

HOLDEN High School



A+ Student Manual

“WE ENTER TO LEARN; WE LEAVE TO ACHIEVE”

Purpose of this Manual

In an effort to enhance educational opportunities for high school students, the Missouri Legislature established the A+ Program as part of the Outstanding Schools Act (Senate Bill 380) of 1993.

Holden High School was approved on April 21, 2006, for designation as an A+ High School by the State Board of Education. Members of the Class of 2006 were the first to take advantage of the financial incentives offered by the State of Missouri.

Eligible graduates may receive two years of tuition and general fees to any public community college, vocational, or technical institution in Missouri, providing the state funding sources are available and the Holden School District maintains A+ designation.

The purpose of this manual is to provide students, parents and staff with information about the guidelines and policies of the A+ Program at Holden High School. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that designation is maintained. It is the responsibility of students and parents to read, understand and comply with program requirements.

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Eligibility

To be eligible for the financial incentives of the A+ Program, a student must be certified as an A+ student by the Holden High School. To qualify for certification, the student must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident, or lawfully present in the U.S.
- Enter into a written agreement with your high school prior to graduation.
- Attend a designated A+ high school for 3 consecutive years immediately prior to graduation.
- Graduate with an overall 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.
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Beginning with the high school senior class of 2015, 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.
- Beginning in 2015, if you meet all of the eligibility requirements except the end-of-course exam requirement, you may establish eligibility by achieving a qualifying score on the COMPASS exam published by ACT, Inc. or the mathematics component of the ACT test. You may achieve the qualifying score as a high school or postsecondary student. If you achieve the score as a postsecondary student you may be eligible for an award in the same term that you take the test. The MDHE will announce the qualifying COMPASS and ACT scores annually. The scores for the 2015 high school seniors have not been established to date.

Student Enrollment in A+

- Students are encouraged to enroll in the program prior to, or early in their freshman year. This may be done through the student enrollment meeting with the A+ Coordinator.
- The student must be enrolled in Holden High School no later than three weeks after the beginning of the first semester of the student's sophomore year.
- If a student withdraws, or transfers (to a non-A+ school), from the high school after the beginning of their sophomore year, the student will not be considered eligible for the A+ Program.
- An A+ Participation Agreement must be completed, with all appropriate signatures, and returned to the A+ office.
- Anyone requesting A+ enrollment after the beginning of their sophomore year must meet all criteria dating back to the beginning of their freshman year.

Student Incentive

Qualified A+ graduates will be eligible to receive the following: Paid tuition, general fees, and possibly up to fifty percent of the book cost, to attend any public community college, vocational or technical school, in the State of Missouri, for two years. Funding each year is dependent on appropriations from the state legislature.

- The tuition incentives will be available after the student has applied for all available postsecondary student financial aid funds that do not require repayment. Students and parents will complete this requirement by filing a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Financial Aid) form available from the counselor's office or at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- The financial incentives from the State of Missouri will only be made available to reimburse the unpaid balance of the cost of tuition, fees, and possibly books, after available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds have been applied to those costs.
- Private scholarships will not affect eligibility for A+, nor will they reduce the state's responsibility to the college or technical school.
- Students will be eligible to receive financial incentives for two years (including summer for a total of 6 semesters) if they are enrolled as a full-time student (12 credit hours during the fall and spring semesters, and 6 credit hours during the summer), and maintain a 2.5 GPA in the post-secondary setting.
- Students must complete the two years of full-time enrollment at the community college or public vocational/technical school within four years of graduation from Holden High School.

Financial need is not a factor in determining eligibility for the A+ Program.

Tutoring/Mentoring

In order to qualify for the A+ financial incentive, students are required to perform at least 50 hours of unpaid, school-based tutoring/mentoring.

The tutoring/mentoring activities must:

- Provide, as an ultimate goal, encouragement to lower grade students to get excited about school, stay in school, and strive for good grades.
- Be a part of an approved program and performed under the direct supervision of a certificated employee of the Holden School District.
- Tutoring must be performed in one of the public school buildings within the Holden School District.
- Tutoring must be performed with Holden School District public school students.
- Students may obtain a Tutoring Log sheet from the A+ office.
- Tutoring time must be documented on the official A+ Tutoring Log. No other record will be accepted.
- Juniors and seniors may enroll in the tutoring class, "Students as Mentors (S.A.M.)" if they correctly fill out an application and have been selected to be placed into the program. Students will learn how to tutor, be placed with a teacher to do the tutoring, fulfill class requirements, and receive a grade. S.A.M. will count $\frac{1}{2}$ elective credit and may be repeated for additional elective credit.
- Students may tutor during summer school.
- Students may make other special arrangements, as approved individually, by the A+ Coordinator.
- Students may tutor during an after-school homework club program.
- Each entry on the tutoring log must be verified by a signature of the supervising teacher. Unverified time will not be credited.
- Log sheets must be turned in to the A+ Office before the end of the semester, during which tutoring occurred, to be included in the semester report to parents. It is the student's responsibility to maintain their log record and turn it in to the A+ Office in a timely manner.
- Failure to adhere to tutoring guidelines may result in disciplinary action, and/or dismissal from the A+ Program.

