



Marketplace and TheoPay Updates

We are excited to announce that a new A-Z filter was added to the Marketplace in the Hope Scholarship online platform to make it easier for users to search for vendors by name. If you click on a specific letter, all vendors and suppliers with a name starting with that letter are displayed in alphabetical order. You can also now type in the "Search" box on the upper right of the toolbox to look for key words in a vendor's name. Simply click on the word "Search" and type in the box and the system will filter for any vendor name that includes that key word. Further upgrades to the Marketplace to enhance the search functionality will be coming later this spring.

Additional TheoPay vendors were recently whitelisted and made available to Hope Scholarship families through the TheoPay browser extension. The new vendors added in the last month include the following:

- Aardvark's Horticulture Adventures
- Flip Flop Spanish
- Super Hi Tech
- Apologia Educational Ministries
- I'm The Chef Too!
- Oh Hobbies
- Tuttle Twins

The whitelisted site for Walmart was changed from Walmart.com to Business.Walmart.com to ensure that families are shopping from the same site where the fulfillment team is able to place orders.

New TheoPay providers will continue to be added and announced in the monthly Hope Scholarship newsletter.

Curriculum Purchases

When purchasing curriculum items from vendors such as BJU Press and Abeka, please remember that TheoPay can only be used for *physical items* that do not require a

subscription, that do not require access to a parent account, or that do not need to be returned directly to the vendor, such as loaned/checked out products like DVDs. Items with a digital download component can also be difficult with TheoPay if the vendor doesn't have a way for the fulfillment team to easily transfer the digital item to the account holder. Please check the description of the products carefully before placing your order to ensure that the item you are requesting doesn't have one of these additional restrictions that would prevent the order from being fulfilled.



The inability to use TheoPay to pay for a specific off-the-shelf curriculum does **NOT** mean that you cannot utilize that curriculum for your child with your Hope Scholarship funds. **The Hope Scholarship Board's Reimbursement Policy includes a provision for off-the-shelf curriculum.** Please review the policy prior to making any out-of-pocket purchase to ensure that the item qualifies for reimbursement.

2025-26 Continued Participation Confirmations Now Available!



Any student currently participating in the Hope Scholarship Program who wishes to continue to participate for the 2025-26 school year must complete the Continued Participation Confirmation (CPC) by no later than June 15, 2025. Late CPCs will not be accepted and the student would have to requalify for the Program in order to participate.

Upon review, all eligible CPCs will initially reflect the status of "Conditionally Eligible" in the Hope Scholarship Portal. After confirmation that the student's year-end academic reporting requirements for 2024-2025 have been satisfied, the status of the 2025-2026 CPC will be updated to Approved. This update is expected in mid-July. Once in Approved status, you will be able to make a school selection for the 2025-2026 school year, if applicable.

Plaid Usage Tip

If using the new Plaid functionality to verify your West Virginia residency, please ensure the government issued ID that is being submitted for review reflects the same name as the account holder and primary guardian's name in the Hope Scholarship Portal. Do not use the ID of your spouse. If you realize that the legal name on your Hope Scholarship account needs updated due to a change in your marital status or if you had previously used a nickname or middle name on your student's application, please contact the Hope Engagement Center for assistance. Documentation such as a marriage certificate or divorce papers may be needed depending on the situation.

If Plaid is unable to confirm your residency with the documentation provided, the application status will be updated to reflect "Needs Changes" or "Missing Documents" for the account holder to upload additional proof of residency documentation.

Reminder to Pay Second Semester Tuition and Fees

If your Hope Scholarship student attends a participating nonpublic school or microschool, be sure to pay your student's second semester tuition and fees by navigating to the "My School" tab on the Hope Scholarship Portal.

If you experience any difficulties with this process, please reach out to the Hope Engagement Center at 681-999-HOPE (4673).



Nationally Normed Standardized Achievement Tests

One option for Individualized Instructional Plan students to meet the year-end academic reporting requirements is through nationally normed standardized achievement tests. If you plan on utilizing such tests to satisfy the requirements, please plan accordingly to ensure that you allow time for the test to be scored by the testing provider for you to submit the results by June 8, 2025.

WV State Bar Contest Underway

The West Virginia State Bar's 2025 Law Day Contest for K-12 students is currently underway. Law Day is a contest open for students in grades K-12 who are attending school (including any public, private, or homeschool program) in West Virginia in which students create submissions regarding a theme chosen yearly by the American Bar Association.

This year's theme is "The Constitution's Promise: Out of Many, One." The possibilities include essay-writing, poetry, songwriting and performance, poster creation, and digital art.

Contest submissions are due at noon on **March 28, 2025**. For more information about the contest, please visit <https://wvbar.org/2025lawday/>.

"When I Grow Up" Essay Contest - Deadline Soon!

The 18th annual SMART529 "When I Grow Up" Essay Contest is underway. Sponsored by the SMART529 College Savings Program, the essay contest encourages West Virginia students in grades K-5 to dream about their future.

Fifteen regional student winners will win \$500 each in a SMART529 education savings account. The winners may participate in a random drawing for an additional \$4,500 grand prize.



Electronic entries may be created or uploaded at SMART529.com/studententry. Paper entries may be printed and sent by mail. The contest deadline is **February 28, 2025**.

Important Upcoming Dates

- February 28, 2025: Last day for eligible students to apply for the 2024-2025 school year
- March 1, 2025: New student applications open for the 2025-2026 year for 100% funding
- June 8, 2025: Year-end academic reporting due to the county board of education
- June 15, 2025: Last day to submit CPCs for 2025-2026 and last day for new applicants to apply for 100% scholarship funding for 2025-2026
- June 16, 2025: First day of the 75% funding window for new applications for 2025-2026



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