



**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

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Bassett Unified Teachers’ Tech Talk Podcast Celebrates 100th Episode, Reaches 70,000

LA PUENTE – A podcast launched in fall 2015 by two Bassett Unified teachers on special assignment (TOSAs) celebrated its 100th podcast this month and notched its 70,000th download by educators who are keen to learn ways to integrate technology into their instructional plans.

Called [“TOSAs Talking Tech,”](#) the podcast was created by Tom Covington and Michael Jephcott as a way to connect with District educators with busy schedules. Podcasts typically run about 20 minutes, designed for listening during commutes or other breaks.

The show started slowly, hitting its 15th episode in its second year, but has since grown to a weekly event. Its popularity skyrocketed after the duo presented at Computer-Using Educators (CUE) conferences in 2017, including a two-hour podcasting demonstration at the National CUE Conference.

They are now regulars at conferences, appearing almost monthly.

“Tom and Mike’s work is not only incredibly innovative, it’s essential as Bassett Unified strengthens the role of classroom technology in our comprehensive instructional program,” Superintendent Debra French said. “We are incredibly proud of the impact they have made in Bassett Unified and across the nation.”

This year, Bassett Unified provided tech tools to every student in third, sixth and 10th grade as part of a multi-year rollout of a 1:1 student-to-device program. Covington and Jephcott supported teachers with podcasts as well as intensive in-person training and classroom visits.

They said they originally turned to the podcast to expand their reach to teachers.

“The main purpose of the podcast was to reach teachers for training through another avenue that could better fit their schedule,” Jephcott said.

Along the way, the podcast became a way for them to learn, too.

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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.



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A recent podcast celebrated innovative ways of using 3-D printers in science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) activities. The duo also hosts the teachers they train, showcasing how changes in instruction are playing out.

“Our job is to bring ideas to teachers so they can be more effective in the classroom,” Covington said. “That includes bringing new ideas back to Bassett – especially in the growing field of STEAM activities.”

The two teachers celebrated the 100th podcast with highlights from past shows, a reflection on how far the District has progressed since they first launched and what’s to come in future broadcasts.

“Our training efforts wouldn’t be where they’re at and our professional growth wouldn’t be anything like it is without the influencers and inspirational people we’ve met through the podcast,” Covington said.

“It’s helped shape who we are as trainers,” Jephcott added. “And we’re very appreciative of all the support we’ve received from Bassett Unified that has made this so possible.”

He said that the podcast has far more to address in the years to come.

“The aspect of staying current will keep the show going. Education changes so much, even within our own District,” Jephcott said. “I don’t think we’re ever going to run out of topics.”

Covington said one of the program’s rewards is seeing Bassett Unified’s classrooms become more engaging.

“It’s called TOSAs Talking Tech, but it’s more about education and pedagogy,” he said. “I love coming to work every day. I love being able to explore and see the reactions of students using technology in the classrooms. I love walking into classrooms and having students cheer.”

PHOTOS:

01.25.19_BASSETT_CAST_1: Bassett Unified teachers on special assignment (TOSAs) Tom Covington and Michael Jephcott, seen here setting up video equipment, are celebrating their 100th TOSAs Talking Tech podcast, which offers teachers ideas for weaving technology into instruction.

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