Step Up
For Students

NEW WORLDS SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNTS

PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

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Overview

Step Up For Students is a state-approved, nonprofit Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO) that empowers families to pursue and engage in the most appropriate learning options for their children. Step Up For Students administers Florida's education choice programs.

These programs include the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Opportunities (FES-EO), the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA), the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program (FTC), the Hope Scholarship for students who are bullied or are victims of violence in a public school, and the New Worlds Scholarship Program for public school students in kindergarten through fifth grades who struggle with math and/or reading.

In 2018, the Florida Legislature established Reading Scholarship Accounts to provide educational options for public school students in grades 3 through 5 who struggle with reading. In 2022, the program was renamed the New Worlds Reading Scholarship Accounts Program and the Florida Legislature expanded eligibility for the scholarship to include public school students in grades K-5 who have a substantial reading deficiency. In 2023, the program was renamed the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts Program and was expanded to include public school students in grades K-5 who have a substantial math deficiency.

Florida is the first state to offer an education savings account program for students enrolled in public schools. The program provides parents with access to education savings accounts, worth $500 each, to pay for tuition and fees related to part-time tutoring in reading and/or math, summer and afterschool programs designed to improve reading/literacy or math skills, instructional materials, which includes limited technology, or curriculum related to reading/literacy or math.

The sections following this introduction will guide you as you utilize your New Worlds Scholarship Accounts funding.

Qualifying for a New Worlds Scholarship Account

New Worlds Scholarship Accounts are available to students who are enrolled in a Florida Public School in grades K-5 who:

- Have a substantial reading deficiency or exhibit characteristics of dyslexia as identified under s. 1008.25(5), F.S.
- Or scored below a Level 3 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) assessment in the prior school year.
- Or have a substantial deficiency in mathematics or the characteristics of dyscalculia as identified under s. 1008.25(6), F.S.

- Or scored below a Level 3 on the statewide, standardized Mathematics assessment in the prior school year.

An eligible student who is classified as an English Language Learner and is enrolled in a program or receiving services that are specifically designed to meet the instructional needs of English Language Learner students shall receive priority.

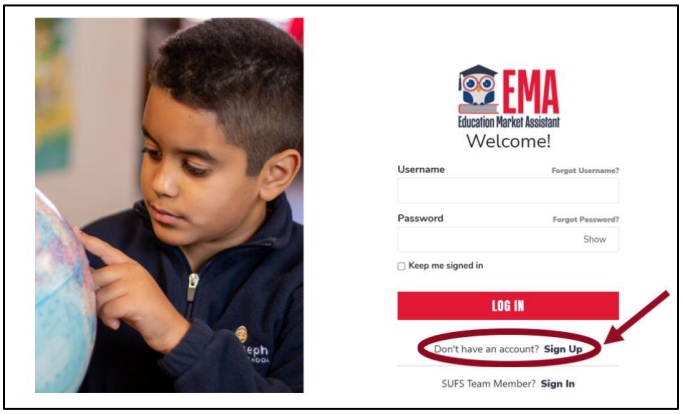
Applying for a New Worlds Scholarship

Families will need to create a Step Up For Students Education Marketplace Assistant (EMA) Account before applying. If you have already created an EMA account, please skip to Add Students to Your EMA Account.

Create a Step Up For Students EMA Account

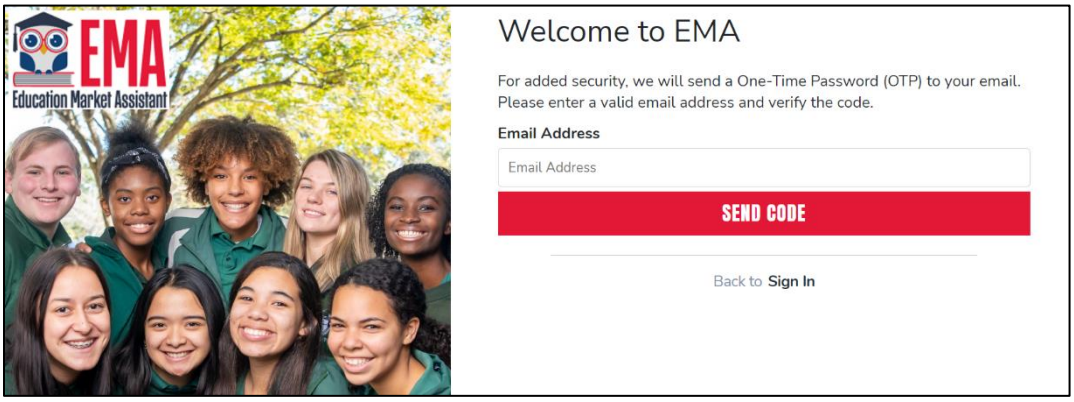
To create a new account, a valid email address is required.

1. New families can click here to create their account.
2. From the EMA login screen, select “Sign Up”.

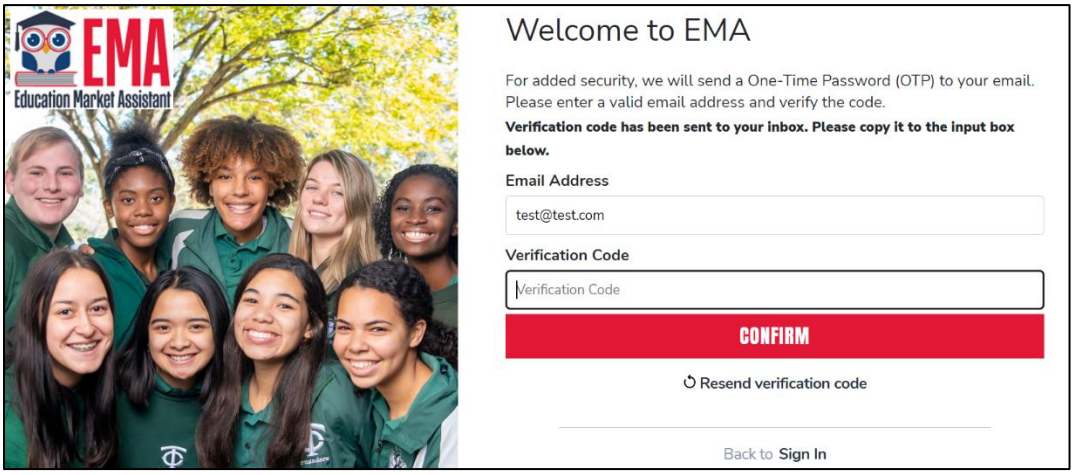


3. In the Email Address box, enter your Email Address, and select **SEND CODE**. The Verification Code is sent to the entered Email Address.

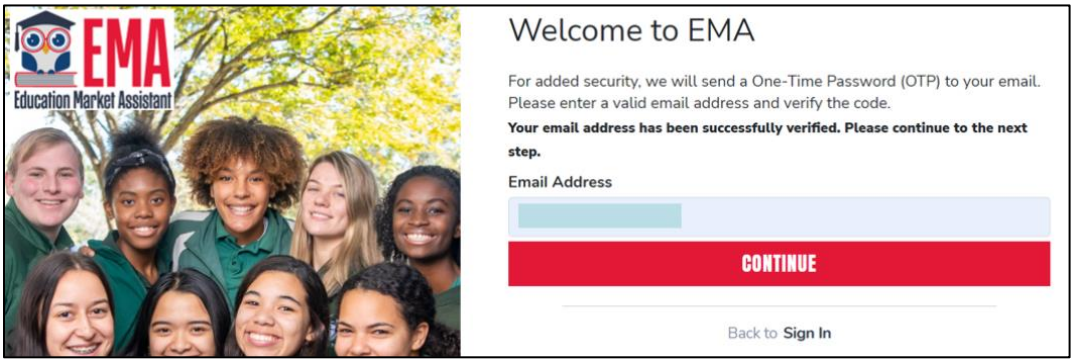
   IMPORTANT: Step Up will email critical information about your student’s scholarship to the email address you use in this step. Make sure to use an email address you use regularly.



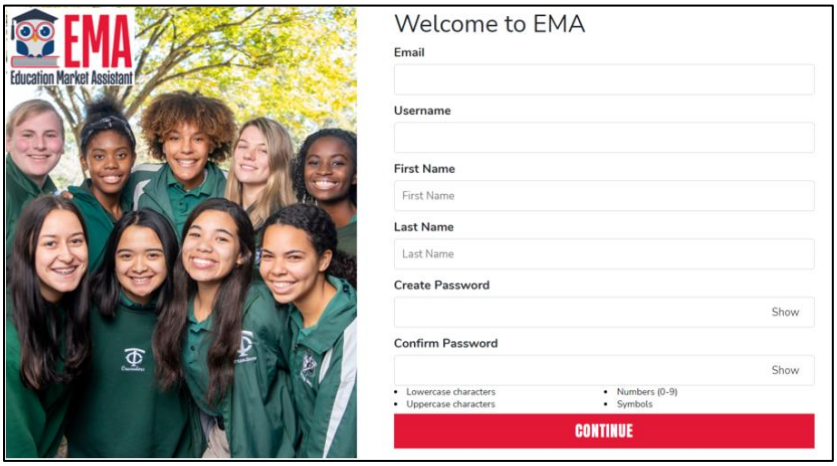
4. In the Verification code box, enter the Verification code from the email, and then select **CONFIRM**.



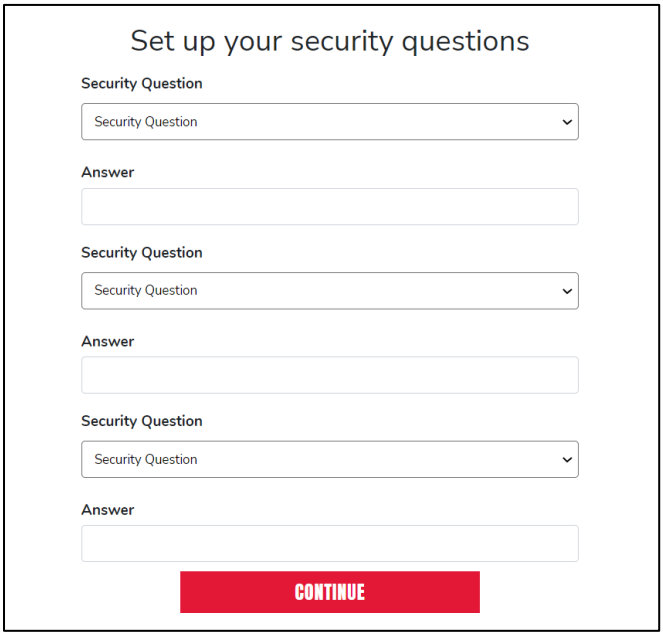
5. Select **CONTINUE**.



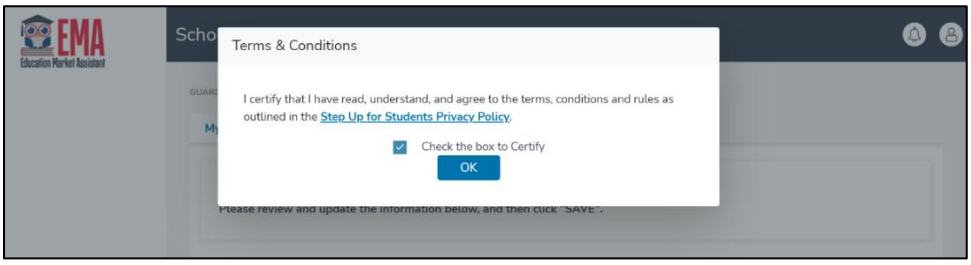
6. Choose a username, enter your first and last name, and create a password. The password must contain a lowercase character, uppercase character, number, and special symbol (! @ #, etc.). Select **CONTINUE**.



