



DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SUPPORT

Hillbrook School

SUMMARY

Location | Los Gatos, CA (JK – Grade 8 campus) & San Jose, CA (Grades 9 - 12 campus)

Post Date | March 24, 2023

Priority Deadline | April 17, 2023

Start Date | Summer 2023

Reports To | Associate Head of School

Salary Range | \$115,000 – \$140,000



SUMMARY

THE POSITION: WHAT YOU WILL DO & HOW WILL WE COLLABORATE

The Director of Student Support (DSS) is responsible for programmatic visioning and leadership of the Learning & Student Support Team, including Learning Support Specialists and Counselors. The DSS leads a team of collaborators, designs and implements effective systems for case management, builds partnerships with families, and expands capacity in teachers to provide extraordinary support services at Hillbrook. The DSS will join the school at a time when we are evolving our existing processes and programs, as well as expanding our programming from a long-standing JK-8 to a JK-12, with a 9th Grade opening this fall.

A HILLBROOK EMPLOYEE: WHO YOU ARE

Do our Core Values – Be kind. Be curious. Take risks. Be your best. – align with how you show up as an educator? Are you committed to building and bridging inclusive communities? Do you believe learning should be an active and relational process? Do you enjoy nurturing and maintaining best practices and continuity of programs, while also evolving programs in response to new information? Is equity and impact at the forefront of what you do? Do you thrive in collaborative environments? Do you believe that students are capable changemakers at any age and stage? A Hillbrook employee will emphatically say yes to each of these questions.

VISION, MISSION, CORE VALUES

VISION

Inspire students to achieve their dreams and reach beyond themselves to make a difference in the world.

MISSION

Hillbrook provides an extraordinary educational experience that fosters a love of learning in our students and helps them develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to achieve their highest individual potential in school and in life. At Hillbrook, students are known, respected and valued as individuals and every day is a journey of self-discovery, imaginative thinking, creative problem solving, laughter and friendship.

CORE VALUES

Be kind. Be curious. Take risks. Be your best.



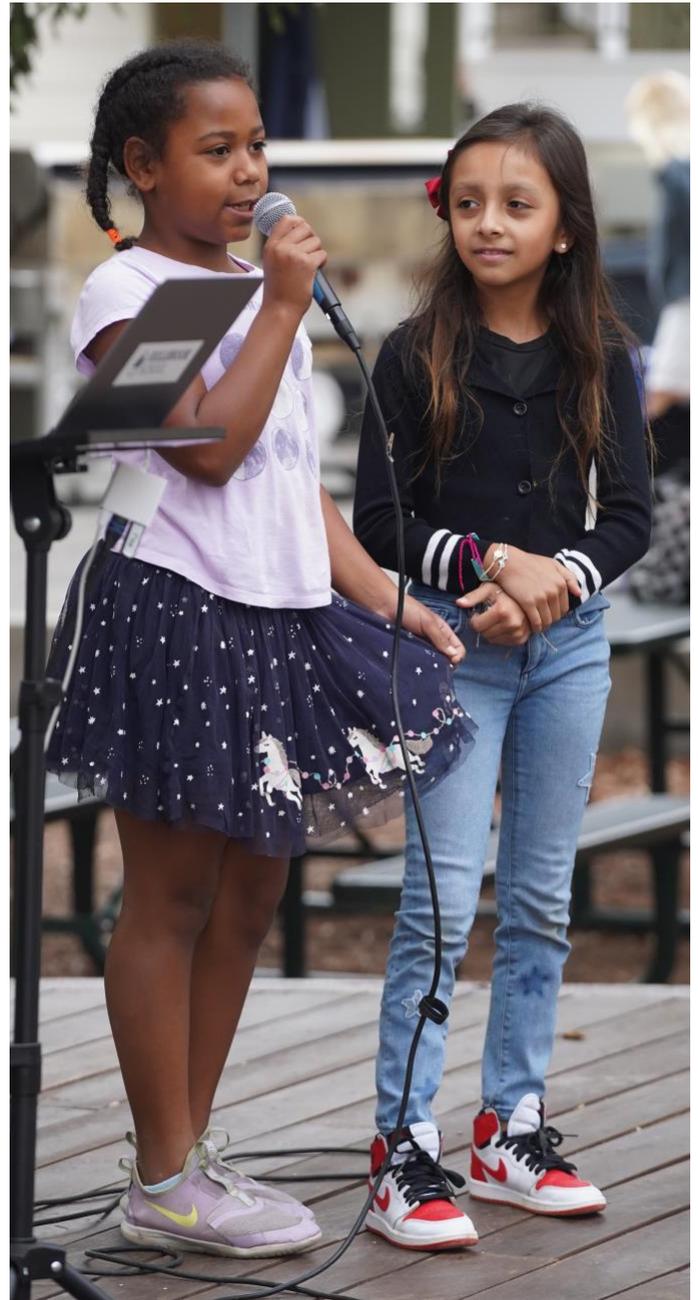
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, JUSTICE, & ACTION

STATEMENT OF INCLUSIVITY

We are an intentionally diverse community committed to a unified vision - to inspire students to achieve their dreams and reach beyond themselves to make a difference in the world. We believe that in order to achieve this vision, our community needs to reflect the diversity of Silicon Valley, including but not limited to diversity in socioeconomic status, family structure, race, ethnicity, learning abilities, gender, belief systems, and sexual orientation.

