A.3.1 Mastery and Promotion

Advancing to the next grade level is a measured, accurate process at La Tierra Community School. As mentioned earlier, students must meet the curricular long-term learning targets in order for promotion to be recommended. Every effort will be made through on-going assessments and interventions to respond effectively to student needs. If a student has met the standards, established by the teacher, at a "proficient" or above category, promotion will be recommended. If that has not happened, several options will be considered, one of which would be to remain in the current grade level.

With the use of "passage" portfolios, La Tierra Community School students demonstrate their depth of understanding every year. Participating in this process and meeting the established criteria at a high level, also contribute to the decision as to promotion or retention.

La Tierra Community School aims to identify goals which are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound, and in accordance with AZ LEARNS requirements. LTCS will meet and exceed all of these goals by the end of the second year of instruction.

Standards Integration Strategy:
Teaching staff will build their Learning Expeditions using a digital Learning Expedition Planner that is documented through an on-line template called Learning Expeditions Online (LEO.) Some of what is included in the digital plan is a description of the Guiding Questions, Long-Term Learning Targets, Supporting Targets, Project / Product Timelines, Assessment Plans, and specific Lesson Plans. The targets are directly linked to the **State Standards**. An administrator has access to all on-line plans and teachers can also choose to share their plans with anyone on the staff---knowing that some teachers will be working together on similar curriculum. The director will have the responsibility to make sure that teacher's curriculum is aligned with the state standards.

Included in the on-line template:

Learning Expedition Narrative
Guiding Questions
Long-Term Targets aligned with AZ State Standards
Supporting Targets aligned with AZ State Standards
Literacy Practices
Math Knowledge, Reasoning and Skills
Technology Integration
Project / Product Timelines
Assessment Plans
Experts Being Used
Service and Adventure
Lesson Plans

The La Tierra Community School Director, along with the ELS School Designer, will provide consistent, periodic feedback on the Learning Expedition plans and the coverage

of state standards. The Director will also analyze the quarter and semester academic classroom results, evaluating the extent of which the learning expedition and lesson plans were successful at meeting the established standards.

Student Monitoring Strategy:

The LTCS teachers will be using a standards based assessment approach. The teachers will establish long-term targets that will help guide instruction and frame assessment. The grading and reporting will be directly linked to the level at which students meet the long-term targets / academic expectations.

Forming supporting targets and assessing those targets in multiple ways will help guide instruction. Formative assessments will provide feedback and give direction. Summative assessments will help distinguish status at which students have mastered the target. Both formative and summative assessments provide valuable information to assist in planning.

LTCS will utilize DIBELS and N.W.E.A. MAPS testing to help measure student growth in reading, writing, and math. Students will take the DIBELS test twice and the MAPS tests three times during the school year. MAPS testing, which is aligned with Arizona State Standards (along with national standards) gives a detailed benchmark regarding student achievement and growth.

Professional Development Strategy:

To implement the Expeditionary Learning model at a high degree, a significant amount of professional development must be offered. Ideally, the training is integrated into the school calendar, consistently implemented throughout the school year. LTCS has chosen to use a standard calendar, which means that students would begin school in early August, get a week break in October, almost two weeks in December, and one week in March while ending school on or before June 1st. Within that time frame, chunks of Expeditionary Learning professional development would happen before the school year begins, intermittingly throughout the school year and right after school concludes. In addition, an Expeditionary Learning partnership implies that there would be a School Designer assigned to the school, spending several days on-site assisting teachers, modeling lessons and practices, and offering feedback to the classroom instruction.

Specific Expeditionary Learning professional development workshops related to the performance plan are:
"Skillful Reading in Primary Classrooms"
"Primary Math"
"Primary Writing"

In addition to ongoing ELS professional development, La Tierra Community School teachers will have access to Prescott College Education faculty's expertise in all areas of teaching and learning including Assessment and Elementary Methods. The Yavapai County Education Service Agency also offers DIBELS & 6-Traits writing trainings. The

goals for LTCS teachers are to become highly skilled in Expeditionary Learning methodology, to learn how to measure and report their students' progress and to align all instruction with Arizona State Standards.

Ultimately, there will be close communication between the teacher, student, parent(s), and administration in regards to student status and advancement. La Tierra Community School will hold itself to high standards while keeping families informed AND involved in their child's education.