

Issue

La Tierra Community School, Inc. (LTCS), a non-profit entity, submitted additional information for the Board’s consideration of an amendment request that was previously tabled. The original request was to add grades 4-6 to the charter for La Tierra Community School, which currently serves grades K-3.

Background

On April 9, 2012, LTCS came before the Board with an amendment request to add grades 4-6 to its current charter of K-3. The Board tabled this agenda item in order to give LTCS the opportunity to submit additional school-generated academic data with two points of data and to specifically include any student test scores related to NWEA. Board discussion and materials considered during the April meeting are included in Item I at http://asbcs.az.gov/board_information/meeting_info/2012/April.asp

In a narrative received on May 4, the charter representative states, “In school year 2010-11 LTCS began as a grades 2-5 private school working to become a charter school. By the end of that year LTCS was awarded a charter for K-3 for school year 2011-12. LTCS also added grades 4 and 5 as a private school while developing curriculum and assessments to present to the charter board in Spring 2012 with a request to amend LTCS’s charter to include grades 4-6.” La Tierra Community School, Inc. was granted a charter in 2011, and opened in August 2011 in Prescott.

To provide evidence of making progress towards the Board’s level of adequate academic performance (LAAP), on May 4, LTCS submitted additional materials for the Board’s consideration. All of the submitted information is included in [Appendix A](#):

- 2nd-3rd Spring 2012 MAP Scores
- 2nd-3rd Winter 2012 MAP Scores
- 4th-5th Spring 2012 MAP Scores
- A report titled, “Data Analysis of La Tierra Community School Assessments”
- DIBELS benchmark testing at the beginning, middle and end (grades K-3)
- Running Records for Scholastic Leveled Readers (grades K-5)

At the Board meeting on April 9, the staff report for LTCS included a table with student data from a Winter 2012 administration of the NWEA MAP assessment for 5 students in 2nd grade and 13 students in 3rd grade. Assessments were administered in Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics, though not all students took all three assessments. The student progress reports provided by LTCS included percentile rankings of each student’s scores compared to the nationally normed sample.

Because the Board specifically requested test scores related to NWEA, Board staff has provided a comparison of the Winter to Spring 2012 NWEA percentile ranks provided by the charter holder. Based on the analysis, it appears that 67% of the students may likely score “meets” on the AIMS Math test and 60% may likely score “meets” on the AIMS Reading test. The change in growth is displayed by the following graphs for each grade level in Math and Reading.

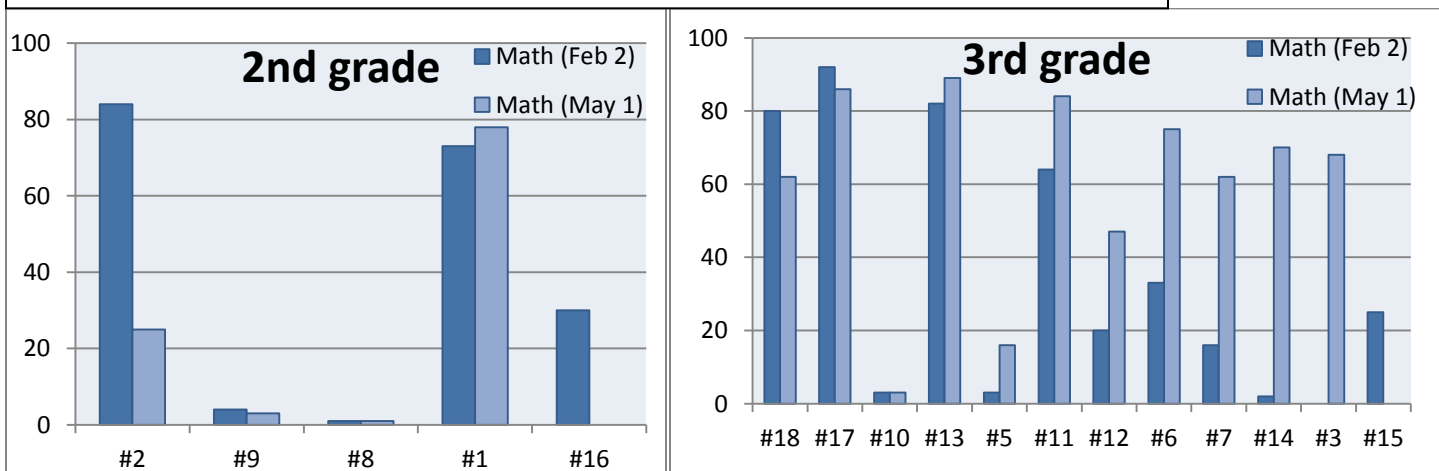
Table 1: NWEA Student Percentile Ranks - Winter to Spring 2012

Student ID	Grade	Math (Feb 2)	Math (May 1)	Reading (Feb 7)	Reading (Apr 30)
1	2	73	78	94	69
2	2	84	25	91	74
3	3	*	68	21	9
4	3	*	*	*	*

