentCharter, an organization that offers several different services including accounting and finance. Based on teligentCharter's cost structure, LTCS is estimating that it will pay $450 / month or $5,400 in the first year for this service. An annual audit will also be a part of this budget and LTCS estimates that it will pay $2,500 for this service in Year 1.

Student Data System

La Tierra Community School will contract out this service, although the Operations Manager will also be involved in maintaining an efficient / accurate system. This service would include student enrollment and attendance, monthly integrity checks and quarterly audits. Potential trainings may also be a part of the contract. Also, LTCS will utilize a management program like School Master to help manage the data. Based on other local charter schools' investment in this service and quoted prices, LTCS estimates to spend $4000 the first year (with 40 students.)

Legal Services

La Tierra Community School will contract for legal services. Legal advice may be needed for a variety of scenarios, including but not limited too policy questions, human resources, and liability. Understanding the importance and need for this service, LTCS is estimating they will pay $5,000 for this service in Year 1.

Nursing

La Tierra Community School will contract out for necessary nursing needs that includes mandatory health testing and reviewing records. Realizing that nursing services in the Prescott area run close to $300 / day LTCS is estimating that it will spend $1200 in Year 1 (or the equivalent of four nursing days) for the 40 students.

Tech Services

La Tierra Community School will have small but important technology needs. It will be important for LTCS to find competent, reliability technicians to service LTCS' needs. Based on what other local charters are paying for these services, LTCS is estimating it will spend $3,000 during Year 1 to get the necessary support for two classrooms and administrative support. This amount does not cover necessary hardware and software.

NWEA-MAPS

La Tierra Community School will contract with NWEA M.A.P.S. to help monitor academic progress. This assessment will be given three times during the school year. Currently, there is a grant available through Yavapai County to cover this cost for the next three years.

Expeditionary Learning

La Tierra Community School will contract with Expeditionary Learning to provide on-site and off-site professional development for the teaching staff and administration. The contract will be around $5000 the first year and grow with the size of the school. After five years of implementation E.L. contracts typically diminish to more of a maintenance contract---realizing that the staff has been trained and implementation is happening at a high degree.