



Westlake

CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

Home of the Explorers

2024-2025 Family Handbook

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HANDBOOK DISCLAIMER

Westlake Charter School will comply with all applicable laws to the extent required by such law. To assist families in understanding their rights, Westlake Charter School has included summaries of some current legislation in this handbook. Of course, as those rights change due to revisions in applicable law, Westlake Charter School will comply with the revisions in applicable law. This handbook will be deemed to be revised to be consistent with appropriate legal revisions whenever such legal revisions become effective even though the handbook language has not been changed. This handbook does not create rights beyond those required by applicable law.

This handbook refers to many Westlake Charter School board policies. To view the board policies in their entirety, please refer to the Westlake Charter School website at www.westlakecharter.com/board_docs.policies.php.

Westlake Charter School Mission Statement:

We demonstrate what is possible when school and community collaborate to create inspiring adults with the academic and social-emotional readiness to lead as Global Citizens.

Home of the Explorers

At Westlake Charter School, we place great value on the development of our school community. Our school's mascot is the Explorer, which helps to define the core purpose of our school. We expect our Explorer students, staff, and families to explore what is possible. Throughout this handbook, you will often see the word Explorer used interchangeably with the word student or used to identify members of our community, such as Explorer Staff, Explorer Families, etc.



SCHOOL DESIGN-PILLARS

Westlake Charter School identifies four pillars of a strong school community. These values play an important part in building and supporting the school's culture. By focusing our school on these principles, our school creates a learning community in which students can develop the skills necessary for future success in any endeavor.

1. Our Place in a Global World

Westlake Charter School focuses on *Our Place in a Global World* by providing our students, whom we often refer to as Explorers, with the skills necessary to embrace cultural diversity. We use the strength of our families and their cultures to enrich the learning that happens in class. Students are involved in a spirit of mutual respect both on- and off-campus. Community members are actively involved in discussing and understanding current events and global topics. Students at Westlake Charter School are citizens of the world and are empowered to embrace the mindset that they can make a difference in the world.

2. Enriched Educational Opportunities

Westlake Charter School focuses on *Enriched Educational Opportunities* by recognizing that all Explorers benefit from experiences that go beyond the core subject areas. We provide art, physical education, and Spanish instruction through specialized teachers. Classroom teachers also implement lessons that integrate character traits and social development. We offer quality after-school enrichment programs and provide activities that are hands-on, technology-infused, and Explorer-centered. These enhanced educational opportunities cultivate globally-minded, reflective Explorers.

3. Personalization

Westlake Charter School focuses on *Personalization* by providing a rigorous and challenging program for all Explorers based on their individual academic and social needs. Our teachers have a vested interest in the development of each Explorer and strive to incorporate a wide array of teaching techniques to support individual learning. Explorer assessment data is used to guide instruction. Teachers include small and collaborative grouping to modify activities for individual Explorers. We utilize the skills and talents of our parent volunteers to support differentiation within our classrooms. Our program is Explorer-centered, thematic, and project-based.

4. Teachers as Designers


Westlake Charter School focuses on *Teachers as Designers* by empowering shared leadership among its staff in order to build a culture of high expectations. Within a collaborative work environment, teachers strive to ensure the success of each Explorer. Teachers are expected to be reflective practitioners and work in Professional Learning Communities to develop an innovative, authentic, and rigorous learning environment. Through thoughtful instructional design, teachers create curriculum and learning opportunities that support Common Core Standards while incorporating a thematic and project-based approach.

**Core Values:**

At Westlake Charter School, we use our Core Values to build both the academic and social-emotional readiness called for in our mission statement. Each month our students and staff focus on a Core Value of the Month. During this time, instruction is designed to help students realize each Core Value: Academically, Personally, Within our Community, and as a Digital Citizen. After initial instruction of each core value, our staff spends time celebrating our students for their work toward bringing these values to life within our community.



Core Values

 Westlake <small>CHARTER SCHOOL</small>	Demonstrated through: Positive Decision Making	Demonstrated through: Self Awareness	Demonstrated through: Social Awareness	Demonstrated through: Digital Citizenship
Respect	Recognizing when it's time to listen and time to collaborate.	Believing in your ability to be successful.	Considering others by making safe choices.	Showing positive online-communication.
Excellence	Trying your best to solve problems.	Setting high expectations for yourself when working with others.	Demonstrating leadership by valuing the perspectives of others.	Using devices correctly.
Responsibility	Finding value in completing your work to the best of your ability.	Being mindful of your feelings and actions.	Communicating effectively with others.	Keeping personal information secure.
Gratitude	Reflecting on your participation during class.	Setting time aside to appreciate those who help you.	Acknowledging the gifts within your community.	Using technology to show gratitude towards others.
Inquiry	Identifying opportunities to solve problems.	Seeking areas for self improvement.	Collaborating with others to extend your learning.	Identifying high quality sites.
Joyful Learning	Evaluating the importance of your growth mindset.	Motivating yourself to explore new things.	Showing pride for our school.	Creating a positive online identity.
Global Perspective	Thinking about ways to include everyone.	Being proud to tell the story of your culture.	Appreciating the diversity of your neighborhood.	Collaborating with others worldwide in a safe manner.
Stewardship	Identifying ways to improve our school.	Making healthy choices for your body and mind.	Solving problems by lending a helping hand.	Knowing how to search and give credit in the proper ways.
Perseverance	Assessing whether you have given your personal best.	Trying your best even when things are difficult.	Being a flexible thinker when faced with challenges.	Staying true to yourself online.
Reflection	Reviewing your past challenges and successes.	Recognizing your strengths.	Understanding the thoughts and feelings of others.	Understanding your growth this past year as a digital citizen.