7. Complete the security questions and then select **CONTINUE**.

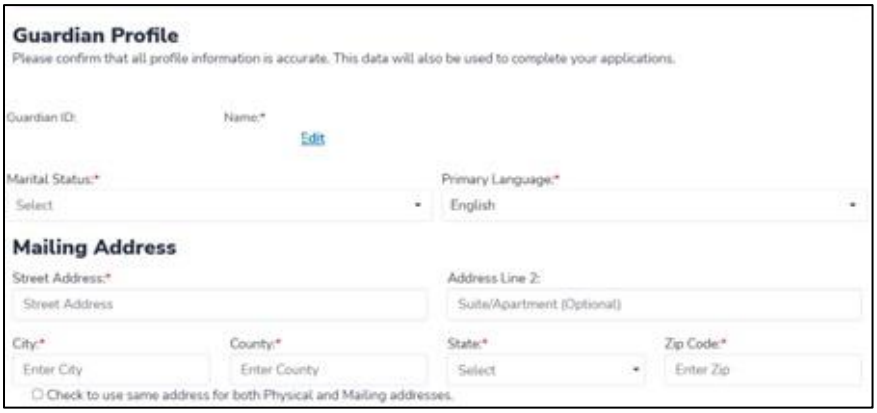


8. Check the box to certify the Terms & Conditions and select **OK**.

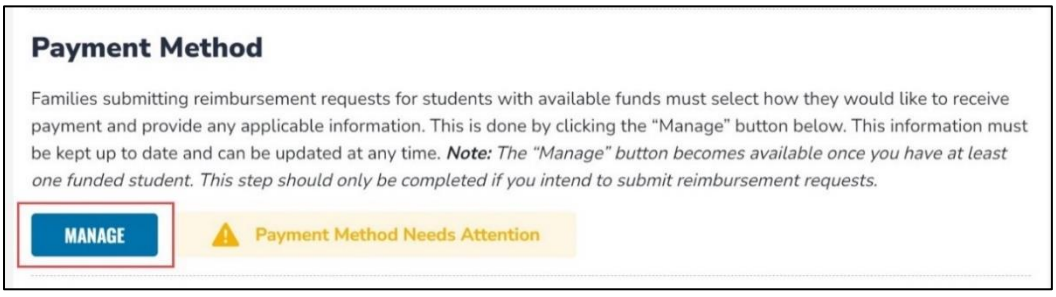


9. Complete the Guardian Profile, Mailing Address, Physical Address, and Contact Information fields.

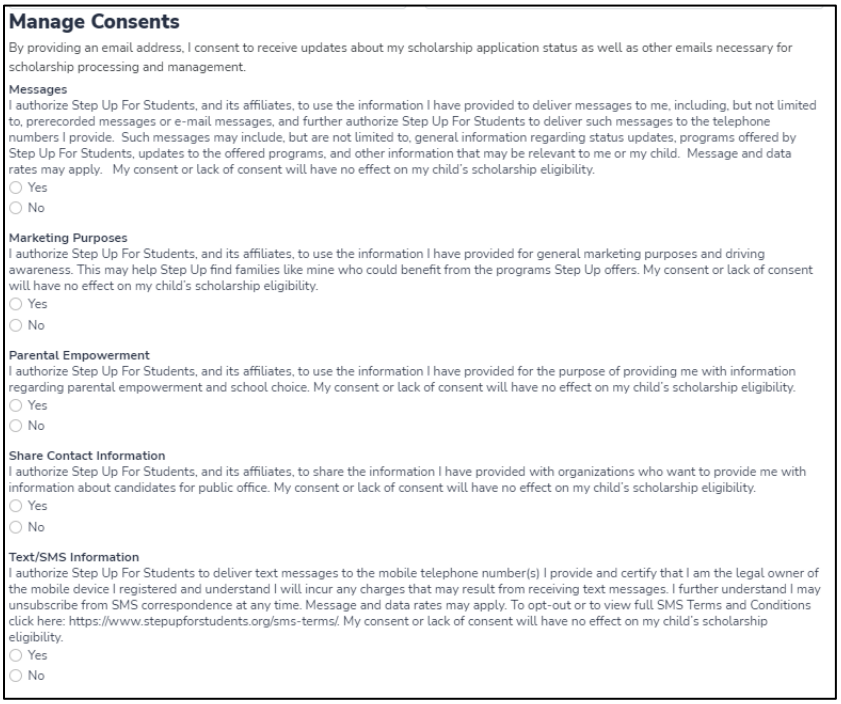
IMPORTANT: Step Up will email critical information about your student's scholarship to the Primary Email address listed in the Contact Information section. Be sure to use an email address you check regularly.



Note: When setting up your profile, you will see a section for Adding a Payment Method. This step will be unavailable until you have a funded student and should only be completed if you plan to submit a reimbursement request. See Choosing A Payment Method section below for further instructions.



10. Complete the Manage Consents section by selecting "Yes" or "No" for each of the categories. Your consent or lack of consent will have no effect on your student's scholarship eligibility.



Manage Consents

By providing an email address, I consent to receive updates about my scholarship application status as well as other emails necessary for scholarship processing and management.

Messages
I authorize Step Up For Students, and its affiliates, to use the information I have provided to deliver messages to me, including, but not limited to, prerecorded messages or e-mail messages, and further authorize Step Up For Students to deliver such messages to the telephone numbers I provide. Such messages may include, but are not limited to, general information regarding status updates, programs offered by Step Up For Students, updates to the offered programs, and other information that may be relevant to me or my child. Message and data rates may apply. My consent or lack of consent will have no effect on my child's scholarship eligibility.
○ Yes
○ No

Marketing Purposes
I authorize Step Up For Students, and its affiliates, to use the information I have provided for general marketing purposes and driving awareness. This may help Step Up find families like mine who could benefit from the programs Step Up offers. My consent or lack of consent will have no effect on my child's scholarship eligibility.
○ Yes
○ No

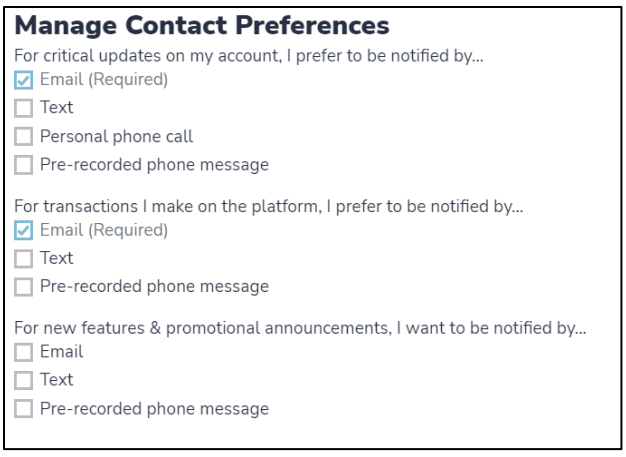
Parental Empowerment
I authorize Step Up For Students, and its affiliates, to use the information I have provided for the purpose of providing me with information regarding parental empowerment and school choice. My consent or lack of consent will have no effect on my child's scholarship eligibility.
○ Yes
○ No

Share Contact Information
I authorize Step Up For Students, and its affiliates, to share the information I have provided with organizations who want to provide me with information about candidates for public office. My consent or lack of consent will have no effect on my child's scholarship eligibility.
○ Yes
○ No

Text/SMS Information
I authorize Step Up For Students to deliver text messages to the mobile telephone number(s) I provide and certify that I am the legal owner of the mobile device I registered and understand I will incur any charges that may result from receiving text messages. I further understand I may unsubscribe from SMS correspondence at any time. Message and data rates may apply. To opt-out or to view full SMS Terms and Conditions click here: https://www.stepupforstudents.org/sms-terms/. My consent or lack of consent will have no effect on my child's scholarship eligibility.
○ Yes
○ No

11. Complete the Manage Contact Preferences section by selecting how you would like Step Up to contact you about your student's account, scholarship transactions, and announcements. You may select multiple categories, but "Email" is required for critical updates and transactions.

    IMPORTANT: Step Up will email critical information about your student's scholarship to the email address associated with your guardian profile. Be sure to check that email regularly.



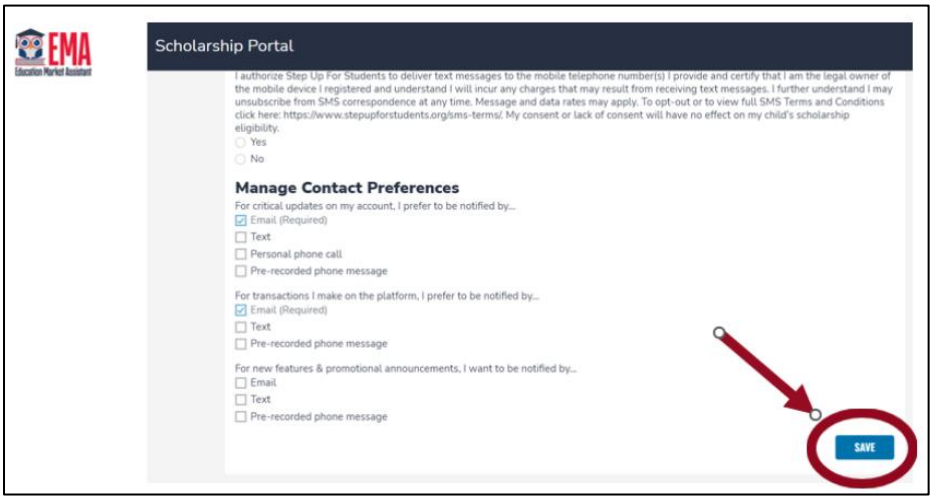
Manage Contact Preferences

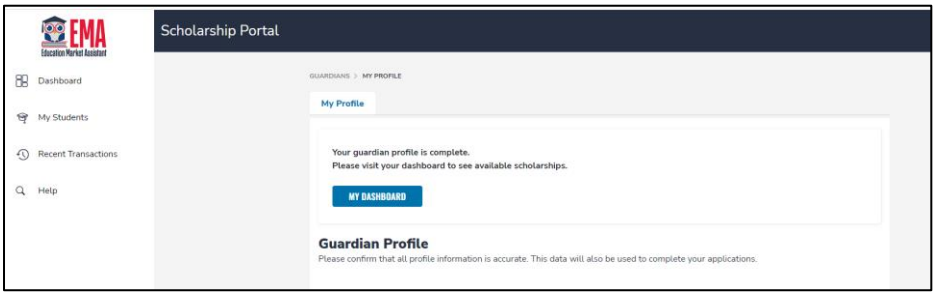
For critical updates on my account, I prefer to be notified by...
☑ Email (Required)
☐ Text
☐ Personal phone call
☐ Pre-recorded phone message

For transactions I make on the platform, I prefer to be notified by...
☑ Email (Required)
☐ Text
☐ Pre-recorded phone message

For new features & promotional announcements, I want to be notified by...
☐ Email
☐ Text
☐ Pre-recorded phone message

12. Select **SAVE**. Congratulations, your account is created!





EMA allows parents and guardians access to:

- Apply for scholarships
- Review and update your contact information
- Change your account password
- Check the status of your scholarship application
- Upload documents to your application or print documents associated with your application
- View your student's account statement
- Shop for pre-approved service providers
- Shop for pre-approved educational materials using funds directly from your student's scholarship account
- Submit a reimbursement request
- Upload documents to a reimbursement

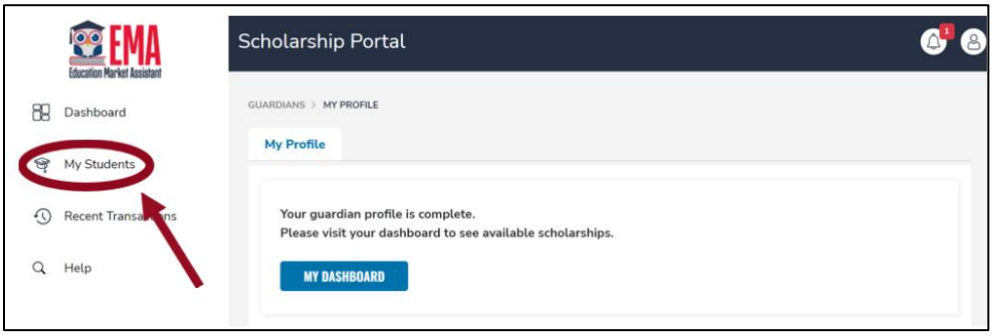
Please DO NOT provide your login information to ANYONE. Providing login information will allow them to access this critical information, make changes, and approve payments from your student's account. Step Up For Students will not be responsible for changes and/or charges made by anyone other than the account owner if the login information has been shared.

