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A+
**SCHOOLS
PROGRAM
HANDBOOK**

WHERE EAGLES LEARN TO FLY



Board Approved 11/19/2012

GOALS OF THE A+ SCHOOLS PROGRAM

The A+ Schools Program is designed to achieve the three basic goals that are set forth in the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. The three goals of the A+ Schools Program are listed below:

1. All students will graduate from high school
2. All students will complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and has identified learning expectations
3. All students will proceed from high school graduation to a four-year college, community college, post-secondary vocational/technical school, or high wage job with workplace skill development opportunities

BENEFITS OF AN A+ SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS

Dependent upon Oran High School receiving A+ certification, the A+ Schools initiative will begin with the graduating class of 2013 at Oran R-III. Students graduating from Oran High School MAY be eligible for the following:

- Tuition incentive while attending any public community college or public vocational/technical school of their choice in Missouri

These costs will be reimbursable only after the student has made a good faith effort to first secure all available federal post-secondary financial assistance funds that do not require repayment. This is achieved by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) during the student's senior year of high school. Full-time students will receive this incentive for TWO years. The two years must be completed within FOUR years after high school graduation.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the financial incentives of the A+ Schools Program, a student must be certified as an A+ student by Oran High School. As the official representative of the A+ Schools Program with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the A+ Schools Coordinator has the responsibility to certify if a graduate of Oran High School has met the criteria for certification. To be certified as an A+ student, an individual must do the following:

- Sign an A+ Student contract
- Attend an A+ designated high school for the three consecutive years prior to graduation (The entire sophomore, junior, and senior years).

- A score of Proficient or Advanced on the Algebra I End Of Course Exam OR meet the following criteria:

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

- Maintain a 95% attendance rate (No rounding permitted)
- Earn a 2.5 minimum grade point average on a 4.0 scale (6.875 on an 11.0 scale)
- Perform 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring for younger students. Job-shadowing can count for 25% (12.5 hours) of the 50 hour requirement
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol, including possession of tobacco
- Make a good faith effort to first secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment (complete FAFSA during senior year and provide a copy of the Student Aid Report (SAR) to the A+ Coordinator)
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- Register with the Selective Service if applicable

A summary sheet advising the parent of student progress toward A+ Schools status will be mailed in June following each school year.

ALGEBRA I REQUIREMENT

Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, to be eligible for the A+ Schools financial assistance, the student must score “proficient” or “advanced” on the Algebra I End of Course Exam (EOC) or meet the following criteria:

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

The student will take the exam after successful completion of Algebra I or Algebra B or before graduation from high school.

GRADE POINT REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for A+ Schools financial assistance the student must graduate with a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or above on a 4.0 scale. That translates to a 6.875 on an 11.0 scale. The following statements are intended to help clarify the A+ Schools policies concerning grade point average.

- The cumulative grade point average is for the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior years combined.
- The student's official transcript will serve as evidence of grade point average for admission into a public community college or public vocational/technical school.
- ALL courses taken by the student during their four years of high school will be used to calculate the grade point average.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

The student must have an attendance rate of 95% for the cumulated time from the beginning of the freshman year through the end of the senior year. The following guidelines will be in effect:

- The attendance information used by the A+ Schools Coordinator will come from the official attendance record kept by the Oran School District
- A cumulative attendance record will be kept from the beginning of the A+ student's freshman year until graduation
- At the end of each year, the A+ Coordinator will send information regarding cumulative attendance home in the summary sheet mentioned above.

TUTORING/MENTORING REQUIREMENTS

A+ students must perform 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring for younger students. The following guidelines should be followed in the completion of this requirement.