Communication

Westlake Charter School demonstrates the Core Value of Respect through our clear and consistent communication. We know that each family wants to be connected to the school community, and our communications are designed to make that easy.

Westlake Weekly

The Westlake Weekly is a school communication which is posted to our website each week. Once the Westlake Weekly is published, each Westlake Family will receive a phone call and email, directing you to access the Westlake Weekly. Please contact the front office if you are not receiving the weekly phone call and/or email.

Teacher Newsletters

Each week, on Friday, you will receive an email that is personalized to your student's schedule. It highlights the classroom activities and assessments that are upcoming in your student's classes.

Social Media

Westlake Charter School uses social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to celebrate our students, staff, and programs. We hope that you will follow our communications using these media and help to promote our school in a positive manner. Just as we teach the students the value of a positive online presence, our school models positivity online and expects our entire Explorer Community to model appropriate social media use as well.



Who to contact for what:

Classroom/Advisory Teacher(s)	First contact for all academic or social-emotional concerns and any questions regarding your student's academic progress
Counseling Department	Contact for four year planning and college and career readiness
Principal	Contact for student and staff concerns and questions regarding school policies and day-to-day operations
Assistant Principal	Contact for behavior support and attendance concerns
Director of Student Support Services	Contact for questions regarding Section 504 Plans, Multi-tiered Systems of Support (including, but not limited to, Counseling, Interventions & Supports, etc.), English Language Learners
Coordinator of Special Education	Contact for questions related to special education services
Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Contact for questions regarding local and statewide assessment and curriculum and instruction
Executive Director	Contact for questions related to the Board of Directors

Dispute Resolution

After seeking a resolution to any concern by following the communication chain outlined above, if there is no acceptable resolution, the parent/guardian may file a formal complaint. Please see the Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures #08-01 and Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures #08-03. Please refer to the Westlake Charter School website at www.westlakecharter.com/board_docs.policies.php.



Attendance

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

Westlake Charter School families and staff demonstrate the Core Value of Responsibility by using the academic calendar and the bell schedule to ensure that their Explorer is in every class, on time, and ready to learn.

Attendance

When your student is going to be absent OR tardy, please contact the school office before 8:00 AM and leave a message on the Attendance Line (916-567-5780 ext.1) or email attendance@westlakecharter.com with the following information:

1. Student's first and last name
2. Advisory teacher's name
3. Your relationship to the child
4. Reason for absence or tardy

If your child is marked absent and you have not contacted us by telephone, the office will contact you for verification and the reason for the absence. Excused absences are defined by the California Department of Education as student illness, bereavement of an immediate family member, or a student's medical appointment. Any other reason for your Explorer's absence is recorded as an unexcused absence.

Tardies

Explorers are required to be in their classroom at the time the 2nd passing-period bell rings. Students who are not in class at that bell will be marked tardy. Arriving to class on time and being ready to learn is important for success in high school. As needed, students will receive additional support and staff will notify and partner with families to ensure they are arriving to class on time.

Early Dismissal

To ensure the highest level of safety, parents/guardians should be present at the school to sign out their student for early dismissal. If anyone other than a parent/guardian is picking up a student for early dismissal, parent/guardian permission must be obtained, and staff must be able to verify this permission by phone.

In cases such as family emergencies, appointments, or illness, the school may accept a written request from a parent or guardian to authorize early dismissal. Staff must be able to reach the parent/guardian by phone to verify the permission.

Westlake Charter High School is a closed campus. Therefore, students are not permitted to leave campus on their own during the school day for non-essential reasons.



Independent Study

If your child will be out of school for three or more consecutive days, Independent Study (IS) contracts may be available so that the Explorer is still able to get credit for attendance. Please contact the office for more information.



Academics

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

Westlake Charter School demonstrates the Core Value of Excellence by providing a unique educational opportunity to each student based on our four educational design-pillars.