Add Students to Your EMA Account

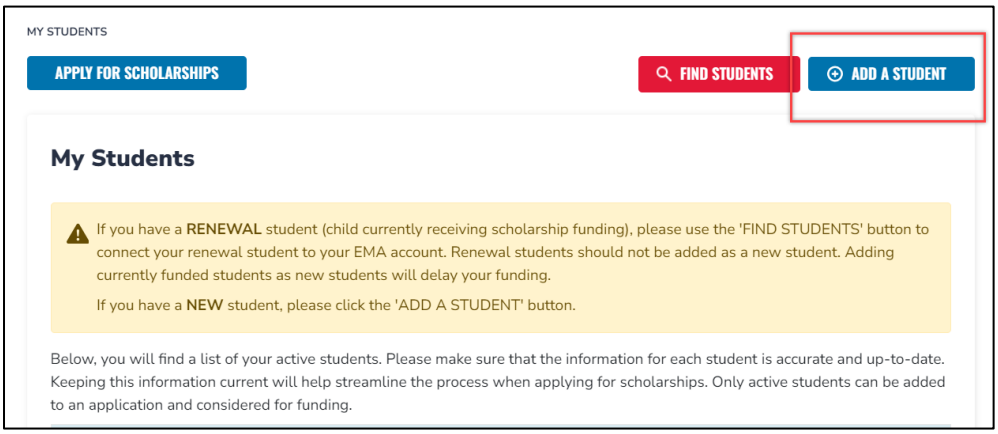
Before you can apply for a scholarship, you will need to add your student(s) to your EMA Account.

Follow the instructions below to add students to your EMA Account.

1. Log in to EMA if you are not already signed in. Navigate to the My Students page.

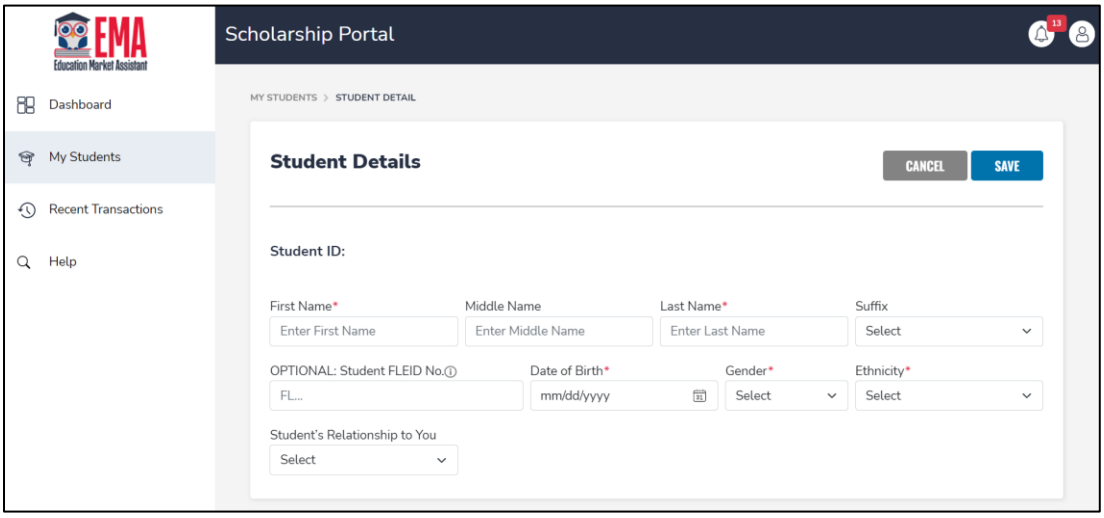


2. Select ADD A STUDENT.

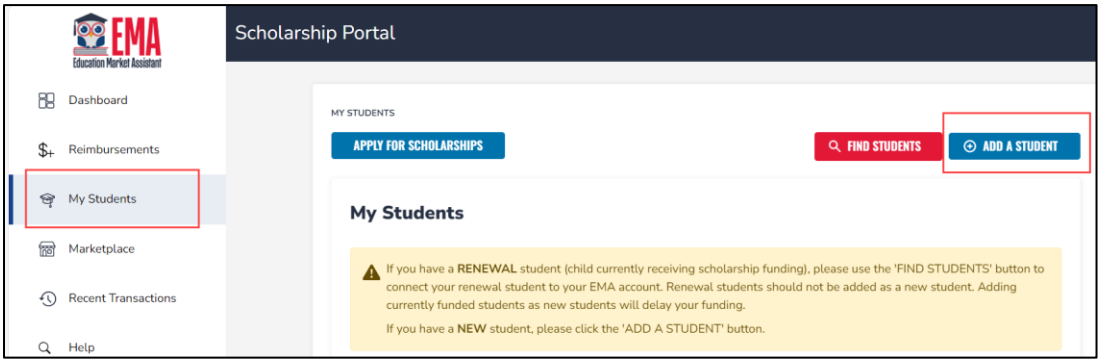


3. Complete the Student ID section. Select SAVE.

   Please note: The FLEID number field is optional. This number can be found on your student's FSA score report, if applicable.



4. If you have additional students to add, navigate back to the My Students page and select ADD A STUDENT.

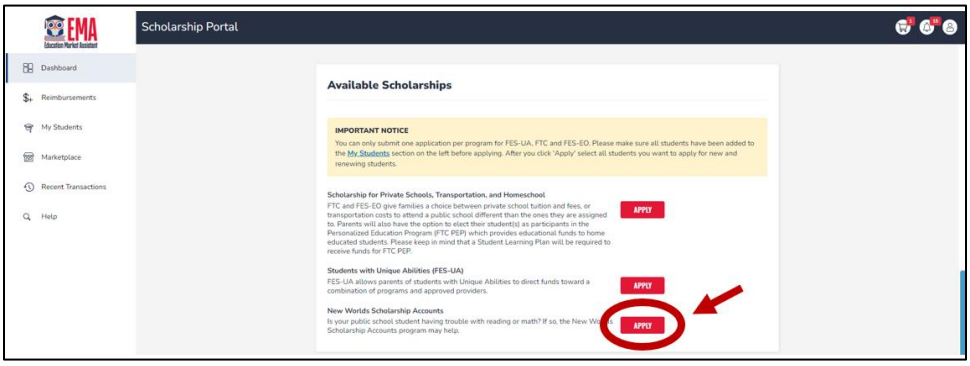


Complete a New Worlds Scholarship Accounts Application

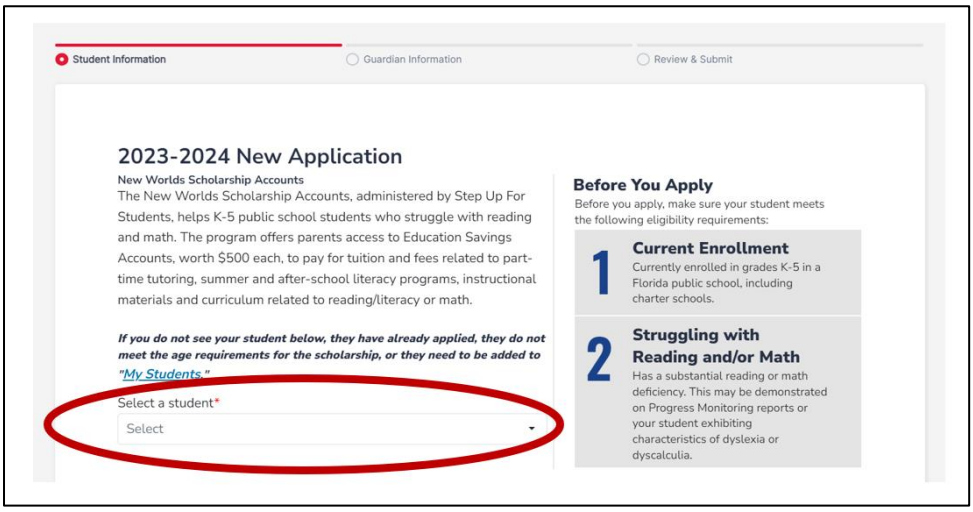
Families can apply online by logging into their EMA Account. There is no fee to apply. You must add students to the My Students page before you apply. See previous section for how to Add Students to Your EMA Account.

Follow the instructions below to complete your application.

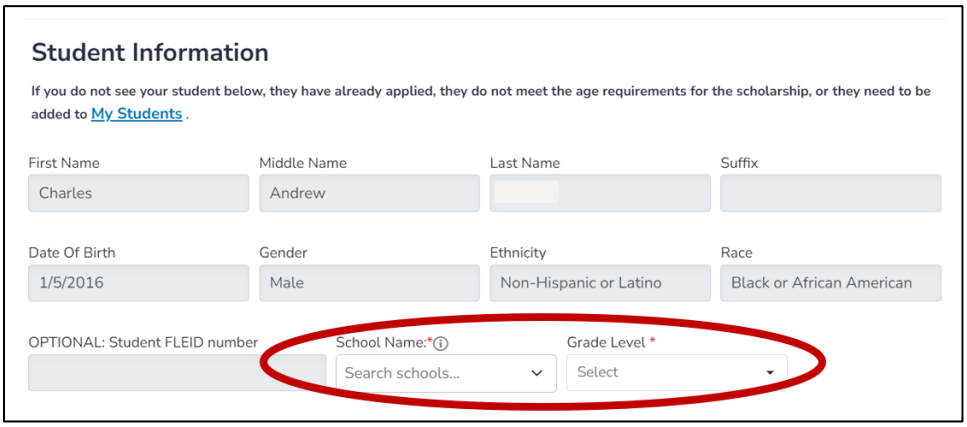
1. From your Dashboard, scroll down to the Available Scholarships section and find the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts application under Available Scholarships and select APPLY. The New Worlds Scholarship Accounts application will display.



