

Pattonsburg  
R-II High School  
A+  
Student Handbook

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## **Student Benefits**

Money for tuition and standard fees to attend a Missouri public community college or vocational/technical school.

Opportunity to learn about careers and gain insight into their primary strengths and how they impact the job market.

College credits while still in high school.

Tutoring experience. Students who participate in the A+ Schools Program will complete 50 hours of unpaid tutoring during the four years in high school.

Career pathways to prepare for an occupation, with additional training upon graduation.

Encouragement to attend school regularly and work hard.

Experience using computers and other modern equipment to solve problems.

## **Five Basic Requirements**

- Attend a designated A+ school for three (3) consecutive years prior to graduation.
- Graduate from high school with a minimum 2.50 grade point average.
- Have at least a 95% attendance record for the four (4) year period.
- Perform fifty (50) hours of unpaid tutoring.
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs, including alcohol.

## **Signing the A+ Agreement**

An A+ School Agreement must be completed with all the appropriate signatures. The agreement simply states that the student and parents/guardians are aware of the A+ Schools Program requirements and incentives. All students are encouraged to enroll during their Freshmen year.

To be eligible, each student must enter into a written agreement with the school anytime during the last three (3) years prior to high school graduation. Regardless of when the A+ Agreement is actually signed and turned in, the student must meet all criteria dating back to the beginning of his/her Freshmen year.

## **Enrolling in an A+ School**

If a student withdraws from Pattonsburg or transfers to a non-A+ School after the beginning of his/her sophomore year, the student will not be considered eligible for the A+ Schools Program.

If a student transfers to Pattonsburg after the beginning of the sophomore year, the student may only participate in the program if the school she/he transferred from was a designated A+ School.

## **Maintaining the A+ GPA**

The student must graduate from high school with a minimum GPA of 2.50 on a 4.00 scale. The cumulative GPA is applicable to all four years of the student's enrollment in high school. The official transcript will document and certify that the grade point requirement has been met. The GPA must be at least 2.50; 2.49 or less renders the student uncertifiable.

## Meeting the A+ Tutoring Requirements

The A+ Schools Program requires that students complete 50 hours of academic tutoring. Before beginning this requirement for A+ certification, a student must have a signed A+ contract on file in the A+ Coordinator's office.

The following guidelines are to be used for all tutoring experiences:

- Tutoring must be approved by the A+ Coordinator
- An A+ Tutoring Log must be kept by the student and turned in at the end of each month. The school sponsor who supervises the tutoring time must sign this log.
- All tutoring must be done on school premises. The opportunities to complete this requirement are summer school, before and after school tutoring at the high school or elementary, including preschool, or cadet teaching.
- Students are expected to behave responsibly while tutoring. This includes notifying the tutoring supervisor before absences, being on time, and making contact with site supervisor. It is important to the success of the programs involved that A+ students remain dedicated to their responsibility.
- No financial payment may be accepted for tutoring activities.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a conference with A+ Coordinator, a letter to parents/guardians and dismissal from the A+ Program.

## **Meeting the Attendance Requirement**

In order to qualify for the A+ student financial incentives, Pattonsburg High School students must maintain a four-year attendance rate of 95 percent or higher (approximately no more than 35 days absent/8.7 days per year). It is the expectation of the Pattonsburg School and its community partnership that, in almost all cases, this 5% attendance allowance should take care of absences due to illness, doctor's appointments, funerals, family emergencies, driver's exam and other unavoidable absences. Students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes. From this requirement the student will acquire the habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility. A student who does not meet the 95 percent attendance requirement will not be eligible for the A+ tuition incentive. The following attendance guidelines will be followed:

- Students must attend a designated A+ High School for three consecutive years prior to graduation.
- A cumulative attendance record will be kept from the beginning of the A+ student's freshman year until graduation.
- The official record of attendance is kept in the high school principal's office.
- Each semester the school will provide parents/ guardians and students information that includes the student's attendance record.

A student who will be missing school for a long period of time due to hospitalization, illness, etc. may call the school and request homebound instruction, which helps the student maintain academic growth and avoid absences. Only absences involving school sanctioned field trips and homebound students will be excused for A+.

