

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS, HAWKEN SCHOOL

THE POSITION

Hawken School seeks an experienced, strategic, and collaborative Executive Director of Athletics to lead and advance its school-wide athletics program. The Executive Director provides vision, leadership, and oversight for athletic programming across Hawken's campuses, from youth athletics through varsity competition, and plays a central role in shaping a culture that values competitive excellence, student development, character, sportsmanship, and Fair Play.

The Executive Director is responsible for developing a coherent, high-quality athletics program that provides meaningful opportunities for students of varying ages, abilities, and interests while supporting Hawken's commitment to developing both character and intellect. This leader understands that athletics is an essential component of the student experience, offering opportunities to develop resilience, teamwork, discipline, leadership, and a commitment to excellence.

The successful candidate will bring demonstrated experience leading athletic programs, developing and supporting coaches, managing complex operations, and building strong relationships across a school community. The Executive Director must be equally capable of setting a compelling long-term vision and attending to the daily work necessary to deliver outstanding programs and experiences for students and families.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership and Program Development

- Provide strategic vision, direction, and leadership for Hawken Athletics across all divisions and campuses, establishing clear goals, priorities, and measures of program success.
- Lead the development of an athletics strategy that balances competitive excellence, broad student participation, skill development, and developmentally appropriate experiences.
- Establish coherence and continuity across youth, middle school, and high school athletics, including developmental progressions, program expectations, and opportunities for students to advance within individual sports.
- Partner with divisional leaders and school administration to integrate athletics into the broader educational experience and support student engagement, well-being, and school community.
- Oversee the continued growth of competitive sports, Human Performance, Strength and Conditioning, and related athletic wellness initiatives in collaboration with school leaders.
- Evaluate program quality, student participation, competitive performance, and resource allocation to identify opportunities for improvement and sustainable growth.
- Foster an inclusive athletics culture that reflects Hawken's Purpose, Promise, and Principles and its longstanding commitment to Fair Play.

Leadership, Supervision, and Development of Personnel

- Lead, supervise, and evaluate Athletics Department personnel, including athletic administrators, program leaders, coaches, and other assigned staff.
- Establish clear expectations, accountability structures, and regular processes for goal-setting, feedback, evaluation, and professional growth.
- Direct the recruitment, selection, hiring, onboarding, and retention of qualified coaches and athletics personnel in partnership with Human Resources and school leaders.

- Develop sport-specific program leaders responsible for strengthening program culture, developing coaches and student-athletes, and building continuity across grade levels.
- Provide meaningful professional development for coaches in student development, leadership, safety, and effective coaching strategies.
- Build a collaborative, high-performing Athletics Department characterized by strong communication, shared responsibility, and a student-centered approach.
- Address personnel concerns and performance issues with sound judgment, consistency, and alignment with school policies.

Athletics Operations, Compliance, and Student Safety

- Provide overall oversight of athletic operations, including team scheduling, contests, tournaments, officials, transportation, facility scheduling, event management, equipment, and uniforms.
- Establish effective systems, policies, and procedures that support consistent operations, clear communication, and accountability across programs and campuses.
- Oversee compliance with Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) requirements, conference regulations, eligibility standards, and applicable school policies.
- Maintain productive relationships with athletic conferences, governing organizations, and independent and public school athletics leaders.
- Oversee appropriate protocols for student-athlete safety, emergency preparedness, coaching certifications, and risk management in collaboration with relevant school personnel.
- Partner with Facilities and campus leadership to guide the maintenance, scheduling, safety, and effective utilization of indoor and outdoor athletic facilities.
- Provide leadership and supervision for major athletic events and a high-quality experience for student-athletes, families, coaches, and visiting teams.

