

Osage County R-III High School



A+

Student & Parent Handbook

Updated June 2023

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School Mission Statement

The mission of the Osage County R-III School District is to empower all students in a safe, positive environment to achieve their goals and become responsible, productive citizens.

Origins of the A+ Program

The A+ Schools Program was one of the educational opportunities brought about by Senate Bill 380 (also known as the “Outstanding Schools Act”) which was passed by the Missouri General Assembly in May, 1993. The primary goal of the A+ Schools Program is to ensure that all students who graduate from Missouri high schools are well prepared to pursue advanced education and employment.

Description of the A+ Program

Students who graduate from a designated A+ High School may qualify for a state-paid financial incentive to attend any public community college or career-technical school in Missouri if students meet all the requirements of the A+ Program. Those students who complete all of the requirements are eligible to receive two (2) years (six semesters – including summer school) of free tuition at a designated two-year community college or vocational/technical (state funded) school in Missouri. Financial need is not a factor in determining student eligibility for the A+ tuition incentive. Participants will have up to four (4) years (from the date of high school graduation) to access the A+ tuition incentive. Participants are under no obligation to use the A+ incentive. The tuition incentive is earned by each student and it is not transferable to any other student.

Purpose of the A+ Handbook

The purpose of the A+ Student & Parent Handbook is to provide a clear understanding of the A+ Program. The Outstanding Schools Act requires that Fatima High School establish rules, guidelines, and policies in order to meet the stipulations and requirements of the A+ Program. The A+ Program must be administered by the A+ Coordinator in a fair and consistent manner and this handbook helps ensure that all A+ students are treated equally and fairly.

To enroll in the A+ program the student must fill out the A+ Participation Agreement form. This form must be signed by the student and their parents and returned to the A+ Coordinator. After signing the participation agreement form, it is then the responsibility of the student to meet the requirements of the program as outlined in this handbook. The student must meet all the requirements listed in this handbook in order to be certified as an A+ Student upon graduation.

Fatima High School went through the A+ review and was approved as an A+ School in the Spring of 2010. Students graduating in the Spring of 2010 were the first graduating class at Fatima that were eligible for the A+ incentive. Each year in June, the A+ Coordinator is

responsible to certify to the state of Missouri that the A+ students have met all the requirements of the A+ Program. If a student does not meet all the requirements of the A+ Program, they will be notified by the A+ Coordinator that they did not qualify for the A+ Incentive.

This handbook is provided for students, parents, employees, and patrons of the district to provide a clear understanding of rules, guidelines, and policies of the A+ Program. **Be aware that this program is funded by the legislative action of the State of Missouri and funding could vary from year to year.** If you have any questions about the A+ Program, please contact the A+ Coordinator at Fatima High School.

Goals of the A+ Schools Program

The three primary goals of the A+ Program are as follows:

1. All students will graduate from high school.
2. All students will complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and for which there are identified and measurable learning expectations.
3. All students will proceed from high school graduation to a traditional college or post-secondary vocational or technical school or high wage job with workplace skill development opportunities.

General Participation Requirements

1. Osage County R-III High School must meet and maintain all the requirements for the A+ schools designation.
2. State funding must be available. As with any State program, the A+ Schools Program is subject to the political process of sustaining and maintaining a budget. The Missouri State Legislature will decide on a yearly basis the amount of funding the A+ Program will receive.
3. The student must meet all the criteria of the A+ Program that is outlined in this handbook and the "Tutoring Agreement and Confidentiality Contract."

Student Eligibility Requirements

To become eligible for the financial incentives of the A+ Program, a student must be certified as an A+ Student by Fatima High School. The A+ Coordinator, along with the high school principal, has the responsibility of making sure that a graduate of Fatima High School has completed all of the criteria of the A+ Program prior to graduation. To be certified as an A+ Student, a student must complete the following criteria before graduation:

