Volume 5, Issue 12| October 2026

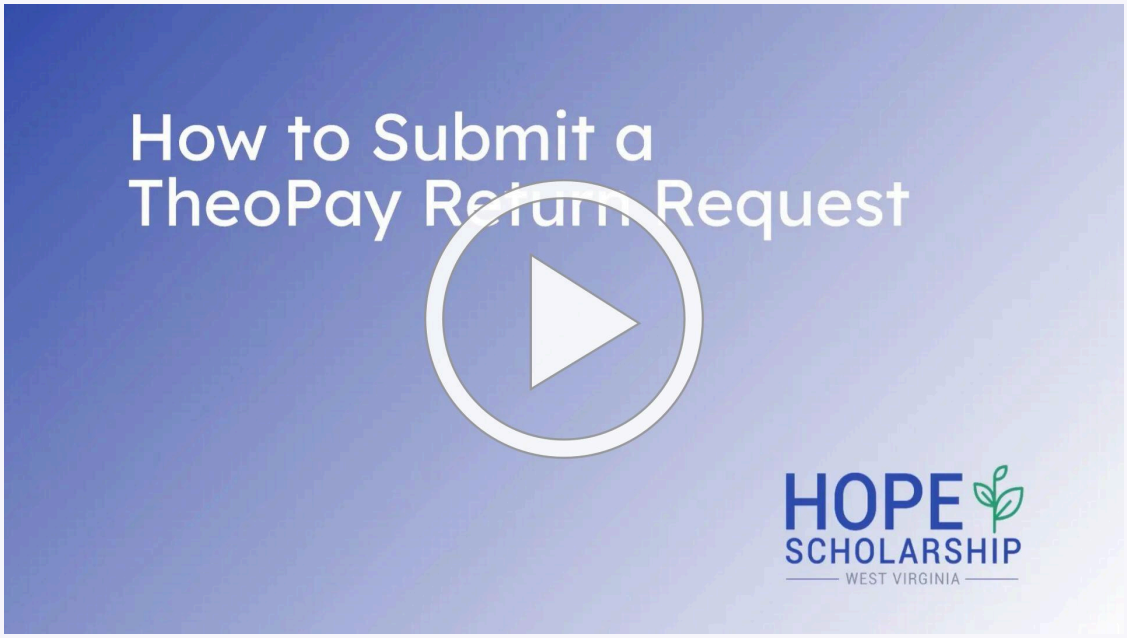
TheoPay Return Process Updates

There are two ways to make educational purchases with TheoPay, and each has its own return process. If you entered a one-time virtual card payment at checkout and placed the order yourself, that's a TheoPay Self-Serve order. You'll handle the return directly with the vendor, from start to finish.

If you clicked on the button “Submit for Purchase” and saw the message "We got it from here!", that's a TheoPay Fulfillment concierge order. Our fulfillment team placed this order for you, so you will need to complete a **TheoPay Product Return Request Form.**

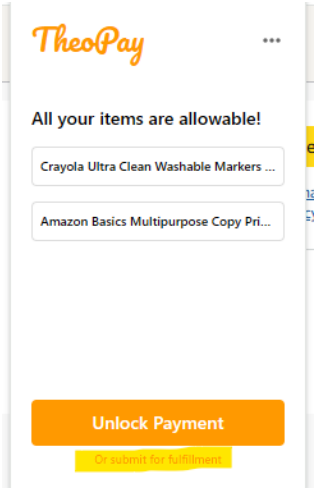
It's important to remember that each vendor has its own return policy and it's crucial to start your return as soon as possible if needed. Once you submit your request, the Hope Engagement Center team begins processing it right away. Behind the scenes, the team reviews your original order and checks the vendor's return policy to confirm it is within the return window.

Some vendors provide return shipping labels when you request a return. Other vendors only provide a label if the return is their fault, like when you receive the wrong item or it arrives damaged. For any other vendors that do not provide a shipping label, you will need to buy the return shipping label yourself from a carrier like the US Postal Service, UPS, or FedEx. You should monitor your email for next steps. Also, you can watch the "How to Submit a TheoPay Return Request" helpful video below.



TheoPay Self-Serve

Have you tried the TheoPay Self-Serve option? This option is available for purchases under $75 and allows you to control the entire order including shipping information, tracking updates, and completing returns. To learn more, visit the **TheoPay Self-Serve** section of the website under the Parents/Students tab. It is highly encouraged to separate your TheoPay orders into separate order transactions, if applicable, that are under $75.00. This will allow you to use all the benefits of TheoPay Self-Serve, including the ability to track your own orders.



For more on TheoPay, click **HERE.**

REMINDER:
Save TheoPay Self-Serve Receipts

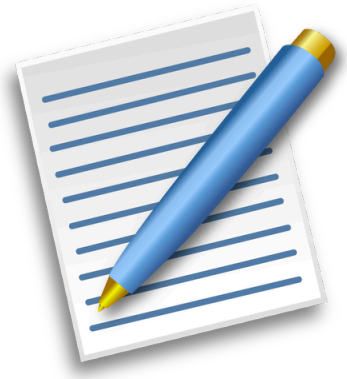
While TheoPay Self-Serve is designed for user efficiency, these purchases are still subject to a review process to ensure proper use of Hope Scholarship funds. It's important that families save their online receipts and/or invoices for all TheoPay Self-Serve orders. If you are notified that a TheoPay Self-Serve order has been chosen for additional review, please upload a receipt or other proof of purchase that shows the individual items that you purchased for your student. Until the documentation is uploaded into your student's account, you will be directed to complete future TheoPay orders through the TheoPay Fulfillment concierges. Please contact the Hope Engagement Center at 681-999-HOPE or **help@hopescholarshipwv.com** for more information.

