

COLE CO. R-I HIGH SCHOOL

A+ Schools Program



Student and Parent Handbook

Approval: August 16, 2016

COLE CO. R-I HIGH SCHOOL

A+ Student and Parent Handbook

The Cole Co. R-I Schools A+ Advisory Council has developed the specific guidelines outlined in this handbook for Cole Co. R-I High School in accordance with Missouri Senate Bill 380.

The eligibility requirements guidelines for the Cole Co. R-I High School A+ Schools Program were approved by:

*The Cole Co. R-I High School Advisory Board
and
The Cole Co. R-I Board of Education.*

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A+ Schools Program

The A+ Schools Program is a school-improvement initiative established as part of Senate Bill 380 (Outstanding Schools Act of 1993) by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The A+ Schools Program has set three goals:

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 college or post-secondary vocational or technical school, or high-wage job with workplace skill development opportunities.

The A+ Schools Program provides scholarship funds to eligible graduates of A+ designated high schools who attend any participating Missouri public community college or vocational/technical school, or certain private two-year vocational/technical schools.

To learn more about A+ Schools Program in Missouri go to:

<http://www.dhe.mo.gov/ppc/grants/aplusscholarship.php>

Student Eligibility

To be eligible for the financial incentive of the A+ Schools Program, a student must meet certain requirements set forth by the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE). The incentive is available for up to 48 months after the graduation date documented on the high school transcript. This funding is dependent upon Cole Co. R-I High School being designated as an A+ School prior to the applicant's graduation and upon legislative appropriation by the General Assembly.

Requirement 1: Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.

Requirement 2: Enter a written agreement with Cole Co. R-I High School prior to graduation.

"A+ Agreement Form" is located in the A+ Student and Parent Handbook Appendix

Requirement 3: Attend a designated A+ School for two years prior to high school graduation.

Student must attend Cole Co. R-I High School or transfer to Cole Co. R-I High School from another A+ designated school district during their entire sophomore, junior, and senior years.

- If a student withdraws or transfers from Cole Co. R-I High School after the beginning of their junior year, the student will not be considered eligible for the A+ School Program, even if that student re-enrolls at Cole Co. R-I before graduation; unless the previous school is an A+ designated school at the time of the student's graduation.

Requirement 4: Graduate from high school with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

This grade point average will represent the applicants cumulative GPA, which includes the freshman through senior year. A student with a 2.49 or lower GPA will not be eligible. The student's official transcript will serve as evidence of the grade point average for admission into a Missouri public community college or public vocational/technical school.

Requirement 5: Have at least 95% attendance record for the four-year period of high school.

The applicant must have a 95% or better average attendance record for the four-year period freshman through senior years. A student with a 94.99% or lower attendance record will not be eligible.

*See important information regarding attendance guidelines and procedures on **page 5-6**.*

Requirement 6: Perform and document 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring to younger students during their high school years.

The following guidelines should be followed for the completion of this requirement. Should questions concerning tutoring arise, please contact the A+ Coordinator.

- All tutoring activities will be designed to involve the A+ applicant with students in the A+ district.
- Tutoring activities will provide, as an ultimate goal, encouragement to other students to become more deeply interested in school, stay in school, and strive for good grades.
- Tutoring activities will be school-based, academic in nature, and at Cole Co. R-I School District (not private or public sector programs in which the school has no input into the activity).
- The tutoring activities must occur before, after, during the school day, or during summer school.
- All tutoring must be supervised and verified by a teacher, principal, or the A+ coordinator.
- The required 50 hours of tutoring must be completed prior to graduation to be considered for A+ status.

The A+ applicant is responsible for maintaining a time sheet indicating all tutoring hours. Exact times should be indicated. Only hours that have been verified with a signature by the tutoring supervisor (teacher, principal, or the A+ coordinator) will be counted toward the 50 hour requirement. The time sheet must be submitted to the A+ Coordinator as it is completed.

Requirement 7: Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs (including alcohol).

