



**Ritenour
School District**
Educational Excellence Since 1867

Ritenour School District

2420 Woodson Road
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08/20

Ritenour High School

A⁺ Schools Program



Student-Parent Manual

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The purpose of this manual is to present in a clear and consistent manner the guidelines and policies of the A+ Schools Program established by the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. It is the responsibility of student/parent to read this manual carefully and to be aware of the requirements of the program and the status of the student towards successful A+ certification. Any questions about this manual or the A+ Schools Program should be directed to the A+ coordinator.

Goals of the A+ Schools Program

- All students graduate from high school,
- All students complete high school studies that are challenging and have identified learning expectations,
- All students proceed from high school graduation to a college or post-secondary career/technical school or a high-wage job with workplace skill-development opportunities.

Ritenour High School

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A+ Forms

The following forms are available on the Ritenour High School website under A+ and in the college and career office:

- A+ Schools Program Student/Parent Manual
- A+ Schools Participation Agreement
- A+ Tutoring Application
- A+ Tutoring Log
- A+ Citizenship Appeals Form
- A+ Attendance Appeals Form

A+ Appeals Procedure

A student (and/or parent) has the right to appeal when he/she becomes ineligible for the A+ financial incentive due to attendance or citizenship. In cases of appeal, the student must complete an A+ Appeals Form and submit it to the A+ coordinator. The A+ coordinator shall then convene an Appeals Committee meeting for consideration of the appeal.

Appeals forms are available on the Ritenour High School website under A+ and in the RHS college and career office.

The following outlines the appeal process:

- **Students/parents will have 30 days from the receipt of a progress report or disqualification letter to appeal a decision. Anyone making an appeal must use the “Appeals Form” available in the A+ office.**
 - Upon receiving a written appeal, the A+ coordinator will convene the A+ Appeals Committee.

After the A+ Appeals Committee reaches a decision, the A+ coordinator will notify the student/parent by letter within five days. Any and all appeals will be conducted following policies set by the Ritenour Board of Education.

If the student would like to appeal the decision of the A+ Appeals Committee, the appeal must be made in writing to the building principal **within 30 days** of the Appeals Committee’s decision.

The A+ coordinator will act as a facilitator and a non-voting member of the Appeals Committee.

STUDENT BENEFITS

Graduates of Ritenour High School who are certified as A+ students may be eligible for financial incentives to a state community college or a state career/technical school.

Financial incentives will be made available after the student has made a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment. This requirement is met by submitting a “Free Application for Federal Student Aid” (FAFSA).

Students may receive this incentive for two years. A student must be considered a full-time student by the post-secondary institution. Students must maintain a 2.5 G.P.A. or higher (on a 4.0 scale) at the institution. Students must complete the two years of full-time post-secondary enrollment within four years of graduating from Ritenour High School.

The A+ Schools Program may provide these educational incentives: 1) when state funds are appropriated by the legislature or 2) per state funding approval. Funding is not the responsibility of the Ritenour School District.

Many Missouri post-secondary schools are offering scholarships for students who qualify for the A+ Schools Program. See the financial aid office at the school for information

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the financial incentives of the A+ Schools Program, a student must be certified as an A+ student by Ritenour High School. To achieve this certification, a student must:

- Sign an A+ Schools Participation Agreement by January 1 of senior year.
- Graduate from an A+ designated school and attend an A+ designated school for the two of the four years prior to graduation.
- Graduate with at least a 2.5 G.P.A. on a 4.0 scale.
- Graduate with a 95 percent attendance record.
- Perform 50 hours of unpaid one-on-one tutoring or mentoring on district property.
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the illegal use and/or possession of drugs, alcohol, and/or related paraphernalia.
- Score “Advanced” or “Proficient” on the Algebra I End of Course exam.

To receive A+ funds from the state, the following must also be completed:

- Make a documented good-faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment (FAFSA).
- Register with the Selective Service, if required by law to do so.

A semester report advising the student’s progress toward certification will be sent as soon as possible after the end of each semester.

Required documentation must be submitted to the A+ coordinator by May 1 of the student’s senior year.

Receiving A+ Status

Monitoring of A+ Status

Following 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 regarding the reported information should be directed to the A+ coordinator.

Notification of A+ Status

The A+ coordinator will review all records of A+ students and names of eligible students will be submitted to the principal and the guidance office for official certification upon graduation. The final A+ designation letter will be mailed to all graduates within two weeks of commencement. Students receiving the A+ designation will have a notation on their official academic transcript sent to the college.