- **Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident**
- **Enter into a written agreement with your high school prior to graduation.**
- **Attend a designated A+ high school for 2 years prior to graduation.**
 - 2020 High School Seniors and Forward who attended an A+ designated high school for any 2 years of the 4 years prior to high school graduation have met this requirement.
 - In addition, regardless of graduation year, if one of the 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, the student is exempt from this requirement. However, they must attend an A+ designated high school in the school year immediately preceding graduation and meet all of the other high school eligibility requirements.
- **Graduate from an A+ designated high school with an overall unweighted grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.**
- **Have at least a 95% attendance record overall for grades 9-12.**
- **Perform at least 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring, of which up to 25% may include job shadowing prior to graduation.**
 - High school policy may allow this criterion to be met up to 6 months beyond high school graduation in exceptional circumstances.
- **Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol while in grades 9-12.**
- **Have achieved 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.**
 - 2018 High School Seniors and Forward - If a student meets all of the eligibility requirements for their high school graduating class except the end of course exam requirement, they may establish eligibility by achieving a combined Pre-ACT or ACT math subscore and high school GPA in accordance with the following scale.
 - A student may achieve the qualifying score as a high school or postsecondary student. If the student achieves the score as a postsecondary student, they may be eligible for an award in the same term that they take the test provided that they established eligibility before the institution's reimbursement request is submitted.

Pre-ACT or ACT Math Score	And	High School GPA
17 or greater	And	2.5 or greater
16	And	2.8 or greater
15	And	3.0 or greater

Osage County R-III Board Policy JFCL: The district encourages its students to further their education and training after they graduate from the district. For that reason, the district will participate in the state A+ Scholarship Program to provide students an opportunity to pursue postsecondary education at a low cost. The

district will follow the requirements established by state law and regulation for the implementation and administration of its A+ Scholarship Program.

The district shall employ an A+ Scholarship coordinator, as required by law. The coordinator will be responsible for implementing this policy and the Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program.

Program Goals

The district is committed to ensuring that:

1. All students graduate from high school.
2. All students complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and for which there are identified learning expectations.
3. All students proceed from high school graduation to a college, postsecondary career-technical school, or high-wage job with workplace skill development opportunities.

Citizenship Component

An important component of the A+ Scholarship Program is the fostering of good citizenship in our district's students. Students demonstrate good citizenship by showing respect for self, law, property, and the rights of others. Students have not demonstrated good citizenship if, while in grades nine through twelve, they have:

1. Pled guilty or nolo contendere (no contest) to, received a suspended imposition of sentence or suspended execution of sentence for, agreed to a deferred prosecution for, or been convicted or found guilty of a misdemeanor or felony.
2. Unlawfully used or possessed drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol on or off school property.
3. Been suspended for more than ten days.
4. Violated the district's rules governing academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.).

Participation Agreement, Discipline, and Appeal

All students wishing to participate in the A+ Scholarship Program for postsecondary education after high school must submit a completed A+ Participation Agreement. If the coordinator determines that a student who has submitted a participation agreement has violated the terms of that agreement or district policies or procedures regarding A+ participation, the coordinator will notify the student in writing and may put the student on probation or expel the student from the program. The student or the student's parents/guardians may appeal expulsions from this program, in accordance with written district procedures, to the board of education or to a committee of board members appointed by the president of the board and given the authority to act for the board. The board or the board's committee will hear the student's appeal in closed session and notify the student of its decision.

Osage County R-III Board Policy JFCL-AP(1):The Osage County R-III School District will follow the requirements established by state law and regulations for the administration of the A+ Scholarship Program. The district's A+ Scholarship Program coordinator is:

High School Assistant Principal
Osage Co. R-III School District
143 E. Main, P.O. Box 37
Westphalia, MO 65085
Phone: 573-455-2375, ext. 111/Fax: 573-455-9884

A+ Scholarship Partnership Plan

The A+ Scholarship Program coordinator shall organize a local advisory committee to develop a partnership plan to be approved by the board. The advisory committee shall include local businesspersons, labor leaders, teachers, senior citizens, college and postsecondary career/technical school representatives, representatives of nonpublic schools that are located in the district and participate in the A+ Scholarship Program, and parents/guardians. The partnership plan shall specify a mechanism to receive information on an annual basis from the plan developers and community leaders to update the plan in order to best meet the goals of the A+ Scholarship Program.

The plan shall:

1. Detail the procedures used to identify students who might drop out of school and the intervention services to be used to meet the needs of such students.
2. Outline counseling and mentoring services provided to students who will enter the workforce upon graduation from high school.
3. Contain procedures for the recruitment of community volunteers to serve in schools receiving program grants.
4. Address internship and apprenticeship programs.

