

2024-2025

WESTLAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

QUALITY PROFILE





Superintendent's Message

What makes a house a home? It's not just the walls and roof—it's the people inside, the care they share, and the way they support one another. The same can be said for our schools. Westlake City Schools are more than just buildings where lessons are taught; we are a community where students are nurtured, encouraged, and given the opportunity to grow into their best selves.

In this issue of Behind the W, you'll see how our students shine—both in the classroom and beyond—thanks to the dedication of our staff, the support of our families, and the generosity of our community. This publication celebrates the people who make Westlake special, from our outstanding educators and volunteers to the organizations that invest in our students' success.

This edition of Behind the W highlights the incredible partnerships, traditions, and achievements that make Westlake City Schools such a special place. We're excited to share that University Hospitals has renewed its partnership with our district, further supporting the health and well-being of our students. We also celebrate the invaluable contributions of our support organizations, including the Westlake Demons Athletic Boosters, Westlake Demons Music Boosters, Westlake Council of Parent and Teacher Associations, Westlake Educational Foundation, and Westlake Alumni Association. You'll also read about one of our most beloved traditions, the Rose Arch at Westlake High School's Homecoming, and the latest class of outstanding alumni being inducted into the Westlake Alumni Association Hall of Fame.

Thank you for being a part of our Westlake family and for your unwavering support in helping our students thrive. We hope you enjoy this issue and take pride in the strength and spirit of our Westlake community!

Sincerely,
Dr. Scott Goggin
Superintendent

University Hospitals Expands Support for Westlake City Schools with Renewed Partnership

University Hospitals (UH) is strengthening its partnership with Westlake City Schools through a renewed \$500,000 commitment and expanded athletic training support, reinforcing a shared dedication to student health, safety, and success.

As part of this 10-year agreement, UH's investment will enhance athletic training resources, increasing from one to 2.5 trainers—providing expanded care for high school athletes and, for the first time, dedicated support for middle school students.

UH will also retain naming rights to Westlake's sports facilities, demonstrating its deep-rooted commitment to the district. This partnership ensures that our student-athletes continue to benefit from expert care, injury prevention, and recovery resources.

We are grateful for UH's ongoing support, which strengthens our athletic programs and promotes the well-being of all Westlake students. Together, we are building a healthier, stronger community.



FISCAL EXCELLENCE

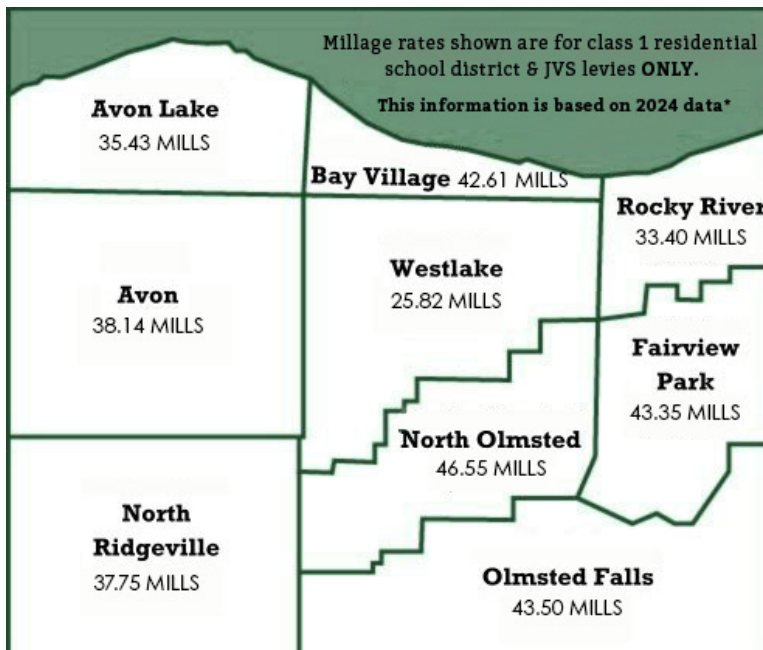
Commitment to Fiscal Excellence

At Westlake City School District (WCSD), we are dedicated to maintaining strong financial stewardship while providing a high-quality education for our students. This sustained financial care has earned WCSD the Auditor of the State Award for the past 20 years a reflection of our commitment to transparency, accountability, and responsible financial management.

