



April 21, 2020

Scripps National Spelling Bee Cancels National Finals

CINCINNATI — The Scripps National Spelling Bee is canceling its 2020 national finals due to the ongoing concerns about the spread of the novel coronavirus and uncertainty around when public gatherings will be possible or advisable.

This decision follows the Bee’s announcement on March 20 that it was suspending the national finals and hoped to reschedule. The Bee has determined there is no clear path to safely set a new date in 2020.

“Our thoughts immediately go to our spellers and their families. The students have dedicated time and effort to their passion for learning. They should be proud of all they have accomplished by winning spelling bees at the classroom, school and regional level,” said Paige Kimble, executive director of the Bee. “Nevertheless, our first priority has to be the health and well-being of our spellers and their families and the hundreds of staff and spectators that come together for Bee Week.”

More than 150 local sponsors successfully completed their regional programs by declaring champions before the coronavirus-related restrictions went into effect. The Bee will recognize those spellers in the coming months.

Among those spellers are students in eighth grade. Students who have advanced beyond the eighth grade are not eligible to participate in the spelling bee program.

“Our hearts go out to the spellers who won’t get their final shot at winning because of the pandemic and the difficult decisions it is prompting us to make,” said Kimble. “They are now part of a widely expanding group of children and adults who are missing out on opportunities due to the coronavirus.”

This year marks the only time since World War II (1943-1945) that the Bee has canceled the national finals since the program’s inception in 1925. While plans for the 2020 championship have ended, the Bee is engaging with students and parents by offering [educational resources](#) and social media-based learning opportunities. School enrollment season for 2021 opens May 1, 2020.

Beginning in August, teachers at enrolled schools will have access to spelling and vocabulary materials for the 2020-2021 school year, including suggestions and guidelines for conducting the spelling bee program in a remote environment. The 2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee is scheduled for June 1-3, 2021, in National Harbor, Maryland.

About the Scripps National Spelling Bee:

The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. The purpose of the Scripps National Spelling Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all their lives. Visit spellingbee.com for more information about the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.

About Scripps:

[The E.W. Scripps Company](http://www.ewsc.com) (NASDAQ: SSP) advances understanding of the world through journalism. As the nation's fourth-largest independent TV station owner, Scripps operates 60 television stations in 42 markets. Scripps empowers the next generation of news consumers with its multiplatform news network Newsy and reaches growing audiences through broadcast networks including Bounce and Court TV. Shaping the future of storytelling through digital audio, Scripps owns top podcast company Stitcher and Triton, the global leader in technology and measurement services. Scripps runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C., and is the longtime steward of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Founded in 1878, Scripps has held for decades to the motto "Give light and the people will find their own way."

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