



# 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 life long habit of learning as embodied in our school's motto

***Aun Aprendo—I am still learning.***








# WELCOME TO BESANT HILL SCHOOL

## *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.

A person wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and dark pants stands on a grassy hill, facing away from the camera with their arms outstretched. They are looking towards a large, densely forested hill that fills the background. The sky is overcast and grey. The foreground consists of tall, dry grass.

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.

## OUR STORY

# *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.

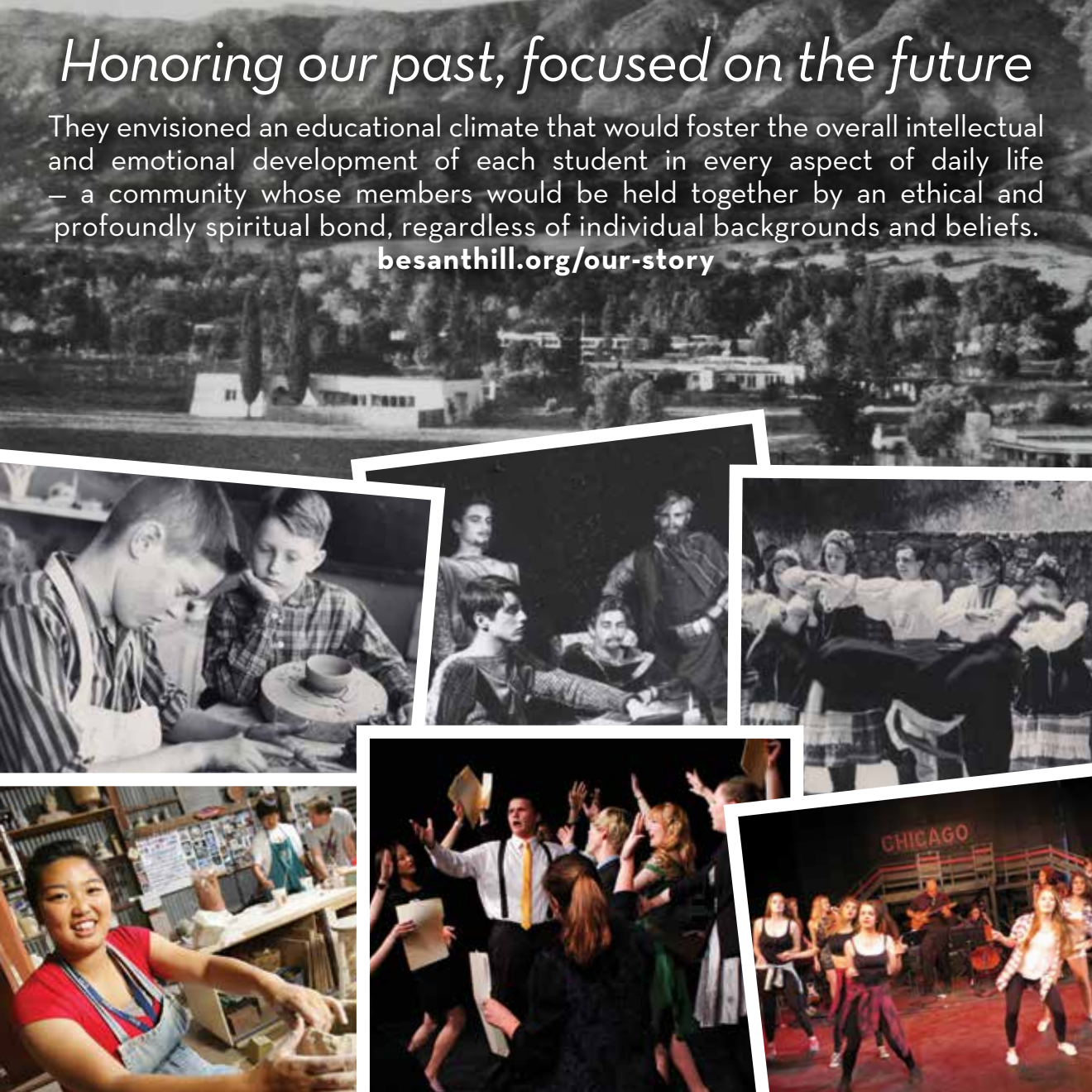




# *Honoring our past, focused on the future*

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.

