

*The Missouri*



# Scholarship Program

*The "Plus" is Free Tuition*



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## **The Purpose of the Missouri A+ Scholarship Program**

In order to strengthen the educational preparation of Missouri's youth, the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 included the implementation of the Missouri A+ Grant Program. The primary goal of the A+ Program is to inspire more Missouri high school students to pursue a post-secondary education and career development.

In 1997, after an intensive review by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Wentzville Holt High School became the first high school in St. Charles County to earn the distinction of becoming a Missouri A+ Program high school. Timberland High School received A+ designation in 2002 and Liberty High School received A+ designation in 2013.

The A+ Program provides scholarship funds to eligible graduates of the Wentzville School District who attend a participating Missouri public community college or vocational/technical school, or certain private two-year vocational/technical schools.

## **The Purpose of this Manual**

The purpose of this manual is to provide students, parents, and staff with the guidelines of the Missouri A+ Scholarship Program. It is the responsibility of the Wentzville School District to follow these guidelines to assure that A+ designation is maintained. It is the responsibility of participating students to follow these guidelines in order to maintain eligibility in the program.

*A+ scholarship funding is directly dependent upon the availability of state appropriations from the Missouri General Assembly. A+ funding is not the responsibility of the Wentzville School District.*

## **MDHE A+ Scholarship Guidelines**

Please refer to the MDHE website for the most up to date guidelines regarding eligibility and benefits.

<http://dhe.mo.gov/ppc/grants/aplusscholarship.php>

## **Enrollment Procedures For Current Wentzville Students**

1. A+ Program Student Manuals can be found on the A+ webpage for each high school. Hard copies of the manual, as well as A+ Program Participation Agreements, are available in the Guidance Office and the College & Career Planning Center. A+ Participation Agreements must be signed by the student and their parent/guardian and submitted to the A+ Coordinator.
2. Any qualified student may join in the A+ Program at any time during high school if they meet all A+ requirements.

## **New Students**

1. Students who transfer to the Wentzville School District from another A+ designated school are responsible for submitting documentation from their previous school to their WSD A+ Coordinator. This information will be reviewed to determine student eligibility status.
2. Students who withdraw or transfer from the Wentzville School District after the beginning of the sophomore year, and later re-enroll will not be eligible for the A+ Program, unless the school they attended in the interim is also a Missouri A+ designated school, per state of Missouri guidelines for the A+ Program.

## **Grade Point Requirement**

A+ students must graduate with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (without weighted grades). A student's grade point average is calculated using all four years of the student's enrollment in high school. The final official high school transcript will be the document used to certify each student's grade point average. A student's GPA will not be rounded up: e.g., 2.49 GPA will not be translated to 2.5 GPA.

## **Attendance Requirement**

Students are expected to attend school and arrive to classes on time. To be eligible for the A+ Scholarship, a student must maintain a 95% cumulative attendance record. This is necessary for the student to receive the maximum benefits from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility. The following attendance guidelines address maintaining eligibility in the A+ Program.

1. The high school attendance office keeps the official record of attendance. Minutes, hours, partial and full day absences are recorded and accumulate to a total number of hours and days missed. To ensure a 95% attendance rate, students should not miss more than eight full days each academic year (varies depending upon the school calendar).
2. Attendance information can be found on the student's report card and by accessing the Student/Parent Portal on line.
3. Students with chronic or long-term health related problems which cause a student to miss more than the approximate of eight days per year must provide medical documentation to the A+ Coordinator. In extreme cases, excessive absences may be forgiven in accordance with the A+ appeals process.
4. Parents, guardians, and students may file an A+ Program attendance appeal if the student's attendance record is such that it may lead to disqualification from the A+ Program. The attendance issue must be directly tied to a major illness, injury, or personal calamity. Official documentation, such as a letter from a physician, will be required along with a written letter from the student and a parent/guardian.

## **Tutoring Requirement**

Students must complete 50 hours of unpaid academic tutoring or mentoring. Tutoring sessions must benefit students in the Wentzville School District, be conducted on WSD property and supervised by district employees. Students may also earn hours through a job shadow experience. Job shadowing is approved through the A+ Coordinator and may account for up to 25% (12.5 hours) of the required tutoring hours.

### General Guidelines for Tutors

1. Before beginning their tutoring hours, A+ eligible students must attend an A+ Tutor Training, sign an A+ Tutoring Agreement and gain approval to tutor by their A+ Coordinator.
2. Students must have at least a 2.4 Grade Point Average.
3. Students have an attendance record of at least 95%.
4. Students have a record of good school citizenship.

### Specific Requirements

1. Tutoring should begin prior to 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of senior year and should be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the senior year. All tutoring must be completed by the last day of student attendance.
2. A+ Tutors must follow the WSD discipline and dress codes while tutoring.
3. Tutoring must be conducted on Wentzville School District property and supervised by a district employee.
4. The A+ Tutor must at all times follow the rules of an appropriate tutor-student relationship which include positive behavior focused on academic success and appropriate confidentiality as outlined at the A+ Tutor Training Workshop.
5. After receiving a tutoring assignment, it is the A+ student's responsibility to schedule specific dates and times to tutor. Absences should only occur in cases of emergency, with appropriate notification to the tutoring supervisor.
6. An official A+ Tutoring Time Sheet must be completed by the A+ tutor and certified by supervising school personnel.
7. A+ tutors must sign in at the tutoring site according to district expectation.
8. The sponsoring teacher/counselor/A+ Coordinator may terminate the tutoring experience at any time if the placement is no longer appropriate.

