



**PRESS  
RELEASE**

# Bassett Unified School District

on the move

904 North Willow Avenue ■ La Puente, CA 91746 ■ (626) 931-3000 ■ (626) 931-3020 ■ [www.bassettusd.org](http://www.bassettusd.org)

**For Immediate Release**

Jan. 11, 2018

**Contact:** Nancy Yeang  
Maritza Fairfield  
(909) 324-0345

## Bassett High English Language Arts Teachers Spur Increase in Standardized Test Scores

**LA PUENTE, CA** – Project-based learning, embedded support for struggling students and professional learning communities (PLC) are fueling a steady rise in English language arts (ELA) proficiency rates on state standardized tests among Bassett High School 11th-graders.

Bassett High placed third out of 40 similar area high schools, with 68.06 percent of juniors scoring proficient or better on ELA standards in 2017 according to state data. The performance outpaces schools with significantly lower percentages of socially-economically disadvantaged students. Bassett High serves a student body in which 88 percent are socially-economically disadvantaged students.

“We are proud of our students’ achievements in English language arts,” Bassett High Principal Gabriel Griego said. “This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our ELA faculty and the leadership brought forth by our department chair, Tania Neri.”

Neri, who was appointed department chair in 2008, oversees a tight-knit English language arts department that uses the PLC discussion forums to determine which strategies and practices have been most effective in the classroom, including providing one-on-one intervention instruction to students.

“This was the result of hard work, collaboration and high expectations among all ELA teachers,” Neri said. “We could not do this without the tremendous support of our administrators, who give us the flexibility to implement strategies that strengthen student achievement.”

Neri favors incorporating history into literature lessons to spur discussions of current events. Her students read “The Crucible,” a dramatization of the 17th-century Salem witch trials, and applied the story to present-day events to determine if fears of the unknown are creating modern-day witches.

Students related the story to Latino immigrants, Black Lives Matter and LGBTQ communities as groups that face harassment and discrimination from those who do not share their views or understand the roles they play in American society.

**MORE**



[www.facebook.com/BassettUnifiedSchoolDistrict](http://www.facebook.com/BassettUnifiedSchoolDistrict)



[twitter.com/bassettusd](https://twitter.com/bassettusd)

**Bassett Unified School District Mission** – Working collaboratively with all stakeholders, the Bassett Unified School District will provide engaging and rigorous learning opportunities, using integrated technology in state-of-the-art learning environments, to graduate College and Career Ready students.

**Bassett Unified School District Vision** – We are a community committed to educating and empowering our students to think creatively, act responsibly, and communicate effectively in order to be successful members of society and make a positive impact on the lives of others.



**PRESS  
RELEASE**

# Bassett Unified School District

on the move

904 North Willow Avenue ■ La Puente, CA 91746 ■ (626) 931-3000 ■ (626) 931-3020 ■ [www.bassettusd.org](http://www.bassettusd.org)

“This type of project-based learning is very effective and popular in the classroom,” Neri said. “Students are more engaged, think critically, make informed choices and ask questions that get to the core of what they are investigating.”

Another popular teaching strategy incorporated into all ELA classrooms is CER – Claim, Evidence, Reasoning – which encourages students to back up their school work by showing the steps they took to reach their answers.

Neri, who teaches AP language and AP literature, was hired in 1999 and has spent her entire education career at Bassett High. Neri has advocated for Advanced Placement looping in which AP students retain their AP teacher for both their junior and senior years, establishing long-term relationships and building trust between student and teacher.

“We are glad that there are positive numbers in our standardized testing scores and also understand that there is more work to be done to continue improvement,” Bassett Unified Interim Superintendent Dr. Debra French said. “Thanks to the strong teamwork and leadership at Bassett High, we will continue to strengthen our programs and curriculum to ensure that all of our students are ready for colleges and careers.”

#### PHOTO CAPTION:

**011118\_BASSETT\_ELA:** Bassett High English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency rates among 11th grade students taking state standardized tests have been rising steadily, thanks to the BHS ELA department, overseen by ELA teacher and department chair Tania Neri (third from right).

###



[www.facebook.com/BassettUnifiedSchoolDistrict](http://www.facebook.com/BassettUnifiedSchoolDistrict)



[twitter.com/bassettusd](https://twitter.com/bassettusd)