Forward-focused preparation for the real world through the development of character and intellect
“The main purpose for which the school exists is the development of character.”

James A. Hawken, Founder
From our earliest days, Hawken School has been deeply committed to developing both character and intellect in our students. We believe that living a life of meaning and consequence requires not just mastery of skills and knowledge, but traits like authenticity, integrity, initiative, curiosity, courage, confidence, and resilience.

Hawken’s motto of “Fair Play” is displayed in every classroom on our campuses because it is central to all we do. It helps guide the thinking, speaking, and actions of every member of our community, reminding us not only to be smart, but to be good.

“Preparing students to become successful, productive adults is a top priority at Hawken. But we believe that who students become is just as important as what they become. We intentionally create our innovative programming and our community culture of inclusiveness in ways that inspire our students to go out and be good people who do good things in the world.”

D. Scott Looney, Head of School
Hawken Middle School

Middle School is a unique and exciting time in your child’s life – a period of remarkable physiological, social, emotional, and cognitive changes that result in profound growth and learning. For students, it’s a time of evolving identities while learning how to manage increased independence. For parents, it’s a time of adapting to a child’s changing needs and thinking ahead to his or her future.

At Hawken, we understand your child’s need for both independence and guidance. Through our character-based environment and challenging academic program, we partner with you to ensure that your child receives the optimal balance of structure, freedom, nurture, and support that will enable him or her to successfully navigate this exciting transition into adolescence.

“Teachers don’t just care about academics; they care about character, intellect, empathy. You learn to treat each other how you want to be treated and to make sure everybody feels okay. It’s the way teachers expect you to behave.”

Carlos, Grade 7

“At parent-teacher conferences, we clearly saw how sincerely our son’s teachers cared about him and his potential. We’ve appreciated when a teacher has said, ‘I’ve worked with your child, I understand your child, and I know that he can do even more.’ The sincerity comes through.”

Grady Burrows, Parent
“I like Hawken Middle School because you have a lot of independence and also responsibility. Small classes make it easier to have a connection with teachers, so it is easier to learn. Learning is fun because there are a lot of hands-on activities. Teachers also incorporate each grade’s core values into their teaching, so it’s different from most other schools.”

Sam, Grade 8
An infrastructure designed to meet your child’s needs and interests

With a focus on hands-on learning and student choice, our Middle School program enables your child to be an active participant in his or her education. By exploring science, math, and the humanities using an interdisciplinary and experience-based approach, students dive deeply into subject areas and become immersed in the process of learning and discovery.

Our school day is built around a schedule that is intentionally structured to support your child’s educational growth and interests. Teachers are readily available to offer your child help and guidance and to facilitate interactions and conversations outside of the classroom. Asking questions is encouraged, and students are given the tools to self-advocate, taking charge of learning through frequent collaborations and exchanges with both teachers and other students.

“I like the way the teachers teach. It’s more interactive. We work with each other, and teachers don’t just lecture. Advisors are really helpful, too. My advisor helped me develop a plan for my homework and helped me figure out how to manage it.”

Margo, Grade 8
Igniting your child’s intellect

Establishing a solid academic foundation is essential to your child’s intellectual development. Our program focuses on building strong academic skills while placing an increasing emphasis on personal responsibility. We accentuate adaptability and creativity in our approaches to instill enthusiasm for learning and to build your child’s confidence and problem-solving ability.

“I like how you get freedom to choose what you do. You can get moved along or get extra help in a subject, so you’re always with people who are as far along as you are. Once you’ve learned something, teachers will challenge you to do something harder. Hawken prepares you for high school and college.”

Zach, Grade 8
“Middle School students and the dedicated faculty who work with them are vibrant, eager, and ready to experience learning through doing. Our students clearly value opportunities to learn, explore and grow, but are equally committed to impacting and shaping the world around them. This is how our mission springs to life every day, as our students cultivate their sense of self, sharpen skills and talents, and deepen empathy.”

