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Friendly Hills student wins ISD 197 and West St. Paul Spelling Bee

(Mendota Heights, Minn.) --- In his first year participating in the ISD 197 & West St. Paul Spelling Bee, Friendly Hills 7th-grader Nathan Thirsten won the bee by correctly spelling “inoculate”. The event, which was sponsored by the Optimist Club of West St. Paul, was held in the Henry Sibley High School auditorium on January 27, 2010.



After eight rounds, there were only three spellers remaining. Nathan was the only speller to correctly spell his word in Round 9 to advance to Round 10. Round 10 consisted only of the word inoculate, which he spelled correctly to win.

The Optimist Club of West St. Paul, which has run the spelling bee for 13 years, presented Nathan with *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary*, the official dictionary of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. As winner of the spelling bee, Nathan will participate in the Minnesota Seven County Metro Area Spelling Bee, which will be held on March 13 at the Minnesota History Center. The winner of that bee then goes to Washington, D.C. to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

There was a four-round battle between Owen Smith of St. Croix Lutheran Middle School and Brandon Krisko, a 7th grader at Friendly Hills, to determine the runner up. After Brandon correctly spelled alias and beige to be officially recognized as runner up, the Optimist Club of West St. Paul presented Brandon with an *Akeelah and the Bee* DVD and a book, *How to Spell Like a Champ*.

Heritage Middle School, St. Joseph's School, Friendly Hills Middle School, and St. Croix Lutheran Middle School participated in the 2010 ISD 197 & West St. Paul Spelling Bee. To be eligible to participate, spellers had to be in grades 4 through 8 and attend a private school in West St. Paul or an ISD 197 school.



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