



2009-2010 School profile

*P.O. Box 850
Ojai, CA 93024
805-646-4343 Phone / 805-646-4371 Fax
Bulk Mailing: 8585 Ojai Santa Paula Rd., Ojai, CA 93023*

*Paul Amadio - Headmaster
Megan Walton – Dean of Students
Tina Leslie – Dean of Academics
Brook Masters – Dean of College Counseling*

www.besanthill.org
C.E.E.B. # 052255

General Overview

Besant Hill School of Happy Valley, formerly known as Happy Valley School, was established in 1946 on the principals of education envisioned by our illustrious founders Aldous Huxley, Rosalind Rajagopal, J. Krishnamurti, Dr. Guido Ferrando, and Dr. Annie Besant. Today the school is a Grade 9-12 co-educational, college preparatory, non-sectarian, boarding and day school enrolling approximately 105 students from 15 countries and 17 states. This year's senior class has 29 students.

Besant Hill School celebrates the individual through a vigorous academic program and developing whole-brained thinking, with an emphasis on creative expression. We encourage this creative exploration not only in our visual and performing arts departments, but also throughout our entire academic curriculum. Each student is encouraged to achieve his or her personal best by engaging fully in all of Besant Hill's programs. There are opportunities for leadership and teamwork in student government, campus habitat crews, outdoor education, experiential learning, and athletics. Intellectual curiosity and personal development are the driving factors in the pursuit of academic excellence at Besant Hill School, while participation in the school community builds caring and responsible individuals, promoting lives of integrity, awareness, and purpose.

Through awakening and fostering the spirit of inquiry, we enable each student to develop a lifelong habit of learning as embodied in our school's motto *Aun Aprendo*, "I am still learning". Our non-competitive community builds honesty, compassion, responsibility, and respect for all of humanity and the earth we live on. Our commitment to global citizenry and sustainability can be seen throughout our programming and our campus. We integrate and blend students from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds, and our international students bring much to our community by way of their unique and distinctive perspectives, values and experiences. We pride ourselves on best preparing our students for future success by creating an environment where they learn how to think, not what to think.

Accreditations/ Memberships

Besant Hill School is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and holds memberships in the National Association of Independent Schools, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, the Association of Boarding Schools, the Western Boarding Schools Association, the Independent School Alliance for Minority Affairs, the California Interscholastic Federation - Southern Section, the Association of Experiential Education, the National Society for Experiential Education, and the National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Graduation Requirements

A minimum of 25 academic credits is required for graduation. Twenty-one of these are specified as follows: 4 years of English, 3 years of Science (including 1 year of Biology and 1 year of chemistry), 3 years of Math, 3 years of Social Sciences (including World Cultures and US History), 2 years of Foreign Language in the same language, 2 years of Art (visual or performing, with 1 year in the same art), and 4 years of Fitness. Beyond these, an additional four credits in electives are required, with one being the Senior Capstone.

Schedule

From September through late May Besant Hill School operates on a modified block schedule. Classes meet for a minimum of 200 minutes per week. Students typically earn 1 credit for every full year class, and ½ credit for every semester class. Grade reports are issued on a semester calendar.

Ranking/GPA

In accordance with our non-competitive environment, Besant Hill School does not rank its students. A cumulative un-weighted grade point average is calculated at the end of the junior year, based on a 4.0 scale. Only Besant Hill School course work is used in computing the GPA. Marking system: A (100-93) A- (92-90); B+ (89-87) B (86-83) B- (82-80); C+ (79-77) C (76-73) C- (72-70); D+ (69-67) D (66-63) D- (62-60); F (59 or below).

Statement on Disclosure

Besant Hill School believes in maintaining confidentiality in matters of student discipline. Our primary interest is in helping students learn from inappropriate behavior, and in refocusing their actions toward more positive outcomes. Therefore, while students are encouraged toward full disclosure in regards to their individual disciplinary history, it is our institutional policy not to respond to specific inquiries.

Exceptions may be made when a student has received an Academic Suspension due to dishonesty or lack of integrity in the academic environment, when grave disciplinary offenses occur resulting in the compromised safety of the community, when a student has been expelled from BHS, or when a student requests disclosure.

Honors and AP Courses

Honors and AP courses are labeled as such on the transcript. These courses are not weighted as the GPA is computed. Besant Hill School is fully compliant with the AP audit process as established by the College Board.

A member of the Class of 2010 would have had the following advanced course work available over their four years at Besant Hill School:

One honors course: English III

Four A.P. courses: Calculus AB, Spanish, US Government and Politics, English Literature and Composition.

Courses of Interest

Beyond the expected academic coursework, Besant Hill graduates have a variety of required curricula that further our mission of developing excellence in every individual.

- All students participate yearly in the **Outdoor Education** program, including a one-week backpacking trip in the High Sierras and multiple weekend experiences that emphasize teamwork, self-challenge and respect for the environment.
- All freshmen students are required to take **Environmental Science**, a place-based and experiential course that provides a foundation for learning the ethics and practices of Sustainability to which BHS is committed.
- All students are required to participate in **Fitness** a minimum of 200 minutes a week, for all four years. BHS fields ten sports teams, competing in the Condor League of California Interscholastic Federation – Southern Section.
- All students are encouraged to participate in an **Experiential Learning** project each year. These projects involve in-depth exploration of clearly articulated educational objectives, coupled with a service-learning component, and are often travel based. Recent projects have been based in New Orleans, San Francisco, Mexico, Venezuela, Egypt, Italy and Cameroon. To culminate their project, students present an evaluated reflection piece.
- All Seniors participate in our **Capstone Program**. Each senior works all year long with a member of the faculty to design a unique learning experience outside of the school community. In partnership with a professional mentor in his or her chosen field of exploration, the student creates a two-week individualized project or internship, which culminates in a public presentation.
- At Besant Hill School, artistic endeavors and creative expression are interwoven with academic excellence. Students regularly participate in performance opportunities and public exhibitions, often partnering with experts in the **visual and performing arts** communities. The spirit of support and appreciation that permeates the community as a result of these events feeds back into all other areas of our campus life.

College List

Approximately 95% of BHS graduates enter schools of higher education. The following is an acceptance list for the class of 2009.

American Musical and Dramatic Academy	Pacific Northwest College of Art
Berklee College of Music	Pepperdine University
Boston College	Prescott College
Brooklyn College	Purdue University
California Institute of the Arts	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
California Lutheran University	Ringling College of Art and Design
California State University, Channel Islands	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
California State University, Chico	Santa Barbara City College
California State University, East Bay	Santa Clara University
California State University, Monterey Bay	School of the Museum of Fine Arts
California State University, Northridge	School of Visual Arts
Chapman University	Sonoma State University
City College of San Francisco	Syracuse University
Cleveland Institute of Music	The City University of New York
Columbia College Chicago	The Evergreen State College
Curry College	The New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts
Drexel University	Université de Montréal
Eugene Lang College	University at Buffalo
Eastern Oregon University	University of California, Berkley
Fort Lewis College	University of Connecticut
Hampshire College	University of Hartford
Lesley University	University of Hawaii, Manoa
Linfield College	University of Illinois
Long Island University	University of La Verne
Loyola University, Chicago	University of Mary
Mount Ida College	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Newbury College	University of New Haven
	University of Rochester
	University of the Pacific
	Wagner College
	Whittier College

The following scores were taken from the Classes of 2008 and 2009:

SAT Verbal:	Middle 50% = 470 – 620
SAT Math:	Middle 50% = 450 – 640
SAT Writing:	Middle 50% = 450 – 570



BESANT HILL SCHOOL
of HAPPY VALLEY