Dr. Michelle Harris, Director of the Middle School
Academics

Mathematics

Hawken School mathematics strives to meet all students where they are in both brain and curriculum development. Whether it’s advanced math, pre-algebra, algebra, or geometry, your child is placed in a level of mathematics that best fits his or her current skill level. Through central concepts, pattern explorations, modeling with technology, and hands-on data collection and analysis, students have many opportunities to demonstrate learning, expand boundaries, and receive personalized attention from teachers.

Science

Students are exposed to hands-on learning while covering a breadth of topics including electromagnetism, human anatomy and physiology, ecosystems, biomes, and the environment. As students progressively build on their scientific literacy, data analysis, and lab skills, technology programs help them problem-solve.

Humanities: Integrated English and History

Hawken students establish a strong connection with the written word, learning how to analyze and pose questions about the texts they read. Literature choices are guided by an “essential question” for each grade level, and writing skills are honed through constant practice as students apply what they’ve learned through observation of their own work.

Present and past collide as students learn how to organize and apply thoughts about history to current events. They learn practical knowledge about their country’s government and history before moving on to explore more global topics in eighth grade. Students develop the skills and tools needed to become effective writers, critical readers, articulate speakers, and successful researchers.

Essential Questions

The curriculum for each grade level in Hawken’s Middle School ties into an “essential question” that provides depth and meaning to what students learn. These essential questions lead students through experiences that ask them to relate what they learn to their own values and the values of those around them.

- 6th Grade: How do my words and actions reveal my character?
- 7th Grade: How can I work to understand the perspectives of others?
- 8th Grade: How can I make a difference in the global community?
World Languages
To foster a connection to the international world, Middle School students choose to study Spanish, French or Mandarin Chinese. They begin with foundational grammar, vocabulary, and introductory conversation and continue to work toward proficiency in writing, reading, and oral skills.

Visual Arts
Students engage their artistic side as they focus on developing sophisticated skills using diverse media such as oil pastels, charcoal, clay, and more. Fundamentals are strengthened through practice and application to different projects. Visual arts frequently interfaces with technology and is deeply integrated into the broader scope of our academic program.

Performing Arts
Starting in sixth grade, your child will have the opportunity to choose from three performing arts options: strings, concert band, or chorus. Students learn to read music and identify musical concepts. They also participate in various productions to strengthen their performance skills.

Human Performance
Due to the evolution of best practices in health and wellness in recent years, Hawken’s Physical Education program was recently re-established as the Human Performance Department in order to provide fully integrated, developmentally appropriate curriculum and programming for Hawken students from kindergarten through grade 12. In Middle School, your child will enjoy learning about wellness and safety as well as the skills and rules of sports including swimming, track, lacrosse, and softball.

Electives
Middle School students are required to take a minimum number of electives in performing arts/music, visual arts, computational thinking and design, and modern language. Students will also choose additional electives that span a variety of disciplines and provide opportunities to explore new interests or deepen existing knowledge and skills. Examples include Printmaking, Playwriting, Historical Investigation, Music Production and Technology, Human Biology, Ceramics, and Ancient Number Systems. All electives are trimester-based (approximately 12 weeks), except for language and music ensemble classes, which are year-long.
Technology
Computer Science
As part of Hawken’s Computational Thinking and Design Initiative, Middle School students will have an opportunity to choose from a variety of classes including Game Design and Coding, Robotics, and Designing with Circuits. This will enable them to develop the fundamental skills and practices required for basic literacy in this area and prepare them for higher-level classes in computer science and algorithmic thinking.

1:1 Tablet Program
Hawken’s 1:1 tablet program assists students in building both organizational and technological skills. Each student is issued a tablet that allows the user to draw, comment, and mark materials interactively on the screen. In addition to gaining experience with interactive and electronic organization systems, Middle Schoolers learn to test and validate sources. The tablet program also enables teachers to see and respond to student work in real-time. The end result? Your child will become a more engaged, self-directed, and independent learner while receiving invaluable support and feedback from teachers.