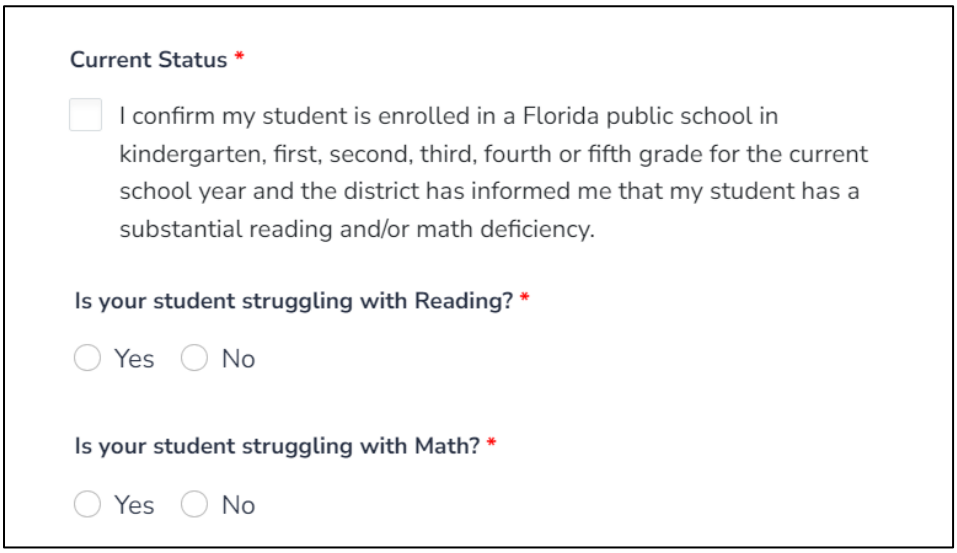
2. Select the student you would like to apply for from the dropdown menu. If you have not added your student to your account, please see previous section to Add Students to Your EMA Account.



3. Your student's information will already be entered from the My Students page. Scroll down to review your student's information. If any of the information is not correct, navigate back to the My Students page to edit your student's information. You will need to provide your student's school name and grade level on the application.



4. Check the box in the Current Status section to confirm your student is enrolled in a Florida public school in kindergarten, first, second, third, fourth or fifth grade for the current school year and has a substantial reading and/or math deficiency. You will also need to indicate if your student is struggling with reading and/or math.

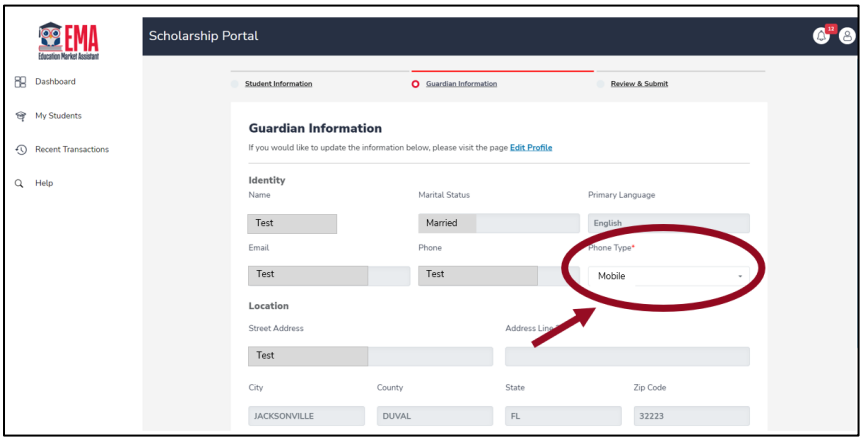


5. If you would like to upload supporting documents, you may do so in the Optional Supporting Documents section. You do not need to submit documents to submit your application.

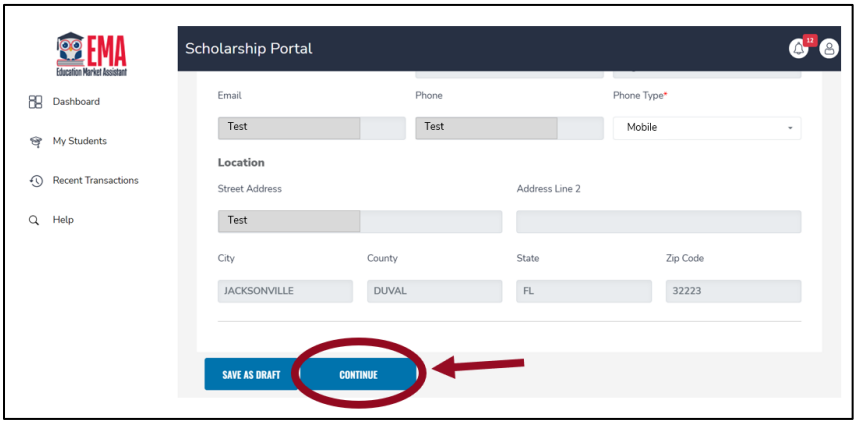
   Supporting documents might include your student's prior year ELA Assessment score report or a copy of your student's Progress Monitoring report.

6. Select CONTINUE.

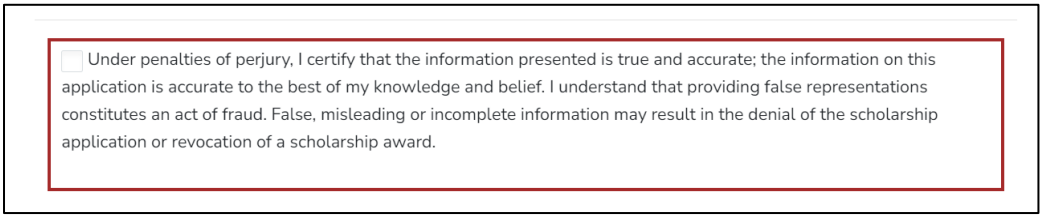
7. From the Guardian Information section, confirm the information in the Identity and Location sections. The information from your Guardian Profile will already be entered into the Guardian Information section. If you need to update it, select Edit Profile. You will need to select the "Phone Type" associated with the phone number in your profile.



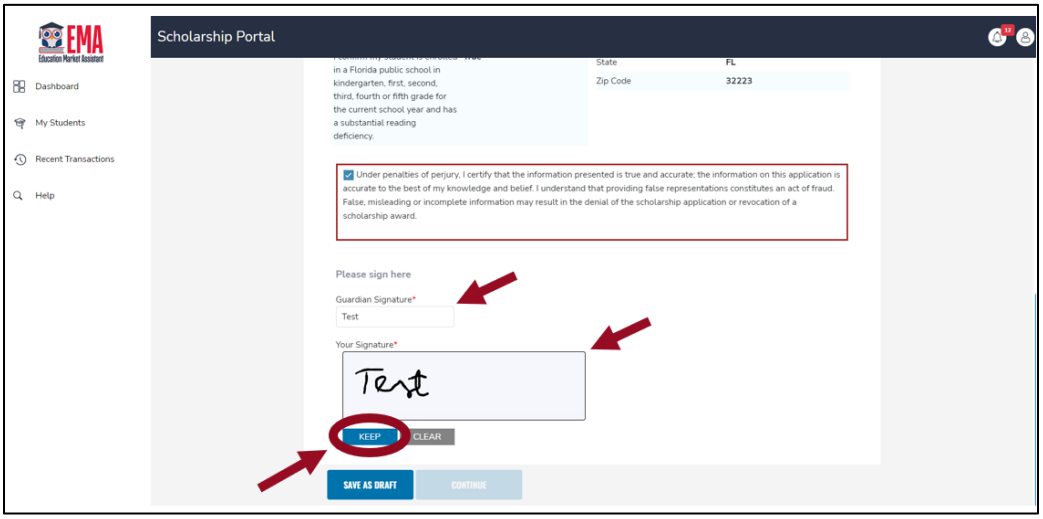
8. Select CONTINUE.



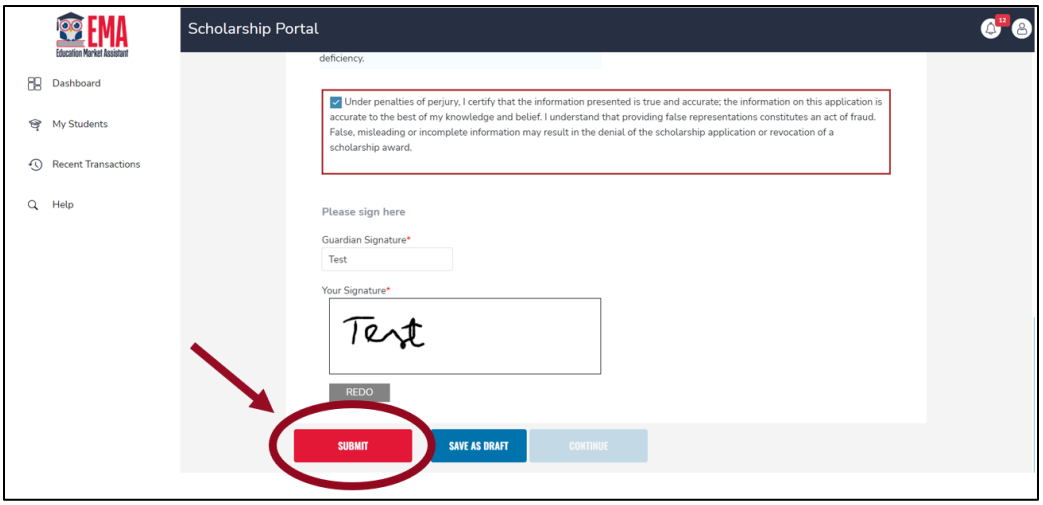
9. Review Your Application details. If you need to correct any information, navigate to the Student Information or Guardian Information pages. Once you have confirmed all information is correct, you must certify that all information is true and accurate by checking the box.



10. In the Guardian Signature field, enter your full name. Then in the Your Signature box, write your full name. After you have written your full name, the KEEP and CLEAR options will display.



11. Select KEEP, and then select SUBMIT to complete your application.



Step Up For Students and the Florida Department of Education will work together to determine if your student qualifies for a New Worlds Scholarship. This process may take several weeks. Parents/guardians will receive email notifications to the email address listed in their Guardian Profile when there is an update in the scholarship status. Parents can also login to their EMA Account to view their application status at any time.

A student may only receive one scholarship at a time. Parents must notify Step Up if the student leaves the Florida Public School system. Leaving the Florida Public School system could affect the student's scholarship status.

Application Processing Status Definitions

- **Submitted:** The application has been received and is being reviewed for eligibility.
- **On Hold:** The application did not have the information needed to determine eligibility. The parent/guardian must submit additional information.
- **Eligible/Awarded:** The Florida Department of Education has confirmed the student's eligibility for the scholarship.
- **Ineligible:** The student was found not eligible for a New Worlds Scholarship and will not be funded.

Funding for New Worlds Scholarship Accounts

Funding for the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts comes from the State of Florida. Each scholarship is $500.

Program funding is limited.

If a student has been found eligible by the Florida Department of Education, Step Up For Students will work with the State of Florida to deposit funds into a student's scholarship account, as long as program funds are available. This process may take several weeks after the student is found eligible. Funding will be established on a first-come, first-served basis, with English Language Learner students receiving priority. Students are required to be enrolled in a Florida public school to be funded.

Parents will be notified via email when funds have been deposited into the student's New Worlds Scholarship account. Parents may also login to EMA to view their funding status.

Once funds have been deposited into the student's account, parents may use the scholarship funds for a variety of services (described in the sections below). **Please note: It may take a few days for the Marketplace tab (including MyScholarShop) to appear in EMA after funds are applied to the student's account.** Any unused funds will be rolled over for use in subsequent school years.

A student's scholarship account must be closed, and any remaining funds must be sent back to the Florida Department of Education after:

- Denial or revocation of scholarship eligibility by the Commissioner of Education for fraud or abuse, including but not limited to, the student or student's parent accepting any payment, refund, or rebate, in any manner, from a provider of any services; or
- Three (3) consecutive fiscal years in which an account has been inactive.

Note: An account is considered inactive if you do not spend any money from your student's account for three consecutive fiscal years (July 1 – June 30).

