Forward-focused preparation for the real world through the development of character and intellect
Why Hawken?
We were founded to be different.

One high school. One mission. Two options.
Hawken’s high school options – the Upper School campus in Gates Mills and the Mastery School of Hawken in Cleveland – are both deeply rooted in our mission of “forward focused preparation for the real world through the development of character and intellect.”

It’s our approach to fulfilling this mission that distinguishes the two campuses from one another. Over the course of the last decades, the Upper School began pioneering innovative, ground-breaking programming that remains a part of the curriculum at the Gates Mills campus. The Mastery School of Hawken takes this nationally-recognized programming to scale in an urban setting that accommodates a unique set of approaches and experiences. Essentially, it comes down to students’ learning preferences and the type of environment in which students thrive.

Can’t decide? We look forward to exploring both options with you. Visit the Upper School and Mastery School campuses and discover for yourself the unique learning opportunities each provides. No matter what option you choose, you will be an active participant in your education as you partner with fellow students and talented faculty on work that matters.

“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
“Fair Play is something you have to cultivate and nurture. People in the Hawken community stand up for what is right.”

Tommy, Student
Character matters

At Hawken, we believe that success encompasses much more than good grades and college placement. Living a life of meaning and consequence requires you to focus on becoming the best version of yourself.

Our motto of “Fair Play” is displayed in every classroom, encouraging every member of our community not only to be smart, but to be mindful of how we treat others. Students and faculty alike work to create a community that values civility, kindness, appreciation, and generosity.

“To me, the culture of high character is one of the profound differences between Hawken and other schools. By the time students graduate, the pieces that stand out are the character traits and the service and leadership opportunities.”

Lynne Gerace, Parent

Did you know?

Hawken students gain experience with the concepts of character and Fair Play by serving on the Student-Faculty Senate, participating in campus stewardship and service projects, and establishing real-world connections with people across the nation and the globe.
"Some of the classes my daughter has gotten the most from at Hawken have been related to topics she wasn’t passionate about initially. The courses have pushed her out of her comfort zone and encouraged her to think critically."

John Emig, Parent
Academic mastery

Hawken’s exceptional academic preparation is designed to support inquisitive and high achieving students like you. Here, you don’t have to wait until you’re in college to study things you’re passionate about. Our in-depth academic offerings and wide array of courses enable you to deepen your understanding and to immerse yourself in challenging and thought-provoking pursuits, and our small class sizes enable teachers to truly know their students’ learning styles.

No matter what the subject, you will find that learning and genuine understanding – not memorization and testing – are at the forefront of every academic endeavor at Hawken.

“The math department really encouraged me to see math as not just a tool but as something you could get imaginative with. And because math is the basis of science, I learned that I could bring my imagination to science as well.”

Hilary, Student

Did you know?

Hawken is the only school in the Cleveland area that is a member of the Global Online Academy (GOA). Students who elect to take an additional GOA course have options that far exceed a typical high school curriculum, such as biochemistry, Arabic, and Abnormal Psychology.

Over the past two years, 38 seniors were recognized as National Merit Semifinalists and Commended Scholars. At Hawken, you will be part of a student body that comprises the best and brightest students in Northeast Ohio.
Meaningful learning

Hawken has been working for over a decade on designing and implementing interdisciplinary “Macro” courses to authentically engage students in work that matters. Entrepreneurship, Engineering, and Architecture are current examples of this new instructional approach, which has not only deepened student learning but also garnered the attention of educators across the nation. While Macro class offerings are available on a limited basis at the Gates Mills campus, they are a central part of the curriculum at the Mastery School campus.

Architecture

The field of architecture is inherently interdisciplinary, making the subject a logical lens through which to study art, science, writing, and communication while also developing skills like problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration. In this semester course, students not only study architecture but also work with practicing architects and organizations in the Cleveland area and beyond to understand the real problems they are working on and to respond to those problems with original design solutions. The studio format allows students to work individually or on project teams under the guidance of the instructor, who will provide support, scaffolding, and feedback while introducing the industry standard tools, techniques, and processes used in the practice of architecture today.

Entrepreneurship

The semester-based Entrepreneurship course takes a different approach. It combines traditional economics, finance, writing, and research skills with hands-on experience and leadership training – but there is nothing traditional about it. Working with Cleveland entrepreneurs to find solutions to actual problems – with real deadlines and hard deliverables – students learn resilience, creativity, and time management as they devise and present solutions. These interdisciplinary skills are highlighted as students pitch their own start-up ideas to investors and mentors.

