TOWN OF WESTLAKE
WESTLAKE ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY

Policy No. 6.04:

Date Board Adopted: **May 12, 2014**

Date Board Amended: **January, 22, 2024**

Effective Date: **Pending approval by TEA**

Policy Category: **Student Achievement**

Policy Name: **Graduation Policy**

Policy Goal: Establishing graduation requirements, defining commencement participation requirements, and determining Valedictorian, Salutatorian and Honor Graduate criteria.

Policy Description: Westlake Academy has a rigorous and enriching International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum that fosters college and career readiness. Students who graduate from Westlake Academy will therefore complete a program of study that includes high academic standards making them eligible for the Distinguished Level of Achievement recognition. The course offerings at Westlake Academy are specifically designed so that students who graduate with the Distinguished Level of Achievement undertake the full IB Diploma Programme.

Graduation Requirements:

The academic credit requirements for a Westlake Academy diploma are identified in the chart below:

Graduation Policy Credits: Foundation Plan and Distinguished Level of Achievement

GROUP		**Foundation Plan** Required Credits	**Westlake Academy** with Distinguished Level of Achievement Required Credits	
1	Language and Literature	4.0 English	4.0 English	4.0
2	Language Acquisition	2.0 Language B	2.0 Language B credits	2.0
3	Individuals and Societies	1.0 World Geography or World History	1.0 World Geography or World History	3.0
		1.0 US History	1.0 US History	
		0.5 Economics	0.5 Economics	
		0.5 Government	0.5 Government	
4	Sciences	1.0 Biology	1.0 Biology	4.0
		2.0 Lab Science	1.0 Lab Science	
			2.0 Science	
5	Mathematics	1.0 Algebra 1	1.0 Algebra 1	4.0
		1.0 Geometry	1.0 Geometry	
		1.0 Math	1.0 Algebra 2	
			1.0 Mathematics	
6	Arts / Electives	1.0 Fine Art	1.0 Fine Art	1.0
		5.0 Electives	7.0 Electives	7.0
PE	Physical Education	1.0 Physical Education	1.0 Physical Education	1.0
Total		22.0		26.0

Additional information

- High School credits can be earned in Language B, and Mathematics in Grade 7 and/or Grade 8.
- Students receiving Special Education Services are eligible to graduate under the Foundation High School Program with approval of their IEP committee or as otherwise allowed by federal law.
- Generally, all students must also achieve satisfactory performance on required state End of Course (EOC) assessments, unless excused by state or federal law. Westlake Academy will establish an individual graduation committee for an 11th or 12th grade student who has failed to comply with the EOC assessment instrument performance requirements under Texas Education Code 39.025 for not more than two courses. The individual graduation committee will be established at the end of or after the student's 11th grade year to determine whether the student may qualify to graduate without achieving satisfactory performance on the EOC assessment. Additional information about the members and the

responsibilities of a student's individual graduation committee will be provided in the Parent/Student Handbook.

Graduation Policy Credits: Texas First Program

Eligible Westlake Academy students may graduate early through the Texas First Program. Any student who wishes to graduate on the Texas First Program must obtain approval from the Head of School or their designee that the required criteria identified below have been met.

Eligible students must meet the following criteria:

- At least 22 high school credits earned;
- Final GPA equivalent of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale;
- Overall score in at least the 80th percentile on one or more of the following assessments: ACT, SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, TSIA/TSIA2, or GED; or, alternatively, a GPA in the top 10 percent of the student's class;
- Completion of the STAAR EOC exams in English I or II, Algebra I, and Biology, or completion of eligible substitute assessments; and
- Demonstration of mastery* in each subject area of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and a language other than English.

* The benchmarks of what constitutes mastery in each subject area is described in Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Section 21.52 (a)(2).

Additional Endorsements – Westlake Academy students who complete the Westlake Academy graduation requirements can also select and earn other endorsements as defined in the Texas Education Code.

Additional Requirements – Westlake Academy graduation candidates must complete the following Texas Education Code requirements to be eligible for graduation. These are:

- Each student must complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or a Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA).
- Complete CPR Training.
- Complete Proper Interaction with Peace Officer Training.

Early Graduation

Westlake Academy does not allow for early graduation unless a) the student has

satisfied all the requirements to graduate on the Texas First Program or b) the student has met the required credits of the Foundation High School Program AND the Head of School, or their designee, has determined it is in the best interest of the student to graduate early due to exceptional circumstances.

Eligibility to Participate in Commencement Ceremony – Westlake Academy seniors who have satisfied all Westlake Academy requirements for graduation are eligible to participate in the graduation ceremonies; however, disciplinary infractions may jeopardize a student's opportunity to participate in the commencement ceremony consistent with the student code of conduct and as determined by the Head of School.

For students who have not successfully completed all coursework, an exception may be made in the event that a senior lacks one (1) credit towards the graduation requirements. The student must have a plan approved by the Head of School to complete the credit prior to the beginning of the next school year. No other exceptions to participation in the graduation ceremony will be granted except as required by law.

Academic Recognition - Westlake Academy will recognize academic achievement through the establishment of a class Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Honor Graduates. These recognitions are determined based on a student's Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) as recorded at the end of the third reporting period of a student's senior year.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian – The graduating senior with the highest CGPA will be recognized as Valedictorian, and the graduating senior with the second highest CGPA will be recognized as Salutatorian. In the event of a tie for Valedictorian and/or Salutatorian, the Academy shall compute the weighted numerical grade average to a sufficient number of decimal places until the tie is broken. Additionally, Valedictorian and Salutatorian eligibility requires attendance at Westlake Academy for at least six consecutive semesters immediately preceding graduation. Further, the Head of School may deem a student ineligible for these recognitions if the student is in violation of Westlake Academy's student code of conduct, other school requirements, Town code, or State law.

Honor Graduates - A graduating senior whose weighted CGPA is 94% or above at the end of the third quarter of the student's senior year will be determined to be an Honor Graduate and will be duly recognized at commencement.

Rank in Class - Rank in class is determined by CGPA and will be used for the purposes of:

- Identifying students eligible to obtain automatic admission to Texas public universities based upon a university's uniform admission policy and in accordance with the Texas Education Code. This information will be reported directly to institutions by Westlake Academy staff; and

- Determining Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

Outside of the above circumstances, Westlake Academy is a non-ranking high school.

Operational guidelines consistent with this policy will be detailed and published in the Parent/Student Handbook.

Students Receiving Special Education Services – Westlake Academy will comply with federal and state laws and regulations applicable to graduation requirements for eligible students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

To the extent required by law, Westlake Academy will provide a summary of performance for graduating students receiving special education services. This summary will consider, as appropriate, the views of the parent and student and written recommendations from adult service agencies on how to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals as well as any required evaluation information.

The Academy shall issue a certificate of attendance to a student who receives special education services and who has completed four years of high school but has not completed the student's individualized education program (IEP). A student eligible to receive a certificate of attendance shall be allowed to participate in a commencement ceremony with students receiving high school diplomas. A student may participate in only one commencement ceremony under this provision.

Dates Amended:
10/05/15
11/02/15
05/06/19
09/13/21
05/23/22
01/22/24