Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment Request

Charterholder Info

Charter Holder

Name:
La Tierra Community School, Inc.

CTDS:
13-85-03-000

Mailing Address:
124 N. Virginia St.
Prescott, AZ 86301

› View detailed info

Representative

Name:
Anita Fernandez

Phone Number:

Downloads

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Current Grade Levels

Current Grade Levels Served

- Kindergarten
- 1st Grade
- 2nd Grade
- 3rd Grade
- 4th Grade
- 5th Grade
- 6th Grade

New Grade Levels

For each grade level being added, provide the following as a representation of a program of instruction aligned to the State's approved academic standards and to methods of instruction described in the charter. Please note that a separate upload must be prepared for each grade level and content area and be named as such. Additionally, applicants must restate the name of the file in the Brief Description box (e.g., First Grade Reading, HS Alegebra II).

For K-8
Language Arts & Math: A completed curriculum sample for reading, writing, and math for each grade level being added including all attachments as outlined on the required template and instructions.

For 9-12
Language Arts & Math: A completed curriculum sample for reading, writing, and math coursework for each grade level being added including all attachments as outlined on the required template and instructions. Each course must align with the State's graduation requirements.

Add Grade Levels

7th
8th

Curriculum Samples

Download File — LTCS Curriculum Sample ELA 7th Grade
Download File — LTCS Assessment Rubric ELA 7th Grade
Download File — LTCS Curriculum Sample Math 7th Grade
Download File — LTCS Curriculum Sample ELA 8th Grade
Download File — LTCS Assessment Rubric ELA 8th Grade
Download File — LTCS Curriculum Sample Math 8th Grade
Download File — Letter to the Board requesting June board meeting date

Effective Date
08/05/2013

Attachments

Board Minutes — Download File

Narrative — Download File

Timeline for implementation — Download File

Additional Information*
No documents were uploaded.

Signature

Charter Representative Signature
Anita Fernandez 05/09/2013

La Tierra Community School, Inc. Narrative for increased grade levels 2013-2014

1. Rationale for Increase in Grade Levels Served:

La Tierra Community School is the only Expeditionary Learning (EL) elementary school in Yavapai County. Currently, we operate kindergarten through sixth grades and our students who complete sixth grade at La Tierra Community School have no EL option for two years of their learning within our community. With the addition of grades seven and eight, La Tierra Community School will be able to offer the tri-city area of Prescott, Prescott Valley and Chino Valley both an EL elementary and middle school with the option to attend Northpoint Expeditionary Learning Academy (an EL school in Prescott servicing grades nine through twelve), for a seamless EL learning experience throughout their elementary, middle and high school years. There is further potential for students in our community to experience EL K-16 as EL is also supported by Prescott College who offers EL courses at a higher education level. Through the development of a complete elementary and middle school at La Tierra Community School, we will have the opportunity to share a fully embedded Common Core curriculum with the compelling and rigorous learning model provided by Expeditionary Learning. Our students will have an embedded college-readiness educational experience through both the acquisition of engaging lessons and consistent connected learning opportunities with both Northpoint Expeditionary Learning Academy and Prescott College.

The rationale for increasing the grade levels served at La Tierra Community School to support both seventh and eighth grades is supported in the mission delineated in our original charter application. La Tierra Community School has also been awarded the Arizona Charter School Incentive Program grant. We are going into our third and final year of this grant which ensures that the addition of both seventh and eighth grades for the school year 2013-2014 would have monetary support for classroom creation, supplies, technology, marketing and professional development for teachers.

2. How Additional Grades Support the Mission, Educational Philosophy and Methods of Instruction:

"EL is at the forefront of creating classroom-ready Common Core curricular materials. New York State chose EL to create Common Core-aligned English language arts and literacy curriculum… delivers Common Core professional development to representatives from districts across the state and nation. EL is also working with the authors of the Common Core State Standards to develop model secondary curriculum aligned to the standards."