Our district's Board of Education and administration deeply value our community's investment in our schools, and we work diligently to ensure that every dollar is used effectively to support student learning. As such, we actively monitor and control costs to maintain WCSD as one of the best values in Northeast Ohio for our community's families.

We are grateful for our community's ongoing support and will continue to prioritize both fiscal responsibility and educational excellence in 2025 and beyond.

Todd Hopkins
CFO/Treasurer



“We understand the impact of the recent property revaluation on our community and remain committed to financial transparency. Westlake continues to maintain one of the lowest school tax rates in the area, and thanks to careful financial management, we have not received an additional operating levy since 2006. Our goal is to stay off the ballot as long as possible while ensuring a strong, stable, and high-quality education for our students.”

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SCHOOL RESIDENTIAL EFFECTIVE RATE
WESTLAKE	25.824247
Strongsville	29.634207
Cuyahoga Heights	30.045378
Brecksville/Broadview Hts	33.154630
Rocky River	33.403796
Independence	33.853855
Berea	33.865537
Orange	35.066739
East Cleveland	35.303849
Beachwood	36.491531
Lakewood	37.564588
Parma	38.275296
Bedford	39.104243
Solon	39.429333
Cleveland	39.804838
North Royalton	41.419562
Bay Village	42.610912
Mayfield	42.698713
Fairview Park	43.347467
Olmsted Falls	43.497227
Chagrin Falls	44.131048
Richmond Hts	44.713982
Warrensville Heights	45.229331
Euclid	45.994028
S. Euclid / Lyndhurst	46.131930
North Olmsted	46.548558
Brooklyn	49.471735
Maple Hts	55.092061
Garfield Hts	58.651373
Cleveland Hts / Univ. Hts	59.624752
Shaker Hts	68.707880

*School Residential Effective Rate is the tax rate homeowners pay in property taxes for the local school district, including vocational education.

**Source: Data has been compiled from Cuyahoga County, Lorain County, & Medina County DTE 515 tax reports.

COMMITMENT BEYOND OUR CAMPUSES

Celebrating the Impact of Our Support Organizations

The Westlake City School District is proud to partner with several outstanding support organizations that make a lasting impact on our schools. From funding innovative projects to fostering school spirit and creating enriching opportunities for students, these groups are essential to our success.

Westlake Demons Athletic Boosters:

SUPPORTING STUDENT-ATHLETES AND BUILDING SCHOOL SPIRIT



The Westlake Demons Athletic Boosters (WDAB) is a nonprofit organization of volunteers who work to support athletic programs at

Westlake High School (WHS) and Lee Burneson Middle School (LBMS). WDAB's mission goes beyond fundraising—it aims to build camaraderie, school spirit, and student pride within the schools and the broader Westlake community.

Over the past eight years, WDAB has contributed more than \$600,000 to enhance the athletic experience for student-athletes. This incredible impact is made possible through collaborative efforts, corporate sponsorships, and generous contributions from families, coaching staff, and the broader community. WDAB supports 24 athletic teams at WHS and 17 teams at LBMS, benefiting over 500 student-athletes.

For the 2024-2025 school year, WDAB volunteers continue to go above and beyond by staffing, stocking, and running all indoor and outdoor concessions (excluding football games) and managing The W Shop, the go-to spirit wear destination for Demon Nation.

WDAB's commitment not only maximizes opportunities for teams to remain competitive but also promotes inclusivity and pride among students. Their efforts ensure that athletics remain a cornerstone of the Westlake student experience.

For more information or to get involved, visit westlakeathleticboosters.org.