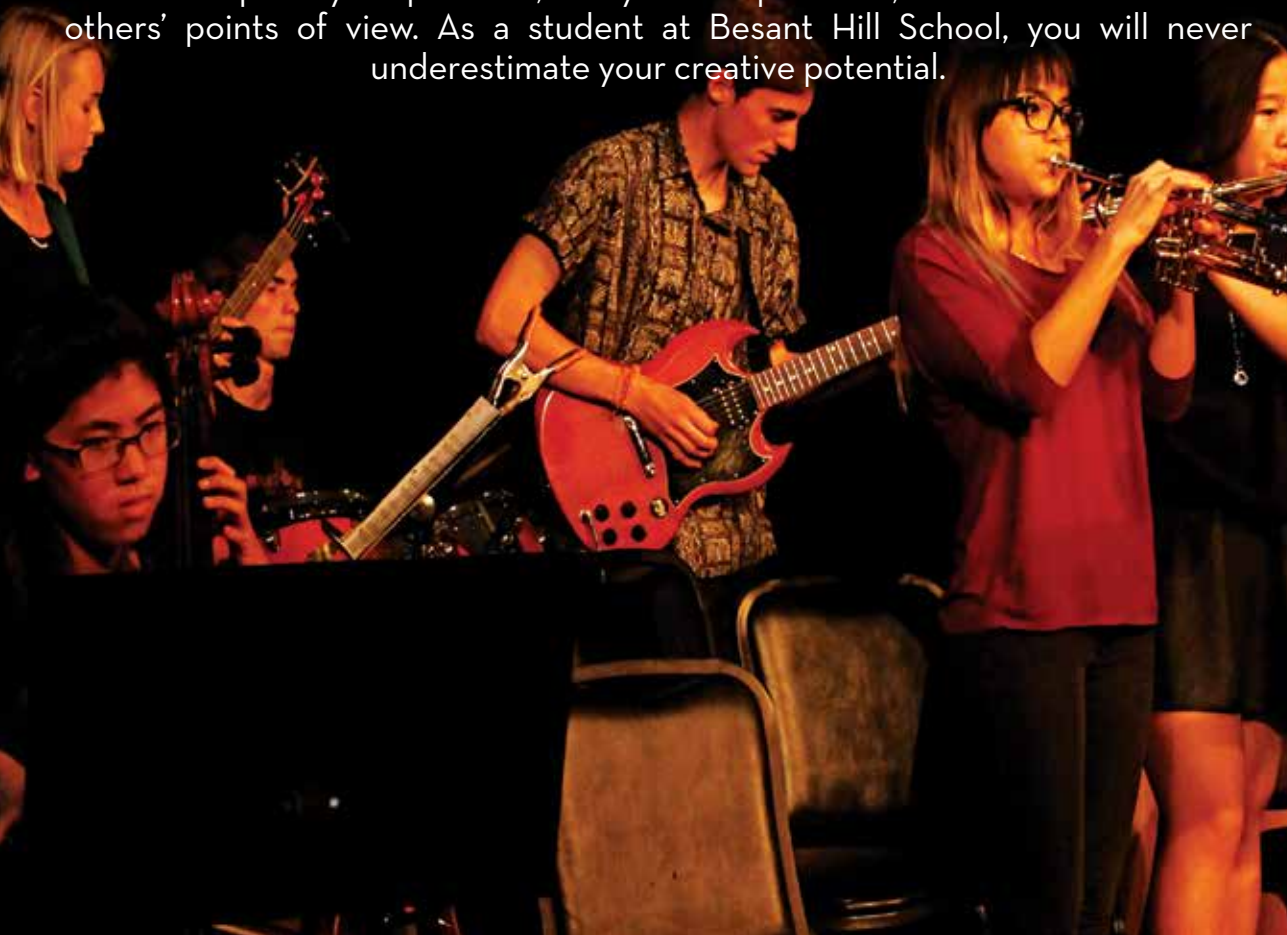
**[besanthill.org/our-story](https://besanthill.org/our-story)**



# THE ARTS

## *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 Choral  
BHS Chamber Choral  
Instrumental Study  
BHS Music Ensemble  
BHS Advanced Music Ensemble  
Music Theory I  
Music Theory II  
Voice

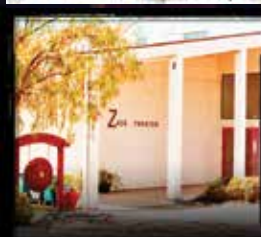
## THEATER & DANCE

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

[besanthill.org/arts](http://besanthill.org/arts)





2016 Spring Musical Rehearsal





# ACADEMICS

## *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?

"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

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

## College Counseling

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

[besanthill.org/academics](http://besanthill.org/academics)

### college counseling

Students regularly meet with a college counselor to prepare for testing & applications.



