

News Release

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California's best elementary spellers named in statewide spelling championship

Winning students from Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara and Alameda counties

Sixty-one of the state's top elementary school spellers met in Northern California on Saturday, May 17, to compete in the California State Elementary Spelling Championship. These students, representing 32 California counties, had already won school, region, and county spelling bees. Each county's first and second place spellers were eligible to compete in this state event coordinated by the Sonoma County Office of Education.

The state spelling competition was completed in 23 rounds. Santa Cruz County's Viraj Shah, an 11-year-old sixth-grader from Georgiana Bruce Kirby Preparatory School, won the top prize by correctly spelling *telegraphese*, then *disseminate*. He received a trophy and a \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond. His school will receive a wall clock commemorating his achievement.

Santa Barbara County's Quinn Hensley, a 10-year-old fifth-grader from Washington Elementary School, earned the second place trophy and a \$500 U.S. Savings Bond. An 11-year-old sixth-grader Akshayraj Aitha, from Alameda County's Eleanor Murray Fallon Middle School was awarded third place and a \$250 U.S. Savings Bond.

The competition was held at Person Theatre on the Sonoma State University campus in Rohnert Park. The Chabot Space and Science Center was this year's partner agency. The event featured space decorations, martians, twinkling lights and balloons, and included a virtual tour of the Science Center.

Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools Carl Wong welcomed participants and guests to the event and showed a video greeting from State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell. Anne Harris-Gebb, a teacher at Jefferson School in Cloverdale, served as spell master. The competition was judged by Jefferson School Teacher Trish Healey (lead judge); California Highway Patrol Captain

Mark Rasmussen; Sonoma County Office of Education Assistant Superintendent Don Russell; and ABC7 Morning News Co-anchor Eric Thomas.

Additional students who competed in the California State Spelling Championship and their place standards were:

Place	Student, Age, Grade	School, County
4	Ramakrishnan Kumaran, Age 11, Grade 6	Acacia Middle School, Riverside
5	Brandon Whitehead, Age 12, Grade 6	The Academy of Higher Education, Butte
6	Krista Chew, Age 12, Grade 6	Pine Grove Elementary School, Amador
7	Katherin McKinnon, Age 10, Grade 5	Sisson School, Siskiyou
8	Madeleine Greenbaum, Age 11, Grade 6	Montessori Center School, Santa Barbara
9	Katherine Reall, Age 11, Grade 6	Kings River-Hardwick Elementary, Kings
10	Savannah Koch, Age 12, Grade 6	Pomo Elementary School, Lake
11	Andrea Ouyang, Age 11, Grade 5	John Baldwin Elementary School, Contra Costa
12	Reza Talieh, Age 11, Grade 6	Mary Lou Dieterich Elementary School, Stanislaus
13	Connor Asercion, Age 12, Grade 6	St. Jerome Catholic School, Contra Costa
14	Elijah Armstrong, Age 10, Grade 4	Manor Elementary School, Marin
15	Hanz Legaspi, Age 11, Grade 6	Hawthorne Middle School, Los Angeles
16	Bailey Ann Runnells, Age 10, Grade 4	Auberry Elementary School, Fresno
17	Ahana Dhakal, Age 11, Grade 6	Scotia Elementary School, Humboldt
18	Euan Harrington, Age 11, Grade 5	Columbia Elementary School, Shasta
19	Sierra Macdonald, Age 12, Grade 6	Rio del Mar Elementary School, Santa Cruz
20	Glenda Chen, Age 10, Grade 5	Marengo Elementary School, Los Angeles
21	Anvita Mishra, Age 11, Grade 6	Excelsior Elementary School, Placer
22	Jordan Fox, Age 10, Grade 5	Sierra Elementary, Placer
23	Gabrielle Roberts, Age 12, Grade 6	Grass Valley Charter School, Nevada
24	Taylor Snook, Age 11, Grade 6	Sacred Heart School, San Benito
25	Nikki Drake, Age 11, Grade 6	Claudia Landeen School, San Joaquin
26	Mikayla Erickson, Age 11, Grade 6	Sacred Heart Parish School, Tehama
27	Jared Seamons, Age 12, Grade 6	Andros Karperos Middle School, Sutter
28	Liam Twight, Age 11, Grade 5	Pacheco Elementary School, Shasta
29	Rommel Bermejo, Age 9, Grade 4	South/West Park Elementary School, San Joaquin
30	Joshua Tupufia, Age 12, Grade 6	Dan O. Root Elementary School, Solano
31	Elizabeth Rodriguez, Age 12, Grade 6	Manchester GATE Elementary School, Fresno
32	Danny Cassee, Age 11, Grade 5	Olive Elementary, Marin
33	Quinn Camara, Age 11, Grade 5	Pioneer Middle School, Kings
34	Emelia BensonMeyer, Age 9, Grade 4	Arcata Elementary School, Humboldt
35	Haley Capitanich, Age 12, Grade 6	Ione Junior High School, Amador
36	Arthur Wilkie, Age 10, Grade 5	Lucerne Elementary School, Lake
37	Thomas Uchimura, Age 11, Grade 5	Fairview Elementary School, Glenn
38	Joe Hayward, Age 10, Grade 5	Anderson Valley Elementary, Mendocino
39	Tristen Moore, Age 12, Grade 6	Jackson Heights School, Tehama
40	Erin Cummiskey, Age 12, Grade 6	Seven Hills Intermediate School, Nevada

41	Taylor Davis, Age 12, Grade 6	Meridian Elementary School, Sutter
42	Sabrina Watts, Age 10, Grade 5	Cerra Vista Elementary School, San Benito
43	Zenon Gillis, Age 9, Grade 4	Rolling Hills Elementary School, Solano
44	Jarret Mitts, Age 10, Grade 4	Redwood Valley Elementary School, Mendocino
45	Adam Cutter, Age 11, Grade 6	Lloyd G. Johnson Junior High School, Colusa
46	Michael Shampine, Age 9, Grade 4	Lone Tree Elementary School, Yuba
47	Joey Franceschi, Age 12, Grade 6	Spring Creek Elementary School, Sonoma
48	Raymond Galloway, Age 10, Grade 5	Lasselle Elementary School, Riverside
49	Paige Donahue, Age 11, Grade 6	Cox Bar Elementary School, Trinity
50	William Rodrigues, Age 12, Grade 6	William Finch Charter School, Glenn
51	Sahit Nallani Menon, Age 11, Grade 5	Fairlands Elementary School, Alameda
52	Not listed for privacy	
53	Brenda Cruz, Age 12, Grade 6	Harmony Elementary School, Merced
54	Hannah Cain, Age 11, Grade 6	Antelope Elementary School, Mono
55	Trevor Bustamante, Age 11, Grade 6	Marigold Elementary School, Butte
56	Joshua McAllister, Age 11, Grade 6	Weaverville Elementary School, Trinity
57	Sarah Marsh, Age 9, Grade 4	Arbuckle Elementary School, Colusa
58	Olivia Wardlaw, Age 12, Grade 6	Mammoth Middle School, Mono
59	Whitney Williams, Age 11, Grade 5	Elim Elementary School, Merced
60	Kira Findling, Age 10, Grade 5	Apple Blossom School, Sonoma
61	Ryan Burns, Age 12, Grade 6	Julien Elementary School, Stanislaus

Did not attend

Pa Le Her, Age 11, Grade 6	Redwood Elementary School, Del Norte
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