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## STVP FAQs

### New York State School Technology Voucher Program (NYS-STVP)

#### **New!** Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Posted 6/4/14 | Updated 6/24/14 | Updated 8/20/14 | Updated 8/25/14

1. **Question:** Where is this money coming from?

**Answer:** The School Technology Voucher Program (STVP) is the result of an \$87 million legal settlement between the Microsoft Corporation and the State of New York. It is being administered by the Rust Consulting, the Settlement Claims Administrator, on behalf of the Microsoft Corporation. **It is not a Federal or State grant.**

2. **Question:** Who gets the money?

**Answer:** Schools having more than 50% student enrollment in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program (FRPL) for the 2011-12 school year are eligible to receive the vouchers to be reimbursed for eligible technology purchases from September 1, 2012. A list of eligible schools can be found at <https://nys-stvp.com/ListofEligibleSchools.aspx>. 

3. **Question:** The voucher application seems very complicated. How do I get my money?

**Answer:** The STVP process is a multi-step process. A video explaining the application can be found at <https://nys-stvp.com/ApplicationProcess.aspx> . All steps must be completed in the following sequence:

- a. **The superintendent registers all eligible schools in your district with the Rust Settlement Claims Administrator (SCA).** The superintendent also provides a secondary contact, usually the District Technology Director. All superintendents were emailed a login and password on July 1, 2013. If the superintendent of your district did not receive the login or is new to the position, email the SCA at [claimsadmin@nys-stvp.com](mailto:claimsadmin@nys-stvp.com) requesting a login.

- b. **New! The District, usually the Technology Director, completes the NYSED Tech Readiness Tool (TRT) for all eligible schools.** The TRT can be found at <https://trt.nysed.gov>. If you have difficulties loading information into the TRT, please send an email to [trt@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:trt@mail.nysed.gov) and we will assist you.
- c. **The District, usually the Technology Director, submits an application to the SCA for all eligible schools,** using the application link found at <https://nys-stvp.com/ApplicationProcess.aspx>.  The application will include the school's plan for closing the technology gap in their school and include a purchase plan that lists the products eligible for the General Purpose Voucher (GPV) and Specific Category Software Voucher (SCSV) for which the school wishes to be reimbursed.
- d. **The SCA verifies that the products listed on the application are eligible for the vouchers.** If they determine that some products are ineligible, they will email and phone the school explaining the issue. The school will then have the opportunity to revise and re-submit the application.
- e. **The SCA sends an email to the school contact (usually the principal) requesting agreement to the Statement of Assurance (SOA).** The **Technology Director may agree to SOA** as long as the **school contact is copied** on the email of agreement. SOA is a statement that the STVP funds will be used to supplement current district and school technology efforts and support a technology-rich learning environment and computer-based testing.
- f. As soon as the **SCA receives the SOA**, they **send the application to NYSED for review.** **Without the SOA, the application will not progress** further.
- g. The Office of Educational Design & Technology of **NYSED reviews the application** to see whether the purchase plan addresses the device gap as much as possible. If a school has a device gap and wishes to buy products other than devices, such as cabling for networks, this must be explained in the Purchase Plan Narrative.
- h. **Based on the review of the Purchase Plan and Narrative, NYSED approves or rejects the application and sends it back to the SCA. If the application is rejected, it is returned to the District with comments for revision and re-submission.** If it is approved, it is also returned to the SCA.
- i. **SCA will notify an applicant by email** 1-2 days after the NYSED approval. **SCA will send an approval email and a separate email with the voucher attached** within a week of an approved application. Voucher emails are usually sent on Fridays.

- j. **Applicant makes purchases or if purchases have already been made, compiles proof of purchase documentation.**
  - k. **Applicant submits voucher** with signature and proof of purchase.
  - l. **SCA reviews the voucher and proof of purchases (usually receipts)** and sends check within 30 days of receiving a reimbursement request in good order.
4. **Question:** My school is listed as eligible for the STVP, but we don't have a device gap. Are we still eligible for the vouchers?

