

2017-2018 HCLS SPELLING BEE COORDINATOR HANDBOOK



Presented by Howard County Library System

Sponsored by BB&T,

Friends & Foundation of Howard County Library System, Howard County Public School System, and the Josephine B. Scheffenacker Education Trust



**HOWARD COUNTY
LIBRARY SYSTEM**
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General Information

An exciting and challenging academic contest awaits...
the Howard County Library System Spelling Bee!

All public and private schools, as well as homeschool associations, in Howard County are invited to participate in this annual event. The following is the sequence of events, which leads to the National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC.

- Classroom Spelling Bee
- School/Association Spelling Bee
- Howard County Library (HCLS) System Spelling Bee
- National Spelling Bee

Each school/association contest determines the champion speller to be sent to the HCLS Spelling Bee. Each contest will send one winner plus an alternate.

Please note: Since it is impossible to monitor home or hospital-bound contestants participating in the bee via telephone or cable, an added rule states that a child must be present at the contest in order to compete.

Important Dates

September 30, 2017	Intent to Participate form due to Howard County Library System (<i>found in August letter to principals and online at hclibrary.org/spellingbee</i>)
January 26, 2018	School/Association Spelling Bees must be completed
January 26, 2018	School Participation Data and School/Association Winners forms due to Howard County Library System
March 16, 2018 <i>March 18</i>	HCLS Spelling Bee <i>Snow date</i>
May/June 2018	Scripps National Spelling Bee

Sequence of Events

Classroom Spelldown

Each teacher may conduct a classroom spelldown. The contest may be written, oral, or a combination of the two. The teacher selects the words. At the completion of the classroom spelldown, one classroom representative will be sent to the grade level spelling bee.

School/Association Spelling Bee

The School/Association Spelling Bee coordinator directs the School/Association Spelling Bee. This Bee may be held during school hours or in the evening. An area with a stage and good lighting is best. You may want to film the performance.

Ask your principal or other dignitary to give a congratulatory speech to the students. Your school may want to provide refreshments. Make sure you forward the name, address, grade level, and school name of your champion(s) to HCLS' Bee Coordinator, as they need this information to make final arrangements for the HCLS Spelling Bee.

A word of caution: if your school has many classes, you may want to hold a preliminary spelldown before your School Spelling Bee. A spelling bee with 20 to 25 contestants lasts about an hour.

Home school associations: Students who reside in Howard County and participate in a local bee with a minimum of 15 contestants, conducted by a Howard County home school association, are eligible to advance to the HCLS Spelling Bee.

County Spelling Bee

Each participating school/association may send their champion speller, plus one alternate, to the HCLS Spelling Bee.

Information for Those Involved in a Bee

Pronouncer Information

1. Read carefully the Judges, Recorders, Spellers, and Audiences information that is included in the Scripps pronouncers' guide.
2. Familiarize yourself with all words on the confidential word list. Pronunciation is important. A meeting with the judges to ensure pronunciation of words and procedures will be scheduled prior to the Bee.
3. Speak clearly. Grant all requests to repeat a word until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear to the speller. You may request the speller to speak more clearly or louder.
4. Pace yourself. You need time to focus attention on the pronunciation of the new word, and the judges need a few moments between each contestant to do their tasks.

Speller's Information

- Each speller needs to focus on the Pronouncer, to aid his or her hearing and understanding of the context of the word. A speller may ask for the word to be repeated, for its use in a sentence, for a definition, for the part of speech, and for the language of origin.
- Each speller should pronounce the word before and after spelling it. If the speller fails to pronounce the word after spelling it, the judge may ask if s/he is finished. If s/he says yes, the judge will remind the speller to remember to repeat the word the next time. (No speller will be eliminated for failing to pronounce a word.)
- When a speller is at the podium spelling, the next speller should be standing at a marked location ready to proceed to the podium.

Recorder's Information

Make an audio recording of the spelling bee. As words are pronounced, the number on the recorder dial should be written beside the word on the recorder's spelling list. In case there is a request by the Head Judge to re-listen to a word's pronunciation or spelling, the recorder will be able to identify the word by reversing the recorder to the appropriate number.

Judges' Information

1. Read carefully the Contest Rules with special attention to rules related to change of procedures when the number of contestants is down to two.
2. Read the Pronouncers, Spellers, and Audience information.

3. Responsibilities:

HEAD JUDGE

- Read aloud the rules of the spelling bee to the spellers and audience.
- Read aloud the procedures when the number of spellers is down to the final five to the speller and audience.
- Make the final decision as to the correct or incorrect spelling of a word.
 - State “correct” or “incorrect” after each speller's spelling of a word.
 - If “incorrect,” spell the word aloud for the speller and audience.
 - Make the final decision as to any procedure in question. These decisions will be made in consultation with other judges.

