



BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Lauren Creiman, (909) 833-9853

Bonita Unified Celebrates Two Years of Milestones During 2026 State of the District

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE - Bonita Unified School District Superintendent Matt Wien addressed a crowd of community members, local and state elected officials, students, and staff during the 2026 State of the District on March 2 at the Bonita Center for the Arts, celebrating remarkable achievements across academics, athletics, arts, and career technical education that exemplify "The Bonita Way."

During the biannual address, Wien highlighted Bonita Unified's continued academic success through California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) metrics, noting that 74% of students met or exceeded standards in English language arts and 63% in mathematics on the 2024-25 statewide assessments, both all-time highs for the District. The results place Bonita Unified among the top-performing unified school districts in California, ranking in the top 6% statewide in English language arts and the top 8% in mathematics, while the District continues to reclassify more than 20% of its English learner students as proficient in English each year.

"However, the real importance is not in the numbers themselves, but in what they convey," Wien said. "These numbers indicate that we are abiding by our stated purpose of preparing every student to live their purpose. Long after students forget a formula or a date on a timeline, they will remember whether their time in school helped them discover who they are, what they value, and how they can contribute meaningfully to the world around them."

According to Wien, the District's academic momentum reflects a sustained commitment to equity, mastery and a focus on results, ensuring all students have access to opportunities that prepare them for college, careers and life beyond the classroom. All 13 Bonita Unified schools have now been recognized by the state, with 12 California Distinguished Schools and one Model Continuation High School.

The event served as a moment to reflect on the impact educators have on students' lives, sharing the story of Bonita Unified alumnus Mark Castellano, whose early influence and reading support from his teacher at Roynon Elementary, Cherry Agapito, helped set him on a path toward academic success. Castellano, once a struggling reader, later graduated from Bonita High School, earned a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from Cal State Fullerton and is now pursuing a doctorate in physical therapy at Azusa Pacific University.

"Mark states that without Mrs. Agapito that he would've simply gone through the motions and very likely would not have achieved to his fullest," Wien said in his address. "I can sum up this story most simply by using the words of Mark. He told me, 'I hope that all teachers from here to the future are just like Mrs. Agapito.'"

MORE



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"These moments remind us that the real measure of success is not simply the numbers we report, but the lives we shape," Wien said. "When educators connect with students, believe in their potential, and invest the time and care needed to help them grow, the impact can last a lifetime."

Throughout the evening, nationally recognized choirs from San Dimas High School and Bonita High School delivered performances that underscored the strength of the District's visual and performing arts programs, which saw 31 students selected to the Southern California Vocal Association's Honor Choirs in the fall.

Wien also highlighted the District's Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, which have earned national recognition through Bonita Unified's culinary arts pathways. Bonita High students Abby Brandler and Charli Padilla won a national ProStart entrepreneurship competition with their food truck concept "The Flip Side," while San Dimas High School's culinary team claimed the 2025 National ProStart Invitational championship, the first national title for the District and the state of California's first since 2011.

Bonita Unified students have achieved significant success beyond the classroom as well. Over the last 18 months, District athletic programs have captured 18 league championships, three California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) team titles and four individual CIF championships. Most recently, Bonita High School's boys water polo team captured a CIF championship in the fall, followed by San Dimas High School's girls water polo team claiming a CIF title in February.

The celebration of student excellence continued with a preview of "Bonita Unified Trailblazers," a new series highlighting alumni and how Bonita Unified has prepared them for a successful future. The [first installment](#) features San Dimas High alumna and professional soccer player Ally Lemos, who won championships for San Dimas, UCLA, and the Orlando Pride of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) by the age of 21.

Wien also took a moment to highlight aging school facilities and the need to support Bonita Unified's evolving needs and student opportunities for the future. Plans include modernizing science labs, upgrading classroom infrastructure, enhancing campus safety systems and expanding learning space across the District. The Board of Education will place a general obligation bond measure on the June ballot to help fund these improvements.

"The state of Bonita Unified is exceedingly strong, but our responsibility is not only to celebrate where we are today," Wien said. "It is to ensure that the students who walk into our classrooms tomorrow have facilities, opportunities, and programs that allow them to reach their full potential and continue the legacy of excellence that defines this district."

PHOTO CAPTIONS

BUSD_2026_SOD1: Bonita Unified School District Superintendent Matt Wien delivers the 2026 State of the District address on March 2 at the Bonita Center for the Arts, highlighting achievements Districtwide.

BUSD_2026_SOD2: The San Dimas High School Chamber Choir performs during the 2026 Bonita Unified State of the District on March 2 at the Bonita Center for the Arts.

BUSD_2026_SOD3: The Bonita High School Chamber Singers perform "Railroad Medley" during the 2026 Bonita Unified State of the District on March 2.