



HOPE VALLEY SCHOLARS INC.

Scholarship Eligibility, Selection, Award and Renewal Policy

Fair access. Consistent review. Responsible education investment.

This policy establishes a fair, documented and mission-aligned process for receiving, evaluating, awarding, paying, renewing, suspending and ending Hope Valley Scholars education support.

OUR COMMITMENT: Hope Valley Scholars applies this document to the programs, people and activities within its scope. Questions or requests for an accessible copy may be sent to the contact information below.

Version	1.0
Policy owner	Board of Directors and Scholarship Committee
Effective date	01/01/2026
Review cycle	Annual
Website address	https://www.hopevalleyscholars.org/Documents/pdf/Hope%20Valley%20Scholars%20Scholarship%20Eligibility%20Selection%20Award%20and%20Renewal%20Policy.pdf

Organization: Hope Valley Scholars Inc. | U.S. 501(c)(3) public charity | EIN 41-2924425

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1. Purpose and guiding principles

Hope Valley Scholars Inc. supports academically promising students in Kenya who face significant financial barriers. Scholarship decisions must advance that charitable purpose while protecting student dignity, applying published criteria consistently and preserving the Organization's independent control over charitable funds.

- No applicant is entitled to an award merely because an application was accepted, an interview occurred or eligibility requirements were met.
- Awards depend on verified eligibility, comparative assessment, available funding, school costs and program capacity.
- No donor, director, officer, staff member, volunteer, partner or school may privately promise an award or select a beneficiary outside the approved process.
- Financial need and academic promise are central; protected characteristics and personal relationships must not be used for an unlawful or undisclosed preference.
- The Committee shall document decisions sufficiently for oversight without recording unnecessary sensitive information or stigmatizing commentary.

2. Scope and annual authorization

This policy applies to every scholarship, bursary, fee payment, education grant and related scholar-support decision administered by Hope Valley Scholars. Before each application cycle, the Board or its authorized committee shall approve the cohort, budget, award period, maximum number of awards, eligibility requirements, application window, evaluation method, decision authority and communication schedule.

2027 COHORT: Hope Valley Scholars plans to consider up to 25 students entering Grade 10 in 2027, subject to verified eligibility, fundraising, available funding and program capacity. Final application dates and the number of available awards will be published on the scholarship webpage.

3. Eligibility

Unless the published opportunity notice states otherwise, an applicant must:

- Be enrolled in, admitted to or legitimately seeking admission to an eligible secondary school, college or university program in Kenya.
- Meet the grade, form, year or cohort requirement stated in the opportunity notice. For the planned 2027 Grade 10 cohort, provide Grade 9 results and evidence of progression or placement when available.
- Demonstrate academic promise through current and cumulative results, progress, effort and educational potential. A single examination result shall not be the only measure when broader evidence is available.
- Demonstrate material financial need affecting the ability to begin, remain in or complete education.
- Submit a complete application, truthful certification, required references and official or verifiable school and fee records by the stated deadline or under an authorized rolling process.
- Agree to appropriate verification and, if selected, sign the Scholar and Parent or Guardian Agreement and participate in approved mentorship and progress monitoring.

Hope Valley Scholars may create a narrowly defined emergency or rolling-assistance process when funds permit. That process must use written criteria and must not bypass safeguarding, conflicts review or financial verification.

4. Application requirements

Category	Required evidence or response
Identity and education	Applicant name, date of birth, contact details, residence, current school, grade or year, course if applicable and expected graduation.
Academic	Current and cumulative transcript or report card; Grade 9 results for entry to Grade 10; KCPE or KCSE results when applicable; relevant awards.
Financial	Current official fee statement, outstanding balance, household contribution, assistance requested, other bursaries or HELB support and a clear explanation of need.
Character and potential	Applicant narratives, one school reference and one recognized community or religious-leader reference, with an equivalent community option always accepted.
Admission	Admission or placement letter when entering a new institution, supplied when available.
Photograph	A current passport-style headshot required for application administration and identity matching; it must be stored securely and must not be used publicly without separate consent.

5. Scholarship Committee and conflicts

The Board shall appoint at least three qualified reviewers or authorize a Scholarship Committee. Reviewers shall receive the criteria, scoring guidance, confidentiality instructions and Conflict of Interest Policy before accessing applications.

- A reviewer must disclose a family, financial, employment, school, community, donor or other relationship that could affect or appear to affect impartiality.
- A conflicted reviewer shall not access unnecessary applicant information, score, interview, rank, advocate for or vote on that applicant.
- The minutes or decision record shall identify the disclosure, determination and recusal without publishing sensitive details.
- No applicant may be penalized because the applicant reported a concern, requested an accommodation or declined optional media consent.

