

spelling bee

School bee winners honored

The Japan Times has been sending the best speller of Japan's English spelling contest to the United States to compete in the U.S. national finals every year since 2010.

But this year, the spread of the novel coronavirus forced the 11th Japan Spelling Bee, which was originally scheduled to be held in Tokyo on March 7, to be canceled. The Japan Spelling Bee, sponsored by the English daily, is the only spelling contest in the country officially endorsed by the Scripps National Spelling Bee in the U.S.

The unfortunate decision follows the announcement by Scripps to cancel the national finals in Maryland. This year marks the first time since World War II that it has canceled the national finals since the program's inception in 1925.

The event has been a popular educational program in the U.S., but it has grown bigger over the past decades and countries such as Japan, China, South Korea, Jamaica and Can-

ada are now holding spelling bees to select representatives to compete in the U.S.

Under spelling bee rules, each speller must spell their word out loud, and they can request the definition, the language of origin and an alternate pronunciation, as well as hearing the word used in a sentence. Spellers cannot go back and change the order of their spelling once they have spoken a letter out loud.

Every year, hundreds of young spellers take part in the heated competitions. 2019 Japan Spelling Bee champion Ariya Narayanasamy outlasted 39 other students at last year's contest in Tokyo. Then a student at the India International School's Tokyo campus, he earned his ticket to go to the U.S. finals after battling through more than two dozen intensive spelling rounds without making a single mistake. His final winning word was "forbearance."

Though he could not be among the top 50

spellers at the U.S. finals, Narayanasamy said the whole experience in the spelling competition created new relationships and made him appreciate the art, science and competition of spelling.

"What I liked the most were the experiences, like making new friends and being on stage. This opens a new area of opportunity. Spelling has helped me a lot," he said.

A total of 40 students from Japanese, international and American schools across Japan were scheduled to participate in the 2020 Japan Spelling Bee.

Though each school winner was not able to compete in Tokyo this year, The Japan Times, along with the co-sponsors of the event, would like to recognize those students' hard work and efforts to win their school bees and introduce them in this section of the newspaper.

The Japan Times hopes to see many schools in the Japan Spelling Bee next year.



Kshitij Kumar from Kakegawa International Christian School spells a word during the 10th Japan Times Bee on March 10, 2019. SAYURI DAIMON

Profiles of the 2020 Japan Spelling Bee contestants

* Winner age as of June 2, 2020

<div>1. Bechtel Elementary School</div> <div><div>Elijah Folahan</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>	<div>2. Canadian International Elementary School Tokyo</div> <div><div>Taiki Terada</div><div>Age: 9</div></div>	<div>3. Columbia International School</div> <div><div>Ludmila Kovaleva</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>	<div>4. Fukuoka International School</div> <div><div>Coco Longstaff</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>	<div>5. Global Indian International School, Nishi Kasai</div> <div><div>Ariav Karikalan</div><div>Age: 9</div></div>	<div>6. Global Indian International School, Tokyo</div> <div><div>Ariya Narayanasamy</div><div>Age: 13</div></div>
<div>7. Gyosei International Junior High School</div> <div><div>Sakura Taki</div><div>Age: 14</div></div>	<div>8. Gyosei International Primary School</div> <div><div>Ayaan Sali</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>	<div>9. Hiroo Gakuen Junior and Senior High School</div> <div><div>Noe Toyoda</div><div>Age: 14</div></div>	<div>10. India International School in Japan (Tokyo Campus)</div> <div><div>Lucshana Sundar</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>	<div>11. India International School In Japan (Yokohama Campus)</div> <div><div>Kabilan Baskaran</div><div>Age: 13</div></div>	<div>12. Iwakuni Elementary School</div> <div><div>Riaya Warshaw</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>
<div>13. Jack N. Darby Elementary School</div> <div><div>Kimberly Miranda</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>	<div>14. K. International School Tokyo</div> <div><div>Ashmita Paul</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>	<div>15. Kadena Elementary School</div> <div><div>Julissa Arango</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>	<div>16. KAIS Elementary & Middle School</div> <div><div>Aleksandra Minaeva</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>	<div>17. Kakegawa International Christian School</div> <div><div>Kshitij Kumar</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>	<div>18. Kansai International Academy</div> <div><div>Risato Uchida</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>
<div>19. Katoh Gakuen Gyoshu Elementary School</div> <div><div>Karen Sato</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>	<div>20. Katoh Gakuen Gyoshu Junior and Senior High School</div> <div><div>Tomoki Koh</div><div>Age: 13</div></div>	<div>21. Kaiyo Academy</div> <div><div>Naoya Hasegawa</div><div>Age: 13</div></div>	<div>22. Kyoto International University Academy</div> <div><div>Natasha Duffy</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>	<div>23. Laurus International School of Science</div> <div><div>Thareq Aqbar Khalifa</div><div>Age: 9</div></div>	<div>24. Linden Hall Elementary School</div> <div><div>Taiki Ishibashi</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>
<div>25. Okinawa Amicus International</div> <div><div>Yuma Tsushima</div><div>Age: 13</div></div>	<div>26. Makuhari International School</div> <div><div>Lucas Balita</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>	<div>27. Shirley Lanham Elementary School</div> <div><div>Hailey Manning</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>	<div>28. Sollars Elementary School</div> <div><div>James Balolong</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>	<div>29. Tamagawa Academy Middle Division</div> <div><div>Layla Estey</div><div>Age: 13</div></div>	<div>30. The Montessori School of Tokyo</div> <div><div>Noah Moon</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>
<div>31. The Montessori School of Tokyo, Middle School</div> <div><div>Anju Aoi</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>	<div>32. Tathva International School - Primary</div> <div><div>Aviral Agarwal</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>	<div>33. Tathva International School - Secondary</div> <div><div>Abhay Nair</div><div>Age: 14</div></div>	<div>34. Tokyo Bay International School</div> <div><div>Vardaan Matpathi</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>	<div>35. Tokyo YMCA International School - Elemenary</div> <div><div>Haru Morioka</div><div>Age: 11</div></div>	<div>36. Tokyo YMCA International School - Middle</div> <div><div>Gyuwon Shin</div><div>Age: 12</div></div>
<div>37. Waseda International Christian School</div> <div><div>Reni Shimizu</div><div>Age: 14</div></div>	<div>38. Willpower Learning Institute</div> <div><div>Zayna Humairaa</div><div>Age: 13</div></div>	<div>39. Yokohama Christian School</div> <div><div>Nakshatra Pandian</div><div>Age: 10</div></div>	<div>40. Yokota West Elementary School</div> <div><div>Katie Petty</div><div>Age: 9</div></div>		



spelling bee

Scenes from 2020 School Bees



Coco Longstaff competes in the Fukuoka International School bee. Right: A student of Global Indian International School, Nishi Kasai, spells a word during the school's bee contest.
FUKUOKA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL / GLOBAL INDIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, NISHI KASAI



Jun Woo Jung, runner-up of the Canadian International Elementary School Tokyo bee, shakes hands with the school principal, JP Jamieson, in January.
CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOKYO



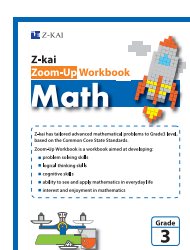
Students from Linden Hall Elementary School pose for a group photo after their school bee. Left: Katie Petty holds a trophy and a certificate after the Yokota West Elementary School bee.
LINDEN HALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL / YOKOTA WEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



The Montessori School of Tokyo winner Noah Moon smiles for the camera. Left: Gyuwon Shin spells a word during the bee at Tokyo YMCA International School. THE MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF TOKYO / TOKYO YMCA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



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