- All tutoring and mentoring activities will be designed to involve the A+ applicant with lower grade students in the Oran School District
- Tutoring and mentoring activities will provide, as an ultimate goal, encouragement to lower grade students to get excited about school, stay in school, and strive for good grades
- Tutoring and mentoring activities will be school-based, academic in nature, and under the auspices of school (not private or public sector programs in which the school has no input into activity)
- The tutoring and mentoring activities must occur before, after, or during the school day on the school premises. Volunteering at Oran Elementary Summer School is an approved opportunity
- All tutoring and mentoring must be supervised and verified by a teacher, principal, counselor, or the A+ coordinator
- The A+ applicant is responsible for maintaining a time sheet indicating all tutoring/mentoring activities. Exact times should be indicated. Only activities that have been verified with a timesheet signature by the tutoring supervisor, teacher, principal, counselor, or the A+ coordinator will be counted toward the 50 hour requirement. Time sheets should be turned in to the A+ coordinator on a bi-weekly basis

GOOD CITIZENSHIP

To be eligible for A+ Schools financial incentive, students must maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs (including alcohol). In an effort to set the parameters of good citizenship, the A+ Schools Advisory Committee defines “good citizens” by the following criteria:

1. Minimal discipline referrals
2. Compliance with provisions of the Oran R-III handbook
3. No student shall possess alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or controlled substances.

When violations of the Good Citizenship policy occurs, each case will be reviewed individually and one of two responses will result:

1. A warning statement will be issued to the student and the student’s parents/guardian, placing the student on probation
2. The student and student’s parents/guardians will be notified that the student has been removed from the A+ Schools Program and is not eligible for the tuition reimbursement.

A student/parent has the right to appeal when she/he becomes ineligible for the A+ financial incentive. In cases of appeal, the student must notify the A+ Coordinator in writing of her/his intent to appeal. The A+ Coordinator will then convene a committee meeting for consideration of the appeal within ten school days. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within five days of the meeting. The decision of the committee will be considered final.

Student Appeal: A Citizenship Review Committee will meet as needed to review and determine the eligibility status of students with citizenship deficiencies. They will also be responsible for hearing cases of appeal. The Citizenship Review Committee will consist of:

1. Superintendent
2. High School Principal
3. A+ Coordinator/Guidance Counselor
4. Board of Education member
5. Teacher

GOOD FAITH EFFORT TO SECURE FUNDING

The parents and students must first make a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayments (Grants) before A+ funding will be available.

- Parents of an A+ eligible student must complete and send in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA information must be sent to the public community college or public vocational/technical school that the student is planning to attend.
- The FAFSA application form is available at www.fafsa.ed.gov. An informational meeting regarding the FAFSA and financial aid will be held each year.
- Parents are encouraged to apply as early as possible, but not before January 1 of the year the student plans to attend school, due to the fact that you will need your prior year income tax forms to complete the FAFSA.
- A copy of the SAR, Student Aid Report, must be provided to the A+ Counselor.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY AFTER HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Missouri public community colleges and vocational or technical schools shall verify for each student intending to participate in the A+ Schools Program student financial incentives at their institution that:

- During the first semester of the student's participation:
 1. Verification of student eligibility has been received from Oran High School
 2. The eligible student is enrolled as a full-time student
 3. A good faith effort has been made to secure federal postsecondary student financial assistance funds
 4. The amount of the A+ School Program student financial incentive funds necessary to cover the remaining costs of tuition to attend, after applying any secured federal postsecondary student financial funds or scholarships

- During the second and subsequent semesters of the student's participation:
 1. The eligible student continues to be enrolled as a full-time student
 2. Good faith efforts continue to be made to secure federal postsecondary student financial assistance funds
 3. The student has earned and maintains a grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale
 4. The amount of the A+ School Program student financial incentive funds necessary to cover the remaining costs of tuition to attend, after applying any secured federal postsecondary student financial funds or scholarships

NOTES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- If one of your parents is a member of the military on active duty or has retired from the military and relocated to Missouri within one year of their retirement, you are exempt from the following requirement:
 1. Attend a designated A+ high school for 3 consecutive years immediately prior to graduation

However, you must attend an A+ designated high school in the year immediately preceding graduation and meet all of the other high school eligibility requirements.

- If you have already received an associate degree or baccalaureate degree, you are not eligible for the A+ Scholarship program.

- Beginning in the year 2015, if you meet all of the eligibility requirements except the Algebra I end of course requirement, you may establish eligibility by completing your first semester at a participating school with a minimum of 12 semester credit hours or the equivalent and a 2.5 grade point average.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW MUCH CAN I RECEIVE?

