

Press Release

SOLANA BEACH SCHOOL DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fifth Grade Skyline School Team Places Ninth in the Nation, Achieves Highest Honors in National Vocabulary WordMasters Challenge



SOLANA BEACH, CA (April 1, 2021) – A team of fifth grade students representing Skyline School in the [Solana Beach School District](#) achieved Highest Honors in the WordMasters Challenge™, a national vocabulary competition involving nearly 125,000 students annually. The Skyline team scored an impressive 181 points out of a possible 200 points in the second of three meets this year, placing them ninth in the nation.

(Photo of team members: Back row, Claire Carter, Claire McEvoy, Lila Gilbert, and Avery Kapsch; Front row, Alaina Achtel, Benjamin Hext, and Maleia Carter)

Competing in the Blue Division of the WordMasters Challenge™, fifth grader Claire McEvoy earned a perfect score of 20 on the challenge. Nationally, only 39 fifth graders have achieved this result. Other students from Skyline School who achieved outstanding results in the meet included fifth graders Alaina Achtel, Claire Carter, Lila Gilbert, and Benjamin Hext. The students are coached by Skyline teachers Amanda Goodman, Stacey Hamilton, and Shannon Applegate.

“The team feels a sense of accomplishment and of course, we are proud of our hardworking students,” said Ms. Applegate. “Our fifth grade teaching team loves this program because it awakens an understanding to the power of words.”

The WordMasters Challenge™ is an exercise in critical thinking that first encourages students to become familiar with a set of interesting new words that go beyond regular grade level vocabulary, and then challenges them to use those words to complete analogies, expressing various kinds of logical relationships. Working to solve the analogies helps students learn to think both analytically and metaphorically. Although most vocabulary enrichment and analogy-solving programs are designed for use by high school students, WordMasters Challenge™ materials have been specifically created for younger students in grades 3-8.

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Applegate explained Skyline's approach to the program. "We study three lists of 25 words each, for a total of 75 words. They get to know those words inside and out, and then for the challenges, students solve analogies with the words in them. The challenges are cumulative, so the second challenge has 50 of the words, and the third has all 75 words. We also look for these words while reading and speaking, and use them in our writing."

Principal Pinkerton congratulated the team of fifth grade students for their accomplishments. "They should be proud of their hard work and perseverance, along with their representation of Skyline Elementary School."

[The WordMasters Challenge™ program](#) is administered by a company based in Indianapolis, Indiana, which is dedicated to inspiring high achievement in American schools.

Skyline School is a K-6 elementary school located in Solana Beach in north San Diego County.

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