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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 19, 2026 **CONTACT:** Lauren Creiman, (909) 833-9853

Bonita, Ramona Choral Programs Selected to Perform at Prestigious California Music Conference

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – Bonita Unified School District's award-winning choral program is making history once more, with the Bonita High School Men's Choir and the Ramona Middle School Troubadours selected to represent all of California at the California All-State Music Education Conference (CASMEC), to be held Jan. 14-17, 2027 in Sacramento.

To make the performances even more special, Bonita and Ramona will perform their programs back-to-back at St. John's Cathedral in Sacramento on Friday, Jan. 15. Bonita, which was first selected for CASMEC in 2025, will be making its second appearance at the prestigious event, while Ramona will make its debut. Bonita is one of just two high schools to be featured at this year's conference, while Ramona is the sole middle school selected to perform.

Additionally, the Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) Chamber Singers – which includes eight former Bonita Unified singers – were also selected to perform at CASMEC. Of the six choral groups selected to represent California, three will feature Bonita Unified singers or alumni.

"This is an amazing moment for Bonita Unified visual and performing arts. Many of California's best young singers are coming from Bonita Unified programs," Bonita High music director Ryan Yoder said. "It's so wonderful to be sharing this with Ramona. It's a perfect fit. The icing on the cake is that Mt. SAC will also perform. At least one of their Chamber Singers performed with us at CASMEC in 2025."

Bonita High's 40-member Men's Choir is its second choral group to be selected to perform at CASMEC; the school's Chamber Singers made history with their selection in 2025. The selection of the Men's Choir is a reflection of the ongoing success of Bonita High's music program, which seeks to accommodate all students with an interest in music.

"Our Men's Choir is filled with students who have discovered they have a love of singing. Many members of our choir are involved in sports. They get just as excited over doing a music program," Yoder said. "The boys enroll in class because they want to earn the credits, but they stay for the memories. The culture of our music program keeps them here. It's a beautiful thing."

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Bonita High sophomore Noah Craven, who began singing at Ramona Middle School, is in his first year as a member of the Men's Choir. Craven is an accomplished singer and musician, and will play acoustic guitar during the CASMEC performance.

"I am looking forward to performing at CASMEC. I have learned so much from Mr. Yoder. His teaching style gets to the point, which is why I like it," Craven said. "It's so exciting to share this moment with the Troubadours and Ms. Shaw. I still have friends at Ramona. Also, I'm looking forward to meeting my peers at CASMEC, along with new choir directors. It's going to be a lot of fun."

Ramona choral director Caitlin Shaw was inspired to submit a video audition after watching Bonita's 2025 CASMEC performance, spurred on by Yoder's praise of her program.

"Ryan has really worked hard to take our students to the next level. I didn't think we could make it, especially on our first audition," Shaw said. "Middle school is a challenging time to teach music, but our kids really love to work together. They lift each other up. They're learning and growing and then finding their joy in music. They are a delight to work with. They are hard workers and sing beautifully."

Ramona eighth-grader Lily Nord grew up in a musical family, with her grandmother and mother inspiring her to become a singer. This is Nord's second year as a Troubabour and she serves the group as a student director. Nord said she is excited to go to Sacramento with her friends, and hopes the experience will bring her closer to a career in music.

"I love music. I've been singing since the moment I was born," Nord said. "Ms. Shaw is such a great teacher. She inspires us and helps us connect with each other and come together as a group. I love being in the Troubadours because I'm a people person. I want to learn music theory so that someday I can become a music teacher."

PHOTOS:

BUSD_2026_CASMEC1: Bonita High School Men's Choir is one of two high schools selected to perform at the California All-State Music Education Conference (CASMEC) in January.

BUSD_2026_CASMEC2: The Ramona Middle School Troubadours are the sole middle school selected to perform at CASMEC in January, joining the Bonita High School Men's Choir to represent California.

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