The scholarship will reimburse, within the limits described in the following paragraph, the unpaid balance of your tuition and general fees after all available, non-loan federal financial assistance, such as the federal Pell grant, has been applied to your account. This may result in a zero award if your Pell grant is sufficient to cover all tuition and general fee charges. General fees are fees that are charged to all students and do not include fees specific to an individual program or group of students.

The tuition amount eligible for reimbursement is capped at the published standard per credit hour tuition rate charged by Linn State Technical College. For the 2018-2019 academic year, the maximum rate is \$170.75 per credit hour or \$4.60 per clock-hour.

The amount reimbursed may be reduced if there are insufficient state appropriations. The following factors may also affect the amount you are eligible to receive:

- Reimbursement will be made for completed coursework, including remedial coursework, for which a standard grade was assigned and that is required by your school for the completion of the degree or certificate.
- The amount of reimbursement paid for coursework for which a standard grade was not assigned (dropped coursework), including coursework in a withdrawn status, may be deducted from subsequent reimbursement requests
- Repeat coursework, which includes courses for which you have already received a grade (including a failing grade), will not be reimbursed.
- Coursework that is part of a higher level certificate or degree program taken after receipt of a certificate will be reimbursed if it is related to the original certificate.

HOW CAN I APPLY?

You do not have to complete a paper A+ Scholarship application for the MDHE. Check with your community college or vocational/technical school to see what materials they require in order to confirm you're A+ eligible. In most cases your school will require at least an A+ seal/stamp on your high school transcript.

In addition, you must complete the FAFSA each year. If you are attending a school that does not participate in Title IV programs you must complete the FAFSA4caster, which is a tool for estimating your level of need for federal financial aid.

The MDHE receives electronic FAFSA records for Missouri residents directly from the federal government. Late filing may jeopardize your payment as well as eligibility for other state aid programs.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF I'M ELIGIBLE?

THE MDHE does not provide notice to students of eligibility. Your local high school A+ Coordinator can provide information regarding your eligibility status. You can contact the financial aid office at the school you attend for your postsecondary eligibility status.

HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY AWARD?

Your community college or vocational/technical school will submit a reimbursement request to the MDHE by the deadlines established for each term (summer, fall and spring). The MDHE will then disburse the funds to the school and the school will apply the funds to your account.

HOW LONG CAN I RECEIVE AN AWARD?

Your eligibility expires when the earliest of the following occurs:

- 48 months after completion of high school coursework as documented by the graduation date on your high school transcript.
 - Students providing service to any branch of the U.S. armed forces can defer their eligibility beyond the 48 months if they return to full-time status within 12 months of the end of their military service.
 - Students graduating from high school mid-year may be eligible for a spring award if their high school transcripts indicate the mid-year graduation date.
- Receipt of an associate's degree
- Completion of 105% of the hours required for the program in which you are currently enrolled
 - 105% includes the following:
 - All hours, including developmental/remedial hours, taken at your current school
 - All known hours, including developmental/remedial hours, taken at any other A+ eligible school
 - Hours taken at any non-eligible A+ school, including out-of-state school, that your current school accepts in transfer
 - 105% excludes the following:

- Hours earned for work completed before high school graduation, including (but not limited to): dual credit, dual enrollment, technical education articulation, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate.
- Hours from non-participating schools not accepted in transfer by a participating school

HOW DO I RENEW MY AWARD?

You may renew your award annually. To renew you must complete the FAFSA, or FAFSA4caster if applicable, each year in order to make a good faith effort to secure a Pell grant or other federal aid and maintain a 2.5 grade point average.

HOW DO I TRANSFER MY AWARD?

If you choose to transfer to a different participating Missouri school, either between academic years or semesters, you must contact the MDHE at (800) 473-6757, option 4. Failure to notify the MDHE of the transfer may reduce the total amount you receive under the scholarship.

CAN THE SCHOLARSHIP BE DEFERRED?

