



**BESANT HILL SCHOOL**  
OF HAPPY VALLEY

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## OUR MISSION

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, *Aún Aprendo*—I am still learning.

# SCHOOL PROFILE 2024-25

## OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Besant Hill School of Happy Valley is a private, coeducational college preparatory boarding and day school (grades 9-12, PG). Besant Hill is an intentionally small school offering students an educational experience that cannot be replicated in larger institutions. Located on 520 beautiful acres in the Ojai Valley, just 85 miles northwest of Los Angeles, students and dedicated faculty create a unique learning environment for each student to explore their passions within a supportive, globally diverse community.

Besant Hill School of Happy Valley was established in 1946 on the principles of education envisioned by our illustrious founders, including Annie Besant, Aldous Huxley, Rosalind Rajagopal, J. Krishnamurti, and Dr. Guido Ferrando. Based on our founders' vision, we have created an intentionally small, nurturing community which facilitates the fullest development of each student's intellectual and artistic abilities.

At Besant Hill School, powerful programming, which can only be implemented on a small scale, affords our students the *Aún Aprendo* Experience, awakening the spirit of inquiry, the pursuit of personal integrity and scholastic excellence. Students will become successful global citizens and have real world experience through our Experiential Learning program, Senior Capstone projects, and an ePortfolio program to prepare for their next step in education.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**100** BOARDING &  
DAY STUDENTS



40% INTERNATIONAL • 60% DOMESTIC • 20 COUNTRIES • 13 STATES • 85% BOARDING • 15% DAY

**4:1** STUDENT TO  
FACULTY RATIO



AVERAGE  
CLASS SIZE **10**



**22%** STUDENTS RECEIVING  
FINANCIAL AID

**30%** STUDENTS IDENTIFYING  
AS PEOPLE OF COLOR



## ADVANCED PLACEMENT & HONORS COURSES (UC APPROVED)

SUBJECT	ADVANCED PLACEMENT	HONORS
ENGLISH	Literature and Composition	English II & III & IV
HISTORY	US History, Human Geography, Psychology	World History, US History
MATH	Calculus AB, Statistics	Math IV
SCIENCE	Biology, Environmental Science	
LANGUAGE	French, Spanish	

Students often are offered a variety of non-traditional class options such as independent studies to further interest in a particular area of study, or they may become a teaching assistant in our beginning level courses after they have progressed to a mastery level. Students wishing to explore Advanced Placement classes not offered at Besant Hill School may do so online with administration approval.

## PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

Within a framework of Universal Design, teachers employ multiple best practices in the classroom including the Socratic Method, Mastery Teaching, and Cooperative Learning. We value and encourage creativity and a creative mindset in all subjects, teaching how to think, not what to think. Academic classes, including art and physical education, are all valued equally in the pursuit of educating the whole person.

## OUR GRADUATES

- *Think critically and synthesize knowledge*
- *Honor their individual strengths and are resilient*
- *Engage in their creative and artistic passions*
- *Model global citizenship*
- *Embody the ideals of environmental activism*

# SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Students build an everlasting affinity to nature while developing leadership and teamwork skills through backpacking, rock climbing, and white water rafting designed to inspire a lifetime of outdoor exploration and respect.

## SUMMER INSTITUTE

Four weeks of dynamic programming where students interact with peers from all around the world while mastering study skills, life lessons, and gain an appreciation for California. We offer a variety of courses in English as a Second Language (ESL), SAT Prep, and a hands-on STEM Program. Students are offered many off-campus trips to enrich classroom material.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Actively engaging learners in progressive education models, students have the opportunity to travel regionally, nationally, and internationally. We instill global activism into our programs, so students gain perspective to enrich their classroom lessons

## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

A comprehensive program that meets students at their academic level, taking into consideration their individual learning style. Students learn strategies they can apply in all of their classes to achieve academic success. ISP students are taught how to accommodate their learning style to an unmodified college prep curriculum.

## VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

With nearly 30 offerings in music, performing, visual and digital arts, Besant Hill School honors our foundation in the arts, seeking to nurture an artistic expression in every student.

