

The **W**ESTLAKE Insider



FALL/WINTER 2025

TODAY . TOMORROW . ETERNITY

LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Stacey Walter



**Welcome
to The
Westlake
Insider!**

What a joyful and faith-filled year 2025–2026 was for WLA! From our Kindergarten Celebration to 8th Grade Promotion, each moment reflected the growth, perseverance, and faith of our students. As we close this chapter and look ahead to what's next—new grades, new goals, and new opportunities—we do so with hearts full of gratitude for all that God has done and the bright future He continues to unfold before us. Together, we remain steadfast in our mission of *Preparing Students for Today, Tomorrow, and Eternity*.

OUR KINDERGARTEN CELEBRATION was a time of pure excitement as our youngest learners proudly demonstrated their accomplishments—reading, writing, and even conquering addition! With eager hearts, they looked ahead to first grade, ready to continue shining the light of Jesus.

OUR 5TH GRADE CULMINATION CHAPEL provided a meaningful close to their childhood years. Students selected Bible verses to anchor themselves as they stepped into middle school, ready to grow in independence and deepen their identity in Christ.

THE 8TH GRADE PROMOTION was a bittersweet celebration, filled with gratitude for all they accomplished and anticipation for what lies ahead in high school. Last year was especially historic, as four of our 8th graders courageously said “yes” to trailblazing the way for Westlake High School. Beginning something new takes vision and bravery, and we are so proud of their leadership.

This school year has brought even more to celebrate. The excitement of adding our very own high school has filled the campus with energy and hope for the future. Plans are already underway to advance the mission of Westlake with the construction of a new six-classroom building—expanding opportunities for learning, growth, and continued excellence in Christ-centered education.

We honored our amazing grandparents, celebrating the legacy they cultivate within our students. Their faith, wisdom, and love leave an irreplaceable mark on each generation and remind us of the priceless gift of family in shaping character and faith.

Guiding us through all of this is our Bible theme for the year, rooted in **GALATIANS 5:22–23**: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” These words shape our vision for the year, reminding us that true growth is not only measured in academics and accomplishments but in the way Christ is formed within us.

As we reflect on where God has brought us and look forward to all He has in store, we are filled with gratitude for His blessings on our school community. Truly, Westlake is a place where students are growing, families are thriving, and Christ is at the center of it all.

IN CHRIST,
Stacey Walter

HEAD OF SCHOOL, Westlake Lutheran Academy



WESTLAKE LUTHERAN ACADEMY IS TRULY BLESSED BY YOUR *Generosity!*



We are deeply grateful for the unwavering support of our incredible community. Through your gifts, volunteer efforts, and faithful prayers, you are making a lasting impact on the lives of our students and staff. Your generosity continues to fuel the mission and vision of Westlake Lutheran Academy.

Thanks to the outstanding support at last spring's gala, we've made significant improvements to our campus. These include a major upgrade to the playground and the completion of the **Wildcat Den**—our new weight room for middle and high school students.

Since January 2025, we have received an incredible **\$833,084 in gifts and pledges**. This includes support from the gala, contributions to special projects, and gifts toward the next exciting phase of our **Advancing Westlake for Today, Tomorrow, and Eternity Campaign**.



\$833,084

gifts and pledges received
since January



16,821 ft²

new education building is
the next major goal

LOOKING AHEAD: A NEW EDUCATION BUILDING

The next major goal of our campaign is the construction of a **16,821-square-foot Education Building**. This facility is essential to support the expansion of our high school program and the continued expansion of PreK–8th grade. We are thrilled to have launched our high school this fall with our first freshman class—the **Class of 2029!**

We believe that, aside from our founding in 2009, growing a full high school will be one of the most pivotal moments in the history of Westlake Lutheran Academy. We are committed to creating innovative and inspiring educational spaces where students can thrive academically and grow as Christ-centered individuals.

With these advancements and more on the horizon, the future is brighter than ever at Westlake Lutheran Academy. Thank you for continuing to walk alongside us in this journey. Together, we are building something truly extraordinary.

GO WILDCATS!

Bret Walter

CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

VOLLEYBALL TEAM'S SEASON OFF TO A SOLID START

Our Westlake Lady Wildcats are having a spectacular season led by captains Emmie Meaux and Kate Katapodis. Their current record is 7-2 heading into the conference tournament as a 2nd seed. Then off to the Lutheran State VB Tournament in San Antonio. Go get 'em Lady Wildcats!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 22: All School Chapel
Oct 22: MS/HS One Act Play
Oct. 27-29: MS Retreat Camp Lonestar
Oct. 28-29: HS Retreat Galveston
Oct. 31: Parent Teacher Conferences
PreK3–5th Grade
Nov. 11: All School Chapel
Nov. 19: Christmas Dance Showcase
Nov. 24-29: Thanksgiving Break



Westlake Happenings



KINDERGARTEN CELEBRATION

Our Kindergarten students shined during their ceremony, showcasing their talents through singing, speaking, and presenting—marking an exciting step in their school journey. Students were recognized with awards for the Godly qualities they displayed throughout the year. Families also had the opportunity to view their portfolios, celebrating the growth and achievements of the entire Kindergarten year.



8TH GRADE PROMOTION

Our 8th graders celebrated the completion of their middle school years, reflecting on their hard work, growth, and the many memories they've created along the way. From classroom achievements to lasting friendships, promotion honors the journey they've shared. This milestone also marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter, as students step into high school and beyond with confidence, prepared by the lessons and experiences they've gained at WLA.