Photo credit: Ripcho Studios

Westlake Demons Music Boosters:

ENHANCING MUSIC EDUCATION AND PERFORMANCE



Westlake Music Boosters are committed to enhancing music education and performance in our schools, encompassing all students and grades while embracing all forms of musical expression. This support is made possible by memberships, business sponsorships, fundraising activities, and volunteers.

The Westlake Music Boosters record all music concerts and make them accessible on the Westlake Music Boosters YouTube channel. One cherished tradition they uphold is the renowned "Music a la Mode" event—a day-long program held at the Westlake High School Performing Arts Center (PAC) that showcases the district's musical talents across band, orchestra, and choral groups for grades 5-12. This event, serving as the largest fundraiser for music programs in our schools, underscores the Boosters' unwavering commitment to nurturing musical excellence and creating opportunities for students to shine.

For more information or to get involved, visit westlakemusicboosters.org.

The Westlake Council of Parent and Teacher Associations:

ADVOCATING FOR EVERY CHILD AND STRENGTHENING THE WESTLAKE COMMUNITY

The Westlake Council of Parent and Teacher Associations (WCPTAs) is a volunteer umbrella organization supporting the five PTA units within the Westlake City School District. WCPTAs is an affiliate of the National PTA, the oldest and largest association devoted to child advocacy in America. Rooted in this profound mission, WCPTAs is a powerful voice and a reliable resource for families and communities, as well as a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child in our district.

Each school year, parents, grandparents, and other devoted family members, as well as teachers, school staff, administration, and community partners, channel collective efforts towards the advancement of education, health, and safety for all Westlake students. In the 2023-2024 school year, PTA volunteers contributed over 9,400 service hours to the Westlake community.

With fundraised dollars in 2023-2024, WCPTAs and our PTA units provided \$21,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors and awarded over \$12,000 to staff to fund grants that directly impacted critical curriculum initiatives from Pre-K through grade 12. In addition, in collaboration with district staff, teachers, and community partners, your PTAs invested \$72,609 to provide programs like STEM Fest, a Wellness Fair, Diversity Week, Kindness Run, literacy programs, art shows, Veterans Day events, family fun nights, and more, serving our mission to make every Westlake child's potential a reality.



Being a PTA member provides an invaluable opportunity to connect with other families and school staff. Membership also helps families gain insights into what is going on in the school community, as well as build rapport and discuss issues directly with the change makers. To learn more about Westlake PTAs, visit bit.ly/wearewcpta.



Enhancing Opportunities for Students

The Westlake Educational Foundation (WEF) plays a pivotal role in enhancing educational opportunities for students in the Westlake City Schools. Established in 1987 as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, the Foundation is dedicated to enriching the educational experiences of students in alignment with the district's mission to "Educate for Excellence." Through grant funding, WEF empowers teachers and administrators to implement innovative and creative projects that go beyond the standard curriculum.

Over the past four years, WEF has awarded more than \$68,000 in grants, supporting impactful initiatives such as sensory and enrichment equipment for special needs students, classroom calm kits for stress relief, outdoor learning spaces at DIS and LBMS, pottery wheels at DIS and WHS, and a 3-D printer at WHS.

History of the Rose Arch

Westlake High School's Rose Arch: A Cherished Homecoming Tradition



For more than 50 years, Westlake High School has celebrated homecoming with the Rose Arch assembly, a time-honored tradition recognizing outstanding senior students. Selected by faculty and staff, Rose Arch members exemplify excellence in academics, school involvement, and citizenship.

Each year, chosen seniors are paired together to perform a short skit during the Rose Arch Assembly. Following the performances, the students create a symbolic "Rose Arch", through which the Homecoming Royal Court—



nominated by their peers—walks. The tradition honors a wide range of student leaders, from those excelling in academics and athletics to those making quiet yet meaningful contributions to the school community.

Over the years, the skits have evolved, becoming more elaborate and entertaining, reflecting the creativity and spirit of Westlake students. While the tradition has adapted, its core purpose remains the same—celebrating the character, leadership, and school pride that define Westlake High School.