No financial remuneration may be accepted for tutoring/mentoring activities.

Grade Point Requirement

The A+ student must graduate from high school with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (grade averages will not be rounded). The cumulative GPA is applicable to all four years of a student's enrollment in high school. The official transcript will document and certify that all GPA requirements have been met.

EOC Testing

Beginning with the high school senior class of 2015, the A+ student must have achieved a score of proficient or advanced on the Algebra I end of course exam. Beginning in 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.

Monitoring of A+ Status

Students who are participating in the A+ Program will receive a letter (either electronic or paper copy) reporting their progress in each of the required area, at the end of each semester. Any questions or concerns about the information reported should be directed to the A+ Coordinator.

Notification of A+ Status

The A+ Coordinator will review all records of A+ students. The names of eligible students will be submitted to the Principal and Guidance Office for official certification prior to graduation. Students and parents will be notified and the student's transcript will reflect A+ status.

Good Faith Effort

A student is required to make a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment.

- Parent 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. A copy of the Student Aid Report (SAR) must be given to the A+ Coordinator.
- The FAFSA and information regarding it, is available in the Guidance Office in December. Parents are encouraged to apply as soon as possible after January 1st, of the graduation year.
- Financial incentives will only be awarded to reimburse the unpaid balance of the cost of tuition, general fees, and (possibly) half of the books, after available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds have been applied to these costs. All state funding is contingent on appropriations by the State Legislature.
- FAFSA forms are based on a fiscal year July 1 – June 30. Any student interested in attending summer school immediately after graduation must fill out a current fiscal year FAFSA form.

Selective Service Registration

Participants who are required by law of the United States to register with the selective service system, must register, or forfeit their eligibility for the A+ incentives.

Attendance Requirement

To be eligible for the A+ School Incentive, a student must have a 95% accumulated attendance record (miss no more than 8 days or 52 hours per year) for all four high school years. **Students are expected to attend school regularly and be on time for classes.** Therefore, the student will acquire the habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. A student who does not meet the 95% attendance requirement **will not** be eligible for the A+ Financial Incentive.

The following attendance guidelines are required of all A+ students:

- You must be a full-time student in an A+ designated High School for three (3) consecutive years prior to graduation. Students attending the Gateway Alternative School are not eligible for A+ Status.
- Enrollment in eight (8) classes per semester at HHS will constitute full-time enrollment.
- A cumulative attendance record will be kept from the beginning of the A+ student's freshman year until graduation.
- Attendance will be calculated on hours missed not days missed.
- The official record of attendance is kept in the high school attendance office. Students attending the Warrensburg Vocational and Technical School will have their attendance reported to the high school attendance office.
- Each semester, the A+ office will provide parents, guardians, and students, information that will include the student's attendance record.

Attendance Review Process:

- After the semester notification regarding attendance, the student/parent will have the opportunity to appeal the student's attendance record with the A+ Coordinator.
- Anyone making an appeal should use the *A+ Attendance Appeal Form*, from the A+ Coordinator. A sample is included in this handbook.
- The A+ Coordinator will convene the Attendance Review Committee in April during the 2nd Semester.
- An Attendance Review Committee will be composed of a counselor, a principal, and a teacher. The committee will rotate members regularly and meet as necessary.
- The A+ Coordinator will act as facilitator and a non-voting member of the Review Committee. After a decision is made, the A+ Coordinator will notify the parents, by letter, within five calendar days. The decisions of the Review Committee will be considered final.

- All granted attendance waivers will be on record until the end of the senior year and then manually recalculated to determine eligibility for A+ incentives.

Attendance Waiver Guidelines:

Anyone submitting a request for an A+ attendance waiver of days missed shall provide the A+ Coordinator with the following official documentation:

Reason for Absence

Hospitalization
 Chronic health problems
 Court dates
 Funeral
 Religious Holiday
 Exchange Student
 Personal and/or family calamity ...
 (Fire, Flood, etc.)
 Catastrophic Illness
 (Long Term, Homebound Education encouraged)

Documentation

Letter signed by doctor
 Letter from doctor & school nurse
 Court Letter
 Principal's Letter
 Minister's Letter
 Documentation from Agency
 Principal's Letter

 Letter from Doctor

Waiver requests **must** include all the proper documentation. Chronic condition **must** be verified by the school nurse and physician with a signed letter from the physician. "Return to School" notes are not acceptable documentation.

