



WESTLAKE HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Westlake High School Family,

Thank you all for a wonderful first two weeks of school. Thank you parents for all that you are doing at home to ensure that our school day runs smoothly at school- it is truly a partnership. As many of you already know, ESPN was here Friday filming a story about our Becoming Empowered Through Education (BEE) Club. BEE Club is a mentorship organization for our young ladies. Through innovative meetings, activities, and mentorship, seniors help support freshman female students to achieve their goals. We are very proud of our young ladies- they did a wonderful job representing Westlake. The feature story will air during South Eastern Conference (SEC) halftime football games. I will let you know the specific date and time in the near future. In addition to our students excelling in the classroom, they are also making meaningful contributions within the community. Please continue to encourage your children to become involved in a sport or club.

Enrollment Update:

Our current enrollment as of today is 2020- this far exceeds our projected growth. We are happy to receive our new families. There are a lot of great things happening at Westlake that we are glad to share with our new families. The Student Services Department is in the process of balancing classes with high numbers to ensure that we are compliant with state and district regulations and to reduce class sizes. This could possibly mean schedule changes for your child's schedule. Please continue to be patient with us through this process. Our goal is to cause the least amount of disruption to our student body as we ensure that class sizes are reduced.

School Start and Dismissal Times

It is critical that our students arrive to school on time each day. The first bell rings at 8:20am. Our highest rate of tardies occurs during this time. We have gotten better since last year with student tardies, however we still have room for improvement. Students that ride the school bus (even if it's late) will not be marked tardy, so please encourage your child to ride the bus. The following are the consequences for being tardy to school:

Cumulative Tardies (Per Semester)	Consequences
1-3 Tardies	Warning
4-6 Tardies	After-School detention
7-9 Tardies	Saturday School/ISS
10+ Tardies	Report to ISS for the remainder of the period; ISS/OSS

Please be advised that juniors and seniors desiring to participate in prom and other activities will have additional behavioral and attendance expectations in order to participate. These expectations will be clearly communicated to students and parents.

New Teacher Spotlight

We are happy to welcome our new teachers and their expertise to the Westlake family. We highlight two of the new staff members below:

World Language Department: Jessie Downs

Where did you attend school? Agnes Scott College and pursuing Master at Georgia State

What are teaching? I will be teaching Spanish 1.

Why are I am excited about being at Westlake? I have always heard really great things about the school while I was at Langston Hughes. Based on the first week, I know that these rumors are true.

World Language Department: Nathalie Ettzevoglou

Where did you attend school? University of Richmond (B.A.); University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (M.A.); University of Connecticut (PhD expected Dec 2014, currently All But Dissertation status)

What are you teaching? French

Why are you excited about teaching at Westlake? After 4 years at the middle school level, I am excited about returning to teach at the high school level again. Also, Westlake is a great school to be!

Data Spotlight

FY 14 EOCT Highlight: Westlake's 11th graders last year posted a 91% pass rate on the American Literature EOCT. Our 10th grade students earned an 83% pass rate on the physical science EOCT.

This year the EOCT has changed to the Georgia Milestones assessment for all tested subject area. Parents will receive more information in the coming weeks about the assessments, but in the meantime, if you want to begin learning about the new assessment, please view this link: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/Introducing%20Georgia%20Milestones%20June%202014.pdf>

SAT Highlight: Overall, the students in the SAT class improved an average of **130 points from baseline (mock Saturday assessment) to formal SAT exam.** The increases were fairly evenly split across the three sections of the test: 46 Reading, 44 Math, 40 Writing. The student with the highest overall increase went up 420 points (130 in Critical Reading, 220 in Math, and 70 in Writing)! Sixteen students went up 250 points or more; 37 went up 200 points or more! These are just a few of the highlights from the SAT class.

Just imagine how much our overall student population could improve if we took advantage of the free resources on the Applerouth site- <http://www.applerouth.com/westlake>. The online resources have a \$99 retail value, but it is absolutely free for our 10th-12th grade students. 9th grade students

pay a nominal \$25 fee for a yearly subscription. Why spent thousands of dollars for college, when there are resources like this that can put our students in a situation where colleges are paying our students to attend their institutions? It's already happening at Westlake. Please visit the Applerouth site for this free information, all you need is your child's Student ID. If you have any questions in the process, please do not hesitate to contact Applerouth at info@applerouth.com or 404-728-0661.

