BELMONT HILL SCHOOL
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
HEAD OF SCHOOL
JULY 1, 2018
www.belmonthill.org
Beginning July 2018, Belmont Hill School seeks a new Head of School to lead one of the country’s most exceptional all-boys schools. Rick Melvoin, who will be stepping down after 25 years of outstanding leadership, describes the position as “the best job in the world.” The new Head will be responsible for leading Belmont Hill School as it enters its second century of leading boys on the journey to becoming men.

With a $110 million endowment, excellent facilities, and an outstanding faculty, Belmont Hill offers the new Head the opportunity to take the helm of a thriving community. The new Head will be charged with implementing the School’s new strategic vision and enhancing it with his or her own strategic plan. The ideal candidate will be an experienced and dynamic independent school educator who can balance a forward-thinking vision with a steadfast commitment to Belmont Hill’s beloved history and traditions and a commitment to excellence in academics, athletics, and character-focused education in our increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

In 1923, Belmont Hill began with a group of seven faculty and 45 students in a red brick manor house in the Boston suburb of Belmont—a building that still serves, today, as the center of the Belmont Hill campus. Even in the School’s earliest days, founding head Reginald Heber Howe emphasized high standards of scholarship, a rich and varied course of study that included arts and athletics, and a close-knit school community, described by one early observer as “the development of cooperative goodwill.”

In subsequent years, Belmont Hill endured both good times and bad, weathering the economic pressures of the Great Depression and the World War II era before entering a time of growth under the leadership of the School’s fourth headmaster, Charles F. Hamilton, who grew enrollment to 370
young men, expanded and improved facilities, and inaugurated an era of robust extracurricular and athletic achievement. Belmont Hill continued to develop throughout the following decades, introducing greater curricular flexibility, implementing new technologies, and advancing a more inclusive school community through financial aid initiatives and new forums for discussion and education around diversity. The School will celebrate its Centennial in 2023, commemorating 100 years of boys’ education and looking forward to many decades of growth and innovation to come.

THE SCHOOL

Today, Belmont Hill School enrolls 443 students in 7th through 12th grade, providing an environment in which boys learn to think deeply, act ethically, and develop into young men of character. With a strong record of academic excellence and achievement in athletics and the arts, Belmont Hill benefits from a robust alumni and parent network and a strong administration committed to balancing tradition and innovation in the ongoing life of the School.

As a founding member of the International Boys’ School Coalition, Belmont Hill is a leader in single-sex education, harnessing the substantial benefits of boys’ education while simultaneously preparing students for participation in a coeducational world. Extracurriculars often include students from nearby girls’ schools Winsor, Newton Country Day, and Dana Hall. Belmont Hill is committed to building a strong and inclusive community that supports student identity development and promotes informed, healthy perspectives on gender identity and sexual orientation.

The Belmont Hill student body draws from over 61 Boston-area communities, with diverse economic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds. Financial aid has grown substantially during the tenure of the current Head; in 2016-2017, Belmont Hill awarded $4.6 million in financial aid to approximately 31% of families. Primarily a day school, Belmont Hill also offers a five-day boarding option to up to 26 students, who benefit from a structured weekday environment and close relationships with faculty dorm parents.
Indeed, Belmont Hill’s faculty is another School strength: of the 60 faculty members, 75% hold advanced degrees, and all teachers also coach or direct extra-curricular activities, getting to know boys in and out of the classroom. With an overall student-to-teacher ratio of 6:1 and an average class size of 12 students, Belmont Hill’s faculty offer individualized attention to each and every student, contributing to a palpable feeling of warmth and community that characterizes School life.

Academics

Belmont Hill’s academic program is structured around a rigorous curriculum of core courses. From Middle School onward, humanities classrooms draw on the Harkness model of discussion-based teaching, leading students to question and think critically as they delve into literature, history, and social studies. In Conceptual Physics students learn concepts of applied physics and design in the classroom, and then build toboggans in the wood shop using CAD (Computer Aided Design) software. Lab-based approaches to STEM subjects are similarly student-centered, with math and science classrooms providing environments in which to hone problem-solving abilities and analytical skills. Public speaking is another emphasis across grade levels, with many opportunities to gain such experience, such as the Woodbury Speaking Contest. Technology is integrated into student learning through a Bring Your Own Device program piloted in the 2016-2017 school year.

