



## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 18, 2017      CONTACT: William Diepenbrock      PHONE: 909-206-5304

### **Baldwin Park Elementary Showcases Dual-language Student Talent**

**BALDWIN PARK** – Dual-language students from Baldwin Park Unified’s Tracy Elementary lit up the evening in bright blue, red and green garments and traditional Mexican attire as they danced and sang to popular songs by iconic singer Juan Gabriel on May 12.

Transitional kindergarteners through sixth-graders performed to a crowd of more than 200 parents, families and teachers to showcase their yearlong progress in language and cultural learning by highlighting the life and musical works of Gabriel.

“It was really great to be a part of the show and to dance with my friends and have a good time,” fourth-grader Jason Avendano said. “I enjoyed having a solo part as a singer and showing my family what I’ve learned.”

Students performed choreographed dances and sang along with Gabriel’s songs, like “No Tengo Dinero,” “Querida,” “Mariachi,” and his famous cover of “Have You Ever Seen the Rain.” Dances ranged from contemporary rock ‘n’ roll with slicked back hair and sunglasses to traditional mariachi music and students in ballet folklórico costumes.

Alternating from English to Spanish, students took the audience through Gabriel’s history and his impact on Mexican music and culture. Each grade level shared short presentations on the star’s childhood, his start in the music industry and his rise to international fame.

“Juan Gabriel is a huge figure in the Mexican community and we thought his work and life would really connect with the families at our school,” second-grade dual-language teacher Elizabeth Montes said. “It was exciting to see the students’ hard work come to life and it is important they share their achievements with their parents and families.”

Montes said this year’s culminating performance had the most parent participation of any event in the program’s 10-year history.

For one number, students wearing Texas-western attire pulled parents onstage to dance along; they concluded the song by tossing their cowboy hats in the air.

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“It’s amazing to see how much the students have advanced since the beginning of the school year,” Tina Keophom said, parent of a third-grader who has been in the dual-language program since transitional kindergarten. “It was so much fun to see them having a good time on stage.”

Dual-language teachers and parents helped stage the show. Teachers provided choreography and parents purchased matching costumes for students and sold snacks to audience members. DVDs were also available for families to buy.

“The dual-language program is a unique enrichment opportunity for students to learn and perfect a different language, so they can be prepared for our increasingly global society,” Baldwin Park Unified Superintendent Dr. Froilan N. Mendoza said. “We are so proud of our teachers and administrators at Tracy Elementary for their commitment to helping our students achieve in every aspect of their lives.”

### PHOTOS

**051817\_BPUSD\_Dual\_1:** Tracy Elementary dual-language students dance and sing to popular songs by iconic singer Juan Gabriel on May 12 as they showcase their yearlong progress in language and cultural learning.

**051817\_BPUSD\_Dual\_2:** Dual-language students from Tracy Elementary wear traditional and contemporary Mexican attire as they demonstrate their fluency in English and Spanish by highlighting the life and works of Juan Gabriel on May 12.

**051817\_BPUSD\_Dual\_3:** Tracy Elementary dual-language students wear traditional ballet folklórico dresses and mariachi costumes as they sing and dance to songs by Juan Gabriel in front of an audience of more than 200 parents, family members and teachers on May 12.

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