Westlake Charter School demonstrates the Core Value of Inquisitive by leading Explorers to dig into their studies and to guide them to wonder, through thematic units and project-based learning opportunities. The vision that guides the Westlake Charter School academic program is documented in the WCS Charter that is regularly reviewed and approved by both the Westlake Charter and Natomas Unified School Boards.

Progress Reports

9-12 Explorers receive a progress report mid-way through a class, at the halfway point of the semester. Any questions regarding marks on the progress report should be directed to the classroom teacher.

Conferences

Every 9-12 family will attend a conference to discuss the Academic and Social-Emotional progress of their Explorer once a semester. Refer to the academic calendar for conference-week dates. Information about scheduling conferences will be shared in the Westlake Weekly.

Report Cards

9-12 Explorers receive a report card twice a year, after classes at the end of each semester.



Grading Scales

Students will receive letter grades for all areas associated with their graduation requirements. The overall grading scale and definitions:

- **A (90-100)** = Mastery: Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the course content and consistently applies the standards, skills, and/or concepts in various contexts.
- **B+ (87-89)** = Proficient, with several elements of mastery: Demonstrates an understanding of the course content and consistently applies the standards, skills, and/or concepts in various contexts.
- **B (80-86)** = Proficient, with elements of mastery: Demonstrates an understanding of the course content and consistently applies the standards, skills, and/or concepts in a variety of contexts.
- **C + (77-79)** = Proficient: Demonstrates a better than basic understanding of the course content; may need additional support to apply the standards, skills, and/or concepts in a variety of contexts.
- **C (69-76)** = Proficient: Demonstrates a basic understanding of the course content; may need additional support to apply the standards, skills, and/or concepts in a variety of contexts.
- **IE (<68)** = Insufficient Evidence: Not enough evidence exists to be reported on.

*Because WCHS offers a variety of coursework there are multiple grading scales to match the courses offered. Grading Scales are shown below:

WCHS Standard Grading Scale:

Grade	Minimum Value Percentage	GPA Value	GPA Unweighted Value
A	90	4	4
B+	87	3.3	3.3
B	80	3	3
C+	77	2.3	2.3
C	69	2	2
IE	0	0	0

**WCHS Honors Grading Scale:**

Grade	Minimum Value Percentage	GPA Value	GPA Unweighted Value
A	90	5	4
B+	87	4.3	3.3
B	80	4	3
C+	77	3.3	2.3
C	69	3	2
IE	0	0	0

WCHS Dual Enrollment Grading Scale:

Grade	Minimum Value Percentage	GPA Value	GPA Unweighted Value
A	90	5	4
B	80	4	3
C	69.9	3	2
IE	0	0	0
P - Pass - C or Better	69.9	3	2
All grades below could be awarded but do not earn credit:			
NP - No pass - less than C	IE - Insufficient Evidence	I - Incomplete	W - Withdrawal
EW - Excused Withdrawal			

Credit/No Credit Grading Scale:

Grade	Minimum Value Percentage	GPA Value	GPA Unweighted Value
Credit - CR	69.9	0	0
No Credit - NC	0	0	0



* WCHS Grades will use the 10th place to determine the whole number percentage that constitutes the final grade. .5 or higher will round up, and .4 or lower will round down to the nearest whole number.

IE or Insufficient Evidence Grades:

If a student receives an IE at the end of the semester, they will not receive credit for the class, and it will be documented on official transcripts that they have not passed the class.

Students who do not receive credit for their classes will be allowed to repeat them in the following semester or at a time determined by the student, their family, and their counselor.

External Coursework

If a WCHS student wishes to take a course outside of WCHS for credit towards graduation, the student must obtain approval from the principal prior to enrolling in the course. Credit will not be given for courses taken without prior approval.

Dual Enrollment

While at WCHS students will take at least one dual enrollment course. The initial dual enrollment course taken by a student will be transcribed by WCHS to meet a student's college proven graduation requirement. Additional dual enrollment courses will be transcribed by WCHS as elective credit. In some cases, courses taken through dual enrollment can be transcribed to meet additional graduation requirements. To qualify to have a dual enrollment course meet additional graduation requirements, the course must be pre-authorized by the school for either credit recovery or be a course that Westlake does not currently offer. This ensures the course aligns with our graduation requirements and academic standards.

Graduation Ceremony and Senior Event Eligibility

In order to participate in graduation ceremonies, students must meet all state and school eligibility requirements. These requirements include earning all credits within each curricular area and being in good disciplinary and attendance standing. To participate in events specific to seniors, students must be on track to graduate. Students must also be free of excessive absences and in good disciplinary standing.