Financial Stewardship and Resource Management

- Develop, manage, and monitor the Athletics Department's operating budget, aligning expenditures with school priorities and long-term program goals.
- Establish resource allocation practices that consider student participation, program quality, competitive needs, equitable opportunities, and fiscal responsibility.
- Assess staffing models, program offerings, facility needs, equipment, and transportation costs to support efficient and sustainable operations.
- Partner with Finance and Facilities leadership on athletics-related capital needs, long-range facility planning, and strategic investments.
- Identify opportunities for program growth and revenue generation, including summer camps, clinics, facility use, and community partnerships.

School-Wide Collaboration and Community Partnerships

- Serve as the senior athletics leader in school-wide planning and decision-making, representing the needs and opportunities of Hawken Athletics while supporting broader institutional priorities.
- Build strong working relationships with division directors, faculty, student support teams, Human Performance personnel, and administrative colleagues.
- Partner with Admissions to communicate the value of Hawken Athletics to prospective families and support appropriate student-athlete recruitment and enrollment initiatives.
- Collaborate with College Counseling and coaches to support student-athletes navigating collegiate athletics opportunities and recruitment.

- Partner with Advancement to support athletics-related fundraising, alumni engagement, recognition, and community-building initiatives.
- Work with Marketing and Communications to support communication of athletics programming and student-athlete accomplishments.
- Develop productive relationships with local athletic organizations, community partners, and regional institutions that expand opportunities for Hawken students.
- Serve as a visible and accessible leader at athletic contests, school events, and community activities.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrated leadership experience in athletics administration, athletic program management, or a closely related field.
- Proven ability to lead and develop coaches, build effective teams, and manage complex programs involving multiple stakeholders.
- Strong understanding of interscholastic athletics, student-athlete development, coaching practices, and the operational requirements of a comprehensive athletics program.
- Experience with budget development, financial management, personnel supervision, and organizational planning.
- Exceptional organizational, interpersonal, and communication skills, with the ability to build trust and positive relationships with students, coaches, colleagues, and families.
- Sound judgment, integrity, discretion, and the ability to navigate challenging situations and competing priorities with professionalism.
- A demonstrated commitment to student safety, equitable participation, sportsmanship, and an inclusive athletics culture.
- Ability to balance strategic leadership with the operational demands of a dynamic, multi-campus athletics program.
- Preference given to experience in an independent school, collegiate athletics, or a comparable educational setting; a successful record of developing competitive and developmental athletics programs; experience with facility planning and community partnerships; and an advanced degree in a relevant field.

THE SCHOOL

Founded on the ideal that “the better self shall prevail and each generation introduces its successor to a higher plane of life,” Hawken School is a coeducational independent day school with 1,600 students in toddler through grade 12. Our four campuses are located within 25 minutes of downtown Cleveland, and an urban extension center in the city's museum district provides a demanding and integrated course of study in a diverse and dynamic environment. To learn more about us, visit www.hawken.edu.

HAWKEN'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Hawken School is committed to doing school differently and better. We seek to create an inclusive and accepting community where adults are empowered to design educational experiences for students that are deep and learner-centered. Hawken School seeks culturally competent teachers, administrators, and staff members who are committed to equity, who are comfortable taking risks, and who embrace a growth mindset. We are constantly looking for new ways to inspire student curiosity and agency while remaining dedicated to nurturing compassion and kindness in our students.

HAWKEN CANDIDATE COMPETENCIES

Mission, Culture, and Philosophy Alignment: Successful candidates show they can thrive at Hawken and are highly motivated by the school's mission.

Fair Play: Successful candidates indicate a commitment to and have experience with serving students and communities equitably.

Relationship Building and Cultivation: Successful candidates show they can build relationships throughout the Hawken community.

Humility and Growth Mindset: Successful candidates are eager to learn new approaches and methods and be able to collaborate effectively with others.

Approach to Work: Successful candidates show initiative and agency with a commitment toward feedback and flexible problem-solving.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send a resume, references, and a cover letter to The Finney Search Group at

<https://www.thefinneysearchgroup.com/hawken-ad-application>.