At Hillbrook, we see inclusivity as core subject matter and believe students learn best in an inclusive environment where every child has a voice. Every individual - child and adult - comes to Hillbrook with a unique identity and a singular experience. The greater our differences, the greater our opportunity for deep understanding. We want Hillbrook to be a safe, comfortable space for children to learn about obvious and subtle differences in themselves and others.

Our community works together to create a climate of mutual respect. We lean into the sometimes complex and challenging conversations about inclusivity because we believe that the growth of a community and learner is continual, and striking a careful balance between individuality and community can be difficult work. We are committed to inclusivity as an ongoing process that ultimately makes Hillbrook stronger, and that prepares our students to develop into responsible citizens.





CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND COMMUNITY NORMS

As noted in our Statement of Inclusivity, we strive to reflect the extraordinary diversity of Silicon Valley, believing that educational excellence and equity depend on the creation of a diverse and inclusive community where all students, families and employees feel a full sense of membership. To live up to our [DEI Teaching Philosophy Statement](#), all employees contribute to developing culturally competent students and building an educational institution committed to social justice and reaching beyond. We offer a wide range of opportunities for all employees to engage in work that furthers these goals, from personal dialogues that help us understand different perspectives, to pedagogical training designed to support equitable instructional practices and build habits to disrupt bias whenever we see it. Ultimately, we hope that this work helps all of our constituents—employees, students, and families—be more aware, empathetic, globally-minded, and justice-oriented.

A highly collaborative community, we use the following norms to guide our communication with each other:

- Assume good will
- Come from your own experience
- Be more curious than certain
- Hold yourself and others capable

Our commitment to these norms makes it possible for us to partner meaningfully, disagree productively, and lean into conversations that are both challenging and generative.

Each and every day our students will be challenged to live out our Core Values - be kind, be curious, take risks, be your best - as they engage with an exceptional team of educators committed to helping each student reach their highest potential in school and in life. Our program is also guided by the core questions of the [Scott Center for Social Entrepreneurship](#) - "What matters to you? What are you doing about it?" Simple yet provocative, these two questions inspire all members of our community as they convey two foundational beliefs: learning must be purposeful and have enduring impact, and leveraging student interest drives both engagement and success. Hillbrook, unlike any other school, not only calls on its students to make the world a better place, but also explicitly prioritizes the skills and habits that prepare them to do so, activating and empowering students to make immediate and lasting social impact during their JK-12 years while launching them into a lifetime of social impact work.





EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

INTERCONNECTION

We believe that a sense of identity and of community belonging are central to each student's developmental and academic needs. With our responsive approach, we strive to create an inclusive environment in which each student feels a full sense of membership and is seen and valued. Strong relationships are an essential component of teaching and learning at Hillbrook. Partnerships between students and teachers underlie our academic program, social-emotional learning, social impact awareness, and competencies in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, giving students both the encouragement to stretch their thinking and the guarantee of support. Classes involve animated discussions and active learning—our students have ideas and opinions. They speak up, they respectfully disagree, and they learn from their teachers and from one another. It's a process that builds confidence in their thinking as they discover who they want to be beyond Hillbrook.

INTENTION

We believe that the best learning happens through doing. The real world is a cross-disciplinary place—and so are our classrooms. Our curriculum is designed to provide authentic activities and explorations which overlap and connect in unexpected ways. There is a point, purpose, and takeaway to every learning activity—no work for work's sake. We design learning with a “low floor and a high ceiling” so each student has their own entry point, and there is infinite potential for complexity, skill-sharpening, and mastery. We foster an equitable daily classroom experience in which every student can access the curriculum in a way that provides a meaningful learning experience. No matter where our students are in their educational journeys, they can expect to be appropriately challenged, authentically engaged, and wholly supported by their teachers.

IMPACT

We believe in igniting the changemaker in every student and nurturing the skills and mindsets to turn ideas into impact. Our curriculum encourages students to know, respect, and value themselves and others as they seek to understand and appreciate differences, to develop empathy, and to challenge racism, biases, and discrimination. Authentic experiences deepen our connections to communities both on and off campus and push us to ask big questions and to assume an active role in shaping a more just and equitable world. Our Reach Beyond program and the Scott Center for Social Entrepreneurship give our students a unique collaborative learning community with a wealth of resources and opportunities to develop their voices, exercise critical thinking skills, and gain the confidence to answer and act upon our two guiding questions, “What matters to you?” and “What are you doing about it?”



