



# Black Educators Association



## For Immediate Release:



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Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Contact: Jacqueline Herriott, **Chair – 2026 EMERALD Spelling BEE**

### **BEA's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Educators Program (REP) Provincial Spelling BEE finishes with winning word 'M.E.S.O.P.O.T.A.M.I.A.N.'**

Thirteen-year-old Christabel Njoku (Speller #53), a student at *John Martin Junior High School (Halifax West Region)* and in the *Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)*, Ohioze Ikhidero (Speller #101) of the *Halifax Regional Centre for Education* and Olateju Oladipo (Speller #36) – *Whitney Pier Cultural Academic Enrichment Program (CAEP)* and a student in the *Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education (CBVRCE)* are the top winners in the 2026 REP Provincial Spelling BEE. Christabel Njoku captured first place in Saturday's event hosted by the *Black Educators Association (BEA) of Nova Scotia*, supported by its education partner – the *African Canadian Services Branch of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), Nova Scotia's Regional Centres of Education*, businesses and corporations across Nova Scotia. Ohioze Ikhidero (14-years-old) took home second-place honors. And, 11-year-old Olateju Oladipo came in third place in the nail-biting competition.

BEA's challenging and long-standing academic competition, which draws up-to-100+ spellers from across the province annually was held Saturday at the *Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU)* featured 125 competitors and celebrated 2,000+ competitors over the twenty years. BEA's Spelling BEE is held annually in May in recognition of the United States-based *Scripps National Spelling Bee*. Christabel Njoku triumphed as first-place speller in the one-word championship round proudly spelling out 'm-e-s-o-p-o-t-a-m-i-a-n'. 2026 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> Year of the **REP Provincial Spelling BEE** – & is recognized as the **EMERALD Spelling BEE** - Truro's own Sebastian Barrington (2016's Spelling BEE Champion) again, assumed the role of Pronouncer for the 2026 REP Provincial Spelling BEE.

### 2026's Top 9 Spellers & Regions:

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|--|---|
| #01 Ayokunmi Oladipo – Cape Breton             | #03 Joel Odumakinde – Northern          |
| #34 Adulmojeed Ademosu – Strait                | #36 Olateju Oladipo – Cape Breton       |
| #53 Christabel Njoku – Halifax West            | #63 Munachiso Nwoye – Halifax West      |
| #64 Ugochukwu Derek Achunike – Halifax Central | #70 Ujuamara Achunike – Halifax Central |
| #101 Ohioze Ikhidero – Halifax Central         |   |

The annual competition is open to black students ages eight to 15 years in public, private schools and home-schoolers and any student enrolled in the **BEA's Cultural Academic Enrichment Programs (CAEPs)** across Nova Scotia. The purpose of the *Regional Educators Program (REP) Provincial Spelling BEE* is to focus on English language basics; foster learning of African Nova Scotian students studying the English language and introduce and encourage students to compete in regional, national and international finals.

First, second and third-place winners took home *BEA Education Awards* of \$1000, \$800 and \$500 respectively along with trophies, a *Samsung Galaxy Tablet A* each and gift cards and prizes from local businesses. **2027's Competition Day** (and the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Year) is scheduled to take place on **Saturday, May 8, 2027** at *Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU)* @ 1:00pm. For more information on the *REP Provincial Spelling BEE*, *Regional Educators Program*, the *CAEPs*, *Adult Learning Program* & all other *BEA Programs/Projects*, please visit: [www.bea-ns.ca](http://www.bea-ns.ca).



**TOP 3 WINNERs**