

## Academics & Curriculum

All subjects are taught from a Christian perspective so that each academic discipline is integrated with biblical truth.

Areas covered in our **pre-school, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten** include the following: Bible Stories, Numbers and Concepts, Listening, Science and Health, Speaking, Music and Rhythms, Alphabet Development, Games and Free Play, Reading Readiness, and Art

Subjects covered in **grades one through six** include: Bible, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Health, Art, Music and Physical Education

Subjects covered in **grades seven and eight (Junior high)** include: Bible, U.S. History, Geography, Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Spanish, Science and Health, Art, Music and Physical Education

Course offerings in **grades nine – twelve (High school) include:** Bible (9-12), English (9-12), World History, U.S. History, U.S. Government, Economics, Algebra I and Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Consumer Education, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Spanish, Health, Physical Education, Art, Music, Drama, and Logic

A variety of Module or Semester courses may be taught in the following areas: Technology, English, Science, Social Studies, Art, and Music. These offerings vary from year to year. Module courses are one quarter (9 weeks) in length and receive .25 credits.

### Sevenstar Academy

Westlake Christian Academy is committed to a well-rounded, quality education from a Christian worldview. To continue pursuing this goal, Westlake has chosen to partner with Sevenstar Academy as its approved online provider of high school courses which WCA will accept towards certain graduation requirements.

Sevenstar Academy offers more than 50 courses. These online courses enhance our electives options and include AP and dual high school-college credit courses. Additionally, some Sevenstar Academy courses are duplicates of core WCA courses. This allows for the students to take core courses in the event a student needs to make-up a course or there is an irresolvable scheduling conflict.

It is Westlake's position that these online courses are to be taken as electives or enrichment courses, as a resolution for irresolvable scheduling conflicts or as make-up courses. It is not the intention to use these courses to replace standard classroom, teacher taught courses.

Instruction and grading for Sevenstar Academy courses is through Sevenstar Academy. WCA may implement an in-house mentor who would provide oversight regarding student pacing of assignments and materials.

WCA credit(s) are awarded for completed courses once official notification has been received from Sevenstar Academy. Notification from Sevenstar on the passing completion of a course(s) should be received at WCA by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday in May.

Because these are online courses students have the flexibility to take them at a regularly schedule time during the school day or from home in the evenings or on weekends.

An additional cost is required for these online courses. Further details can be found at <http://www.sevenstaracademy.org/> and on the last page of this scheduling packet.

### High School

Students must have completed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year to be classified as freshmen. Minimum grade classifications are as follows:

Sophomore	(Grade 10)	6 units completed
Junior	(Grade 11)	12 units completed
Senior	(Grade 12)	18 units completed

Students who fail courses may be subject to retention or requested to withdraw.

A Typical 4-Year Educational Plan

<u>9<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>	<u>10<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>	<u>11<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>	<u>12<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>
Bible 9	Bible 10	Bible 11	Bible 12
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
Civics/Geography	World History 10	US History 11	Governments/ Economics
Intro to Chemistry & Physics	Biology 10	Chemistry or Physics	Chemistry or Physics
Algebra I or Geometry	Geometry or Algebra II	Algebra II Precalculus/ Trigonometry	Algebra II Precalculus/ Trigonometry Calculus
Physical Education /Health 9	Physical Education Consumer Education	Consumer Education	Consumer Education
Foreign Language	Foreign Language	Foreign Language	Foreign Language
Fine Arts (visual, vocal, instrumental)	Fine Arts (visual, vocal, instrumental)	Fine Arts (visual, vocal, instrumental)	Fine Arts (visual, vocal, instrumental)
Electives	Electives	Electives	Electives

## Graduation Requirements

1. Transfer credits (public school, home school, independent study, dual college credits) will be considered if documentation is credible and mastery is demonstrated.
2. To graduate from Westlake, a student must be enrolled full-time during their senior year.
3. A maximum of 4.0 PE credits may be applied towards graduation requirements.
4. .5 Bible credits are required for each semester of attendance at Westlake.

Courses in these specific categories are required for graduation.

Bible*	4.0 credits	*Bible credits are required for each semester of attendance.
English	4.0 credits	
Social Studies*	4.0 credits	*American History and Government are required.
Math	3.0 credits	
Science	2.0 credits	
Consumer Ed.	.5 credits	
Health	.5 credits	
Foreign language	2.0 credits	
Physical Education*	2.0 credits	*Participation in a complete sports season may be substituted for .5 PE credit.
Fine Arts	.5 credits	
Technology	.5 credits	
Electives	3.5 credits	
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Total	26.5 credits	

## Grading System

### Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Grading Scale

E = exceeds grade level expectations consistently  
M = meets grade level expectations  
P = progressing towards grade level expectations  
N = not progressing towards grade level expectations