**Answer:** All schools meeting the eligibility criteria (having more than 50% student enrollment in the FRPL for the 2011-12 school year) are eligible for the technology voucher program, to support learning and instruction. Once a school is deemed eligible the voucher money is guaranteed.

5. **Question:** What's a "device gap?"

**Answer:** The device gap is the difference between the number of computing devices (desktops, laptops, or tablets) a school has and the number of students in the school's largest tested grade(s) (grades 3-11). The information in the TRT is used to calculate the device gap. Reducing or eliminating the device gap is intended to facilitate online assessments and technology infused instruction. For example:

- a. If a K-5 school has 25 computers and the biggest tested grade is 3rd with 60 students, the device gap would be the device gap would be calculated by subtracting 25 (the number of devices) from 60 (the number of students in the largest tested grade). So the device gap would be 35.
- b. b. If it is a K-8 school with 30 devices and the 3rd grade has 55 students and the biggest 6-8 grade is grade 7 with 75 students, the device gap would be calculated by subtracting 30 (the number of devices) from 130 (the number of students in the two largest tested grades). So, the device gap would be 100.
- c. c. If a 7-12 school has 50 computers and, the 7th grade has 60 students, and the biggest 9-11 grade is the 10th grade with 75 students, the device gap would be calculated by subtracting 50 (the number of devices) from 135 (the number of students in the two largest tested grades). So the device gap would be 85.

6. **Question:** Do all computers count in calculating the device gap?

**Answer:** No, the computers have to be up-to-date (Windows 7 or the equivalent). Windows XP machines do not qualify. Please see [PARCC Guidelines](#)  for more information about minimum technology standards for eligibility for STVP vouchers.

7. **Question:** Why can't I buy printers or a smart board?

**Answer:** **If your school** has a device gap, **the voucher funds must be spent** to reduce or eliminate the device gap **to facilitate online assessments and technology- infused instruction. In other words the General Purpose Vouchers (GPV) should be used to** purchase devices and improve school networking. **It should not be used to purchase printers, projectors, interactive whiteboards, or software.**

8. **New! Question:** What's the deadline for applications? Don't I have plenty of time to complete mine?

**Answer:** The deadline to submit all application material **has been extended to December 1, 2014.** There will be no opportunity to submit a revised purchase plan or purchase plan narrative after December 1. That's not a lot of time to submit an application that can be approved by SCA and then by NYSED.

9. **New! Question:** What's the deadline for submitting the vouchers and the proof of purchases?

**Answer:** The deadline for submitting the vouchers and the proof of purchases **has been extended to February 1, 2015.**

10. **Question:** Are K-2 schools eligible?

**Answer:** K-2 schools are eligible for the voucher program. Since they do not have any tested grades, they may buy any eligible product that will enhance teaching and learning.

11. **Question:** Are Pre-K only schools eligible?

**Answer:** Pre-K schools are not eligible for the STVP program.

12. **Question:** Are Pre-K to Grade 2 schools eligible?

**Answer:** Since the Pre-K students are not eligible for the STVP program, the school would receive funds from the program based on the number of students in grades K-2 to be spent on eligible products that would enhance teaching and learning.

13. **Question:** Are charter schools eligible?

**Answer:** Charter schools are eligible, under the same rules as the district public schools.

14. **Question:** Are nonpublic schools eligible?

**Answer:** No. Nonpublic schools are not eligible. This determination was made by the parties to the legal settlement, not by SCA or NYSED.

15. **Question:** Can I transfer my STVP voucher to another school or district?

**Answer:** STVP vouchers can only be transferred within a district if a school has closed. Please see [question 29](#) for the protocol to handle school closings. STVP vouchers cannot be transferred between districts.

16. **Question:** I am having trouble with my application. Who can help me?