Lyndhurst’s Goldberg Innovation Lab
Opened in 2018, the Goldberg Innovation Lab includes 3600 square feet of maker space where students can harness and channel their natural creativity and curiosity as they build confidence in their ability to identify and create solutions to problems. Students, under the guidance of teachers who have been trained in design and makerspace thinking and learning, have access to a wide range of fabrication tools and prototyping materials; electronic tools including soldering irons and circuit materials; robotics tools including coding sets, snap circuits, LEGOS and iPads; and machines for vinyl cutting, laser cutting, 3-D printing, sewing and embroidery, as well as a mini CNC mill, a heat press, and lab computers fit with design software.

For more information on the Innovation Lab, visit hawken.edu/InnovationLab
Interdisciplinary endeavors

Middle School students display not only enthusiasm and curiosity toward learning; they exhibit an increasing capacity to think in deeper, more sophisticated ways. That’s why integrated projects are a hallmark of Hawken Middle School programming. Here are some examples.

The Monument Project

As a seventh grader, your child will participate in this fully integrated project that combines aspects of science, math, and humanities to bring to life the class trip to Washington, D.C. Your child will be part of a design team that proposes a new monument to be placed on the National Mall. Teams compose a historical rationale, complete design plans, build a scale model of their monument, and propose LEED credits for which their environmentally-sustainable design would qualify. The culminating presentations occur in front of parents and invited guest panelists to commission a “new monument” structure in the future Washington, D.C. monument site plan.

Biomimicry Project

In this multi-week unit, your child will be challenged to identify a problem and come up with design solutions that are inspired by nature. Students investigate the principles of artistic design, discover the science behind the anatomy or physiology they are using to solve their problem, write a paper describing their understanding, and create an artistic sculpture showing their inspiration.

Choosing to Participate Unit

In this humanities unit, students choose a global issue such as poverty, war and conflict, human rights, or women’s rights, studying it in depth through case studies taken from current or historical events and books. They then look at how these global issues are playing out in our own city, identifying and interviewing people from organizations that are trying to solve and address these problems locally. Their findings are presented in a final project that demonstrates their learning through a medium of their choosing.

Wind Turbine Unit

Groups of eighth grade students spend three to four weeks designing and building wind turbines that they then showcase for the Hawken community. Groups are quizzed on their knowledge of wind energy, their turbines are assessed on their design and performance, and power output ratings are recorded by placing turbines in a wind tunnel to see how much electricity each one produces. Selected groups bring their turbines to Kent State’s “KidWind Challenge,” where they engage in a friendly competition with teams from other schools.

For more information on Middle School curriculum and programming, visit hawken.edu/MiddleSchool
“I remember going to the Gries Center before the seventh grade trip to Washington, D.C. to see the monument that our daughter created. All the monuments the students made were linked to a social cause, and they were also architecturally sound. I was just so impressed by how the academic and social components of Humanities are thoroughly intertwined.”

Todd Adams, Parent
A welcoming environment

Whether new to Hawken or transitioning into the Middle School from our Lower School, your child will find a warm, welcoming community. As new students enter Hawken, they are invited to attend the Middle School Preview program, which takes place a few days prior to the start of the school year. The goal is to acquaint your child with our school and its culture, provide basic orientation, build familiarity with tablets and teachers, and create a group atmosphere where no one feels “new.” The Preview program also enables teachers and administrators to get to know each and every student who joins the Middle School community.

“My favorite thing about Hawken is the teachers. At Hawken, not only are your teachers supportive, your classmates are too.”
Caden, Grade 6

“My kids want to come to school every day. If they are absent, it’s not just that they are missing class or their friends — it’s that they are missed.”
Lynne Gerace, Parent
“For me, what is critical is that Hawken loves my children like a surrogate parent. I send my children to Hawken so they can feel loved and nurtured and safe. My children can be themselves whether they’re an athlete or a chess player or a musician.”

Nailah Suggs, Parent

Responsibility citizenship

We believe that community matters, and when your child enrolls at Hawken, he or she will become a known and valued member of our school community. We want students to feel a sense of belonging and understand their personal responsibility in building relationships with other students and teachers. At Hawken, we help students to know themselves and to actively engage in the larger community as they explore “essential questions” in each grade level.

