

WESTLAKE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL NOW OPEN. SEE PAGE 3



Explore the difference!

The small school
with a **big school** feel
Westlake Charter School





WESTLAKE'S EDUCATIONAL PILLARS

The vision of Westlake Charter School is not to simply teach, but to connect Explorers to the world. Every day, students gain the tools to learn, grow and become people who make positive impacts on the world around them as "Global Citizens." Here's how:



OUR PLACE IN A GLOBAL WORLD

Westlake Charter School focuses on Our Place in a Global World by providing our students with the skills necessary to embrace inclusion, diversity, equity and the cultural competencies to collaborate as global citizens.



ENRICHED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Westlake Charter School focuses on Enriched Educational Opportunities by recognizing that all students benefit from experiences that go beyond the core subject areas and the four walls of a classroom.



PERSONALIZATION

Westlake Charter School focuses on Personalization by providing a rigorous and challenging fully inclusive program for all students based on their individual academic and social-emotional needs.



TEACHERS AS DESIGNERS

Westlake Charter School focuses on Teachers as Designers by engaging in shared leadership practices that empower staff with the responsibility of collaboratively developing curriculum, instruction, and assessments that ensure the development of academic and social-emotional readiness of our Explorers.



Small school with a big mission

Westlake Charter School welcomes first high school class

Westlake Charter School, in the Natomas region of Sacramento, is a small school with a big mission. The tuition-free public school opened its doors in 2005 and immediately became a popular alternative for students—and their parents.

Westlake Charter School (WCS) became popular by offering specialty programs including Art, Spanish, and PE embedded into its K-8 curriculum. Over the years, families were drawn to the school because WCS offered the smallest class sizes in the region, 1:1 technology, and an opportunity for students to continue learning with the school through the eighth grade. With the addition of Westlake Charter High School, which welcomed its first freshman class in the Fall of 2021, students can now continue with Westlake until they head off for college!

"We are growing our high school one year at a time until we graduate our first senior class in the spring of 2025," says Christina Eick, Director of Student Support Services and a founding teacher of Westlake.

"The impact of expanding through the 12th grade will allow Westlake to fulfill our mission by creating inspiring adults to lead as global citizens," says Eick. In grades 9-12, students will

have access to UC Approved Embedded Honors Courses, Dual Enrollment through American River College, CIF Competitive Athletics, daily flexible time for enrichment and personalized support, as well as a host of engaging elective courses, clubs, and campus life opportunities. "Already the response from parents has been overwhelmingly positive," says Eick.

"Watching our high school Explorers succeed will have a great influence on our younger students," says fourth-grade teacher Heather Chastain, a founding Westlake parent.

"Now with a High School program, we can serve students until they go off to college—and we want to be a part of that," says Sabrina Jackson, Coordinator, Special Education.

In fact, Jackson says it's the close-knit personal relationships with the kids and their families that makes Westlake a special place for students and staff. It's with this in mind that Westlake is committed to building a high school where every student feels connected and welcome. "We are a small community," she says. "We're a family."

**"It's a small
community. We're
a family."**

SABRINA JACKSON
Coordinator, Special
Education





SPORTS, CLUBS & MORE

Learning doesn't happen just in the classroom.

In addition to its thematic and project-based learning model, Westlake offers students extracurricular activities, clubs, events and sports that develop the whole student. Keeping students engaged and offering powerful social-emotional development opportunities is a big part of the plan at Westlake Charter School.

"As good as our academic program is, without these extra-curricular programs, we are not fully serving our students," says John Eick, Westlake Charter School Executive Director. "Life skills like perseverance, overcoming adversity, and problem solving as a team are learned both inside and outside the classroom."

High School Builds on Westlake Vision

First freshman class welcomed in Fall 2021

High school has always been part of Westlake Charter School's big picture. The first ninth grade class is the Explorer graduating class of 2025. This founding class has played a key role in the launch of the high school and will continue to shape the culture of this new high school for years to come.

