

Westlake Middle School

2629 Harrison Street, Oakland, CA 94612 | <https://www.ousd.org/westlake>

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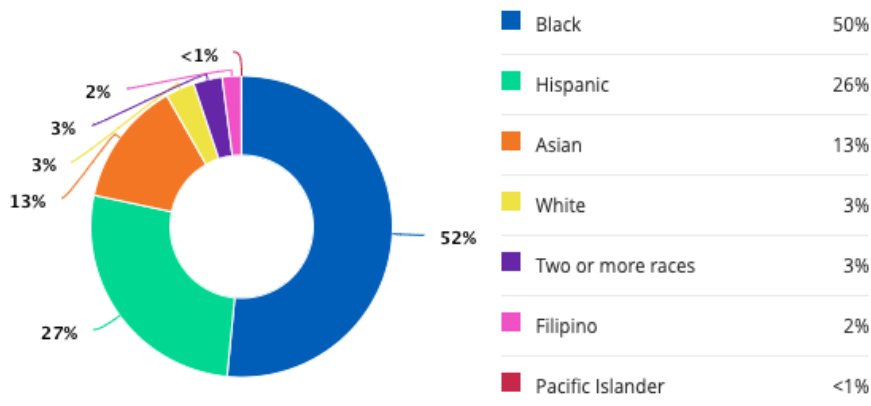
Overview

Mission/Vision: Westlake offers an exceptional middle school experience for scholars. With an emphasis on academics, the Arts also have a strong presence on our campus and are integrated into every classroom. We have an award winning instrumental music program, studio art program, as well as choir, drama and computer science. An extended day program facilitated by Citizen Schools, offers both academic and enrichment classes. We hold high expectations for all of our scholars and utilize Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) strategies to ensure a safe and nurturing learning environment. Principal: Maya Taylor

Demographics:

Total # of Students	Under-Resourced Students	Dual/Multi Language	Equity Rating	Students to Teacher Ratio	Students: Counselor
307	85%	24%	1/10	19:1	459:1

Race/ethnicity:



What Makes This School Unique:

Westlake Middle is a proud member of Oakland in the Middle, allowing its students to participate in events involving the collaboration of many middle schools in all of Oakland. In addition, there are the Soul Sister Wisdom Circle and Bend Like Water, two creative writing circles for girls and boys respectively. The Principal remains engaged with the community, the students and the parents by way of her weekly public messages that can be found on the school's website.

The school is participating in the Oakland Undivided tech check, so they will be able to make sure that you have all the right equipment you need to continue your education. The Warrior Eagle Support Services Team and the Family Resource Center are also there to help with whatever problems you might have.

Westlake Middle was a recipient of the NBA Legacy Project in 2017. The Golden State Warriors visited the school and spent some time on the campus. They funded for the campus a learn and play zone for the students to do just that, as well as completely refurbished the gym.

School and Neighborhood History:

[Westlake Middle School](#) was given approved plans by The Board of Education to be constructed in 1927. The construction plans were to go for a two-story steel and concrete structure to build a "Spanish" architecture-type building in the form of an L where 35 classrooms, shops, and an auditorium were built. The building was finally completed in 1928 and in 1929, it adopted the name Westlake Middle School to avoid similar-name conflict with Lakeview Elementary.

The [Ohlone and Chochenyo nations](#) inhabited the coastal region of Central and Northern California that includes Oakland.⁴ Due to [Spanish colonization of the Ohlone and Chochenyo lands](#), there was a drastic change and evolution of the region over the years that leads us to its physical layout today.

Westlake is located in Lake Merritt and its nearby neighborhood of Adam's Point. The name [Adam's Point comes from early landowners in Oakland](#), Edson Adams. This place was known as an area for people displaced from San Francisco by the 1906 earthquake which became a place for people to remain in Oakland where the population grew. Adam's Point now includes neighborhood landmarks like the Veteran's Memorial Building, the Earl Warren House, the art deco Bellevue-Staten Building, Lakeside Park, one of Oakland's larger parks, and Children's Fairyland.