Photo credit: Bob Tuneberg

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Westlake Alumni Association Announces 2025 Hall of Fame Inductees

The Westlake Alumni Association has announced the 2025 inductees into the Westlake High School Hall of Fame, recognizing outstanding alumni, athletes, and community contributors.

This year's Athletic Category honorees include Bob Smith (Class of 1969), a standout golfer who achieved the highest finish in school history as State Runner-up, and Bob MacKenzie (Class of 1971), a three-sport athlete and record-holding basketball player. Additionally, the 2012 WHS baseball team will be honored for its historic run to the Division I State Championship game.

In the Distinguished Category, Nick DiCello (Class of 1965), a successful entrepreneur and founder of Ohio State Waterproofing, and Chad DiLillo (Class of 2010), a dedicated supporter of WHS athletics, will be recognized.

The Honorary Category inductee is Art Daniels, a longtime educator and coach whose 35-year career shaped Westlake athletics and earned him numerous coaching accolades.

Inductees were recognized at the January 24th Westlake High School varsity boys basketball game, and the official induction ceremony will take place September 25, 2025 at LaCentre Banquet Facility during Homecoming weekend. Congratulations to all honorees!



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Team Hope/ Leukemia Lymphoma Society Student Visionaries

**KAOVYA VEL AND
ALLISON GRANZIER**

Team Hope at Westlake High School competed in the Student Visionaries of the Year competition to raise funds for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, surpassing last year's \$30,168 total. The team exceeded their goal, raising over \$50,000 and making a tremendous impact in the fight against blood cancers! After shadowing a pediatric oncology doctor and witnessing the reality of childhood cancer, the team is more committed than ever to making a difference, with 100% of funds raised going directly to the cause.

Westlake Elementary School Toy Drive

**SKYLAR HOTZ,
MAEVE GALLAGHER,
AND VAIDA COYNE**

Westlake Elementary School students organized a January 2025 toy drive to support University Children's Hospital, collecting a variety of items to bring comfort and joy to young patients. Donations included word search puzzles, card games, fidgets, books, Hot Wheels, Play-Doh, baby toys, crayons, markers, and dry erase boards—each chosen to help brighten a child's hospital stay.



WHS Unified Sports

LINA GHANEM

WHS junior Lina Ghanem is a standout both on and off the court. As a member of the basketball team, Best Buddies, Arabic Club, and Unified Sports, she leads with compassion, dependability, and humility. In Unified Sports, Lina's kindness and patience create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued. She is a true role model, showing that leadership is about lifting others up.



Green and White Review Star

DANNY YAMAN

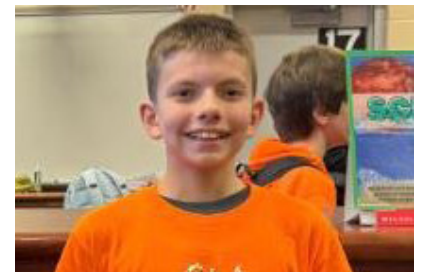
Danny Yaman, a talented 5th grader, consistently achieves high marks, with grades above 98% in advanced coursework. He showcases his musical abilities as a baritone player in the 5th grade band and a vocal performer in the Green and White Review. In addition to his musical pursuits, Danny takes piano and vocal lessons and practices karate at Horizon ATA Martial Arts in Westlake. His diverse talents and dedication to his interests make him a standout student.

Academic Excellence and Leadership

ARIELLA VANHOOSE

Ariella VanHoose, a 6th grader, excels academically with grades above 98% in advanced coursework. She is

involved in the DIS Environmental Club, Math Club, and DIS Choir. Ariella competes in regional and national tournaments with Cleveland Force Soccer's Pre-ECNL team and achieved a perfect score on the WordMasters Vocabulary Competition—one of only four students nationwide to do so.



LBMS Standout

IAN CONNORS

Eighth grader Ian Connors is a dedicated student leader at LBMS. He serves as student council vice president, first chair in honors band, and a morning announcement volunteer. He also runs the basketball scoreboard, competes in track, and plays the clarinet. Outside school, Ian enjoys skiing, sailing on Lake Erie, and hopes to own a business one day. His enthusiasm and involvement make him a true role model!

