BESANT HILL SCHOOL
OF HAPPY VALLEY
1946
The mission of Besant Hill School is the development of each individual’s intellectual and artistic abilities. Through awakening the spirit of inquiry, we encourage each student to pursue integrity and excellence. Our non-competitive community builds honesty, respect, compassion, and responsibility. Our goal is to develop a lifelong habit of learning as embodied in our school’s motto

*Aun Aprendo—I am still learning.*
Let your life speak...

“Let Your Life Speak” is an old saying used to describe a notion that one’s actions, not one’s professed beliefs, are of utmost importance in life. At Besant Hill, we are confident that our school “speaks” through the experiences that students have here.

These experiences ultimately build upon each other and result in positive growth for each individual. It is our hope that the time spent in the classrooms, art studios, theater, playing fields, and dormitories gives each person the ability to create his/her own life which speaks - one that results in constructive change to the human condition and the planet.
Join your voice to ours.

To achieve this lofty goal, our community is united in a common purpose which is our curriculum. We define curriculum as everything we do with intention, and it includes all aspects of student life. The learning does not stop when the academic day ends, as it continues in the arts, athletic programs, and in the dormitories. As the overwhelming majority of our faculty live on campus, students are interacting with adults who have a wide range of academic and professional backgrounds. Conversations between students and adults are constant, and learning and mentoring continue in these informal ways as well.

After receiving a Besant Hill education students are not only ready for a life of inquiry, but also prepared to be purposeful with their actions – to let their life speak. We hope you consider becoming a part of our community and joining your voice to ours.
Let your history speak...

Coming together 70 years ago, in a world ravaged by war, our founders were committed to a future based on the dignity of the individual. This community of educators and philosophers were convinced of the need for new approaches to education.
Honoring our past, focused on the future

They envisioned an educational climate that would foster the overall intellectual and emotional development of each student in every aspect of daily life—a community whose members would be held together by an ethical and profoundly spiritual bond, regardless of individual backgrounds and beliefs.

besanthill.org/our-story
Let your soul speak...

Our expansive visual and performing arts programs, within this supportive community that celebrates creativity and diversity, is the perfect environment in which to explore your passions, find your unique voice, and better understand others’ points of view. As a student at Besant Hill School, you will never underestimate your creative potential.
What will you create?

VISUAL ARTS
Art History
Ceramics
Yearbook
Filmmaking/Screenplay
Digital Arts
Digital Photography
Visual Arts Foundation
Visual Arts (I & II)
Drawing
Painting
Printmaking
Sculpture
Advanced Visual Arts/
Portfolio Development

MUSIC
BHS Chorale
BHS Chamber Chorale
Instrumental Study
BHS Music Ensemble
BHS Advanced Music Ensemble
Music Theory I
Music Theory II
Voice

THEATER & DANCE
Performing Arts Foundation
Acting I
Acting II
Dance

“Singing a classical piece broadened my perspective on what I believed my voice was capable of and challenged me to grow as a vocal artist.”
- Madi Kish ‘16

besanthonll.org/arts
2016 Spring Musical Rehearsal
Let your mind speak...

Curiosity is motivated by dialogue and active participation in classes that challenge your intellectual creativity and passion. Our teachers facilitate discussion, rather than lecture, and encourage divergent thinking in which there is never just one right answer. In the end, you will be a big-picture thinker, someone who can synthesize knowledge, solve problems, and help others find meaning.
What will you discover?

Comparative Religion  
Creative Writing  
Cultural Geography  
Human Development Program  
Senior Capstone Program  
Modern World History  
Advanced Environmental Science  
Anatomy and Physiology  
AP Biology  
AP US History  
US History Honors

AP Economics  
AP French  
AP Environmental Science  
AP Calculus AB  
AP Statistics  
AP English  
AP Spanish  
AP Human Geography  
English III Honors  
Physics and Astronomy  
Organic Farming

“You feel empowered here. If you work hard at something, you can do it, and you are never afraid to express what is on your mind.”
Talya Horowitz ’07, Golan Heights, Israel

College Counseling
Our College Counselor works closely with all students and their families from the moment they arrive on campus.

besanthill.org/academics
Physics class
Let your heart speak...

