Step Up For Students

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)

September 19th, 2024

Presented by Step Up For Students

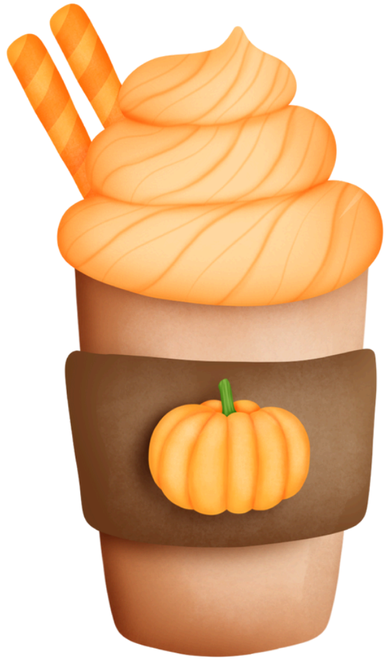
OPEN HOUSE
FES-UA

Step Up For Students

Step Up For Students

FES-UA

Agenda



- Communications
- MyScholarShop: New Vendor Alert
- 529 Plans
- Submitting Reimbursements in EMA/Legacy
- Purchasing Guide Hot Topics
- Q&A
- Resources
- Contact Us

FES-UA

Communications

Subject: ACTION REQUIRED BY SEPTEMBER 9TH FOR SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Date: 9.6.24

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Florida Department of Education has notified Step Up For Students that, in February, your student _ was reported by your district as a public-school student during the 2023-24 school year. Accordingly, your student is scheduled to be withdrawn from the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA) program.

As indicated in FES-UA program statute and detailed in our parent/guardian resources and application, students attending a Florida public school, full-time Florida Virtual School (FLVS), or a Florida Charter School are not eligible to receive an FES-UA scholarship.

Because your student has been indicated as a full-time public-school student in the 2023-24 school year, your access to any remaining FES-UA 2023-24 funds may be temporarily suspended. If your student is eligible for FES-UA for the 2024-25 school year, these funds will also be held until your student has been confirmed eligible. **You should not attempt to spend any funds at this time. This includes through reimbursement, purchases through MyScholarShop or direct payment to a school or provider from your student's scholarship account.**

To avoid your student being withdrawn from the FES-UA program, and your 2023-24 funds returned to the state, we must receive your Public-School Withdrawal Confirmation Form by **5:00 p.m. ET on Tuesday, September 10th**. The Public-School Withdrawal Confirmation Form can be found by clicking the button below. Failure to respond by September 10th will result in your student's withdrawal from the FES-UA program and the return of any 2023-24 FES-UA funds to the state.

Your student will not be eligible for any 2024-25 FES-UA funding until your student's 2023-24 account has been confirmed eligible following our receipt of your Public-chool Withdrawal Confirmation Form. Again, please do not attempt to submit any reimbursement requests, make any purchases through MyScholarShop or initiate direct payment to schools or providers while your student's eligibility is being reviewed.

FES-UA

Communications

Subject: A message from Step Up's CEO

Date: 9.6.24

Dear Step Up Families,

I hope your new school year is off to a great start.

It's been four-and-a-half months since I assumed the role of CEO at Step Up For Students.

I have spent my career tackling complex banking and payment challenges. In this role, I've been focused on listening, learning, and delivering improvements for families and educators.

I wanted to share an update on what I've learned so far, our progress addressing your feedback, and two of our key priorities: delivering timely payments to schools and improving our processing of reimbursement requests.

School payments

This year, we are currently serving more than 436,800 scholarship students. Of those, more than 340,000 are enrolled in eligible private schools.

Our team has been delivering faster payments to schools. As of today, a total of 281,000 tuition invoices have been approved by both the school and the parent or guardian. Of those, Step Up has paid 278,000, or nearly 99%, in 6.5 calendar days on average. Our team continues to process invoices as they are approved.

This is much better than last year. We believe this will help schools and families confidently plan their budgets for the rest of this school year.

FES-UA

MyScholarShop New Vendor Alert

Company Name	Description of Services	Website
The Fidget Game™	Our mission is to REVOLUTIONIZE EDUCATION with innovative and science-backed educational resources to address the global literacy crisis.	https://www.thefidgetgame.com
tonies®	The Toniebox uses audio storytelling to introduce pre-readers and developing readers to the wonders of narrative long before children can read the words in a book. When children combine tonies with play, they unlock the real wonder of storytelling - a mix of fascination, surprise, curiosity and a craving for exploration all stirred together. Through this, they discover powers within to create and transport themselves to worlds and wonders all on their own	us.tonies.com

FES-UA

MyScholarShop Vendor Alert

Company Name	Description of Services	Website
UPPER STORY ENDLESS CURIOSITY	At Upper Story, making educational toys means bringing important, but abstract concepts into a tangible, playful form. We create groundbreaking, premium toys that both delight and foster endless curiosity. Our two products are Turing Tumble: Build Marble-Powered Computers, and Spintronics: Build Mechanical Circuits.	https://upperstory.com/en/
CircuitMess	Educational STEM Kits for Kids — Let your kids acquire skills of the future by assembling fun engineering STEM DIY projects. Explore engineering principles with our immersive STEM projects for kids aged 9+ Continuous Fun. Foster Creativity. 80,000+ Boxes Delivered. Perfect for Curious Minds.	circuitmess.com

Step Up
For Students

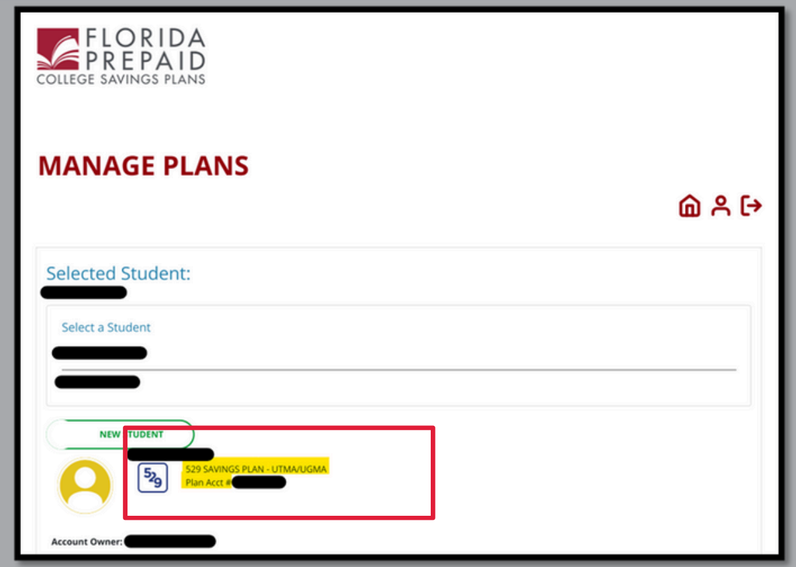
Florida 529 College Savings Plan

Overview of Florida 529 Savings Plan

Step Up cannot provide a student's 529 Savings Plan number. If you are not able to locate this number in the 529 account, please contact your account holder.

FES-UA

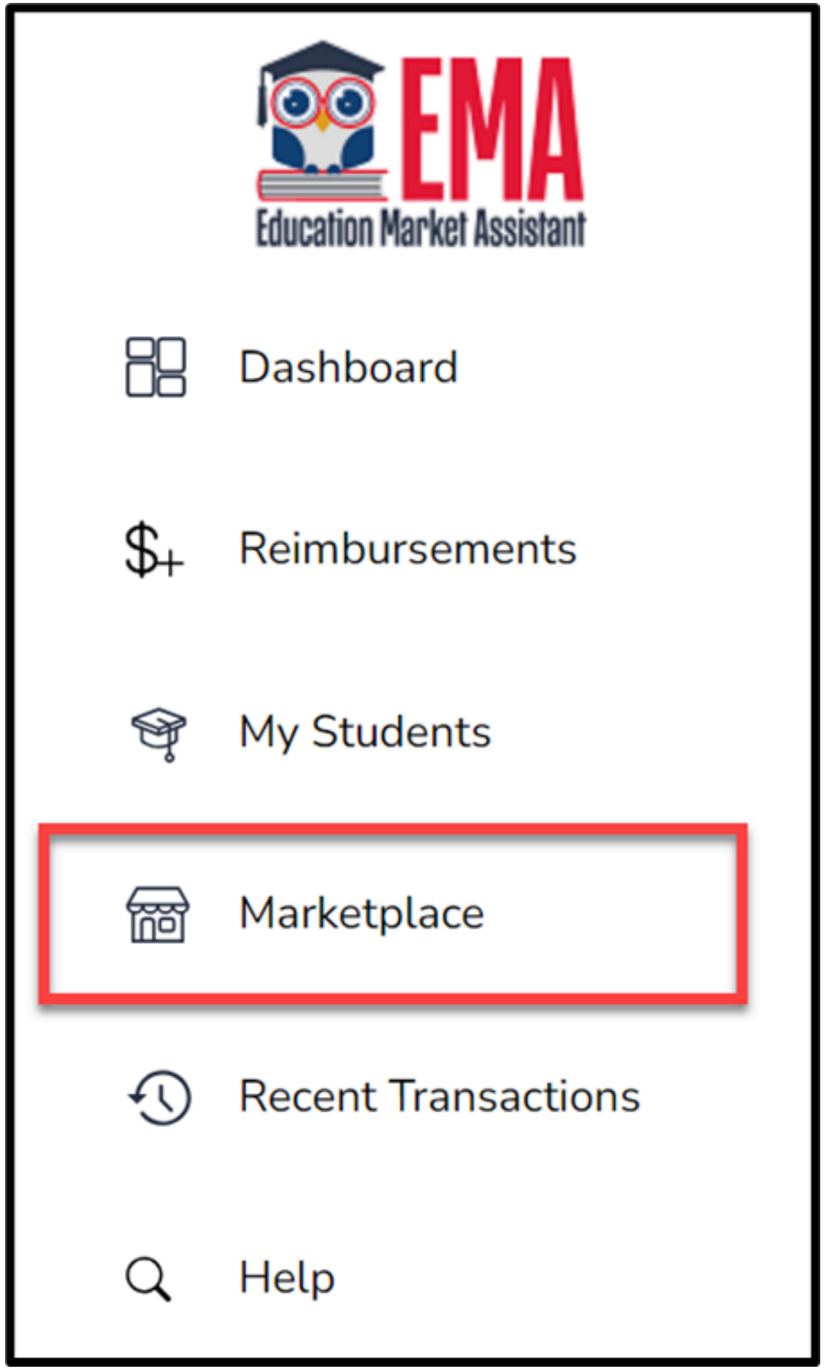
Locate the 10-digit number associated with your student's 529 Savings Plan Account.



FES-UA

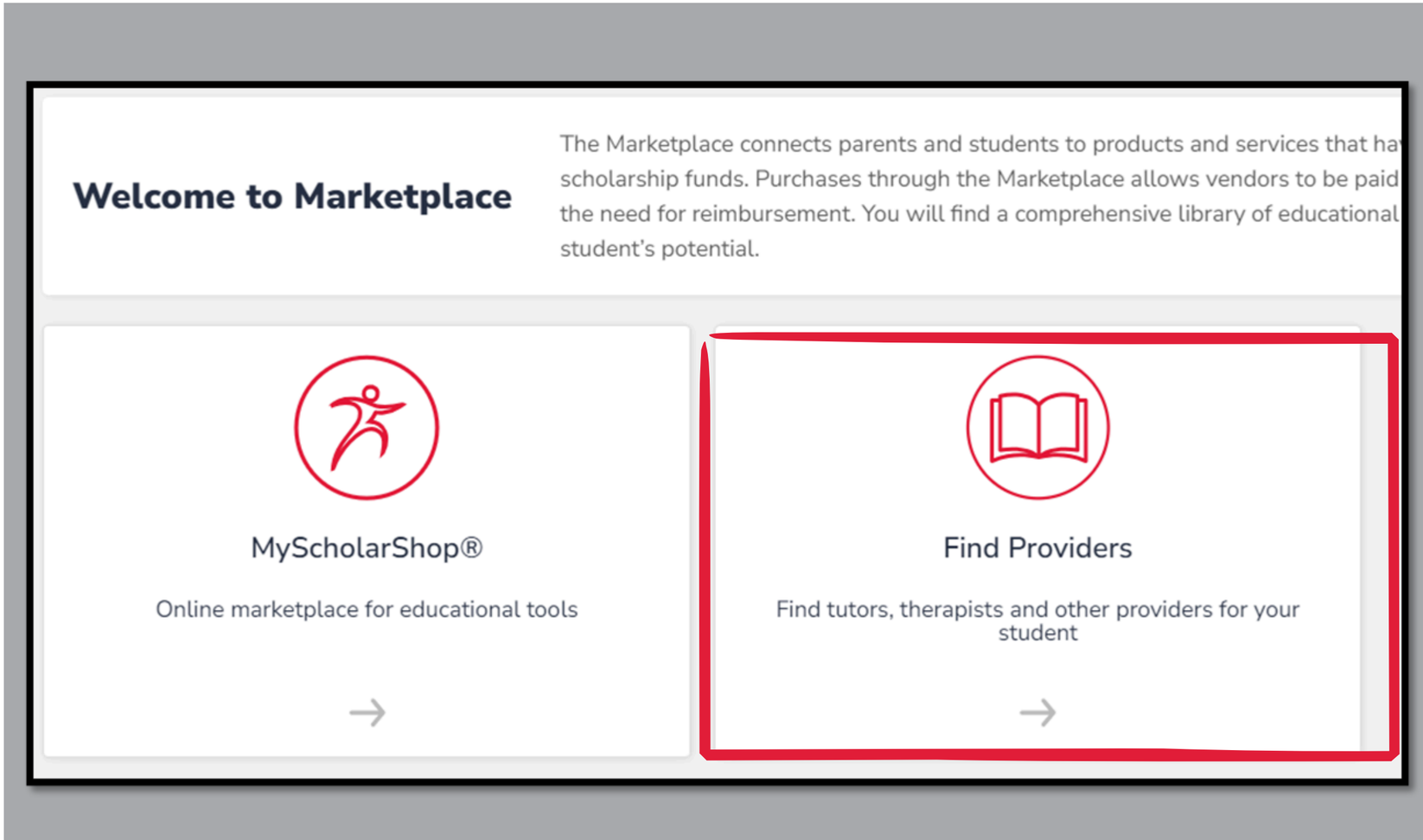
For guardians to contribute to the 529 College Savings Plans using scholarship funds, they will need to follow the steps below.

First, sign into your account in EMA and select Marketplace.



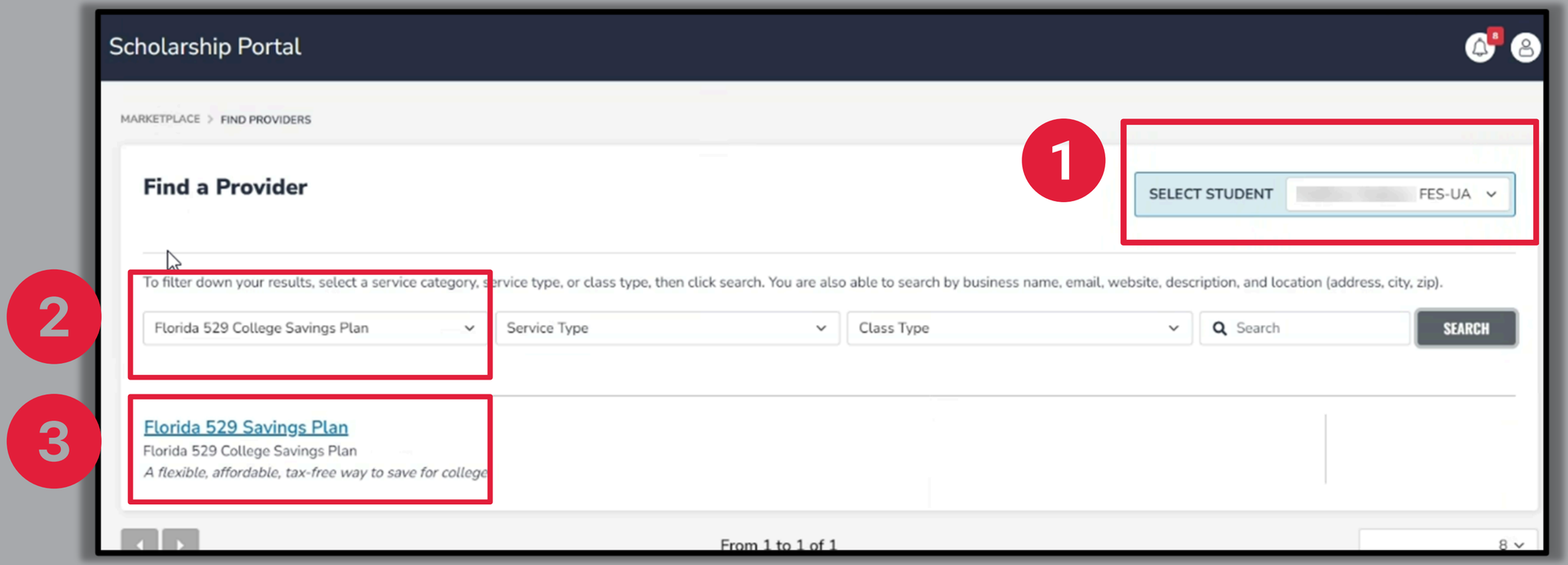
FES-UA

Once the guardian selects “Marketplace”, they must choose “Find Providers” to bill for the 529 College Savings Plan.