### college visits

Visiting colleges provide a great opportunity to ask questions and make the best choice for college.







Physics class

# ATHLETICS & FITNESS

## *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.



# Playing with heart is always a win.

"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

## SPORTS | FITNESS

Volleyball  
Soccer  
Cross Country  
Basketball

CrossFit  
Swimming  
Weight Training  
Yoga  
Surfing  
Water Polo  
Golf  
Dance

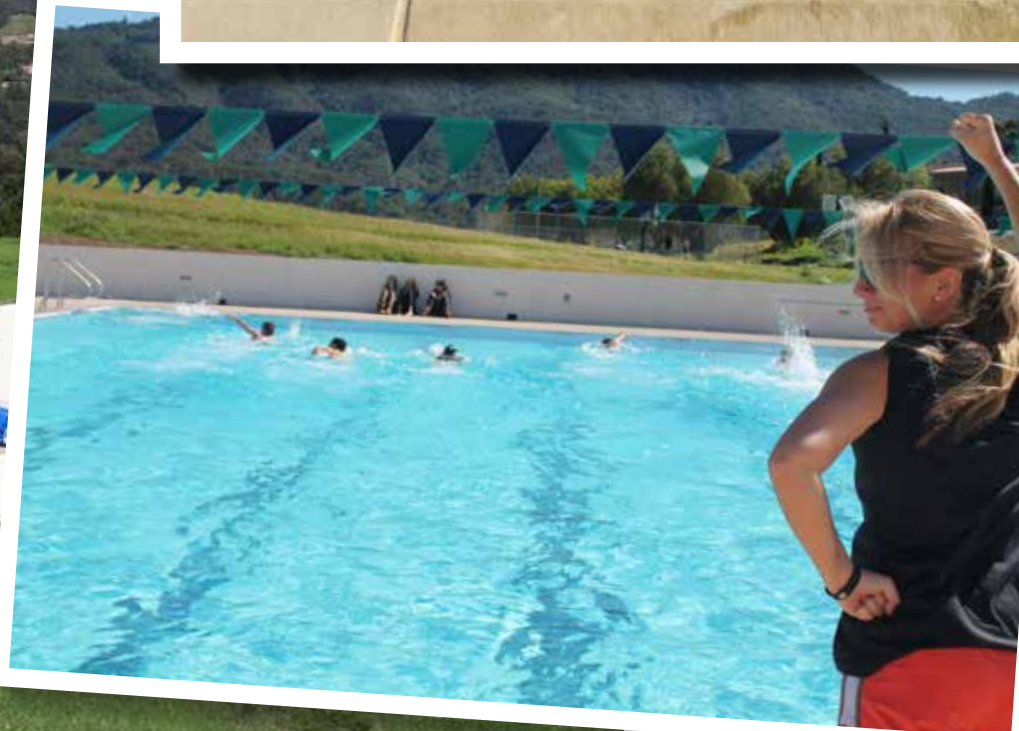
[besanthill.org/athletics](http://besanthill.org/athletics)







Aquatic Center





# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

## *Let your work speak...*

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.





# What will you grow?

"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

[besanthill.org/sustainability](https://besanthill.org/sustainability)



Project Day grape harvest



Bioneers Conference, San Francisco



campus Farm







# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

## *Let your world speak...*

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

[besanthill.org/experiential](https://besanthill.org/experiential)



FALL TRIPS



WORLD TRAVEL

SENIOR CAPSTONE PROGRAM



Italy 2016





# RESIDENTIAL LIFE

## *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.



EOS



GROVE



PHOENIX



# Connect with community

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](http://besanthill.org/student-life)