Global education is an important facet of academics at Belmont Hill, highlighting the School’s commitment to educating students for engagement and leadership in an increasingly diverse and complex world. The School offers Chinese, French, and Spanish in addition to Latin and Greek, and all students study both ancient and modern languages. In addition to language learning and offerings in world history, Belmont Hill provides students with opportunities for global travel in the form of group trips or study abroad options during the summer, March break, or for a semester. In this way, the School encourages students to grow in their understanding of themselves as world citizens, giving them the tools they need to contribute meaningfully to the well-being of the global community.
**Middle School**

Middle School at Belmont Hill is composed of 7th, 8th, and 9th grades, known to students and faculty as First, Second, and Third Form. Each grade is organized around a central theme: First Form students explore the idea of heroism through the question “Who are your heroes and why?,” Second Form students study what it means to be a boy and a man, and Third Form students delve into leadership, responsibility, and the future.

All Belmont Hill Middle School boys cultivate a love of learning, forging connections with teachers and building character through a well-rounded educational experience that includes core courses, arts, and athletics. One key feature of the Third Form program is the required Ethics class, a weekly course taught by the Head of School, in which students confront ethical dilemmas through case-based discussion.

Third Form students serve as leaders in the Middle School, taking an active role in extracurricular activities and benefiting from an additional year of academic support and instruction in organizational and study skills before transitioning to the Upper School.

**Upper School**

As they move through the Upper School, Belmont Hill students have more freedom to design their own schedules, choosing to pursue Advanced Placement work in certain subjects, selecting electives within disciplines such as English and art, and taking advantage of opportunities such as the optional eight-week senior project, which allows students to pursue an area of interest in depth. The Advanced Science Research program is another unique feature of a Belmont Hill education: the two-year program for advanced juniors and seniors places students in professional lab settings to
Throughout the Upper School, all students complete a selection of required courses that ensures a firm grounding in vital content, skills, and values, fostering intellectual curiosity, growth, and a passion for learning. Indeed, Belmont Hill’s academic strength is borne out in the results of student testing: the average AP exam score is a 4.2, and 36% of students receive National Merit Scholarship honors.

**ARTS AND ATHLETICS**

Belmont Hill has a long tradition of athletic excellence and exemplary sportsmanship, with a reputation as one of the strongest athletic programs in New England. The School offers 16 interscholastic sports and fields 57 teams, with opportunities for students of every level of interest and ability. Participation in sports is a requirement for Belmont Hill students, for athletics serve as an extension of the classroom, and an opportunity for the School’s expert teacher/coaches to cultivate teamwork, effort, perseverance, and sportsmanship.

Arts are another facet of Belmont Hill’s well-balanced
program, with students completing at least one semester of art history, music composition, theory of jazz, or music appreciation, as well as a semester in a participatory art course. Students may study drama or music as well as drawing, painting, ceramics, woodworking, photography, and digital video, among other media. The Landau Gallery on campus serves as a source of inspiration for visual artists, while the annual Middle and Upper School plays and Senior-Directed Play offer opportunities for thespians. Choral and instrumental musicians perform in concerts throughout the year. Dramatic productions are one area in which Belmont Hill boys interact with girls from neighboring schools; extracurricular activities provide other such opportunities.

**School Life**

Throughout Belmont Hill’s long history school life has been enriched by beloved traditions. At lunchtime, students sit at assigned tables with a faculty member, rotating seats every few weeks. Students enjoy a snack break of milk and cookies each morning, and Chapel Talks by the Head of School, as well as annual events like Greek and Roman Field Day, PoetryFest, and the Woodbury Speaking Contest provide students with lasting memories. Before graduating, all boys carve a wooden panel to be permanently displayed on campus—a longstanding tradition by which every alumnus leaves his mark on the School.

Extracurricular activities are yet another element that contributes to the sense of warmth and energy among Belmont Hill students. From publications such as The Sextant literary magazine and The Panel newspaper to special interest clubs in areas like African drumming, poetry, and aeronautics, Belmont Hill offers boys myriad opportunities to grow and explore. Students hone leadership skills through participation in student government and advocate for a better world through organizations such as Amnesty International. Across the board, these activities allow students to identify new interests, cultivate diverse skills, and develop new friendships.
Other aspects of student life include community service and sustainability. From solar initiatives to investing in reusable water bottles in order to save plastic, the Belmont Hill community is committed to cultivating environmentally sustainable practices. In addition to the School’s annual Community Service Day and various fundraising events throughout the year, student participation in ongoing work with veterans, disaster relief, and homelessness furthers the School’s core values of compassion and service to others.