Afterschool Pick-Up

In accordance with Fulton County policy and to ensure student safety, **it is critical that all students who are car riders are picked up no later than 4:30pm (this is an hour afterschool dismisses)**. This is a school safety issue because we do not have staff beyond this time to monitor students. If students are not remaining afterschool for scheduled tutoring, athletics or clubs, it is critical that they be picked-up on time. Students on campus after this time that are not afterschool for tutoring, athletics or clubs will be referred to the school social worker. If there is an emergency that keeps you from picking up your child on time, please contact the attendance office at Westlake to indicate that there is an emergency and who will be picking them up. This policy is also in effect for all athletic activities such as football or basketball games.

School Lunch

Please be reminded about the following guidelines:

- Students are not permitted to leave campus during lunch.
- Parents may drop off money if needed to purchase school lunch, **however no food should be brought to students during lunches**. We simply do not have the resources in our front office to facilitate that process.
- Students are permitted to bring in lunch from home. Unfortunately, the county has explained that we cannot purchase microwaves due to food safety, food sanitation and student safety concerns.

Student Dress Code

Westlake's dress code can be found on pages 11-12 of the Student Planner. Most students received their planners at the beginning of the year. Please ensure that your students leave all hats (this includes the young ladies) and headphones at home. If they are worn during the school day they will be confiscated by administration. Parents will have to set-up a time with administrators to pick up items. Cell phones are not permitted to be used during the school day unless it is being used for instructional purposes specified by the classroom teacher.

GHS GT Re-Test

Any students who are in need of re-taking the Georgia High School Graduation Test (content area subjects and/or writing) will need to sign up for each test. The state of Georgia requires the following for specific groups of students:

1. Students entering 9th grade for the first time before July 1, 2008 must pass all areas of the GHS GT for graduation.

2. Students entering 9th grade for the first time between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2011 must pass the GHSGT OR one of the EOCT in the corresponding subject areas for graduation.
3. Students entering 9th grade for the first time after June 2011 are not subject to the GHSGT content area graduation rule.
4. ALL students, regardless of their classification, must take and pass the Georgia High School Graduation Writing Test.

If your student fits the criteria for a GHSGT re-test, the deadline to sign-up and register is Thursday, August 21, 2014. Please have your student report to Ms. Oliver's office, 109 to sign-up and register for the GHSGT re-test.

Important Dates

- 1. Advanced Placement (AP) Night-** August 28th, 6:30-7:30pm, Westlake Auditorium
The PTSA will be using this time to also hold their annual meeting.

Purpose: Hear firsthand helpful tips on how to improve your child's AP scores. The PTSA will also share important information and updates.

- 2. Magnet Parent Meeting-** September 8th, 6:30-7:30pm, Westlake Auditorium

Purpose: Parents will have an opportunity to hear magnet updates, be informed about new support systems for students, and mechanisms to get involved.

- 3. 9th Grade Dinner and Dialogue-** September 16th, 6-7:30pm, Westlake Cafeteria

Purpose: Dinner and Dialogue is an opportunity for 9th Grade parents, students, teachers and counselors to come together to focus on tools, tips, and strategies that students and families can use to increase their academic success. Of course, since it's called Dinner and Dialogue, we will also enjoy a delicious meal so look out for RSVP information in the next News Blast!

- 4. "Second Cup of Coffee" with the principal-** September 23rd, 7:30-8:30am, Westlake Media Center

Purpose: Informally the principal will share Westlake updates and be available to parents to answer global Westlake questions.

- 5. Services for Exceptional Children (SEC) Parent Night-** September 25th, 4:30-6:30pm, Westlake Media Center

Purpose: Opportunity for our SEC families to ask the Instructional Support Teacher (IST) and SEC department chair questions or concerns, but also an opportunity for our IST and SEC department chair to share critical information and updates that pertain to the SEC department.

6. Curriculum Night- October 1st 5:45-7:45pm, Westlake Auditorium

Purpose: To get a better understand of your child's curriculum and what parents can do at home to support their learning. Parent will follow their child's schedule for the evening. We have decided to push back this activity due to the effect of our high enrollment. We will most likely earn additional instructors, which will result in lower class sizes and some student schedule changes. We really appreciate your patience in this process. We do encourage you to contact student services in the interim to schedule a conference with your child's teachers if you need. However, we have attempted to offer multiple opportunities before Curriculum Night to engage with your student's teachers.

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“Education is the most powerful weapon that can change the world,” Nelson Mandela