UPPER SCHOOL EXPANSION

For more than 85 years, Hillbrook School has been a junior kindergarten-8th grade independent school located on 14 acres of oak woodland in Los Gatos, CA. Founded in 1935, the school remains deeply connected to its historical roots as a place where children are known, learning is authentic and active, and success is measured one child at a time. Over the years, Hillbrook has grown and evolved from a small boarding school serving wards of the state to one of the leading independent schools in the Bay Area, and yet the vision remains the same—to inspire children to achieve their dreams and reach beyond themselves to make a difference in the world.

Hillbrook is now embarking on one of the school's most ambitious strategic initiatives ever: the expansion to a JK-12 with the addition of a new high school in downtown San Jose. Hillbrook is driven by a foundational belief - that 8th graders and other students deserve an extraordinary educational experience in high school that builds upon the exceptional foundation provided to Hillbrook's JK-8 students. The core differentiators for the current program - the placement of choice and engagement at the center of the learning experience, integrated, real world education that challenges students to reach beyond and make a difference, and a deep commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion - will translate seamlessly into a 9-12 environment, allowing Hillbrook to extend its innovative approach into a market in need of a new model of secondary school education.

The Upper School will build upon the exceptional foundation provided for the JK-8 students. The program places choice and engagement at the center of the learning experience - an integrated, real-world education that challenges students to reach beyond and make a difference in the world, and a deep commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

Each and every day on the San Jose Campus, students will be challenged to live out Hillbrook's Core Values - be kind, be curious, take risks, be your best - as they engage with an exceptional team of educators committed to helping each student reach their highest potential in school and in life.





EVOLUTION OF A DEPARTMENT

The Student Support Department brings together the staff and programs that are in service of student support and success: learning specialists, counselors, and challenge coaches. Following a thoughtful and intensive assessment of our student support services, this department is evolving from separate but cooperating teams to form a single, unified, collaborative department serving the Lower, Middle, and Upper divisions of the school. Following are some highlights of this process, and we invite you to [read the full executive summary](#).



BACKGROUND

During the 2022-23 school year, Hillbrook entered a focused process to clarify and document Hillbrook's philosophy of, and approach to, JK-12 learning support. The goals of this project were to:

- Identify strengths of Hillbrook's current learning support structures and practices.
- Make recommendations on a longer-term staffing model for learning support for JK 8 & expanding 9-12.
- Make recommendations on the top skills the school should hire for as it expands its learning support staff, based on the school's culture, mission, and vision.
- Make recommendations for additional ways the learning support program might evolve in the next 1-5 years.
- Make recommendations on professional development to support faculty.

The school partnered with an external consultant whose expertise is in learning and student support. This report summarizes a high level summary of her findings, including strengths of Hillbrook's current program, and recommendations for both how it can evolve the JK-8 program as well as how it develops the Upper School. School leaders and the Learning Support team will be using these findings as guide-posts in the next 1-5 years to build on the current strengths and make meaningful adjustments to the learning and student support systems.



KEY FINDINGS

Across three days of meetings with the Hillbrook community, a number of clear and noteworthy strengths of Hillbrook's current Learning Support program surfaced. In pursuing implementation of the recommendations described below, Hillbrook should leverage the:

- Strong, shared sense that Hillbrook is a community of care.
- School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Palpable feeling of warmth, compassion and respect amongst and between faculty, parents and students.
- Willingness of leaders and teachers to figure out what students need and to respond to those needs to the extent they can.
- Faculty's commitment to Hillbrook and the spirit of willingness to try new things.
- Opportunities for faculty to grow professionally and to change roles within the school.
- Extremely skilled, highly functional, cohesive leadership team.
- Healthy partnerships with external organizations to amplify learning support by providing ongoing learning for faculty and parents, facilitating communication with families, and addressing skill development of students (on and off site).



LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES

"Since our founding in 1935, Hillbrook School has been committed to a simple and compelling vision – to inspire students to achieve their dreams and reach beyond themselves to make a difference in the world." -Mark Silver, Head of School

"The director of student support will arrive at a critical and exciting time as we expand to become a JK-12 school. The programs and services this director will oversee are essential to ensuring success for all students at Hillbrook." -Colleen Schilly, Associate Head of School

We invite you to watch our [interview](#) with Mark and Colleen, in which they discuss Hillbrook's inclusive community and collaborative culture, the exciting programmatic growth and campus expansion occurring right now, and the motivation for and importance of this new role.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Hillbrook will most effectively achieve its mission and vision and meet the needs of all learners when the school can clearly state its philosophy and approach to learning support, effectively deliver on that philosophy, and communicate with and care for families in such a way that they clearly see the school's philosophy come to life in supporting their child. Hillbrook's strengths as described above means there is great potential to build out a robust, coherent learning support system in the years to come. Hillbrook's next areas for focus are to:

