



# SAN GABRIEL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## PRESS RELEASE

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## **Fifth-Grade Student to Represent San Gabriel Unified at LA County Spelling Bee**

**SAN GABRIEL, CA** – Coolidge Elementary fifth-grader Ryan Yan will represent San Gabriel Unified School District at the 12th Annual Los Angeles County Elementary Spelling Bee on March 29 after taking top honors in the school spelling contest.

Yan faced off for 13 rounds with other fourth- and fifth-graders in friendly competition at the 10th Annual Coolidge Spelling Bee on Feb. 24, ultimately winning the contest for the second consecutive year. Fourth-graders Dorian Gamero and Kyle Tang took second and third place respectively.

“I’m really excited to go to the County Bee again, but I want to win first place this year,” Yan said.

Yan won last year’s Coolidge contest and placed second in the 2016 LA County Spelling Bee. This earned him an invitation to the California State Spelling Bee, where he placed 13th. Yan is studying hard to prepare for the County bee and hopes to be a state finalist this year.

“We wholeheartedly support opportunities like the Coolidge Spelling Bee that allow students to test their knowledge in a fun and challenging environment,” SGUSD Superintendent Dr. John Pappalardo said. “This is also a great way to showcase the talents of our students and reward them for their hard work and diligence in preparing for the spelling bee.”

All Coolidge fourth- and fifth-graders are invited to participate in the annual spelling bee; this year, 12 accepted the challenge. Students began preparing in December, when they were provided a study list of 350 words. The words were organized into three sets of varying difficulty and were used in the early rounds of the competition.

The competition based at least two rounds on each set of words from the preparation list and eliminated students after one misspelled word. The final rounds used more difficult challenge words that were not provided to students prior to the competition. Challenge words included facetious, photosynthesis, margarine and the winning word: inadvertently.

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Yan received a trophy and PTA sponsorship to cover the County bee registration fees, while second- and third-place winners Gamero and Tang received medals.

Coolidge Principal William Wong served as the event's pronouncer. Judges included San Gabriel City Councilmember Juli Costanzo, Jefferson Middle School Assistant Principal Stephen Feng and Jennifer Vargas, SGUSD teacher on special assignment and GATE coordinator.

"I want to congratulate each student who participated in this challenging contest. We know they dedicated a lot of time outside of the classroom to preparing for it," SGUSD Board President Andrew L. Ammon said. "This demonstration of student excellence represents the very best of San Gabriel Unified and we wish Ryan the best of luck in the County competition."

### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**031017\_SANGAB\_SPELLING:** Coolidge fifth-grader Ryan Yan celebrates his victory at the 10th Annual Coolidge Spelling Bee on Feb. 24 with finalists Kyle Tang and Dorian Gamero. Yan will represent San Gabriel Unified School District in the LA County Elementary Spelling Bee on March 29.

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