## SUSTAINABILITY

With an eight-acre organic farm as a main source of food in the dining hall, student participation in energy saving competitions, and trips to annual environmental conferences, ecological literacy is an integral part of our lives and the educational process.

## ESL

While improving their written, verbal, and comprehension skills, non-native English speakers build confidence for public speaking during weekly assemblies and a personal commencement address.

## SENIOR CAPSTONE

Each spring, seniors work with a member of the faculty and in partnership with a professional mentor in his or her chosen field of interest to create a two-week individualized project or internship.



# GRADES AND RANKING

Besant Hill School complies with the UC system A-G graduation requirements. Besant Hill School holds high expectations, therefore, we do not rank our students. Our classes are graded on a standard letter scale of A through F, with pluses and minuses attached to grades A through D. Grades are not weighted in the calculation of a student's GPA. Students do not receive credit for grades D or lower.

# SAMPLE ACCEPTANCES 2020-2024

Contact our Director of College Counseling for the complete list.

Adelphi University (NJ)  
Alfred University (NY)  
American University (DC)  
American University of Paris (France)  
Arizona State University (AZ)  
Bard College (NY)  
Bates College (ME)  
Belmont University (TN)  
Berklee College of Music (MA)  
Boston University (MA)  
Brandeis University (MA)  
California College of the Arts (CA)  
California Lutheran University (CA)  
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (CA)  
California State University, Northridge (CA)  
Case Western Reserve University (OH)  
Chapman University (CA)  
Claremont McKenna College (CA)  
Coe College (IA)  
Colorado State University (CO)  
Culinary Institute of America (NY)  
Dickinson College (PA)  
Drew University (NJ)  
Earlham College (IN)  
Emerson College (MA)  
Fordham University (NY)  
Franklin University (Switzerland)  
Goldsmith's, University of London (UK)  
Gonzaga University (WA)  
Goucher College (MD)  
Indiana University, Bloomington  
Ithaca College (NY)  
James Madison University (VA)  
John Cabot University (Italy)  
King's College London (UK)

Lake Forest College (IL)  
Landmark College (VT)  
Lawrence University (WI)  
Lewis & Clark College (OR)  
Loyola Marymount University (CA)  
Macalester College (MN)  
Miami University (OH)  
Michigan State University (MI)  
Middlesex University (UK)  
Mount Holyoke College (MA)  
New York University (NY)  
Oberlin College (OH)  
Occidental College (CA)  
Otis College of Art and Design (CA)  
Pacific University (OR)  
Parsons School of Design at The New School (NY)  
Pennsylvania State University (PA)  
Pepperdine University (CA)  
Pitzer College (CA)  
Purdue University (IN)  
Reed College (OR)  
Regis University (CO)  
Rhode Island School of Design (RI)  
Roger Williams University (RI)  
Rutgers University (NJ)  
Saint Mary's College of California (CA)  
Salve Regina University (RI)  
San Diego State University (CA)  
San Jose State University (CA)  
Santa Clara University (CA)  
Sarah Lawrence College (NY)  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago (IL)  
Scripps College (CA)  
Seattle University (WA)  
Skidmore College (NY)

Sonoma State University (CA)  
St. Olaf College (MN)  
State University of New York, Stony Brook (NY)  
Syracuse University (NY)  
Temple University (PA)  
The American University of Paris (France)  
The New School: Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts (NY)  
The New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts (NY)  
The Ohio State University (OH)  
Trinity University (TX)  
University College London (UK)  
University of Arizona (AZ)  
University of California, Berkeley (CA)  
University of California, Davis (CA)  
University of California, Irvine (CA)  
University of California, Riverside (CA)  
University of California, San Diego (CA)  
University of California, Santa Cruz (CA)  
University of Colorado, Boulder (CO)  
University of Connecticut (CT)  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst (MA)  
University of Oregon (OR)  
University of Portland (OR)  
University of Redlands (CA)  
University of Roehampton (UK)  
University of San Francisco (CA)  
University of St. Andrew's (UK)  
University of Texas, Austin (TX)  
University of the Pacific (CA)  
University of Vermont (VT)  
University of Washington (WA)  
Whitman College (WA)  
Whittier College (CA)