Under the guidance of the coordinator, the advisory committee shall evaluate, review, and update the partnership plan annually.

Eligibility

To be eligible, a student must:

1. Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident of the United States.
2. Attend a designated A+ high school for two years prior to graduation. Enrollment during the two years in which the student was in attendance at an A+ designated high school must total a minimum of 80 percent of the instructional days required by the high school from which the student graduates. Interruptions in enrollment cumulatively totaling no more than 20 percent of instructional days in the two years in which the student was attending an A+ high school may occur consecutively or intermittently.
 - a. A student who is an active duty military dependent or a dependent of retired military personnel who relocate to Missouri within one year of the date of retirement from active duty is excused from the requirement to attend a designated A+ high school for two years prior to

graduation if the student attends a designated A+ school in the school year immediately preceding graduation and has met all other eligibility requirements.

3. Graduate from a designated A+ high school with an overall grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent on another scale.
4. Have at least a 95 percent attendance record overall for grades 9–12. Any student appropriately counted for average daily attendance will be considered as in attendance, whether physically present or not.
5. Perform 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring, of which up to 25 percent may include job shadowing, prior to high school graduation. However, the district may make an exception and extend the time for completing this requirement on a case-by-case basis when there are circumstances beyond the student's control that prevent the student from completing this requirement. The length of the extension will be determined by the district but will not exceed six months beyond high school graduation.
6. Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of alcohol and drugs, as defined by district policy, while in grades 9–12.
7. Achieve a score of proficient or advanced on the official Algebra I end-of-course exam or a higher-level, DESE-approved, end-of-course exam in the field of mathematics, or meet other criteria established by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education, unless the district has met all of the DESE requirements for a waiver of the Algebra I end-of-course exam for the recipient.
8. Prior to graduation, enter into a written agreement with the district to participate in the A+ Scholarship Program.
9. Meet any additional eligibility requirement set out in state law.

Appeals

If the coordinator determines that a student who has submitted a participation agreement has violated the terms of that agreement or district policies or procedures regarding A+ participation, the coordinator will notify the student in writing. The notice will include a statement of which condition was violated and the facts constituting the violation. The student will be provided copies of documents or other evidence supporting the determination. The coordinator may put the student on probation or expel the student from the A+ Scholarship Program.

The student may appeal an expulsion from the program to the board of education, or a committee created by the board, by notifying the coordinator within five working days of receiving the notice. The coordinator will provide notice of the appeal to the board along with a copy of the reason for the expulsion. The board or the board's committee will hear the student's appeal in closed session within 20 working days of receiving the notice of appeal. The board will notify the student of its decision in writing within five working days of hearing the appeal.

Receipt of Funds

In order to receive A+ financial assistance, an eligible student must:

1. Make a good-faith effort to secure all sources of federal funding that could be applied to tuition reimbursement.
2. Be admitted and enrolled at a participating institution on a full-time basis in accordance with law unless the student is enrolled in all the available hours applicable to the student's program of study in a

given term, the student is participating in a required internship, or the student is enrolled in prerequisite courses that do not require full-time enrollment.

3. Not be enrolled in or intend to use the award to enroll in a course of study leading to a degree in theology or divinity.
4. Not have a criminal record preventing receipt of federal Title IV student financial aid.
5. Meet the institution's definition of satisfactory academic progress as determined by the institution's policies and law.
6. Meet the course completion standards as required by law.

**Osage County R-III
A+ Student Participation Agreement**



Student Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Student MOSIS Number (*Completed by the A+ Coordinator*): _____

Social Security Number (Required): _____

Date of Birth: _____ Graduation Year: _____

A+ Incentive Program Consent Information:

By signing below, you give your consent to participate in the Osage County R-III High School A+ Program. The A+ Schools Incentive Program is contingent on the Osage County R-III High School successfully achieving designation as an A+ School. These incentives are subject to the state legislature appropriating sufficient funds toward this program. The incentives provided by this program will pay for tuition at any Missouri publicly-funded technical college, community college, or vocational/technical school. This financial incentive provides funds to prospective A+ students for a total of two years, but students are eligible for this program for four years immediately following their high school graduation. This program will not pay for housing, transportation, supplies, or program specific fees.

