

HOUSTON HINTS: PARENT GUIDE TO CHANGES TO THE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



DON'T CROSS YOUR FINGERS AND HOPE YOUR STUDENT IS READY FOR COLLEGE...

Since 1993, more than two million students have attended college and technical school on HOPE, Georgia's lottery-funded scholarship and grant program. In fact, the program has been so successful that lawmakers have taken cost-saving steps to preserve HOPE for future generations of Georgia students. So, what does that mean for you as the parent of a college-bound Houston County student? Here are the facts about changes to HOPE and how they will affect your student.

WHAT ARE THE BIG CHANGES IN THE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP?

- ✓ The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC), not the school system, will determine your student's eligibility based on grades in **both required and elective classes in core subjects** – language arts, math, science, social studies and foreign language (college prep diploma only).
- ✓ Your student's high school will now be sending the GSFC their **complete transcript**. All credits attempted will be included in their HOPE GPA. This means that if your student failed a core class and then retook the class, then both grades will be included in their HOPE GPA.
- ✓ All grades will be computed on a true 4.0 scale. Students enrolled in the college prep diploma option will need a HOPE GPA of **3.0 or higher**. If your child is enrolled in the career/technical option, a 3.2 GPA or higher is required.
- ✓ The only classes that will be "weighted" are Advanced Placement (AP). The GSFC will weight those classes to ensure uniform weighting across the state. Numeric grades will be converted to the 4.0 scale and .5 will be added to each, up to a total of 4.0. Local weight for honors classes will be removed for purposes of the HOPE calculation.

WHO IS AFFECTED AND WHEN DO THOSE CHANGES TAKE EFFECT?

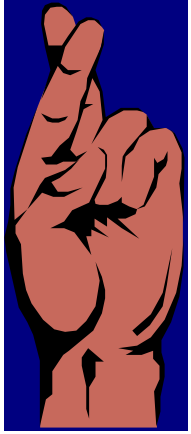
The changes apply to Georgia high school graduates who begin taking college courses after May 1, 2007. If your student starts college before that date, the old HOPE eligibility rules apply.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO GET AND KEEP A HOPE SCHOLARSHIP?

Help your child make good choices. Your student may want to avoid challenging classes – like AP, honors or gifted—thinking they'll have a higher grade and enhanced HOPE eligibility. But the more challenging their high school course load, the more prepared students are for college and the more likely they are to keep HOPE. (Also, students who are successful on AP tests gain college credit and have fewer class hours to pay for in college!) Studies also show that students who take tough high school classes are more likely to finish college. A college degree means money in the bank over a lifetime in the workforce.

WHERE CAN MY CHILD AND I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

Talk to your school counselor, find HOPE information at www.GAcollege411.org, or call the Georgia Student Finance Commission at (770) 724-9000.



DON'T CROSS YOUR FINGERS AND HOPE YOU'RE READY FOR COLLEGE...

- ✓ **Know the requirements to graduate.** Ask your counselor if you have questions.
- ✓ **Learn about eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship.** (Learn about the new HOPE rules at www.GAcollge411.com.)
- ✓ **Make a plan and talk with your counselor often to make sure you're on track.**
- ✓ **Make good academic choices.** Challenge yourself to take the toughest classes you can handle. You're more likely to get into the college of your choice, be better prepared for college, and more likely to graduate from college.
- ✓ Starting in the spring of your junior year, **take both the SAT and ACT** college-admission tests.