



**Town Council/Board of Trustees  
Town of Westlake**  
Council Chamber, 1500 Solana Blvd  
Building 7, Suite 7100 Westlake, TX 76262



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**TOWN COUNCIL AND  
WESTLAKE ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORKSHOP MEETING  
TO INCLUDE JOINT WORKSHOP  
WITH WESTLAKE ACADEMY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 5:00 PM**

**Meeting Minutes**

The Town Council of the Town of Westlake also serves as the governing Board of Trustees for Westlake Academy. This agenda may contain both municipal and Westlake Academy items, which will be clearly identified. **NOTE: To comply with Senate Bill 12, Westlake Academy items will begin no earlier than 5 p.m. but may start later depending on the progression of posted agenda items.** Town Council/Board of Trustees meetings are available for viewing online via live-stream or on-demand at <https://www.westlake-tx.org/787/Watch-Meetings-Live>. In an effort to improve meeting efficiency, any residents wishing to speak must submit a speaker request form to the Town Secretary prior to the start of the meeting.

Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.127, one or more members of the Town Council may participate in this meeting by video-conference call. A quorum of the Town Council and the presiding officer will be present at the physical location of the meeting.

**NOTE:** As authorized by Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code, the Town Council/Board of Trustees may enter into closed Executive Session for the purpose of seeking confidential legal advice from the Town Attorney and/or School Attorney on any agenda item listed herein.

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**A. CALL TOWN COUNCIL/BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORKSHOP MEETING TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCE A QUORUM PRESENT**

***Mayor Greaves called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and announced a quorum present.***

**COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Mayor Kim Greaves  
Council Member Michael Yackira  
Council Member T. J. Duane

Mayor Pro Tem Tammy Reeves  
Council Member Todd Gautier

**COUNCIL ABSENT:**

Council Member Kevin Smith

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Town Manager Wade Carroll  
Deputy Town Manager Jason Alexander  
Finance Director Cayce Lay Lamas  
Town Attorney Alex Crowley  
IT Director Jason Power

Head of School Dr. Kelly Ritchie  
Dir. of Innovation Michelle Briggs  
Academic Fin. Mgr. Marlene Rutledge  
School Attorney Janet Bubert

**B. JOINT TOWN COUNCIL/BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND WESTLAKE ACADEMY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS WORKSHOP ITEM**

*Mayor Greaves announced the first item as the Joint Workshop Item with the Westlake Academy Foundation Board of Directors.*

**WESTLAKE ACADEMY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Marsha Ailey  
Meghan Dorr  
Patty Pinsonnault  
Sean Shope

Mike Colby \*Remote  
Heather Kilgore  
Dr. Ahu Primeaux  
Bri Deslongchamps

**WESTLAKE ACADEMY FOUNDATION STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

Executive Director Dr. Shelly Myers

Dev. Assoc. Julie Kelly

**B.1. Discussion of Vision and Goals for Westlake Academy Fundraising**

Discussion held with the focus of this joint workshop being to review fundraising goals and activities. WAF Executive Director Dr. Shelly Myers provided an update on the Blacksmith Annual Fund, which fills the gap in the annual WA operating budget. North Texas Giving Day continues to be a major campaign initiative, with a record-setting \$1.54 million in unrestricted funds donated during the one-day event. Historically, the majority of donor families contribute during the Giving Day period, followed by a significant post-event drop in giving. The Gala serves as WAF's primary community event for raising discretionary funds to support WA's teacher recruitment, retention and development efforts. Gala success has allowed the Foundation to meet increasing WA requests, funding teacher grants, teacher/staff of year awards, and gifts cards to use for classroom/workstation needs. The current WAF Board consists of 10 directors (7 minimum and 15 maximum), serving staggered 3-year terms, with no term limits noted. The Blacksmith Annual Fund provides unrestricted funds for school operations, while the Gala and other events offer the opportunity for donors to designate funds for specific projects or initiatives. Participation disparities noted: four large gifts skewing averages; 77% of Westlake families have donated to date (with 23% not yet participating), and 61% of secondary boundary families have contributed to date. Less than 10% of families meet or exceed the "gap" request of \$3,700 per student. Numerous families leverage employer matches, which helps with campaign totals. Several families indicate that personal circumstances impact their giving level. Regular follow-ups and reminders are sent to non-donors, but response rates can be low, especially during holiday periods. Discussion was held about possible misperceptions among Westlake residents regarding school funding sources (e.g., property taxes), economic barriers, and how to motivate broader giving. WAF has invited feedback from families to better understand what impacts their decisions regarding donating to support the school. Each year, the WAF meets all funding requests from the school. Remarks from the BOT thanked the WAF board and volunteers for its ongoing work and committed support of the school. Discussed opportunities to engage the community in larger endeavors (e.g., endowment building, capital campaigns), noting the importance of strategic planning between the school and affiliate fundraising boards to accomplishing these goals. The WAF currently manages three endowment funds – General Unrestricted, Bradley Travel Awards, and Gingy Quinn Fund for Teachers. The benefits of aligning the WAF's efforts with the school's strategic plan and communicating specific funding priorities for larger campaigns was noted.

