



Same Program... New Look!



Hope Scholarship West Virginia now has an updated look! The program unveiled a new full-sized logo and button image this week on its website and program materials.

The new design represents nurturing and growth, as the Hope Scholarship program continues to support West Virginia families. Keep in mind, you may see the previous logo in some locations as materials are updated.



Schools and service providers who had previously applied for a Hope Scholarship Approved Service Provider seal may now receive an updated version of the seal for your marketing materials. The Hope Scholarship team will automatically provide you a copy of the new seal without the need to reapply.

New schools and providers who wish to receive an Approved Service Provider seal should apply on the website by clicking [HERE](#).

Please note: Parents, schools, organizations, and advocacy groups should **NOT** replicate or use any Hope Scholarship logos or imagery without prior written consent from the West Virginia State Treasurer's Office.

TheoPay Updates

To help provide transparency to families regarding TheoPay orders and pricing, the Hope Scholarship fulfillment team is including the full order details in the Family Notes section of each fulfilled TheoPay order. This will allow parents/guardians to see the unit cost of each item, the sales tax, and any shipping cost charged by the vendor.

Please be aware that there may be minor price differences from the time that a parent initially submits a TheoPay request and the time that the fulfillment team actually places the order. Many of the white-listed TheoPay vendors use a dynamic pricing model and update pricing daily (sometimes multiple times per day) based on supply and demand. In addition, sale prices at the time of the TheoPay request may no longer be valid at the time the fulfillment center actually places the order. With Amazon orders specifically, there are sometimes situation where the original “seller” that was selected by the parent in their TheoPay cart no longer has the item in stock and the fulfillment team must use a different “seller” with a slightly higher price in order to fulfill the order. There have also been instances where a parent/guardian has selected an option for a store-pickup price in their TheoPay cart, but the unit price is slightly higher when the shipping option is changed to being mailed to the family.

If the fulfillment team sees a significant price increase for a requested item, the agent reaches out to the parent/guardian to see if they still wish to purchase the item at the increased price before placing the order. This is most common with technology related purchases but could be with any item that had a significant discount or sale price at the time the parent placed the request that is no longer valid.

These price differences are important to remember as we approach the upcoming holiday season. Many vendors will offer special pricing for Black Friday, Cyber Monday, etc. **While the fulfillment team will do their best to quickly place orders and attempt to secure the discounted pricing for TheoPay orders, that may not always be possible.** The fulfillment team will reach out if there are significant price differences to ensure the family still wishes to purchase the item at the higher price.

TheoPay Returns

Since announcing the TheoPay return process instructions in the October newsletter, the Hope Scholarship Program has received more than 100 requests to return items. To help ensure that the return process operates smoothly for all parties involved, we wanted to share the TheoPay Order Returns Process document with all Hope Scholarship families to fully outline all relevant information for returning items purchased with Hope Scholarship funds. This document can be found [HERE](#).

All returns under the Hope Scholarship Program are subject to the return policies of the vendor from which the returned item was originally purchased. This includes the timeframe to complete a return as well as any restocking fees or other charges for returns processed after the eligible period. If the vendor will not permit the return of a specific TheoPay item under the vendor’s return policy, the Hope Scholarship student will not be

able to receive a refund for the item. To help identify vendor-specific return policies, a centralized database of TheoPay vendor return policies can be found [HERE](#). While this document will be reviewed and updated regularly, please be aware that the vendor return policy directly from the vendor controls if there is a discrepancy.

If you have purchased an item on TheoPay and need to return the item, the first step is to complete the TheoPay Product Return Request Form found [HERE](#). Please do not attempt to initiate a return on your own with a vendor without going through the required link, as the form captures all of the information needed to process the return request. **Parents are encouraged to complete this form as quickly as possible after the receipt of the item so that Student First Technologies can initiate the return within the specific vendor's return window. Failure to promptly request a return may jeopardize the ability to meet the vendor's return policy and receive a refund for the purchase.**

Upon receipt of a return request, the Hope Engagement Center will review the original TheoPay order, reference the vendor's product return policy, generate a digital return shipping label, and email the return shipping label to the requesting family with all relevant instructions. **Parents/guardians must utilize the return shipping label provided by Student First Technologies immediately upon receipt to ensure that the materials are returned within the vendor's return policy window.** The family must securely package the item(s) being returned, firmly attach the return shipping label to the package, and deliver the package to the designated shipping provider. Vendor return windows vary and it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the item(s) are delivered to the shipping provider in sufficient time to meet the vendor's requirements.

