



## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 16, 2017    **CONTACT:** William Diepenbrock    **PHONE:** 909-206-5304

### Heath Elementary Dual-Immersion Teacher Named Teacher of the Month

**BALDWIN PARK** – A teacher at Baldwin Park Unified’s Margaret Heath Elementary School has been honored for her commitment to diversity, the arts, student development and her community by Dual Language Schools, a group that promotes dual-language instruction.

Laura Reyes, who teaches a fifth-/sixth-grade Spanish dual-language class, received the group’s Teacher of the Month award for February 2017.

“Congratulations to Ms. Reyes for receiving this well-deserved honor,” Superintendent Froilan N. Mendoza said. “Her work is an example of the strength of Baldwin Park Unified’s teachers, who dedicate themselves every day to the success of our students.”

Reyes has worked for Baldwin Park Unified for 26 years, including 19 years as a Spanish dual-language elementary school teacher and seven as a Spanish bilingual aide. She also teaches English as a second language at Citrus Community College.

A Baldwin Park native, she attended Baldwin Park Unified schools as a child and started as an aide at the District less than a year after graduating from Baldwin Park High School. Her classroom offers language instruction with cultural context; students collaborate on lessons and take ownership of their education.

“I teach my students the value of biliteracy by teaching the cultural contribution, skills and beliefs of diverse cultures,” Reyes said. “It is important for the students to understand their culture before learning and building on other cultures. I not only teach cultural diversity through books but also through theater, poetry and art.”

Reyes said many of her students will be the first in their families to attend college. It is her wish that they will return to the community, as she did, and mentor other youths.

“They know the struggles and feelings they went through to get where they are today, and they succeeded. They can make a huge difference in people’s lives by sharing their experiences and giving hope,” she said.

#### PHOTO

**BPUSD\_REYES\_1:** Margaret Heath teacher Laure Reyes has been honored for her commitment to diversity, the arts, student development and her community by Dual Language Schools.