Engineering

Following the success of Hawken’s Entrepreneurship program, Hawken developed an immersive, 3-credit honors course in engineering that focuses on finding solutions to local, regional, national, and global engineering problems. The course is designed to help develop and hone students’ problem solving, computational, and algorithmic thinking skills.

In short, thinking beyond the textbook – and applying that knowledge to the world around you – makes learning meaningful.

“Entrepreneurship changed me as a person and gave me skills that I can take with me and use for the rest of my life. Before Entrepreneurship I thought grades would define how successful a person can be. After the class I learned that it’s how you learn, how you adapt, and how you respond to failures.”

Ian, Student
Did you know?

At Hawken, you can enroll in our STEMM program, which involves a summer research project with a mentor, often from NASA, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Clinic, VA Hospital, or University Hospital. In 2018, three out of four grand prizes at the Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair went to Hawken STEMM students.

You can also enroll in a problem-based class called Outsiders, a three-block interdisciplinary course that trains students to understand, appreciate, and navigate the wilderness through several lenses; students gain skills and credits in English and biology and also become certified as Wilderness First Responders.
Students immerse themselves in language and culture study while traveling in Cuba.
We put Hawken in the real world…

At Hawken, learning doesn’t end when you leave the classroom. It happens throughout our campuses, at labs and museums, at non-profits across Cleveland, and even in canoes on the rivers of Pennsylvania. The meaningful use of local resources provides a depth of understanding that can’t be gleaned from books alone. By applying constitutional law precedents while observing actual court cases or engaging in authentic conversations with native Spanish speakers in our city and throughout the world, Hawken students gain the full advantage of all the world offers.

… And the real world in Hawken

Just as you will apply your learning to the real world at Hawken, you will also be part of a community that mirrors that world. Our school is intentionally coeducational and diverse so that Hawken students learn to appreciate both differences and similarities in other perspectives, approaches, and responses.

In our efforts to build a community where each individual is included and treated equitably, we work intentionally to cultivate an environment that allows students to see through multiple lenses, learn from the stories and life experiences of others, and build empathy.

Did you know?

In 1973, Hawken made a deliberate decision to become coeducational after almost 60 years as an all-boys school because the old model of segregating and isolating the sexes simply did not align with our mission and our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

“I am a 100% believer in coeducation. We get so much out of building friendships and working in a gender-inclusive environment. We hear other perspectives, and it’s the best way to learn.”

Hannah, Student

Excerpt from the Hawken School Diversity Statement:

“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.”
Engagement through Intensives

Because we truly believe in meaningful learning, we designed our innovative schedule that makes time for transformational learning through classes we call Intensives.

At the end of each semester, Hawken students participate in one of an array of Intensive courses, academic classes that meet all day, every day, for three weeks, allowing for hands-on, in-depth learning that you won’t find elsewhere. You’ll enjoy uninterrupted time to fully immerse yourself in a single subject that will offer more opportunities to travel outside of the classroom to interact with experts and professionals across Cleveland, Northeast Ohio, and, in some cases, the globe.

Starting freshman year, you can study electromagnetics in our Physics 9 Intensive or explore the immigrant experience in Cleveland in one of our Humanities 9 Intensives. In subsequent years, you might explore the conditions and causes of Homelessness while partnering with local social service agencies or plunge into Honors Marine Science and learn by doing in the Caribbean.

No matter what you choose from over 40 Intensive course offerings, you’ll have a transformational experience.

To learn more about Intensives, visit hawken.edu/Intensives
"What sets Hawken apart are the Intensives. If you can go and act and see and do and speak and create, then it makes your education stick. Those three weeks when they’re outside the classroom, taking trips, digging deep — students experience learning in a different way and at a different level. It’s really exceptional."

Lari Jacobson, Parent

Did you know?

Two times each year, you’ll have the opportunity to choose from a variety of Intensive classes. Recent options have included:

- Radiolab: Hawken
- Latino Immigration: Cleveland and Beyond
- Money Makes the World Go Round: How the Economy Shapes the Modern World
- From Wonderland to Hogwarts to Hawken: An Exploration of Children’s Literature and Problem-Based Learning
- Homelessness
- In Pursuit of Justice
- Curves, Surfaces, and Space: An Introduction to Topology
- Rocket Science
“In a college prep environment, you might anticipate that there would be lots and lots of competition. At Hawken, students genuinely want each other to succeed and will help each other to make sure that happens on a regular basis. They go to each other’s performances, dance events, plays, and games to cheer each other on.”