"We'll have 500 students by senior year," says John Eick, Westlake Charter School Executive Director and an educator in the Natomas Community for over two decades. "We have just over 100 eighth graders each year, so there will always be openings in ninth grade."

That's a big deal; Westlake typically has more than 1,000 students on its waitlist. "People want to come to Westlake," Eick says. "The school has a great reputation. Our teachers are fantastic, and our community is spectacular."

What's really exciting to Eick is that, with the addition of Westlake Charter High School, Westlake will fulfill its mission by guiding students throughout their education from kindergarten through 12th grade.

"Our Explorers are really special students," Eick says. "Starting in kindergarten, our approach to education develops students who demonstrate ownership and engagement in their own learning. We're preparing them for college since day one of kindergarten. Which is how we realized: We need to build a high school!"

Westlake's K-8 program is truly innovative and its High

School will extend this approach to education through the 12th grade. For example, students will be required to take at least one college-level course while still in high school and have the option to take many more — tuition free.

"Once our kids leave high school, they're not only college-ready; they'll be college-proven," Eick says. "We not only have the college courses, but have also built the necessary supports into the school day for each student to be successful. Ensuring this support demonstrates our commitment to personalization; what we're doing is pretty unique."

Emily Battin, the founding principal of Westlake Charter High School, has served as principal at Westlake Charter since 2013. Since taking on this new role, Battin worked with the community to develop the high school program, culture and facilities.

The high school has a separate campus, but is built upon the same educational philosophy used across the K-8 program, developing students to lead as global citizens.

"It's so exciting! I feel so fortunate to serve our community. Opening the high school is the final realization of our mission statement: to create inspiring adults with

academic and social-emotional readiness," Battin says. "We used to promote 8th graders to a variety of local high schools; however, now when they graduate from our high school, they'll leave as inspiring adults ready to lead as global citizens."

"Once our kids leave high school, they're not only college-ready; they'll be college-proven."

JOHN EICK
Executive Director,
Westlake Charter
School



AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS (KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12TH GRADE)

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| • <i>Cooking</i> | • <i>Art</i> |
| • <i>Gardening</i> | • <i>Black Student Union</i> |
| • <i>Sewing</i> | • <i>Video Gaming</i> |
| • <i>Spanish</i> | • <i>And more!</i> |
| • <i>Leadership</i> | |

ANNUAL EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • <i>School Play</i> | • <i>Olympic Triathlon</i> |
| • <i>Talent Show</i> | • <i>International Festival</i> |
| • <i>Chili Cook Off</i> | |
| • <i>Fall Festival</i> | |

MIDDLE SCHOOL INTRAMURAL SPORTS

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| • <i>Flag football</i> | • <i>Dodgeball</i> |
| • <i>Volleyball</i> | • <i>Cross-Country</i> |
| • <i>Basketball</i> | • <i>Futsal</i> |

HIGH SCHOOL CIF LEAGUE SPORTS

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| • <i>Cross Country</i> | • <i>Basketball</i> |
| • <i>Volleyball</i> | • <i>Track and Field</i> |
| • <i>Soccer</i> | • <i>Esports</i> |



A WHOLE-STUDENT APPROACH TO LEARNING

At many schools, students' social-emotional skills are secondary to academic achievement.

Westlake takes a different approach: Focusing on the whole-child by balancing the academic and social emotional readiness of every student.

"Our students do better academically when we attend to the social-emotional needs of each student as an individual," says Jen Callau, the Westlake Charter K-8 Principal.

This whole-child approach not only helps students academically, it teaches the soft skills students need to be successful in life, like how to set and achieve goals, persevere through adversity, and meet challenges as a team.



Joyful Learning

Parents find Westlake
a community
where their children thrive

There are many things parents look for in a school; academic reputation, extracurricular activities and passionate teachers are just some factors that help parents decide what program best fits their children. At Westlake Charter School, families can find a balance of academic and social-emotional support, as well as a welcoming community that enables students to thrive.

Tanesa Calhoun was initially attracted to Westlake because of its academic reputation but also found its community a great fit for her two daughters, Yniah and Jayde.

