

# BETSY HAMILL

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## BIO

Betsy Hamill is a passionate educator, facilitator, recording artist, and performance artist in Flagstaff, AZ. Betsy is an arts educator at the Flagstaff Arts and Leadership Academy (FALA) where she teaches music and dance classes. Her focus has been on developing a unique music curriculum where instead of having standard ensembles (band, orchestra, choir) she has established the FALA World Music Ensemble, the FALA Action Band (FAB) and a funk and jazz fusion ensemble called Falunk. These classes along with the other music classes have set FALA apart as a progressive world-focused comprehensive music program. Students that have graduated from FALA have made it into the most prestigious music programs in the country as a result of this dynamic and diverse program. In terms of dance, she also teaches the popular West African Drum and Dance ensemble and a Hip Hop dance class. Parents have praised Betsy for her work with students, noting that she encourages confidence and promotes a love for music and dance that students carry with them throughout their lives.

Betsy studied French Horn at Carnegie Mellon University and received a BFA from California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) with a focus on Ewe drumming and dance from Ghana. She has studied under master drummers and dancers such as Alfred Ladzekpo, Maputo Manesh, (Ghana) Djeneba Sako (Mali) and Fara Tolno (Guinea) and has performed in three dance troupes: Logo Ligi, Kuma Tunyale, and Kissidugu 2.

Along with teaching her own classes, Betsy also gives support to other students and teachers on FALA's campus. In 2016, she assisted fellow educator, Mike Levin, by composing an original score for the FALA production of MacBeth, On Austrian Soil, and Salvaged Pages. Mike speaks highly of Betsy's work, stating that her music and student performers helped make MacBeth one of FALA's most impactful performances. Last spring Betsy composed another original score for FALA's Crucible also directed by Levin. She will be working on her second album this summer entitled "Love" in honor of her mother.