

Hawken School

Sally and Bob Gries Center at University Circle

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is Hawken School creating an urban extension campus in University Circle?

A: As an outcome of Hawken’s strategic planning process, the School is investing in a physical location in Cleveland that will serve as a locus for experiential and service learning for the students.

Hawken believes students need authentic experience in the real world to make meaning from knowledge. The Hawken School Sally and Bob Gries Center at University Circle will enable collaborations with some of the greatest academic, cultural and scientific organizations in the world. Furthermore, a physical location in Cleveland, near to where Hawken was founded, demonstrates a commitment to the vitality and future of the city.

Q: Where is the Gries Center at University Circle located?

A: Commonly known as the “Ferris House,” the property is located at 10924 Magnolia Drive in Cleveland, Ohio—200 yards from Wade Oval.

Q: Who is Hawken purchasing the property from?

A: The Western Reserve Historical Society.

Q: Is it a historic property?

A: Yes, the property was built in 1910 and has strong architectural features.

Q: Will the property be renovated?

A: Yes, renovations may begin as early as summer 2008 and Hawken anticipates the Center to be open to students by fall 2009.

Q: Who is doing the renovation?

A: An RFP process to engage an architect is underway.

Q: What factors will guide building renovations?

A: Renovation decisions will be determined by a combination of academic programming needs, historic preservation requirements, and green building principles. We are exploring ways to involve students in faculty-led planning, designing and the actual renovation process.

Q: How many classrooms/students will the property accommodate?

A: The 8,023 square-foot building will accommodate between five and six classrooms with an additional office space.

Programming

Q: How will Hawken students benefit from this expansion and what types of activities and educational opportunities will students experience at the Gries Center at University Circle?

A: In the coming months, Hawken School will engage its faculty and community members in dynamic discussions to explore forward-focused programming. Students will benefit from collaborations with world-class academic, scientific and cultural organizations, and will also learn and contribute to Cleveland through meaningful service-based projects. The Gries Center at University Circle also will give students a deeper understanding and appreciation for their hometown—Cleveland.

Q: Are there other independent schools with a city campus?

A: We believe this urban extension campus to be the first of its kind among suburban independent schools in the region, and one of the first of its kind in the country.

Q: Will the Gries Center at University Circle be open to all students, including Lower, Middle and Upper School students?

A: While at this time we are still in the planning stages, we anticipate the Gries Center at University Circle being available for all grade levels at various points throughout the school year.

Q: Isn't Montessori School doing something similar?

The Gries Center at University Circle is unique because it provides an urban extension campus for students of all ages from its Gates Mills and Lyndhurst locations. Students will leave their traditional school environment and travel to the campus at intervals throughout the year.

Hawken has been educating students in Cleveland since 1915, when the school was founded in University Circle. The Montessori School is a brand new school serving high-school students only.

Experiential and service learning opportunities will be a focal point for students utilizing the Gries Center at University Circle. Hawken envisions engaging a variety of community partners to enrich Hawken students' classroom experience with hands-on learning to help them make meaning from knowledge.