



# How-to Guide



Have fun...

Promoting

...language

...spelling

...vocabulary

...bilingualism

...and, biliteracy



*This How-To Guide was put together to assist you to organize a Concurso de Deletreo (Spanish Spelling Bee) in your classroom, school, and district. Please feel free to contact Dr. Cynthia Trinidad-Sheahan at [csheahan@cocabe.org](mailto:csheahan@cocabe.org) with questions.*

There are no hard and fast rules, and you are not required to follow any of these suggestions. We intend them only as suggestions and encourage you to provide us with more suggestions that we can pass along to others.

## Things to consider before you begin

Please consider sending your top speller(s) to compete in the Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee. The Concurso de deletreo in Colorado is typically held in April of each year. You can check for the date, location, and other resources at <https://cutt.ly/E9hOJDq>

- After you have selected your school winners, be sure to go to [www.cocabe.org](http://www.cocabe.org) to register your winner(s) to participate in the CO-CABE Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee.
- Each school can send 2 spellers to the Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee to compete for state honors and to possibly qualify for the National Spanish Spelling Bee that is usually held in the summer of each year.
- Three Colorado State winners will be sent to the National Spanish Spelling Bee in July and their entry fees will be paid for by the Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee sponsors.

## First Thoughts

- Regardless of the level of the competition you are organizing, here are a few things that you need to be aware of if your intent is to send your winner to the Colorado state competition.
- Kindergarten through Eighth Grade students are eligible to compete at the state however **only fourth through eighth graders are allowed at the national level.**
- This Booklet or the National Spanish Spelling Bee Booklet and the Student Study Guide can be used to prepare.
- These resources are available online and free of charge at [www.cocabe.org](http://www.cocabe.org) and at [www.nationalspanishspellingbee.com](http://www.nationalspanishspellingbee.com) Please download the documents and make as many copies as you need for your students or provide them electronically or both.
- Keep in mind that someone must be responsible for paying the:
  - State Spanish Spelling Bee registration fee (\$250) per school
- Each school may send 2 contestants to the Concurso de Deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee



## Let's get started

- You will find the study guide that includes the list of words and the rules for the state and national Spanish spelling bees and other resources at <https://cutt.ly/E9hOJDq>

## How to organize your school-based bee

- Keep it simple (see options below)
- Organize what works for you & your setting
- If this is your first time, be flexible, don't be too hard on yourself, ask for help
- Most spelling bees are facilitated and/or organized by the Gifted and Talented teacher or coordinator. Ask them to work with you to provide this opportunity to your students.
- Get buy-in from the principal, teachers and parents at your school and ask them to promote the bee with the students and families.
- Recruit volunteers (staff, family, community members) to help you run the bee at your school.

## Getting Specific

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A CONCURSO DE DELETREO IN YOUR SCHOOL

- Set the date for your school spelling bee.
- Download the Spanish Spelling Bee Booklet, study guide, etc. from <https://cutt.ly/E9hOJDq> and make as many copies as you need for distribution to your students and provide them electronically to those students who have that capability at home. Remember to also download the Official Concurso Rules at <https://cutt.ly/A9hAu7m> and provide copies to contestants and their coaches. These rules include the procedures contestants should follow, how special marks should be spelled out, and how the contest will be run.
- Establish a registration procedure to participate in the event. You may consider having all students take a written Spanish spelling test to identify students who are good spellers. Or, you may simply announce the Concurso and ask any student who is interested to sign up.
- Recruit as many spellers as possible for your event.
- Establish a procedure to determine the order of spelling. For a random process you can determine the number of students who have registered and then make up the same number of cards with the numbers printed on them. The cards are placed face down on a table and each student must select a card as they sign in at the registration table. This becomes their "place" in the spelling bee competition. Any random process will work.
- Recruit a pronouncer – This individual should have native Spanish fluency, a pleasing voice and superior enunciation skills in Spanish.

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- Recruit Judge(s) – At least one and up to four adults who will determine whether or not the word is spelled correctly and will make a final ruling on all protests. Their judgment is final.
- The pronouncer and all judges should be provided with a list of words and the rules/instructions from the state level (the rules are somewhat different from the Scripps English) ahead of time to familiarize themselves with all aspects of the bee. To minimize confusion, we recommend that you use the Concurso de Deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee Rules and Procedures for your local event. You can find those here: <https://cutt.ly/A9hAu7m>
- You will find that the study guide is a contest-ready list of words, definitions, and sentences. You may randomize this list and use it to create your own local list. These words may or may not appear in the Colorado or national competitions.

