

# **HOPE Scholarship Frequently Asked Questions**

## ***Class of 2026***

*\*The information provided in this document is accurate as of July 2025. Please visit [www.GAfutures.org](http://www.GAfutures.org) regularly for more details and updated information.*

### **What are the requirements for earning a HOPE Scholarship or a Zell Miller scholarship?**

To qualify for the HOPE Scholarship, a student must earn a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average in all academic classes in high school. Students must also meet the HOPE Rigor requirement to qualify. HOPE recipients must be enrolled in an eligible postsecondary institution. They must meet Georgia residency requirements and be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen. Applicants must be registered for selective service, if applicable, and may not have a drug conviction or be in default on a school loan. In addition to meeting the requirements above, Zell Miller Scholars must be their high school's valedictorian or salutatorian, or earn a 3.7 high school GPA or higher and post, in one sitting, an SAT combined score of 1200 or higher in math and reading or an ACT score of 26 or higher.

**What high school courses will count in determining HOPE eligibility?** All academic courses attempted in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and modern and classical languages, including both required and elective courses in these subjects, would count toward HOPE eligibility. If a student fails a class in a core subject, then retakes the class, both grades would be included in the student's HOPE grade point average. Students entering high school in 2011–12 and after will be required to earn credit in rigorous high school coursework in order to qualify for the HOPE Scholarship in the future. The Class of 2026 must earn at least four high-rigor credits.

### **Will an “80” average in academic classes qualify a high school student for the HOPE Scholarship?**

No. Each individual course grade (expressed as a percentage) must be converted to a 4.0 scale, based on Sumter County High School's grading scale. For instance, a 77% has a value of 2.0, an 88% converts to 3.0, and a 94% is a 4.0.

### **Are any high school classes given extra weighting?**

For HOPE purposes, the numerical grade in AP and Dual Enrollment courses taken in core academic areas (degree level) will be converted to a 4.0 scale, then .5 points will be added to the converted score. For HOPE, no grades higher than a 4.0 will be awarded. Sumter County High School adds 10 points to the final numeric average for AP courses and 5 points to the numeric average for honors courses. The Cumulative Weighted GPA includes all courses taken in grades 9-12.

**Who calculates the HOPE average and determines eligibility for the Scholarship?**

The Georgia Student Finance Commission, a state agency, calculates HOPE averages based on transcript information provided by Sumter County High School. The school does not calculate HOPE averages and does not have access to the state's calculations.

**Will the HOPE average be included on Sumter County High School transcripts or report cards?**

No. Because the HOPE average is not computed by SCHS, it will not appear on a student's transcript or report card.

**How and when do families learn a student's HOPE eligibility status?** Students will not receive automatic or direct notification of their HOPE eligibility status. Students and/or their parents may sign on to [www.GAfutures.org](http://www.GAfutures.org) to check on HOPE status. The state generally makes HOPE eligibility available for graduating seniors through the students' personal accounts in mid-June. After the state posts HOPE eligibility information on [www.GAfutures.org](http://www.GAfutures.org), families may contact the financial aid office of the college or postsecondary school the student is registered to attend in the summer or fall. Financial aid staff will have access to this information directly from the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

**What courses at SCHS meet the HOPE Rigor Requirement?**

Courses offered (with enough course requests) at SCHS that possess academic rigor according to this requirement are:

- Chemistry
  - Advanced Math Decision Making
  - Advanced Algebra: Concepts and Connections
  - Spanish 2
  - AP Government
  - AP US History
  - AP Language/Comp
- In addition, transcript credits earned by a high school student through Dual Enrollment in any degree level Science, Mathematics, English, Foreign Language or Social Studies course, substantially similar to one listed on the comprehensive listing and taken at an eligible postsecondary institution in Georgia, will be counted towards the Rigor requirement.