



SPRING-FORD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

857 SOUTH LEWIS ROAD, ROYERSFORD, PA 19468

For Immediate Release

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Oaks Elementary School Teacher Named 2016 Phillies All Star Teacher ***Photo/Media Opportunity***

ROYERSFORD, PA – Oaks Elementary School teacher, Mrs. Katie Bala, was recently named a recipient of the 2016 Phillies All Star Teacher Award! Mrs. Bala is one of just 10 teachers from across the state who will be honored during Teacher Appreciation Day at Citizen's Bank Park on May 13, 2016.

Prior to the Phillies game on May 13, the top All-Stars will be honored on field during a pregame ceremony. The 10 All-Stars, along with 10 Honorable Mentions, will also be acknowledged during a pre-game Tent Party on the same date.

Each year, the Phillies select 10 area teachers nominated by current and former students, parents and peers to honor as Teacher All-Stars. Read Mrs. Bala's nomination from Oaks Elementary School parent Megan Wescott:

“‘Your boy will not become a part of the system.’ When you leave back-to-school night and your child's teacher looks into your eyes with those very words, you realize that you have someone that is extraordinary in your presence. Katie Bala is one of the bravest, strongest, loving people that I have experienced in this world and to have her teach my child for two straight years (3rd and 4th grade), is humbling. Katie knew my son had issues, and with her help (and the help of the amazing Oaks Elementary School and Children's Hospital) Jake was diagnosed with Turret's Syndrome and the various co-morbid symptoms coinciding with it. Katie worked with our family, day in and day out, to find a situation where Jake could learn and explode. She took her personal time – both in the class and out – to find ways to assist Jake. She would alter tests and assignments to help grow his confidence; she would send work home that he could do independently. Katie just knew what to do. Jake THRIVED! At the beginning of 3rd grade, Jake was reading on a 1st grade level. By the end of this single year, she had caught him up to 3rd grade. I'm truly grateful and at peace for this angel that I found on earth who could make school good again, for Jake.

Jake is a twin who also has older twin sisters. I believe I am a very good judge of teachers and expectations (having four children) but nothing could prepare me for the amount of time and effort that this lady could make for MY son. She would update me with both good and bad. She would email me whenever I had those tough evenings of homework. She would walk next to me whenever I entered another IEP meeting asking for something else. She was not only there for my son, she was



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there for me. Katie is a gift that I can't repay. She's given my family more than I can express. She's given this boy a gift of education and a love of school that I thought never would exist. She's his hero – she's amazing –and, truthfully, she is now my hero too.

I'll conclude with a quote from one of my favorite movies, "It's a Wonderful Life." The line reads, "Every time you hear a bell ring, it means that some angel just got their wings." Make no mistake – Katie Bala should be a teacher – in a place where the bell rings multiple times a day. There is little doubt that she has truly been an angel for many children... the many she has taught and changed along the way. Thank you, Mrs. Bala."

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