

Press Release

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FROM: Putnam Valley Central School District
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Can YOU Spell as Well as a Third or Fourth Grader?

Putnam Valley Spelling Bee Showcases Student Literacy



The English Language Arts (ELA) Subcommittee of the Education Enhancement Committee (EEC) of the Putnam Valley Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is celebrating the second year of its successful reading initiative entitled "Putnam Valley Reads - The Standard is 25." The title refers to the goal of encouraging Putnam Valley's students to read 25 books or their equivalent every year.

As part of the PTA EEC's wider literacy efforts, Spelling Bees were held in the Putnam Valley Elementary School's (PVES) third and fourth grade classes this spring, and are also being held at the Putnam Valley Middle School (PVMS). These spelling bees were modeled after the Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee and drew 48 initial contestants at PVES.

At the final round on the evening of May 1st, Elias Wynshaw, son of PVES third grade teacher Linda Rappaport, and himself a former competitor in the Scripps-Howard National Spelling Bee (he placed 45th in the nation), read the words to the eight finalists. Teacher Mrs. Denise Hayes was the moderator and teacher Mrs. Chrissy McDermott was the judge.

District representatives in attendance were Superintendent Dr. Marc Space, Board Trustee Guy Cohen, PVES Principal Jamie Edelman, Assistant Principal Louise Frangella, and a number of teachers from all grade levels. The eight finalists were third and fourth grade students: Alexander Craven, Allison Honors, Tyrique Scantlebury, Kaitlin Millicker, Patrick McCormack, Rebeka Kaskin, Marc Orlando, and Samantha Bruno each wearing a colorful tag adorned with a bee with a number from one to eight on it. Throughout the competition they were referred to only as "Speller Number One," etc.

Examples of words that the contestants spelled correctly were console, mystery, academic, oxygen, and aggressive. Words that proved to be challenging were birch, cannot, autumn, and peculiar among others. The very supportive audience of parents, family, PTA volunteers, friends, and community members numbered more than one hundred. Whenever a new word was announced, audience members' heads could be seen bobbing in rhythm to the spellers' voices. Applause was both loud and plentiful.

The final round winner was Tyrique Scantlebury, correctly spelling the words "mechanism" and

then "molasses." The winner received a \$25 Barnes & Noble gift card and a trophy to be personalized, and every contestant received a silver medal to commemorate his or her participation in the second year of this very exciting educational event.

For more information on the Scripps-Howard national program, visit <http://www.spellingbee.com>

(630) *Photo Attached: Superintendent of Schools, Dr, Marc Space, hands Tyrique Scantlebury his award for wining this year's PVES Spelling Bee.*