Graduation Requirements

Westlake Charter High School Graduation Requirements A-G and Courses	
A. HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE	40 Credits for Graduation Requirement 20 Credits for UC/CSU A-G Requirements
B. ENGLISH	40 Credits for Graduation Requirement 40 Credits for UC/CSU A-G Requirements
C. MATHEMATICS	30 Credits for Graduation Requirement 30 Credits for UC/CSU A-G Requirements
D. SCIENCE	30 Credits for Graduation Requirement - 10 Life and 20 Physical 20 Credits for UC/CSU A-G Requirements
E. LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH	20 Credits for Graduation Requirement 20 Credits for UC/CSU A-G Requirements
F. VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS	10 Credits for Graduation Requirements 10 Credits for UC/CSU A-G Requirements
G. COLLEGE-PREPARATORY ELECTIVE	10 Credits for Graduation Requirements 10 Credits for UC/CSU A-G Requirements (Any course that exceeds the requirement in Categories "A-F" will also count as a "G" Elective)
H. ELECTIVE	40 Credits for Graduation Requirements Any course that exceeds the minimum subject requirement will count as Elective credit
I. PE	20 Credits for Graduation Requirements
J. College Proven	10 Credits for Graduation Requirement - 1 college course
Minimum 250 Credits for Graduation Requirement	



Infinite Campus

Attendance and Academic data for each student can be accessed through the Parent Portal on Infinite Campus. If you have any questions about logging into the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, email admin@westlakecharter.com.

Child Find

We are dedicated to the belief that all students can learn and must be guaranteed equal opportunity to become contributing members of the academic environment and society. The School provides special education instruction and related services in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA"), Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and procedures of the El Dorado County Office of Education Charter SELPA. These services are available for special education students enrolled at the School. We offer high-quality educational programs and services for all our students in accordance with the assessed needs of each student. The School collaborates with parents, the student, teachers, and other agencies, as may be indicated, in order to appropriately serve the educational needs of each student.



School Culture

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

Advisory 9-12

Every Explorer in 9th-12th grade will meet with their Advisory teacher four times a week. Advisory classes will stay together as a group for all four years. Advisory promotes communication and coordination between home and school. Families will also meet twice a year with their Explorer's Advisory teacher during the 1st and 2nd semester Explorer-led conferences.

Restorative Justice

Explorers will participate in a community founded in the beliefs associated with Restorative Justice. In a community based on restorative practices, all persons in positions of authority work *with* students to make positive changes. These practices include, but are not limited to:

Restorative Circles: Restorative Circles can be used to build community in Advisory and also in other core classes.

Informal Restorative Conference: Informal conferences will be used for low- or medium-level behavior management. These may be held privately during a class period or through the front office. These typically include staff and students who were impacted by the behavior.

Formal Restorative Conferences: Formal Restorative Conferences are used for medium- to high-level behavior management. They are scheduled following a behavior incident. They typically include all staff, all students, and family members of students who were impacted by the behavior.

Positive Teacher Language

Adults use carefully selected, respectful words and tone to promote active learning and self-discipline.

Logical Consequences

Adults respond to misbehavior in a way that respects students, guides them to recognize the effects of their actions, and helps them develop internal controls.



Behavior Management

The Response to Misbehavior Model in practice at Westlake Charter School is in line with our Restorative Justice practices and relies upon clear, logical consequences for all levels of misbehavior.

Low	Possible Staff Response
<p>Examples of low-level misbehavior include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interrupting• Disregarding/not following directions (more isolated, non-recurring cases)• Inappropriate language• Disrespect of staff and peers• Distracting others• Play-fighting• Low-level theft (snacks, pens, toys)• Inappropriate use of technology <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Recurring low-level behavior issues might result in further review to support that Explorer.</i>• <i>Persistent low-level behaviors may require medium-level responses.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactive strategies (positive reinforcement, redirection, reminding)• Restorative Justice - Explorer directed to make amends for the situation• Verbal warning• Natural/logical consequence (loss of privilege)• Reset protocol (defined break time in a separate setting, such as a buddy classroom)• Parent communication (may include ongoing Parent-Communication Agreement)
Medium	Possible Staff Response
<p>Examples of medium-level misbehavior include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular and outward defiance & disrespect of staff and peers• Emotional disrespect (e.g. repeated exclusion, teasing)• Encouraging or engaging in physical disrespect (e.g intentional pushing, tripping, challenging someone to fight, encouraging others to fight)• Academic dishonesty• Signs of early patterned bullying (i.e. threats, intimidation)• Low-level vandalism/destruction of property• Recurring, disruptive, emotional outbursts	<p>Teachers and staff will use low-level response possibilities when appropriate. At teacher or staff discretion, an office referral may be submitted. If a referral is submitted, the situation <i>may</i> be remediated by the office through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low-level response options• Notifying and engaging parents in corrective action <p><i>Note: All office-referral forms will be kept on file in the WCS office. For other Explorers involved in an incident or on the receiving end of disrespectful behavior, WCS staff will support the child and will communicate with families to inform them and to describe the action plan.</i></p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inappropriate behavior by means of an electronic act• Plagiarism <p><i>Notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Recurring medium-level referrals may result in collaboration with the MTSS team to review data and develop supports/interventions including individual behavior-management plans.</i>• <i>Several recurring medium-level referrals may be escalated to a severe designation if not remediated.</i>	
Severe	Possible Staff Response
<p>Examples of severe misbehavior include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Willful violence/fighting resulting in physical injury• Possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco• Stealing or attempting to steal school property or private property• Use of racial slurs/comments with the intent to harass, intimidate, discriminate, and bully• Property damage/vandalism• Severe disruption/defiance/obscenity/profanity/harassment• Bullying (including by means of an electronic act)• Hazing• Witness harassment or intimidation• Possession and brandishing of a dangerous object (including imitation firearms)• Hate violence or speech (Motivated by, but not limited to, disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, Religion, and sexual orientation)• Terroristic threats• Inappropriate sexual behavior	<p>Teachers and staff will use low- or medium-level response possibilities when appropriate. At teacher or staff discretion, an office referral may be submitted. If a referral is submitted, the situation <i>may</i> be remediated by the office through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low- or medium-level response options• Notifying and engaging parents in corrective action• Other corrective actions <p><i>Note: All office-referral forms will be kept on file in the WCS office. For other Explorers involved in an incident or on the receiving end of disrespectful behavior, WCS staff will support the child and may communicate with families to inform them and to describe the action plan.</i></p>



