



Hope Scholarship Q&A Spotlight



Question: Can I purchase an item out-of-pocket and submit it for reimbursement to guarantee I can purchase the item while it is on sale?

Answer: Only the limited items which are eligible for reimbursement under the Hope Scholarship Board's **Reimbursement Policy** can be purchased out of pocket and submitted for reimbursement. Not all qualifying expenses are eligible for reimbursement, **so you cannot purchase technology equipment, school**

supplies, etc. out of pocket and submit them for reimbursement. Such items must be submitted for purchase directly through TheoPay.

We cannot guarantee that an order will be processed in time to secure sale prices offered by TheoPay vendors, but the team makes every attempt to process orders as quickly as possible to increase the likelihood that the item will still be on sale.

Keep in mind that the volume of TheoPay orders will be higher around the Thanksgiving holidays and program offices will be closed on both Thanksgiving and Black Friday.

TheoPay Troubleshooting

If you experience issues placing TheoPay orders, please refer to the new video tutorial for common troubleshooting tips.

Navigating Product Eligibility & Messaging in TheoPay



TheoPay Return Process

To return an item purchased through TheoPay, simply go to the **TheoPay** page on the Hope Scholarship website. In the section of the page titled “How to Return Items Purchased with TheoPay,” there is a blue button to take you to the **TheoPay Product Return Request Form**. Complete the form with the requested information for Student First Technologies to initiate the return on your behalf with the vendor. They will reach out to you upon receipt of your form submission.

This page on the website also contains helpful information such as a full description of the TheoPay Returns Process and the Vendor Return Policy list for whitelisted TheoPay providers. All returns are subject to the applicable vendor’s return policy.

Prohibited: Reselling Items Purchased with Hope Scholarship Funds

As part of the Hope Scholarship account holder agreement signed by all account holders, account holders agree that they will not resell items purchased with Hope Scholarship funds to other parties in accordance with Section 6.1.7 of the Hope Scholarship Legislative Rules (**W.Va. Code St. R. 112-18-1 et seq**). This applies to any items purchased with Hope Scholarship funds, including individual items (such as laptops, curriculum, etc.) as well as supplies used to build or make another item which would be sold (such as art and craft supplies). While participation in arts and craft fairs may teach students both art and business skills, selling items made with Hope Scholarship funded supplies is a violation of the Hope Scholarship legislative rules.

Best Practices: Don't Save Hope Scholarship Credentials in Browser

Please do not allow your internet browser to save your log-in credentials to your

Hope Scholarship account. Saving your log-in credentials could allow other individuals with access to your computer to inappropriately access your Hope Scholarship account and use the TheoPay app to submit orders on your account. As a reminder, only the Hope Scholarship account holder is authorized to make purchases for the participating Hope Scholarship student.



NEW: FAQs Regarding Public School Enrollment

Additional guidance is now available on the Hope Scholarship website under the FAQs page regarding frequently asked public school enrollment questions.

[Public School Enrollment FAQ](#)

Hope NOI Reminder

Hope Scholarship Board staff will not fund a student's account for the first time until the Hope Notice of Intent (NOI) is properly on file with the county board of education where you reside. If your new 25-26 application is in the status of Eligible, please complete the Hope NOI by clicking [HERE](#) and email your local county board of education at the appropriate email which can be found [HERE](#).



If your child is attending a virtual charter school, such as West Virginia Virtual Academy or Virtual Preparatory Academy of West Virginia, please ensure you submit a Hope Notice of Intent to **BOTH** the virtual school and the county board of education.

After the Hope NOI is properly recorded with the county board of education, your student's application status will be changed to Approved. Hope Board staff perform batch updates from Eligible to Approved status on a weekly basis so the Hope status update will not be instantaneous after your submission to the county board of education.

Funding is generally processed once per month outside of the two main funding windows set forth in statute. The list of unfunded students in Approved status is pulled around the 15th of each month with funds deposited into student accounts approximately one week later. Please see the Hope Scholarship website banner for a projected date for monthly funds to be deposited into student's accounts.

Did You Know?

Hope Scholarship Board staff regularly onboard new Education Services Providers for participants to utilize in the closed marketplace of the Hope Scholarship Online



Platform. In September 2025, there were 55 new Education Services Providers accounts added to the platform. Hope account holders can use the red Marketplace tile on the student's digital wallet to search for new vendors in the closed marketplace. Please keep in mind that once a new Education Service Provider account is created, the provider must still enter their services/products in the system before a Hope student is actually able to place an order to utilize the provider to services.

New TheoPay Whitelisted Vendors

The following additional TheoPay vendors have been whitelisted since the last newsletter:

- Cornerstone Educational Supply
- Qubits Toy
- Daylight Computer Co.
- Adena Montessori



2025-26

ESSAY CONTEST

**ENTER FOR A
CHANCE TO
WIN UP TO
\$5,000!**



SMART529.COM/STUDENTENTRY

SMART529 "When I Grow Up" Essay Contest

The SMART529 When I Grow Up essay contest allows West Virginia students in kindergarten through 5th grade the chance to submit, in 200 words or less, an essay that explains what they want to be when they grow up.

Fifteen regional winners will be awarded \$500 invested into SMART529 college savings accounts. 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. **The deadline for entries is Dec. 12, 2025.**

[Enter Today](#)



Share Your Story

Any currently participating Hope Scholarship student or account holder is welcome to share the positive impact the Hope Scholarship Program has had on their student by clicking the link below to share a student testimonial.

[Share Your Story](#)

Important Upcoming Dates

- **November 30, 2025:** Last day for eligible new students to apply to receive 50% of the scholarship amount for the 2025-2026 school year.
- **December 1, 2025:** First day for eligible new students to apply to receive 25% of the scholarship amount for the 2025-2026 school year.
- **January 5, 2026:** Anticipated first day for existing Hope Scholarship students to submit their Continued Participation Confirmation (CPC) for the 2026-2027 school year.
- **February 28, 2026:** Last day for eligible students to apply to receive 25% of the scholarship amount for the 2025-2026 school year.



- **March 2, 2026:** First day for eligible new students to apply to receive 100% of the scholarship amount for the 2026-2027 school year.

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](#)



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