**Physical Campus**

Since the early days of the School, when classrooms, meeting spaces, and even the Head of School’s residence were housed in a single building, the Belmont Hill campus has grown to 17 buildings on 37 acres. Much of campus is composed of beautiful red brick buildings, with new additions including the Melvoin Academic Center and the Prenatt Music Center. Thanks to development efforts over the past several decades, campus facilities are in excellent condition.

State-of-the-art athletic sports facilities support Belmont Hill’s athletic program: the 98,000 square foot Jordan Athletics Center houses an Olympic-size ice hockey arena, double gymnasium, 7 squash courts, a wrestling room, brand new Cross Fitness Center, and more. Outside, a new outdoor track and two professional-quality turf fields allow for practice and play in all weather conditions. The Robsham Center for the Arts features studios for drawing, painting, ceramics, photography, and woodworking as well as galleries and a theater.
Belmont, Massachusetts

Belmont, Massachusetts is a suburb of Boston, located about 10 miles northwest of the downtown and five miles west of Cambridge. The town of Belmont, which comprises approximately 25,000 residents in five square miles, is primarily residential. The surrounding neighborhood features a number of historic homes, including the former residence of politician Mitt Romney, whose five boys graduated from Belmont Hill. Overall, the suburb is relatively affluent, with strong public schools and green spaces. The School itself backs up to the Mass Audubon’s Wildlife Sanctuary, which is open to the public.

Residents and visitors enjoy Boston’s historic and cultural appeal as well as beaches and mountains proximate to the city. Boston is one of the world’s premier cities, home to world-class cultural and educational resources. Boston University, Harvard University, Tufts University, MIT, Boston College, Berklee College of Music, Northeastern University, New England Conservatory, and Wellesley College contribute to the area’s youthfulness, vitality, and pride. Rich in history and central to the birth of our nation, Boston also gave the country its first college, secondary school, public park, subway, and periodic newspaper. The geography of the greater Boston area creates opportunities to enhance diversity not only in the curriculum, but in the student body as well. Belmont Hill draws from a number of ethnically and socio-economically diverse towns and neighborhoods.

Boston is a world leader in medicine and pharmaceutical research, technology innovation, and education. Other leading cultural institutions that call Boston home include the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston Ballet, the Athenaeum, Boston Symphony and Pops, and Museum of Science. Boston is a legendary sports town, abounding in professional, collegiate, and youth teams of all varieties (and generating plenty of opinions). A river city with a busy harbor and the adjacent Massachusetts Bay, Boston is also ideally positioned for recreation with mountains, lakes, and seacoast all within easy drive. Served by a good public transit system, Boston is an eminently walkable (and bike-friendly) city.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Belmont Hill demonstrates unwavering devotion to helping boys become men of character. As one of the finest independent all-boys schools in the Boston area, this position represents an extraordinary opportunity for the right candidate.

Strengths include:
• Quality of faculty and close relationships between faculty and students
• The teacher-coach model
• A strong emphasis on work ethic
• Quality of academics and athletics
• Focus on character
• Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
• Loyalty of all constituencies to the history and traditions of the School
• Robust volunteer programs for Alumni and Parents
• Single-sex education—a community where boys can show vulnerability and affection/support for one another
• Small size with one school (Middle School and Upper School not separated)
• Administrative support for faculty
• Superbly maintained campus facilities
• Very well-run—both in terms of administration and governance (Development and Alumni relations are particularly strong)

Areas for growth and development/challenges include:
• Arts and co-curricular programs should continue to develop
• Questions about abutting real estate, campus expansion
• Striking a balance between traditions and new developments in pedagogy and curriculum (especially boys’ education)
• Building upon foundational work to continue the momentum in diversifying the community of students and faculty
• Increased focus on financial sustainability and financial aid for middle-income families
**Desired Qualities of the Next Head of School**

The next Head of School should possess the following personal and professional qualities and qualifications:

- Role model for boys who leads by example; someone whose strong character is instantly recognizable
- Eagerness to deeply integrate into the Belmont Hill community
- Willingness to raise significant resources for the institution
- Ability to communicate effectively and persuasively in public
- Thoughtful writer and thinker on issues related to education and character
- Strong and decisive leader coupled with an evident humility
- Openness to new educational ideas
- A Renaissance person who has strong and evident intellectual interests and who also appreciates athletics and the arts
- A good listener—someone who seeks and values a variety of perspectives and is responsive to the individual needs of members of the community

*Preferred candidates will have:*

- Teaching experience in education
- Leadership and management experience in education
- Knowledge of and interest in boys’ school education
- An advanced degree

**To Apply**

Interested and qualified candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position
- A current résumé
- A one-page statement of educational philosophy and practice
- A list of five (5) professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each to:

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