“If you visit Hawken Middle School on any day of the school year, you will notice the joy and exuberance our students bring into the building each morning. They are greeted by advisors and teachers who spend their time between classes as well as before and after school engaging with the students and getting to know them better. You will notice that faculty members show respect for each individual and care deeply about the intellectual and character development of each child. The time your child spends at school will feel like an extension of your home culture.”

Anna Delia, Director of the Innovation Lab
Teachers who know and care about your child

At Hawken Middle School, our teachers embrace and celebrate individuality. We help students grow into their authentic selves, channeling their energy, passion, and openness to help them understand not only the world around them, but their identity and their place in that world.

After your child is thoughtfully paired with an advisor at the start of each school year, teachers spend extended time in advisory period to build understanding and community with their advisees. Our annual student-led conferences provide a vital opportunity for your child to lead the conversation between you and the advisor, focusing on goals and growth over the course of the year.

“My personal philosophy is that if we are mindful of our pedagogy - challenging ourselves to be inclusive and ensuring that the most marginalized or underrepresented among us feel like they are a member and not a guest in the community - that helps everyone.”

Darnell Epps, Director of Fair Play
Chapel Talk
A fondly remembered Hawken rite of passage, the Chapel Talk is a nine-minute speech delivered by each eighth grader to the entire Hawken Middle School student body and faculty, the speaker’s family, and special friends. The Chapel Talk is the culmination of a student-written, research-based position paper that is part of their humanities curriculum. As an eighth grader, your child will stand at the door of the chapel as students file in one at a time to greet him or her with an encouraging word, hug, or handshake. By the time your child approaches the podium, he or she will have received heartfelt encouragement from over 200 people in the Hawken community.

Middle School assemblies
Assemblies in the Middle School are entirely student-led. As a sixth grader, he or she may share something that happened on this day in history; as a seventh grader, your child may have an opportunity to open the meeting; and as an eighth grader, your child will formally introduce the Chapel Talk speaker or call on those who have news or information to share with the community.

Advisory program
Your child will become a member of a small student group that will be paired with a faculty advisor who provides academic, extracurricular, and personal support to each student. Each advisor is guided by a social/emotional growth curriculum that is developmentally scaffolded for grades 6, 7, and 8. The curriculum focuses on important skills relating to personal identity, teamwork and collaboration, and problem solving and decision making. Your child will also participate in Service Learning as part of the advisory curriculum.

Clubs
Time for clubs is embedded into the school day; examples include Lego Robotics, Jazz Band, Chess, Art, Fitness, Kindness Club, and more. These opportunities enable your child to identify and explore interests and passions outside of the academic curriculum alongside students from other grades who have similar interests.

“There are a lot of different friend groups. The groups aren’t exclusive. The grade gets along because everyone can connect.” Maggie, Grade 6
As you walk through Hawken’s Middle School, you may notice that there are few hallways. Instead, the building is structured around clusters of classrooms called “pods,” one for each grade level. These pods are intentionally designed to provide opportunities for your child to connect and converse within his or her grade-level community.

The pods provide students in each grade their own space where students gather to address logistics or to discuss a particular issue at hand. In this environment, classmates can be called upon to become problem solvers and to take ownership in defining the culture and character of their community.

“+ At Hawken you get to be your authentic self both as a parent and a student. That’s valuable. Authenticity is so hard to achieve. At Hawken, kids come as they are, and if you can come as you are, you can grow.”

Melissa Burrows, Parent
“From classrooms to common areas, we are fortunate to have spaces in the Middle School that enrich the academic and social experiences of our students. We strive to create and utilize settings that enhance their learning and their connection to one another. Our grade-level “pods,” for example, serve as a welcome home base where students can relax, play, and interact with classmates and faculty throughout the day.”

Karen Doyle, Middle School Teacher
Real world engagement

At Hawken, a big part of real world learning is showing our students that the world is bigger than themselves.