A+ tutors are expected to follow all school rules and represent Wentzville School District to the best of their ability. Appropriate consequences may be assigned to students who violate the Wentzville School District Code of Conduct.

### **Math Proficiency Requirement**

A+ Program students must achieve a score of proficient or advanced on the Algebra I end of course exam or a higher level DESE approved end-of-course exam in the field of mathematics.

If you meet all of the eligibility requirements except the end of course exam requirement, you may establish eligibility by achieving a qualifying ACT mathematics score (17) set by the MDHE or by achieving a combined ACT math subscore and high school GPA in accordance with the following table.

ACT Math Score		High School GPA
17 or greater	and	2.5 or greater
16	and	2.8 or greater
15	and	3.0 or greater

You may achieve the qualifying math score as a high school or postsecondary student. If you achieve the score as a postsecondary student you may be eligible for an award in the same term that you take the test.

## **Requirement to Secure Federal Funding**

A+ graduates who desire to use A+ funding are required to make a good faith effort to secure all available federal financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This can be done online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) after October 1<sup>st</sup> and before April 1<sup>st</sup> each and every year the A+ Program graduate wishes to utilize the A+ Scholarship.

## **Citizenship Requirement**

Participation in the A+ Scholarship Program is a unique privilege for WSD high school students. Students pursuing the A+ designation must maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs/alcohol.

### Unlawful Use of Drugs/Alcohol

A+ Program students will not sell, possess or use any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined by law and stated in the Wentzville R-IV School District Code of Conduct (Regulation 2610).

### Good Citizenship

Students participating in the A+ Scholarship Program should exhibit behaviors fitting a role model for other students. They should strive to maintain the highest standards of character and ethics and obey all school rules. Negative student behaviors are reflected through the official discipline record of each student.

The assistant principals are responsible for assigning school consequences for infractions of the Code of Conduct. Discipline reports are reviewed by the A+ Coordinator. Students who fail to follow behavior expectations and demonstrate good school citizenship may be disqualified from the A+ Scholarship Program.

## **Disqualification from A+ Program**

Any out of school suspension of ten days or more will result in disqualification from the A+ Program. A pattern of accumulated in school or out of school suspension may also lead to disqualification. Students may appeal the disqualification based on the manual guidelines.

## **Appeals Process**

A student and parent/guardian may appeal decisions regarding attendance or citizenship disqualification from the A+ Program. There are two levels of appeal:

- First level of appeal: Student and parent/guardian submit a formal letter to the A+ Coordinator, outlining the concerns and requesting reinstatement in the program. The coordinator confers with the building principal. The three high school principals will then confer to make appeal decisions.
- Second level of appeal: If further concern exists, the student and parent/guardian should contact the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services.
- Appeals beyond this would go to the Superintendent of Schools and should be made in writing.

## **Monitoring Process**

The A+ Scholarship Program Coordinator regularly reviews each student's A+ status. Additionally, all A+ students and parents/guardians are urged to monitor class grades, the cumulative grade point average, attendance rates, A+ tutoring hours, and citizenship.

## **Missouri A+ Program Graduates**

At the time of graduation, only seniors who meet all A+ Program requirements will be eligible to utilize the A+ Scholarship. At the student's written request, the A+ seal will be added to the official final high school transcript and sent to the college of choice.



## Yearly A+ Student Checklist

### Freshman Year

- Read the A+ Student Manual and review the requirements with parents.
- Sign an A+ Program Participation Agreement.
- Concentrate on earning at least a 2.5 cumulative non-weighted grade point average and strive to earn a proficient or advanced Algebra I EOC score.
- Attend school regularly to maintain a 95% attendance record.
- Develop and maintain a record of good citizenship.

### Sophomore Year

- Continue to fulfill the basic A+ Program requirements.
- Consider starting tutorial hours after attending a tutor training and signing the A+ tutor agreement (training dates are posted in each high school).

### Junior Year

- Continue to fulfill the basic A+ Program requirements.
- Attend a tutor training and sign the tutor agreement.
- Begin tutoring. Along with previously offered tutoring opportunities, juniors and seniors may tutor through the Chautauqua Program. Juniors may also tutor through the district summer school program (opportunities may vary from year to year).

### Senior Year

- Meet all A+ requirements:
  - earn at least a 2.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale (non-weighted) and a qualifying EOC mathematics score and/or ACT math subscore combination.
  - maintain at least a cumulative 95% attendance rate
  - maintain a record of good citizenship
  - Complete 50\* hours of academic tutoring in the Wentzville School District under the supervision of a Wentzville employee

\*A+ Program participants are able to earn up to 12.5 hours of the 50 hour requirement through an approved job shadowing experience. Job shadowing must be pre-approved through the A+ Coordinator, documented outside the regular school day and may account for up to 25% of the required 50 hours.