

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONTESTANT

• **ENTRIES.** As many as THREE students from each grade level (grades 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and COMBINED grades 7/8) OR ages 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 respectively by Sept. 1 of the current school year, if in an ungraded school, may be entered in the Spelling District Contest from each school. Designated adults representing each school will select contestants to represent the campus at the District Meet based on their abilities in spelling, as well as other factors, which are decided upon by each school.

• **ADVANCING TO STATE.** 4 students must compete in each grade level to allow the top two students from each contest to advance to State (See p. 7 for complete rules.)

• **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** *The PSIA Spelling Contest consists of two parts: The spelling test and the tiebreaker spelling test:* Contestants learn by memory to write or print (in pencil or dark ink) the spelling words found on the current year's "PSIA Spelling List." The spelling lists change each year, and the full list consists of 600 words for grades 2 & 3, 800 words for grades 4 & 5, and 900 words for grades 6 & 7/8.

The tests in competition consist of the following numbers of words:

Grades 2-3: **40** words on test / **10** tiebreaker

Grades 4-5: **60** words on test / **15** tiebreaker

Grades 6-8: **80** words on test / **20** tiebreaker

Exactly 20% of the words pronounced in the spelling test will be from "outside." OUTSIDE for the purpose of this competition means that the words pronounced are taken from the official source for spelling verification, the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition*. Outside words are not on the study list. Some words on the test may be derivatives of the original word, or have different suffixes or prefixes. (example: "orderly" may be "orderliness")

• **WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.**

The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for verification of the scoring of tests. Contestants are then given answer sheets for the Spelling test, including the tiebreaker, on which they are to write **their grade levels, contestant ID numbers and school numbers in the spaces provided.** The contest director will tell contestants their ID numbers, usually during roll call. (If you are an alternate taking the place of a registered contestant who is absent, be sure to let the contest director know as you enter the room to save time in roll call.)

The contest director will begin the contest by playing the CD that will have a person pronouncing words TWICE at approximate 5-second intervals, and at about 6 words per minute. Additional time may be provided for more difficult words for which the pronouncer provides a sentence and/or definition. As contestants hear the words pronounced on the CD, they should begin writing/printing the spelling of the word in the spaces provided on the answer sheet. Monitor(s) in the room will listen to pronunciations while viewing their own copies of the tests. If a word seems to have provided difficulty, or the pronunciation was varied or otherwise faulty, monitors may request that a word be re-pronounced at the end of the contest **by the Contest Director.** Contestants **must NOT** request the re-pronunciation of words, and they may not speak during the contest pronunciation time. Contestants must use clean erasers and they may not write on their erasers or on any of their body parts before or during the contest. Words should be written only on the blanks provided on the test answer sheet. Immediately following the regular part of the test, all contestants will take the tiebreaker test.

• **SCORING.**

Add 5 points for each word spelled correctly. No points are added or deducted for misspelled, skipped or unanswered test items. Only proper nouns may be capitalized, and letter formation throughout the word **MUST** be correct (including capital letters) for the contestant to receive credit. The word list provides correct capitalization for each word. For tiebreakers, one point is added to the score for each word spelled correctly. The score in a tie should be posted with the original score and a + sign followed by the number of points earned in the tiebreaker -- ex: 95+9; 95+7; 95+6.

• **VERIFICATION PERIOD.**

The contest director is required to set aside a verification period of 15 minutes prior to the announcement of official results. **Only one coach OR parent OR adult and the contestant** may attend the verification period. Contestants (and/or their adult representative) may view their own papers using their dictionary. Contestants must remain in the verification room until dismissed by the contest director. If tests must be rescored, a time and place to reassemble for a 5-minute re-evaluation before awards should be announced. Tests taken from the contest room prior to release date constitutes student disqualification. **The test release dates for 2011 are April 2 for District and May 7 for State.** No changes in scores or ranking will be allowed after awards have been issued. Posting errors may be corrected on a limited basis with State approval.