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A High-Quality, Inclusive Learning Experience: Inside Our Preschool Program



Our preschool program serves children ages 3-5 with disabilities, offering a nurturing learning environment across six half-day classrooms and one full-day classroom. The program operates Monday through Thursday, with Fridays dedicated to team meetings, play-based evaluations, and community collaboration.

A key feature of our program is the inclusion of typically developing peers, providing role models and fostering an enriching experience for all students. Students engage with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards, focusing on social-emotional skills, literacy, math, and science. In addition to classroom activities, students visit the library and participate in music activities.



We serve up to 56 students with disabilities and 44 typically developing peers, and have partnerships with local preschools, including Play and Learn and Best Beginning. Specialized support is provided by our itinerant staff at these locations.

In Fall 2025, our preschool earned the Gold Rating through Ohio's Step Up to Quality system, the highest rating a preschool can achieve. This reflects our commitment to excellence, based on national standards proven to enhance young learners' outcomes.

Our program thrives through collaboration with county and community organizations such as Bright Beginnings, Connecting for Kids, and the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities. These partnerships strengthen our services and provide valuable resources for our students and families. We remain committed to supporting every child's growth and success.



American Flag Dedication at Westlake High School

HONORING TRADITION AND PATRIOTISM

On September 24, 2024, Westlake High School hosted a special ceremony to unveil a new American flag installation during the girls' volleyball match. Sponsored by the Westlake Alumni Association and funded by generous donors, the event highlighted the community's dedication to patriotism. The centerpiece of the installation is a large mechanical flag that descends via remote control, combining tradition with innovation.

The flag, placed in a prominent spot in the gym, was introduced during the varsity match's opening. Attendees witnessed its first descent while the school choir performed the National Anthem, creating a powerful reminder of the values the American flag represents—liberty, justice, and unity.

Westlake High School and the Alumni Association thank the donors and community members who made this memorable addition possible. Their support has created a lasting symbol of hope and pride for the community.



Pawsitive Vibes Dog Treats

A STUDENT-RUN BUSINESS PROMOTING INCLUSION AND LIFE SKILLS

Students in Mrs. Blahnik's class at Lee Burneson Middle School (LBMS) have launched an exciting entrepreneurial venture: Pawsitive Vibes Dog Treats! This student-run business not only creates delicious treats for furry friends but also serves as a platform to support inclusive activities at school and fund classroom projects.

Through this initiative, students are developing essential life skills that will prepare them for future employment. Every student has an important role to play, whether it's measuring ingredients, managing orders, or delivering treats. The program also fosters meaningful connections within the school and community, helping to build relationships and promote acceptance.

How It Works:

- Treats are made every Tuesday and delivered on Thursdays.
- Place your order by completing the Google Form by Tuesday at noon. The form will close each week once we reach the maximum order limit.
- Treats will be delivered to students' 6th-period classes or can be picked up in the LBMS main office.

The Pawsitive Vibes team is grateful for the community's support and loves seeing happy customers—both human and canine! To spread even more joy, they're inviting customers to share photos of their dogs enjoying the treats. These pictures will be displayed on the classroom's Pawsitive Vibes bulletin board, providing daily inspiration for the team. Photos can be emailed to blahnik@wlake.org.

Thank you for supporting Pawsitive Vibes Dog Treats and helping us make a difference in our school and community!

Scan for more info or to order!



Growing Minds, Greener Futures

DOVER INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS DRIVE OUTDOOR LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Students at Dover Intermediate School (DIS) are making a lasting environmental impact through a multi-phase outdoor learning project. Led by teachers Angela Germano and Bridget Royce, the initiative integrates math, science, and real-world problem-solving to create sustainable outdoor spaces.

The project began in 2020 with a native garden, designed and built by students to support local wildlife and to learn about conservation solutions for local pollinators. In the following years, students expanded their efforts by designing a stage, additional pollinator spaces, and a comprehensive outdoor learning area.



