



Student Freedom of Speech Policy

Westlake Charter School (“WCS” or the “School”) acknowledges and respects students’ rights to express ideas and opinions and support causes, whether controversial or not, through their speech, clothing, the wearing of buttons, badges or other insignia, and the written materials they post or distribute. That being said, to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the health and safety of all members of the WCS community, student speech may be limited as permitted by law and consistent with this Policy. For example, student expression that is obscene, defamatory, libelous, slanderous, discriminatory, vulgar, violates privacy, or incites violence is prohibited.

Distribution of Circulars, Newspapers, and Other Materials

Students are permitted to distribute circulars, leaflets, newspapers, and pictorial or other material, and to circulate petitions, subject to the following limitations:

1. Students who are selected to speak at a WCS event or who wish to distribute leaflets, pictorials, and other printed material must submit the materials to the Principal or designee for approval at least one school day prior to the event or distribution of materials.
2. Distribution of materials and solicitation of voluntary signatures may take place during the school day (except during instructional time) provided there is no substantial disruption to the School’s operations.

Student expression on or through WCS’s website, social media, or other School-sponsored platforms or devices shall generally be subject to the same limitations within this Policy as printed material.

Use of Bulletin Boards

Students may be provided with bulletin boards, upon request, for use in posting student materials on campus. Posted material must be in compliance with this Policy.

Organized Demonstrations

Students may organize lawful on-campus demonstrations subject to the provisions of this Policy and applicable law. Students may not organize demonstrations to take place off campus during school hours. Students may not demonstrate in the name of WCS or as an official School group at any time unless otherwise authorized by the Principal or designee.



Off-Campus Expression

Students may be subjected to discipline for off-campus expression, including but not limited to, expression on non-School sponsored internet web sites, personal social media or email accounts, or via text messages sent on a personal device outside of school hours, when there is a sufficient nexus between the speech and the School. For example, student off-campus expression may result in discipline if the expression results in the material disruption of classwork or involves the following:

- Serious or severe bullying or harassment targeting particular individuals or groups.
- Threats aimed at teachers or other students.
- The failure to follow rules concerning lessons, the writing of papers, the use of computers, or participation in other online school activities.
- Breaches of school security devices.
- Other conduct that involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others.

Disputes/Complaints

A student who feels their freedom of expression was unconstitutionally limited may file a complaint with WCS in accordance with the School's General Complaint Policies and Procedures.

A student who feels their freedom of expression was unconstitutionally limited may file a dispute or complaint with the School. Students who wish to file a dispute or complaint are encouraged to refer to the following Board Policies as necessary to determine whether a dispute or complaint should be filed:

- Board Policy, 08-03, Dispute Resolution
- Board Policy, 08-01, Uniform Complaint Policy
- Board Policy, 24-02, Title IX Policy Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Sex.