Parents of students receiving scholarship funds through a New Worlds Scholarship Account may not take possession of funds at any time, unless provided as a reimbursement by Step Up For Students. If a parent receives a refund for any services or goods purchased with New Worlds Scholarship funds, those funds must be returned to Step Up For Students for deposit into the student's scholarship account.

To return funds to the student's New Worlds Scholarship Account, the parent/guardian must send a check that includes the student's name and student ID number to:

Step Up For Students
Attn: Accounts Receivable
P.O. Box 54429
Jacksonville, FL 32245-4367

If you wish to close your student's New Worlds Scholarship Account, you must contact Step Up For Students at NewWorlds@SUFS.org or (877) 735-7837.

Waitlist

The number of applications received by Step Up For Students may exceed program capacity. Statutory guidelines limit the number of scholarships available each school year, with the annual number of available scholarships determined by statute. In the event that program capacity is met, a waitlist will be instituted.

We strongly encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible. Applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. After the annual statutory scholarship cap has been met, all students found eligible after that date will be placed onto a waitlist. There is no guarantee that a student will be moved from the waitlist. If program capacity allows additional awards, students may come off the waitlist. You will receive an email notification regarding your updated application status if your student is moved from the waitlist. Award amounts are based on the date of award, not the date of eligibility.

Approved Uses of New Worlds Scholarship Account Funds

The following categories of items are approved uses of funds for the New Worlds Scholarship Account.

Part-Time Tutoring Services

Part-time tutoring includes tuition and fees for part-time tutoring services provided by a person who holds one of the following:

- A current, valid Florida educator's certificate pursuant to s. 1012.56, F.S.; or
- A person who holds an adjunct teaching certificate given by a Florida school district pursuant to s. 1012.57, F.S.; or

- A baccalaureate or graduate degree in Reading, Math, Elementary Education, or English Education

The part-time tutor may be a person who has demonstrated a mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to s. 1012.56(5), F.S.

Mastery could be achieved through one or more of the following:

- An official Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam, not more than 10 years old; OR
- A passing score report that is not more than 10 years old, above the intermediate level, on both the oral and written exams for a foreign language subject area (excluding French, German or Spanish) administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL); OR
- A form provided by a Florida school district and signed by the school district, indicating there is no standardized exam in the subject area, but the person has attained the essential subject matter competencies and subject area specialization requirements; OR
- A valid certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS); OR
- A valid certificate issued by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE); OR
- A valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Professional Certificate; OR
- For a subject requiring a master's or higher degree (i.e., Educational Leadership, Guidance Counseling, Reading, or School Psychologist) a score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam (not more than 10 years old) AND a valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Temporary or Professional Certificate; OR
- A valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Temporary Certificate but does not list a passing score on the subject area exam under the Professional Certificate requirements

Fees Associated with Summer Education Programs

Summer education programs must be designed to improve reading/literacy and/or math skills.

Fees Associated with After-School Education

After-school education programs must be designed to improve reading/literacy and/or math skills.

Instructional Materials

Instructional materials must be related to reading/literacy and/or math. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Digital devices – limited to desktop computers, laptop computers, and tablets
- Digital material or stand-alone online class
- Online software programs related to reading/literacy and/or math
- Books, including workbooks

Curriculum

Curriculum is defined as a complete course of study for a particular content area or grade level, including any required supplemental materials and associated online instruction related to reading/literacy and/or math.

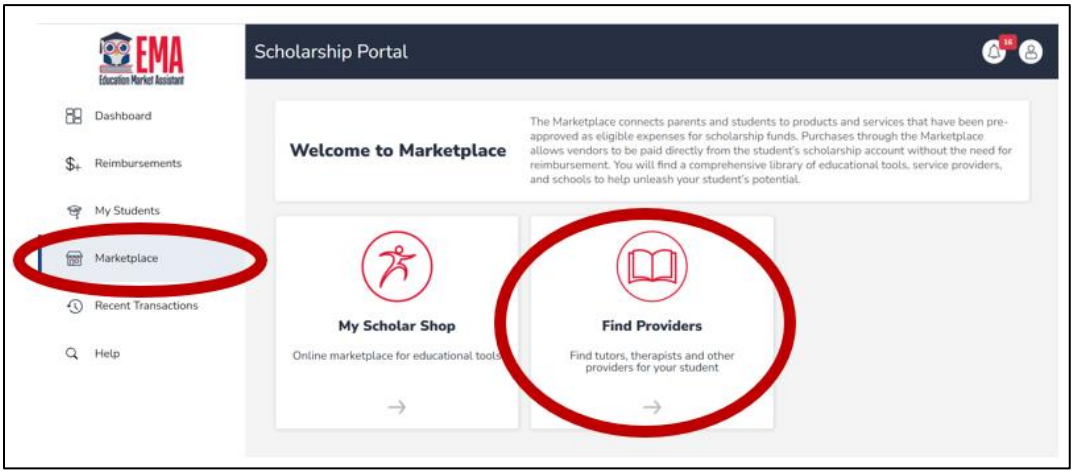
Direct Payment Through the EMA Provider Marketplace

By selecting a provider through the EMA Marketplace, you will not have to pay a provider out-of-pocket and wait to be reimbursed.

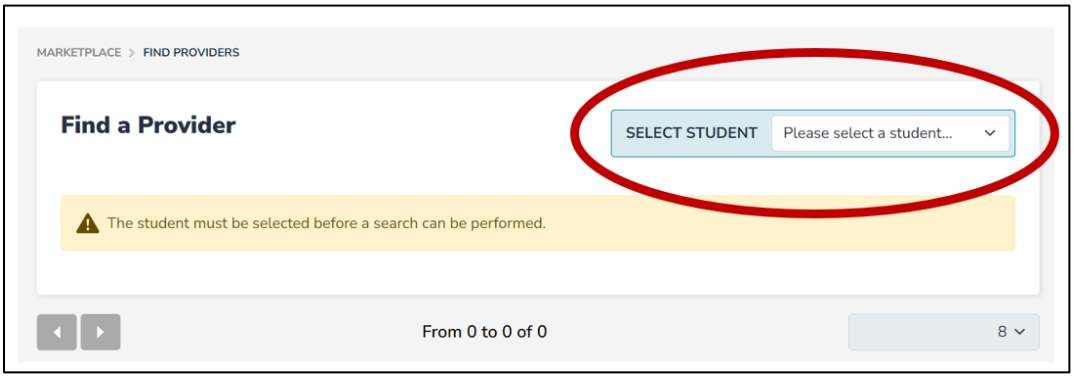
Please note: The EMA Marketplace cannot schedule services. It is the guardian's responsibility to call the service provider and schedule the time for services to be rendered.

To shop for direct pay providers, login to EMA.

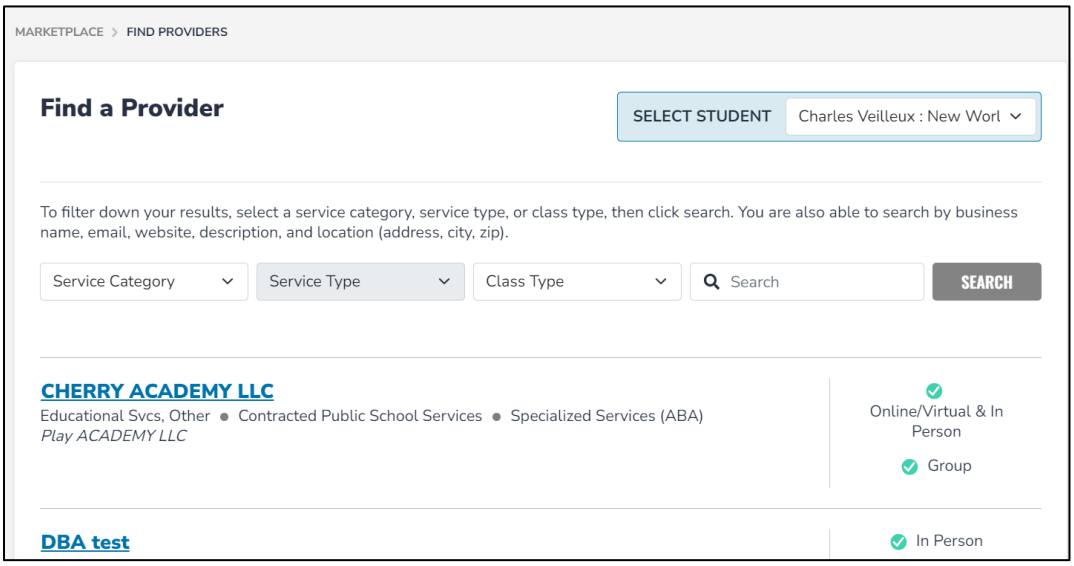
1. Navigate to the Marketplace tab and select **Find Providers**.



2. Select the student you wish to shop for.

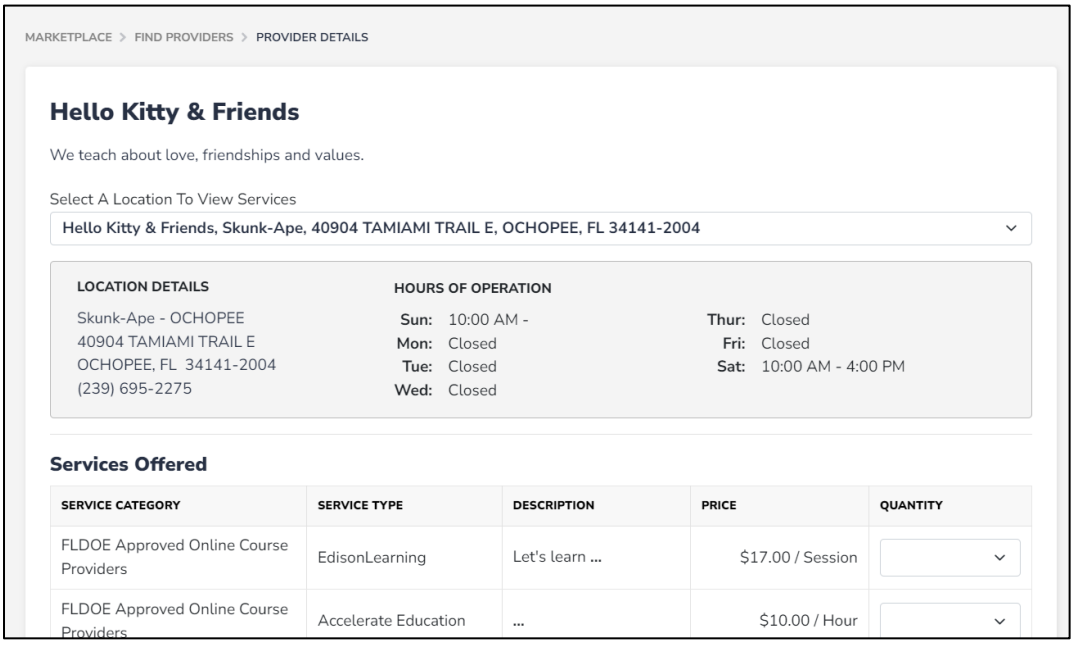


3. Search for providers that might be a good fit for your student's needs. You can filter the marketplace by selecting a service category, service type, or class type. You are also able to search by business name, email, website, description, and location (address, city, zip).



4. Click on the name of providers you are interested in to learn more about their services. You will need to select one of their locations to view services after clicking on the business name.

   You will be able to view location details, hours of operations, and services offered.