### **For your “stand up and spell out loud” traditional bee...**

- This might be your only round (or 2nd or 3rd overall round) but you will probably need...
- a good competition space without a lot of noise or interruption potential;
- a seat for each contestant, in row(s) with corresponding numbers for random seating, with a judges’ table directly in front of them:
- there should be an official dictionary available for judges,
- have at least one small dry erase board with two or three dry erase markers and eraser(s) for use by the contestants.
- if possible, provide a microphone for use by the contestants during the competition. This is not necessary but will help them prepare for the state and national competitions;
- if possible, include as large of an audience as possible for the space. Consider the space you will need for the contestants and their seating and for the judges and organizers. If an audience is present, they should understand that their job is to LISTEN SILENTLY, applauding as instructed (You might ask for “silent” applause with a variety of gestures after each speller and word, regardless of correctness, then a loud round of applause after each round.) The contestants should face the judge(s), not the audience. Contestants would have their side to the audience and the judges, facing the contestants, will also have their side to the audience.
- Recognize all of your contestants as well as winners in your school and district communities.
- Be sure to have one or two alternates. Sometimes the winners are not able to compete at the state level. Having your alternates selected and prepared to go will help ensure that you can send two contestants to the state bee.
- Remember to create certificates of accomplishment for all your participants to recognize and honor their participation. You may also create certificates or other awards for the students who will move on to the next (state) level.

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- Seek support to get the school winners registered for the Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee. You might want to ask your Parent-Teacher Organization to provide the registration fees. You might get your school to pay the registration for your school's contestants. You can also seek donations from local businesses both for prizes for your school's winners as well as for registration fees. (The winners of the State competition will have registration paid for the National Spanish Spelling Bee by Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee.

### **Other/extra steps you may consider**

- Have a formal "Registration" – This is where your participants sign in for the event, draw for contestant number, and receive the printed number to wear on their chest. This will help students prepare for the state and national competition.
- Enroll in National English Spelling Bee for resources, ideas and experience at <https://spellingbee.com/>
  - Practicing for one language will support the other
  - <http://spellingbee.com/> sends a weekly email with spelling tips, most of which can be easily adapted to Spanish, they also provide "Language of Origin Roots" in their study materials of which the Spanish and Latin pages could prove helpful
- Hold more than one "Round", which could include,
  - A "written" qualifier at classroom, grade level or school level depending on how many participants are interested. There is no written portion at the state or national level.
  - Have classroom and/or grade level bees (if teachers/schedule allow)
- Recruit a Concurso Announcer – This individual introduces everyone, reviews the rules of the competition with the audience, and at the end of the competition presents the winners to those in attendance. This gives formality and structure that makes the event more special for other students and families that may attend the bee plus helps prepare for the next level.
- Recruit Audio Visual Staff – These individuals will monitor all audio visual and recording equipment. The contest can be recorded and this recording can be used by the judges should a protest be lodged. \* The judges will review the recording and will make a ruling as to whether or not the word was spelled correctly or incorrectly.
  - \*It is our recommendation that no protests be allowed at the school level.
  - The recording can be used to help students become comfortable with the process and perhaps to have them observe themselves and prepare for other competitions.
- Study Latin roots
- Set up study groups or clubs during school, recess, lunch or after school
- Encourage students to create flash cards and send them home with information/rules and encouragement for parents and other family members to help the student practice



- Watch “Akeela and the Bee” or video clips from the previous National Spanish Spelling Bee finals on YouTube, <https://cutt.ly/o9hDj2l>
- Take a group of students, parents, and teachers to the Concurso de deletreo Colorado Spanish Spelling Bee in April to support your school’s winners and to observe the experience. This will help build momentum and excitement for next year.
- The State and National Spanish Spelling Bees are educational events, and they are competitions however they are intended to be fun and memorable events for the participants and their families. The events are family friendly.

## Roles and Responsibilities

- You could combine some of these roles, especially for classroom-level spelling bees.
- **Pronouncer** – You will need a pronouncer to pronounce words for students.
- **Judge(s)** – Focus on the accuracy of participants’ spellings. Determine beforehand how the judge(s) will indicate a misspelling.
- **Record Keeper** – Keep a written record of how each speller spells their word.
- **Concurso Announcer** – This can be the classroom teacher or the organizer of the bee. This individual introduces everyone, reviews the rules of the competition with the audience, and at the end of the competition presents the winners to those in attendance.
- **Audio Visual Staff** (optional) –The contest can be recorded, and this recording can be used by the judges should a protest be lodged. The judges will review the recording and will make a ruling as to whether or not the word was spelled correctly or incorrectly.

Special thanks to the Colorado Association for Bilingual Education (CO-CABE) for their sponsorship of the Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee



*The Concurso de deletreo Colorado State Spanish Spelling Bee prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, age or disability. We will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations to spelling bee participants with special needs.*