



## A Message from State Treasurer Riley Moore for the Holiday Season

Merry Christmas and happy holidays from the State Treasurer's Office! My staff and I would like to wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season.

As many of you know, this is my final year as your State Treasurer before moving on to Congress in January 2025. I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your participation in the Hope Scholarship. I hope that the program is making it possible for you to choose the education that best meets your child's needs.



Earlier this year, I was proud to announce that Hope Scholarship Program enrollment numbers have met the threshold established by the Legislature to expand to all West Virginia school children beginning in the fall of 2026. This will be a monumental leap forward for school choice, allowing tens of thousands of additional West Virginia families to access this program.

The Hope Scholarship Board recently approved a policy that will allow children of West Virginia military service members who are required to temporarily relocate to another state remain eligible for the Hope Scholarship Program. This creates greater access and flexibility for the program and supports our West Virginia military families while they are temporarily out of state for service.

We have accomplished so much since the Legislature passed the Hope Scholarship Act in 2021. Families can now apply throughout the school year featuring prorated scholarship award amounts depending on when they apply, which has generated more flexibility and interest in the program over the years. This is demonstrated through increased program participation, growing from 2,333 students in 2022-2023 to 5,443 students in 2023-2024 to over 11,000 students for 2024-2025.

Again, I want to express my sincere thanks to the Hope Scholarship Board, our staff, and the families involved in this program for their hard work and patience as we worked diligently

## Military Service Member Policy



On Tuesday, November 12, the Hope Scholarship Board approved the Hope Scholarship Military Service Member Policy to help support West Virginia military families while they are temporarily relocated out of state for service pursuant to a military order. The Board's Military Service Member Policy can be found [HERE](#).

For military families needing to certify that their Hope Scholarship student will not attend a public school during their temporary relocation out of state, the required affidavit can be found [HERE](#).

## Non-Qualifying Expense List Updates

The Hope Scholarship Board updated the Hope Scholarship's Non-Qualifying Expense List on November 12. New items that are **unallowable** to purchase with Hope Scholarship funds include:

- Lifetime subscriptions or memberships, except for Rosetta Stone
- Laminating machines in excess of \$300
- Metal detectors
- Cameras
- Table Tennis/Ping Pong tables
- Trampolines
- Bikes and helmets
- White boards with dimensions in excess of 24 inches by 24 inches

The Hope Scholarship Board also adopted a motion to include an additional exception for the non-qualifying expense of groceries and food items. Now, in addition to student lunch fees charged by a participating school for lunches consumed on school premises during the school day, **food will be allowed as part of educational subscription boxes that include some food ingredients, provided that a lesson plan is included in the box.**

A full list of non-qualifying expense list can be found [HERE](#).

## Hope Scholarship Application Windows

### 2024-2025

The application window to receive 50% of the Hope Scholarship for the 2024-2025 school year ended on November 30, 2024. Applications for 2024-2025 are now being accepted for 25% funding up through February 28, 2025. All applicants must meet one of the three eligibility pathways for the Hope Scholarship Program. As a reminder, approved Hope Scholarship students must reflect a properly recorded Hope Scholarship Notice of Intent with the county board of education of residence to receive initial funding. Applications received after February 28, 2025, will be considered for the 2025-2026 school year.

### 2025-2026

**For current Hope Scholarship participants wishing to continue participation in the program during the 2025-2026 school year, the Continued Participation Confirmation will be available in the online portal beginning on January 3, 2025, and running through June 15, 2025.** Late confirmations will not be accepted. Students continuing participation in the program will have to demonstrate current proof of WV residency. A new, simplified residency process through Plaid will be available for families who wish to use it. Using Plaid will help expedite the review process and result in a faster decision on the system application. Families who do not wish to use Plaid or those where Plaid is unable to confirm the address will be able to upload proof of residency documentation outlined in the Hope Scholarship legislative rules such as utility bills, vehicle registrations, etc. with their system application for manual review.

**As a reminder, effective for the 2025-2026 year, approved Continued Participation Confirmations will be updated to a status of Conditionally Eligible in the online platform.** In early July 2025, Board staff will review all Conditionally Eligible students to ensure that the required academic progress reporting for the 2024-2025 school year has been recorded by the student's county board of education and will update the status to Approved. The 2024-2025 academic progress data is due to the county board of education by June 8, 2025. For non-public school students, the non-public school will send an enrollment confirmation to the county board of education. For Individualized Instructional Plan (IIP) students, including microschool students, the parent must submit either nationally normed standardized test results or a certified teacher academic progress review to the county board of education.

**Applications for new students for the 2025-2026 school year will be available on March 1, 2025.**

## Second Semester Funding

Second semester funding will be available in students' accounts on January 15, 2025. For students approved for the scholarship after January 15, funding will be available in each student's account as soon as feasible on the monthly funding cycle.

## Returning to Public School

If any participating Hope Scholarship student returns to a WV public school, it is unlawful to continue to spend Hope Scholarship funds because the student is no longer eligible to receive the Hope Scholarship upon return to public school. The Hope Scholarship account holder must provide notice by email to [hopescholarshipwv@wvsto.com](mailto:hopescholarshipwv@wvsto.com) within five (5) business days of the student's return to public school.

## 45-Day Eligibility Pathway Reminders

If you apply for the Hope Scholarship for your student under the 45-day eligibility pathway, do not submit a Hope Scholarship Notice of Intent until **after** the application reaches an approved status. West Virginia public schools have been instructed to withdraw students upon receipt of the Notice of Intent form, so submitting the



Notice of Intent before a decision is reached on your student's Hope Scholarship application negatively impacts eligibility and will make your student ineligible for the program.

If your student has enrolled in a West Virginia public charter school, such as Virtual Preparatory Academy of WV or West Virginia Virtual Academy, you must submit the Notice of Intent to **both** the charter school and your local county board of education of your county of residence **after** your student's Hope Scholarship application has been approved.

If your child is actively enrolled in a West Virginia public school, including one of the public charter schools, the public school should be able to supply your student's WVEIS ID number for your student's Hope Scholarship application. **You do not need to submit a Notice of Intent form to request the WVEIS ID number, as this will result in the public school withdrawing your child prior to the decision on your student's Hope Scholarship application.**

## Expanded Reimbursement Policy Update

As a reminder, the Hope Scholarship Board's expanded reimbursement policy is scheduled to end on December 31, 2024. The following items which were temporarily allowable for reimbursement will no longer be eligible for reimbursement if purchased after December 31, 2024: technology equipment, school uniforms, basic educational supplies, assistive technology, musical instruments and related supplies, individual online curriculum subscriptions, and other educational supplies. Please submit any reimbursements falling into the expanded criteria as quickly as possible during January 2025.



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