Academic Integrity

As an expectation of our College-Proven graduation requirement, Westlake Charter School expects all students to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity.

Violations of academic integrity include cheating, plagiarizing, turning in another's papers or projects as your own, giving one's work to others, passing test information to others, misrepresenting others' work as their own, or being found in possession of another's work.

What Is Plagiarism?

Definition: Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or facts as if they were your own, without giving credit to the original source.

Examples:

You are plagiarizing when you use information from another source without including proper documentation (e.g. citations and a list of works cited or a bibliography).

You are plagiarizing when you turn in another student's work as your own or allow someone else to copy your work; this work might include homework, tests, papers, or other assignments.

You are plagiarizing when you copy materials from sources such as the internet, books, or periodicals without introducing the material or using citations to show the beginning and end of the "borrowed" material.

(Adapted from the OCTE pamphlet "What's Plagiarism and How Can You Avoid It?")

Guidelines for Avoiding Plagiarism:

Indicate clearly when you use anything from another person's work, even if only a phrase or a single keyword, by using quotation marks. If you use more than three words from a source in a row, put them in quotations and cite the source. When summarizing or paraphrasing, distinguish clearly where the ideas of others end and your own comments begin. When using another person's ideas, credit the author by name and identify the work in which you found the idea. Err on the side of caution by giving credit whenever you suspect you are using information, other than general knowledge, from a source. If you are unsure if you are plagiarizing, it is your responsibility to consult with your teacher regarding the work before the assignment is due.

(Adapted from Write for College, published by Write Source.)



Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying

All Explorers have the right to a safe and civil learning environment. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors which interfere with Explorers' ability to learn, negatively affect Explorer engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, WCS prohibits any acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying related to school activity or school attendance. Families and students have the ability to report bullying behavior through our bullying report button located on the Westlake Charter website. Please see our Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (Board Policy 0812-01). Please refer to the Westlake Charter School website at www.westlakecharter.com/board_docs.policies.php.

Closed Campus

Westlake Charter High School is a closed campus. Once a student arrives at school, they are not permitted to leave and return to the campus without parent/guardian permission or administrative approval. Parent/guardian permission is in the form of an early dismissal cleared through the front office.

Dress Code (9-12)

The intention of the high school dress code is to create a safe learning environment for all individuals. All students are encouraged to dress in a manner that is comfortable and conducive to an active school day.

Students Must Wear:

- Shirt
- Bottom: pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/legging
- Shoes; activity-specific shoes requirements are permitted (for example, for sports)
- The fabric covering the chest area, genitals, and buttocks must be opaque.

*Courses that include attire as a part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may consist of an assignment-specific dress code.

Students Cannot Wear:

- Violent language or images
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal activity item or activity) or the use of the same
- Hate speech, profanity, or pornography
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class
- Visible underwear
- Bathing suits
- Helmets or headgear that obscures the face (except as religious observance)

**Field Lessons**

Field Lessons at Westlake Charter High School are an important part of bringing the on-campus learning to life. Field Lessons may include but are not limited to grade-level college field lessons, grade level mission statement experiences, individual class field lessons.

Deliveries

To maintain a safe school environment and respect school staff responsibilities, deliveries from external services including food services (e.g., DoorDash, Uber Eats, Grubhub) to students are not permitted. Delivery personnel may be turned away or deliveries may be held until the end of the school day.