## **A+ Attendance Appeal process**

Students and parents/guardians must notify the A+ Coordinator of their intent to appeal a decision that is made dealing with attendance within 10 school days of the reported decision, using the A+ Appeal of Attendance Form available from the A+ Coordinator. The A+ Coordinator will act as facilitator and a non-voting member of the review committee. The A+ Coordinator shall then convene the A+ Appeal Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 school days of the written intent to appeal. The committee shall hear the appeal and return its decision to the student and parents/guardians within 5 school days. The student and parent/guardian may follow a course of appeal to the superintendent in writing within 10 school days of receiving the decision of the A+ Appeals Committee. The superintendent will notify the student within 5 school days of his/her decision. Upon receiving the notification from the superintendent, the student may request, in writing within 10 school days of receiving the decision of the superintendent, a final appeal to the Pattonsburg R-II School Board to be conducted at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

Anyone submitting a request for an A+ waiver of days missed shall provide documentation from doctors, principals, or other appropriate sources. Parent/guardians and students are encouraged to save such documentation in a safe and secure place in case it would be needed at a later date for an attendance appeal.

Attendance requirements for A+ are not to be confused with general attendance requirements as stated in the Pattonsburg R-II Student Handbook.

No student will receive a waiver for an absence that is due to any of the following:

- Truancy
- Skipping Class
- Personal/Family Vacations
- Transportation Problems (unless on a late school bus)
- Suspension from class or school for any reason

## **Being an A+ Citizen**

Student eligibility for the A+ school financial incentives is based on his/her ability to meet the five requirements, which are stated on page one, with one of those requirements being: “a student must maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs, including alcohol.” The student is responsible for maintaining all of the requirements under the A+ program on a year round basis, from the first day of school of his/her freshmen year until his/her date of graduation from high school.

Information for the purpose of certification of good citizenship will be obtained from the official discipline record maintained in the high school office. The principal assigns consequences for infractions of the discipline code and is responsible for certifying the accuracy of the student’s discipline record.

In an effort to set forth the parameters of good citizenship, Pattonsburg R-II School A+ participants should understand that the following guidelines will be followed in establishing good standing.



## **Unlawful Use of Drugs/Alcohol**

An A+ student will not sell, possess or use any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined by law and stated in the Pattonsburg R-II Student-Teacher Handbook. The use of prescription medicine is allowed under Board Policy. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for understanding and following these guidelines.

### **The following offenses reported to law enforcement authorities will result in immediate removal from the A+ Program.**

- Possession, use, sale or transfer of alcohol, drugs or narcotics
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Criminal activity defined by the Safe Schools Act:
  - First and second degree murder
  - First and second degree burglary
  - First and second degree assault
  - Distribution of drugs
  - Voluntary/involuntary manslaughter
  - Property damage
  - Possession of a weapon
  - Assault on a student
  - Intimidation or physical threat of staff
  - Vandalism/theft
  - False fire alarm/bomb threats and misuse of emergency equipment
  - Serious sexual misbehavior/exposure
  - Possession of dangerous items
  - Dangerous Behavior
  - Felonious restraint
  - Kidnapping
  - Robbery
  - First degree arson
  - Forcible rape or sodomy

Student admission, direct observation, and testimony from school principal, law enforcement officials/agencies, social service agency reports-any or all will be considered as proof of violation of this policy.

## **Probation while a part of the A+ Program**

Disciplinary probation within the A+ program is used with the understanding that even the best student makes mistakes. Probation is designed to recognize this characteristic in young people. However, receiving the A+ incentive is a privilege and should be treated as such. Students who are designated A+ should demonstrate distinctive qualities and be role models for other students. Their character and ethics should meet high standards.

A student will be placed on probation for 87 days for the following infractions:

1. More than one in-school suspension\*
2. Any out-of-school suspension

If no further misdeeds occur, the student will be returned to full A+ status following his/her probation. Any student who receives two semesters of probation during his/her high school career will have his/her disciplinary record reviewed by the A+ Appeals Committee for continued probation or possible dismissal from the program. Furthermore, any senior who has been placed on probation for his/her final semester of school will be considered in good standing in the A+ program at the end of his final semester if no further misdeeds occur prior to graduation.