"I love this school, it's amazing. Everyone is like family; it's really close knit and they don't let anyone fall between the cracks," she says. "My youngest loves how everyone knows her name, she feels so special. She said, 'Mom, the principal said my name! She knows me and we talk!' I think that they're excited to know that there is a group of leaders who have their back and want them to succeed. And if they ever fall behind, there's always someone there to help."

As a Westlake parent, Calhoun found that support is not only available for students, it's available for parents as



The Calhoun family (left) and the Corells (above) appreciate Westlake Charter School's approach to learning. *PHOTOS COURTESY OF WESTLAKE CHARTER SCHOOL FAMILIES*

well. "In all relationships, communication is key. Without communication, things don't work well," she says. "At Westlake, they communicate about everything. I can call someone right now and get an answer. They're so open and I have emails and phone numbers and they've said, 'If you need anything, I am here.' I think that's so important."

"They get a really good education there and that is exactly what we were looking for," says Josh Corell, whose daughter Stella and son Wyatt both attend Westlake. "Not only are they getting the educational growth we all look for, they also get this social and emotional growth I took for granted until they started going to Westlake. The teachers focus on the child not only as a student, but the child as a whole."

Corell says that the sense of support and community among students, teachers and staff at Westlake enriches his children's learning experiences.

"Anybody who works for Westlake has a joy for education that's shared with the kids. You can see that in the kids' daily learning environment; they love going to Westlake," he says.

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have their back and want
them to succeed."**

TANESA CALHOUN
Westlake Charter
School parent





A welcoming community, great teachers and plenty of opportunity to grow

Students share what it's like to be an Explorer

Westlake Charter School's approach to education invests not only in students' academic readiness, but in their social-emotional readiness as well. Students share what they enjoy most about attending Westlake and how teachers and staff help to create experiences that make this a special place to learn.

Eighth grader Kadence Gruenholz, who has been a Westlake student since kindergarten, says the best thing about Westlake Charter School is its community.

"Students and the teachers, they're all very welcoming, ... and they care if you're doing well or not," she says. "It's a safe space where you can learn successfully and there's a great community here. If you go, you'll make a friend on the first day."

Student council president Titus Thomas says he really appreciates the personal connections teachers develop with their students, something he says helps students learn.

"We have things like Flex Blocks here where if you need re-engagement, or to retake something, or just need to learn more about the subject you are in, you can just do that and you won't be losing time on something else. It's extremely helpful...everything here just feels more personal."

For ninth grader Adina Gonzalez, who transferred into Westlake in seventh grade, the extracurricular clubs and activities offered at Westlake — such as art, sign language, dance and sports — have been a great opportunity to socialize and grow as a student.

"In Middle School, we had a great elective program and you switch every few weeks. I did Leadership twice last year and I had a blast. ... It's fun and you get to be with friends and put up posters, set up rallies, or set up for dances," she says. "I feel like it could — and I'm thinking far ahead — give guidance on what career you want to pursue later on."

Ninth grader Divroop Kaur, who started at Westlake in the sixth grade, says that she felt ready to start high school because of the quality education Westlake provides as well as the efforts of teachers and administrators to show students what comes after middle school.

"They really explained what they were doing to make us ready for high school," she says. The WCS staff even included the voice of students in preparing for the launch of the new high school. "Through the High School Spirit Council, they asked students what they wanted the mascot to be, and what clubs we wanted. They're listening to students' opinions."

It is clear that the students appreciate what WCS has to offer including a welcoming environment, support for every student, the creative clubs and electives, as well as the value placed on high rigor and academic preparation for high school. Each of these student experiences comes to life because of the incredibly dedicated teachers and staff.

**"It's a safe space
where you can learn
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a great community here."**

KADENCE GRUENHOLZ
Westlake Charter School
student





Collaboration is key to success

Teachers, students and parents work together to build support

Avital part of Westlake Charter School's model is collaboration. Teachers, students and parents work together toward common goals.