Birthdays

Students may communicate with their Advisory teacher if and how they would like to be celebrated. Balloons, flowers, or other gifts cause a distraction in the classroom and cafeteria. These items should not be sent to school. Any such deliveries will be held in the office until dismissal time. Birthday treats (cake, cookies, cupcakes, pizza, etc.) are not allowed in the classroom or cafeteria. Please check with your child's teacher for individual grade level traditions to honor Explorers.



Get Involved

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

The Westlake Charter School community demonstrates the Core Value of Stewardship by volunteering with our WAVE parent group and in our classrooms.

Westlake Charter School demonstrates the Core Value of Gratitude by helping others in our community to make our school a better place for our Explorers to learn.

W.A.V.E. (Westlake Association of Volunteer Explorers)

All families are part of WAVE. WAVE works hand-in-hand with the school administration and the WCS Board in fulfilling the stated mission of our school. Since WAVE recommends that all families volunteer a minimum of thirty hours per year, WAVE offers a conduit through which parents can connect to the many volunteer needs of the school. Opportunities include leadership roles within WAVE, as well as within various committees, such as Fundraising, Hospitality, Communications, and Parent Participation. Families can also easily earn hours by attending field trips, helping in the classroom, volunteering at WCS events, attending meetings, and more.

Volunteering at Westlake Charter School

WCS values our family volunteers. Please follow these guidelines when planning to volunteer:

1. Connect with your classroom teacher at least 24 hours before coming to volunteer in the classroom. This will give the teacher a chance to be prepared and make your volunteer time as efficient as possible.
2. Check-in at the front office to receive a volunteer badge.
3. If volunteering in a classroom, support all Explorers in the classroom, or your group, as instructed by the classroom teacher.
4. If volunteering to prepare materials, please respect the teacher's workroom shared-space.
5. When volunteering on any field lesson volunteers must have DOJ fingerprint clearance on file with the Westlake Charter business office.

All volunteers are asked to wait until after the first eight days of school are completed before coming on campus to volunteer. This allows our Explorers and their teachers to build community within their classroom spaces.



Student Technology Use Guidelines

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

WCS demonstrates the Core Value of Global Perspective through our use of technology as a tool to develop 21st-century skills in our Explorers, which will allow them to lead as Global Citizens.

Westlake Charter School Devices

Students are responsible for caring for their WCS issued Chromebook and bringing it fully charged to school each day. WCS expects students to complete electronic classwork using their school-issued Chromebook.

Personal Electronic Devices

Students may bring their personal electronic devices (cell phones, airpods, etc.) to school. Students may only use electronic devices in the classroom if the teacher has permitted use for educational purposes. Teachers may ask students to check in their electronic devices. Parents/guardians wishing to contact their students during the day can call the front office. WCHS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronics.

Internet Acceptable-Use

Families are asked to sign an acceptable-use agreement each year. The acceptable-use agreement states the following:

In addition, my use of any technology issued by the school will be for educational purposes only.

1. I will not misuse the technology issued by the school.
 - a. I will not download inappropriate “Apps” on the technology issued by the school. This means Apps that are not academically related and/or approved by my Teacher, Principal, or the Executive Director of Westlake Charter School.
 - b. Although my email account can only communicate with staff email accounts, I will not send emails other than for school-related purposes.
 - c. I will not browse websites that are inappropriate or contain inappropriate content. This includes websites that are harmful to the technology issued by the school, offensive to other students, or that are not academically related.
 - d. I will not take or keep inappropriate videos/pictures on the technology issued by the school. This means videos or pictures that are not academically related and/or approved by my Teacher, Principal, or the Executive Director of Westlake Charter School.
2. I will surrender any technology issued by the school to any staff member of Westlake Charter School at any time for inspection.
3. The penalty for violating either items 1 or 2 will include appropriate school consequences, beginning with communication between the school and Parent/Guardian.



Cell Phones on campus:

(In lieu of Board Policy 08-04)

Families are asked to sign a Personal Device Contract. The Personal Device Contract states the following:

Expectations

1. Personal devices, including cell phones, are allowed on campus but students must agree to and follow these expectations:
 - a. I agree to only use my phone, earbuds, and or other personal devices in class with my teacher's permission and in the manner directed by my teacher.
 - b. I agree to respect the privacy of my peers by not recording, posting images or videos of them on social media, and/or sharing images with them without their consent.
 - c. I agree only to consume content that is not offensive or harmful to our community.
 - d. I agree to turn in my phone, earbuds, and or other personal devices to the office when I break these agreements and when asked to do so by an adult.

Failure to Comply

Failure to comply with these expectations may result in the following:

- Device/cell phone is turned off and turned into the office for the remainder of the day or class period
- Device/cell phone turned into the office until a family member can collect it
- Implementation of an individualized device/phone use contract
- Device/phone not allowed on campus

The use of cameras or recording functions on electronic devices is prohibited unless under the direction and supervision of a staff member. Students in possession of cell phones or other devices on school grounds that contain inappropriate, violent, or pornographic pictures/video; inappropriate or harassing text messages; or information stored for the purposes of cheating academically will face serious discipline. Any individual who uses a wireless communication device to photograph, videotape, or otherwise record individuals without their permission will face serious disciplinary action. Ed Code § 51512. Prohibited use of electronic listening or recording device.