If you are unable to attend school due to active duty service to any branch of the armed forces of the United States, you may qualify for a deferral of your scholarship eligibility. You must submit a written request for deferral to:

Missouri Department of Higher Education

Attn: A+

P.O. Box 1469

Jefferson City, MO 65102-1469

For more information about A+, please visit the following websites: www.dhe.mo.gov ,
www.dese.mo.gov

Five Steps to Being an Effective Tutor

STEP ONE: KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU AS A TUTOR

- Arrive on time
- Learn and use the appropriate procedure for signing in and out at your assigned site
- Attend regularly! Remember, people are counting on you!!!
- Dress and act appropriately. You are a role model.
- Be prepared for each tutoring session
- Never criticize the supervising teacher or the rules of the classroom
- Treat everyone with respect
- Be polite
- Keep your records up to date and accurate
- Turn in the required paperwork

STEP TWO: SETTING UP THE TUTORING SESSION

- The better you are prepared, the better you will be able to tutor
- Learn the student's name and pronounce it correctly
- Make sure your student understands the purpose of tutoring
- Try different methods to help the student be successful
- Confer with the supervising administrator, counselor, or teacher on a regular basis

STEP THREE: MEETING YOUR STUDENT'S NEEDS

- Be a good listener and establish a good rapport with the student
- Build the student's confidence whenever possible
- Know the skills you are working on for each student
- Never let your student struggle to the point of frustration
- Focus on the whole student, not just the academics
- Believe in the student and provide positive feedback

STEP FOUR: THE INGREDIENTS OF A GOOD TUTOR SESSION

- Have empathy with your student
- Be honest
- Have a sense of humor
- Have the ability to "lighten up" a situation
- Interact well with your student; have a give-and-take attitude
- Know your student's strengths and weaknesses
- Work through your student's strengths to improve his/her weaknesses
- Make your student feel good about him/herself and his/her accomplishments
- Use mistakes and failures as positive learning experiences
- End the session on a positive note
- ALWAYS keep information CONFIDENTIAL. Student names and/or academic needs are confidential. DO NOT share this information or any other personal information that a student

may tell you with anyone other than the adult supervising the tutoring session and/or the A+ Coordinator.

STEP FIVE: ENDING THE TUTORING SESSION

- End the session with a positive comment
- Confirm the next session
- Do any necessary paperwork

Tutoring Arrangements—F.A.Q.

1. I signed up for the A+ Program but I haven't started tutoring. When should I get started?

- Seniors who haven't begun tutoring will be contacted by the end of first quarter to discuss arrangements
- Any underclassman who is interested in tutoring before senior year should make an appointment to see the A+ Coordinator. As tutoring opportunities are limited, priority placement will go to seniors. But many sophomores and juniors are able to complete tutoring hours as well.

2. What counts for A+ tutoring?

- Must be done at a Oran R-III Schools, supervised by a Oran staff member
- Must be academic tutoring/mentoring that assists other Oran students

3. What are some "typical" ways students go about completing their 50 hours?

- Homework Club through Beta Club, AR Reading Club
- Before school or after school
- May be done during the school day if schedule permits (library science, art aide, etc)
- Students may be assigned to a group or in a one-on-one arrangement
- Some activities done within school groups may count for A+ (ask A+ Coordinator)
- Students are responsible for their own transportation

4. How do I go about making arrangements to complete tutoring hours?

- Make an appointment to see the A+ Coordinator
- Discuss schedule, preferences, transportation, etc.
- If you have an opportunity or idea, bring it to the attention of the A+ Coordinator
- The A+ Coordinator will the contact appropriate staff members to make arrangements
- The A+ Coordinator will contact you when arrangements are made with details

5. What are some things I need to be aware of regarding tutoring?

- General community service activities do not count toward A+
- Unsupervised tutoring done outside of Oran Schools does not count for A+
- All tutoring must be unpaid
- Students must be actively assisting students to earn A+ hours (not observing)
- If a student does not follow through or is removed from a tutoring opportunity, alternate tutoring arrangements at a later date may be difficult to arrange.
- If you have any difficulties in your tutoring arrangement please address it with the A+ Coordinator.