6. Evaluation and scoring

Hope Valley Scholars uses the following scoring allocation to support consistent, documented review. Any future change must be made prospectively and may not be created after reviewers have seen applicant identities:

Factor	Weight	Evidence
Verified financial need	35%	Fee balance, household circumstances, contribution ability, other assistance and risk of interruption.
Academic promise and progress	25%	Results, improvement, effort, readiness and educational potential.
Educational continuity and urgency	15%	Admission or enrollment status, fee-related exclusion risk and timing.

Factor	Weight	Evidence
Character, leadership and service	15%	Applicant responses, references, responsibilities and demonstrated integrity.
Interview and verification	10%	Clarity, consistency, goals, commitment and verified facts.

Reviewers score independently before deliberation. The Committee may calibrate inconsistent scoring, request clarification and consider portfolio balance only within published, lawful and mission-related criteria. It must not invent new criteria after seeing applicant identities.

7. Verification, interviews and safeguarding

- Verify school enrollment or admission, fee statements, results, references, other funding and material financial claims using proportionate and respectful methods.
- Obtain parent or guardian participation for a minor's interview and use approved communication arrangements consistent with safeguarding rules.
- Do not require original identity documents through an ordinary public form. If identity evidence is needed, request the minimum necessary through a secure process.
- Treat inconsistency as a request for clarification before concluding that information was intentionally false.
- Refer a safety disclosure through the Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy rather than investigating it within scholarship deliberations.

8. Decisions, notification and waiting lists

The authorized decision-maker shall approve awards and document the amount, period, institution, conditions and funding source. Applicants shall receive a respectful written result. A decline message should explain that funding and capacity are limited and provide the complaint or reconsideration channel without disclosing rankings or other applicants' information.

A waiting list may be used only when its duration, order or re-evaluation method is documented. Placement on a waiting list is not an award. Expired applications must not be carried indefinitely into another cycle without renewed consent and updated information.

9. Award administration and payment

- Issue a written award notice and Scholar and Parent or Guardian Agreement before payment.
- Pay approved education costs directly to the verified school or service provider whenever practicable. Exceptions require documented approval and receipts.
- Do not pay more than the verified eligible cost after other confirmed assistance unless the Board approves another education-related purpose.
- Record donor restrictions at the fund level. A donor may support a program or cohort but may not control selection of a named applicant unless counsel confirms a lawful pre-approved arrangement that preserves charitable control.
- Reconcile payments to fee statements and obtain updated balances or receipts.

10. Renewal

Renewal is not automatic unless the award letter expressly guarantees a defined multi-year term. Before renewal, Hope Valley Scholars may require current results, attendance or enrollment confirmation, an updated fee statement, disclosure of other assistance, reasonable mentorship participation and an updated financial-need review.

A scholar experiencing difficulty should ordinarily receive an opportunity to explain the circumstances and, when appropriate, a written support or improvement plan. Disability, illness, bereavement, displacement, school disruption or another serious circumstance must be considered fairly and confidentially.

11. Probation, suspension, withdrawal and termination

Action	Possible basis	Minimum safeguard
Support plan or probation	Academic decline, attendance concern, missing progress documents or participation difficulty.	Written expectations, support offered, review date and opportunity to respond.
Temporary suspension	Enrollment uncertainty, unverified fees, serious conduct or safety issue, duplicate funding or pending investigation.	Notice when safe and lawful, limited duration, responsible reviewer and status updates.
Termination	Material intentional misrepresentation, ineligibility, permanent withdrawal, misuse of funds, serious repeated breach or funding/program end.	Written reason, disinterested approval and appeal information, except where immediate safety measures are required.
Voluntary withdrawal	Scholar or family requests to end support.	Confirm effective date, reconcile payments and protect records.

No action may be retaliatory or based on declining optional publicity, requesting an accommodation or making a good-faith complaint.

12. Reconsideration and appeal

An applicant or scholar may request reconsideration for a material factual error, undisclosed procedural irregularity, conflict of interest, discrimination, failure to consider an approved accommodation or significant new information that could not reasonably have been supplied earlier. Disagreement with comparative judgment alone does not require a new decision.

Requests should ordinarily be submitted within 15 business days of notice. A person who did not make the original decision shall review the request where practicable. The outcome should be issued within 30 business days or the requester should receive a status update and revised date.

13. Privacy, records and oversight

Applications, scores, references, verifications, recusals, decisions, awards and appeals are confidential records. Access must be role-based, retention must follow the Document Retention and Destruction Policy, and public reporting must use aggregate or appropriately consented information. The Board shall review de-identified application and award data at least annually for consistency, barriers, funding sufficiency and program outcomes.

14. Official references

- [IRS guidance on private benefit and inurement](#)
- [Kenya Data Protection Act, 2019](#)
- [Kenya Children Act, 2022](#)

Document control: The current public version is maintained by Hope Valley Scholars Inc.; printed or downloaded copies may become outdated. **Related:** [Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy](#) | [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

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