VERITAS AWARD

The Veritas Award is presented to an 8th grade student who has attended Westlake Lutheran Academy for at least two years and best exemplifies the school's mission. This award recognizes a student who lives out WLA's pillars of excellence: *Walking with Jesus, Loving Relationships, and Academic Excellence*. It honors a student who not only achieves academically but also models integrity, kindness, and leadership, serving as an example to the entire school community. The 2024-25 Veritas Award recipient is **Ainslie Milne**, who has been at WLA since PreK-3 and is one of our trailblazing high school students.

TRAILBLAZING THE WAY

The Freshman Class, the Class of 2029, has committed to be the first graduating class of Westlake Lutheran Academy. These students are paving the way for future Wildcats, demonstrating leadership, courage, and determination as they blaze a trail forward for others to follow.



TRAILBLAZERS OF '29



STEVE ZEHNDER
Principal



GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST!

I want to express to you how excited I am to be walking with you at Westlake Lutheran Academy. As a long time educator of over 35 years, I am grateful to be a part of this new chapter in the life of Westlake Lutheran Academy. As our school family continues to grow—not just in numbers, but in faith, purpose, and vision, and our hearts being rooted in Christ, we look towards the future. The journey of growth is rarely easy—new beginnings often come with challenges, tough decisions, and stretching moments. Yet, we are reminded that where God calls, He also equips.

My vision for Westlake focuses on our three pillars: **Walking with Jesus, Loving Relationships, and Academic Excellence.** As this vision is accomplished, we will see our lower school, middle school and high school grow, adding more classrooms per grade, hiring teachers for those classrooms and the lower school “pushing” the middle school down the hallway and out into some of the new available high school classrooms.

Let us model for our children what it means to trust in Jesus and walk faithfully, even when the path is unfamiliar. Facilities growth will of course be determined as our student body grows, but with my past involvement is starting and growing a Lutheran high school, I have a glimpse of the future. Let’s us be a family that walks in grace, boldly moving forward, one body, one mission. The future of Westlake looks bright!

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6

May the Lord’s blessings be upon us, may His face shine on us and grant us His peace.

Mr. Zehnder

PRINCIPAL, Westlake Lutheran Academy



**LET US MODEL
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AINSLIE MILNE . MAKAYLEN DAVENPORT . LUKE TURNER . ADDISYN KATOPODIS . NIXON HALL

THE GLC ACADEMY IS BEING LED BY

MRS. EMILY FALVEY
and MR. BRET WALTER.

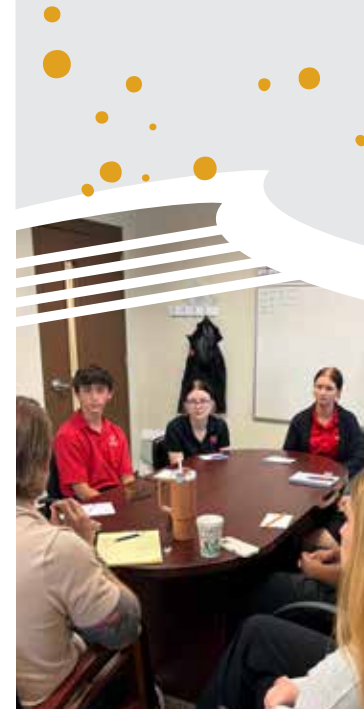
Mrs. Falvey is blending GLC lessons into English class and students are writing meaningfully about their experiences.

WELSLAKE'S CLASS OF 2029 AND THE LAUNCH OF THE GLC ACADEMY (GRIT, LEADERSHIP, AND CAREER) The GLC academy at WLA is a four-year journey during HS that allows students to pursue and develop GRIT and leadership skills that prepare them to be successful. Students will gain hands-on exposure to a variety of careers from highly successful individuals to help identify career interests.

The class of 2029 is learning how to professionally communicate, learning interviewing skills, researching fields, serving others, and attending career visits. On September 24th, we welcomed our first highly successful professional, Mr. Casey Knight, President of Financial Search for Encore Search Partners. Mr. Casey shared what he does for a living and his unique journey from high school to a where he is blessed to be today. Students learned that success to him includes having gratitude. He explained that “Failing is Winning” because of what you learn from it. They discussed what it takes to become an expert, and Mr. Casey shared the characteristics his company values most in their people.

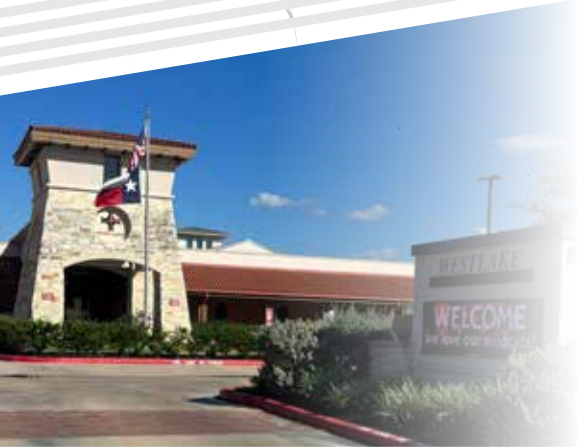
In October, students are participating in an overnight retreat that includes a service project with Moody Gardens, visiting the Moody Gardens Aquarium, and having some fun together on the beach in Galveston!

WLA students that complete the requirements of the GLC Academy will be awarded an Honors Certificate and signified at graduation with a distinctive cord. Additionally, students will be able to include their participation in the academy on their resume for college applications and write effectively about their experiences in application essays.



FALL/WINTER 2025
WESTLAKE LUTHERAN ACADEMY

**PREPARING STUDENTS FOR TODAY,
TOMORROW & ETERNITY**



CHECK OUT OUR
WEBSITE, AND FOLLOW
US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



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