

**Charter Schools Division (CSD) Analysis of La Tierra Montessori School of the Arts & Sciences  
Governing Board Response (August 10, 2022)**

Public Education Commission (PEC) Meeting, August 19, 2022

Isaac Dakota Casados, President of the La Tierra Montessori School of the Arts & Sciences (LTMAS) provided a response to CSD to the concerns raised by the PEC at the July 22, 2022. Listed below are the points made in the response, with CSD comments in bullets below each item.

LTMAS currently has five board members and is working to on-board another member.

- Willie Williams is listed on the letterhead of the response document as a member of the board, even after she publicly announced resignation from the board at the July 22, 2022, PEC meeting. Although the CSD received a copy an email she sent to staff about her resignation, [GC bylaws](#) require written notification to the chair or secretary. Ms. Williams intentions are unclear, however any change in membership requires a Governing Body Amendment within 45 days (or a request for 30-day extension) to ensure there are 5 members on the GC at all times.

LTMAS Hired Mr. Tompson as head administrator on July 15, and Mr. Lang provided support prior to that.

- The charter contract requires that a head administrator be appointed at all times. If Mr. Lang was serving in the capacity of interim head administrator, the board was required make that vote publicly and to submit an amendment request naming him in that capacity. The board did not. Moreover, at the June 30, 2022, governing board meeting, Maitai Garcia asked the board to whom she would report, and was told that she would report to the board, not to Mr. Lang. For the period of July 1-15, LTMAS was in violation of the terms of its contract.

New officers were elected to the LTMAS governing board.

- The board followed bylaws and correct procedures and has all officers in place.

All documentation has been submitted to the PED concerning new board members.

- During the prior contract term, documentation was not always submitted by deadlines, with transitions on the board several months (some almost a year) without notification. At this point, the school is caught up on all outstanding documentation of board member transitions, pending the transition in Ms. Williams' position. The CSD expects to receive all paperwork associated with any board transition within 45 days of the transition, unless a request for a 30-day extension is submitted, in which case the school has a total of 75 days to fill a spot.

The LTMAS board finance committee has met with the school's business manager to address concerns, the board will hold a special meeting on August 17, 2022, to discuss the budget.

- CSD will review the minutes of the August 17 meeting when they are posted. The fact remains, however, that the school did not act in accordance with expectations for the development of the FY23 budget. CSD expects the school to manage the FY24 budget development process in accordance with the Public School Finance Act, in particular 22-8-10-11 NMSA, 1978 and the requirements for parental involvement in the process.

The LTMAS board has complied with the Open Meetings Act (OMA), but has planned additional training regarding OMA compliance.

- CSD will continue to review minutes of the LTMAS as they are posted

DRAFT LANGUAGE FOR EXPECTED OUTCOMES

<p><b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</b> Based on concerns discussed at PEC’s July 2022 meeting</p>	<p><b>First deadline and documentation</b> required. Date of first update to PEC</p>	<p><b>Second deadline, if needed</b> and documentation required. Date of second update to PEC</p>
<p>The school will continue to implement the Montessori program consistent with its mission.</p>	<p>The CSD will conduct a school site visit in the fall, to monitor implementation. Based on evidence at the school, a status report will be provided to PEC at the December 16th meeting.</p>	
<p>The FY23 OMA resolution will be voted on by the board and posted to the school’s website.</p>	<p>Status update provided to CSD by November 1, 2022, a report to PEC will be provided at the December 16th meeting.</p>	
<p>The school will obtain training on the charter school fiscal policies and roles of the Governing Board, Finance subcommittee and staff.</p>	<p>By November 1, all board members will have completed the Fiscal training provided by CSD, status update will be provided to PEC at the December 16th meeting.</p>	
<p>The board will create a budget development plan to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In October, the enrollment projection, submitted to PED.</li> <li>• In the spring, a timeline of their activities leading to the budget submission.</li> <li>• An agenda (emailed to CSD) for the meeting in which public input for the budget is sought.</li> </ul>	<p>Status update will be provided to CSD by November 1, 2022, a report to PEC will be provided at the December 16th meeting.</p>	<p>Status update will be provided to CSD by May 1 and reported to PEC at the May, 2023 meeting.</p>
<p>The Governing Board will ensure that all paperwork is submitted to PEC, through CSD, for all Governing Board member transitions, in accordance with PEC policy.</p>	<p>Status update reported to PEC at the December 16th meeting.</p>	<p>PEC update at the May, 2023 meeting.</p>