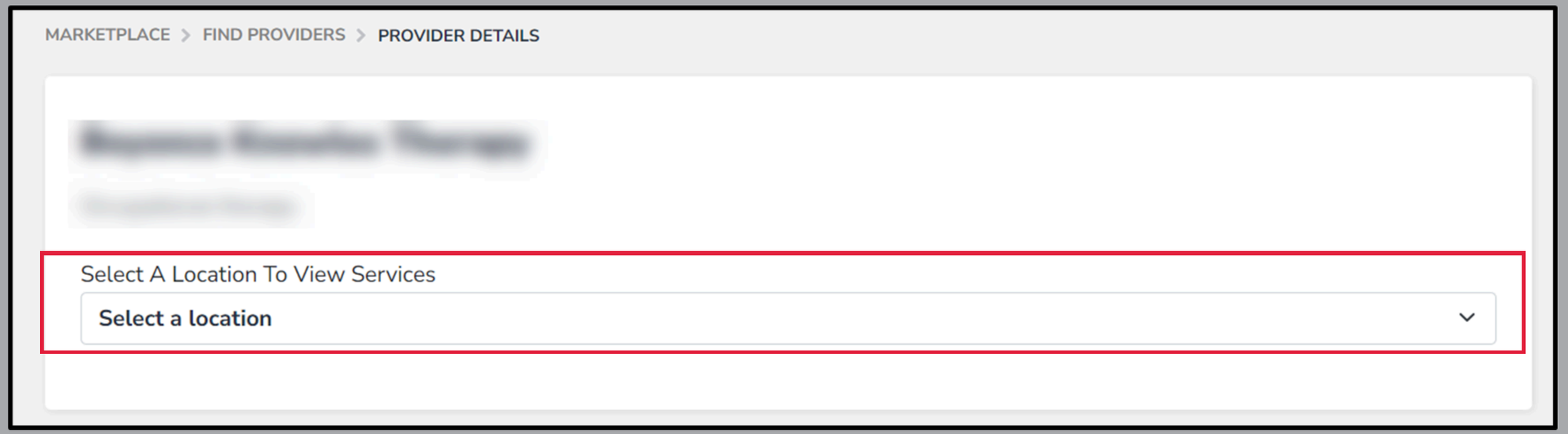


FES-UA

After selecting a student, guardians can filter by selecting Florida 529 College Savings Plan from the drop-down, then click on the Hyperlink below in the search results.



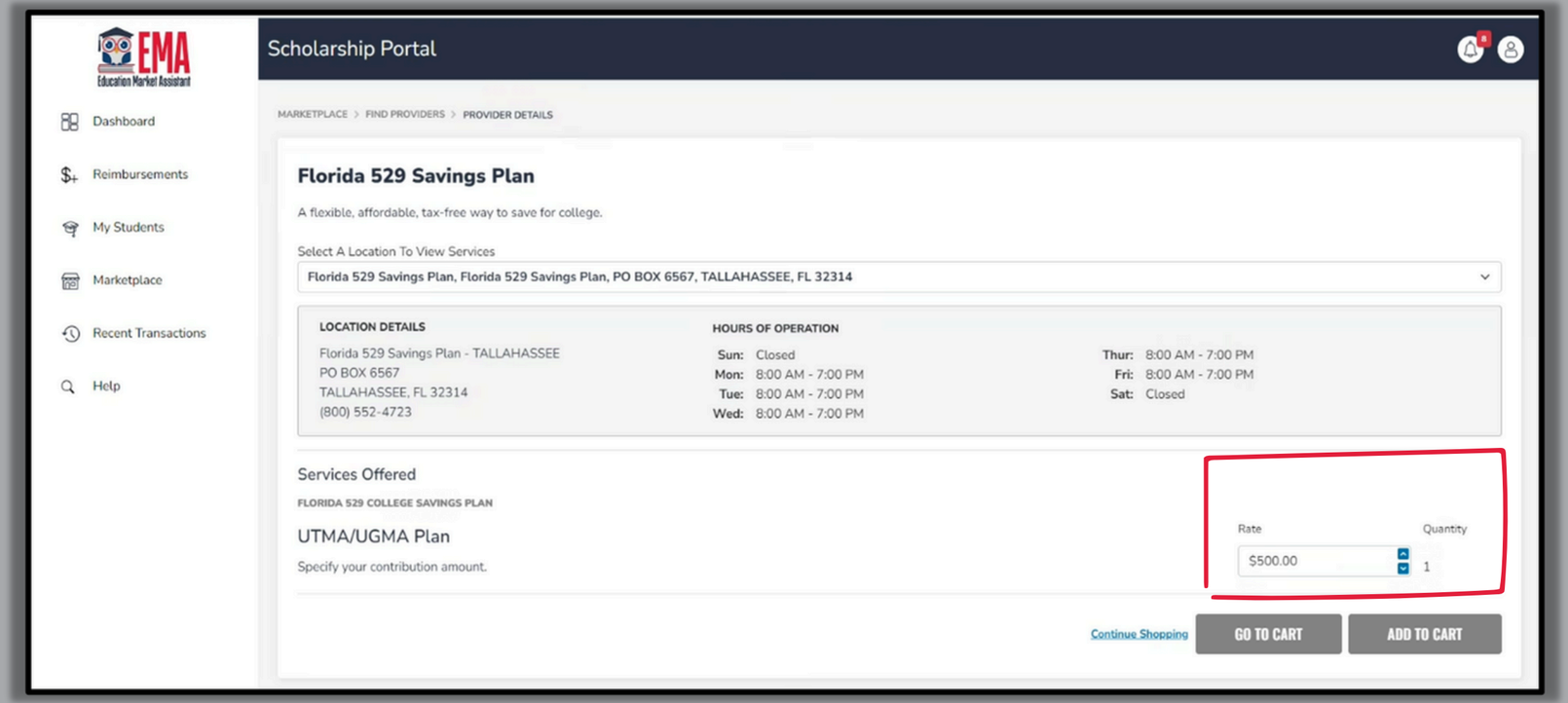
FES-UA



After selecting the provider, the guardian must then select the location associated with the “service provider”.

FES-UA

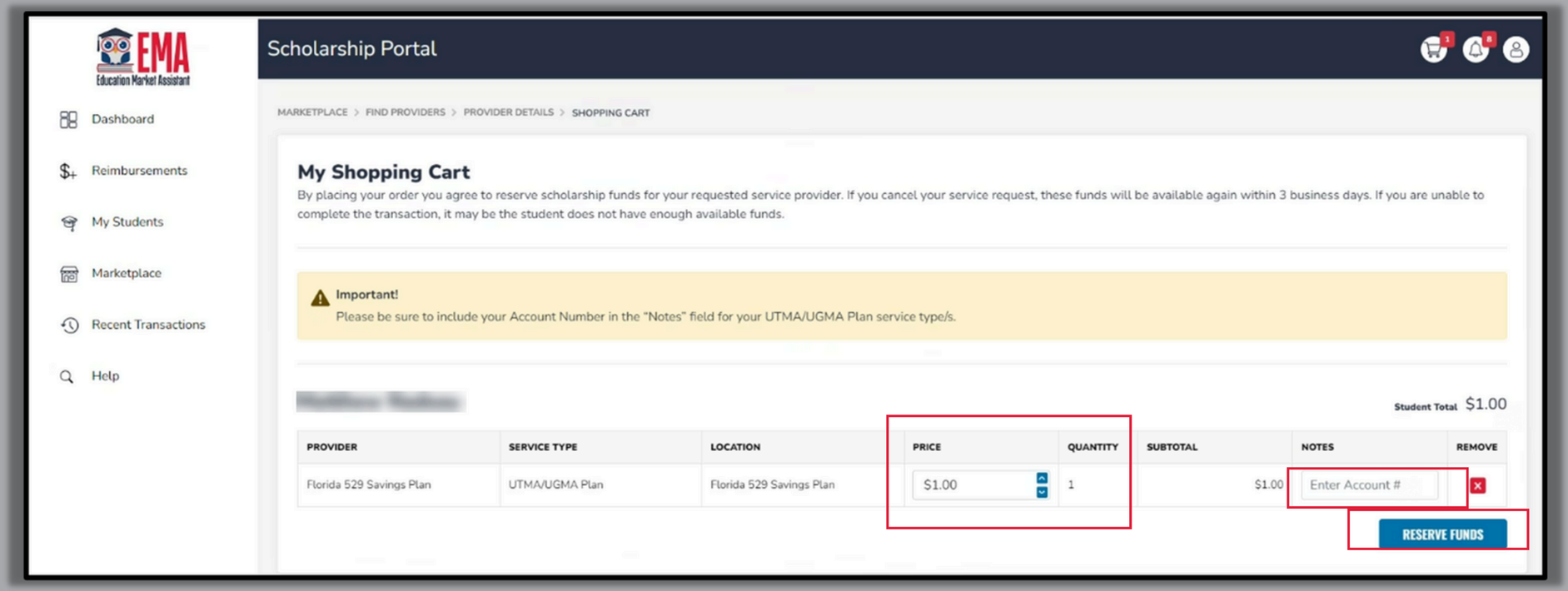
Guardians need to indicate the rate (amount) they wish to contribute to their 529 College Savings Plan to make contributions. The quantity cannot be changed.



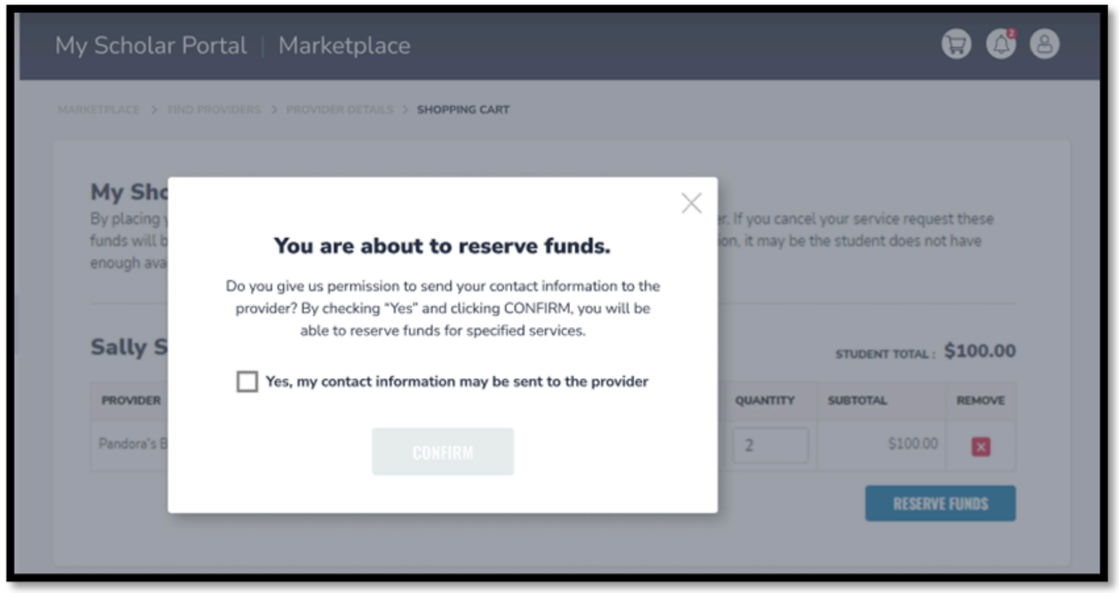
FES-UA

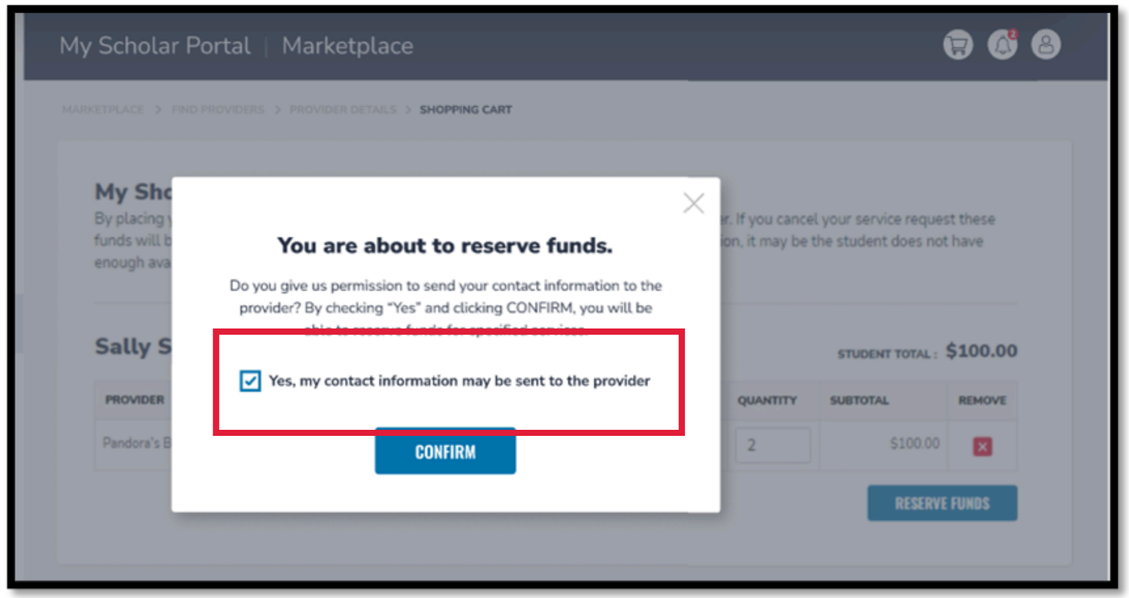
Double-check the amount you want to contribute to the 529 plan. Once correct, enter the 529 account number in the notes column. Once you have confirmed everything, click reserve funds.

Note: An incorrect account number may result in the purchase not getting processed!



FES-UA





After adding the 529 to your cart, select "Reserve Funds" to proceed to checkout. You will need to confirm permission to send your contact information to the provider by checking the box for "Yes" before the "Confirm" button appears.

FES-UA

Direct contribution requests must be submitted by the 14th day of each month and will be sent to Florida Prepaid for verification monthly before each payment is made. The student's name listed on the scholarship account must match the name of the beneficiary of the Florida 529 College Savings account. Any requests received after the 14th day of each month will not be sent to Florida Prepaid for verification until the next month.

Step Up
For Students

Submitting a Reimbursement in EMA

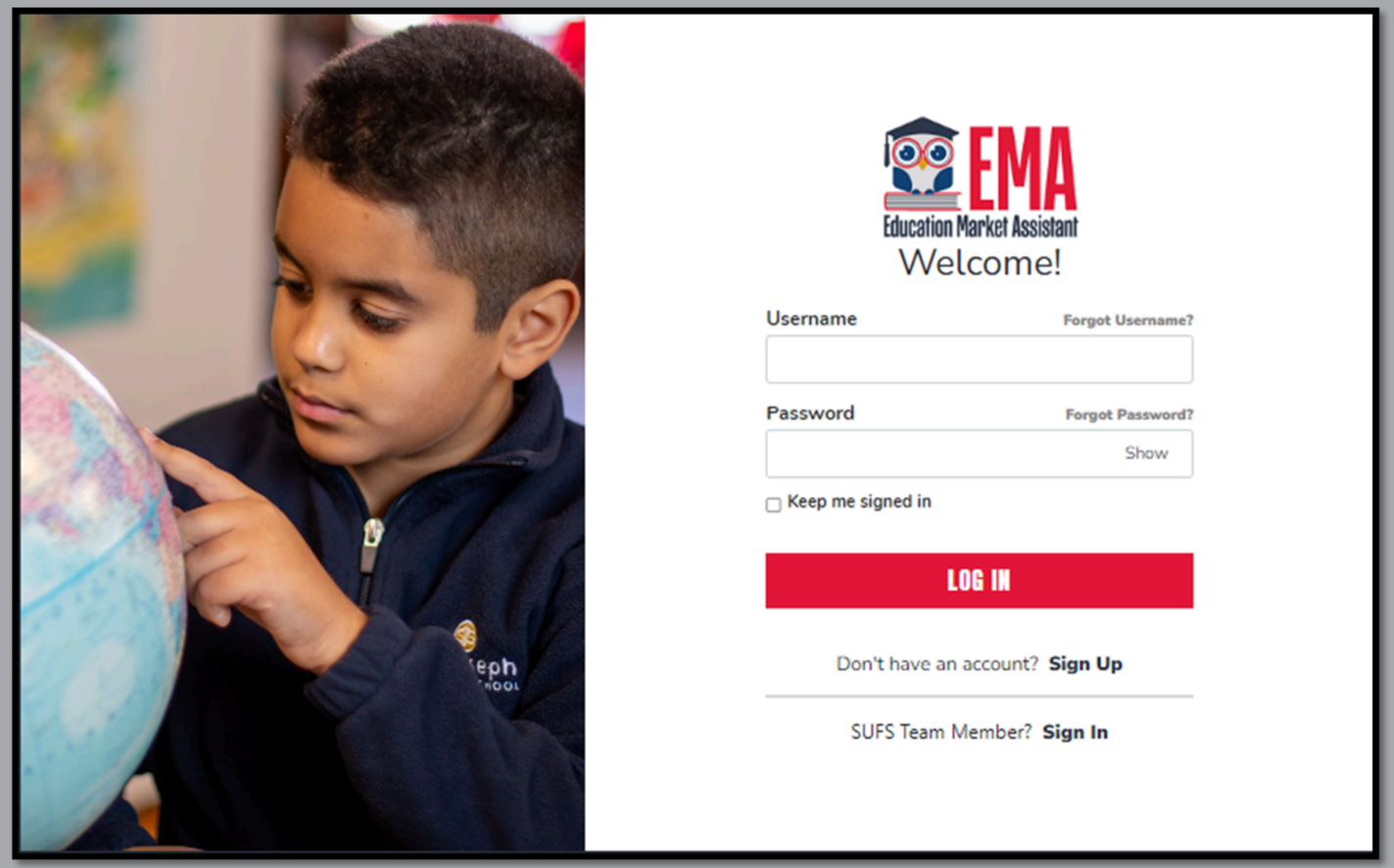
Step Up
For Students

FES-UA

If your student received the FES-UA scholarship for the 2023-2024 school year or later, and you submitted your application via EMA, then these next steps are tailored just for you!