5	3	3	16	1	1
6	3	33	75	46	89
7	3	16	62	8	10
8	2	1	1	*	1
9	2	4	3	1	1
10	3	3	3	4	36
11	3	64	84	46	52
12	3	20	47	43	60
13	3	82	89	92	85
14	3	2	70	4	5
15	3	25	*	32	*
16	2	30	*	24	*
17	3	92	86	96	93
18	3	80	62	67	49
# Likely to Meet		6	10	9	9
% Likely to Meet		33%	67%	50%	60%
LAAP		61%	61%	76%	76%

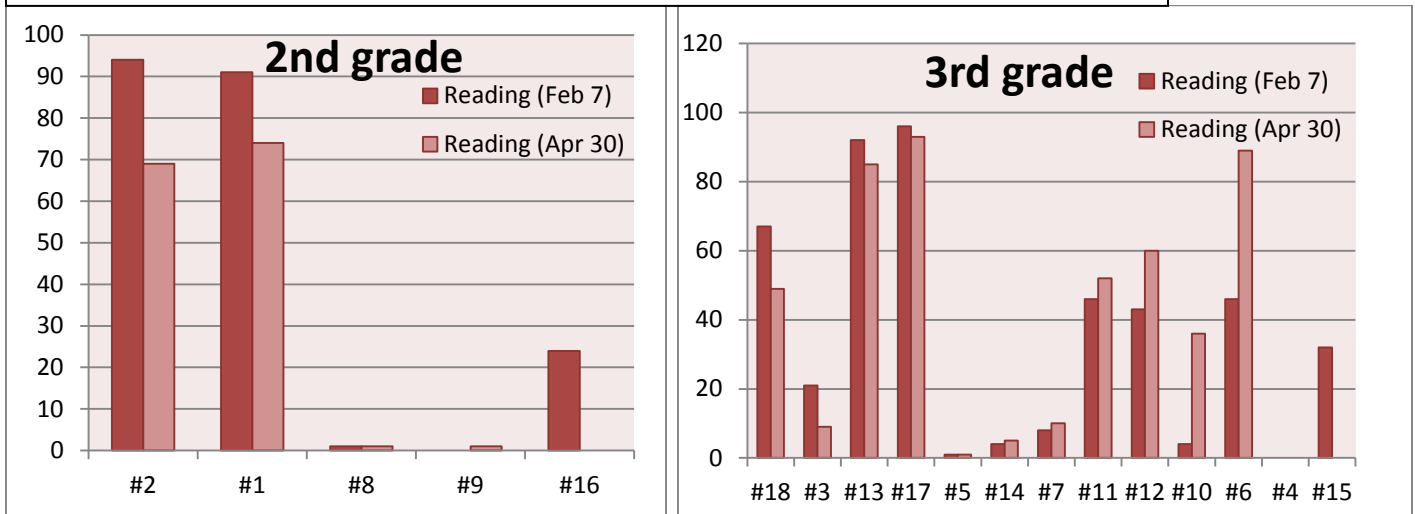
An asterisk (*) indicates that no score in that subject was provided for that student.

Graph 1: NWEA Math scores from Winter to Spring 2012



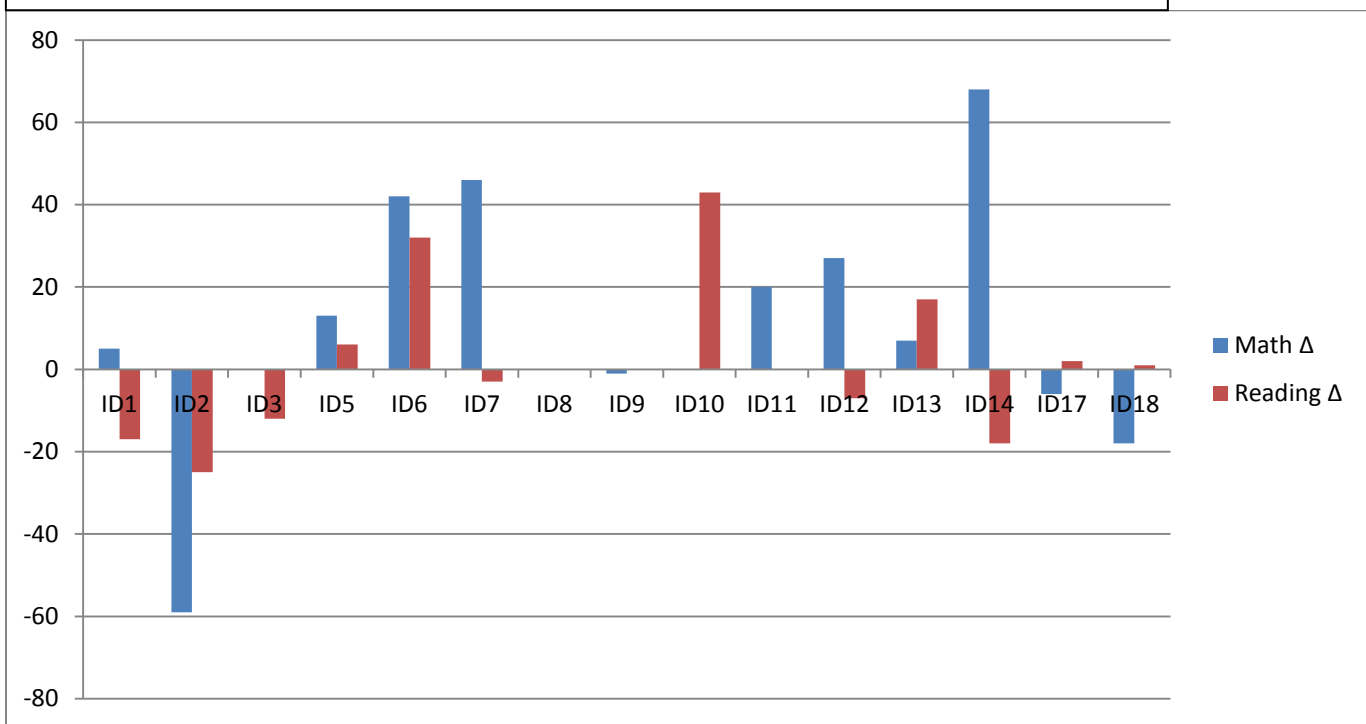
In the area of Math, only 1 student out of 4 that took both benchmark assessments has demonstrated growth in 2nd grade. In 3rd grade, 7 out of 10 students that took both benchmark assessments have demonstrated growth.