Students must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the A+ Program:

1. Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign an A+ student participation agreement.
2. Students must attend Fatima High School or another designated A+ school for two years immediately prior to graduation.
3. Students must graduate with at least a 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
4. Students must graduate with a 95% attendance average or higher over a four-year period immediately prior to graduation.
5. Students must perform 50 hours of unpaid tutoring. A tutoring class is offered.
6. Students must maintain a record of good citizenship as stipulated in the A+ citizenship policy. This includes the avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol.
7. Students must make a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds (PELL/SEOG) that do not require payment. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be filled out during your senior year. Go to <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>
8. Students must register for Selective Service (males 18 or over). Go to <http://www.sss.gov/>
9. End of Course Exam Requirement: a score of proficient or advanced on the Algebra I, or a higher level math, end of the course exam will be required. Students not meeting this criterion may become eligible with a qualifying score on the math component of the ACT.

Student and Parent Consent

By signing this agreement, I understand that I will be working with Fatima High School to fulfill all of the requirements outlined above to be considered a candidate for the A+ financial incentive.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Osage County R-III School District

Citizenship Appeal Form

Date of Appeal: _____

Student Name: _____

Parent and/or Guardian Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Please write a short paragraph explaining the reason(s) for appealing your loss of citizenship and why you feel the A+ Appeal Committee should reinstate you in the A+ Program. If ISD, ISS, or OSS are not the reasons for your suspension/loss of citizenship then please indicate that below.

This request is to appeal a school citizenship issue from the following school year and semester:

School Year: _____ Semester: (Check One) First: _____ Second: _____

In the space provided below, please write in the ISD, ISS, or OSS dates and the reason you were suspended.

Suspension Date(s): _____ Reason: _____

Suspension Date(s): _____ Reason: _____

Suspension Date(s): _____ Reason: _____

Suspension Date(s): _____ Reason: _____

Suspension Date(s): _____ Reason: _____

Suspension Date(s): _____ Reason: _____

For Office Use Only

Cumulative GPA: _____

Date of Appeal Hearing: _____

Tutoring Hours: _____

Committee Decision: _____

Appeal Granted: _____

Appeal Denied: _____

Written Notification Mailed On: _____



**A+ Appeals Form – Waiver of Attendance
DUE BY MAY 1st OF THE SENIOR YEAR
(By December 1st for mid-year GRADUATES)**

An appeal is to help the student meet the state requirements for the A+ Scholarship Program when extreme and unusual situations necessitate an appeal. A+ participants with less than the state required 95% attendance, who have extenuating circumstances as described below may apply for a waiver of attendance. Students may appeal their 9-12 attendance ONE TIME. The senior attendance waiver request MUST BE ACCOMPANIED by the appropriate/required documentation to support the request. All requests and documentation for an appeal must be submitted to the high school office no later than 2:45 P.M. on May 1st of the senior year. The following situations are recognized by the Board of Education guidelines:

Reason for Absence

Catastrophic illness/injury
Hospitalization for surgery
Chronic health problems
Catastrophic family crisis
Funeral
Court Appearance
Religious Holiday
Covid Related

Recommended Documentation

Physician's letter/Insurance Explanation
Physician's letter/Insurance Explanation
Physician's letter/Insurance Explanation
Explanation of Crisis
Obituary/Memorial program
Official court documentation
Letter of verification from clergy
Physician's letter/Parent Explanation

ITEMS TO BE SUBMITTED: Recommended documentation does not exclude other forms of documentary evidence to support the request for attendance waiver. NO REQUEST FOR WAIVER CAN BE CONSIDERED UNLESS SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION IS ATTACHED TO THE WAIVER REQUEST FORM. Please attach documentation supporting the appeal.

1. Original documentation from a physician, hospital medical personnel, and/or insurance detailing information supporting and explaining the appeal. This documentation must indicate the dates the student is appealing. Examples of original documentation may be a letter signed by the physician or an insurance document. The documentation should include:

- specific dates and times to be considered
- physician diagnosis
- treatment
- period when the student was confined to home or hospital and date released

2. Any additional pertinent documentation which will help the committee understand the nature of the appeal and support the request.



