



BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE

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San Dimas High Sports Medicine Team Returns to AACI Nationals for Sixth Consecutive Year

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – When San Dimas High School athletes take the field for competition, they do so with confidence, knowing they are backed by a world-class athletic training staff that responds lightning quick to mishaps and injuries on the field. The staff is backed by its own student trainees, who are part of the school’s esteemed Sports Medicine pathway, where they learn first aid, injury evaluation, and medical skills.

The San Dimas Sports Medicine competition team continued its impressive showing at the American Academic Competition Institute (AACI) 2026 California High School regionals in March, finishing with its highest placement to date, placing fourth in California, seventh in their division, and tenth among all divisions, and earning their sixth consecutive trip to the AACI Nationals in May.

“This year was a really tough exam for the students. All the competitors struggled, but our scores prevailed, so we are happy,” San Dimas lead athletic trainer Jessica Truax said. “I can’t say enough about our Sports Med students. They are self-starters, they study together, they quiz each other. It’s wonderful to see them come together as a team.”

The Sports Med competition team was led by San Dimas sophomore Avery Rivera, who placed 33rd among all second-year students, and freshman Drew Duarte, who placed 17th among all first-year students.

Rivera, who participated in her second AACI competition, is an athlete and member of the San Dimas JV softball team. She said she enrolled in the Sports Medicine pathway because she has always had an interest in sports and medicine. Rivera credits Truax for helping the students prepare for success.

“The Sports Medicine class is very hands-on, which I love, and Ms. Truax makes sure we are well-prepared,” Rivera said. “She gives us insight that goes far beyond what we can learn in a textbook. I would love to someday learn orthopedic surgery and work as an athletic trainer. This is a fun class that I would recommend to anyone, even if they don’t plan to enter the field.”

MORE



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The AACI regional competition brings in dozens of teams from the California/Oregon/Washington area for a challenging series of written and practical exams, a medical terminology exam, a digital cadaver quiz, and a quiz bowl. Competitors showcase their skills in first aid, CPR, wound care, and orthopedic testing. This year's competition focused on shoulders and elbows.

"We were fortunate this year because we just took a whole unit on the shoulder, which is a very complex part of the body," Rivera said. "Our preparation made all the difference."

Rivera is one of three students – along with sophomores Lauren Gonzalez and Oliver Cartwright – who are poised to earn three college credits for Kinesiology as part of an articulation program with Mt. San Antonio College. The three students have already passed a written exam and a short History, Observation, Palpation and Special (HOPS) exam, and are preparing for a final practical exam, where they will have to display all the sports medicine skills they have learned to date.

"This is a very impressive feat for the students," Truax said. "In six years, I've only had one student who has completed the articulation. This year, we hope to have three students."

The San Dimas High Sports Medicine pathway consists of two courses – Sports Medicine and Advanced Sports Medicine – that teach basic anatomy and physiology, first aid and CPR, and prepare students to take comprehensive courses offered at colleges and universities.

Students can also join the Sports Medicine Intern Club, which gives students an opportunity to apply their skills during San Dimas athletic contests, working with new San Dimas head athletic trainer Jake Gonzales, a former student of Truax's who attended Damien High School. The final tier is the AACI Sports Medicine competition team, which meets once a week to train, conduct practical drills, and strategize for its end-of-the-year meets.

PHOTOS:

BUSD_SPORTSMED_2026_1: Members of the Anatomage team from San Dimas High School's Sports Medicine program prepare to compete at the American Academic Competition Institute (AACI) 2026 California High School regionals in March.

BUSD_SPORTSMED_2026_2: San Dimas High School Sports Medicine students are all smiles after competing in the mini quiz bowl at the AACI 2026 California High School regional competition.

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