Whatever the scoreboard says, our teams win by playing their best, displaying good sportsmanship, showing commitment, and having fun. We want you to stretch yourself to be a better player, a better teammate, a better person. If you want the benefits of regular physical activity but without the competition, we have a complete fitness program built around group and individual activities such as dance, hiking, surfing, golf, yoga, and weightlifting.
“Being a student athlete at Besant Hill is one of the best things I have ever experienced. The feeling of being fully immersed in the sport of your choice while getting Besant’s unique education is simply indescribable. Playing here has not only made me love the game more, but I have made some of the greatest friends I will ever encounter.”

-Lukas Huberman ’13 Ojai, CA

besanthill.org/athletics
When you live in one of the most beautiful places in the country, you recognize the importance of protecting our resources. Our Director of Environmental Sustainability provides real-world experience with environmental challenges like waste disposal and waste conservation, challenges that foster environmental awareness and push your capacity to problem-solve in creative ways.
“Sustainability education is the active cultivation of a community ethic, an ethic that is committed to preserving and enriching our natural, social, and economic resources to meet our present needs, while ensuring that these resources will still be available to nourish and enrich future generations of the school community.”

- Tod Cossairt, Director of Environmental Sustainability

besancthill.org/sustainability

Project Day grape harvest

Bioneers Conference, San Francisco
Experiential Learning is a practice that engages students in active, hands-on learning, integrating curricular goals with practical and consequential real-life experiences. You will experience outdoor education, adventure learning, service projects, internships, group-based learning projects, world travel, and cross-cultural collaboration.

Greece 2014
What will you experience?

“When you write via blog or in your journals on a trip, that reflection is more than just a report of the day’s events. You find the places that take you deeper, the questions your experiences provoke. What do you know today that you did not know yesterday?”

- Brook Masters, Director of Experiential Education

besanthonline.org/experiential
Let your home speak...

In our residential boarding program, you will find an atmosphere that encourages and supports your academic, creative, and personal growth. It’s a healthy community with comfortable dormitories in a natural setting of inspiring moonrises and sunsets, walking and hiking trails, an organic garden, fruit trees, and most of all, friendly faces.
My favorite moment with friends this year was when I first got here and everyone was so nice and welcoming.

- Ryan McNamara '16, Chicago, USA

besanthill.org/student-life
Let your learning speak...

The Instructional Support Program (ISP) meets students at their academic level, taking into consideration individual learning styles. Students learn time-management skills and practice strategies they can apply in all of their classes to achieve academic success.

besanthonline.org/isps
Speak the language of learning.

Our ESL (English as a Second Language) Program provides students, who are not native speakers of English, with a complete immersion experience, and ensures they have all necessary credits for college acceptance.

besanthill.org/esl
Let your summer speak...

Besant Hill School’s Summer Institute is a comprehensive program for students eager to improve SAT or TOEFL scores and/or English language proficiency and includes STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) courses and a music program. Students enjoy weekend excursions such as hikes, beach days, a Six Flags Amusement Park day, and visits to museums and other fun Southern California attractions.

**SAT**
An in-depth overview of all three sections of the SAT test, including discussions about format, content, and overall strategies.

**ESL**
An immersion journey in speaking English, getting to know the BHS campus, and exploring Ojai and California. A great opportunity for international students to get a head start on the school year.

**STEM**
Ideal for students interested in pursuing a career in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM). The BHS Summer STEM Program is an intensive, four-week experience that immerses students in hands-on engineering design and problem-solving.
“By attending the Summer Institute, I finished my college essay early. That gave me a big head start going into my senior year. It took some of the pressure off, and I was accepted to the colleges of my choice.”

- Ilana Ariel ’14, Texas, USA

besanthon.org/summer
Besant Hill School: At a Glance

A Global Community where students develop their intellectual & artistic abilities

100 Boarding & Day Students
Grades 9-12/PG

13 US States & 20 Countries Represented

Founded in 1946
Founded on 520 acres (210 hectares)
Surrounded by spectacular panoramic views of the Topa Topa Mountains and the Ojai Valley, Besant Hill School provides a serene, natural environment in which students can pursue their educational goals.