- Undergo a clearly mapped out process to clarify and document the school's approach to and philosophy regarding learning support.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of current Learning Support Team members.
- Improve systems for case management, which includes: communication about services and processes, guiding team meetings; processes for referral, assessment, evaluation, and accommodations; and strengthening guidance and support for all constituents (students, families, faculty, and support staff).
- Evolve admissions practices, in a mission-aligned way, to ensure that from the moment the school makes an admission decision a family is well held and a child is well-served.
- Plan for staffing expansion of the Learning/Student Support Team and prioritize hiring or appointing a JK-12 Director of Learning/Student Support. This job's core responsibilities will be to execute on the philosophy of and approach to learning support at Hillbrook, supervise and lead the full Learning Support Team in executing effectively on their job responsibilities, and ensure effective case management and an excellent, deeply relational experience for students and families.
- Design professional development for employees that is both broad and deep.
- Provide education for families about neurodiversity and Hillbrook's approach to learning support.





DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SUPPORT

SPECIFIC DUTIES

Student Success

- Advocate for children having learning difficulties.
- Oversee the process for supporting students needing accommodations by reviewing outside testing reports, identifying strategies to meet the needs of evaluated students, planning for and communicating student accommodations, and systematically checking in on how accommodations are being implemented.
- Actively participate in a collaborative employee culture that is committed to being at the leading edge of JK - 12th grade education.
- Work with the Director of College Counseling to ensure students' successful transition to post-Hillbrook learning environments.

Case Management

- Evolve and implement a case management system that supports students that are struggling to learn and those who have diagnosed needs.
- Ensure that Hillbrook has a robust case management system for supporting students that is both age-appropriate as well as cohesive across multiple divisions.
- Facilitate ongoing communication with families, teachers, and administrators to discuss accommodations, recommendations, supports, and student progress.
- Conduct student observations to inform follow-up with teachers and families.

Campus Leadership

- Supervise the Student Support Team, which currently includes Learning Support Specialists, a Challenge Coach, and School Counselors, and provide opportunities for team members to grow, develop, and feel supported and nurtured.
- Educate faculty and administrators about supporting neurodiverse students, and serve as both a resource and faculty trainer.
- Work with teachers to effectively enable students to use diverse learning strategies in the classroom.
- Meet regularly with Division Heads to ensure student learning is progressing and families feel supported.
- Co-develop plans and advise Support Specialists and Counselors who teach small groups with identified needs.
- Design and expand learning support systems into Grades 9 – 12.
- Perform other duties as assigned.



QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

Professional Qualifications

- Advanced degree/s in special education or related field highly preferred
- Demonstrated experience effectively forming and leading teams of colleagues as a coach, mentor, director or similar role
- Demonstrated skill in designing and executing on systems for case management

Personal Qualities

- A commitment to anti-racism and demonstrated skill designing equitable and inclusive educational experiences and learning environments that incorporate themes of diversity and justice
- Ability to both envision and communicate a compelling strategic vision and to execute on tasks as described above
- Demonstrated commitment to teaching and learning in a diverse, dynamic, and progressive school community
- Proficiency communicating with varied constituents around complex topics while effectively balancing candor and warmth
- Desire and ability to work in a collegial, highly collaborative environment





HOW TO APPLY

12M Recruiting is acting on behalf of Hillbrook School to identify exceptional leaders to fill this extraordinary opportunity. Please direct any inquiries to:

Gabriel Lucas
Principal, 12M Recruiting
jobs@12MRecruiting.com

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY APRIL 17, 2023 WILL RECEIVE PRIORITY REVIEW.

All applications must be submitted online, via:

www.12MRecruiting.com/jobs/Hillbrook

An application requires submitting four PDFs:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to the Hillbrook School search committee
- CV or résumé
- A list of four references, at least one of which is a current or past supervisor (include each person's name, current organization, title, phone number, email, and past connection to you— though we will not contact any references without obtaining your permission first)
- A response (no longer than one page) to ONE of the following prompts:

[Option A] Given Hillbrook's core values, statement of inclusivity, and outcomes (strengths and recommendations) of the recent learning support expansion project: write a draft of Hillbrook's philosophy and approach to learning support. In no more than one page, please highlight essential elements of an effective and mission-aligned student support program.

[Option B] In this role, you would be leading a department that would include learning specialists and counselors committed to serving the needs of students JK - 12. In no more than one page, identify essential elements of a successful student support program and share how you would work with stakeholders (teachers, administrators, parents, and student support team members) to bring those elements to life at Hillbrook.

Hillbrook is an equal opportunity employer, and we value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. We encourage applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, and veteran status.