### Grades 3-12 Grading Scale

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>GPA Points</b>	<b>Honor Points</b>
100-98	A+	4.3	5.3
97-94	A	4.0	5.0
93-90	A-	3.7	4.7
89-88	B+	3.3	4.3
87-84	B	3.0	4.0
83-80	B-	2.7	3.7
79-78	C+	2.3	3.3
77-74	C	2.0	3.0
73-70	C-	1.7	2.7
69-67	D+	1.3	2.3
66-65	D	1.0	2.0
64 or below	F	0.0	0.0
		No Credit	No Credit

“I” – Incomplete; an incomplete grade must be made up in a timeframe agreed to with the teacher/administration or the permanent grade is changed to an “F” and no credit is given.

### Grade Point Average (GPA)

Most final grades are assigned a GPA point value. These values are used in the calculation of Grade Point Averages (GPA). The GPA for each letter grade is indicated above. For letter grades with a plus sign (+) add .3 of a GPA point. For letter grades with a minus sign (-) subtract .3 of a GPA point.

### Honor Points

An honor point is one extra GPA point (1) added to the GPA point value for a letter grade for designated high school courses for the purpose of calculating GPA. These courses would be those designated as Honor courses or Advancement Placement (AP) courses. For example, a student earns a C+ in one of the designated courses. They would receive 2.3 GPA points plus an additional honor point for a total of 3.3 GPA points for that course. The 3.3 GPA points would then be used in the calculation of a student's overall GPA. If a student fails (F) a designated course they would not receive any GPA points.

### Honor Courses

Some courses have been designated Honor Courses for the purpose of GPA calculations with Honor Points. Designated courses: Advanced Placement courses whether taken on campus or online through Sevenstar Academy and on campus courses Spanish IV, Calculus, and Chemistry.

### Class Rank

The WCA Valedictorian is the student who has ranks first in their graduating class. The Salutatorian is the student who ranks second in their graduating class. Each year a Valedictorian and Salutatorian are selected within the graduating class based on the following criteria:

- The student's cumulative grade point average (Grades 9-12) after the third quarter of the graduating year.
- Length of attendance at WCA - a student must attend three of the four high school years at WCA, including the senior year, to qualify.
- The student's conduct must be in good standing during their senior year.
- Has earned a minimum GPA of 3.0.

Each student's transcript indicates the student's GPA rank as compared to the rest of the class.

### High Honor and Honor Rolls

The honor rolls for grades 7-12 is calculated at the end of every quarter. "High Honor Roll" distinction will be earned by a student achieving a 4.0 GPA with no D's or F's. "Honor Roll" distinction will be earned by a student achieving a 3.5 GPA with no D's or F's.

### Academic Distinction

All graduates meeting the following standard will be recognized for "Academic Distinction" by wearing a gold cord/tassel at graduation. A cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher, is necessary to earn this distinction. The student must also be in good standing in regards to conduct and attitude.

### Eligibility

Eligibility for upper elementary, junior and senior high extra-curricular activities (such as Student Council and Athletics) is calculated at mid-quarters and at the end of quarters for students. A detailed explanation of eligibility calculation is in the Athletic Department's handbook. However, the basic standard is that a student with one F or two D's is not eligible until the next time grades are checked.

### Report Cards

Report cards are issued at the conclusion of each of the four grading quarters. The last report card will be issued after school is dismissed for the summer. Parent/teacher conferences will be conducted after the release of the first report card.

### Progress Reports

Progress reports (mid-quarter reports) indicating academic progress will be mailed home at mid-quarter for students in grades 3 – 12<sup>th</sup>. These reports will reflect the student's academic progress and may include comments regarding attitude and/or behavior.

### Dropping/Adding High School Courses

Students may drop or add courses after final registration subject to the following requirements:

- Drop/add requests for semester or year-long courses must be made in writing on or before the fifth school day of the course.
- Drop/add requests for module courses must be made in writing on or before the third school day of the course.
- Drop/add requests must be signed by the student's parent. Requests must be submitted to the Administration by the deadline date in order to be considered.
- Approval of drop/add requests is at the discretion of the Administration and may include consultation with the teacher(s), student or parents. The student's best interests will be a primary consideration.

### Community Service

Community Service activities are consistent with the development of a strong Christian testimony and reflect on the reputation and character of both the individual and school. Community Service is an important aspect of our secondary curriculum. The Westlake Christian Academy vision, "Every Student a Disciple of Jesus Christ" is developed as students serve others. As a body of believers in Jesus Christ we recognize the servant nature which must be grown in each of us in order to function properly in the Christian community and in our society.