# SUPPORT PROGRAMS (ISP & ESL)

## *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.

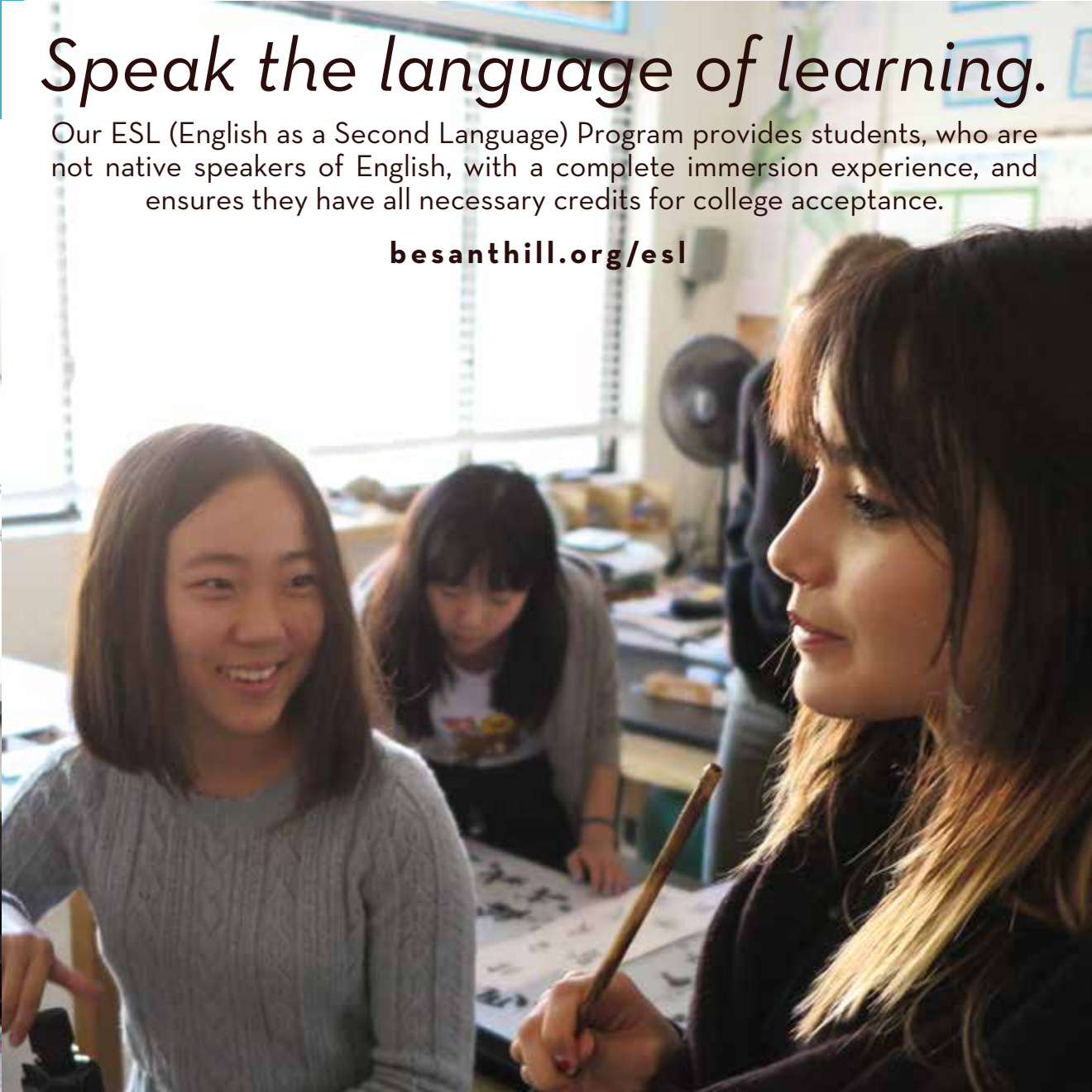
**[besanthill.org/isp](http://besanthill.org/isp)**



