2027 EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP GRANT

Information for students, families and Student Advocates

IN SUMMARY

Available support	For education-related expenses for the 2027 school year
Grant amount	Year 7 students: up to $2,000 ex GST. Years 8 – 12 students: up to $1,500 ex GST
Who can apply	Secondary school students living in Boroondara and experiencing financial hardship
How to apply	Complete the online application form with a Student Advocate. Refer : www.hawthorncommunitychest.org/education-grant-request
Applications close	Wednesday 4 November 2026
Outcome advised	by Friday 20 November 2026
Grant period	20 November 2026 - 30 October 2027

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Hawthorn Community Chest (HCC) and Inner East Community Support (IECS) jointly deliver the Education Assistance Partnership (EAP). IECSupport provides funding for the grants. Hawthorn Community Chest administers applications and payments, and the EAP Committee considers applications.

The program helps secondary school students experiencing financial hardship, access the items and activities they need to attend school and participate more fully in school life. Support is intended to make a practical difference for the student and reduce financial pressure on their family.

WHAT THE GRANT INCLUDES

The EAP Grant will provide up to $1,500 ex GST of education-related costs for each Yr 8 -12 student for one academic year and up to $2,000 ex GST for those entering Year 7, in recognition that there are extraordinary expenses for those starting a new school.

This funding will be used to cover essential education-related costs such as:

- Computers - full or part payment of a school-approved computer or rental
- School uniform, school shoes, sports shoes and other uniform items
- Textbooks (hard copy and digital) and online resources
- Calculators, stationery and materials for art and crafts
- Camps, sports, incursions and excursions
- Subject levies and VTAC fees
- VCE exam revision lectures
- Graduations and valedictories
- Internet access
- Tutors
- myki cards for students 18yrs of age and not eligible for a myki Youth card
- Music lessons and instrument hire
- Co-curriculum activities (provided by school and external suppliers) that improve emotional wellbeing and enhance engagement with school. Includes: club registration fees, uniforms etc

There may be other essential education-related expenses that are eligible for funding, and not mentioned above. Please forward any requests for funding to Hawthorn Community Chest. The EAP Committee will review requests on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the student's needs and in consultation with the Student Advocate. Requests for funding beyond the approved grant amount can also be submitted.

HOW TO APPLY

Visit **www.hawthorncommunitychest.org/education-grant-request** to complete the Online Application Form.

The application must be completed by the Student Advocate, in consultation with the student and their parent or carer. The Student Advocate is a professional who understands the student's circumstances and education needs and can support their application. This may be: a school wellbeing coordinator, a school principal or year-level coordinator, a case worker or care provider, or another approved professional. The Student Advocate is the main contact for the application and for any payment requests.

Applications close: Wednesday 4 November 2026.
Outcome advised: By Friday 20 November 2026. The Student Advocate will be notified of the outcome of the application, whether successful or not.

ELIGIBILITY

All EAP Grants will be awarded at the discretion of the EAP Committee.

To be eligible for consideration for an EAP Grant, the student must:

- be attending secondary school in 2027
- be a resident of Boroondara
- be an individual or in a family facing financial necessitous circumstances, and
- not be receiving any other scholarships, bursaries or grants.

Necessitous Circumstances : Our grants are intended to provide support to students and their families who are facing financial difficulties. This is an essential part of our role as a registered charity and our status as a deductible gift recipient.

If the student or their family receive a government benefit, they automatically meet this requirement. If they don't receive government support but are still facing financial difficulty, they may still be eligible - we'll just need more information.

Financial stress can happen for many reasons, such as illness, disability, family changes, trauma, accidents, or other unexpected challenges. It may be a short-term setback or an ongoing situation.

When applying, it's important to show how an EAP Grant would make a real difference for the student and help ease the financial pressure the family is facing.

Change of Circumstances : The student and/or Student Advocate must notify Hawthorn Community Chest if the student leaves their school, or moves out of Boroondara, during the academic year.

For students who move out of Boroondara, their EAP Grant will end from the date they move, whether or not they remain at the same school or transfer to another school. Any EAP payments already made will not need to be repaid. However, no further EAP funding will be available.

PAYMENTS

Once your application has been approved, you can request payment for eligible education expenses incurred during the grant period, up to 31 October 2027, and up to the total amount of your approved grant. Expenses incurred before the date you are notified that your application has been successful, will not be approved.