Community Service is a conscious and intentional component of the discipleship ministry of Westlake Christian Academy. It is an active effort to help students implement the spiritual and intellectual knowledge they are learning in the classroom. A key aspect of the Christian life is that we are called to serve others as Jesus Christ stated and did. But serving others is usually a learned character trait. It seldom develops by chance. That is why Westlake requires secondary students to engage in community service. The goal is far more than just putting in the hours. First and foremost, we desire that students develop a natural bent for helping others. We want our students to learn to see a need and act to meet that need. Thus WCA incorporates this standard of Community Service into its curriculum.

To qualify as community service a student must be ministering with a formalized organization other than Westlake Christian Academy and the student would not receive a wage or remuneration for their service. The organization could be a church, the local park district, a food pantry, a homeless shelter, a nursing home, a school, etc. The Community Service guide can help with this and the possibilities are nearly endless. The emphasis of community service is the local, Chicagoland area, rather than out-of-state or overseas. Thus Lake County or adjacent counties would be the appropriate area in which to perform community service. Students are strongly encouraged to lock into a service ministry which provides regular service opportunity and enough hours to meet the standard. An official, supervisor or other leader of the service/ministry organization must sign off on a description of the service activity, the date and the hours of service. Community Service forms must be turned into the office quarterly and will be reflected on report cards and transcripts. Community Service does not receive grades or credits nor is it included in the GPA calculation.

High school students must participate in 25 hours of community service per school year, for every year in attendance at WCA, as a requirement for graduation. Junior High students must participate in 10 hours community service per school year. This requirement will be prorated for those students who enroll after the start of the school year. Community service is to be conducted outside of the school day. Community Service forms are available through the school office or on our website.

### Promotion and Retention

#### Pre-K – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Students are promoted or retained on the basis of their total preparedness to enter the next grade level and perform satisfactorily. Ability, achievement, attendance, physical and social factors are all taken into consideration. Should a student fail one or more major subjects in one year, without that failure being made up, the student may be retained in his present grade. The school Administration and teachers meet after the second grading period to discuss individual promotion or retention. Parents will be notified concerning retention and their input will be considered before the decision is finalized.

### Homework & Exams

Homework, an integral part of most educational programs, is designed to aid the student in his studies. Out of class assignments are relevant to classroom lessons, are given to reinforce classroom teaching and are intended to enable students to gain mastery of the content and concepts. It is a student's responsibility to complete any assigned work, and this discipline will help the student become more responsible in other areas.

Homework assignments are given for several purposes:

- For drill and practice—we believe that most students require solid drilling to master material essential to their educational progress.
- For remedial activity—as instruction progresses, various weak points in a student's grasp of subject matter become evident. Homework, following instruction, is given to overcome such difficulties.
- For special projects—book reports, compositions, special research assignments and projects are some of the activities that are frequently the subject of homework attention.

Homework assignments are to be pertinent to classroom lessons and may be given in reasonable quantities consistent with the abilities of the grade level. It is the student's responsibility to complete any assigned work and this discipline will help the students become more responsible in other areas.

The amount of homework assignments increases as a child matures and moves forward in their academic grade level. A rule of thumb which many educators use to determine homework amount relevant to grade level is an average of 10 minutes per grade level. For instance, a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader may receive, on average, 30 minutes of homework per evening. A 9<sup>th</sup> grader may receive, on average, 90 minutes of homework per evening. If you have any questions or comments regarding homework, please consult with the classroom teacher.

Exams (tests) are a method of academic assessment which is usually given after a chapter or unit of material has been taught. Exams are used to assess large bodies of knowledge and the understanding of conceptual or abstract learning. Exams also aid in character development as they require greater concentration, sustained over a longer period of time. The rigor of focused study helps develop qualities such as, self-discipline, perseverance, patience and setting priorities. Students in grades nine through twelve also take semester exams in most courses.

### Semester Exams

Semester exams are given for most all high school courses. The semester exam will count 10% of the student's grade for the semester. Eighth grade students take semester exams if they are taking Algebra I. Any request to take a semester exam at other than the scheduled test time may require that a \$25.00 fee be paid to the instructor.

## Standardized Testing

Westlake Christian Academy is committed to the total Christian education model, Westlake uses a testing program in order that the needs of each student might be recognized and met. Testing is a tool that parents, teachers, counselors and Administration may utilize to help direct, motivate, facilitate and evaluate the student as we jointly seek to assist the individual in reaching his/her optimum potential in Jesus Christ.

WCA annually gives the nationally recognized Stanford Achievement Test and/or the Otis-Lennon Ability Test to all students in First through Eleventh grades. These records will help determine individual and school-wide academic performance. Parents receive a report of the results and the school places a copy of the individual results in the student's cumulative file. This standardized testing is usually given in April of each school year.

Westlake employs a non-standardized Kindergarten Readiness Test to ensure that students are developmentally ready for our Kindergarten program.