Teachers collaborate to best serve students, the students collaborate as a critical part of their learning experience at WCS, and parents are central to every function of the school. "We believe that the smartest person in the room, is the room," says Director of Student Support Services, Christina Eick, when explaining why collaboration is so important to the school.

Teachers at WCS have a common planning time built into the school day when grade level teams and subject area teachers get together to plan thematic units of study, lessons, and to discuss the best ways to ensure all students are engaged.

"We are committed to personalization for every student, and that takes a lot of planning. When we plan together, we can share our resources and our ideas," says Kimberly Erickson, Sixth Grade Humanities Teacher.

"Our students do better when our teaching teams collaborate. The staff works together as a team to make sure every student gets what they need," says Student Support Services Instructional Aide, Pam Dhesi.

Not only do teachers and staff collaborate, but every lesson and unit plan includes a focus on students collaborating with their peers. WCS invests in the four C's of 21st Century learning: Communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

"Our school doesn't focus on rote memorization or work for work's sake. We balance academic and social-emotional readiness by helping our students develop the skills they will need in college and career. We think learning to collaborate is crucial to our students' future," says Eighth Grade Humanities teacher, Roland Aichele.

Teachers and students are committed to collaboration, and, with thousands of parent volunteer hours logged each year, the parents truly demonstrate that they are just as committed! "This place is a parent's dream; they care about the kids and they really want parents involved in everything,"

Amber Hustead, president of the volunteer parent association.

WCS has parents on their Board of Directors, parents who collaborate in the classroom, and a parent committee with its own non-profit status and independent board. WAVE, which stands for Westlake Association of Volunteer Explorers, is a parent group that requires no fees or dues to pay and every parent with a student at the school is automatically a member. "Our WAVE parent team is amazing, they organize festivals, volunteerism, and special events that really help to build our community," says

K-8 principal, Jenifer Callau.

The WCS mission reads, "We demonstrate what is possible when school and community collaborate," and it seems that this commitment to collaboration seeps into every area of the school, making Westlake a special place for students, teachers, and parents.

"This place is a parent's dream; they care about the kids and they really want parents involved in everything."

AMBER HUSTEAD
President, Westlake
Charter School
volunteer parent
association



FULL INCLUSION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

One of the innovative practices at Westlake Charter School is its full-inclusion program. Westlake places all students, including those served by special education, into balanced classrooms and no student is ever separated from their peers due to ability level.

"The biggest benefit is their being with their same-grade-level peers, and being able to access that grade-level's curriculum just as other students are experiencing it," says Fatima Murguia, an Education Specialist who focuses on assisting students who require specialized supports.

Teachers benefit from the model, too. "Not all students learn the same, so having diverse needs in the classroom helps the teacher adjust the curriculum and make it personalized," Murguia says. "Finding creative ways to support all students and help them grow makes a good teacher a better teacher."

Having all the students be able to collaborate, learn together, experience diversity and follow unique classroom assignments cultivates a unique way of learning, Murguia says. "They experience a multitude of perspectives they take with them into the world."

Find out all you need to know to make Westlake your school of choice

Westlake Charter High School opened its doors to freshmen and their families in the Fall of 2021. Although the high school program is new, it is built on over a decade of experience, a culture of collaboration, and Westlake Charter School's long-standing educational philosophy. In addition to these foundational beliefs, the High School offers programs uniquely crafted for students in grades 9-12.

"Westlake Charter School focuses on both academic and social-emotional readiness. In the high school, we will have personalized academics and an amazing school culture!" says WCHS founding principal, Emily Battin.

The academic program at WCHS has been designed in alignment with the University of California and California State University systems to ensure our graduates meet and exceed college admissions criteria. All WCHS core academic courses meet the University of California a-g requirements for freshman admission.

"WCHS is taking college preparation one step further," says Battin.

All WCHS students will graduate college-proven; this means that all students will take and pass one developmentally appropriate college course in preparation for graduation. The

school has a partnership with American River College to offer college courses to WCHS students at no cost to the student.