Participating in the A+ Program is an honor and unique privilege for Cole Co. R-I High School students. The state, which funds the A+ Schools Program, and the district view

the A+ Schools' benefits as an incentive program and therefore holds the student to a higher standard. Therefore, the student pursuing these A+ incentives must maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol during all four years of high school, regardless of when the A+ contract is signed.

Certification of good citizenship will be based on official discipline records maintained by Cole Co. R-I high school. The Principal assigned consequences for infractions of the discipline code and those administrators are responsible for certifying the accuracy of the student's discipline record.

See important information regarding Citizenship Guidelines and Procedures on **page 7-9**.

Requirement 8: Make a good faith effort to secure federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds.

During the applicant's senior year, he/she will be required to complete an application for securing federal post-secondary financial assistance (FAFSA). The FAFSA must be filed prior to graduation to be considered as a good faith effort to secure federal postsecondary financial assistance funds. The institution to which the student applies for post-secondary education will make the final determination of student qualification.

Requirement 9: Achieve a Proficient or Advanced score on the Algebra I EOC or a higher level DESE approved EOC exam in the field of mathematics.

For students who meet all other eligibility requirements, except the Algebra I EOC. The Missouri Department of Higher Education designates qualifying combined ACT Math subscore and high school GPA to meet this requirement in lieu of the EOC score.

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

Attendance Requirement

The following guidelines and procedures will be in effect when certifying that a student has met the required 95% accumulative attendance record for all four years of high school. The following attendance guidelines are required for all students participating in the A+ Program:

- Attendance information given to the A+ Coordinator will come from the official attendance record kept by Cole Co. R-I School District.
- A cumulative attendance record will be kept from the beginning of the A+ student's freshman year until graduation.
- Each grading period, the A+ student's cumulative attendance percentage will be reported on their grade cards. Parents have 30 days after grade cards are sent out to file an attendance appeal with the A+ Coordinator for attendance concern

within the grading period. If an appeal is not filed within 30 days of attendance notification, the waiver for those days missed will not be considered.

- Anyone making an appeal should complete the “A+ Attendance Appeal Form” located in the A+ Parent and Student Handbook Appendix, as well as, provide official documentation within 30 days of notification to the A+ Coordinator. See Attendance Waiver Guidelines below.

Attendance Waiver Guidelines

Attendance waivers submitted to the A+ Coordinator must include the A+ Attendance Appeal Form and official documentation listed below:

Reason for Missing

Doctor/Dentist visits
Hospitalization
Chronic health problems
Funerals
Personal/Family Calamity (fire, flood, etc.)
Catastrophic illness
Court Appearance

Documentation

Doctor/Dentist’s Letter
Doctor’s letter/Hospital Verification
Doctor’s letter
Funeral director’s verification
Parent letter
Doctor’s letter
Scheduled hearing verification

Waivers will not be provided if absences are due to any of the following:

- Transportation problems (unless school related)
- Truancy
- Skipping class
- Personal/Family vacation
- Suspension from class or school for any reason

Attendance Appeal Process

An A+ Attendance Appeal Committee will be composed of the following:

- High School Principal
- High School Teacher
- High School Teacher

The A+ Coordinator will act as facilitator and a non-voting member of the A+ Attendance Appeal Committee. The Appeal Committee will meet to review the request and decide if the waiver of absence for A+ School certification will be granted. After the committee reaches a decision, the principal and A+ Coordinator will notify the parent/guardian of the appeal decision by letter.

To appeal the attendance committee’s decision, parents/guardians have **10 school days to file a written appeal** with the superintendent of Cole Co. R-I School District. The superintendent will contact the parents/guardians regarding his/her decision.

To appeal the superintendent's decision, the parents/guardians have **10 school days to file a written appeal** with the Cole Co. R-I Board of Education. The two previous appeals will be submitted to the Board of Education. The decision of the Board will be final with no further appeal being permitted.