La Tierra Community School's vision incorporates developing a high quality public K-8 school. The addition of grades seven and eight will complete the original vision of our charter. Aligned with our EL pedagogy, La Tierra has fully embedded curriculum modules that combine the rigorous academic content of the Common Core State Standards with EL's proven instructional practices, leading to high achievement. Through the implementation of a complete K-8 school La Tierra Community School will continue to prepare our students throughout both elementary *and* middle school with the learning capacities required to succeed in college and career ready classrooms. We will accomplish this through the continued implementation of our curriculum pacing guides and curriculum maps for ELA and Mathematics, as well as the development and implementation of Expeditions (intense cross-curricular units of study) which cover the skills and concepts embedded in the State Standards for Science and Social Studies. Our seventh and eighth grades will continue to demonstrate our schools devotion to compelling curriculum,

engaging instruction and continuous assessment. Seeing the level of academic rigor and engaging content in the middle school, will motivate the elementary aged children as they look forward to learning experiences particular to their middle school years.
Through our commitment to Expeditionary Learning, La Tierra Community School also significantly values dynamic leadership and positive school culture. Students who begin developing character traits emanating respect, responsibility, caring, courage and leadership beginning in their elementary years will develop into model citizens committed to the integrity of our school culture. The middle school will be a place where school ambassadors are selected and where dynamic leadership sets the tone for all children as they journey through elementary and middle school. Developing a learning continuum K-8, charged with the consistency of academic rigor and character development, significantly supports the vision and mission of learning at La Tierra Community School.

3. Mastery of Coursework and Grade-Level Promotion
The additional grades (seventh and eighth) would adhere to the sound practices outlined below that define La Tierra Community School's methods for demonstrating growth and mastery of coursework as students progress through the grade levels.

Curriculum Mapping for Concept and Skills Mastery
Through collaboration La Tierra's faculty works as a team to annually review and revise our vertically aligned grade level and school wide Curriculum Maps as we develop and implement units of study called Expeditions that are content driven, as well as aligned with and developed from the standards.

Grading and Reporting
La Tierra Community School has a succinct grading system that is aligned with the Common Core and Arizona State Standards for learning. Our academic achievement key is as follows:

Academic Achievement Key:	
4 = Exemplary	Work goes beyond grade-level standards.
3 = Accomplished	Work is proficient and meets grade level standards.
2 = Developing	Work is below grade-level standard, but progress is being made.
1 = Beginning	Work is far below grade-level standard.
No Mark	Not assessed this term

Student Progress Reports are standards based and written in learning target language. Students receive progress reports quarterly. La Tierra Community School progress reports monitor students' progress towards proficiency within a given quarter of study and are aligned with pedagogical practices of effective feedback.
Students' grades for a given quarter as assigned based on classroom performance indicators derived from ongoing anecdotal records, recognized habits of works, weekly and daily assignments, long-term and weekly learning target trackers, beginning and end of unit tests and collections of student generated work samples. All students are working towards Accomplished and/or Exemplary levels of learning as they progress through a given school year.

Ongoing Assessments for Learning
All learning experiences have clear learning targets; match assessment methods to targets; and consistently implement quality assessments of learning. Our learning targets are developed as

long term learning targets spanning entire units of study, as well as daily and or weekly learning targets for skills and concept mastery. We develop standards-target-assessment planners for student content curriculum, performance assessment plans and project based rubrics for quality work.

Formal Assessments of Learning

All La Tierra Community School students participate in benchmark assessments three times a year as both an academic monitor and an instructional design indicator. The benchmark assessment program that La Tierra Community School uses is Galileo. Our assessments are aligned with the Arizona Common Core State Standards. Data from these tests is used to inform instruction, determine risk and achievement levels of students, develop intervention groups, determine grade level and school wide trends, identify learning gaps through disaggregated data and can further be used as a system of instruction through developing assignments based on standards mastery. La Tierra uses Galileo assessment data to fashion SMART goals and to project how our student body will fare on the AIMS assessments. All students are benchmark assessed in reading, language arts, writing and mathematics. Currently, grades 3-6 also are assessed in science and we will continue to assess all areas through grades seven and eight. La Tierra also implements an oral reading fluency and reading comprehension benchmark assessment three times a year through the Dibels Next Program.

Portfolios

Throughout the year, teachers archive student work samples that correlate to Accomplished learning targets. All of work samples are accumulated in student individual portfolios and are organized according to English Language Arts, Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Spanish and Dramatic Arts. Portfolio Presentations happen during the last three weeks of the school year and demonstrate a years worth of learning accomplishments. The students must invite a panel of three individuals (one person must not be related to the student) to their Portfolio Presentation. The teacher attends all student Portfolio Presentations and the panel and teacher complete a Portfolio Presentation rubric while the students present their work. Portfolio Presentations are a formal process and are presented as part of students' criteria for passage to the next grade level.

SMART Goals

As a team, our faculty uses data to inform instruction and develop consistent differentiated learning opportunities for our students. We consistently review our benchmark assessment data and collaborate to determine strengths and challenges in our learning environment. Through data interpretation we work together to develop SMART goals. Our SMART goals are developed and implemented both school wide and at specific grade levels. We review our SMART goals quarterly to determine our progress towards accomplishing these goals. The goals guide our interventions and differentiation.

