



The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP

Premier of NSW

Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 19 June 2012

PREMIER LAUNCHES 2012 SPELLING BEE

A record 120,000 primary school students from more than 800 NSW schools are expected to take part in the 2012 Premier's Spelling Bee, launched at Drummoyne Public School in Sydney today.

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell said the Spelling Bee gives students in Years 3 to 6 a great opportunity to improve their literacy skills by spelling in a fun and educational way.

"Good spelling is a skill that serves everyone well in life," Mr O'Farrell said.

"For those who master spelling at an early age, the value of accuracy in communication is obvious.

"The joy of reading and creative writing is heightened, and the rewards of being a good speller last a lifetime.

"Spelling is an unnoticed skill. It usually only becomes an issue if it is done badly – and even Premiers are guilty of spelling mistakes from time to time.

"Advances in technology make learning to be a good speller at an early age even more important – abbreviations in text messages and auto correct make it harder, not easier, for children to develop good spelling."

NSW students are currently leading the nation for spelling, with the 2011 NAPLAN Summary Report showing an average of 94 per cent of NSW students in each of Years 3, 5, and 7 could spell at a level that was equal to or above the national minimum standard.

There are two divisions in which students compete – a junior division for students in years 3 and 4, and a senior division for years 5 and 6.

About 120,000 students are expected to compete at the school level with each school sending two students from each division to 40 regional finals. The State finals are held in Sydney in November.

"I encourage all students to sign up for this year's Spelling Bee and wish everyone the best of luck," Mr O'Farrell said.