Name: _____ Graduation Month/Year: _____

SCHOOL DATES OF ABSENCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please describe the circumstances involved in this appeal. (Attach necessary documentation)

How did these circumstances contribute to days missed?

Explain why you should be re-admitted to the A+ Scholarship Program.

We acknowledge receipt of the Appeal Process.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

A+ Tutoring Class Contract

As an A+ Tutoring student, I agree to abide by the following terms and conditions and to carry out my responsibilities with respect for my fellow students.

- **I understand that this course is now offered for 0.5 credit hours and does count towards my GPA.**
- I agree to arrive and leave on schedule for the period in which I am scheduled to tutor. I will sign in and out at the appropriate school location and remain in that location until the dismissal bell rings. I understand I am only authorized to be in the office where I sign in/out, my assigned A+ classroom(s) and traveling directly between, otherwise I must have permission from the office staff. I understand I am not allowed to stop at other locations/classrooms or roam the hallways at any time.
1st offense: Lunch Detention; 2nd offense and beyond: write up for Insubordination
- If I am unable to fulfill my responsibilities because of illness or other unavoidable circumstances on any given day, I agree to contact the supervising teacher / school's secretary to report my absence. I will notify the A+ Coordinator and the supervising teacher if I know I am going to be absent in advance, such as a field trip, college day, etc.
- **I understand if I am at school but fail to go to my A+ assignment for three (3) A+ Tutoring sessions then I will receive a F for the semester and be removed from the program. (This is referencing failure to attend A+ tutoring sessions when present at school. This is not referencing absences from school.)**
- I understand the cooperating school is an "educational area". I agree to stay on task as requested and expected by the supervising teacher and A+ Coordinator. I agree to refrain from activities that may conflict with tutoring/mentoring expectations such as socializing by phone or in person with others I am not tutoring or mentoring, eating (unless part of a classroom activity), sending and/or reading personal emails or playing on the computer, etc. while I am A+ Tutoring.
- **I will dress appropriately and follow the student dress code as stated in the Fatima High School Student Handbook.**
- **I understand I will be following the Fatima High School Student Handbook, Fatima High School A+ Handbook, and the Osage County R-III School Board Policies.**
- I agree to treat the students with whom I work with understanding, respect, and confidentiality.
- I agree to maintain confidentiality between myself, the supervising teacher, student(s), and the A+ Coordinator.
- **I realize my grade will be based upon completion of all required written work as assigned by the A+ Coordinator and the supervising teacher's evaluation.**
- I understand all A+ hours earned outside of the assigned classroom must be prior approved with the A+ Coordinator.

Student Signature: _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____ Printed Student Name: _____

Fatima High School

Missouri A+ Scholarship Program Syllabus

Course Information

- **Grade Level:** 11-12
- **Duration:** semester
- **Instructor:** Mrs. Langer
- **Contact:** langerm@fatimacomets.org

Course Description

This course is designed to inform and guide students through the requirements of the **Missouri A+ Scholarship Program**. Students will explore eligibility criteria, document required hours, and keep a daily journal. This course will assign students to a cooperating teacher in grades K-8 at Fatima. Students will report to their assigned classroom each day. Students may only take this course once.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the benefits provided by the Missouri A+ Scholarship program.
- Track and document progress toward A+ eligibility.
- Complete 50 hours of tutoring/mentoring

Grading

This class follows the Fatima High School grading system and policies. Student's grades will be based on submitting their A+ journal every two weeks to the counselor's office. Students can earn a maximum of 20 pts (2 pts per day) each two week cycle.

Resources

- Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development (dhewd.mo.gov)
- School A+ Coordinator
- Student handbook, A+ Student Handbook, Journals, A+ Agreement, A+ Class Contract

A+ Time Log

Participants must perform a minimum of 50 hours of tutoring/mentoring by graduation. Logs are due every TWO weeks.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

JOURNAL PTS: _____

MINUTES: _____

TOTAL A+ HOURS: _____

Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Date	Time In	Time Out	Total Time	Teacher Signature
Total Time in Minutes:				

A+ Journal

You can earn two points each day. Points are earned by writing two sentences each day describing what you did in A+. This is how you earn credit for the class. Logs are due every two weeks.

Date	Journal Entry