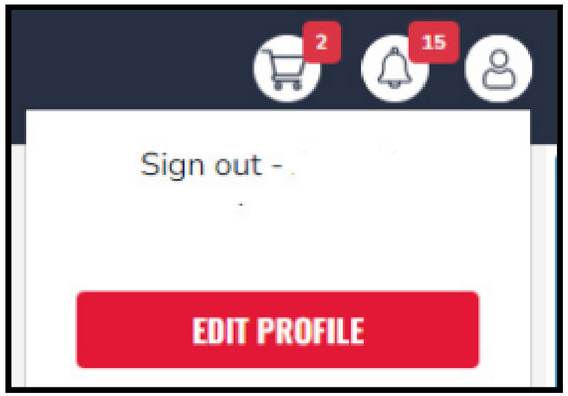
Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

Log in to your account in EMA.

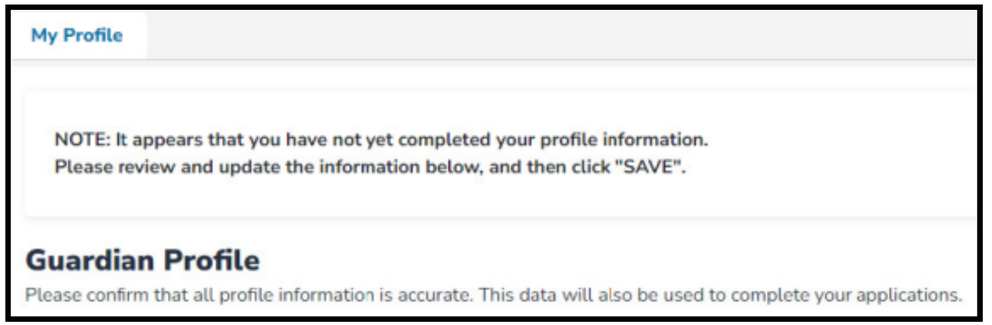


Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

1. From your dashboard in EMA, select the profile icon at the top right corner of the screen.



2. Select EDIT PROFILE from the popup window that displays.

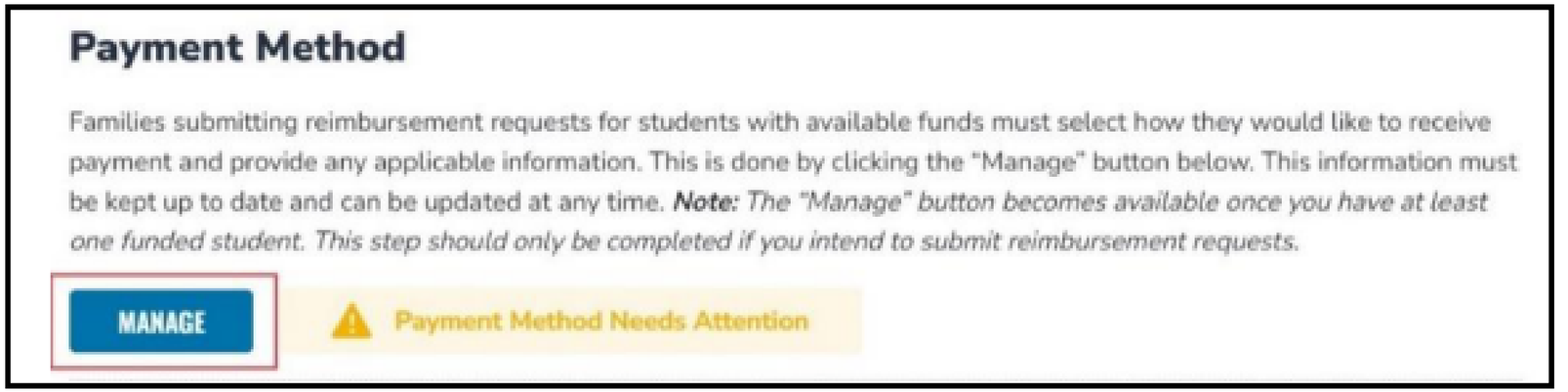


3. The Guardian Profile screen displays (under the My Profile tab).

When submitting a reimbursement for the first time, you will need to take the steps below to select your reimbursement payment method.

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

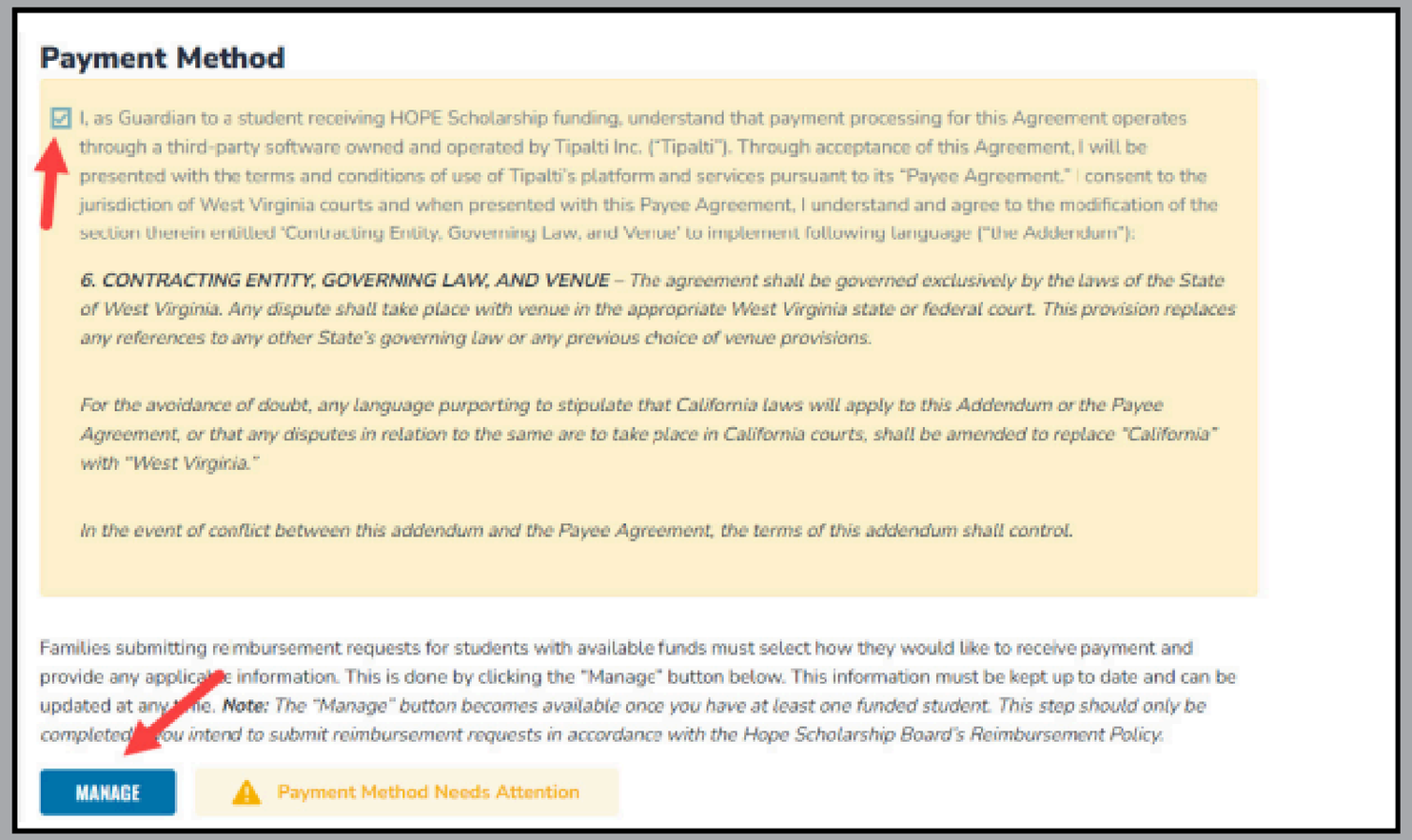
4. Scroll down to the Payment Method section (middle of the page).



When submitting a reimbursement for the first time, you will need to take the steps in the following slides to select your reimbursement payment method...continued

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

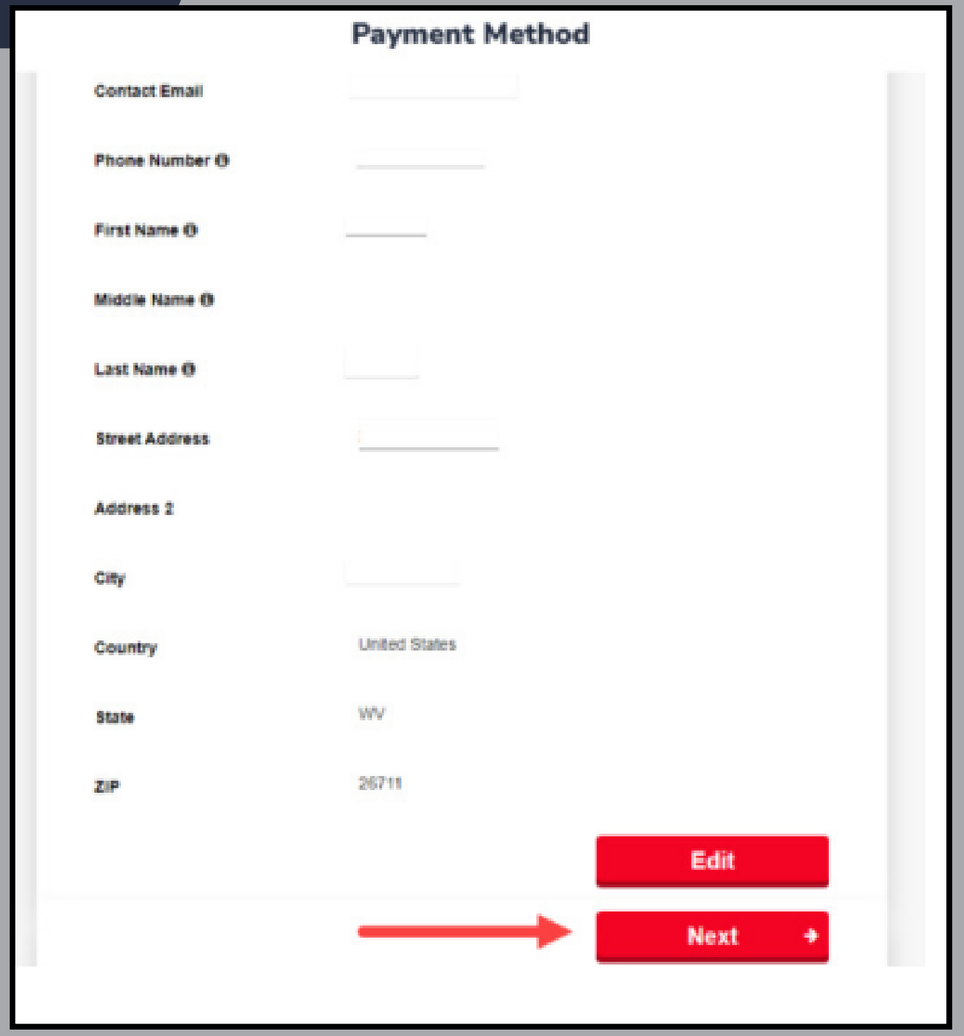
5. Read the agreement in the yellow box, select the checkbox to acknowledge you have read it, and then select MANAGE.



Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

6. The Payment Method popup window displays.

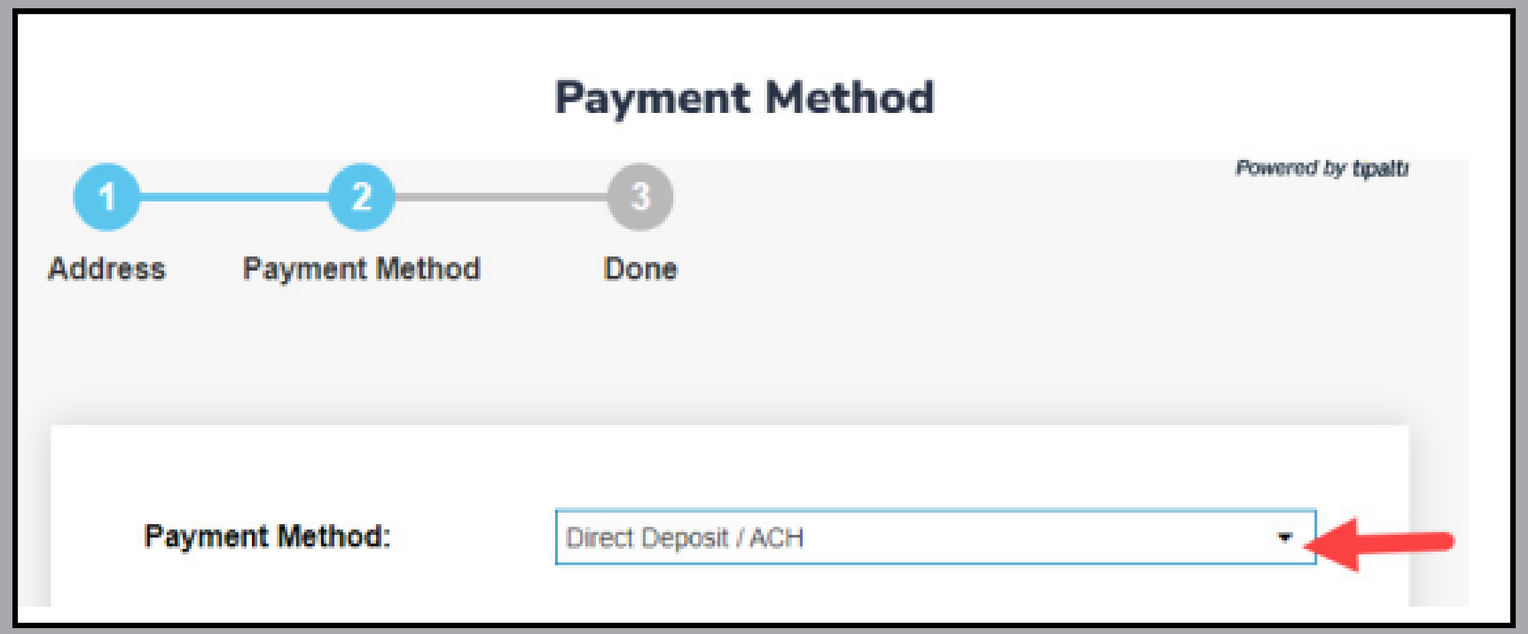
7. On the Payment Method screen, your information populates from your Guardian profile.



Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

8. If all your personal information is correct, select NEXT.

9. Use the drop-down menu to select one of the three options for payment (ACH, Check, or PayPal):



Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

Direct deposit / ACH

Complete the fields:

i. Name on Account

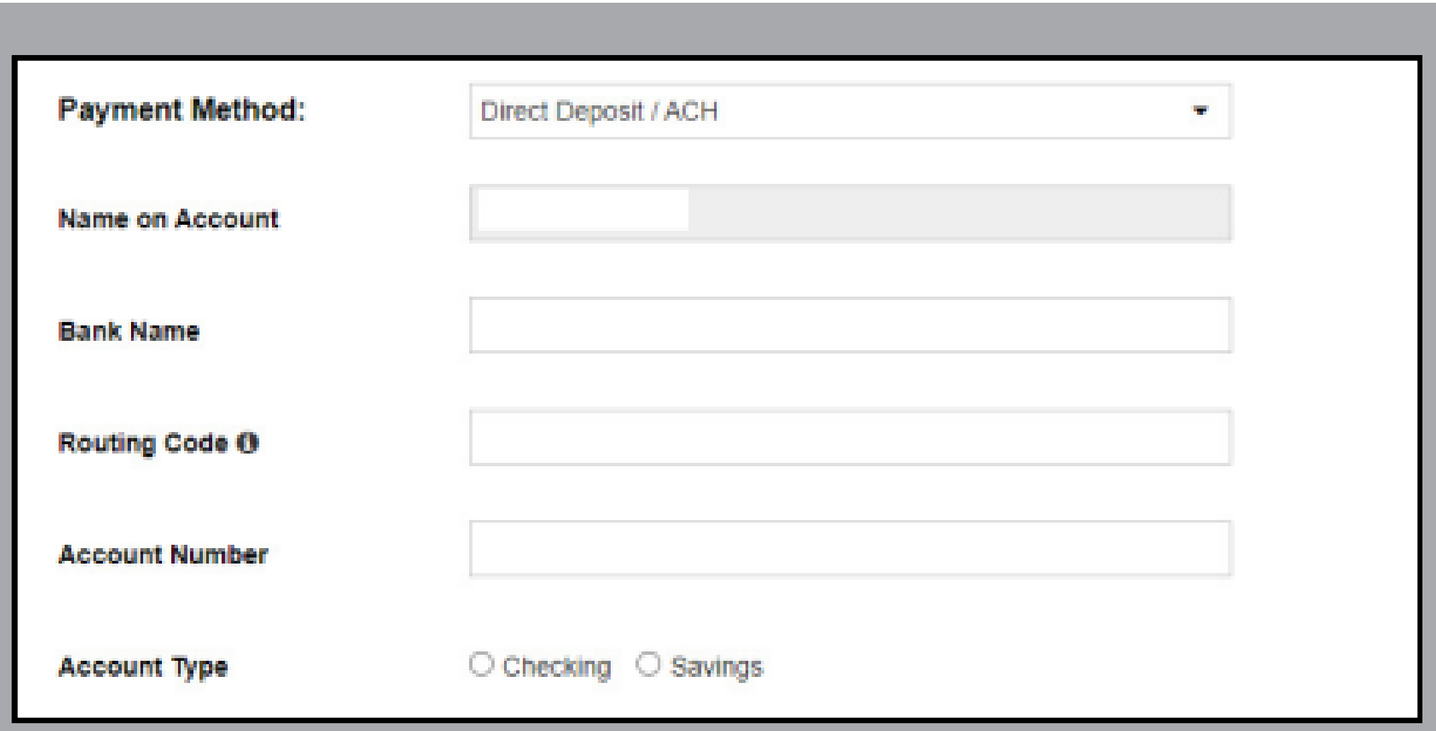
ii. Bank Name

iii. Routing Code

iv. Number

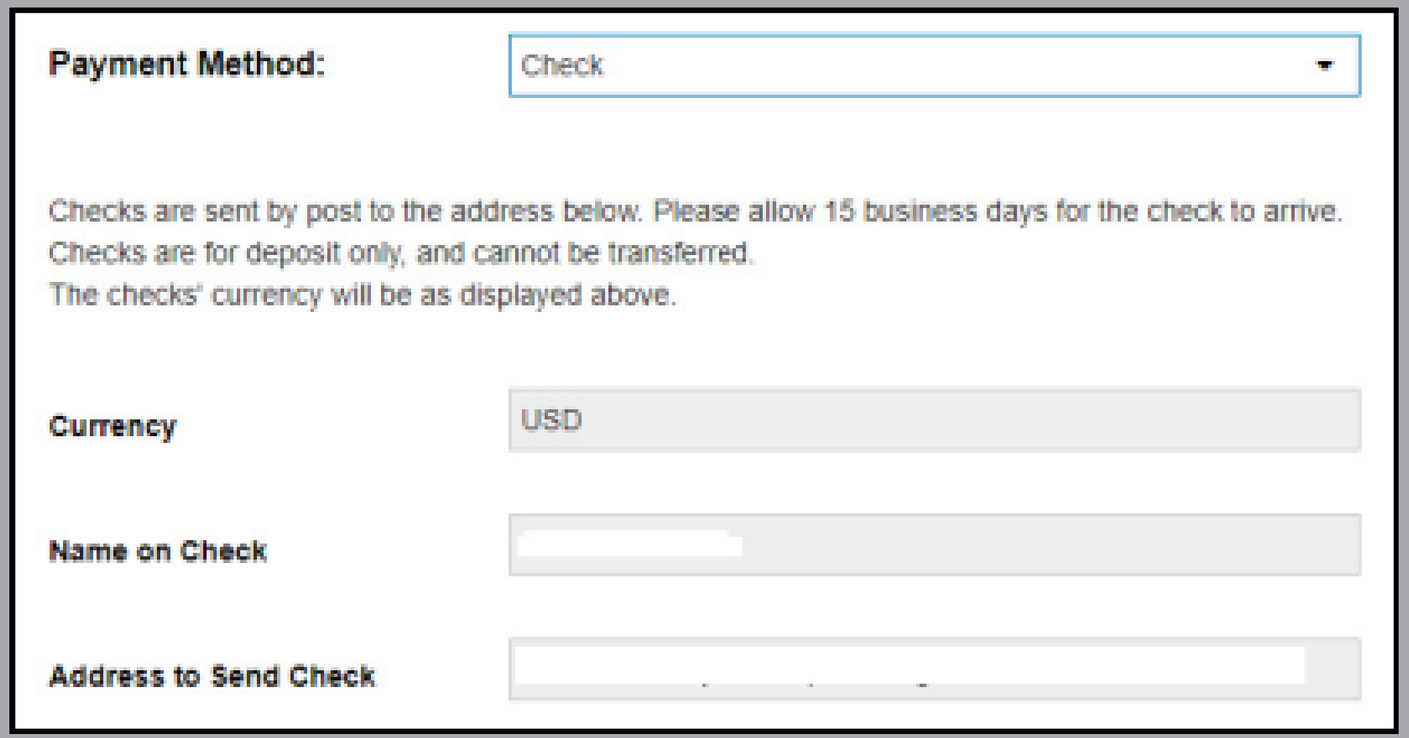
v. Account Type

- Checking or
- Savings



Note: To help keep your information secure, your banking information is not stored in EMA.

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA



Check

Complete the fields:

i. Currency (Please select USD for United States Dollars to receive payment in US currency)

ii. Name on Check

iii. Address to Send Check

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

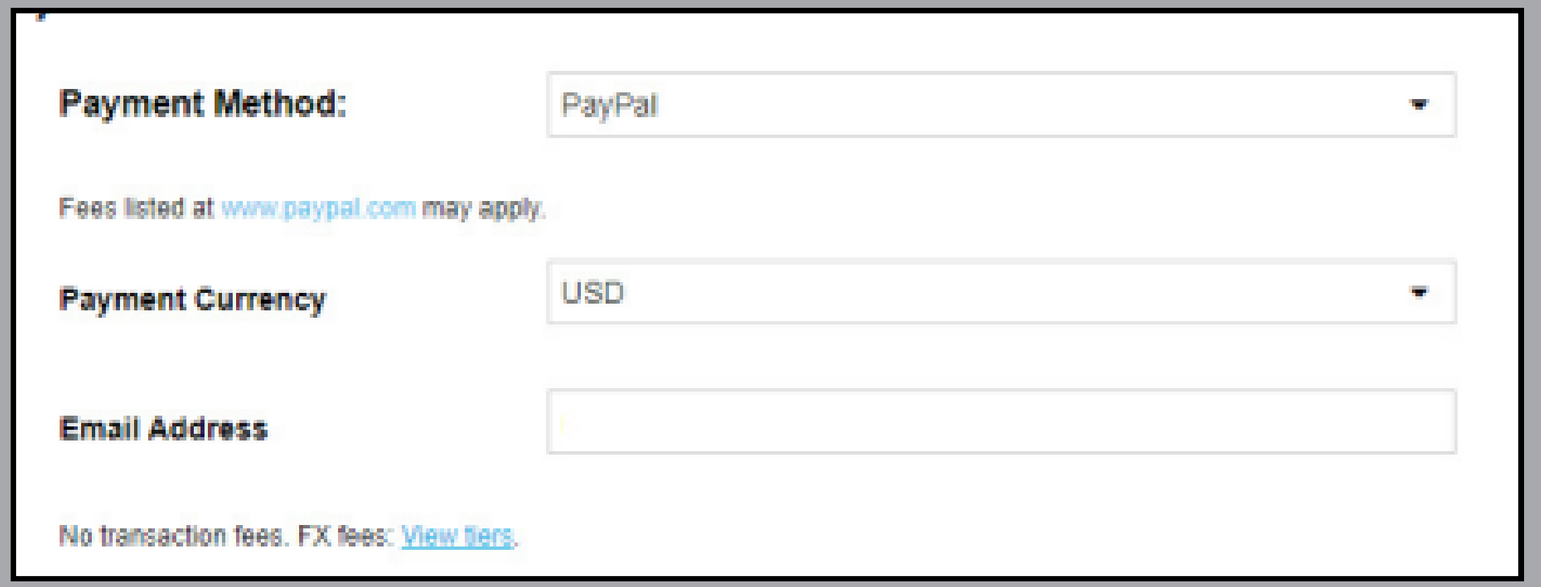
PayPal

Complete the fields:

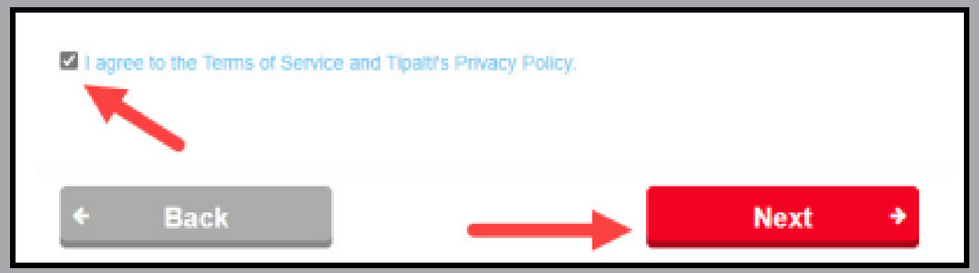
i. Payment Currency

ii. Email address

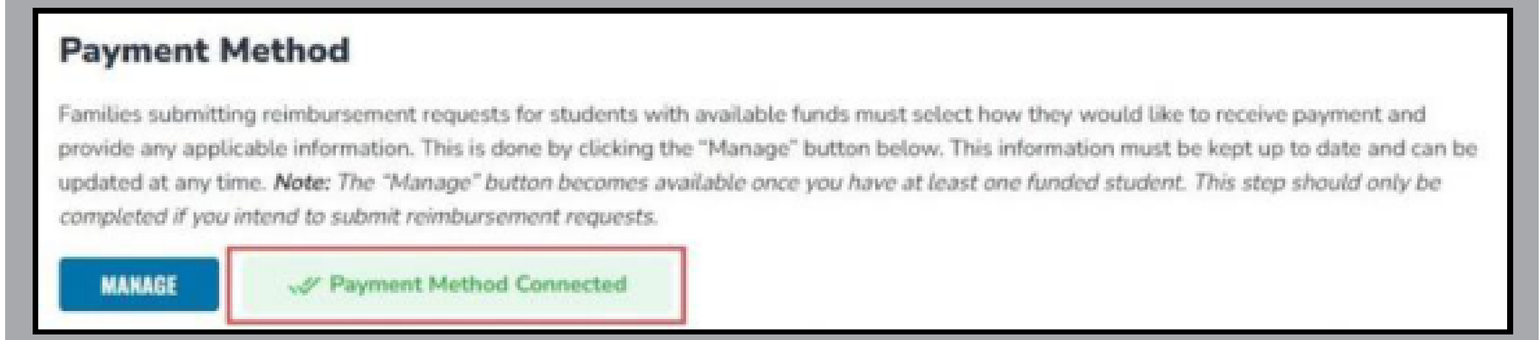
Note: FX fees (applied when a transaction involves foreign currency) may apply.



Submitting Reimbursements in EMA



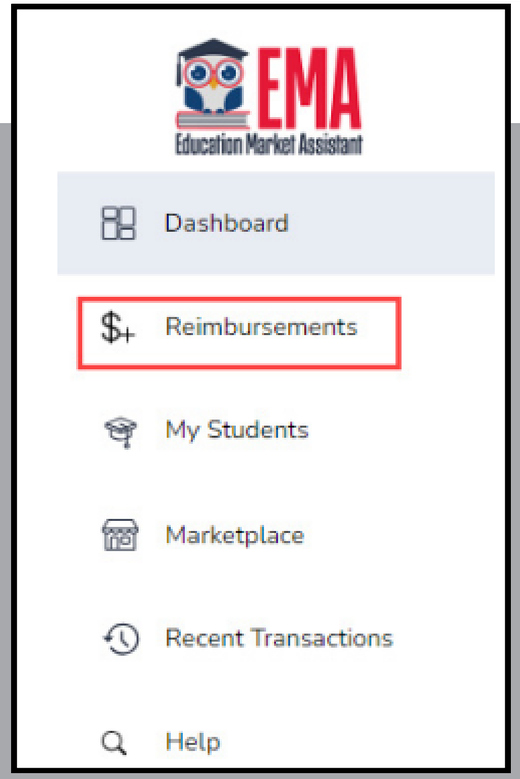
10. Next, select the checkbox to agree to the terms of Tipalti's Privacy Policy then select Next.



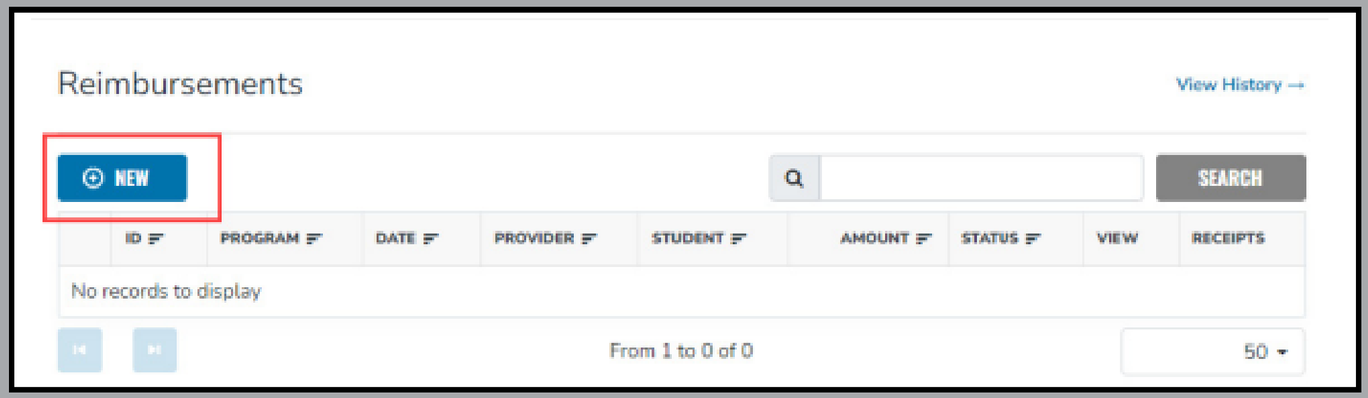
11. You're all set! The green message populates when your payment method is complete.

Note: It may take up to 12 hours for this change to be reflected in your account in EMA. If you continue to see the "Payment Method Needs Attention" message after updating your payment method, please log out, open a new window, and log back in.

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

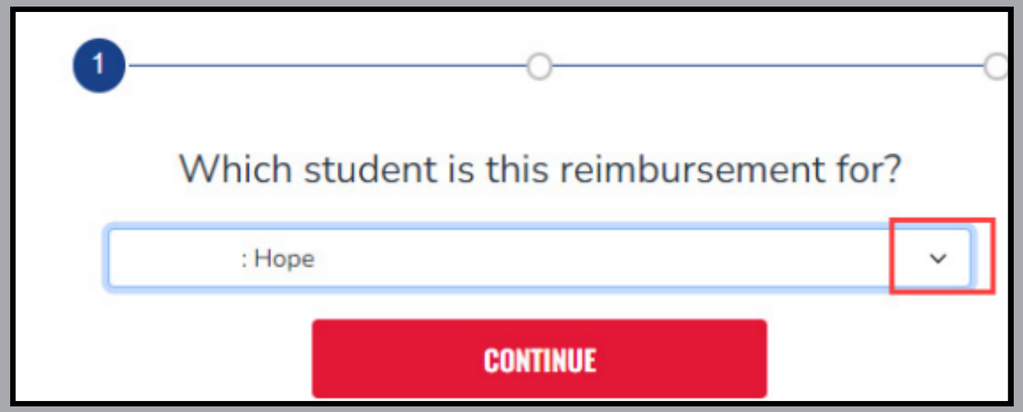


12. To return to your reimbursement request, select Reimbursements from the left panel of the Dashboard.

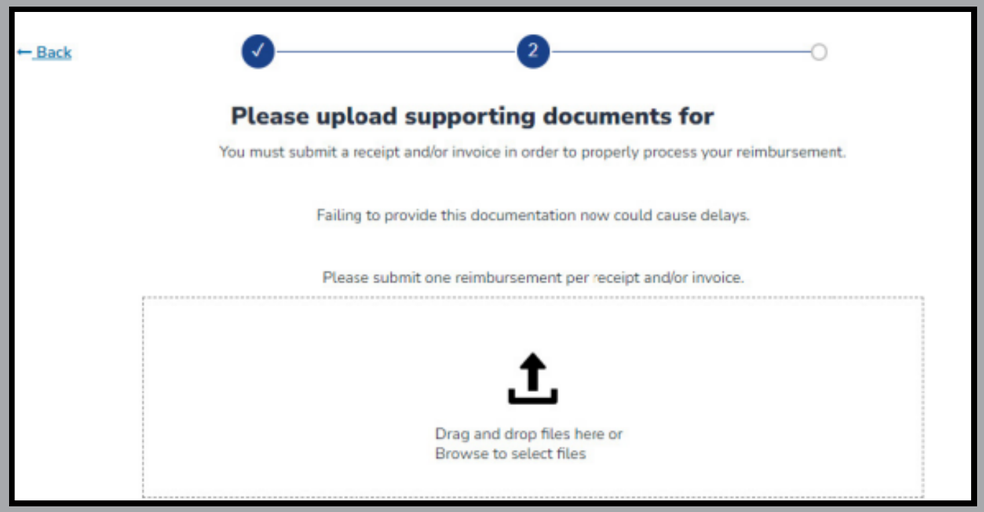


13. From the Reimbursements screen, select NEW.

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA



14. From the dropdown menu, select a student, and then select CONTINUE.



15. Drag-and-drop a file onto the icon to upload the invoice statement, proof of payment, or receipt for the student selected.