DICTIONARY JUDGE

- Honor requests by spellers to have dictionary definitions, part of speech, and language of origin of the word. These are provided on the word list. Only refer to the dictionary in cases of questions.

ROUNDS/RECORDS JUDGE

- Check each word as it is properly spelled. Record the number of the speller by each word spelled on the word list margin.
- Circle any misspelled word and write the contestant’s number or name beside it. Write the misspelled word on each speller’s card as they miss a word.
- At the beginning of each round, draw a line over the top of the first word in that round. Label the line with the round number.

4. All judges are responsible for listening carefully to each word’s spelling. If you cannot hear the spelling clearly, request that the contestant speak louder and more distinctly.
5. If any judge believes a speller has misspelled a word, the judge will:
 - Say “delay” to the Pronouncer. The Head Judge will then tell the contestant, “Please wait.”
 - Consult the official dictionary regarding the word in question.
 - If two of three judges concur with a misspelling, the judge who requested the delay will tell the Head Judge, “The word was spelled incorrectly.” The Head Judge will then state “incorrect” to the speller and that student is “down.” The Head Judge then correctly spells the word for the speller and the audience.
 - If only one judge of the three thinks a word was misspelled, or if it is agreed that the word actually was spelled correctly, the Head Judge tells the contestant “correct,” and the contest will continue.
6. Any judge may disqualify any contestant who ignores a request to start spelling.
7. At all times watch for an unconscious tendency to give non-verbal clues to the contestant (raised eyebrow, nod of head, etc.).

Scripps Suggested Rules for Local Spelling Bees

Preface

The *Rules for Local Spelling Bees* have been revised. Please note, in particular, changes in requirements for eligibility. We encourage spellers, parents, teachers, and spelling bee officials to read these rules prior to any spelling bee.

The Scripps National Spelling Bee has no authority over the conduct of local spelling bees (namely, spelling bees other than the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC). Consequently, the national office will not render judgments relating to the conduct of local spelling bees. Individuals bearing complaints about the conduct of local spelling bees should register their concerns with local spelling bee officials. DECISIONS OF LOCAL SPELLING BEE OFFICIALS ARE FINAL.

These *Rules for Local Spelling Bees* are not the rules in effect at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC. When a local spelling bee official says, “We use the national rules,” s/he is probably indicating that the *Rules for Local Spelling Bees* are in effect.

The Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC, operates under a significantly different set of rules called the *Contest Rules of the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee*. These rules—obtainable through www.spellingbee.com—contain provisions that are specific to unique conditions at the event in Washington, DC. Their successful implementation at the local level is considered impossible and therefore is not recommended.

Rules

A speller qualifying for the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee must meet these requirements:

- The speller must not have won a Scripps National Spelling Bee championship.
- The speller must attend a school that officially enrolled with the Scripps National Spelling Bee.
- The speller must not have passed beyond the eighth grade on or before February 1, 2018.
- The speller must not have repeated any grade for the purpose of extending spelling bee eligibility. If the speller has repeated any grade, the speller must notify the Scripps National Spelling Bee of the circumstances of grade repetition by March 31, 2018; and the Scripps National Spelling Bee will, at its sole discretion, determine the speller’s eligibility status on or before April 30, 2018.
- The speller – or the speller’s parent, legal guardian, or school official acting on the speller’s behalf – must not have declared to another entity an academic classification higher than eighth grade for any purpose, including high school graduation equivalency or proficiency examinations and/or examinations such as the PSAT, SAT, or ACT.
- The speller must not have earned the legal equivalent of a high school diploma.
- The speller must not have completed or have been enrolled in more than six high school-level courses or two college-level courses on or before April 30, 2018.