If you have questions related to the TheoPay return process or need to follow-up regarding a previously submitted return request, please contact the Hope Engagement Center at 681-999-HOPE or help@hopescholarshipwv.com.

Used Book Purchases



If you wish to purchase used books with your student's Hope Scholarship funds, it is recommended that you purchase the items out of pocket and submit them for reimbursement as a curriculum purchase. Purchasing out of pocket will best allow families to control their satisfaction with the quality of the used book as the quality ratings (excellent, good, fair, etc.) can be subjective.

Board staff have experienced an exceptionally high return rate for used book purchases made through TheoPay and believe that the reimbursement pathway will be the most efficient for both families and staff. We understand that not all families are in a financial position to make purchases out of pocket so some used books will still be available for direct purchase through TheoPay with limited vendors.

Expanded Reimbursement Policy

As a reminder, on September 20, 2024, the Hope Scholarship Board expanded the Hope Scholarship Reimbursement Policy for out-of-pocket purchases for certain additional qualifying program expenses made between August 15, 2024, and December 31, 2024. [Click HERE for the Board's expanded policy.](#)

The expanded list includes technology equipment, school uniforms, basic educational supplies, assistive technology, musical instruments and related supplies, individual online curriculum subscriptions, and other educational supplies. All reimbursement requests, including the expanded list from above, are subject to the requirement that funds be available in the student's online platform account at the time of purchase. All reimbursement requests must be submitted directly through the online portal with all required supporting documentation for each purchase. Please see page 17 of [The Hope Scholarship Parent Handbook](#) for the required supporting documentation required.

Reimbursement Submission Best Practices

The list below includes the best practices for submitting reimbursement requests to ensure the review process is as efficient as possible:

- Supporting documentation submitted with a reimbursement request should be in a PDF, JPEG, or PNJ format.
- When making purchases for multiple students that you plan to submit for reimbursement, it is recommended to check out separately for each participating student whenever possible so that each student has a separate invoice/receipt with only the purchases for that student.
- If separate purchases are not feasible and multiple students have purchases on one invoice/receipt, clearly identify the item(s) that are for each student on the invoice/receipt. (i.e. underlining, highlighting the associated purchase) so that Hope Scholarship Board staff can easily verify the accuracy of the amount for each student. Be sure to appropriately allocate any sales tax, discounts, and shipping expenses to each student. Sales tax must be allocated proportionately based on each student's share of the total purchase, not just divided evenly by the number of students. Discounts on the grand total purchase should also be allocated proportionately to each item on the invoice/receipt.
- Do not claim sales tax or shipping costs for reimbursement if they were not actually paid and included on the itemized invoice/receipt.
- If a reimbursement request is denied for missing documentation, the explanation to *why* the reimbursement request was denied will be available in the family notes section of the specific reimbursement. The account holder should submit a new reimbursement request for the same item with all supporting documentation.

Application Deadline Approaching - November 30, 2024



Eligible students have until November 30, 2024, to apply for the Hope Scholarship Program to receive 50% of the scholarship funding amount for the 2024-25 school year.

An application submitted between December 1, 2024, and February 28, 2025, if eligible, will receive 25% of the scholarship funding amount. Please ensure your student(s) meet one of the three eligibility pathways highlighted on our website before submitting an application.

45 Day Requirement Information

A Hope Scholarship applicant gaining eligibility via the 45-day pathway must complete 45 consecutive calendar days enrolled in a West Virginia public elementary or secondary school, with a 90% or higher attendance rate, before applying for the Hope Scholarship.

Applications submitted prior to meeting the statutory eligibility requirements will be marked ineligible. Applicants may re-apply in the Hope Scholarship online portal when the student(s) have met this eligibility requirement. As a reminder, the law requires the student remain enrolled and attending the public-school program until a decision is reached on the Hope Scholarship application. Withdrawing early will make your student ineligible for the Hope Scholarship.

Notice of Intent Reminder

Newly awarded Hope Scholarship students must successfully submit the Hope Scholarship Notice of Intent (NOI) to their local county of residence before the student's Hope Scholarship account will be funded. If you have not completed this step yet for your student, please complete the Hope Scholarship [Notice of Intent](#) form and send to your local county board of education. A complete list of the County Board of Education contacts can be found [HERE](#).



When emailing the NOI, please be sure to include in the subject line that the NOI is for the Hope Scholarship so the county can more easily distinguish your student from a traditional homeschool student. In addition, be sure to mark the correct year (currently 2024-2025) on your NOI so that the county board of education knows the appropriate year to record in the WVEIS system.



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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!