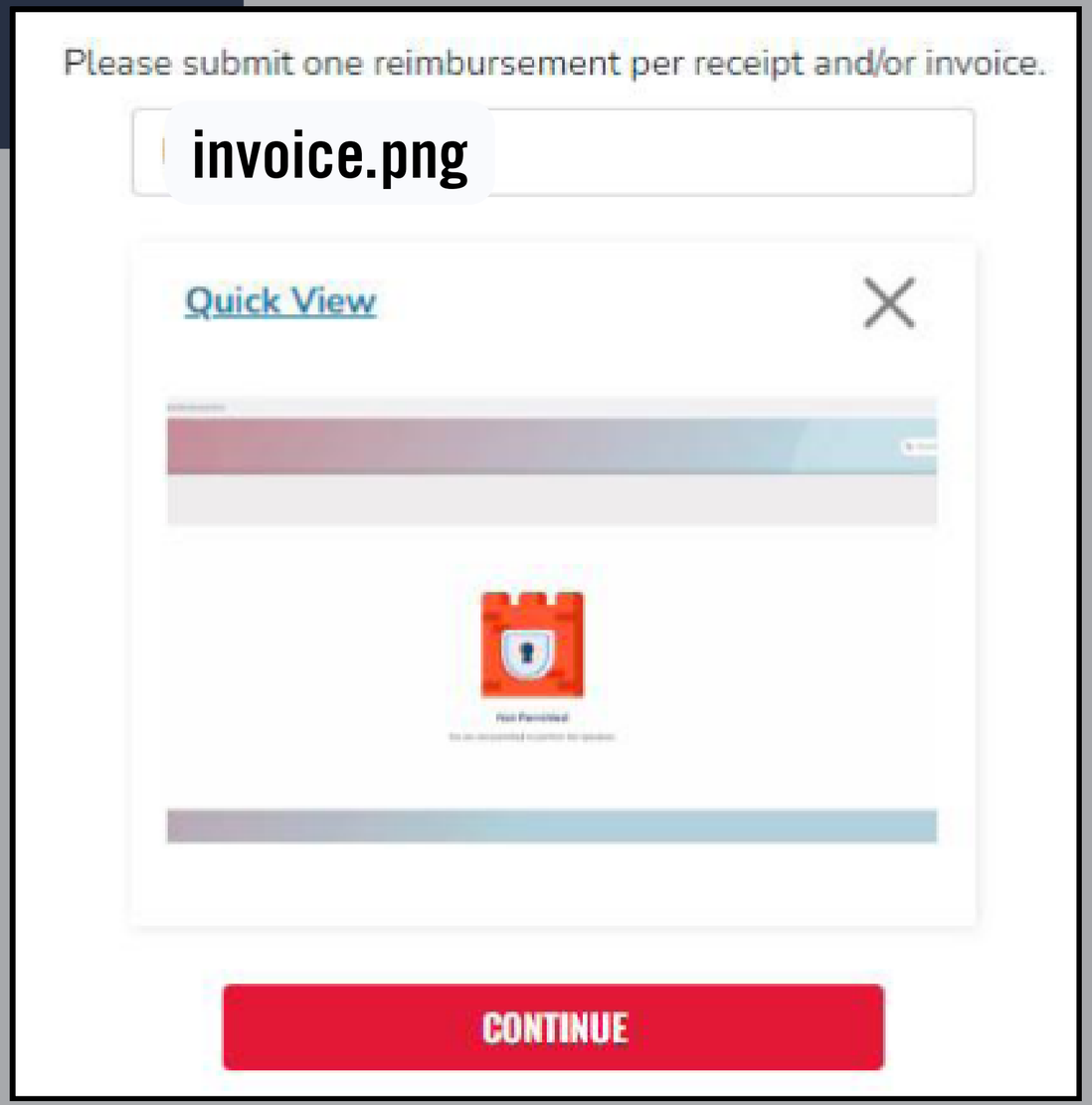
Note

1: File must be a png, jpg or PDF.

2: Select the icon to browse for documents, which may be added later (see below).

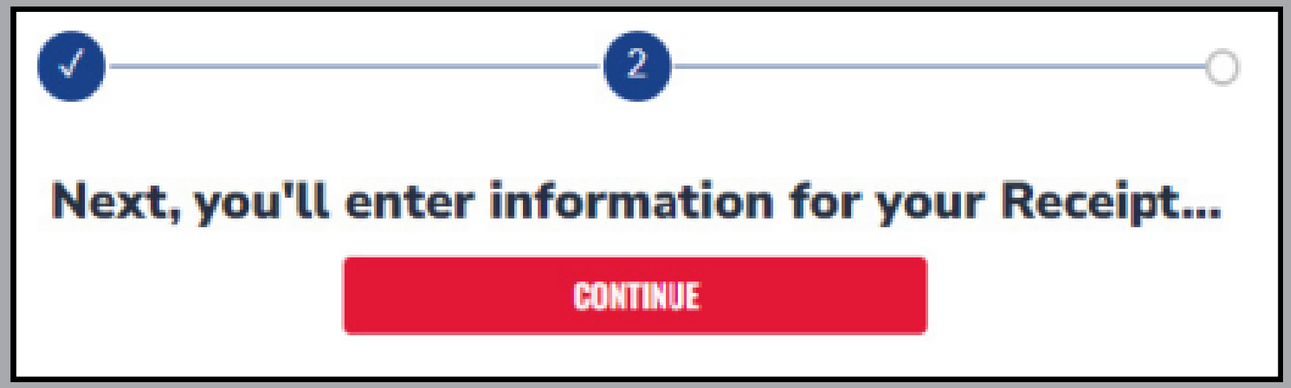
Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

Use Quick View to review your document. Select CONTINUE.



Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

16. Select CONTINUE on the Next, you'll enter information for your Receipt… screen.

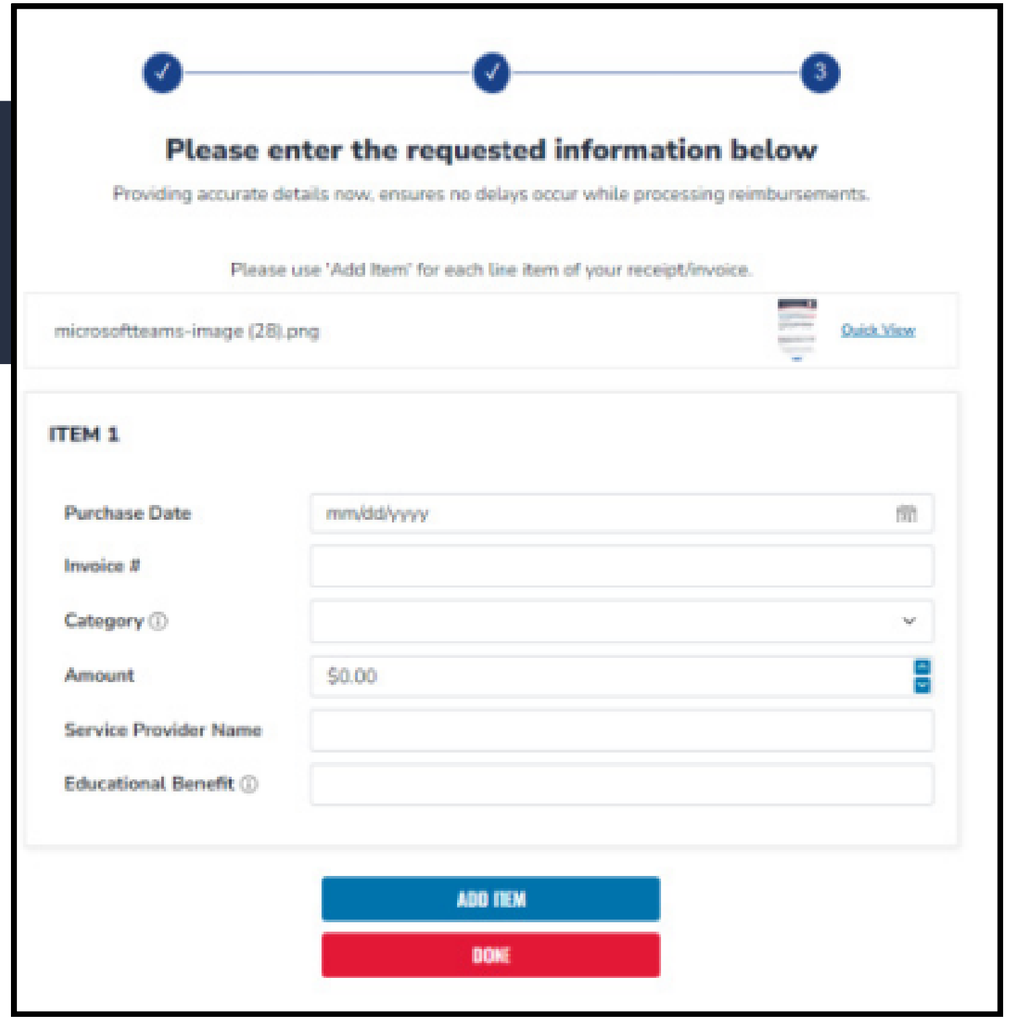


Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

The required information screen displays.

a. Complete the required fields for each item.

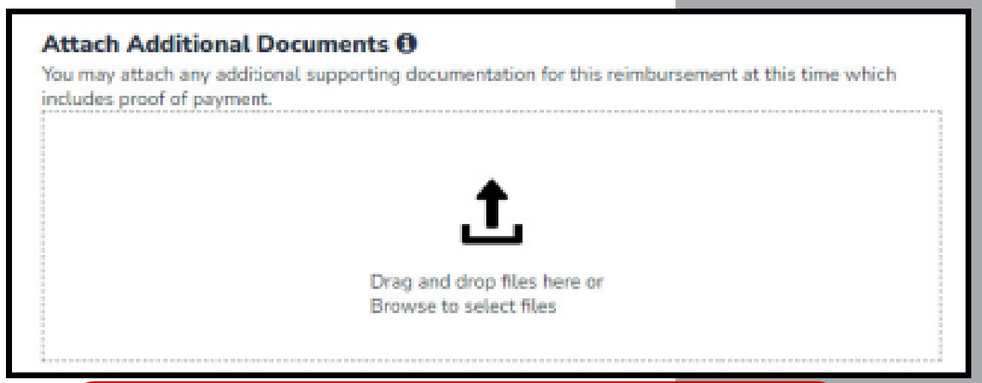
- Purchase Date
- Invoice #
- Category (Scholarship funds can be spent on the categories listed in the dropdown menu, shown below. Please select the appropriate category below. (If you are unsure, please reference the Purchasing Guide to review the list of qualifying expenses for the program and the Parent Handbook to review documentation necessary to submit the reimbursement for the item/services.)
- Amount
- Service Provider Name
- Educational Benefit (Please include a brief description of how this item or service is meeting the educational needs of your student.)



FYI!

If your provider name is not listed, please select, 'Provider Not Listed'

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA



PDF's are the preferred format

b. If necessary, add attach additional documents in the space that populates for some category types near the bottom of this screen.

Note: When requesting a reimbursement, you must provide official documentation/receipts from the educational service provider that clearly shows the Student's name, qualifying educational expenses, and the amount of each expense, along with the amount paid and payment dates. You must attach detailed, itemized receipts, or invoices that reflect the educational expenses. A bank statement alone, without any of the other criteria above, is not sufficient support for a reimbursement request.

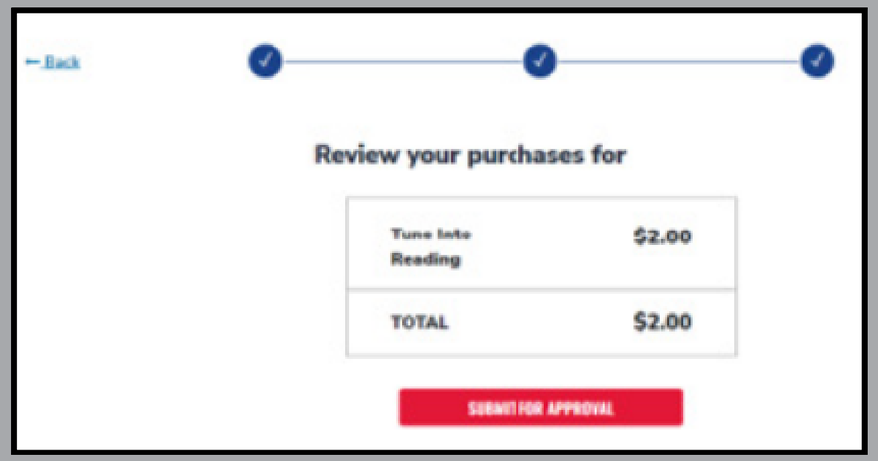
*Refer to the handbook on specifics of what to submit.

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

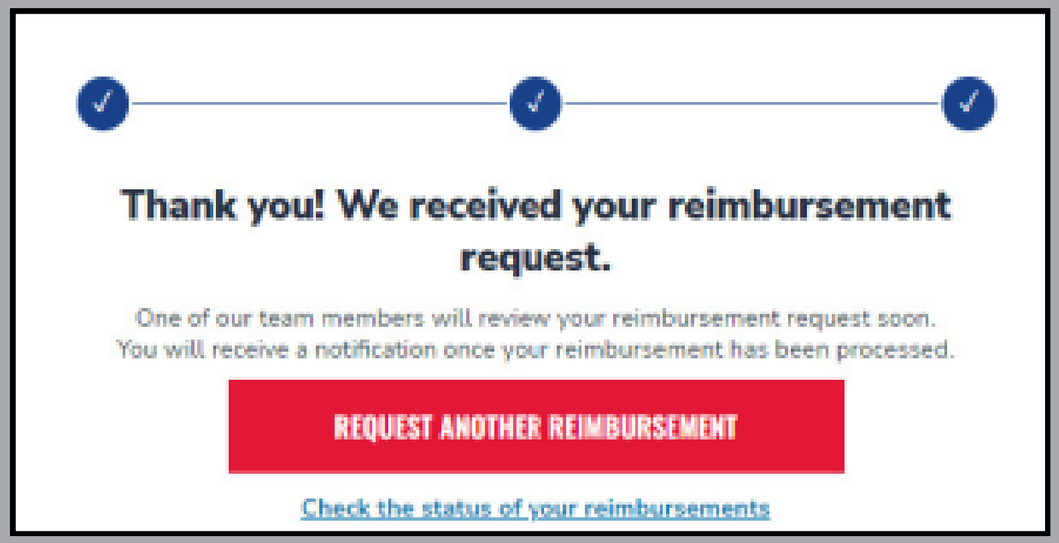
To add another item to the reimbursement request select ADD ITEM. When all items are added and fields are complete, select DONE.

- Note 1: Select Download to review the primary document or receipt uploaded to the reimbursement.
- Note 2: Select Back to go back and make any edits necessary.

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA

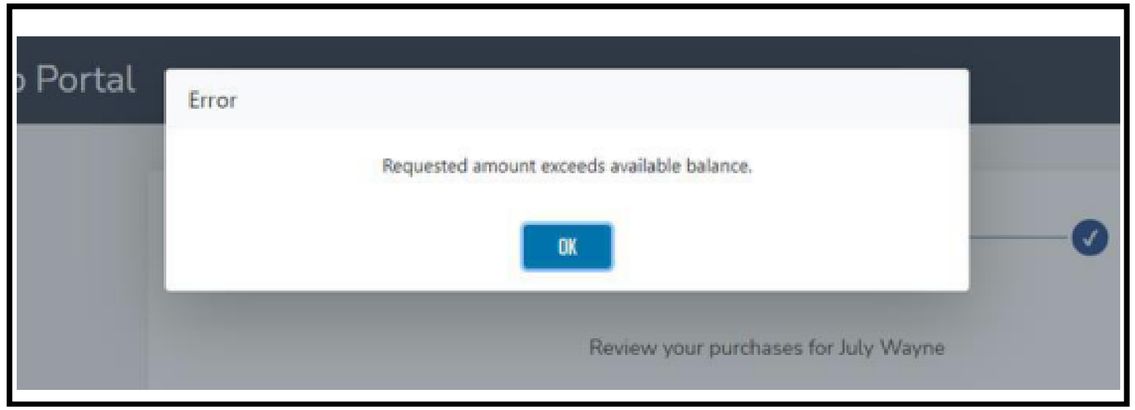


17. The review screen displays. Select SUBMIT FOR APPROVAL to complete the reimbursement request.



18. You will see the screen below after submitting your reimbursement request.

Submitting Reimbursements in EMA



Note:

If your requested amount exceeds the balance in your student's account, an onscreen error will appear as shown. The screen will refresh and will go back to the request form so you can adjust the amount.