We start by immersing your child in a community that reflects the most basic form of diversity: coeducation. Coeducation helps boys and girls appreciate both differences and similarities in each other’s perspectives, approaches, and responses. Respect, empathy, and friendship become the norm between boys and girls, establishing the groundwork for fulfillment and success in the real world.

Diversity both in and out of the classroom means that your child will be challenged to see different perspectives while learning how to make his or her voice heard. Students are given opportunities to get out of the classroom and into the real world to fully engage with citizens of the city. A range of experiential learning opportunities will enable your child to apply knowledge to the real world, making learning relevant, meaningful, and fun.

Hawken’s Sally & Bob Gries Center for Experiential and Service Learning in University Circle, connects students to Cleveland’s cultural hub of learning and puts them in the center of a variety of educational facilities. All Middle School students are connected to the Gries Center for a minimum of two weeks each year.

“Having been in board rooms with both men and women, I want both of my children — my son and my daughter — to be able to handle themselves in that situation because that’s what they’ll have to do in the real world.”

Montrie Adams, Parent

Hawken’s Commitment to Diversity

“Hawken School’s steadfast commitment to diversity in all of its forms is rooted in our mission of forward-focused preparation for the real world through the development of character and intellect. We honor the dignity of every human being, and we respect and value differences including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, political and social values, culture, religion, and physical ability. We believe that this commitment to diversity, equity, and social justice is vital to the realization and cultivation of character and intellect in our students.”

Excerpt from Hawken School Diversity Statement
Community engagement

Hawken partners with local organizations to teach students the importance of giving back. As one teacher explains, “The Middle School Service Program is pretty amazing. The service groups visit the same agency multiple times throughout the year, so they are able to make connections over the course of the year. The teachers design pre- and post-service activities for students here at school. There are opportunities for reflection and culminating activities to help grow the students’ understanding. And then every time you go back your connection is deeper and more meaningful.”

“In eighth grade, my son’s class went to the United Cerebral Palsy Center multiple times throughout the year. I know that for some kids, it can be really hard to see and work with others who have severe disabilities and who are really not communicative, but my son told me that they found a way to get the kids to sing and dance. I thought it was such a joyful, happy way for my son to move out of his comfort zone to help others. At Hawken, this kind of work is just part of the average day. It sends the message that this is just what we do and who we are.”

Andrea Hill, Parent
Insights opens a world of opportunities for both faculty and students to explore their passions and interests. In CSI Cleveland, for example, students delve into forensic science and deepen their knowledge of math and science. The Cosplay All Day class combines art and technology, enabling students to create costumes for their favorite animated character while diving into the Anime culture and characters. No matter what your child’s interests, Insights can deepen existing passions or ignite new ones.

Princess Harrison
Math Teacher, Grade 8

Doorways trips

In sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, your child will take a curriculum-based trip in the spring. These week-long trips serve as signature experiences to his or her academic, personal, and social-emotional growth. They also showcase the incredible transformation students experience as they become accustomed to applying concepts learned inside the classroom to the world around them. Sixth graders visit Williamsburg, seventh graders travel to Washington, D.C., and eighth graders backpack through New York City.

Insights Week

Each March, the Middle School participates in Hawken’s annual Insights Week – five days of multi-grade-level courses designed to inspire and inform. These interdisciplinary courses include a wide variety of innovative and engaging topics that stem from the passions of the Middle School faculty. Using the greater Cleveland area as a resource for projects and exploration, your child will develop skills of collaboration, synthesis of information, and critical thinking through real world experiences and inquiries. Past courses offered include Anatomy of a Hit Song, CSI Cleveland, Ohio Journey: Planes, Trains, Automobiles, and Blimps!, and Olympic Gold.