## College Guidance and Entrance Testing

Career development is an integral part of our total program; therefore WCA exposes senior high students to college days, presentations from college representatives, and vocational and collegiate brochures and materials.

College entrance exam information is made available for juniors and seniors. Registration packets for both **Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)** and **American College Testing (ACT)** are provided to students. Testing dates for both examinations vary. It is the responsibility of the student to register for either of these tests. Online registration is an option for these tests.

All juniors complete the **Pre-Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)** in October. This test is very similar to **SAT** and allows the student to become familiar with this kind of exam. Minimal fees may be required for these tests.

College Tour: Additionally, Westlake provides an annual freshman college tour to allow students to experience the collegiate setting for a day. This day trip includes a presentation by the college admission office, a tour of the campus, a class visit and lunch in the college dining hall. As of this writing, Westlake's freshman tour Trinity International University.

College Seminar: Each fall, Westlake hosts a college preparation seminar. This seminar is presented by a college admissions director and covers topics such as college preparation, the admissions process, and finances.

Westlake also provides students with information regarding local college fairs.

## Awards and Honors

Part of the underlying philosophy of Westlake Christian Academy is building Christian character and the pursuit of excellence by our students. God is honored in this process. In order to direct students toward a level of excellence in education and living, various awards and honors have been designed to provide goals for which our students strive. These honors are generally school-wide unless noted otherwise and are recognized at year-end assemblies.

Athletic awards are presented each spring at the Athletic Awards Banquet.

### Elementary Awards

Junior Eagle (4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>) , and Eaglet Award (1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>): The faculty nominates and votes for a student to receive this award. These students demonstrate the mission and purpose of WCA through strength of character, commitment to God’s Word, and diligence in academics. Candidates exhibit, “Academic Excellence,” “Christian Citizenship,” and “Faithful Service.”

- **Academic Excellence:** The student earns above average grades but more importantly displays a desire to do well as evidenced by a strong work ethic.
- **Christian Citizenship:** The student has best displayed such Christian characteristics as honesty, respect, obedience, kindness, love and understanding.
- **Faithful Service:** The student has “visualized each task as a Special Assignment from the Lord, and used his or her energies to accomplish it.”

Character Awards: A positive character quality such as: perseverance, initiative, steadfast, diligent, compassionate, holiness, honesty, humility, integrity, kindness, leadership, loyalty, meekness, patience, punctual, respectful, righteousness, self-control, sensitivity, and servanthood.

Presidential Physical Fitness Award criteria are pre-determined by the PPFA. Students who meet the prescribed standards of athleticism will be recognized with this award.

### Secondary Awards

The Timothy Award is presented to one student in each grade, 7-12, who most exemplifies the character and qualities of the Timothy of the Bible. Timothy was an outstanding student of Paul’s.

As such, we are looking for students who are responsible, diligent and have a thirst for knowing God's Word. Timothy was also a minister in his own right and so we are looking for students who understand the call upon all Christians to minister, to serve others and are willing to make the self-sacrifice necessary. In short, although young, Timothy strived to be an example to all believers. And so, we are looking for students who are exemplary in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.

II Timothy 4:12 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself as example of those who believe.

Although our students are young, they do not allow that to hinder their Christ-like example to fellow students and the adults they come into contact with on a daily basis. They show this by sharing their Christianity, by conducting themselves in a proper manner, and by using uplifting speech.

- Speech – *uplifting*
- Conduct – *proper*
- Love – *genuine*
- Faith – *sharing*
- Purity – *thought & deeds*

Eagle Awards are presented to one junior high student and one senior high student demonstrating the following traits; spiritual leadership and maturity, school spirit, academic achievement and an all-around representative of WCA.

ACSI Distinguished Student – High school students will be recognized by ACSI for outstanding ability in one or more of the areas of academics, athletics, art, music, leadership, or service.

Most Improved Student recognizes a student in each grade that has made significant progress in overcoming academic and/or attitudinal challenges.

- 1<sup>st</sup> would be to consider improvement within the current school year.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> would be to consider improvement from last year through this year.

Most Outstanding Student recognizes a student in each grade who demonstrates the following qualities.

- High academics
- School spirit
- Character
- Respectful to students and faculty
- Positive attitude

Presidential Physical Fitness Award criteria are pre-determined by the PPFA. Students who meet the prescribed standards of athleticism will be recognized with this award.

WCA Spirit Award is presented to one student in the 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades who positively promotes WCA and actively participates in extra-curricular activities.

### All School Awards

Perfect Attendance is defined as no absences and no tardies over the course of the school year.

Excellent Attendance is defined as three or less absences and three or less tardies.

High Honor and Honor Roll Awards are presented to students for their individual academic achievement over the course of the school year.

Vocal Music and Band Awards are presented at the discretion of the instructors.