\*In-school suspension is defined as requiring the student to spend the day in the suspension room, rather than in the classroom, thus isolating the student from the rest of the student population. Generally in-school suspension is used in lieu of out-of-school suspension.

## **Removal from the A+ Program**

A student may be removed from the A+ Program when:

- 1) Within the semester while on probation, the student commits another offense that would result in another probationary action.
- 2) After two semesters of probation, a review by the A+ Appeals Committee shows that earlier disciplinary consequences did not positively affect the student's behavior.
- 3) Convicted of a felony that is verifiable and is either a matter of public record or is communicated to school officials in compliance with the Safe Schools Act.
- 4) Convicted of three or more misdemeanors (other than for moving traffic violations not involving alcohol or illegal drugs) that are verifiable and a matter of public record.

Any student, who commits a serious offense involving drugs, alcohol or which falls under the Safe Schools Act, will be immediately dismissed from the program.

## **A+ Citizenship Appeal Process**

Students and parents or guardians may appeal an A+ disciplinary decision using the following process:

Students and parents/guardians must notify the A+ Coordinator of their intent to appeal a decision that is made dealing with discipline or probation within 10 school days of the reported decision, using the A+ Appeal of Citizenship form available from the A+ Coordinator. The A+ Coordinator will act as facilitator and a non-voting member of the review committee. The A+ Coordinator shall then convene the A+ Appeal Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 school days of the written intent to appeal. The committee shall hear the appeal and return its decision to the student and parents/guardians within 5 school days. The student and parent/guardian may follow a course of appeal to the superintendent in writing within 10 school days of receiving the decision of the A+ Appeals Committee. The superintendent will notify the student within 5 school days of his/her decision. Upon receiving the notification from the superintendent, the student may request, in writing within 10 school days of receiving the decision of the superintendent, a final appeal to the Pattonsburg R-II School Board to be conducted at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

### **A+ Appeal Committee**

The A+ Appeal Committee will be composed of a guidance counselor, a principal, and two teachers.

## **Making a Good Faith Effort**

A+ students are required to make a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment. The following steps must be taken each year to show this good faith effort:

Students must complete and file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA summary report must be sent to the community college or public vocational/technical school that the student is planning to attend.

The FAFSA forms are available in the Guidance Office in December of each year, or online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Students are encouraged to apply as early as possible after January 1 each year. Since the FAFSA is based on your family's income tax return, parents and graduating Seniors are encouraged to file their income tax return as early as possible.

You may be asked to do additional paperwork by the college or vocational/technical school you plan to attend.

A+ tuition incentives will only be awarded for the unpaid balance of the cost of tuition and standard fees after available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds have been applied to these costs.

## **Monitoring and Certifying of A+ Students**

At the end of each semester, students who are participating in the A+ Program will receive a letter reporting their progress in each of the required areas. Any questions or concerns about the information reported should be directed to the A+ Coordinator.

At the end of each school year, the A+ Coordinator will review all records of A+ students, and the names of eligible students will be submitted to the Principal and Guidance Counselor for official certification prior to graduation. A+ incentive information will be given to students within two weeks of graduation.

After graduation, a list will be sent to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education notifying them of all Pattonsburg R-II A+ graduates.

# Appendix

A. Attendance Appeal Form

B. Citizenship Appeal Form

# A+ Attendance Appeal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parents Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell/Work Number: \_\_\_\_\_

This request is to appeal the school absence(s) for the following:

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Spring

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Appeal will be: \_\_\_\_\_ In person \_\_\_\_\_ In writing

In the space below, please indicate the date(s) and the reason for the request to be reviewed. If additional space is needed, please attach another sheet of paper.

Date of Absence	Reason
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



# A+ Citizenship Appeal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell/Work Number: \_\_\_\_\_

This request is to appeal the citizenship certification for the following:

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Spring

School Year \_\_\_\_\_

Appeal will be: \_\_\_\_\_ In Person  
\_\_\_\_\_ In writing

In the space below, please indicate the basis of your appeal concerning the good citizenship certification for the A+ School Program. If additional space is needed, please attach another sheet of paper.

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