How payment works:

1. Student, parent or carer: Identify an education expense that meets the grant criteria and provide the invoice (with ABN mentioned), book list, website link or payment request to your Student Advocate. You do not need to pay upfront. Payments made personally by students, parents or carers cannot be reimbursed.
2. Student Advocate: Forward the invoice or payment request to HCC at eap@hawthorncommunitychest.org. Before submitting a payment request to HCC, the Student Advocate must ensure that all relevant funding options have been accessed, such as Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) and State Schools' Relief (for eligible items including school shoes and laptops).
3. HCC: Will arrange payment directly to the supplier (inc. school) and notify the Student Advocate once the payment has been processed. Items purchased can be sent to student's home, school or collected from supplier.

PAYMENTS (CONT.)

Any unused grant funds cannot be carried over to the next academic year.

Preferred suppliers

We encourage students to use our preferred suppliers:

- Learning With Technologies - laptops
- Campion - new text books
- I Love Books, Mont Albert - new and second hand text books
- Dobsons, Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn - uniform and school shoes, offer 10% discount
- Bob Stewart, High St, Kew - uniform and school shoes
- Active Feet, Camberwell - sneakers
- Officeworks - stationery

Computers

EAP will fund:

- the cost of "school-managed" laptops purchased via the school's supplier portal (e.g. Learning With Technologies), either in full or in part.
- computer rental from school or other supplier.
- "BYO" laptops if the device and/or software is approved by the student's school. Please note: EAP will not cover the cost of repairs if required. We recommend insurance is purchased. In most cases BYO laptops will not be supported by the school's IT department.
- one partly or fully purchased computer, every three years.

Booklists and textbooks

- Booklist requests should be emailed to eap@hawthorncommunitychest.org, ideally by 11 December 2026.
- Books will be sent directly to the student's home address (or school on request).
- Refunds: Campion does not allow refunds for digital/electronic or downloadable resources or stationery items and other items purchased must be returned within 30 days of receipt of goodsI Love Books does not allow refunds for digital/electronic or downloadable resources, stationery, calculators, workbooks, study guides, Checkpoints and non-digital items are refundable if returned within 3 days of delivery in their original condition (ie: items in their original shrink-wrapping, with any enclosed CDs, disks, licenses, or passwords unopened)

School uniforms

When purchasing from Dobsons or Bob Stewart:

1. Visit the store to select the required items and confirm the correct sizing, and ask the store to hold the items, or if sizes are known and purchasing online, send website and uniform requirements to Student Advocate.
2. Contact Student Advocate to request payment.
3. Once HCC has made payment, the Student Advocate will be notified, and student can collect items from the store or have items delivered to home or school.

Public transport

The EAP will cover myki costs for students aged 18 years or over who are not eligible for a myki Youth card.

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Camps, sports and excursions

The EAP may cover expenses that are eligible under the Victorian Government's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), once the student's available CSEF funding has been fully utilised.

Students must apply for CSEF through their school by the CSEF application cut-off date, before requesting EAP assistance for eligible expenses.

Eligible CSEF expenses include:

- school camps and trips
- swimming and other school-organised sporting programs
- outdoor education
- excursions and incursions that are extracuricular
- graduations and valedictories.

REVIEW

We have developed criteria against which the success of each EAP Grant can be measured. Importantly, "success" is not measured through a student's academic improvement, but will focus on the overall improvement in the child's life - is the EAP Grant making a difference to the student and family?

At the end of each year, the EAP Committee will review the progress of each individual student, always considering individual circumstances, and determine whether the EAP Grant has been helpful to the student and family. The EAP will request, via the Student Advocate, responses to questions which may include the following:

- Has the funding reduced financial pressures on the students and/or their family?
- Did the EAP Grant reduce barriers to the student attending or participating in school?
- Has there been a change in the student's effort, contribution, engagement and attendance? How?
- Is the student planning to undertake further study in 2027?
- What could improve the program?

This assessment is an important component of the EAP Grant and the EAP Committee will use the information (without identifying individual students) to report back to our supporters.

Contact Hawthorn Community Chest (HCC):
eap@hawthorncommunitychest.org hawthorncommunitychest.org Phone: 0499 0400