Location
Ojai, California
90 minutes northwest of Los Angeles
40 minutes south of Santa Barbara
20 minutes from the beach

Tuition
Domestic Boarding: $48,900
International Boarding: $55,600
Day Tuition: $22,500
Book & Act: $3,100
ISP: $8,200, $6,200, $4,200

A 4:1 Faculty-to-Student Ratio

Average Class Size: 10
Total Faculty: 27
Faculty Who Live on Campus: 70%
Faculty with Advanced Degrees: 75%

Academics
AP & Honors Courses
English as a Second Language (ESL)
Instructional Support Program (ISP)
Experiential Learning
Sustainability Education
Foreign Languages: Spanish & French
Visual & Performing Arts

Performing Arts
Performing Arts Foundation
Acting I & II
Choral Singing
Instrumental Study
A Fall Play and a Spring Musical
Two Concerts
Two Variety Shows

Sports & Fitness
Team Sports: Basketball, Soccer, Volleyball, Cross Country Running
Intramural Activities: Dance, Golf, Hiking, Surfing, Weight-training, Yoga

Admissions Dates
January 15: Financial Aid Applications Due
February 1: Priority Applications Due
March 10: Admissions Decisions Sent for Priority Applications
April 10: Enrollments Contracts Due to Admissions Office; Rolling Admissions Begins

Visual Arts
Studio Art & Art History
Digital Arts & Photography
Ceramics
Printmaking
Screenwriting & Film
Student Art Shows

Performing Arts Foundation

Visual Arts

Sports & Fitness

Academics

Performing Arts

Admissions Dates

How to Apply
Start your application today!

Getting started on an online application is just a few clicks away. You can return anytime to continue and your application isn’t submitted until you are ready!

www.besanthill.org/apply

August
Begin your online application, or contact our Admissions Office for application materials.

September-November
Schedule a campus visit and interview, or contact the Admissions Office to arrange an online interview.

December
Complete student Essay & Application. Have transcripts forwarded and current teachers complete recommendation forms.

January/February
Application & Financial Aid
Financial aid deadline is January 15.
Application deadline February 1.

March
Decisions released.
We will contact applicants about our decision on March 10.

April
Make a Decision.
Deadline for admitted students is April 10.
Our Graduates Will...

Honor Their Individual Strengths and Be Resilient
Embody the Ideals of Environmental Activism
Model Global Citizenship
Think Critically and Synthesize Knowledge
Engage in Their Creative and Artistic Passions
A Letter from Head of School Randy Bertin

It is a personal and professional privilege to lead this unique school into its 70th year of educating young people from around the world on how to think, not what to think. Besant Hill School has experienced a renaissance over the past ten years, as the facilities and campus have been completely overhauled, the profiles of students and faculty are stronger and more diverse than ever, and the school's many programs have grown along with this transformation in our community. Additionally, parents, trustees, and alumni are supporting the school in more generous ways than in previous years! We are all dedicated to the support of student learning, and our external community has demonstrated their commitment to this effort as well.

Life at Besant Hill includes a rigorous college preparatory academic program that emphasizes creativity, divergent thinking, and the Socratic method of teaching. In addition to this, we accentuate the Visual and Performing Arts and Environmental Sustainability. We are committed to pedagogical and operational practices that help us to minimize our impact on the planet. This has been a longstanding tradition at our school, and in recent years we have emphasized environmental sustainability as a critical component of the student experience at Besant Hill. The arts are crucial, as we believe that an exploration of music, drama, film, and the visual arts gain an appreciation for these wonderful expressions of the human spirit.

Our motto, Aun Aprendo -“I am Still Learning”- asks each member of our school community to approach the academics at Besant Hill as not the end-goal of learning, but rather as the foundation for a mindset of lifelong inquiry. I hope you visit us in Ojai soon to experience for yourself how this school is creating constructive change in the planet and the human condition, one student at a time.

Aun Aprendo,

Randy R. Bertin, Ed.D.