- The speller must not bypass or circumvent normal school activity to study for spelling bees. The Scripps National Spelling Bee defines normal school activity as adherence to at least four courses of study other than language arts, spelling, Latin, Greek, vocabulary, and etymology for at least four hours per weekday for 34 of the 38 weeks between August 27, 2017 and May 22, 2018.
 - The speller must not have reached his/her 15th birthday on or before August 31, 2017.
 - The speller must have been declared a champion of a final local spelling bee taking place on or after February 1, 2018.
 - The speller, upon qualifying for the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC, must submit a completed Champion Bio Form, a Certification of Eligibility Form, a signed Appearance Consent and Release Form, and a hard copy photo to the Scripps National Spelling Bee. The speller will notify the Bee – at least 24 hours prior to the first day of competition in the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee – if any of the statements made on the Certification of Eligibility Form are no longer true or require updating. Howard County Library System will provide access to the necessary forms.
 - The speller must not have any first, second, or third relatives (i.e., sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, half-sibling, first cousin, or great grandparent) who are current employees of the E.W. Scripps Company.
1. The Scripps National Spelling Bee may disqualify prior to or during competition any speller who is not in compliance with any of its Eligibility Requirements; and it may – at any time between the conclusion of the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee and April 30, 2019 – require any speller who is found to have not been in compliance with any of the Eligibility Requirements to forfeit the prizes, rank, and other benefits accorded to the speller as a result of participation in the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee.
 2. Howard County Library System does not make participation in its local spelling bee program contingent upon any of the following: race, religion, creed, gender, the type of school one attends, membership in an organization, or subscription to a publication.
 3. **Home schools:** Home school students are eligible under the same requirements that apply to students attending public, private, or parochial schools. Home school students who are not part of an association must participate in an association bee. Individual families cannot host their own bees and send their winner to the HCLS Spelling Bee.
 4. Howard County Library System has complete autonomy to determine how home schools participate in its spelling bee program. Students who do not participate within Howard County Library System's designated qualification structure are not eligible.
 5. **Format:** The spelling bee is conducted in rounds. Each speller remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round spells one word in each round—except in the case of a written, multiple choice, or online test. The spelling bee may be conducted orally or in writing or in a manner that is a combination of the two; however, if the spelling bee officials specify an oral format, the speller may not demand a written format except under the conditions of Rule 7.
 6. **Word list:** Local spelling bee officials are responsible for selecting the word lists for use at each local spelling bee. Many local spelling bee officials use word lists generated by the Scripps National Spelling Bee. These lists include many words that appear in the current

online edition of *Spell It!* as well as some "end-of-bee" words. All words on Scripps National Spelling Bee word lists are entries in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its addenda section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster, the official dictionary of the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

7. **Special needs:** Spelling bee officials will strive to provide accommodation for spellers who have physical challenges. All requests for spelling bee officials to accommodate special needs involving sight, hearing, speech, or movement should be directed to spelling bee officials well in advance of the spelling bee date. The judges have discretionary power to amend oral and/or written spelling requirements on a case-by-case basis for spellers with diagnosed medical conditions involving sight, hearing, speech, or movement.
8. **Pronouncer's role:** The pronouncer strives to pronounce words according to the diacritical markings in Scripps National Spelling Bee word lists and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its addenda section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster.
 - Homonyms: If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer indicates which word is to be spelled by defining the word.
 - Speller's requests: The pronouncer responds to the speller's requests for a definition, sentence, part of speech, language(s) of origin, and alternate pronunciation(s). When presented with requests for alternate pronunciations, the pronouncer or an aide to the pronouncer checks for alternate pronunciations in either *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its addenda section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster or *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, eleventh edition. The pronouncer does not entertain root word questions or requests for alternate definitions.
 - Pronouncer's sense of helpfulness: The pronouncer may offer word information—without the speller having requested the information—if the pronouncer senses that the information is helpful and the information is presented in the entry for the word in a 2010 Scripps National Spelling Bee word list or *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its addenda section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster.
9. **Judges' role:** The judges uphold the rules and determine whether words are spelled correctly. They also render final decisions on appeals in accordance with Rule 16. They are in complete control of the competition. Their decision is final on all questions.
 - Interaction with the speller: Because seeing the speller's lip movements may be critical in detecting misunderstandings or misspellings, the judges encourage spellers to face them when pronouncing and spelling the word.
 - Notice of rules: The judges ensure that all spellers and audience members are given an opportunity to receive a complete copy of the rules prior to the start of the spelling bee.
 - Misunderstandings: The judges participate in the exchange of information between the speller and pronouncer if they feel that clarification is needed. Also, the judges listen carefully to the speller's pronunciation of the word; and, if they sense that the speller has misunderstood the word, the judges work with the speller and pronouncer until they are satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to assist the speller in understanding the word. While the judges are responsible for attempting to detect a speller's misunderstanding, it is sometimes impossible to detect a misunderstanding until a

spelling error has been made. The judges are not responsible for the speller's misunderstanding.

- Pronouncer errors: The judges compare the pronouncer's pronunciation with the diacritical markings in the word list. If the judges feel that the pronouncer's pronunciation does not match the pronunciation specified in the diacritical markings, the judges direct the pronouncer to correct the error as soon as it is detected.
- Disqualifications for reasons other than clear misspelling: The judges will disqualify a speller (1) who refuses a request to start spelling; (2) who does not approach the microphone when it is time to receive the word; (3) who does not comply with the eligibility requirements; (4) who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct; (5) who, in the process of retracing a spelling, alters the letters or sequence of letters from those first uttered; or (6) who, in the process of spelling, utters unintelligible or nonsense sounds.
- Speller activities that do not merit disqualification: The judges may not disqualify a speller (1) for failing to pronounce the word either before or after spelling it, (2) for asking a question, or (3) for noting or failing to note the capitalization of a word, the presence of a diacritical mark, the presence of a hyphen or other form of punctuation, or spacing between words in an open compound.

