



News Release

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Baldwin Park Unified Wins Golden Bell for Science Instruction

Holland Middle School singled out for program that sparks collaboration and critical thinking

BALDWIN PARK – Baldwin Park Unified will receive a 2015 Golden Bell Award – the highest honor possible for a California school district – for a collaborative approach to science instruction praised as a catalyst for systemic change.

The award, given by the California School Board Association, recognizes programs that are innovative, data driven, make a difference for students, connect to the local Board of Education's vision, and demonstrate board leadership and support.

Baldwin Park's Holland Middle School launched the innovative approach to teaching science in 2010. Called "Focused Science through Lesson Study," the approach brings together teams of teachers to design lesson plans, observe student responses, analyze their effectiveness and collaborate on ways to strengthen lesson delivery.

"Lesson Study is a highly intense effort. Our dedicated teachers have dramatically shifted their focus to a collaborative approach to teaching," Baldwin Park Interim Superintendent Froilan N. Mendoza said. "This allows teams of teachers to leverage all of their strengths to serve students most effectively."

The program is credited with deepening student collaboration and critical thinking at Holland, where more than 90 percent of students qualify for free or reduced price lunches, more than half are English learners and nearly 20 percent have disabilities.

Using Lesson Study, students in these high-needs groups have outperformed district peers on state standardized science tests since 2012; the percent of Holland students achieving advanced scores on state science tests more than doubled in four years.

"We are tremendously proud of our teachers and administrators at Holland Middle School," Board of Education President Teresa I. Vargas said. "Their commitment on behalf of our students is inspirational."

MORE

In a culture of high expectations and academic rigor and an environment of support, understanding, and emotional safety, all Baldwin Park Unified School District students will graduate with a valued and highly respected diploma, prepared with the relevant skills, knowledge, and personal attributes necessary for success in a university or other institution of higher education and/or any post-secondary options of their choice.



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The 2015 Golden Bell is Baldwin Park's eighth such honor from the California School Board Association. The association will make the award at a presentation at noon Saturday, Dec. 5 during its annual convention in San Diego.

The non-profit education association represents elected officials who govern nearly 1,000 public school districts and county offices of education.

This spring, Holland was named a 2015 Gold Ribbon School by the California Department of Education in recognition of the effectiveness of its Lesson Study approach to science instruction.

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