



## A+ FAQs

### What does signing the A+ Agreement mean?

By signing and submitting the A+ Agreement, students and their parents are simply indicating an interest in participation in the A+ Schools Program and that they understand the requirements that qualify the students for that program. When an agreement has been signed by all parties and returned, a file will be established for that student and will be located in the A+ coordinator's office. This file denotes the student's active participation in the A+ Schools Program and will contain all pertinent information relative to the student's eligibility for A+ funds.

### What are the participation requirements for the A+ Schools Program?

Students must sign an A+ agreement to the effect that they will:

1. Attend an A+ school for three consecutive years.
2. Graduate with a minimum 2.5 cumulative unweighted GPA.
3. Graduate with a minimum 95% cumulative attendance rate.
4. Be good citizens at school and in the community.
5. Avoid the use of illegal drugs including alcohol.
6. Perform a minimum of 50 hours of unpaid tutoring/mentoring.
7. Make a documented, good faith attempt to secure free federal education funding in your senior year.
8. Register with selective service (if required by law).

### Does participating in the A+ program restrict a student's choices?

Participating in the A+ Program DOES NOT in any way restrict a student's educational choices. The A+ Schools Program is designed to provide greater opportunities for students. Signing up will not restrict the options available to a student while in high school or upon graduating from high school.

### What is meant by graduating with a 2.5 cumulative unweighted GPA?

To be eligible for the tuition reimbursement benefit, students must complete all studies (grades 9-12) and graduate with a cumulative unweighted grade point average of not less than 2.5. For A+ purposes, the GPA is not rounded. In other words, the minimum acceptable GPA is 2.5 and 2.4999 does not round up to 2.5.

### What happens if a participant falls below the required 2.5 during any one grading period?

The key word is "cumulative." A student's GPA may drop below 2.5 during a grading period and the student is still considered part of the A+ Program. The final GPA will not be calculated until after graduation, and at that time, the cumulative GPA must be a minimum unweighted, unrounded 2.5.

### What about the 95% attendance rate?

All A+ participants are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Based upon state of Missouri recommendations for a school year, participants may miss up to only 5% of school days and still be eligible for the tuition benefit. There is no difference between an excused or unexcused absence. Illness, injury or other circumstances may combine to keep a student out of school. Unavoidable absences are covered in the 5% A+ attendance policy. SCA's attendance policy will exclude absences for doctor/hospital documented medical emergencies, two college visits per semester for juniors and seniors, school-related activities, and bereavement.

A student's cumulative attendance percentage is calculated at graduation and if the figure is 95% or better, this requirement is satisfied. If the figure is below 95% at the time of graduation, the A+ attendance policy provides for relief in cases where the absence was beyond the control of the A+ participant. Requests for an attendance appeal must be filed in accordance with the established policy guidelines.

## **How is a violation of the alcohol/drug policy determined?**

Any violation (possession, use, manufacture, sale, transportation) that results in a discipline assignment (ISS or OSS) will result in the immediate removal of the student from the program. This policy is also in effect at all school sponsored events. In the community, a plea of guilty or no contest or a finding of guilt in a drug-related case will result in the removal of the participant from the program.

## **Where can I get a FAFSA form and when is it due?**

The earliest that a FAFSA can be submitted is 12:01 a.m., October 1 of the year in which the student is to graduate. You can find the application at [fafsa.ed.gov](http://fafsa.ed.gov). Copies are also available at all Mid-Continent Public libraries. You need W-2 forms because of the income information that is reported on FAFSA.

## **Suppose a student completes an A+ agreement. What's the reward?**

You may use your A+ grant benefits at any Missouri public community college or Missouri technical or vocational school. The benefits will help with the cost of six semesters of fees (Fall, Spring, Summer, Fall, Spring, Summer) or the completion of a degree program, whichever comes first.

The benefits are available to a qualified student for up to four years after his/her high school graduation. You may work for a while and then attend community college or a vocational/technical school. Or you may attend another college or university and then return to a community college or vocational school on a full-time basis and use your grant benefits as long as you transfer with a 2.5 GPA.

Several four-year colleges and universities offer their own incentives to entering freshmen that graduate with A+ status. When visiting the financial aid office of a 4-year university, a student is encouraged to ask about incentives available to students who have received A+ certification.

## **What if an A+ participant decides to attend a four-year college or university?**

There are no repercussions for participating in the A+ Program and completing the student eligibility requirements. Many students will develop plans to attend a four-year college or university following high school. Several four-year colleges and universities offer their own incentives to entering freshmen that graduate with A+ status. When visiting the financial aid office of a 4-year university, a student is encouraged to ask about incentives available to students who have received A+ certification. Students eligible for A+ tuition benefits may choose to attend a community college for two years, earn an Associate's Degree, or simply earn basic credit hours, then transfer those credits to a four-year college/university.

If for whatever reason an A+ eligible student should withdraw from the four-year institution with at least a 2.5 GPA he/she could enroll at a Missouri public community college or vocational-technical school and be eligible for A+ tuition benefits.

## **What if an A+ participant decides not to attend a community college or vocational or technical school?**

Participation in the A+ Program in no way restricts a student's post high school career or educational opportunities. It is simply a funding resource for post-secondary education should the student choose to utilize it. A student who participates in the A+ Program is NOT required to attend a community college or vocational or technical school.

## **Does enrolling in the A+ Program guarantee that students will receive the tuition benefits?**

There are at least three factors that will impact the availability of tuition benefits to a particular student.

- First, the high school from which the student graduates must meet and maintain all the requirements for A+ Schools designation.
- Second, state funding must be available.
- Third, the student must meet all the criteria outlined in the A+ Schools Program and the participation agreement that the student signed.

## **Does a student qualify for A+ tuition benefits if his/her grade point average is 2.49 on a 4.0 scale upon graduation?**

No. The A+ Schools Program does not permit rounding up of a GPA percentage.

## **Student Tutoring Guidelines**

Perform and document 50 cumulative hours of unpaid tutoring and mentoring of younger students during the years enrolled in the A+ program (NOT community service - not ministry days). Tutoring and mentoring activities must involve working directly with younger students.

### **Tutor/Mentor Responsibilities**

Documentation: Tutoring time must be documented on the official A+ tutoring log. No other records will be accepted. The tutoring logs are available in Mrs. Wilson's office. The participant is responsible for maintaining his/her tutoring log accurately, obtaining the necessary approved signatures and submitting the log to Mrs. Wilson's office when the 50 hours are complete. All 50 hours must be completed by March of graduation year. No credit will be awarded for logs that are misplaced or stolen - no exceptions.

**Please Note: Although Mrs. Wilson can help you think of ideas, it is ultimately your responsibility to accomplish the 50 hours needed for the program.**