When adjusting the amount, please add a comment explaining that the requested amount no longer matches the attached documentation because the reimbursement was limited to the available funding.

Step Up
For Students

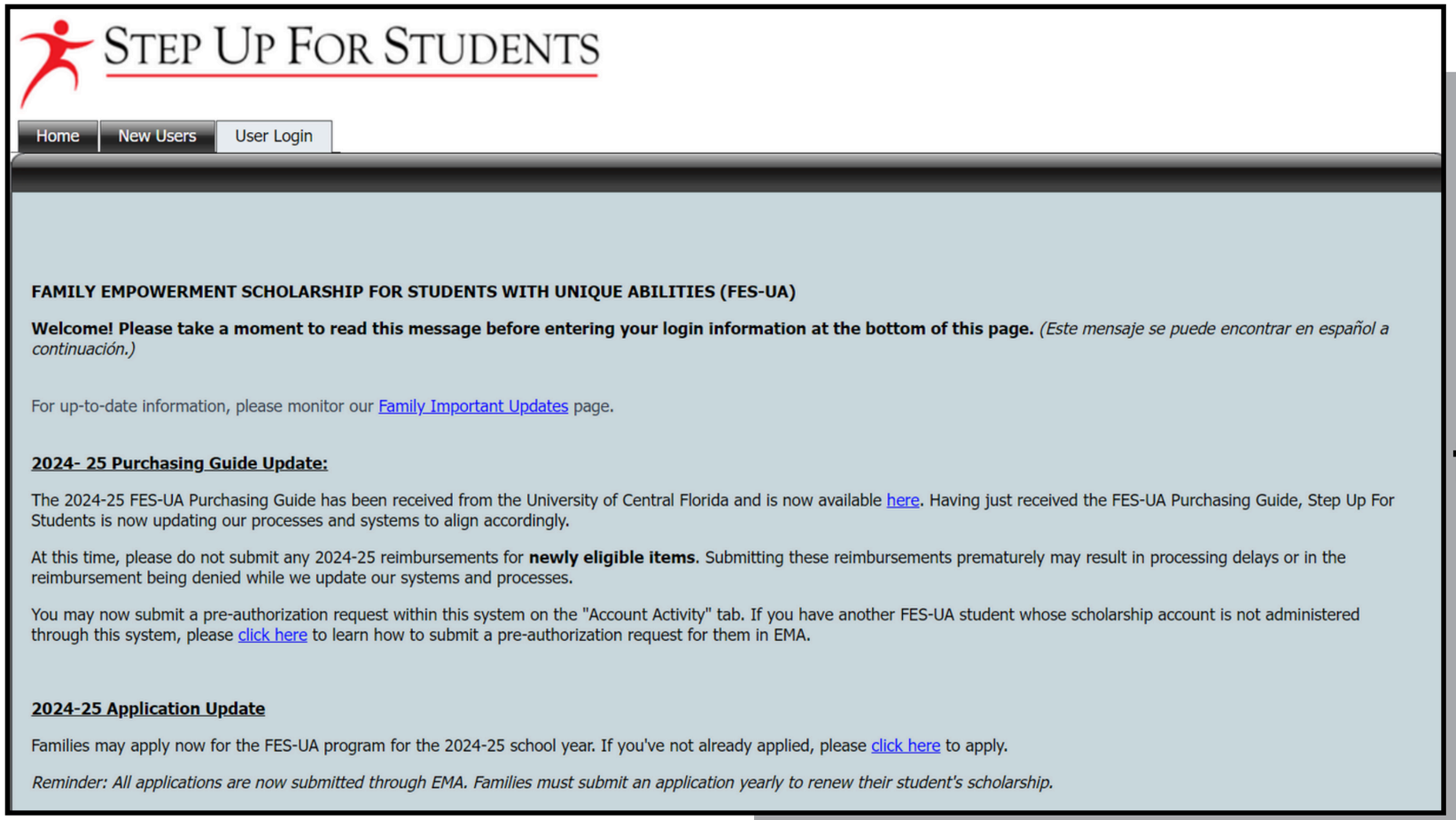
Submitting a Reimbursement in Legacy

Step Up
For Students

FES-UA

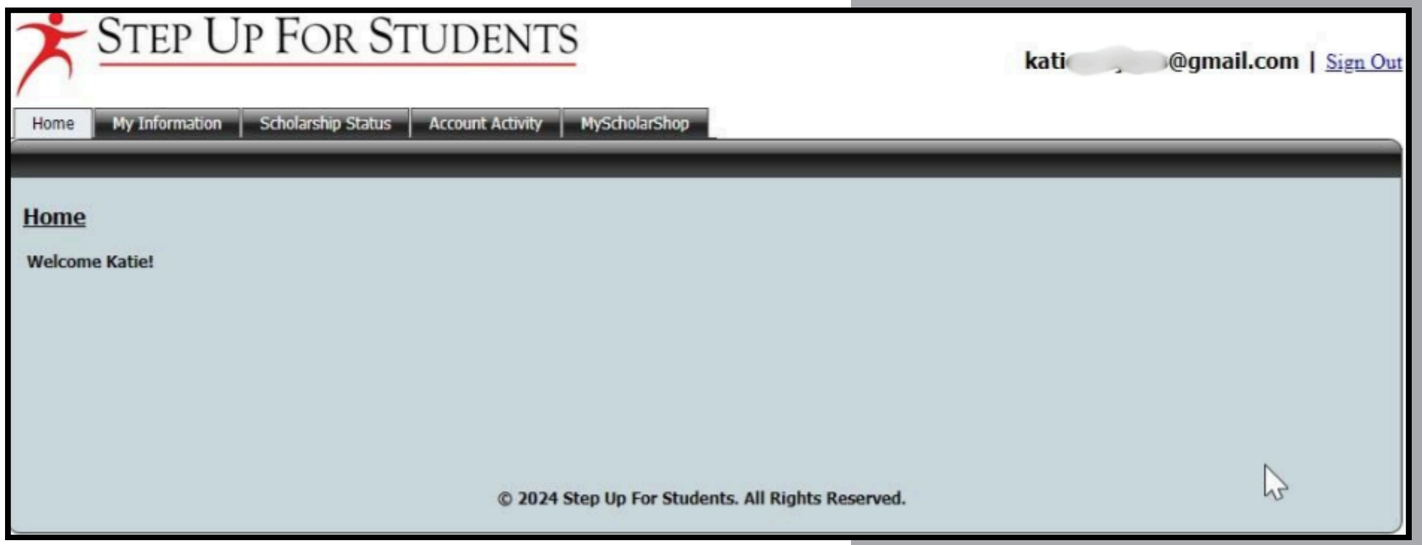
The steps outlined below are tailored specifically for our Legacy families. Legacy families refer to those with students who received the FES-UA scholarship before the 2023-2024 academic year.

FES-UA



Navigate to Gardiner.sufs.org to log into your account in the Legacy System.

FES-UA

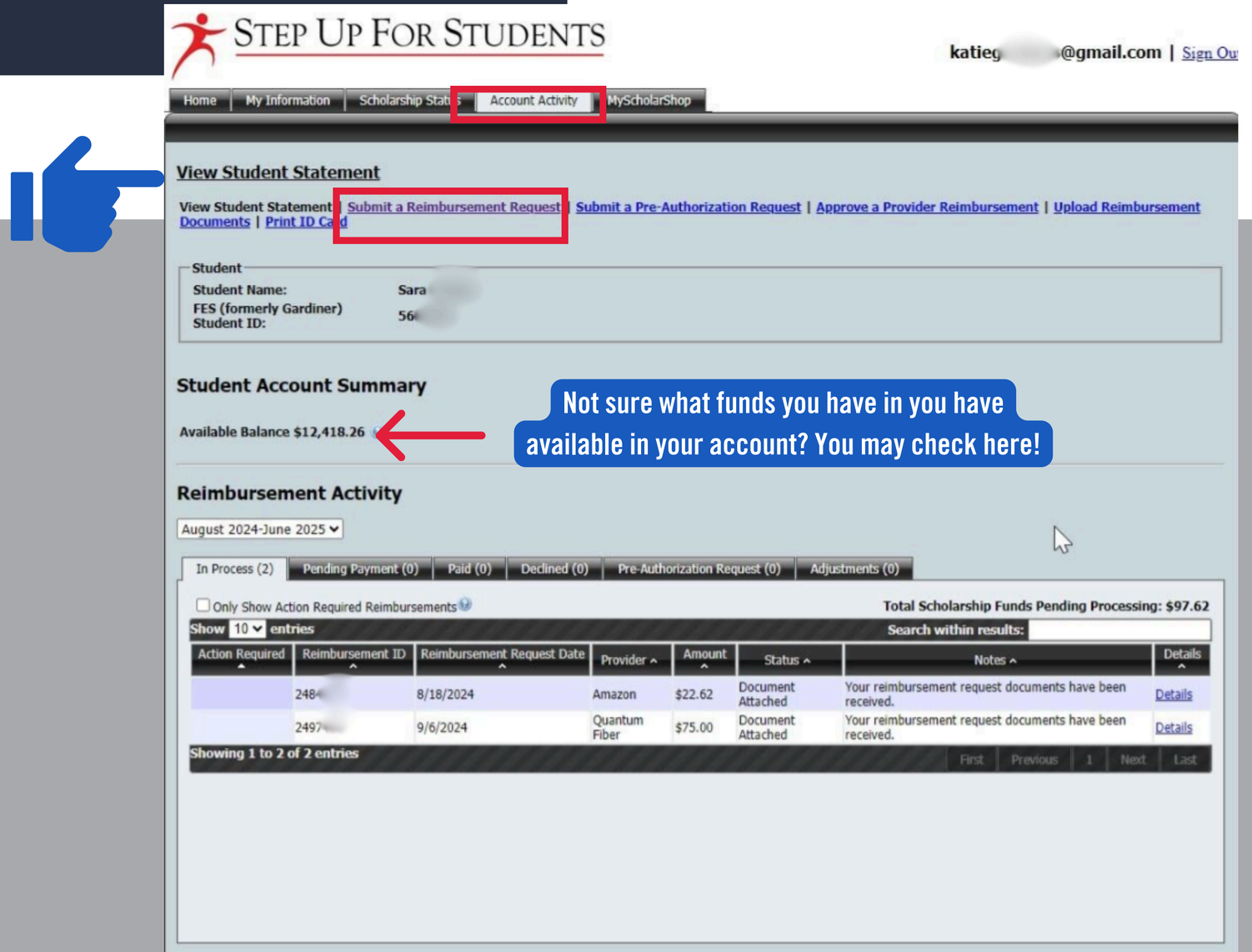


Upon logging in, you will arrive at the landing page.

FES-UA

Click on the ‘Account Activity’ tab at the top of the page. Choose the 'Submit a Reimbursement Request' option found under the "View Student Statement" section.

On this page you may also review previously submitted reimbursements and their status.



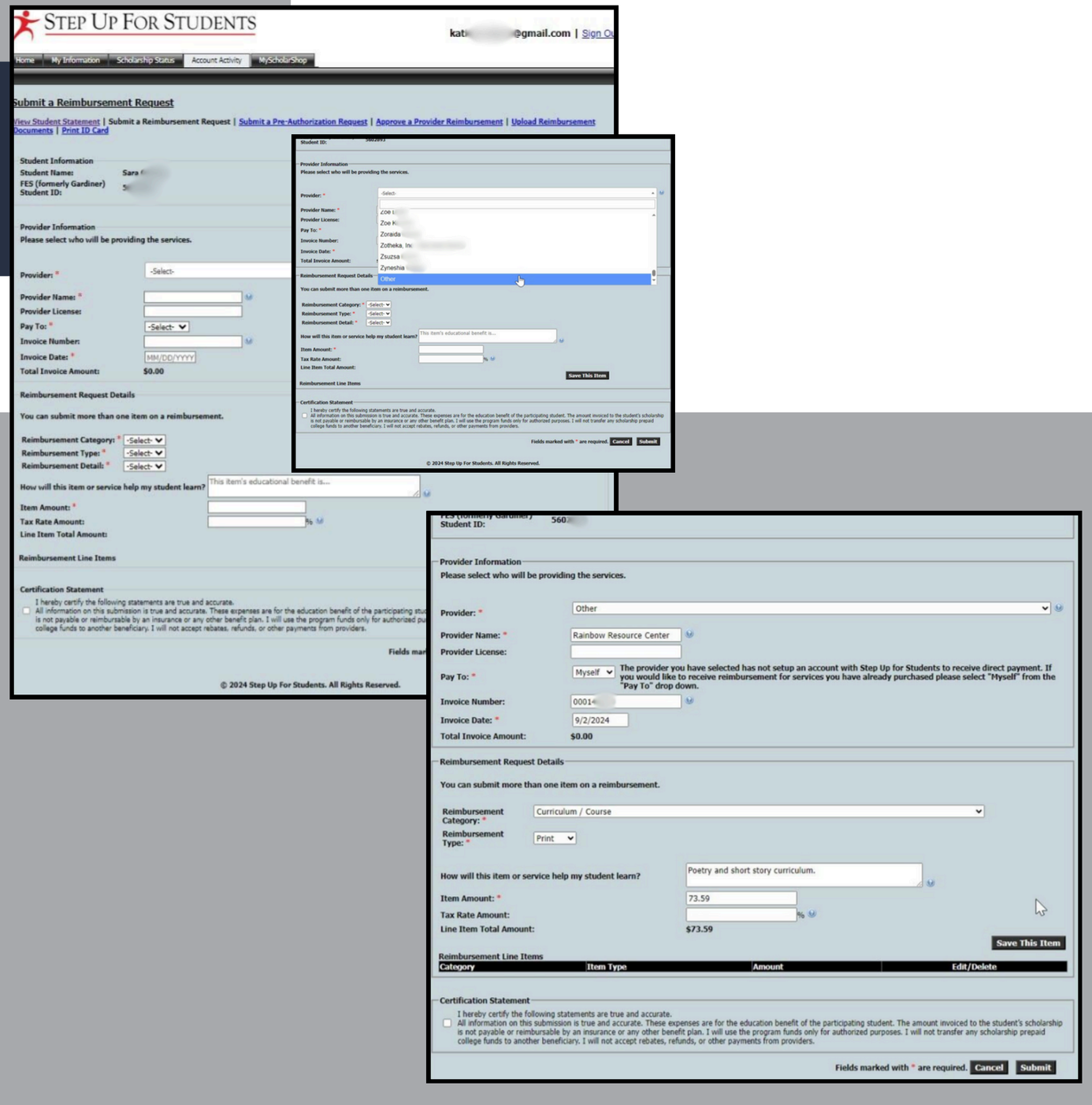
FES-UA

Under Provider Information

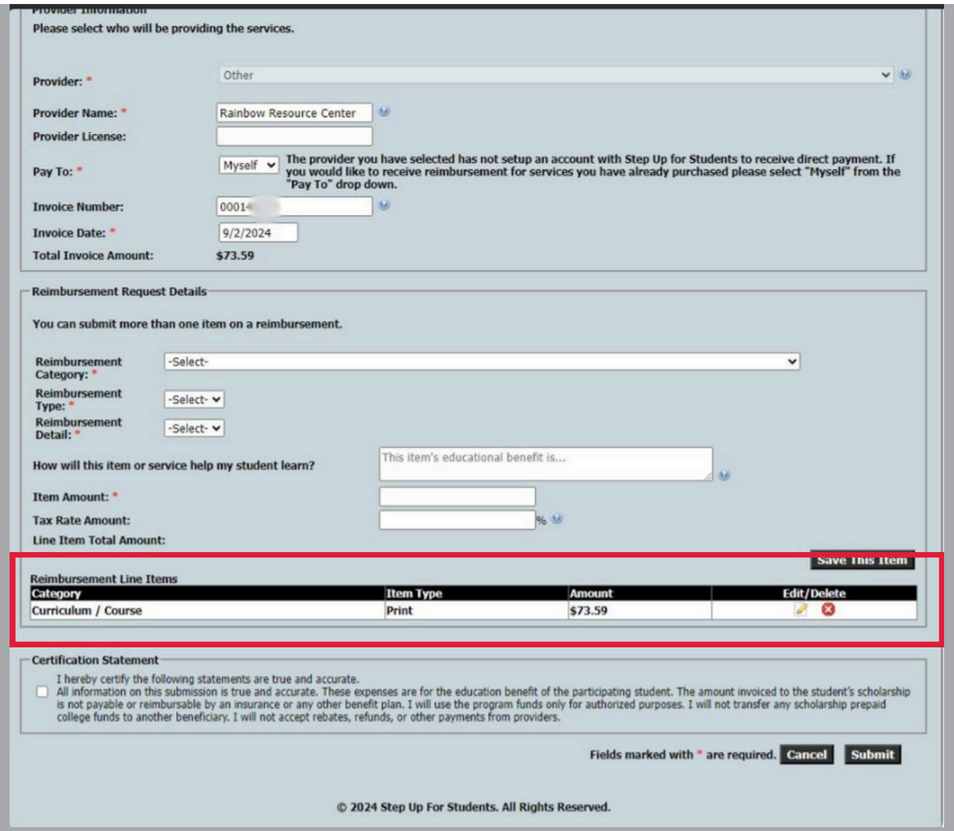
Now you are able to select a provider (if the provider is not listed in the dropdown menu select ‘Other), list the provider’s name, provide their license (if applicable), indicate who should be paid, list the invoice number, and select the date of the invoice.