Deborah Gold, Parent
Find your passion at Hawken

Are you passionate about chemistry? Do you love to sing? Are you an athlete who wants to compete in college? At Hawken, we intentionally provide opportunities for those things. Here, you’ll join an inclusive class of students brimming with diverse interests and talents who appreciate and respect one another for who they are. From your first moments at the ninth grade retreat to your walk across the stage at graduation, you will make lifelong friends, experience countless “aha” moments, discover your innate potential, and embrace a myriad of opportunities you won’t find anywhere else.

“Hawken has helped me grow tremendously. My greatest accomplishment has been discovering who I am as a person in this world.”

Amber, Student

Did you know?

Our ninth grade class this year comes from 40 different middle schools!
Get inspired to lead

Clubs at Hawken’s Upper School are student-initiated and provide an opportunity for community involvement as well as leadership and character development. Serve as a Writing Center intern or as a peer tutor to cultivate your mentoring skills. Try something new by joining clubs like Model UN, the AffirmativeNo school newspaper, Chess Club, Speech and Debate, Random Acts of Kindness Club, Hawken Players’ Society, Improv Club, and more. Club leaders will mentor you as you become a leader in your own right.

Is there a club missing from the list? Start one yourself, and you’re sure to find students excited to join you in a new adventure!

“From sports to theater to different clubs, Hawken has it all. In addition to being on the golf team, I am thrilled to be a member of our theater group the Hawken Players’ Society, and also Hawken Harmony, a small vocal ensemble. This has given me the opportunity to meet new friends while doing something I love.”

Jane, Student
“While Hawken will always academically challenge our students, through empowering them with essential skills, we realize more than ever that James Hawken’s call to teach character is as relevant today as it ever was. Who you are and how you interact with others is as important as everything else you will learn.”

Rick Tate, Assistant Director for Teaching & Learning, Upper School

Did you know?

Students elected to the Hawken Senate are charged with shaping school policy, including the dress code and honor system; senior Peer Leaders welcome their freshman cohorts at the 9th grade retreat and mentor them throughout the year at weekly meetings. Opportunities like these allow you to practice responsible leadership, citizenship, and Fair Play.

Hawken’s Outdoor Leadership Program prepares students for five-day camping expeditions that include backpacking, snowshoeing, bouldering, snow camping, 40-hour solos, canoeing, wilderness first aid, and more. The program emphasizes confidence, skills mastery, and ethical discernment in everything from helping a peer on Hawken’s challenge course to being part of a group building a snow shelter.
An exceptional faculty

It’s evident just from walking the hallways and visiting the classrooms at Hawken that teachers here are different. Not only are they passionate about what they teach, but they also love what they do. And they genuinely enjoy being around students.

You’ll find that your teachers at Hawken aren’t just interested in your class performance; they’re interested in you as a person. Knowing that they are invested in your growth and success will motivate you to do things you never believed you were capable of doing.

“I really love how the teachers at Hawken treat us with respect and dignity. When I talk to my teachers, they truly listen to what I have to say. This kind of relationship gives me the confidence I need to share my ideas and opinions with others.”

Bethany, Student

Did you know?

Hawken teachers are experts in their fields and exemplify life-long learning. You will be taught by PhDs, Fulbright recipients, and National Endowment for the Humanities scholars.

Hawken students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with faculty in an independent study. One recent independent study has been Worldbuilding, an interdisciplinary course which tasks students with constructing order from chaos through the study of physics, economics, religion, and history.
“Hawken pushes teachers to try new things; this makes us better teachers, and it makes students partners in the process as their feedback is critical to shaping new curriculum.”

Jennie Becker, Science Teacher
athletics
Athletics: Game on

We know that winning isn’t everything, but our commitment to character and to becoming our better selves propels us to be at the top of our game physically and mentally in every endeavor both on and off the field. Hawken is home to athletes who work hard and play hard, proving their skills in the multitude of championships and awards won throughout the years. Our sports tradition is one where dedication, hard work, and sportsmanship are valued.

Sports offerings

Baseball • Basketball
Cross Country • Field Hockey
Football • Golf • Soccer
Lacrosse • Softball
Swimming/Diving • Tennis
Track and Field
Volleyball • Wrestling

“Sportsmanship is a huge emphasis. Even when we play teams that may not display good sportsmanship, we keep our cool. Fair Play is ingrained in us.”

Caroline, Student

Location

Hawken’s Gates Mills campus is situated on over 300 wooded acres. Athletics facilities include a modern athletic complex with two gymnasiums, one of the best competitive swimming pools in Ohio, a weight room, a wrestling room, six tennis courts, numerous grass and artificial turf fields, a stadium, a track, and a ropes course for Outdoor Leadership.