**Answer:** There are several different ways to get help with your STVP application:

- a. New York City Department of Education schools should contact [techreadiness@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:techreadiness@schools.nyc.gov) or 212-374-6646.
- b. All other schools, including NYC charters, should contact [claimsadmin@nys-stvp.com](mailto:claimsadmin@nys-stvp.com), 866-303-7288, or 612-359-2013.
- c. Schools may also contact [nysstvp@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:nysstvp@mail.nysed.gov) or 518-474-5461.

17. **Question:** Can a BOCES or RICs submit application(s) for their component district(s)?

**Answer:** No. School districts must apply on behalf of their eligible schools. A school district may request assistance from their BOCES or RIC, but each district's application(s) must be submitted separately.

18. **Question:** I was told that the voucher funds were not guaranteed. Is that true?

**Answer:** Once the School is deemed eligible for the NYS-STVP, the voucher funds are totally guaranteed, since they result from a legal settlement with Microsoft Corporation.

19. **Question:** Do I have to wait for approval of my STVP application before I can purchase items?

**Answer:** No. You don't have to wait until your application is approved to purchase items, however, the only way you can confirm that items you purchase will be reimbursed by the STVP is to submit your completed application and have it approved. Or, alternatively, you can apply, have the items approved by the Settlement Claims Administrator (SCA), have the purchase plan approved by NYSED, receive the vouchers, and then purchase the items.

20. **Question:** Are items that have already been purchased eligible?

**Answer:** Items purchased after September 1, 2012 are eligible for the vouchers, if they are approved by SCA and the **purchase plan is approved by NYSED.**

21. **Question:** Why won't NYSED let me buy items I think would be useful for my school?

**Answer:** The Settlement Claims Administrator, not NYSED, makes all product and service purchase eligibility determinations, based on the terms of the legal settlement.

22. **Question:** How do I know what I am allowed to buy?

**Answer:** The list of eligible products can be found at <https://nys-stvp.com/EligibleProductsServices.aspx> or contact the SCA. See question 15 for the contact information.

23. **Question:** Can I move funds between the GPV and the SCSV categories?

**Answer:** No. According to the legal settlement that established the voucher program, funds cannot be moved between the voucher categories.

24. **Question:** If I receive grant funds for an item, can I also receive voucher funds for that item?

**Answer:** No. A school cannot receive money twice for the same item. They may, however, apply for the non-aided portion of an expenditure.

25. **Question:** Do the State and Federal rules that grant funds may only be used to supplement District funding not supplant (replace) it apply to the STVP vouchers?

**Answer:** Yes. The supplement (add to) only rules also apply to the STVP vouchers. Voucher funds cannot replace district technology funding.

26. **New! Question:** Can the STVP voucher funds be used to pay for an equipment lease?

**Answer:** Yes, if the product that would be leased is approved by the Settlement Claims Administrator and the purchase plan includes the charges for a period that does not exceed September 1, 2012 and **February 1, 2015**.

27. **Question:** If I have received a voucher for an item, but I haven't bought it yet, can I change the item and get a voucher for a different item?

**Answer:** Yes the purchase plan can be revised if it is approved by Settlement Claims Administrator and does not increase the device gap. For information on revising the purchase plan, contact SCA. Please see Question 15 for the contact information.

28. **Question:** Could someone do a preliminary review of my purchase plan and purchase plan narrative before I submit my application?

**Answer:** Yes. If you would like assistance with your application, please contact NYSED at [nysstvp@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:nysstvp@mail.nysed.gov) or 518-474-5461.

29. **Question:** What if one or more of my districts' eligible schools has since closed?

**Answer:** Please see this [protocol](#)  for requesting approval to reallocate the monies that were designated for that school.

30. **Question:** If an eligible school is re-organized and will be serving different grades in the future and has not yet submitted a STVP application, would it still be eligible for technology voucher funds?

**Answer:** Voucher funds for re-organized schools will be handled on a case-by-case basis. For assistance with that issue, you may wish to contact NYSED at [nysstvp@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:nysstvp@mail.nysed.gov) or 518-474-5461.