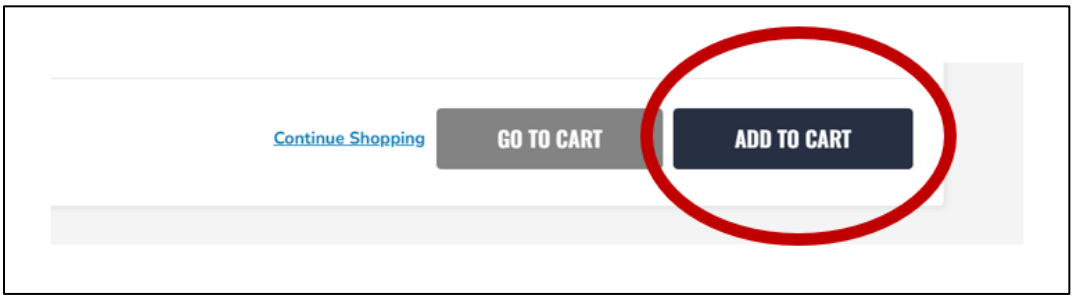


Before reserving funds for a service, you should reach out to the provider using the contact information in the EMA Marketplace to ensure the provider is a good fit for your student's needs.

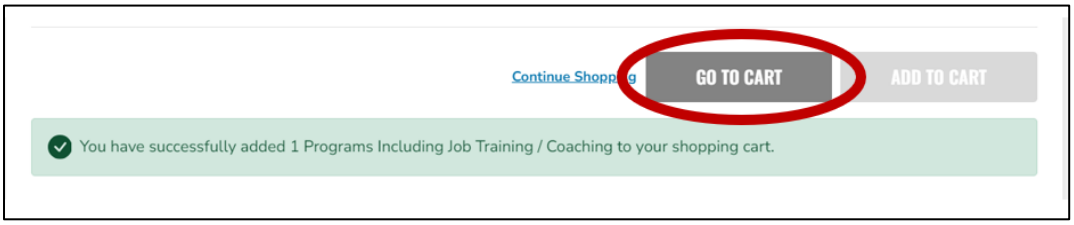
5. Once you have confirmed which provider and services are best for your student, login to EMA and reserve funds.

   Find your provider in the Marketplace, identify which services you want to purchase, and select the quantity you wish to purchase.

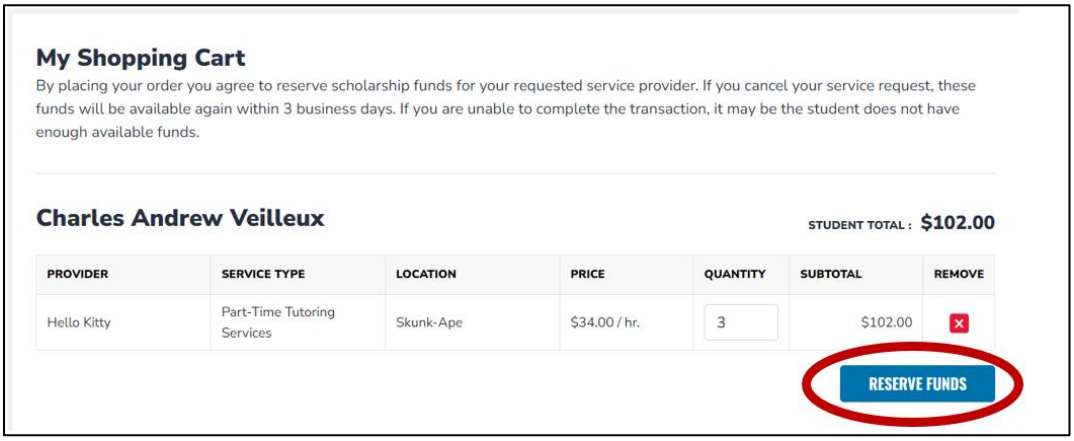
6. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select **ADD TO CART**.



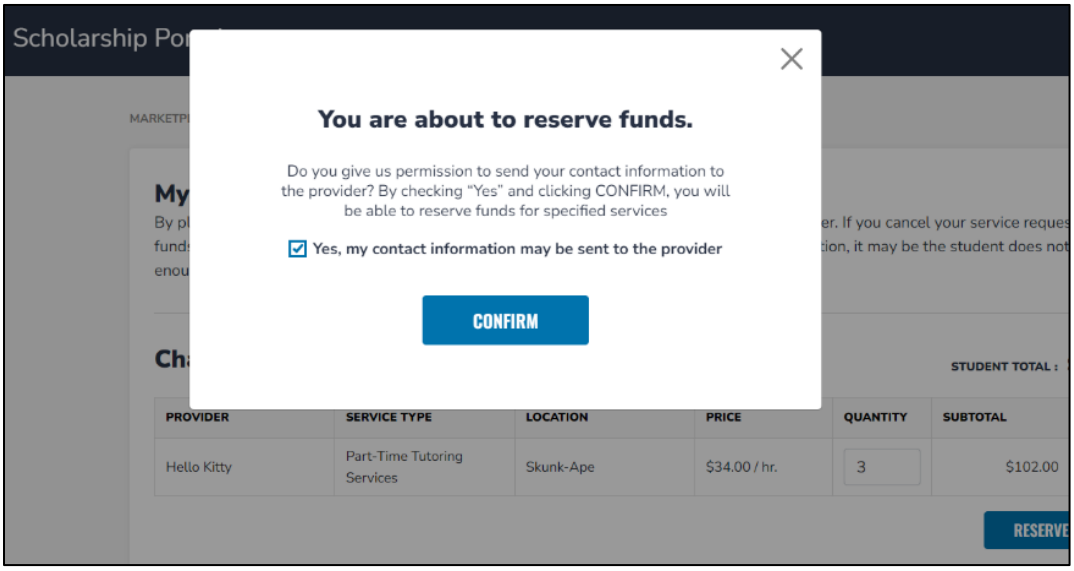
7. A green box will appear confirming your order is in your cart. Select **GO TO CART**.



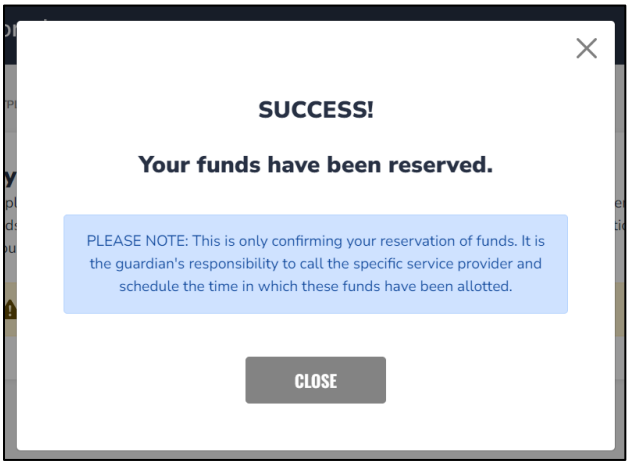
8. Review your order. You may adjust the quantity from this screen, if needed. If your order is correct, select "Reserve Funds". This sets the indicated scholarship dollars aside until your provider submits an invoice for services rendered.



9. You will be asked to confirm that you wish to reserve your student's scholarship funds. Your confirmation also gives Step Up For Students to share your contact information with your selected provider.



10. You will see a pop up indicating your funds have been reserved. **Please note:** This is only confirming your reservation of funds. It is the guardian's responsibility to call the specific service provider and schedule the time in which these funds have been allotted.



MyScholarShop

MyScholarShop is an educational e-purchasing platform built to assist you in purchasing instructional materials using your scholarship funds *without* any upfront cost to you.

- Items available through MyScholarShop are approved for purchase using the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts funds. If you do not see an item in MyScholarShop, it does not mean the item is not approved.
- Make sure you have available funds in your scholarship account to cover the entire purchase.
- This partnership is ONLY for goods purchased through MyScholarShop and does NOT apply to in-store purchases or purchases from the vendor's website.
- MyScholarShop orders cannot be shipped out-of-state or to a post office box.
- When purchasing multiple items, include ALL items on one order!
- Please be aware that Step Up For Students reserves the right to deny requests.
- Access to MyScholarShop will be activated once your student's account has funding.
- Step Up For Students reserves the right to limit or deny access to MyScholarShop.

Purchasing

Please note: Before shopping on MyScholarShop, please confirm your mailing address in your guardian profile in EMA. If your address is incorrect in EMA, please update and allow a couple of business days for the new address to populate in MyScholarShop. Step Up For Students is not responsible for any purchases shipped to an incorrect address.

To access MyScholarShop, you will need to login to EMA by clicking here. MyScholarShop will appear under the Marketplace option and will only appear in the portal once your student's funds have been deposited in their account.

1. Log in using your current credentials (email and password).
2. Select the “Marketplace” tab.

   When logging in the first time to the MyScholarShop platform, you will be required to read and acknowledge the Privacy Statement.
3. Select the student account.
4. Search for the items you wish to purchase.
5. Choose the tile with the item category or type the item name in the search bar.
6. Hover or select the item and select “Add to Cart”.
7. Review your cart.

   After reviewing the cart, choose “Check Out”.
8. Review your ‘ship to’ information.
9. Choose “Submit” to complete the purchase.

Returns

Returns are done through the vendor they were purchased from and not through Step Up For Students.

1. To return an item purchased via MyScholarShop click here.
2. Find the correct vendor and follow the instructions.

Once the vendor has received the item, it may take up to 14 days for the funds to be credited to the student’s scholarship account.

Status Definitions

- **Composing:** The MyScholarShop request is pending; the cart has not been submitted for purchase.
- **Submitted:** The MyScholarShop request was submitted and is pending review.
- **Approved:** The order has been approved and sent to the vendor(s) for fulfillment
- **Denied:** Items requiring review have been denied. One appeal is allowed.
- **Ordering:** A fully approved order is in the process of being generated. Once the order is fully generated, it will be sent to the vendor(s) for fulfillment and the status will be updated to “Ordered”.
- **Ordered:** All items associated with an order or requisition have been sent to the vendor to fulfil.

- **Cancelling:** The order was cancelled after it was placed.
- **Cancelled:** An order cancelled after being submitted and approved.
- **Receiving:** Ordered items have been shipped and are in the process of being delivered.
- **Received:** Ordered items have been fully received.

For more in-depth information on MyScholarShop, click here.

Reimbursement Requests

Parents/guardians may also choose to pay out-of-pocket for educational services and/or products and submit a request for reimbursement through EMA. These educational services and/or products must be related to reading/literacy and/or math.

Families with an approved reimbursement request can select from one of the following payment methods:

Direct Bank Transfer
Securely deposit funds directly into your bank account via an ACH transfer. If direct deposit (ACH) is selected, families will be asked to submit personal banking information.

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

Check
If you prefer a more traditional approach, you can select to have a check mailed to the address in your EMA profile.

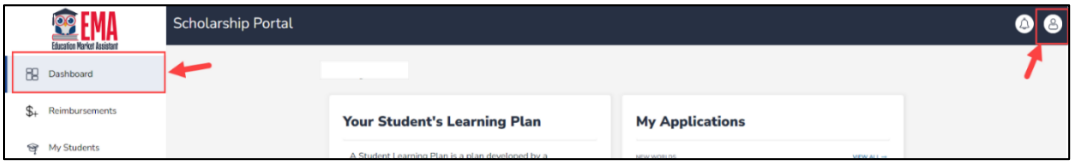
PayPal®:
Opt for PayPal®, a widely used and trusted online payment platform, to receive your reimbursement with ease.

Reimbursements for multiple scholarship students on multiple scholarship programs will be paid separately. Please click here to learn more about how reimbursement payments are made and how to receive your payment.

