



# Illinois State Council Knights of Columbus

## State Spelling Bee Rules

1. Participants must qualify under two basic requirements: (1) They must not have passed beyond the eighth grade at the time of their individual school finals, and (2) they must not have reached their sixteenth birthday on or before the date of the State Final Spelling Bee.
2. Students from any school (public, private, parochial or home) wishing to participate in a spelling bee may not be excluded from participation if they are located in an area that is close to a Knights of Columbus Council that sponsors a spelling bee.
3. The contest will be conducted orally.
4. The word list will be the official Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee School Pronouncer word list. In the event all words in the School Pronouncer word list are used before a winner is determined, additional words will be given to spellers until a winner is declared. All words used in this contest are found in Webster's Third New International Dictionary and its Addenda section, copyright 2014.
5. Words will be pronounced according to the diacritical markings in Webster's Third New International Dictionary and its Addenda section, copyright 2014. With the approval of the judges, the pronouncer may give a fuller explanation of the word to supplement the dictionary definition or definitions of the word.
6. In competition, after the pronouncer gives the speller a word, the speller will be encouraged to pronounce the word before spelling it and again after spelling it. The judges may not disqualify a speller for failing to pronounce the word either before or after spelling it.
7. The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it and/or use it in a sentence. The pronouncer will grant all such requests until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear to the contestant. The judges may disqualify any contestant who ignores a request to begin spelling.
8. The role of the pronouncer is to correctly pronounce the word and give a sentence, definition or other information about the word at the speller's request. The role of the judges is to determine whether the contestant has spelled the word correctly. The role of the speller is (1) to gather as much information as possible to help him or her spell the word correctly, and (2) to spell the word correctly. The judges may not disqualify a contestant for asking a question.
9. Having started to spell a word, a speller may stop and start over, retracing the spelling from the beginning, but in retracing there can be no change of letters or their sequence from those first pronounced. If letters or their sequences are changed in the respelling, the speller will be eliminated from the competition.
10. The contest will be conducted in rounds. Each speller remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round shall spell one word in the round, except as provided in Rule 12.

11. Upon missing the spelling of a word, a speller immediately drops out of the contest, except as provided in Rule 12. The next word on the pronouncer list will be given to the next speller. In order to minimize disruption and confusion, spellers who are eliminated during a round are asked to remain in their seats until the round has been completed. At the conclusion of the round, spellers who have been eliminated may exit the area and join the other spectators.

12. OPTION A) If none of the spellers remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round spells a word correctly during that round, all shall remain in the competition. All spellers eliminated in the same round will be tied for the same place. If only one of the spellers remaining in the competition at the start of a round spells a word correctly during that round, a new round shall begin and the speller shall be given an opportunity to spell the next word on the list. If the speller succeeds in correctly spelling the new word, the speller shall be declared the champion. Otherwise (that is, if the speller does not succeed in correctly spelling the new word), all the spellers remaining in the competition at the start of the previous round shall remain in the competition. A new round will begin, with these spellers spelling in the original order.

OPTION B) 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 correctly that word plus the next word on the pronouncer 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 correctly spells the next word on the list, then he or she 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. There will be no Ties.

13. Webster's Third New International Dictionary and its Addenda section copyright 2014 Merriam-Webster, Inc. shall serve as the final authority for the spelling of words. If more than one spelling is listed for a word, any of the spellings will be accepted as correct if the word either matches the pronunciation provided by the pronouncer or if it is clearly identified as being a standard variant of the word that the speller has been asked to spell. Spellings at other locations having archaic, obsolete or regional labels (such as North, Midland, South, Brit[ish], Irish, etc) that are different from those at the main entry will not be accepted as correct.

14. Any question relating to the spelling of a word should be referred to the Appeal Official immediately in writing on the official appeal form. An appeal may be filed by a parent, legal guardian or teacher of the speller who is seeking reinstatement into the contest. The judges will not entertain an appeal from any individual 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 he/she stayed in the contest. No appeal will be entertained after that. When only five spellers remain, an oral appeal must be made immediately, that is, before the speller affected would have received his/her next word had he/she stayed in the contest.

15. If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer will indicate which word is to be spelled. If the listed word is not properly identified, either by defining it or distinguishing the homonyms, any correct spelling of any homonym of the word will be accepted.

16. The judges are in complete control of the Bee. Their decisions shall be final on all questions.