No student will receive a waiver if absences are due to any of the following:

- Truancy/Skipping classes/Skipping school
- Suspension from school for any reason
- Personal/family vacation
- Transportation problems (unless related to school buses)

Attendance requirements for A+ are not to be confused with general attendance requirements as stated in the Holden High School Student/Parent Handbook.

Citizenship Requirement

Participation in the A+ School Program is an honor and a unique privilege for Holden High School students. Students pursuing the A+ incentive must maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs/alcohol. Certification of good citizenship will be based on the official discipline record maintained in the high school office and other information applicable to the status of good citizenship outside of school. The assistant principal assigns consequences for infractions of the discipline code, and the administration is responsible for certifying the accuracy of the student's discipline record.

*Citizenship status is a building level decision.

Disciplinary Probation

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 an honor 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 inside and outside of school.

A student will be placed on probation for the rest of the semester upon receiving:

- More than one In-School-Suspension referral.
- Any referral for Out-of-School suspension.
- Any other infraction deemed inappropriate by administration.

If no further incidents occur, the student will be returned to full A+ status at the end of the semester. A student who receives two semesters of probation during their high school career will have their disciplinary record reviewed by the Citizenship Committee for continued probation or possible dismissal from the program.

Removal from the A+ Program

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

- Within the semester while on probation, the student commits another offense that would result in another probationary action.
- After two semesters of probation, a review by the Citizenship Review Committee shows that earlier disciplinary consequences did not positively affect student's behavior.
- Any other infraction (inside or outside of school) deemed inappropriate by administration.

In accordance with State A+ rules and regulations, any student disciplined for any infraction involving illegal drugs or alcohol, will immediately be dismissed from the program.

A+ Citizenship/Probation Appeal Process

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

- Students and parents/guardians will have 15 calendar days to appeal a decision that is made dealing with discipline or probation using the A+ Citizenship/Probation Appeal Form available from the A+ Coordinator. A sample is included in the back of this handbook.
- The appeal must be made in writing through the A+ Coordinator.
- Within 30 days of receiving a written appeal, the A+ Coordinator will convene the A+ Citizenship/Probation Review Committee. The committee will be composed of a guidance counselor, a principal, two teachers, and one advisory committee member.
- The parent/guardian and student should appear, in person, before the committee.
- The A+ Coordinator will act as a facilitator and a non-voting member of the Citizenship/Probation Review Committee. After the committee reaches a decision, the A+ Coordinator will notify the parents by letter within five calendar days. Decisions of the Review Committee will be considered final.

Illegal Drugs/Alcohol

Any involvement with illegal drugs or alcohol (use, manufacture, possession, transport, distribution, or sale) at school, or in the community will result in the immediate, and permanent, removal of the participant from the A+ Program.

- School involvement will have been established when the participant is disciplined for a drug or alcohol related offense.
- Community involvement will have been established when the participant is charged, and pleads no contest, or is found guilty of crimes, that relate to the use, manufacture, possession, transportation, distribution, or sale of a controlled substance, including alcohol.
- The use of prescription medicine is allowed under the Board Policy.
- Students and parents are responsible for understanding and following these guidelines.

Career Paths

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have set forth six major groups of occupations based on similar types of skills, knowledge, and abilities. Students are being encouraged to match their interest with a career path and then take courses that will be beneficial in progressing toward a potential job field. It is not the district's intention to have each student decide on a specific job at this early age. We simply hope that this will provide students with a better focus on school, and increase the relevance of school to life after high school.

Arts and Communications

Occupations related to the humanities, and the performing, visual, literary, and media arts. These may include architecture, creative writing, film, fine arts, radio, television, and languages.

Business, Management, and Technology

Occupations related to the business environment such as sales, marketing, computer/information systems, finance, and management.

Health Services

Jobs related to the promotion of health, and the treatment of disease. These include research, prevention, and treatment.

Human Services

Career related to economic, political, and social systems, including education, government, the military, religion, child care, and others.

Industrial and Engineering Technology

Occupations related to the technologies necessary to design, develop, and maintain physical systems. These include manufacturing, construction, and the related technologies.

Natural Resources

Jobs related to agriculture, the environment, and natural resources. Areas include agriculture sciences, earth sciences, fisheries, forestry, horticulture, and wildlife.