Tutoring/Mentoring Requirement

A+ students must perform 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring for younger students. Cole Co. R-I A+ students may complete tutoring hours through the following options:

- Cadet Teaching Program is a semester course that exposes students to community service opportunities, allows them to explore the human services career pathway, and allows A+ students to complete their tutoring requirements.
- Tutoring/mentoring younger students before or after school in a school sponsored program. (Cole Co. R-I School District After-School Tutoring Programs, High School Academic Lab, etc.)
- Tutoring/mentoring younger students during summer school.

Citizenship Requirement

Participation in the A+ School Program is an honor and unique privilege for Cole Co. R-I High School Students. Students pursuing the A+ incentives must maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol. Certification of good citizenship will be based on official discipline records maintained by the high school and/or official records from city, county or state officials.

Activities within the school setting are an important part of determining good citizenship. Students are expected to demonstrate patterns of good behavior that include, but are not limited to; cooperation, respect for oneself and others, responsibility and leadership. Poor school citizenship resulting probation or loss of A+ eligibility include:

Level I Infraction - 1st Offense - Not Eligible / Removal from the A+ Program

Expulsion – 1st Offense – Not Eligible / Removal from the A+ Program

OSS/ISS (Excluding tardies) – 1st Offense - Conference with Principal/A+ Coordinator

OSS/ISS (Excluding tardies) – 2nd Offense - Probation

OSS/ISS (Excluding tardies) – 3rd Offense - Not Eligible / Removal from the A+ Program

Refer to the “Cole Co. R-I Citizenship Policy” located in the A+ Student and Parent Handbook Appendix for a list of policies and Level I infractions.

Good citizenship outside of the school setting is of equal importance. Therefore, any actions for which legal information is available to the school district will be used in evaluating the citizenship of the applicant as follows:

Misdemeanor – 1st Offense – Not Eligible / Removal from the A+ Program

Felony – 1st Offense – Not Eligible / Removal from the A+ Program

Probation

Any disciplinary offense (other than an offense that causes immediate removal from the program) may result in the student being placed on probation. A second disciplinary offense would remove the student from the A+ Program.

Disciplinary probation 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+ Students should demonstrate distinctive qualities and be role models for other students. Their character and ethics should be of the highest standards.

Disciplinary Probation Appeal Process

In the event that an applicant is not able to meet the “good citizenship” requirements and becomes ineligible for the A+ financial incentive, the student/parents or guardians have the right to appeal. The following process may be used by to appeal a disciplinary decision:

- Students and parents/guardians have 15 days to appeal a decision that is made dealing with discipline or probation. Anyone making an appeal must use the “A+ Appeal of Citizenship Form” located in the A+ Student and Parent Handbook Appendix.
- The basis of the appeal must be submitted in writing to the A+ Coordinator.
- Upon receiving a written appeal, the A+ Coordinator will convene the A+ Appeals Committee composed of the following:
 - High School Principal
 - High School Teacher
 - High School Teacher
- The A+ Coordinator will act as facilitator and non-voting member of the A+ Appeal Committee. After the Appeal Committee reaches a decision, the principal and A+ Coordinator will notify the parents/guardians of the appeal decision by letter. Upon review of each individual case, by the Appeal Committee, one of the following actions will be taken:
 1. A warning statement will be issued to the student’s parents/guardians notifying them that the student may be placed on probation if another infraction occurs during the semester.
 2. A letter of notification will be issued to the student’s parents/guardian placing the student on probation. Students are only allowed ONE probationary period within the A+ Program.
 3. The student’s parents/guardians will be notified that the student has been removed from the A+ Schools Program and his/her A+ Contractual Agreement is no longer in effect.
- To appeal the citizenship committee’s decision, the parents/guardians have **10 school days to file a written appeal** with the superintendent of Cole Co. R-I

School District. The superintendent will contact the parents/guardians of his/her decision.

- To appeal the superintendent's decision, the parents/guardians have **10 school days to file a written appeal** with the Cole Co. R-I Board of Education. The two previous appeals will also be submitted to the Board of Education. The appeal will be reviewed at the next board meeting. The Board of Education will notify the parents/guardians of their decision. The decision of the Board will be final with no further appeal being permitted.