10. **Speller's role**: The speller makes an effort to face the judges and pronounce the word for the judges before spelling it and after spelling it. The speller *while facing the judges* makes an effort to utter each letter distinctly and with sufficient volume to be understood by the judges. The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it, use it in a sentence, provide the part of speech, provide the language(s) of origin, and/or provide an alternate pronunciation or pronunciations.

Misunderstandings: The speller is responsible for any misunderstanding of the word unless (1) the pronouncer never provided a correct pronunciation; (2) the pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding the definition, part of speech, or language of origin; or (3) the speller correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to either offer a definition or distinguish the homonyms.

11. **Correction of a misspelling**: The pronouncer and judges will not ask the speller to correct another speller's misspelling, except at the end of the bee.

12. **Misspelling**: Upon incorrectly spelling a word, the speller immediately drops out of the competition, except as provided in Rule 11.

13. **End-of-bee procedure**:

- When the number of spellers is reduced to two, the elimination procedure changes. At that point, when one speller misspells a word, the other speller shall be given an opportunity to spell that same word. If the second speller spells that word correctly, plus the next word on the pronouncer's list, then the second speller shall be declared the champion.
- If one of the last two spellers misspells a word and the other speller, after correcting the error, misspells the new word, then the misspelled new word shall be referred to the other

speller. If this other speller then succeeds in correcting the error and spells the next word on the list, then s/he shall be declared the champion.

- If both spellers misspell the same word, both shall continue in the competition, and the one who first misspelled the word shall be given a new word to spell.
14. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its Addenda Section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster, shall serve as the final authority for the spelling of words. If more than one spelling is listed for a word that the pronouncer has provided for the speller to spell, any of these spellings shall be accepted as correct if all of the following three criteria are met: (1) the pronunciations of the words are identical, (2) the definitions of the words are identical, and (3) the words are clearly identified as being standard variants of each other. Spellings at other locations having temporal labels (such as archaic, obsolete), stylistic labels (such as substand, nonstand), or regional labels (such as North, Midland, Irish) which differ from main entry spellings not having these status labels shall not be accepted as correct.
 15. Any question relating to the spelling of a word should be referred to the designated official immediately in writing on the official appeal form. The official appeal form should contain space for the following: the word in question, the name of the speller, and the reason for the appeal.
 16. Appeals may be filed by a parent, legal guardian, or teacher of the speller who is seeking reinstatement in the contest. The judges will not entertain appeals from individuals seeking to dislodge another speller from the competition. The deadline for filing an appeal is before the speller affected would have received his/her next word had s/he stayed in the competition. No appeal will be entertained after that word has been given to another speller. When only two spellers remain, an oral appeal must be made immediately, that is, before the speller affected would have received his/her next word had s/he stayed in the competition.
 17. The judges are in complete control of the competition. Their decision shall be final on all questions.

What is the origin of e-n-t-h-u-s-i-a-s-m?

Generate enthusiasm for school spelling bees by adopting these ten tips:

- Host an all-school showing of *Akeelah and the Bee*.
- Offer after-school study groups. Start a spelling club and host fun mini-bees.
- Find a popular community personality to host your spelling bee—a local athlete, columnist or elected official.
- Encourage everyone to dress in black and yellow on the day of your spelling bee.
- Create and promote a few supporting awards such as "Most Improved Speller."
- Host a Teacher Bee for the entire school to enjoy.
- Raise funds for your school and spelling bee with Great American SpellCheck (spellingbee.com). It's simple, safe and educational.
- Promote your spelling bee at other events such as family nights or open houses.
- Invite students to design their own spelling bee logo. Put the winning entry on T-shirts to sell at your spelling bee.
- Ask a face painter to paint bees on students' and teachers' faces on the day of your spelling bee.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Press contact: Spelling Bee Coordinator _____
School _____
Phone _____

Date _____

For Immediate Release

AREA SCHOOL PREPARES FOR HCLS SPELLING BEE

The classroom was quiet, the tension was mounting, not even a buzz of the bee was heard. The annual spelling bee was in progress. On _____ (day), _____ (date) _____ (number) students will advance from the classroom spelling bee to the _____ school spelling bee.

_____ (name) will act as Pronouncer at the spelling bee to be held in _____ (site) at _____ (time).

Students participating at the school level are:
(list students here)

The school champion(s) will advance to the HCLS Spelling Bee on March 16, 2018. The winner advances to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in May/June 2018.

The HCLS Spelling Bee is open to public, private, and home school students in grades four through eight, and is sponsored by BB&T, Friends & Foundation of Howard County Library System, Howard County Public School System, and the Josephine B. Scheffenacker Education Trust.

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SPELLING BEE SCORE SHEET

[illegible]