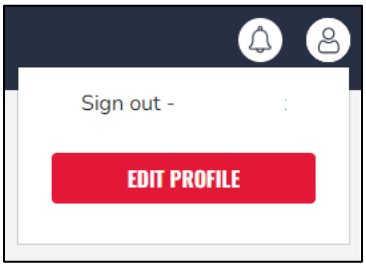
Choosing a Payment Method

If submitting a reimbursement for the first time, you will need to follow the steps below to select your payment method. The same steps can be followed to update your payment method at any time.

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

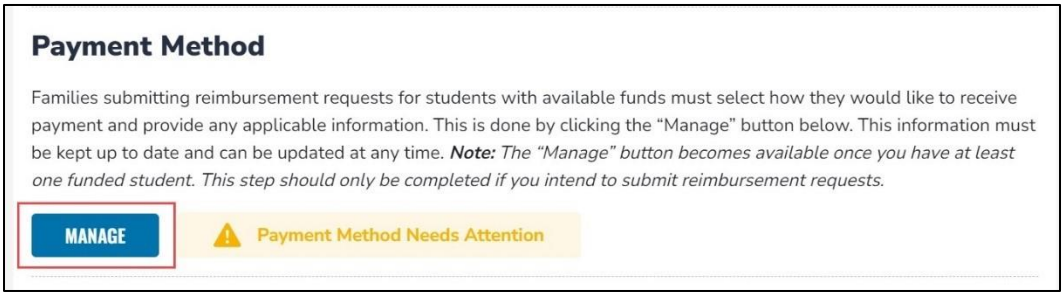


2. Select **EDIT PROFILE** from the popup window that displays.

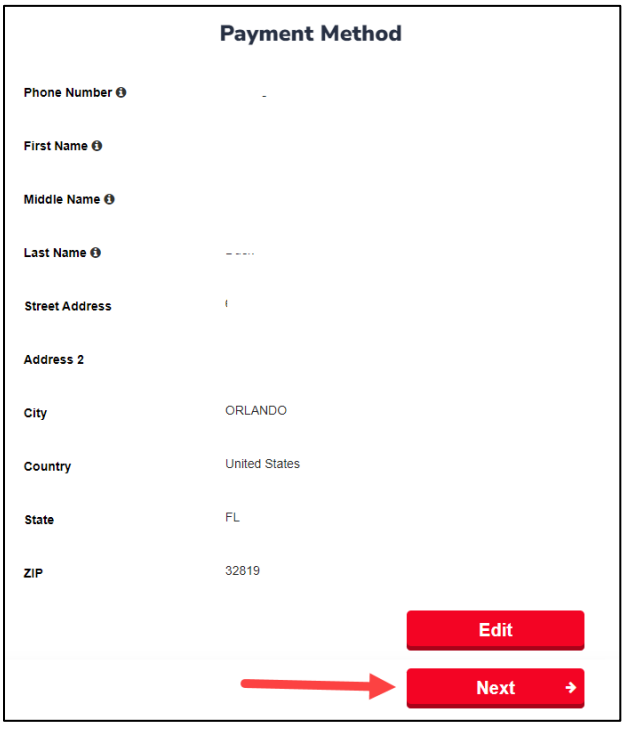


3. The **Guardian Profile** screen displays (under the My Profile tab). Scroll down to the **Payment Method** section (middle of the page) and select **MANAGE.**

   Please note: The **MANAGE** button only becomes available once you have at least one funded student.



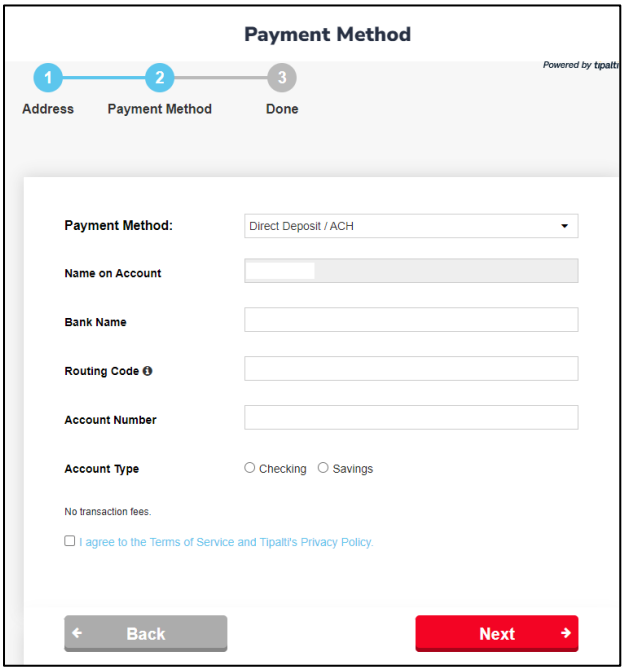
4. The **Payment Method** popup window displays. Your address information populates from your EMA profile (**step 1**).



5. Select **Next** to continue your preferred payment method selection.

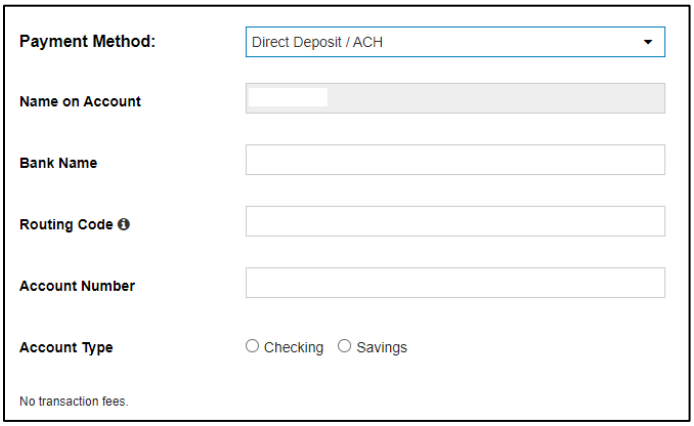
   IMPORTANT: Do not edit your address here. If your address needs to be updated, please do so in your Guardian Profile.

6. On the next screen (**step 2**), use the drop-down menu to select how you will receive payment for approved reimbursements.



Your 3 payment options are:

a. Direct Deposit (ACH)



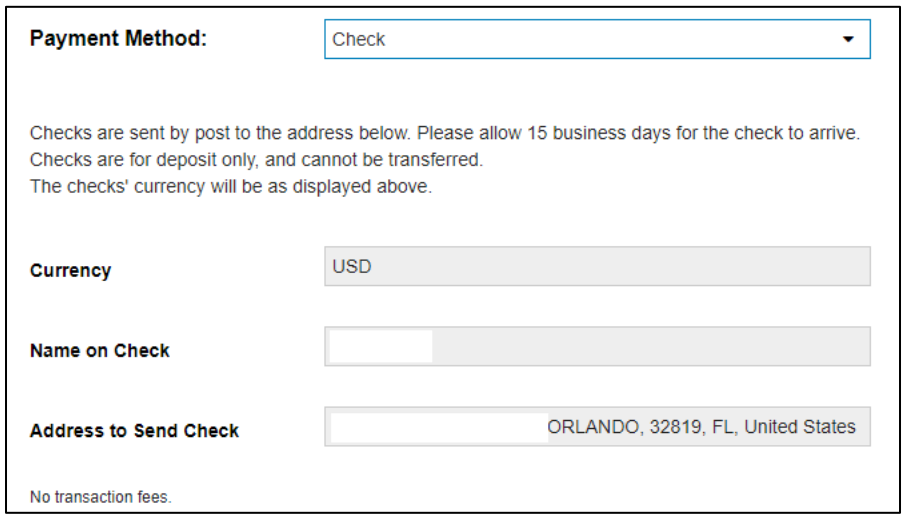
Complete the fields:

- Name on Account
- Bank Name
- Routing Code

- Account Number
- Account Type
- Checking or
- Savings

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

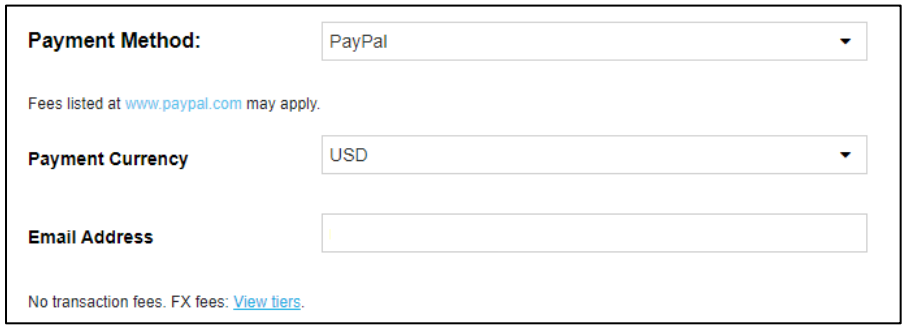
b. Check



Complete the fields:

- Currency
- Name on Check
- Address to Send Check

c. Paypal

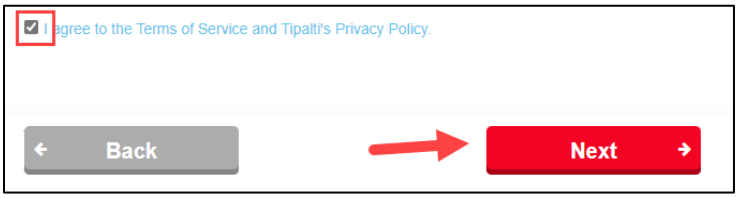


Complete the fields:

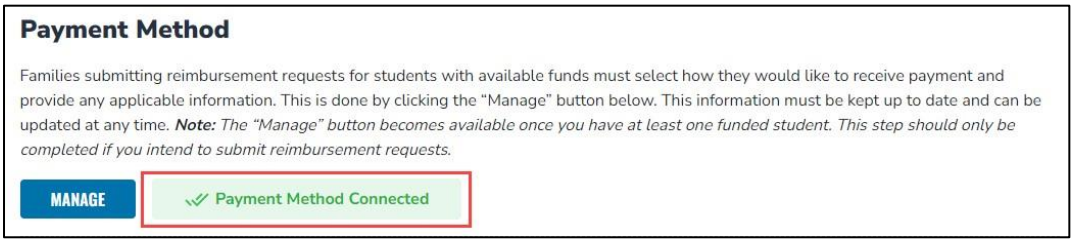
- Payment Currency
- Email address

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

7. Select the **checkbox** to agree to the terms of Tipalti's Privacy Policy then select **Next**.

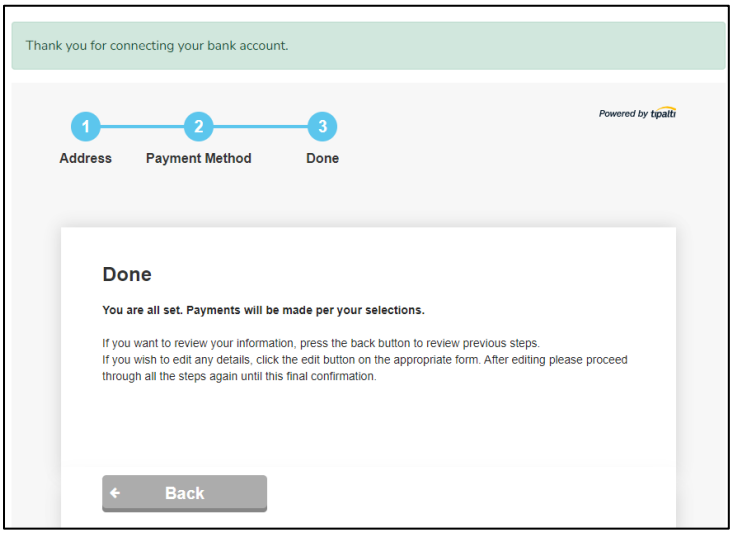


8. You're all set! The green **Payment Method Connected** message populates when your payment method is complete.

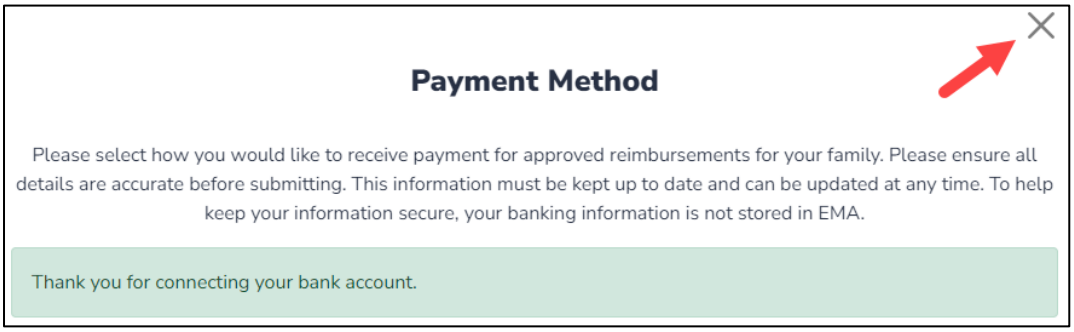


9. It may take up to 12 hours for this change to be reflected in your EMA account. If you continue to see the **Payment Method Needs Attention** message after updating your payment method, please log out, open a new window, and log back in.