Benefits of Career Pathways for Students

- * The need for long range planning is a significant factor not only for your success in high school but also for your future.
- * Career pathways provide a plan for all students, based on their interests, abilities, talents, and desired levels of education. All pathways have equal dignity.
- * Career pathways provide ALL students with areas of FOCUS, along with FLEXIBILITY and a VARIETY of ideas to pursue as they make decisions regarding course selection.
- * Career pathways allow students to see the importance in their selected school courses. Thus, students are more apt to do better in school.
- * Career pathways help parents and other adults provide better assistance to students as they discuss careers and select courses.

What are Career Pathways?

- * Career pathways are clusters of occupations grouped together because the people in them have similar interests and strengths.
- * All pathways include a variety of occupations that require different levels of education and training.
- * Career paths help you identify a career focus without being locked into a specific occupation.

How can Career Pathways Help You?

- * Deciding on a career pathway can help you prepare for your future.
- * The intent is not for you to decide on a specific occupation for the rest of your life, but to select a career pathway into which you can begin directing your energies.
- * Identifying a career pathway can help you in selecting school courses, activities, and part-time employment.
- * It can help guide your participation in workplace readiness programs like job shadowing and career exploration.

Holden HIGH SCHOOL

Home of the Eagles

Holden R-III School District A+ Schools Participation Agreement

PLEASE PRINT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle _____

Street Address _____ City _____ ZIP _____

Social Security Number (Required) _____ Date of Birth _____

Anticipated Graduation Date _____ Home Phone Number _____

I wish to participate in Holden High School's A+ Schools Program. If state funds are available, I will receive reimbursement for the college expenses determined by legislative approval and appropriation of funds each year. This is on the condition that I meet the following requirements:

1. Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
2. Enter into a written agreement with your high school prior to graduation.
3. Attend an A+ high school for three years immediately prior to graduation.
4. Earn a cumulative high school grade point average of a 2.5 grade point or higher on a 4.0 scale (non-weighted).
5. Maintain a 95% high school attendance record for the 4-year period (attendance is not rounded up).
6. Perform 50 documented hours of approved and unpaid tutoring and/or mentoring. 25% of hours can be obtained through job shadowing or internship.
7. Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol while in grades 9-12..
8. Register for Selective Service, if applicable (as required by law).
9. 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.³

2018 and 2019 High School seniors - If you meet all of the eligibility requirements except the end of course exam requirement, you may establish eligibility by achieving a combined ACT math subscore and high school GPA in accordance with the following scale. You may achieve the qualifying score as a high school or postsecondary student. If you achieve the score as a postsecondary student you may be eligible for an award in the same term that you take the test.

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



Holden High School Attendance Appeal Form

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Address: _____ Phone #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Student Signature: _____

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

SEMESTER: ☐ Fall ☐ Spring **SCHOOL YEAR:** _____

Appeal will be: ☐ In person ☐ In writing

In the space below, please indicate the date(s) of the absence(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 for Absence

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

This form, including pertinent documentation (See page 8 & 9 of the A+ Student Manual), must be returned to the A+ Office within 15 days of the date of notification. Parents will be notified of a hearing date scheduled within 10 days of the appeal notice being received in the A+ Office.



2020-2021 Senior A+ Covid-19 Accommodations

DESE A+ Accommodations Links:

<https://dhewd.mo.gov/ppc/grants/documents/20-21ACovid-19Accommodationsfor2020-2021AY.pdf>

<https://dhewd.mo.gov/ppc/grants/documents/Aplus2020-2021TutoringMentoringRequirementClarified.pdf>

Holden High School has put in place a blanket attendance exemption for the mandatory 95% attendance rate for 2020-2021 Seniors. If you are a senior and fit this criteria you will not be asked to meet the attendance requirement for A+.

Blanket Exemption Criteria:

- You have been placed in quarantine due to Covid-19 positivity, close contact, or out of precaution.
- You were enrolled in the Holden High School Virtual Learning Program, or another suitable online learning program to learn remotely from home.

A+ Hours Requirement Accommodation:

- 2020-2021 Holden High School Seniors will only be required to reach 25 hours of mentoring/tutoring to meet the A+ requirements for the state of Missouri.

Algebra I EOC Accommodation:

- All students graduating after 2020 who were unable to take the Algebra I EOC in the 2019-2020 academic year, regardless of their graduation year, must either score proficient or advanced on a higher level math EOC, or have a qualifying combination of HS GPA/ACT math subscore

Mr. Grant Guevel, A+ Coordinator

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Mr. Ryan Beenken, Counselor

Ms. Melissa Kackley, Counselor

Goals of the A+ Schools Program

The A+ Schools Program is dedicated to the following goals:

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