Lake Merritt, [the Jewel of Oakland](#) is a unique lake with freshwater and saltwater and the largest lake of its kind in an urban area. Lake Merritt was originally part of the San Francisco Bay until Dr. Samuel Merritt donated 155 acres to the Indian Slough (tributary to the Old River, an old channel of the San Joaquin River) and money to build a dam at the 12th Street Bridge. It became known as "Merritt's Lake" and later changed to Lake Merritt. This lake is also known as one of America's

Oldest Protected Wildlife Refuge as it was declared by Dr. Samuel Merritt in 1869 and it remains a sanctuary stop for migratory birds. Islands with freshwater ponds were built for birds to land and be fed in order to ensure that other marine sports and activities were not disturbed.

Development: Things began to change in the 1880s, as the coming of streetcars quickened the pace of Oakland's expansion. Suddenly, the area was looking more and more desirable. Certainly by the summer of 1906, with the mass influx of refugees from the SE earthquake (an army of whom were camped out — with permission — in what later became Lakeside Park) the City of Oakland had realized the area's increasing centrality; plans were afoot to ring the lake with grand boulevards and formalize a park area.



Over the years, Lake Merritt has undergone many redevelopment and revitalization efforts. On September 13, 2018, the BART Board approved staff's recommendation to select the developer team composed of the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) and Strada Investment Group, to advance transit-oriented development at the Lake Merritt station.

The plan proposed by the EBALDC/Strada joint venture calls for four new buildings on BART-owned lots above the station. The proposal features 519 units of housing, 44% of which would be affordable, and 517,000 square feet of commercial space for offices and shops.

"Transit-Oriented Developments" maximize the amount of public transportation within walking distance of residential, business, and leisure spaces within neighborhoods. Lake Merritt's TOD project was introduced during the rise of urbanization which encouraged other urban projects across the United States.

The boom around Lake Merritt is due both to the city's multimillion-dollar cleanup of the 155-acre lake and an influx of San Francisco refugees. Oakland invested nearly \$200 million since 2002 into rehabilitating the lake, once a stinky, swamp pond filled with trash, bacteria and sewage. The lake is cleaner than it has been in decades. It's also maintained by the majority of existing residents, who are reflective of the neighborhood's Latinx culture.

Gentrification within the neighborhood: [Gentrification](#) is a process that includes economic and demographic changes to historically disinvested neighborhoods. It's important to be aware of the process because new, affluent residents moving to a neighborhood for housing or business can contribute to significant increases in rent and real estate prices. These increases impact the most vulnerable and pressure low-income residents to meet the demand which alters their own household/family budget.⁶ Many Bay Area neighborhoods have [changed culturally and financially due to gentrification](#).

As Lake Merritt becomes an increasingly popular area in Oakland many new businesses try to keep up with the economic shift in the area. But the problem with a bunch of people with money

showing up on our doorstep and pushing native Oakland residents out of their homes is distinctly a class issue. Whereas before locals could comfortably afford to rent or buy housing, all of a sudden they're too poor to live in the neighborhoods they've lived in for their whole lives. The housing market in the Bay Area is far ahead of the curve in terms of rising median house prices and rental rates, and in Oakland this is symptomatic of prosperity from across the bay.

Endnotes:

1. <https://abitofhistory.website/2020/01/29/then-now-oakland-school-part-16/>
2. <https://native-land.ca>
3. https://localwiki.org/oakland/History_of_Mexican_and_Latino_Americans
4. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adams_Point,_Oakland,_California
5. <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/lake-merritt-the-jewel-of-oakland>
6. https://www.greatschools.org/california/oakland/269-Westlake-Middle-School/#Race_ethnicity
7. https://localwiki.org/oakland/Adams_Point