Graph 2: NWEA Reading scores from Winter to Spring 2012



In the area of Reading, no students that took both benchmark assessments have demonstrated growth in 2nd grade. In 3rd grade, 6 out of 11 students that took both benchmark assessments have demonstrated growth.

Graph 3: Change in scores from Winter to Spring 2012



The graph above depicts the change in percentile scores from Winter to Spring in Reading and Math for 13 students that took both benchmark assessments in each content. The information displayed indicates that only 3 out of 13 students had growth in both Math and Reading. 6 out of 14 students did not grow in Math and 8 out of 14 did not grow in Reading. For some students that had high growth in Reading, they also had low or no growth in Math. Some students had high growth in Math and little to no growth in Reading.

LTCS provided Board staff with analysis of data that included three different measures. Two of the measures are related to reading proficiency and level of reading. The last measure is to assess Reading, Mathematics and Language Usage. Within the report submitted by LTCS, a description of the student population is also provided which indicates the number of students LTCS has in each grade level for the 2011-12 academic year. The narrative states that 8 out of the current total number of students also attended the private school in the prior year. The narrative further states that of those 8 original students, 7 are meeting or exceeding Arizona benchmarks. It is unclear whether the referenced 7 students remain private school students or are now part of LTCS.

Board staff also reviewed the “Data Analysis of La Tierra Community School Assessments” document submitted and found the following discrepancies in the noted sections:

Section B: The narrative states, “The total student population is **46** with 9 kindergartners, **5** 1st graders, **4** 2nd graders, **11** 3rd graders, **4** 4th graders, and **10** 5th graders.” Based on the figures given, the total number of students equal 43.

Section D: The narrative states, “**K-3rd Grade Summary of DIBELS Final Designations:** The data shows these final results for the total of **23** K-3 students: **Benchmark = 15** students, **Strategic = 1** student, **Intensive = 7** students (3 w/IEPs).” Based on the DIBELS student data submitted, Board staff confirmed 16 students at Benchmark, 5 students at Strategic, and 7 students at Intensive.

Section G: The narrative states the following:

“First, by grade level the math and reading Spring percentiles from NWEA are reported and compared with the Winter scores if available so progress can be noted.

2nd Grade: Total Students = 4

Spring Student Reading Percentiles: 94 up from Winter to Spring

3rd Grade: Total Students = 11

Spring Student Reading Percentiles: 89 up from 86 in Winter”

NWEA MAP reports submitted by LTCS indicate that no 2nd grade student increased to a percentile of 94 in the Spring and only one student in 3rd grade increased to 89 in the Spring and their Winter score was 46.

Board Options:

Option 1: The Board may approve the addition of grades 4-6 to the charter of La Tierra Community School, Inc. The following language is provided for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today that the Board approve to add grades 4 to 6 to the charter of La Tierra Community School, Inc.

Option 2: The Board may deny the addition of grades 4-6 to the charter of La Tierra Community School, Inc. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, that the Board deny the requests to add grades 4-6 to the charter of La Tierra Community School, Inc. for the reasons that:

- The academic data and documentation provided by La Tierra Community School, Inc. to support the addition of grade levels to the charter does not provide sufficient evidence that the Charter Holder is providing a learning environment that will result in improved student achievement as measured through AIMS.
- (Other specific reasons the Board may have found during its consideration.)