# *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](http://besanthill.org/esl)**



# SUMMER INSTITUTE

## *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

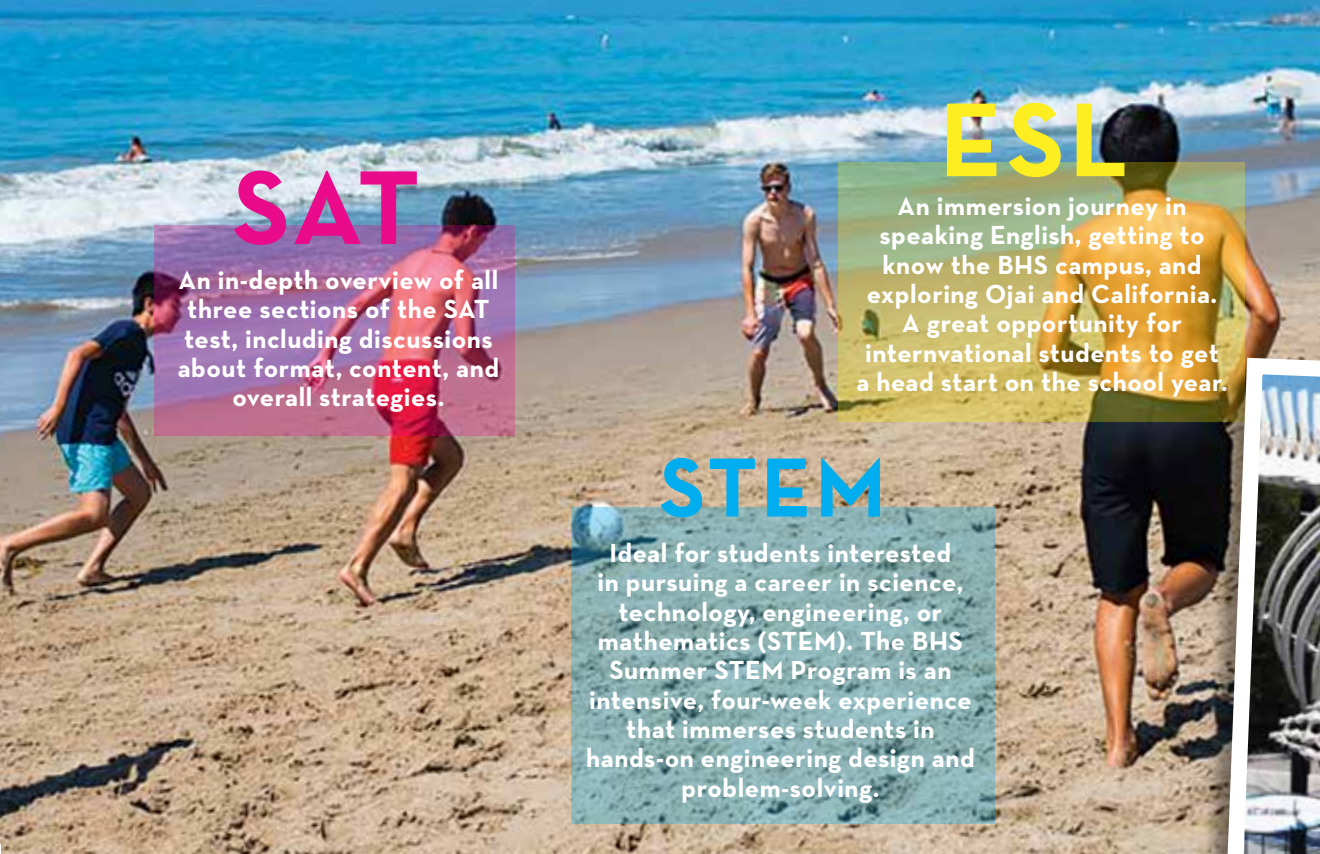
An in-depth overview of all three sections of the SAT test, including discussions about format, content, and overall strategies.

### 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.





# Get a jump on the year ahead!

"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

**[besanthill.org/summer](http://besanthill.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

50/50

**85%**  
BOARDING STUDENTS

13 US STATES & 20 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

OVER 60 COURSES OFFERED

## LOCATION

**OJAI,  
CALIFORNIA**

**90 MINUTES** NORTHWEST OF LOS ANGELES

**40 MINUTES** SOUTH OF SANTA BARBARA

**20 MINUTES** FROM THE BEACH

## 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.

## TUITION

**DOMESTIC BOARDING:**

\$48,900

**INTERNATIONAL BOARDING:**

\$55,600

**DAY TUITION:**

\$22,500

**BOOK & ACT:** \$3,100

**ISP:** \$8200, \$6200, \$4200

# 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

## SPORTS & FITNESS

TEAM SPORTS:

BASKETBALL, SOCCER, VOLLEYBALL,

CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING

INTRAMURAL ACTIVITIES:

DANCE, GOLF, HIKING, SURFING,

WEIGHT-TRAINING, YOGA

## PERFORMING ARTS

PERFORMING ARTS FOUNDATION

ACTING I & II

CHORAL SINGING

INSTRUMENTAL STUDY

A FALL PLAY AND A SPRING MUSICAL

TWO CONCERTS

TWO VARIETY SHOWS

## VISUAL ARTS

STUDIO ART & ART HISTORY

DIGITAL ARTS & PHOTOGRAPHY

CERAMICS

PRINTMAKING

SCREENWRITING & FILM

STUDENT ART SHOWS

## 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

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](http://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,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Randy Bertin". The signature is stylized, with the first letters of the first and last names being large and prominent.

Randy R. Bertin, Ed.D.



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**[www.besanthill.org](http://www.besanthill.org)**