

# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH SPELLING BEE



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## OFFICIAL RULES & REQUIREMENTS OF THE ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH 2018 SPELLING BEE SEMI-FINAL COMPETITIONS AS APPROVED BY SCRIPPS BEE

1. Spellers in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch 2018 Spelling Bee must meet all requirements below in accordance with the Scripps National Spelling Bee.
  - The speller must not have won a Scripps National Spelling Bee championship in the Washington, D.C. area.
  - The speller must attend a school that officially enrolled with the SNSB between August 22, 2017, and December 15, 2017.
  - 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 SNSB of the circumstances of grade repetition by March 31, 2018; and the Scripps National Spelling Bee will, in 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 nor ever 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 eschew normal school activity to study for spelling bees. The SNSB 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 on or after February 1, 2018.
  - The speller must not have been disqualified at any level of a sponsor's spelling bee program between July 2017 and April 2018. Further, if the speller becomes disqualified at any level of a sponsor's spelling bee program before April 2018, the speller will be disqualified from competing in the 2018 St. Louis Post-Dispatch Spelling Bee and may not seek advancement in the Bee program through enrollment in another school.
  - The speller, upon qualifying for the 2018 Spelling Bee in the Washington, D.C. area must submit a completed Champion Bio Profile, a signed Certification of Eligibility Form, a signed Appearance Consent and Release Form, and a photo. The speller will notify SNSB, at least 24 hours prior to the first day of competition in the 2018 Spelling Bee, if any of the statements made on the Certification of Eligibility Form are no longer true or require updating. The speller's sponsor will provide access to the necessary forms. SNSB may disqualify prior to or during competition any speller who is not in compliance with any of the above Eligibility Requirements; and it may—at any time between the conclusion of the 2018 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 any prizes, rank, and other benefits accorded to the speller as a result of participation in the 2018 Spelling Bee.
  - The speller must not have any first-, second- or third-degree 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.
2. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch 2018 Spelling Bee semi-final is a written competition, consisting of 25 words. The pronouncer will be at the front of the room, and all spellers will be seated at tables or desks—no speller will be on stage during the semi-final written test.
3. The pronouncer will provide the following: the word (and alternate pronunciation(s) if applicable), part of speech, origin, definition, the word used in a sentence, and any additional information needed to spell the word. 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 by distinguishing the homonyms, any correct spelling of any homonym of the word will be accepted. The pronouncer will then pause briefly, and then repeat this information. Spellers will not have the opportunity to ask questions about the words given. The pronouncer will then pause for 30 seconds, and then move onto the next word. When all 25 words

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- have been announced, the pronouncer will then recite all 25 words in order from 1 to 25. No word information will be provided during this recitation, and there will be no time for contemplation between each word. There will be no interruptions unless the judges feel that further clarification of a word is needed. **SPELLERS MUST PRINT THE WORDS LEGIBLY.**
- Spellers are welcome to change spellings during the test; however, in changing spellings, they must cross out the spelling(s) that they wish for the judges to disregard. If two or more spellings are provided for a single word, the judges will count an error for the word, even if one of the provided spellings is correct.
  - Words used and definitions given in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch 2018 Spelling Bee may be selected from words that appear in the current edition of *Spell It!* and word lists provided by the Scripps National Spelling Bee. All words on Scripps National Spelling Bee word lists are entries in Merriam-Webster Unabridged, the official dictionary of the Scripps National Spelling Bee, available at unabridged.merriam-webster.com.
  - Parents, friends, or family members are NOT invited to watch the written semi-final testing, but are required to stay on the McKendree University campus during registration, testing and to pick up spellers.** The semi-final written test will last approximately one hour.
  - The same words will be given during all six semi-finals. Spellers should not discuss these words until they are off of the McKendree University campus. Discussing the test words within earshot of other spellers will provide an unfair advantage to your competitors.
  - Each speller will receive a number at registration, which determines the order in which the speller will be seated in the testing area, and will match up with the written test.
  - Upon entering the testing area, each speller will be given their test form, blank sheets of "scratch" paper and 2 ballpoint pens. Spellers may not use pencils. Spellers may not bring any personal items into the testing area including hats, purses, bags and cell phones. There will be no breaks. A speller who needs to leave the testing area during the test may do so but may NOT return to complete the test.
  - Spellers will be seated with space between each speller. Spellers must remain silent during testing. If a speller is disrupting other spellers during the semi-finals, a judge will ask the speller to remain quiet and/or take them to a special seating area within the testing area, away from the other spellers. **No electronic devices of any kind, including phones, are allowed in the testing area and will be grounds for disqualification.**
  - The St. Louis Post-Dispatch provides accommodation for spellers with physical challenges involving sight, hearing, speech, handwriting legibility, and/or movement. Individuals who need special accommodation must contact the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Spelling Bee at **314-340-8914 NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2018.**
  - All tests will be scored by two independent graders. If a word is illegible or if the two graders disagree on the spelling of the word, the judges will rule on each discrepancy. Please refer to rule 16 on this page.
  - Merriam-Webster Unabridged, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, eleventh edition or on Merriam-Webster's online dictionary at m-w.com, shall serve as the final authority for the spelling of words in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch 2018 Spelling Bee. If more than one spelling is listed for a word, any of these spellings will be accepted as correct if the word either matches the pronunciation and definition provided by the pronouncer or if it is clearly identified as being a standard variation of the word that the contestant has been asked to spell. Spellings at other locations having archaic, obsolete or regional labels (such as North, Midland, Irish) that are different from those at the main entry will not be accepted as correct.
  - Once all tests are graded, the scores will be ranked by the number of correctly spelled words. A minimum of 30 spellers, with the most correct from the semi-finals, will advance to the oral final bee. Winners from the written semi-final rounds will be announced on the NIE website ([nie.post-dispatch.com/bee](http://nie.post-dispatch.com/bee)) by 9 p.m. on Saturday, March 10, 2018.
  - Spellers who do not qualify for the oral final bee may pick up copies of their graded official test forms at the Post-Dispatch, 900 North Tucker Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63101, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. from Monday, March 19, 2018, through Friday, April 6, 2018. Any tests left in the possession of the Post-Dispatch after 4 p.m. Friday, April 7, 2018, will be destroyed.
  - Per Scripps National Spelling Bee: The national office will not render judgments relating to the conduct of local spelling bees. Individuals bearing complaints or questions about the conduct of local spelling bees should register their concerns with local spelling bee officials. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, which serves as the official, reserves the right to revise or amend these rules at any time. The judges serve in control of the competition. **DECISIONS OF LOCAL SPELLING BEE OFFICIALS/JUDGES ARE FINAL.**

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