Interventions & Differentiation

The pedagogy of Expeditionary Learning that we implement is consistently differentiated to meet the variety of levels of learners in our classrooms. Students who do not demonstrate content mastery through evidence displayed within classroom performance, ongoing assessments for and of learning, as well as formal assessments including Galileo Benchmarks, Dibels Benchmarks and AIMS, will be delineated into intensive intervention groups for differentiated instruction focusing on skill and concept acquisition pertaining to their grade level

standards and individual needs. La Tierra facilitates the same process for students excelling beyond grade level in order to expand their learning opportunities to become deeper and richer so they can continue to grow above and beyond Exemplary. Some students falling far below grade level, who continue not to demonstrate evidence of growth beyond a Beginning level, will follow the course of intense remediation plans and will be required to attend after school tutoring, recommended to private tutors and/or recommended to attend a summer session. Students who meet specific criteria falling far below grade level may be considered for retention.

All of La Tierra Community School's practices for keeping students on track towards adequate progress towards proficient are relative to goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound, and aligned with AZ LEARNS requirements.

5. Changes in Staffing

All additional staffing necessary with the development of grade levels will comply with Highly Qualified Federal Guidelines. La Tierra Community School recruits and hires teachers who are both Highly Qualified and Teacher Certified in Arizona and/or a reciprocal state. It is also significant to the recruiting process that incoming faculty have Expeditionary Learning experience and a developed understanding of the Common Core State Standards.

La Tierra Community School
Special Meeting of the Corporate Board of Directors Minutes
Monday, November 26, 2012 at 5:00p.m
Prescott College

Present: David DenHartog, Beverly Santo, Paul Burkhardt, Fransisco Lisbona
Via phone: Anita Fernandez
Staff: Jennifer Roderick

I. Meeting called to order 5:10pm – David DenHartog
II. Approval of consent agenda – David DenHartog moved, Beverly Santo, seconded approved 5-0-0.
III. Board Business & Related Action
   1. Discuss and approve revisions to LTCS Inc. corporate board by-laws to amend page 2, article III, Number and Election to read "shall not be fewer than three" - David DenHartog moved, Fransisco Lisbona seconded, Vote 5-0-0.
   2. Discuss and approve revisions to corporate board by-laws to amend article III, section 4, page 2 to read "at least three directors then in office" and further revise any other language in LTCS Inc. corporate board bylaws that mentions a minimum number of five directors to read a minimum number of 3 directors – Paul Burkhardt moved, Fransisco Lisbona seconded, Vote 5-0-0.
   3. Discuss and approve addition of Jennifer Roderick, as a Director, to the La Tierra Community School Inc. corporate board – Paul Burkhardt moved, David DenHartog seconded, Vote 5-0-0.
   4. Discuss and approve changing La Tierra Community School Inc. Arizona Corporation Commission board directory, adding Jennifer Roderick to the officers - Beverly Santo moved, David DenHartog seconded, Vote 5-0-0.
   5. Discuss and approve revision to amend La Tierra Community School Charter B1, Section 2, Committee of the Governing School Board, page 142 to remove the language stating that "a governing board member must also sit on the corporate board" – Paul Burkhardt moved, Anita Fernandez seconded Vote 5-0-0.
   6. Discuss and approve changing La Tierra Community School Incorporated's Authorized Charter Representative from Anita Fernanadez to Jennifer Roderick – David DenHartog moved, Fransisco Lisbona seconded, Vote 5-0-0.
   7. Discuss and approve an increased Enrollment Cap for La Tierra Community School from 91 to 200 - David DenHartog moved, Anita Fernandez seconded, Vote 5-0-0.
   8. Discuss and approve a change to amend La Tierra Community School Charter to include grades 7 and 8 for the 2013-2014 school year – Paul Burkhardt moved, Beverly Santo seconded, Vote 5-0-0.

IV. Discussion Items
   1. Discussion of resignation of Anita Fernandez from the La Tierra Community School, Inc. corporate board. The discussion of Ms. Fernandez's removal from the board was tabled.
   2. Discussion of 501c3 application status in regards to timely filing of taxes for 2012.

V. Adjourn

Timeline for Implementation of grades 7 and 8 at La Tierra Community School

Looking Forward:

- It is the intention of La Tierra Community School, Inc. to fully incorporate grade 7 and grade 8 for the 2013-2014 School Year beginning in August of 2013. The full implementation of grade 7 and grade 8 would be implemented as a combined 7th and 8th grade classroom for the 2013-2014 school year.