## **C. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

- C.1. Receive presentations from Charter Management Organizations regarding alternative services available for Technology and Finance functions at Westlake Academy and hold discussions regarding same.

Dr. Kelly Ritchie, Head of School, addressed the Board of Trustees regarding school operations: charter-specific challenges and solutions. Westlake Academy (WA) has grown to 906 students and 100 staff and currently operates on a shared-services model with shared municipal information technology and finance services, which are not charter-specific. The Head of School's desire is to move toward structures more aligned with charter school best practices, including clearer accountability, transparency, and autonomy. The pressures of compliance reporting and recent legislative changes have increased demands for specialization and better technological and financial systems for WA that do not include the current shared-services model. With that in mind, proposals from charter management firms will be presented for the Board of Trustees. The first proposal was from Charter Impact about outsourcing finance functions. Charter Impact representatives presented case studies of transitioning between similar schools, emphasizing improved financial autonomy, controls, and tailored reporting, and propose a team of 10-14 dedicated staff for Westlake Academy. They addressed questions about liability, controls, audit preparedness, integration with town systems, and onboarding challenges. The second proposal was from Technology Lab about outsourcing information technology functions. Technology Lab representatives presented findings from the IT assessment, recommending migration to Cisco Meraki for networking, cloud migration for services, and increased security (multi-factor authentication, admin rights review). They emphasized proactive support, school-focused help desk, quarterly strategy reviews, and leveraging Federal E-Rate funding, which is not currently used by WA for technology investments. The discussion focused on WA separation from the town's IT system, improving wireless coverage, and the need for a dedicated network infrastructure for the academy. Both of the firms have charter and independent school district experience. Both firms provided presentations which are attached as part of the minutes and include dedicated pods/teams for the academy, cloud-based solutions, onboarding and audit process, and alignment to school-specific needs. WA staff projects that the projected annual net increase will be less than \$40,000 for shifting to both services, with a possible cost savings in IT utilizing new grant opportunities that would offset the additional expense. The transition would separate academy and town systems more distinctly, clarifying finances for both entities and freeing up leadership to focus on core priorities. Other questions posed by the Board of Trustees, including information on current leases and contractual obligations for hardware, software and other equipment used by WA will be researched and answered by Town staff. WA staff will prepare items to bring forward contract proposals from both Charter Impact and Technology Lab for consideration of approval by the Board of Trustees at the February meeting.

- C.2. Receive and discuss perspectives and input regarding Westlake Academy's Vision and Strategic Goals for the next 5 to 10 years as part of the Strategic Planning Process

***This item was not discussed.***

**D. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Town Council/Board of Trustees will conduct a closed session pursuant to Section 551.071(2) of the Texas Government Code, for the purpose of seeking confidential legal advice from the Town Attorney/Westlake Academy Attorney for the following:

- D.1. Section 551.076: Deliberation regarding Security Devices or Security Audits: Technology Security Assessment Results.

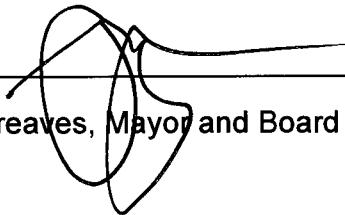
*Executive Session was not held.*

**E. ADJOURNMENT**

*Mayor Greaves adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.*

Approved by the Town Council/Board of Trustees at the Meeting held on February 17, 2026.



  
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Kim Greaves, Mayor and Board President

**ATTEST:**



Dianna Buchanan, Town/Board Secretary