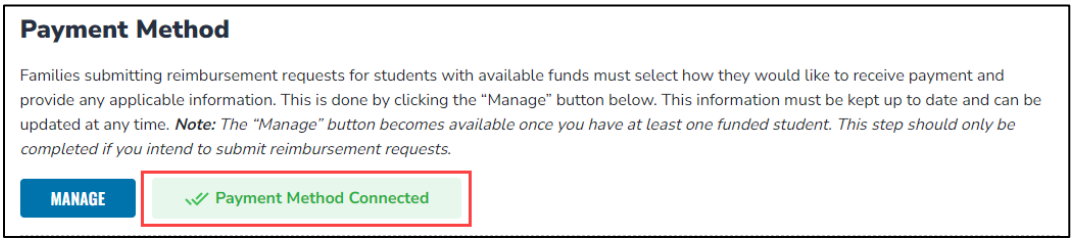
10. When connected, you should see the screen below (above **step 3)**, in addition to the green box above.



11. Select the X in the top right corner of the screen.



12. You are returned to the Guardian Profile screen where the **Payment Method Connected** displays.



Note: To continue submitting reimbursement requests within EMA, you will need to select a payment method. If you do not update this information in your profile today, you will be reminded on various screens in EMA before you can submit a reimbursement.

ATTENTION Important Reimbursement Information

As a result of House Bill 1361 from the 2024 Florida legislative session, reimbursements for program purchases will be eliminated after the 2023-24 school year. Students will only be able to utilize direct pay providers through the EMA marketplace and/or make direct purchases through MyScholarShop.

If you have any out-of-pocket expenses that need to be submitted for reimbursement, please note the deadline for submission with documentation is September 30, 2024 for the reimbursement request to be reviewed. This is a hard deadline to ensure Step Up For Students complies with HB1361.

Reimbursement requests will be processed as they are received.

To submit a reimbursement request, you will need to login to your EMA Account and go to the reimbursement tab on the left side of the dashboard. The reimbursement option will only appear in the scholarship portal once your student's funds have been deposited in their account.

In the reimbursement tab, you will be able to:

- Submit a reimbursement request
- View and search current statuses for your requests

Reimbursements may be submitted for purchases made after July 1, 2023.

Requests for reimbursement for the 2023-24 school year must be submitted, with all the required supporting documentation, no later than August 31, 2024, to be considered for payment.

If would like to use a provider that is not on the pre-approved list and you don't know if they meet the requirements, please show the provider this section of the Handbook and ask them if they meet any one of the requirements needed to be eligible to serve your scholarship student.

The reimbursement process will be faster if the provider is pre-approved by Step Up For Students. Pre-approved providers may also opt-in to our direct-pay service, eliminating the need for families to pay out-of-pocket and wait to be reimbursed. Providers can learn more about becoming a direct-pay partner by visiting our provider webpage.

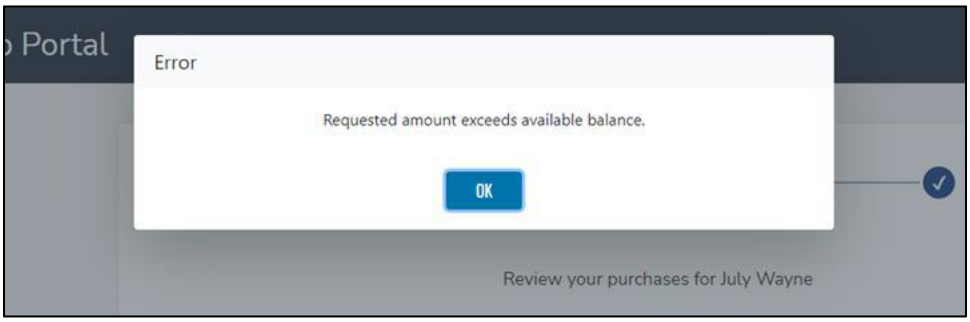
If a single reimbursement is submitted that totals more than the maximum scholarship award ($500) OR the account balance at the time of submission, the reimbursement will be adjusted to the maximum scholarship amount or the amount available.

If multiple reimbursements are submitted totaling more than the maximum scholarship award ($500) OR the account balance at the time of submission, the reimbursements will be paid in the order received by Step Up until the account balance is used. This could result in a partial payment or a denial of one or more of the reimbursements due to a lack of available funds.

How to Submit a Reimbursement Request

1. Once logged into your EMA Account, select "Reimbursements".
2. Select "New" to add a new reimbursement request.
3. Select the student and select "Continue".
4. Upload your reimbursement document. Please see Documents Requirements to Submit a Reimbursement. *You will have the option of adding additional documents later if you have more reimbursement requests.*
5. Select "Continue" until you come to the page to enter reimbursement information.
6. Enter information for each line item of your receipt. Be sure to include the educational benefit for your request. The educational benefit will need to demonstrate *how the item or service will help the student learn.*
    - If you only have one item to submit for reimbursement on your receipt, select "Done".
    - If there are multiple items on your receipt, select "Add Item". You may add as many items as needed. After adding all items, select "Done".

7. Review your reimbursement request. Click back to make any edits or select "Submit for Approval" if the information is correct.
8. If your requested amount exceeds the balance in your student's account, an onscreen error will appear as shown below. The screen will refresh and will go back to the request form so you can adjust the amount.



If your student has enough funds in their account, your request will be submitted to Step Up for approval. You will then see an onscreen confirmation. As a reminder, reimbursements may be submitted for purchases made after July 1, 2023, until you have exhausted your funds. Requests for reimbursement for the 2023-24 school year must be submitted, with all the required supporting documentation, no later than August 31, 2024, to be considered for payment.

When making purchases from an individual or private seller who does not accept credit or debit cards, (i.e., garage sale, flea market), payment using a cashier's check or money order is required to be reimbursed. Using a cashier's check or money order provides the required proof of payment method for the purchase. **Reimbursement requests for purchases paid with cash will be denied.**

Documents Requirements to Submit a Reimbursement

Instructional Materials and Curriculum Related to Reading/Literacy or Math

Proof of payment **must** include the following:

- The item purchased related to reading/literacy and/or math; **and**
- The date of purchase; **and**
- The place of purchase or vendor/provider; **and**
- The amount of the purchase; **and**
- The method of payment

Part-Time Tutoring

- A form for invoicing for part-time tutoring is now available. It can be found here. This form may be submitted with proof of payment.

- If not using the invoice form, an invoice on business letterhead or receipt must include the following:
  - The New Worlds Scholarship Accounts student's first and last name; and
  - The New Worlds Scholarship Accounts student's student ID number, found on the "My Students" tab in EMA; and
  - The tutor's first and last name; and
  - The company name, if applicable; and
  - Dates and hours of instruction; and
  - Hourly rate; and
  - Proof of payment
- If the provider has not been pre-approved, you will also need to submit documentation showing proof of credentials as a part-time tutor (please see Part-Time Tutoring Services section above for details).

Summer and After-School Education Programs Designed to Improve Reading/Literacy and Math Skills

An invoice on business letterhead or receipt must include the following:

- The New Worlds Scholarship Accounts student's first and last name; and
- The New Worlds Scholarship Accounts student's student ID number, found on the "My Students" tab in EMA; and
- Start and end dates of program, including the year; and
- Amount of fees; and
- Documentation that the program is primarily focused on reading, literacy, English language, English usage, grammar, comprehension, vocabulary, literature, and informational text, writing in English, or math; and
- Proof of payment (for reimbursement to parent)

Reimbursement Status Definitions

You may login to the scholarship portal to review a reimbursement request status. The "Reimbursements" tab is on the left side of the screen.

In the reimbursement tab, you may view and search current statuses for reimbursement requests. The definitions are below:

- **Submitted**: Reimbursement request submitted.
- **In Review**: Reimbursement request is under review.

- **On Hold:** Reimbursement request is missing needed information for approval. The parent/guardian must submit more information within the scholarship portal. Step Up For Students will provide more information in an email sent to your email on file.
- **Approved**: Reimbursement request approved, and payment is on the way. Click here to learn more about how the payment process works.
- **Denied**: Reimbursement request was not approved. Step Up For Students will provide the denial reason in an email sent to your email on file.
- **Appealed**: Appeal submitted for a denied reimbursement request. *Families may appeal a reimbursement request one time.*
- **Cancelled**: Reimbursement request cancelled by the parent/guardian.

Denied Reimbursements

If a reimbursement request is denied, you may appeal that decision ONE TIME by reopening that request in the scholarship portal.

1. Open the Reimbursements tab on the left-hand side of the scholarship portal dashboard.
2. Select any request with a status of Denied. Select "Appeal" button.
3. Make any necessary edits, include new attachments, and submit.

   The decision made by the Step Up For Student's appeal team is final. After the appeal decision is made, any additional appeals for the same item will NOT be reviewed.
4. Step Up For Students reserves the right to deny any reimbursement request submitted for payment.

Important Items to Note

- Please keep your contact information current, especially your email address. This is the primary way Step Up For Students will communicate important information related to your student's scholarship.
- **If the parent/guardian does not spend any money from their account for three consecutive fiscal years (July 1 – June 30), their account will be closed, and all remaining funds will be returned to the Florida Department of Education.** If scholarship eligibility is denied or revoked by the commissioner for fraud or abuse, including but not limited to, the student or student's parent accepting any payment, refund, or rebate, in any manner, from a provider of any services, their account will be closed, and all remaining funds will be returned to the Florida Department of Education.

- Step Up For Students staff may request additional documentation or clarification when they review a reimbursement request. These requests will arrive via email to the email address associated with the parent/guardian account.
- Please update email settings to accept email from Step Up For Students so it is not sent to spam or junk folders.

Contact Information

Step Up For Students wishes all scholarship students a productive and fun-filled 2023-24 school year.

There are 3 ways to reach Step Up For Students:

Chat with a live agent at StepUpForStudents.org

Email NewWorlds@SUFS.org

Call (877) 735-7837

The Service Center is generally open from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Eastern. During peak periods, hours may be extended. For Service Center hours, please visit the Contact Us page on the Step Up For Students website.

The terms outlined in this handbook are subject to change. You may familiarize yourself with updates by occasionally checking our website at StepUpForStudents.org.