New TheoPay Vendors

- MC Studio

- Wanderlust Innovations, LLC
- UWorld, LLC
- Shar Products Company

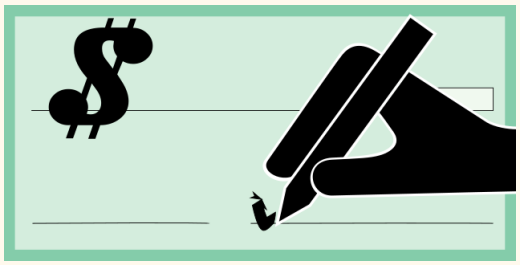
Second Quarter Funding Schedule



The next funding date for all approved applications for the 2026-2027 school year is October 15, 2026. New applications that were updated to the status Approved status by October 1, 2026 to receive October 15 funds. If your student is attending a participating non-public school or microschool, please pay your student's second quarterly payment for tuition and fees in the Hope Scholarship Portal, once the second quarterly funding is available in your student's account.

If your student's 2026-2027 application shows an “Approved” status after the deadline of October 1, 2026 for Hope Notice of Intent submission, the next quarterly funding date is January 15, 2027. To review the Hope Scholarship Quarterly Funding Policy, please click **HERE.**

Hope Scholarship Reimbursement Policy



Please review in detail the **Hope Scholarship Reimbursement Policy** if you are considering submitting a reimbursement request for an item you purchased out of pocket. As a reminder, not all qualifying expenses are reimbursable under the Hope Scholarship Reimbursement Policy.

Important Reminder

If your student stops participating in Hope Scholarship, such as returning to public school, move out-of-state, or returns to traditional homeschool instruction under a different exemption, they are no longer eligible for the Hope Scholarship Program. The account holder must immediately cease use of Hope Scholarship funds. As the account holder, you must provide notice by email to hopescholarshipwv@wvsto.gov.

Make Your IIP Pathway or School Selection in Online Portal

Please select your students 2026-27 educational pathway in the portal if not yet selected for applications in an “Approved” status. Click on the video below for instructions on how to complete this process. Please make sure you select the correct school and city location. Once you select the school from the drop-down list, the school will complete your student’s enrollment information in the portal.

New Application 50% Funding Available

New 2026-2027 applications submitted between Sept. 16 through Nov. 30, 2026 in the Hope online portal will receive 50-percent of the scholarship amount if found eligible. Please review the application checklist by clicking **HERE** to review required documentation for submitted applications. Please submit your students **Hope Notice of Intent** to your **County Board of Education** in the county you reside, once your application shows the status Eligible.

New Education Service Provider Agreement Available

All participating Hope Education Service Providers and Non-Public Schools should read, review, and sign the updated ESP Agreement in the Hope Scholarship online portal for the 2026-27 school year. You will be required to review and sign the updated ESP Agreement the next time you log into your account in the Hope Scholarship online portal. Signing the new agreement must be completed before you can proceed into your account.

SMART529 K-5 Essay Contest

SMART529®
WHEN I GROW UP
20TH ANNIVERSARY

Celebrating it's 20th Anniversary, the SMART529 "When I Grow Up" essay contest allows West Virginia students in kindergarten through 5th grade the chance win up to $5,000 for education! To enter, students must write about what they want to be when they grow up in 200 words or less.

Fifteen regional winners will each be awarded $500 invested into a SMART529 college savings account. Out of the regional winners, one grand prize winner will be randomly selected to receive a total of $5,000 toward a SMART529 account. Each winner’s school will also receive a $500 cash award.

Teachers of grades kindergarten through fifth also have the opportunity to compete in the teacher portion of the essay contest. This year's winning teacher will receive a $2,500 cash prize.

The contest is open now! Click below for contest rules and entry. **The deadline for entries is Dec. 11, 2026.**

SMART529 Essay Contest

Important Upcoming Dates

October 15, 2026: Second quarterly funding for the 2026-27 school year

November 30, 2026: Last day to apply for the 2026-27 school year to be eligible for 50% funding

December 1, 2026: Frist day of the 25% funding window for the 2026-27 school year

January 2, 2026: Last day for Hope NOIs to be recorded by the County Boards of Education to receive a quarterly funding distribution on January 15

Fraud and Abuse Reporting

If you are aware of any person who has abused the use of their Hope Scholarship funds or has committed fraud or attempted to commit fraud involving Hope Scholarship funds, you can file a report on the Hope Scholarship website. Click on the link below to report fraud or abuse.

Report Fraud or Abuse

West Virginia State Treasurer's Office | 1900 Kanawha Blvd. E | Charleston, WV 25305 US

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