Did you know?

Students at the Mastery School of Hawken are eligible to participate in sports offerings at the Gates Mills Campus. Transportation will be provided via an activities shuttle.
A winning tradition

Hawken has more individual state championship titles (190) than any other school in Ohio!

5th on the all-time OHSAA team state champions list

40 team state championships in school history

73% participation rate (students who participate in at least one sport)

#1

33 Girls State Championships
(30 swimming, 2 track and field, 1 girls golf)
#1 among Ohio high schools

22 Consecutive Girls Swimming State Championships
#1 among Ohio high schools in any sport, any division, boys or girls

More OHSAA team/individual state titles than all other independent schools in Northeast Ohio combined

State championships:
• Boys soccer
• Boys lacrosse
• Girls swimming
• Boys swimming
• Girls track & field
• Girls golf
• Boys golf
• Girls cross country
“Doing a sport in the fall or at least one season during freshman year helps you structure your time, make friends, and show school spirit. It’s fun.”
Charlie, Student

Did you know?

Hawken has both a dedicated athletic trainer and a director of strength and conditioning.

College sports participation has ranged from 15 to 25 percent of the graduating class in recent years; the national average is 6 percent participation.

For more information, visit hawken.edu/Athletics
“The culture surrounding the arts community is a very accepting one. Hawken is a place that allows people to be themselves.”

Andrew, Student
Nurturing your innate, untapped creativity

At Hawken, you can try something new in an introductory visual or performing arts course or hone your talents in advanced level classes. Either way, the arts at Hawken will allow you to think creatively, develop problem solving skills, and help you build resilience – all skills needed in the real world.

Whether on stage, behind-the-scenes, in classes offered on campus, or partnering with real-world artists, you will find countless ways to let your creativity shine.

“Training in the arts builds character through the discipline needed to hone the skills of perception and develops skills of critical and analytical thinking. Confidence gained through instruction and practice enables productive exploration and intelligent risk-taking, all important factors in the development of character and intellect.”

Denise Buckley, Visual Arts Department Chair

Did you know?

The Hawken Players’ Society stages two major productions each year, a fall play and spring musical. In 2019-2020, HPS performed *The Life of Galileo* and *Matilda*.

Students can fulfill their arts credits in visual arts, performing arts, or design.
The journey ahead

What you experience and accomplish at Hawken will differentiate you in the college application process. As you discover and develop your passions, you’ll find that your strong intellectual capabilities and experiences give you a voice and a unique story to tell, displaying an authenticity that attracts the interest of colleges worldwide.

Our expert college counseling staff works with you to find the best fit for your strengths, interests, and desires. Not only are Hawken students more than twice as likely to get into top national universities and liberal arts colleges; fifty-three percent of the students in the Class of 2020 were offered merit scholarships totaling over $11 million. Hawken boasts a college matriculation rate of 100%.

The impact of a Hawken education doesn’t end with college placement; it will remain with you throughout your life. Our alumni continually report how transformational their Hawken experience was in determining the trajectory of their lives – from attending top colleges and graduate schools across the nation to employment in a vast array of professional opportunities around the globe, where they apply the skills, knowledge, and confidence they have acquired to make a meaningful difference in our ever-changing world.

To learn more about experiencing Hawken, visit hawken.edu/Admission

Did you know?

Hawken has the lowest student-counselor ratio of any of its Cleveland area peer schools, enabling more interpersonal interaction, individualized guidance, and student growth and empowerment.
at a glance

Established 1915

Founded by James A. Hawken

Faculty with advanced degrees 80%

High School Students Grades 9-12 540

Flexible Tuition $10.3 million

the largest financial aid budget in the state of Ohio

Students K-12 receiving financial aid 45%

All-School Student Body 1,200

Coed, Toddler–Grade 12

National Merit Recognition over past 10 years 92 semifinalists

Students of Color 33%

8,000 total square feet of maker space

Transportation available in 20+ communities

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

Hawken School

#1 Best Private High School in Ohio

#1 Best Private K-12 in Ohio

All figures as of July, 2020.
Visit us!

The best way to get to know Hawken is to visit.  
*We look forward to welcoming you.*

For more information, please contact the Mastery School at 440.423.8801,  
the Upper School at 440.423.2955 or visit www.hawken.edu.

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"It's really easy to get to know people here  
because people are so friendly. When I  
shadowed at Hawken, it seemed like people  
wanted to get to know me. It was really  
welcoming. I was taken aback that people  
remembered my name just from my one visit.
That was the difference."

Natsumi, Student

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.