"Students will be able to take college classes in areas of their interest, which count toward both high school graduation and count as college credit! These opportunities are offered to all students, and every course through our dual enrollment agreement is tuition free," says Parwana Daud, High School Counselor.

In addition to college courses, all students at WCHS have the opportunity to take UC-approved honors courses.

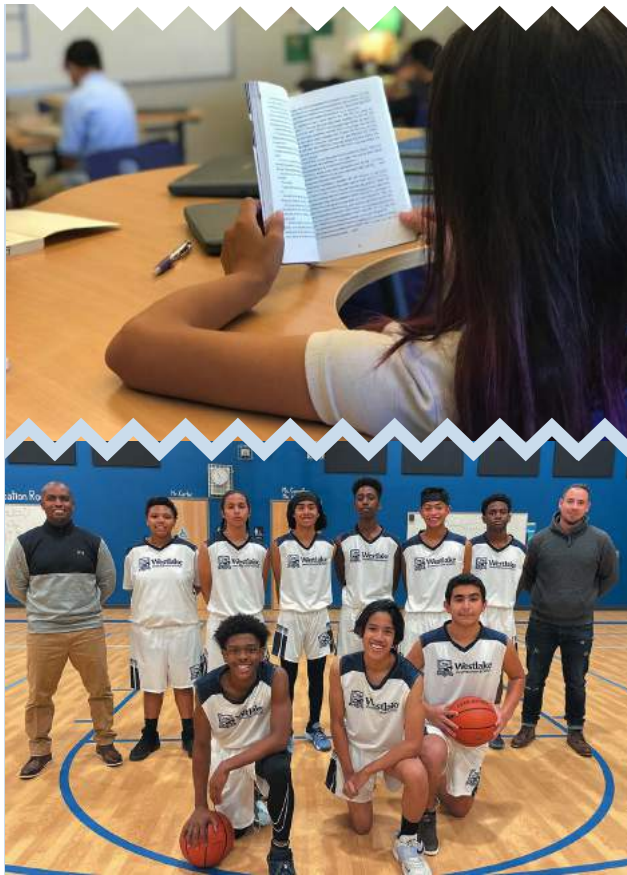
"These courses are designed to engage students looking for the most challenging and rigorous coursework, offering increased GPA opportunities, and look great on a college application," says Leslie Sargent, Director of High School Development.

To personalize for each student, WCHS has built flexible blocks of time into every school day. "These Flex Blocks are used by all students. Some students use the time to get support, others may attend honors seminars, and some may use the time to attend office hours hosted by college professors. The great part is, with this flexibility WCHS can offer every student exactly what they need every day," says Principal Battin.

"WCHS is taking college preparation one step further."

EMILY BATTIN
Principal, Westlake
Charter High School





Calling All Explorers!

Now that you know about the unique education Westlake Charter School provides in our community, you understand why the parents, teachers and students that make up the Westlake Family are so excited to be working together.

WESTLAKE'S CORE VALUES

Each month, students focus on one of our 10 CORE VALUES:

- Respect
- Excellence
- Responsibility
- Reflective
- Global Perspective
- Stewardship
- Perseverance
- Inquisitive
- Joyful Learning
- Gratitude



Students are encouraged to demonstrate each Core Value academically, personally, within the community and as digital citizens, and each student is recognized when they do. Westlake students put these Core Values into practice every day!



High School Campus:
4400 East Commerce Way
Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 567-5780

K-8 Campus address:
2680 Mabry Drive
Sacramento, CA 95835
(916) 567-5670

www.westlakecharter.com

HOW TO BECOME AN EXPLORER—

BEGIN THE APPLICATION PROCESS NOW!

Applications are accepted from **December through January** each year and waitlist applications are accepted year-round. Westlake Charter School offers:

- Free, public school, K-12
- Academic and social-emotional focus
- Student-led clubs
- Art and Spanish for all students
- 1:1 classroom technology
- Small class sizes

Get started with just one click! Find out more about enrollment at joinwestlake.com