A+ REQUIREMENTS

Algebra I End of Course (EOC) Exams

An A+ student must score an “advanced” or “proficient” on the Algebra I EOC, Geometry EOC, or Algebra II EOC; or a qualifying score on the ACT (math section) to receive full A+ benefits upon graduation.

Federal Financial Assistance Funds

The A+ Schools Program requires a parent(s) to make a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment. Students who do not submit the FAFSA form will not be able to access A+ funds at the post-secondary level. Parents must apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA information must be sent to the state community college or state career/technical school that the student is planning to attend.

Students should be sure to list the community college or career school they plan to attend on the FAFSA. Students may list up to six schools on the FAFSA. Failing to do so causes unnecessary delays.

Students using the A+ financial incentives for the summer immediately following graduation must contact the school’s A+ coordinator as soon as possible during the senior year.

Selective Service

A student must register with Selective Service, if required to do so by law, and provide the A+ coordinator with documentation. All required individuals must do so to be eligible for state-supported scholarships and/or programs for financial assistance for post-secondary education. Students who are required by law to register with Selective Service and do not register will not be able to access A+ funds at the post-secondary level.

A+ REQUIREMENTS

Student Enrollment

The student must be enrolled at Ritenour High School or another A+ designated school for any two of the four years prior to graduation.

If a student withdraws or transfers from Ritenour High School the student will not be considered eligible for the A+ School Program **unless the student transfers to another A+ designated high school** in the State of Missouri.

Grade Point Average Requirement

The student must graduate from high school with a minimum grade-point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 non-weighted scale. The cumulative grade-point average is **applicable to all four years** of the student’s enrollment in high school.

Rounding up to the next highest grade point is not allowed.

Attendance Requirement

To meet eligibility for the attendance requirement, the following guidelines are in place:

- Graduate with a 95 percent attendance rate, based on all four years.
- Cumulative attendance information used by the A+ Coordinator will come from the official attendance records kept by the Ritenour School District.
- For students who attend tech school for half of the day, attendance information will be gathered from the tech school and sent to the A+ coordinator who will add this information to the Ritenour School District records.
- At the end of each semester, the A+ coordinator will send attendance information to the student and parent(s). After receiving this information, the student and/or parent will have 30 days to file an absence appeal with the A+ coordinator.

A+ REQUIREMENTS

Tutoring/Mentoring Requirement

To meet eligibility for the tutoring/mentoring requirement, the following guidelines are in place:

- Perform 50 hours of unpaid one-on-one academic tutoring or mentoring on district property under the supervision of a certified teacher.
- Have an A+ Schools Participation Agreement and an A+ Tutoring Application on file.
- Provide his/her own transportation and waive school liability if the student will be tutoring in a building other than Ritenour High School.
- Submit an A+ Tutoring Log to the A+ coordinator for all hours toward this requirement at the end of the semester in which the tutoring/mentoring occurred (by May 1 of senior year).

Citizenship Requirement

Participation in the A+ Schools Program is an honor and a privilege for Ritenour High School students. To meet the eligibility for the citizenship requirement, the following guidelines are in place:

- Citizenship certification will be based on the Student Discipline Code of the Ritenour School District. All students are expected to comply with school and district policies and regulations.
- A student may be disqualified if any of the following occur:
 - o The student exceeds eight (8) days of out-of-school suspension over four (4) years.
 - o The student exceeds twelve (12) days of in-school suspension over four (4) years.
- An A+ student will not sell, possess or use a controlled substance and/or related paraphernalia as defined by law, including alcohol, unless prescribed by a licensed physician.

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A+ REQUIREMENTS

Citizenship Requirement (Continued)

This prohibition applies at all times, whether on or away from school property. Any violation of the above will result in immediate removal from the A+ program with no right to appeal.

- The following other offenses will result in immediate removal from the A+ Schools Program: criminal activity as defined by the Safe Schools Act; assault on a student; assault, collateral; physical threat to staff; vandalism/theft; false fire alarm/bomb threats and misuse of emergency equipment; sexual misbehavior/exposure/harassment; possession of dangerous items; dangerous behavior; charged, convicted, or pled guilty of a felony.
- Student and parent signatures on the A+ Schools Participation Agreement allow the A+ coordinator to check discipline records to verify compliance with this requirement.
- At the end of each semester, the A+ coordinator will send citizenship information to the student and parent(s). After receiving this information, the student and/or parent will have 30 days to file a citizenship appeal with the A+ coordinator.