International travel opportunities

The Hawken-Haibara Exchange Program provides an opportunity for an international two-week exchange program with Hawken’s sister school in Haibara, Japan. Students typically visit Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, and other smaller towns; they also visit temples, shrines, parks, and festivals and learn about the history, foods, and practices of Japanese culture. The trip has taken place during spring break every other year for the past 30 years. In alternating years, students from Haibara travel to Cleveland and stay with the families of the students who visited Japan the previous year.
Game on

At Hawken, your child will participate in a competitive athletics program in an atmosphere that emphasizes good sportsmanship while focusing on the fundamentals of all sports. We strive to win every contest fairly and to provide the opportunity for each student to participate. Your child will be required to play two of three sports seasons in grades 7 and 8. Through this program, students learn the lifelong value of involvement in sports – good sportsmanship, personal commitment, physical activity, teamwork, skill development, decision-making, and moving beyond their original comfort zone. These skills are transferable to the classroom and will help your child discover passions and self-knowledge while also preparing them to be competitive athletes in high school at Hawken.

"The Middle School athletics program provides an opportunity for seventh and eighth graders to learn new sports and continue to progress and enhance previously learned skills. There are opportunities on every team for players from beginners to advanced levels. We encourage students to try new sports. After all, what better place to learn and try new sports than at Hawken School?"

Greg Marmaros
Associate Director of Athletics

Sports offerings:
- Cross Country
- Football
- Field Hockey
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Swimming
- Wrestling
- Baseball
- Softball
- Lacrosse
- Track and Field
Starting in seventh grade, Middle School students choose two sports. I chose lacrosse, which I already knew how to play, and volleyball, which was a new sport for me. The coaches made it easy to learn a new sport, and I progressed pretty quickly. In lacrosse, the coaches taught me new things and helped improve my skills.

Sydney, Grade 8

Looking for more?

Hawken offers a myriad of choices beyond athletics that will engage your child’s existing passions and help him or her find new ones. Students who enjoy performing will have opportunities to expand their experience through participation in Jazz Band, the annual Middle School musical, and the Talent Show. Students who enjoy a battle of the minds might hone their skills by joining the Academic Challenge team. If these choices don’t entice your child, they are welcome to suggest the creation of a new club.

“I love the musicals at Hawken. I was in Grease, The Wizard of Oz, and The Sound of Music. The directors do a great job of making it a fun and professional experience.”

Julianna, Grade 8

For more information about athletics, visit hawken.edu/MSAthletics
As students complete Middle School, they are soon faced with an entirely different adventure: high school. Hawken’s Middle School curriculum uniquely prepares your child for our Upper School or the Mastery School of Hawken, and he or she will soon realize that the groundwork laid has provided more than adequate preparation. With established habits and a strong academic base, students feel comfortable and self-assured entering another stage of life alongside classmates who will become lifelong friends.

“Students coming from our Middle School handle the transition to high school incredibly well. They have pushed beyond their comfort zones and have developed resiliency and an ability to handle an exciting academic community. With a core foundation of integrity and respect, our students advocate for themselves with confidence and poise. This enables them to handle the independence of high school with maturity.”

Jim Newman, Assistant Director of the Upper School for Student Life

For more information about Hawken’s Upper School, visit hawken.edu/UpperSchool
at a glance

Established 1915

Faculty with advanced degrees 80%

Lyndhurst Campus
Toddler – Grade 8

660 students

Founded by James A. Hawken

National Merit Recognition over past 10 years 92 semifinalists

$10.3 million Flexible Tuition
the largest financial aid budget in the state of Ohio

Students K-12 receiving financial aid 45%

Transportation available in 20+ communities

Students of Color 33%

Hawken students are more than twice as likely to get into top national university and liberal arts colleges.

High School
Grades 9-12

540 students

All figures as of July, 2020.

All-School Student Body 1,200
Coed, Toddler–Grade 12

Hawken School
Best Private High School in Ohio

Hawken School
Best Private K - 12 in Ohio

Niche

2020 Best Schools

#1

#1

All figures as of July, 2020.
Visit us!

The best way to get to know Hawken is to visit.

For more information, please contact us at 440.423.2950 or visit www.hawken.edu

We look forward to welcoming you.

“`The teachers are great, and the kids are very welcoming. They include you. They make you feel like you fit in.”`

Khalil, Grade 7

Hawken School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation in the administration of its admission policies or Flexible Tuition.