Yuba County Elementary School
Spelling Bee Rules
Grades 4 - 6

1. This competition is open to students from each school in Yuba County in grades 4-6 who have been certified as champions by their school coordinator or principal.

2. This is an ORAL COMPETITION in which students will be eliminated after their first misspelling. Paper and pencil are available on the table for the spellers to write the spelling word for their use, but the speller must then spell the word orally for competition. Paper and pencil are not allowed except as provided on the table.

3. A study word list was compiled to aid the students in preparing for the competition. However, actual words used throughout the competition will not be limited to this list or any other word list. Rather, words may be chosen from any source deemed appropriate by the Judges and the Spelling Master.

4. In competition, spellers may pronounce words before spelling, after spelling, or not at all. However, students are encouraged to pronounce the word BEFORE spelling to ensure that the word was heard correctly. For instance, if the word given is baseball and the student spells baseballs, the spelling would be considered incorrect. An additional example is, if you are given absence and you spell absent, your spelling will be considered incorrect.

5. Once you begin to orally spell a word, you will not have a chance to change letters once pronounced. A speller may repeat the word orally, provided letters and their sequence are not changed. The speller must indicate words with apostrophes, capitals, and other punctuation and any accent marks either over the letter or at the end of the word.

6. At any time, a speller may request that a word be re-pronounced, defined or used in a sentence. The Spell Master shall grant the request(s) until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear to the speller.

7. Judges may disqualify any contestant who ignores a request to start the spelling of a word within a reasonable time.

8. If, no definition of a homonym is given, the correct spelling of either word shall be accepted as correct. When a speller is given the definition of a homonym, he/she must spell the word defined.

9. **There is an element of chance in this competition.** Spellers will be eliminated in the order in which they misspell words. That is, when a speller fails to spell a word correctly, he/she must drop out of the competition and return to the audience. Another word shall be given to the next speller in line. The last spellers standing will be the winners.

10. **When only two (2) spellers remain, the elimination procedure changes.** At that point, as soon as one speller misspells a word, the other speller will be given the opportunity to spell the same word. If the second speller spells the word correctly PLUS the next word on the Spell Master’s list, the second speller will be declared the champion. If one of the last two spellers misses a word and the other speller, after correcting the error, misspells the new word given, then both will continue in the contest with a new word. If both misspell the same word, both will continue in the contest and a new word will be given. The last two students are eligible to advance to state competition.

11. The decision of the Judges and Spell Master will be final in all questions. Any problem relating to the spelling of a word must be referred to the Judges immediately (before the beginning of the next round). No protest will be entertained after the contest has ended.

12. In the event of a protest or dispute, decisions will be based on Webster’s Third New International Dictionary Unabridged – the official contest dictionary. No other source will be allowed.

13. Once the competition begins, spellers must remain in the competition area. Family and friends must remain in the audience. If spellers need to be excused to use the restroom, they must notify the judges to be excused.

14. To minimize disruptions during the competition, we ask audience members to turn off cell phones. Please hold your applause until a participant returns to the audience.