Under Reimbursement Request Details

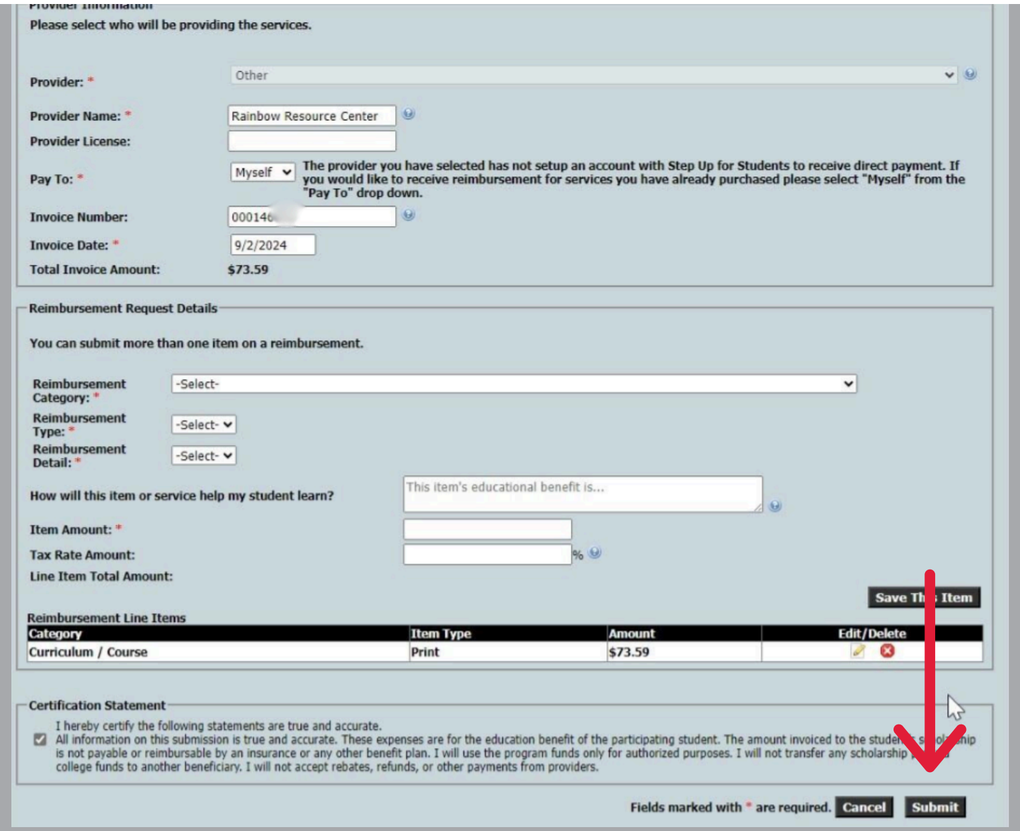
Select the reimbursement category, type and details. You will need to provide a description for how the item will be used to help your student learn. Please list the amount for the service, the tax rate amount and then press the ‘Save This Item” button to save the entry.



FES-UA



Once the entry has been saved, it should populate under the 'Reimbursement Line Items' section.

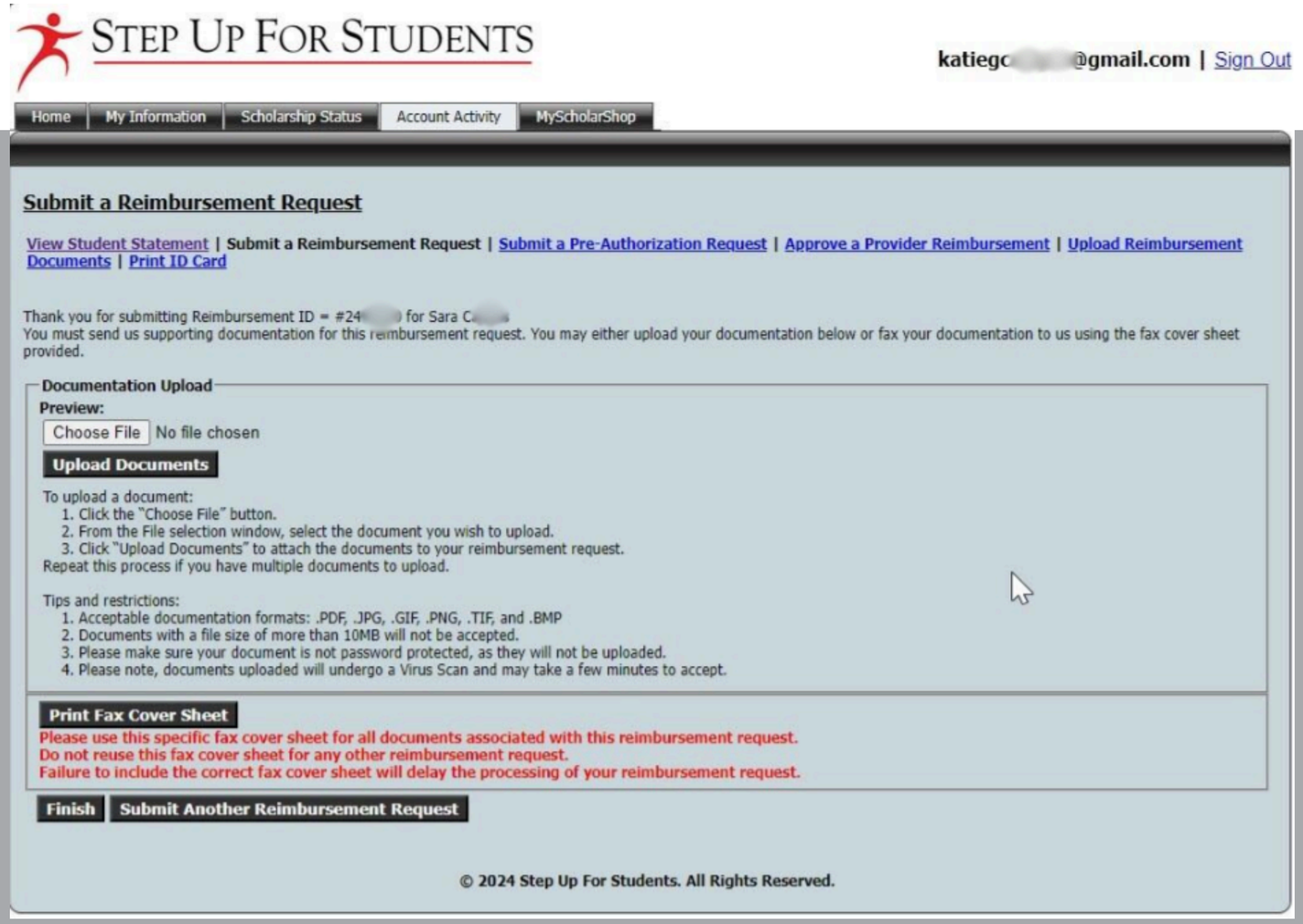


If the entry requires editing, click the pencil icon. To delete, simply select the red 'X'. If the information provided is accurate, you can move forward with submitting your reimbursement by checking the Certification Statement and clicking on 'Submit'.

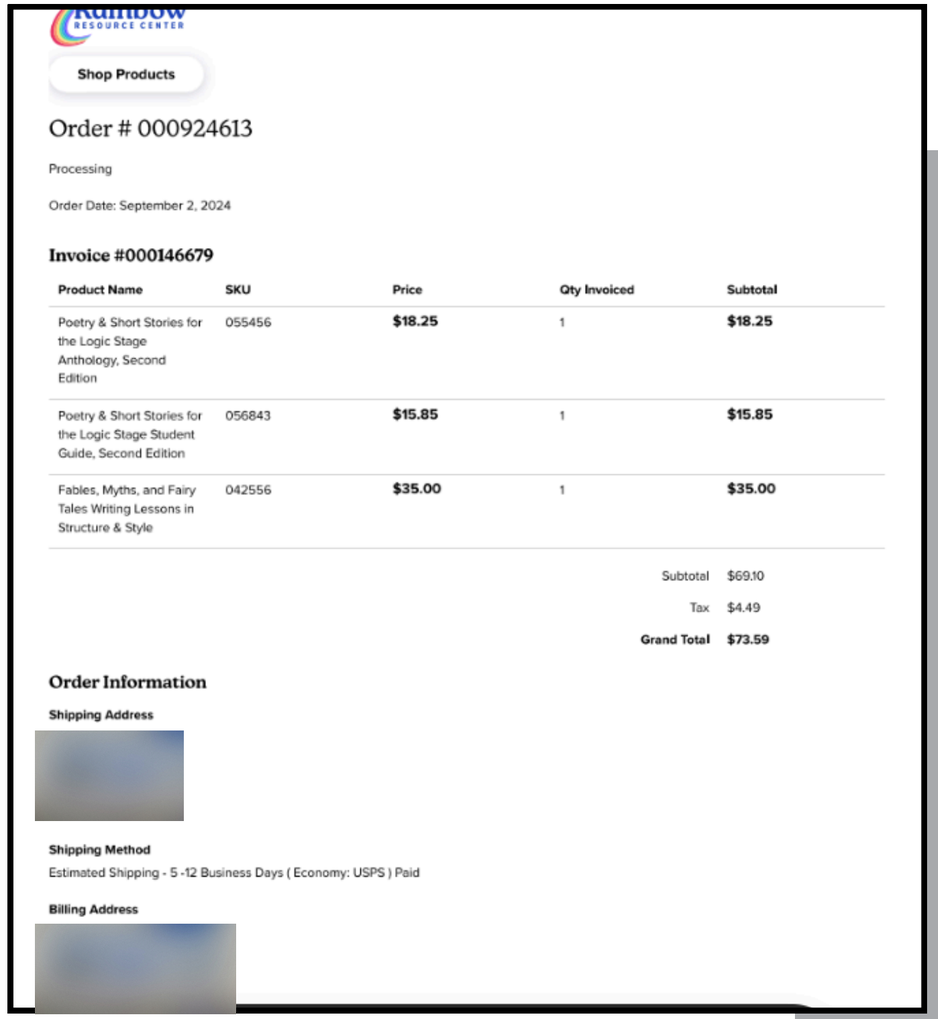
FES-UA

When submitting a reimbursement request, you will be prompted to upload documentation to support your purchase.

Use the ‘Upload Documents’ guidance to upload the documents required for proof of purchase (POP).



FES-UA



Shop Products

Order # 000924613

Processing

Order Date: September 2, 2024

Invoice #000146679

Product Name	SKU	Price	Qty Invoiced	Subtotal
Poetry & Short Stories for the Logic Stage Anthology, Second Edition	055456	$18.25	1	$18.25
Poetry & Short Stories for the Logic Stage Student Guide, Second Edition	056843	$15.85	1	$15.85
Fables, Myths, and Fairy Tales Writing Lessons in Structure & Style	042556	$35.00	1	$35.00

Subtotal	$69.10
Tax	$4.49
Grand Total	**$73.59**

Order Information

Shipping Address

[redacted]

Shipping Method

Estimated Shipping - 5 -12 Business Days (Economy: USPS) Paid

Billing Address

[redacted]

Payment Method

Credit Card

Credit Card Type	American Express
Credit Card Number	xxxx[redacted]

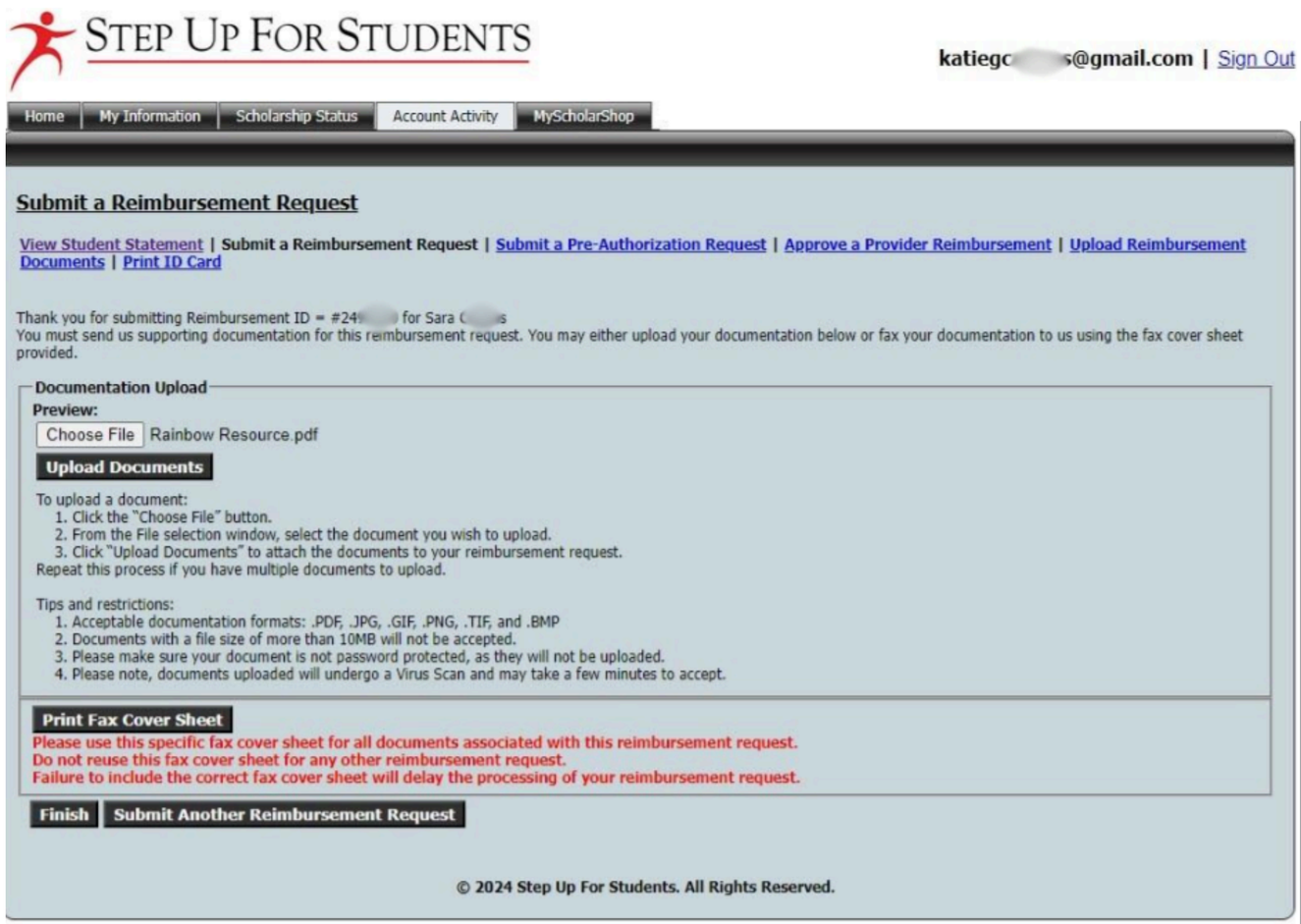
© 2006-2024 Rainbow Resource Center, Inc.

Terms of Use Privacy Policy

When submitting documentation to support the proof of purchase (POP) for a reimbursement request, make certain it contains the requested information such as the invoice number, items, amount paid, etc.

For a full listing of provider qualifications and approved items/services, please review the FES-UA Purchasing Guide. For what is necessary to submit each reimbursement, please review the FES-UA Handbook.

FES-UA



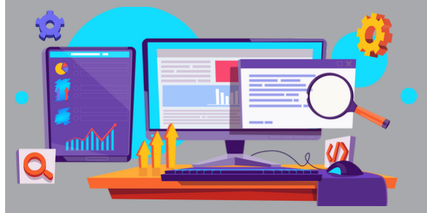
After uploading your document, its name will be displayed. To print a cover sheet for the specific reimbursement request, use the 'Print Fax Cover Sheet' option. Please remember not to use this fax sheet for any other requests.

Once you've finished adding reimbursements, click the 'Finish' button. If you wish to submit another reimbursement request, select the "Submit Another Reimbursement Request" button.