Health & Safety

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

Westlake Charter School demonstrates the Core Value of Respect in our response to the health and safety needs of our Explorers. The health and safety of our Explorers is the priority in all areas of campus and our policies regarding health and safety mirror that belief.

Medication at School

Explorers needing medication during school hours must have a Physician's Authorization for Medication at School form signed by their doctor and on-file in the health office.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency (fire, earthquake, storm, etc.), WCS staff will follow the safety guidelines outlined in the WCS Safety Plan. This plan can be produced upon request in our front office. Typically, during a safety emergency, all staff will remain at the school until all children have safely exited the site, are in a place of safety, or have been released to parents/guardians, unless directed otherwise. Teachers will keep their classes in their rooms unless directed otherwise by an administrator or designee. Teachers will remain with their classes and are responsible for accounting for each child in their class. Teachers will be responsible for signing out children to parents/guardians or other designated adults.

Suicide Prevention

WCS recognizes that school personnel who regularly interact with students are often in a position to recognize the warning signs of suicide and to offer appropriate referral and/or assistance. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, WCS has developed strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, postvention, and the identification of the mental health challenges frequently associated with suicidal thinking and behavior. Please refer to WCS Board Policy #0817-01 for more information. Please refer to the Westlake Charter School website at www.westlakecharter.com/board_docs.policies.php.

Selling/Buying Personal Property

Students may not arrange the buying or selling of any personal property, including food, on a campus. Students found doing this will be subject to both appropriate consequences and the items and money involved being confiscated by the administration and returned to the parents, once it has been determined that the items involved are not illegal or stolen.

Transportation Safety

Westlake Charter School may provide transportation to or from a Westlake school activity and has procedures for Westlake personnel, parents/guardians and volunteers to follow to ensure the safe transportation of students. Students shall be informed that any violation of Westlake policies and procedures, including violation of safety procedures on a school bus or school activity bus, could result in discipline pursuant to the Westlake discipline policy.



Field Lesson Transportation

Consideration will be given to the safest mode of transportation and the safest routes of travel. The legal occupancy limit of vehicles must not be exceeded. Seat belts are to be used at all times while traveling.

If transportation for the field lesson or excursion is provided by parents/guardians, such parents/guardians shall provide proof of liability insurance. A copy of the insurance policy shall be given to the Principal of the Charter School or their designee. The parents/guardians shall acknowledge in writing that their insurance carrier is the primary agent responsible for insurance for the field lesson or excursion. The Charter School shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that individuals volunteering to transport students are responsible and capable operators of the vehicles to be used.

Under no circumstances shall students transport other students except siblings, with parental permission.

School Employees and Parent/Guardian as Chaperones and Drivers

As field lessons and excursions are an integral part of the Westlake learning experience, parents are encouraged to participate in an assisting role with students. The Principal or their designee will provide parents and guardians with specific supervisory guidelines prior to any Westlake group trip involving students. Topics to be included are safety regulations, emergency responses, and responsibilities of the parent volunteers and language or behavior requirements of all attendees.

A participating parent or guardian will be assigned to a specific group of students to supervise and will be responsible for these students at all times during the field trip or excursion. Under no circumstances will a parent or guardian consume alcohol or use controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's orders) during a field lesson or excursion. The parent or guardian will notify the Principal or their designee, in advance of the field lesson or excursion, should they be under a physician's orders and using medications.

Particularly for our high school students who participate on an athletics team, regular travel to and from meets, games, practices, tournaments and similar activities will occur that may necessitate carpooling for transport. All staff drivers will abide by the regulations outlined in this policy when transporting students during school-sponsored activities. At the beginning of each sports season, parents/guardians will be provided a notification letter/permission slip informing them of the possibility that other parent/guardian volunteers and coaches/school staff may serve as chaperones and drivers to transport students to meets and games throughout the season. Parents may decline permission for their child to be transported by a coach/staff member/other parent or guardian, in which case that student will be responsible for his/her own transportation.



All adults taking out-of-state field trips or excursions (including athletics meets and games), and all parents or guardians of pupils taking out-of-state field trips or excursions (including athletics meets and games) are required to sign a statement waiving all claims against Westlake, its employees, and the State of California for injury, accident, illness or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion (including athletics meets and games).

At all times during the field lesson or excursion (including athletics meets and games, etc.), employee and volunteer drivers will use the safest mode of transportation and the safest route of travel. If travel is not by bus, the legal occupancy limit of ten (10) occupants (including the driver) must not be exceeded, all speed notices must be strictly adhered to and students are to be seated with individual seat belts engaged at all times.