Most recently, DIS earned the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Wild Schools designation, and students organized a celebration to educate the community about environmental stewardship.

This hands-on learning experience has been supported by \$25,000 in grants/community partnerships, The Pattie Group, the Westlake City Service Department, and parent volunteers. Students have collaborated across grade levels, worked with high school mentors, and engaged in service projects with the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Through this initiative, students are not only creating outdoor spaces but also fostering a love for nature and a commitment to sustainability that will benefit the school and community for years to come.

K-12 STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

The district has a 1:1 **TECHNOLOGY RATIO** for all students

Project Link offers programming over 250 days each year with more than **1,500 STUDENTS PARTICIPATING ANNUALLY**, providing an excess of 90,000 hours of care since last year to families utilizing our before/after school and during the summer months

WHS participates in **26 VARSITY SPORTS** through the OHSAA

K-4 students receive **WORLD LANGUAGE, HEALTH AND TECHNOLOGY SPECIALS** IN ADDITION TO MUSIC, HEALTH AND PE

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE IS 23 IN WES; Student to core teacher ratio is 20:1 at DIS and LBMS

Social workers available in **EACH BUILDING** to support student and family needs

147 LBMS STUDENTS (53.3%) entered WHS with high school credits

94 SPECIAL EDUCATION, SUPERVISION AND OTHER CLASSROOM SUPPORT STAFF to assist student learning throughout the district

GIFTED SERVICES begin in Kindergarten. 100% of gifted students served

110 STUDENTS recognized as AP scholars

100% of English language learners served, 15 languages are spoken by students in the district

11 district counselors **PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES** for our students

BAND, ORCHESTRA AND CHOIR ARE AVAILABLE to all of our students starting in 5th grade

3 FULL-TIME NURSES are employed by the district to support student health and wellness

3 CERTIFIED MEDIA SPECIALISTS support our school buildings

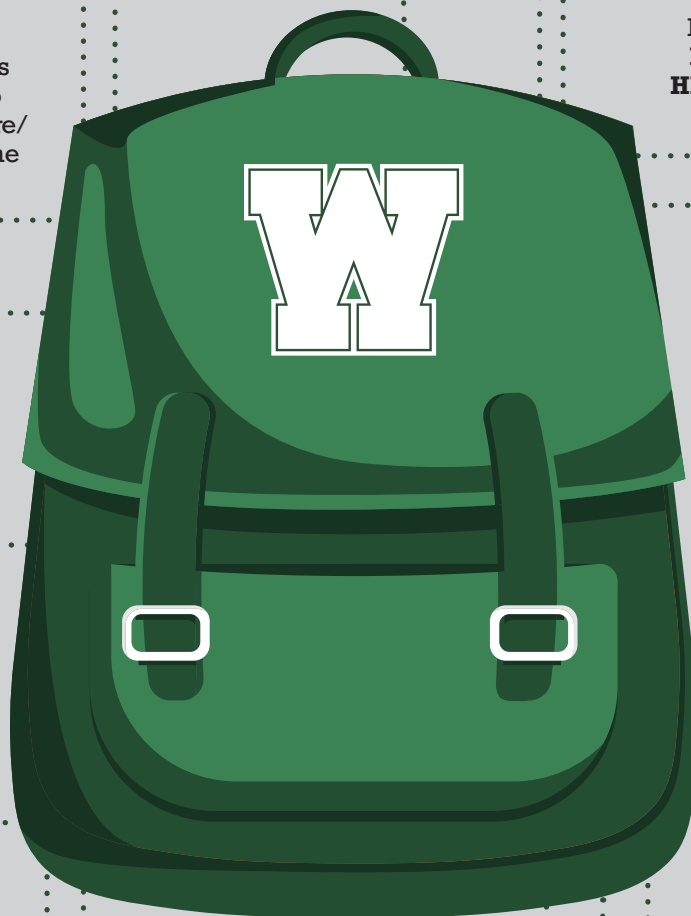
TITLE 1 SUPPORT SERVICES available for students in grades K-6

