

# NEWS RELEASE



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## **THE MISSION OF GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*is to pursue excellence  
in academic knowledge,  
skills, and behavior  
for each student,  
resulting in measured  
improvement against  
local, national, and  
world-class standards.*

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It is the policy of Gwinnett County Public Schools  
not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex,  
religion, national origin, age, or disability in any  
employment practice, educational program, or  
any other program, activity, or service.

2010 Winner of



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 3, 2012**

News Media Contact: Communication and Media Relations, 678-301-6020

## **Arcado ES and Sweetwater MS:**

### **Two Gwinnett WordMasters teams earn high honors**

A team of **Gwinnett County Public Schools** (GCPS) students representing **Arcado Elementary** along with a second group representing **Sweetwater Middle** both recently earned high honors during the WordMasters Challenge, a national language arts competition.

Competing in the Gold Division and coached by Sweetwater Middle teacher **Lois Bean**, the Sweetwater Middle team of 6th grade students ranked 1st in the nation this spring. The team also placed first during the first meet earlier this school year. The Sweetwater Middle students outscored teams from across the nation in this advanced vocabulary competition. Perfect scores were achieved by **Kaitlyn Choe, Joshua De La Fuente, Nabid Farvez, Rodrigo Herrera, Ibum Obu, Estefania Ortega, Darlene Praseuth, and Mariela Prieto-Torres.**

Competing in the Blue Division and coached by teacher **Kathy Dean**, Arcado Elementary's team of 4th graders tied for 4th place in the nation in the meet among the 698 school teams participating at this level and in this division. One of the students, 4th grader **Rhiannon Eplett**, earned the highest honors for individual achievement for a perfect score. At the national level, only 37 4th graders did so. Other Arcado Elementary students who achieved outstanding results included 4th graders **Cailleagh Finlayson, Samir Hadi-Cisneros, Elise Musser, Jessica Pan, Isabel Segre, Paul "Joey" Thomas, Mary Wang, Reece Whitfield, and Jule Zehngraft.**

The WordMasters Challenge is an exercise in critical thinking that first encourages students to become familiar with a set of interesting new words considerably more difficult than grade level. The competition then challenges them to use those words to complete analogies, expressing various kinds of logical relationships. The challenge helps students learn to think both analytically and metaphorically. Though most vocabulary-boosting and analogy-solving activities have been created for high school students, the WordMasters materials have been specifically designed for younger students, in grades three through eight. They are particularly well suited for able and interested children who rise to the challenge of learning new words and enjoy the logical puzzles posed by analogies.

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The WordMasters Challenge has been administered for the past 25 years by a company based in Allendale, New Jersey, which is dedicated to inspiring high achievement in American schools. The Arcado Elementary and Sweetwater Middle students will participate in the final WordMasters meet. Medals and certificates will be awarded in June to those who achieve and/or improve the most in the course of the year.

More than 220,000 students from across the nation enter the competition annually.