StepUp
For Students

FES-UA

Purchasing Guide
Hot Topics

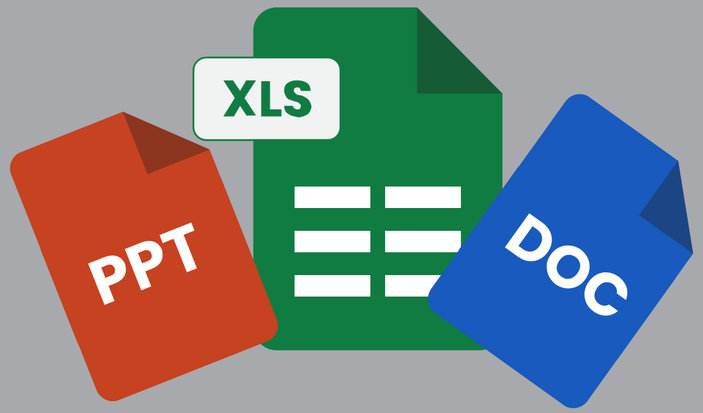


Educational Software
Subscriptions
Elective Courses

FES-UA

Approved Educational Software & Subscriptions

Software Subscriptions:



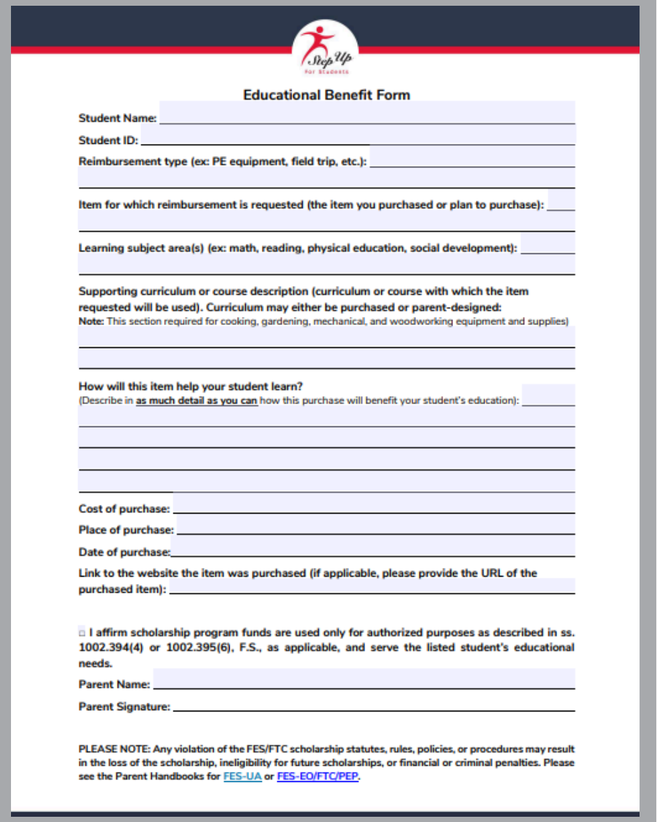
- Graphics
- Photo Editing Software
- Magazine Subscriptions
- Music Creation
- Editing Software
- Newspaper Subscriptions
- Productivity Software (including Microsoft 365)
- Google Workspace
- Video Creation
- Editing Software
- Magazine Subscriptions

FES-UA

Educational Software & Subscriptions

Eligible Educational Software & Subscriptions Requiring the Educational Benefit Form

- Video/TV/Online Streaming Services
- Family or multi-user software subscriptions
- Musical Streaming Services
- In-Game Purchases or Credits
- Live Television
- Social Media
- (except LinkedIn Learning for Students)



Educational Benefit Form

Student Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Reimbursement type (ex: PE equipment, field trip, etc.): _____

Item for which reimbursement is requested (the item you purchased or plan to purchase): _____

Learning subject area(s) (ex: math, reading, physical education, social development): _____

Supporting curriculum or course description (curriculum or course with which the item requested will be used). Curriculum may either be purchased or parent-designed:
Note: This section required for cooking, gardening, mechanical, and woodworking equipment and supplies)

How will this item help your student learn?
(Describe in as much detail as you can how this purchase will benefit your student's education): _____

Cost of purchase: _____

Place of purchase: _____

Date of purchase: _____

Link to the website the item was purchased (if applicable, please provide the URL of the purchased item): _____

☐ I affirm scholarship program funds are used only for authorized purposes as described in ss. 1002.394(4) or 1002.395(6), F.S., as applicable, and serve the listed student's educational needs.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

PLEASE NOTE: Any violation of the FES/FTC scholarship statutes, rules, policies, or procedures may result in the loss of the scholarship, ineligibility for future scholarships, or financial or criminal penalties. Please see the Parent Handbooks for FES-UA or FES-EO/FTC/PEP.

FES-UA

Educational Software & Subscriptions

Items to Note

Items are eligible for single-use/student pricing only. Reimbursements for multiuser access subscriptions will be prorated to only cover the student's cost

Educational Subscription Kits curated and mailed to the home by a kit company are eligible for reimbursement.

Subscriptions must be age appropriate.

If a single-user subscription is available, the multi-user item purchase is prohibited.

Step Up For Students

FES-UA

Approved Elective Items

- Music Lessons
- Art Lessons
- Art Supplies (including subscription kits)
- Club Fees (such as Boy/Girl Scouts, and 4H/FFA Clubs)
- Cooking Lessons
- Cooking Supplies (including subscription kits)
- Drama Lessons
- Foreign Language Lessons
- Animal Husbandry Lessons or Training Programs
- Animal Husbandry Supplies
- Woodworking/Building Lessons or Training Programs
- Woodworking/Building Supplies (tools must satisfy manufacturer age recommendations)
- Mechanical Lessons or Training Programs
- Sewing Lessons
- Sewing Supplies
- Gardening or Horticultural Lessons or Training Programs
- Garden Supplies (tools must satisfy manufacturer age recommendations)
- Safety items (including protective gloves and goggles)
- Programming/Digital Production Lessons
- Enrichment Classes/Courses

FES-UA

Ineligible Elective Items

*Commercial-Grade Tools/Equipment

*Elective uniforms and or costumes

Step Up
For Students

FES-UA

Question: What is the timeframe for holding on to our scholarship before it is forfeited? We are unsure of our next course of action.

Answer: Account Closure and Fund Revocation A student's scholarship account must be closed and any remaining funds, including any contributions made to the Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Savings Program or to the Florida College Savings Program (529), will be returned to the state after:

- Any period of two consecutive fiscal years (July 1 – June 30) with no spending activity.
- Denial or revocation of program eligibility by the commissioner for fraud or abuse,
- Any period of three consecutive years after high school completion or graduation during which the student has not been enrolled in an eligible postsecondary educational institution or a program offered by the institution.

FES-UA Parent Handbook pg(s): 15

s.1002.394 (5)(3)

FES-UA

Question: Can a Step Up UA Recipient enroll in a public school and use the scholarship for therapy or other essential needs?

Answer: No, a student awarded an FES-UA scholarship may not enroll full-time in any public school, including:

- A charter school
- A developmental research school
- Any other Florida public school
- Florida Virtual School or any other online public school
- The College-Preparatory Boarding Academy
- The Florida Scholars Academy
- The Florida School for Competitive Academics
- The Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

If the school has services in the EMA marketplace, they can be used in this manner.

FES-UA Parent Handbook pg(s): 38

FES-UA

Question: Can UA recipients attend a combination of in-person and virtual classes, like some schools permit (e.g., attending public school but taking certain courses at FLVS private), and still qualify for the scholarship?

Answer: Yes. UA students must either be enrolled at an eligible private school or enrolled with their district as a home education student. If the private school is approved by the DOE to participate in the UA scholarship, parents can enroll their students. As a home education student, parents have access to public school on a part-time basis and approved online providers. Please see the purchasing guide for the list of eligible expenses

FES-UA Parent Handbook pg(s): 11

FES-UA

Question: Is it possible for newly awarded families to receive reimbursement for online schooling that they have already commenced before funds become accessible?

Answer: Reimbursement Timing-Reimbursement requests are year-specific. Requests for reimbursements using scholarship funds from the 2024-25 school year may be submitted at any time after the purchase is made, as long as the items or services were purchased between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025. In addition, reimbursements for purchases made in the following categories between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, are eligible for reimbursement with scholarship funds.

- Eligible Private School Tuition and Fees
- Home Education Tuition and Fees
- Public School Contracted Services
- Full-Time Private Tutoring

State-Approved Virtual Instruction Provider

- State-Approved Online Course
- Curriculum In these instances, reimbursements should be submitted during the school year in which the service is rendered (or curricula is used), but the proof of purchase may be from the immediately preceding fiscal year.

FES-UA Parent Handbook pg(s): 26

FES-UA

Question: Is it possible for newly awarded families to receive reimbursement for online schooling that they have already commenced before funds become accessible?

Answer: Direct Payment for Services

Step Up For Students allows parents and guardians to pay directly for some eligible educational services. Providers wishing to participate in direct payment for educational services from scholarship students must set up a provider account in EMA and submit a service catalog. Students who received and utilized scholarship funding during the 2022-23 school year will begin the 2024-25 school year in the Legacy System for direct provider billing, with the exception of eligible private school enrollment, which is described below. Students funded for the first time during the 2023-24 school year or later will utilize direct provider billing in EMA through the EMA Marketplace. Requests for payment directly to a provider may only be approved after the service has been rendered.

FES-UA Parent Handbook pg(s): 21

FES-UA

Question: Can tutors receive direct payment from scholarship funds, or is it always a reimbursement?

Answer: Yes. Step Up For Students allows parents and guardians to pay directly for some eligible educational services. Providers wishing to participate in direct payment for educational services from scholarship students must set up a provider account in EMA and submit a service catalog.

Question: Additionally, can a tutor without credentials still be a service provider?

Answer: No. every provider must meet the credential requirements within the service category they wish to serve

FES-UA Parent Handbook pg(s): 21

FES-UA

Q: Has there been guidance given as to when we can submit newly added items to the Purchasing Guide for the current school year?

A: Parents and guardians please refrain from submitting new items from the 24-25 Purchasing Guide. A communication will be sent when these items may be submitted.

Step Up For Students

FES-UA

New Provider Survey

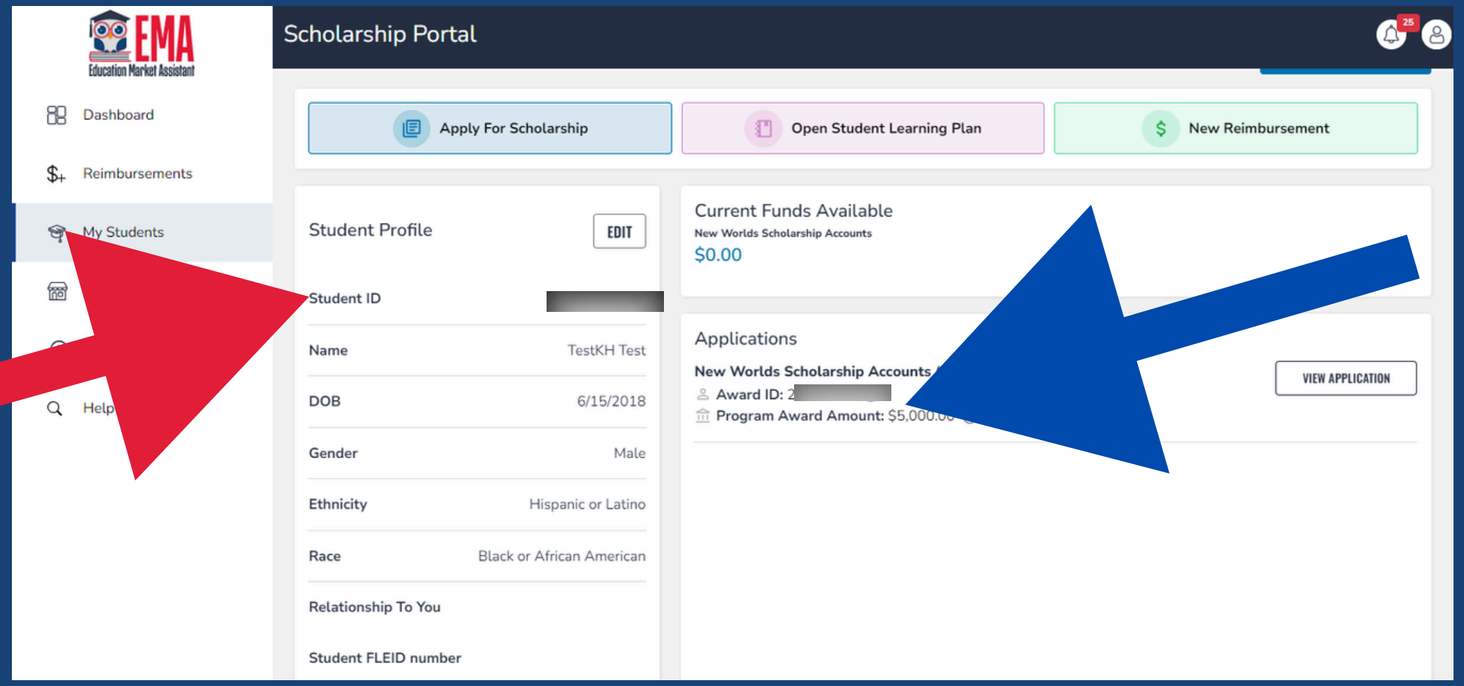
We are actively looking for committed tutors, as well as afterschool and summer programs, to help families achieve their academic aspirations. If you are aware of any qualified tutors or programs in the counties mentioned below, we would be immensely grateful for your assistance. Please take a moment to fill out the brief survey linked here. Your input can have a meaningful impact on a child's educational experience. Thank you for your support.

New Provider Survey

- Citrus
- Gilcrest
- Glades
- Gulf
- Hardee
- Hamilton
- Hendry
- Jefferson
- Lafayette
- Levy
- Liberty
- Madison
- Monroe
- Taylor
- Union
- Wakulla

Award ID vs Student ID

Student ID:
Use this number to complete the Scholarship Decline Form, or when speaking with the Engagement Center.



Award ID:
Give this number to an eligible private school of your choice for enrollment. This number changes yearly.

FES-UA

2024-2025

Parent/Guardian Handbook

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS WITH UNIQUE ABILITIES

PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

FES-UA

Previous FES-UA Open Houses

May Open House

June Open House

August Open House

FES-UA

LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL OPEN HOUSES FOR FTC/EO OR PEP? NOT TO WORRY, WE HAVE THE LINKS HERE FOR YOU JUST SCAN THE QR CODE.

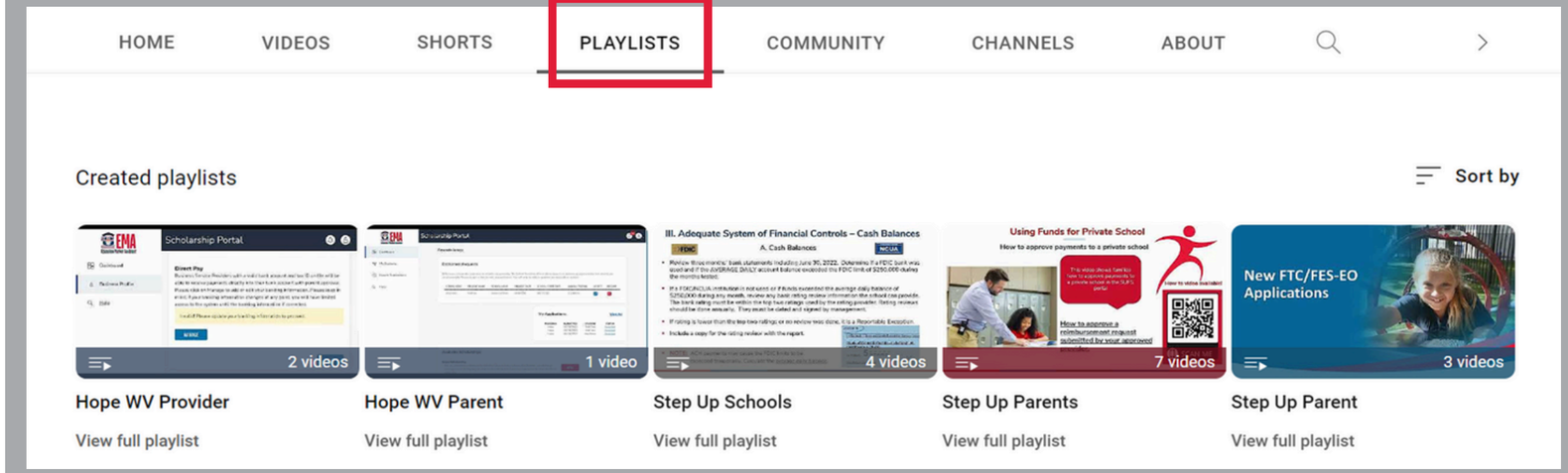
FTC/FES-EO Open House
October 10th, 2024

FES-UA Open House
October 17th, 2024

PEP Open House
October 24th, 2024

FES-UA

Looking for additional help? Scan the QR code or click the link to access our YouTube channel.



[STEP UP FOR STUDENTS YOUTUBE CHANNEL]

Step Up
For Students

FES-UA

Contact Us

Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm EST

Chat with us sufs.org

877-735-7837

Contact Us

Step Up
For Students

FES-UA

Thank you for attending!

Upcoming webinar: October 17th, 2024

Registration Link