103 WHS STUDENTS enrolled in 170 College Credit Plus (CCP) programs

Student-focused curriculum programs such as **"WHAT I NEED WEDNESDAYS" (WIN)** at DIS, offer custom learning opportunities and enrichment and support services for students

87.4% of teachers hold an **ADVANCED DEGREE OF MASTERS OR HIGHER**

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION in welding and Micro Electromechanical Systems (MEMS)



CLASS *of* 2024



Students with a GPA
of 4.0 or higher

Graduating
Students



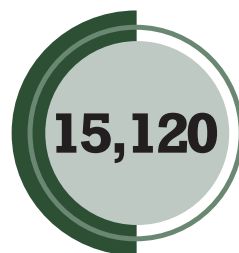
Total University
Scholarships Awarded
to Top 20 Students

Career-Tech Industry
Credentials Earned



Entering Military
Air Force • Army • Marines • Navy

NCAA College
Student Athletes



Career Service
Hours

National Merit Finalists

Stine Lillian Adkins
Mirabella Sophia Zingales

National Merit Scholars

Rohit Jain
Aubrey Kathleen Winczewski

OHIO COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Akron University • Baldwin Wallace University • Bowling Green State University • Case Western Reserve University • Cleveland State University • College of Wooster • Columbus State Community College • Cuyahoga Community College • Denison University • Hocking College • John Carroll University • Kent State University • Kenyon College • Lorain County Community College • Miami University • Notre Dame College • Oberlin College • Ohio Northern University • Ohio University • The Ohio State University • University of Cincinnati • University of Dayton • University of Findlay • University of Toledo • Xavier University

OUT-OF-STATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Allegheny College • Baylor University • Belmont University • Brigham Young University • Carnegie Mellon University • CUNY - Laguardia • Embry Riddle Aeronautical University • George Washington University • High Point University • The University of South Florida • Illinois Wesleyan University • Indiana University • Lafayette College • Padua University • Michigan State University • Mississippi State University • New York University • Nova Southeastern University • Palm Beach Atlantic University • Penn State • Rowan University • Purdue University • The Jordanian University • University of Alabama • University of Connecticut • University of Michigan • University of Pittsburgh • University of South Carolina • University of Tampa • University of Virginia • Vanderbilt University • Westminster College

Trade Schools

Ohio Peterbilt
Raphael's Beauty School
Polaris Career Center
IBEW 129

Educate for Excellence.
Learn with Purpose.

Westlake Contact Information

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Joseph Kraft, President
Elizabeth Pirnat, Vice President
John Finucane
Barbara Leszynski
Brad Lamb

ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent	Dr. Scott Goggin	440-871-7300
Treasurer	Mr. Todd Hopkins	440-835-6301
Associate Superintendent of Instruction	Mrs. Amanda Musselman	440-250-1269
Director of Secondary Education	Mr. Paul Wilson	440-250-1240
Business Office	Mr. Adam House	440-835-6319
Human Resources	Mr. Robert Maver	440-250-1267
Project Link	Mr. Michael Waters	440-835-6306
Student Services	Ms. Jane Reilly Perry	440-250-1266
Technology	Dr. Pete Zagray	440-250-1283
Transportation	Mr. Quinton Banks	440-835-6313

BUILDING DIRECTORY

Administration/Central Office 440-871-7300
Dover Intermediate School 440-835-5494
Lee Burneson Middle School 440-835-6340
Westlake Elementary School 440-250-1200
Westlake High School 440-835-6352

Westlake City School District

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STAY CONNECTED:

Explore updates, news, and resources on our website: wlake.org

SOCIAL MEDIA:

X: @WestlakeSchools

Facebook: /WestlakeSchools

Instagram: [westlakeschools](https://www.instagram.com/westlakeschools)

Stay Connected with ParentSquare

Don't miss important school updates, announcements, and messages! ParentSquare is the easiest way to stay informed and engaged with your child's education. Sign up today to receive real-time notifications, communicate with teachers, and access essential school information—all in one place.



The ParentSquare apps are free and available in both the Apple iOS and Android stores.