Westlake shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that all employees and volunteers who transport students are responsible and capable operators of the vehicles to be used and ensure compliance with Driver Requirements as follows:

- A. Employee or volunteer drivers who offer to provide transportation for a field trip or excursion (including athletics meets and games) must provide a copy of the following:
 - 1. Proof of liability insurance for their vehicle with a minimum of \$100K/\$300K coverage.
 - 2. A copy of their Driver's License and Vehicle Registration.
 - 3. A written statement acknowledging that their insurance carrier is the primary agent responsible for insurance during the field trip or excursion.
 - 4. A criminal background check conducted by the California Department of Justice ("DOJ"). Employees or volunteers whose DOJ report reveals a Driving Under the Influence conviction shall not be permitted to transport students or operate any vehicle on Westlake business for ten (10) years from the date of the conviction. Any employee or volunteer convicted of a felony shall not be permitted to transport Westlake students on Westlake business.
 - 5. A Department of Motor Vehicles record. Employees or volunteers with driving records with two (2) points or more shall not be permitted to transport students or operate any vehicle for Westlake field trips and excursions (including athletics meets and games).

Each of these items will be provided to the office prior to driving on a field trip or excursion (including athletics meets and games), or at the beginning of each sports season.



For the employee's/volunteer's safety and that of all the students in their car, the following rules apply:

1. All Westlake rules apply to students in the car. Employee/volunteer drivers should report student behavior to the Principal or their designee as necessary to maintain safety.
2. All California driving laws must be followed including child restraint laws: no texting or distracted driving, hands-free phone use only.
3. No movies may be shown in vehicles.
4. No side trips are allowed.
5. Maps and directions from the teacher/coach should be reviewed prior to leaving.
6. No purchases for students should be made on the field trip/excursion including food or treats for students in the car.
7. Call the Westlake office immediately if there is a problem.

California Law Regarding Safe Storage of Firearms

The purpose of this section is to inform and remind parents and legal guardians of all students of their responsibilities for keeping firearms out of the hands of children as required by California law. Incidents such as these can be mitigated by storing firearms in a safe and secure manner, including keeping them locked up when not in use and storing them separately from ammunition.

This section spells out California law regarding the storage of firearms. Please take some time to review this information and evaluate your own personal practices to assure that you and your family are in compliance with California law.

- With very limited exceptions, California makes a person criminally liable for keeping any firearm, loaded or unloaded, within any premises that are under their custody and control where that person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, and the child obtains access to the firearm and thereby (1) causes death or injury to the child or any other person; (2) carries the firearm off the premises or to a public place, including to any preschool or school grades kindergarten through twelfth grade, or to any school-sponsored event, activity, or performance; or (3) unlawfully brandishes the firearm to others.¹
 - Note: The criminal penalty may be significantly greater if someone dies or suffers great bodily injury as a result of the child gaining access to the firearm.
- With very limited exceptions, California also makes it a crime for a person to negligently store or leave any firearm, loaded or unloaded, on their premises in a location where the person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to it without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, unless reasonable action is taken to secure the firearm against access by the child, even where a minor never actually accesses the firearm.²



- In addition to potential fines and terms of imprisonment, as of January 1, 2020, a gun owner found criminally liable under these California laws faces prohibitions from possessing, controlling, owning, receiving, or purchasing a firearm for 10 years.³
- Finally, a parent or guardian may also be civilly liable for damages resulting from the discharge of a firearm by that person's child or ward.⁴

Note: Your county or city may have additional restrictions regarding the safe storage of firearms.

Thank you for helping to keep our children and schools safe. Remember that the easiest and safest way to comply with the law is to keep firearms in a locked container or secured with a locking device that renders the firearm inoperable.

^[1] See California Penal Code sections 25100 through 25125 and 25200 through 25220

^[2] See California Penal Code section 25100(c)

^[3] See California Civil Code Section 29805

^[4] See California Civil Code Section 1714.3

California Law Regarding Notification of Synthetic Drugs

The State of California asks that we notify parents and guardians of each enrolled student about the dangers associated with using synthetic drugs that are not prescribed by a physician, such as fentanyl. Parents and guardians should also be aware of the possibility that dangerous synthetic drugs can be found in counterfeit pills. For more information on the dangers associated with synthetic drugs, please contact your health provider.

Westlake Charter School's Governing Board

The Board meets every month. Meetings are open to the public except during closed session. All parents/guardians are invited to attend board meetings and to address in person or in writing any concerns, questions, or feedback concerning the governance of the school. Agendas and minutes of all meetings are posted on the school bulletin board located outside the school office and on www.westlakecharter.com.

Our Relationship with the Natomas Unified School District

Westlake Charter School is a California public charter school operating under the sponsorship of the Natomas Unified School District. Westlake Charter School is a non-profit public benefit corporation and adheres to the laws governing nonprofit corporations in the state of California.