I. Philosophy

Westlake Charter School and Westlake Charter Middle School (“WCS”) are committed to the success of each student. WCS has adopted and follows a Student Success Team Policy (“SST”) to establish and implement student achievement and intervention strategies in a timely manner. Despite the implementation of such strategies it may be necessary to retain a student in the prior grade level for the following school year. In implementing this policy the Board of Directors is guided by the following principles:

1) Retention criteria will be objectively based on a student’s inability to meet the grade level WCS standards of expected student achievement in reading, language arts, and mathematics for students in grades three through five, and in reading and language arts in grades kindergarten through second as determined by the WCS staff as articulated in its California standards-based report card
2) For English Learners, retention cannot be based on the student’s lack of English fluency as related to meeting English standards.

II. Required Steps Proceeding Retention Decision

Retention Procedure

Before retaining a student, the Principal or designee shall determine that:

1) The student has not made progress towards meeting Westlake Charter School grade level standards of expected student achievement.
2) An SST meeting has been held.
3) Research based interventions suggested at the SST meeting have been implemented and documented in an ongoing and consistent manner
4) Student achievement is “at risk” as defined by Westlake Charter School ”Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention” for 1 or more trimesters (attached as Exhibit A).
5) A Retention Team consisting of the Principal, teacher(s), support staff and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student considered for retention has met, reviewed interventions and progress and has endeavored to reach a conclusion as to which grade level placement is in the best interest of the student. If the team does not agree upon a recommendation, the Principal will make the determination based upon all information discussed at the meeting.
6) Appropriate instruction and interventions are targeted for the following year so the student will be supported in meeting the standards the following year in the retained grade.
7) The student’s parent/guardian has been continually informed and invited to be involved. When a final decision is made to retain, the parent/guardian is notified and given the reason for retention in writing along with a copy of this policy.

III. Identification of “At Risk” Students

A student will be identified as “at risk” of retention based on end of year Westlake Charter School Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention, which are based on Common Core State Standards and described in Exhibit A.

Parent notification and involvement

1) Parents will be notified by the teacher of areas of academic concerns in parent teacher conferences or in writing on progress reports or trimester report card.
2) Parents will be invited to the SST meeting to discuss concerns and proposed interventions. Parents will receive a copy of the SST meeting notes which will serve as notice of proposed interventions and student achievement strategies.
3) Parents will receive notice of progress or lack of progress in target areas through mid-trimester progress reports and trimester report cards.
4) A recommendation for retention is made by the teacher. Once made, parents will be invited to conference with teacher, Principal, and other staff members as deemed necessary (“Retention Team”). A recommended interval of 6 weeks of academic should occur before the initial SST and the recommendation for retention.
5) Retention Team Conference invitation will be via telephone by teacher to the number Parent/Guardian provided School, followed up by a written confirmation sent via US Mail to the address Parent/Guardian provided to the School. Teacher will log all attempts to contact parent/guardian.
6) If after 2 documented attempts to schedule a conference by phone if parent(s)/guardian(s) does not respond or attend the conference, the conference will be held without their presence.
7) Notes of the meeting and the decision of the team present will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) within 48 hours of meeting at the address provided by Parent/Guardian to the School via registered mail unless otherwise agreed in writing.
8) Students will be offered placement for the following year in the grade level determined as appropriate by the Retention Team. If there is disagreement among the retention team, the Principal will make the determination.
9) Retention Team Conference

The Retention Team Conference will include:

1) Review of previous SST notes;
2) Discussion of previous/current/ongoing interventions, review of intervention logs;
3) Review of current work and available assessments; and
4) Development of a plan for support for the following academic year.
IV. Right to Appeal

If the parent(s) disagree with the decision, they have the right to appeal to the Westlake Charter School Executive Director.

1) Parents choosing to appeal a decision to retain a student shall submit a completed Retention Appeal Request Form (attached as Appendix B) to the Principal specifying the reasons why the decision should be overturned. This must occur no later than ten working days following the determination of retention.

2) The Executive Director shall review the appeal as well as the student’s academic performance records on which the Retention Team relied. The Principal shall be provided opportunity to state orally and/or in writing the criteria on which the Retention Team or Principal decision was based. The parent(s) will be given an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing their reason for appeal. The Appeal will be held in a confidential setting. The Executive Director will prepare a written decision which summarizes findings and conclusions.

3) The Executive Director shall notify the parent(s) and Principal of the Appeal Committee’s decision in writing within 7 business days of the Appeal.

4) The Executive Director’s decision is final.

V. Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental instructional programs will be available for students recommended for retention, retained, or identified as at-risk of retention. The Principal or designee may require recommended students to participate in supplemental instructional programs.

Such programs may be offered by Westlake Charter School during the summer, after school, on Saturdays and/or during intersession.

These services shall be provided to students in the following priority order:

1) Students recommended for retention
2) Students identified as being “at risk“ of retention
3) Students who have been identified as having a deficiency in mathematics, reading or written expression based on STAR(Standardized Testing and Reporting) test –students who test Basic, Below Basic or Far Below Basic and/or the Westlake Charter School specific grade level criteria for retention as approved by the Board.

Parents have the option of excluding their students from supplementary instructional programs.
Appendix A
Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention

Westlake Charter School Retention Criteria

Westlake Charter School expects students to progress through each grade level within one school year. To accomplish this, instruction is differentiated to accommodate the various needs of students. Differentiation is a key component of our program. We provide support and intervention when a student is struggling to meet the benchmarks at a particular grade level. When a student is identified as performing below the minimum standard for promotion, the SST (Student Study Team), the parents, and the teacher(s) will determine the best placement for the student. A student will be identified as “at risk” for retention when the following criteria have been met.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade and Subject</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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| Kindergarten      | • Identification of less than 45 out of 52 letter names  
|                   | • Identification of less than 20 out of 26 Letter Sounds  
|                   | • Score of Far Below Basic or Below Basic in Language Arts and Mathematics on the NWEA Assessments |
| 1st-2nd Grade     | • Not reading at grade level benchmark  
|                   | • Score of Far Below Basic or Below Basic in Language Arts and Mathematics on the NWEA Assessments  
|                   | • Evaluation of student classroom work is at Far Below Basic Level |
| 3rd-5th Grade     | • Not reading at grade level benchmark  
|                   | • Score of Far Below Basic or Below Basic in Language Arts and Mathematics on the NWEA Assessments  
|                   | • Score of Far Below Basic or Below Basic in Language Arts on the CST given in May of the prior year.  
|                   | • Evaluation of student classroom work is at Far Below Basic |
| 6th-8th Grade     | • Score of Far Below Basic or Below Basic in Language Arts and Mathematics on the NWEA Assessments  
|                   | • Score of Far Below Basic or Below Basic in Language Arts on the CST given in May of the prior year.  
|                   | • Failing grades in core academic classes during the first or second trimester of the school year. |

Before retaining, a student should also be considered in terms of the following criteria:

a) **Age**- A student whose birth date falls in the last half of the calendar year (July through December) and are in the younger half of the class would more likely benefit from repeating a grade.

b) **Academic Performance**- The student should be performing significantly below peers at his/her grade level (see criteria above).

c) **Intervention Support**- The student should have received strategic intervention support throughout the year to assist in gaining necessary skills.

d) **Social Development**- The social/emotional maturity of the student should be considered in order to determine if placement in another grade level would significantly affect the social well being of the student.

e) **Student Attendance**- The number of absences should be considered in order to determine whether the loss of instructional time has prevented the student from meeting grade level standards.

Approved/Ratified: August 12, 2008
Amended: September 18, 2013