

Baldwin Academy initiative encourages kids to 'bag' plastic bags

By Maritza Velazquez, Staff Writer

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The Bag Monster haunts Baldwin Academy students during Gloria Molina's Green Bag for a Clean Earth initiative kickoff at the Valinda campus Oct. 8, 2009. The Bag Monster represents the 500 disposable bags per year that the average consumer uses. (SGVN/Staff photo by Leo Jarzomb)

LA PUENTE - LA County Supervisor Gloria Molina has kick-started an initiative to rid plastic bags that pollute local landfills and waterways.

Molina launched the second phase of the "Green Bag For a Clean Earth" initiative at Baldwin Academy in La Puente Thursday.

"Through the education of the children, we're educating their parents," said Molina, who added

that she's a proponent of creating a mandate that would require the use of re-usable bags.

Baldwin, a K-6 Hacienda La Puente Unified elementary school, is one of 15 within Bassett, Rowland and Hacienda La Puente Unified school districts to participate in the campaign, which provides incentives to children whose families use re-usable bags.

The campaign focuses on educating children in grades 3-5, by providing curriculum and incentives. Molina said she hopes that other schools will eventually be able to adopt the program on their own.

Thursday's event included local administrators and representatives from the Department of Public Works' "Brag About Your Bag Team," and the Heal the Bay organization.

A visit from the "Bag Monster" during the presentation created a buzz with the kids, while also teaching them about the widespread use of plastic bags.

As the character made its way through the crowd of students, representatives from the Heal the Bay organization told students that he was made of 500 bags, the average amount one person uses in a year.

"It's good and it's funny," 11-year-old Noah Bango said of the presentation. "It teaches us how we can save the world and recycle."

As part of the program, students are encouraged

to use re-usable bags at local grocery stores that have decided to participate in the campaign.

Students and their families who will receive stickers for using their recyclable bags and the top winners will receive prizes such as an L.A. Dodgers on-field experience, free bicycles and Dodgers baseball



Gloria Molina visits Baldwin Academy for her Green Bag for a Clean Earth initiative kickoff at the Valinda campus Oct. 8, 2009. (SGVN/Staff photo by Leo Jarzomb)

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