Good Faith Effort to Secure Funding

Parents of A+ Students must make a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment.

- Parents must complete and send in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form online.
- Parents must complete the application between October 1st and prior to the A+ student's graduation date.
- The FAFSA information must be sent to the community college or public vocational/technical school that the student is planning to attend.

A+ Schools Program Appendix

Cole Co. R-I High School
A+ Agreement

Student: _____ Year of Graduation: _____

The A+ Program provides scholarship funds to eligible graduates of A+ designated high schools who attend a participating Missouri public community college or vocational/technical school, or certain private two-year vocational/technical schools.

To be eligible students must meet the following requirements:

- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Enter a written agreement with your high school prior to graduation.
- Attend a designated A+ high school for two years prior to high school graduation.
- Graduate with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Have at least 95% attendance record for grades 9-12.
- Perform at least 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring.
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Complete the FASFA during senior year prior to graduation.
- Achieve a Proficient or Advanced score on the Algebra I EOC or a higher level DESE approved EOC exam in the field of mathematics

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

A+ Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

Students will be eligible for A+ funding pending Missouri General Assembly appropriating funds.

Cole Co. R-I High School

A+ Program

Permission to Travel

Dear parent/guardians,

Your child is currently scheduled for A+ Cadet Teaching for one semester of the school year. A+ requires that students complete 50 hours of unpaid tutoring. A+ Students are scheduled for A+ Tutoring for one period of the day during the duration of one semester of the school year.

A+ Students may complete their tutoring hours throughout the Cole Co. R-I School District. In order for your student to complete their A+ hours at Russellville Elementary or Russellville Middle School, A+ students must be give permission from their parent/guardian to drive themselves during their scheduled A+ hour.

Students traveling to Russellville Elementary or Russellville Middle School will be required to document their leaving and arrival times at both at the K-8 building and Russellville High School. Students may only drive **themselves** to the K-8 building.

Sincerely,

A+ Coordinator

Student's name: _____

Date: _____

Parent's signature: _____

Cole Co. R-I High School
A+ Program
Attendance Appeal Form

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____ Phone No. _____

Parent/Guardian's

Address _____

City

State

Zip Code

This request is to appeal the school absence(s) of my son/daughter for the following:
(Please Check)

SEMESTER: ____ Fall ____ Spring SCHOOL YEAR: _____

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 must be given to the A+ Coordinator within 30 days of the end of the semester in which the absence occurred. Please include necessary documentation for absence.

Cole R-I High School

A+ Schools Citizenship Policy

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 - High School Teacher
 - High School Teacher
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 1. A warning statement will be issued to the student’s parents/guardians notifying them that the student may be placed on probation if another infraction occurs during the semester.
 2. A letter of notification will be issued to the student’s parents/guardian placing the student on probation. Students are only allowed ONE probationary period within the A+ Program.
 3. The student’s parents/guardians will be notified that the student has been removed from the A+ Schools Program and his/her A+ Contractual Agreement is no longer in effect.
- To appeal the citizenship committee’s decision, the parents/guardians have **10 school days to file a written appeal** with the superintendent of Cole Co. R-I School District. The superintendent will contact the parents/guardians of his/her decision.
- To appeal the superintendent’s decision, the parents/guardians have **10 school days to file a written appeal** with the Cole Co. R-I Board of Education. The two previous appeals will also be submitted to the Board of Education. The appeal will be reviewed at the next board meeting. The Board of Education will notify the parents/guardians of their decision. The decision of the Board will be final with no further appeal being permitted.

Level I Infractions

Alcohol and Drug Policy - The use and or possession of alcohol and unauthorized prescription or nonprescription drugs, narcotic substances, counterfeit drugs, or drug paraphernalia, is not permitted in school buildings, on school grounds, on school transportation, or at school sponsored events.

Cole Co. R-I High School
A+ Program
Appeal of Citizenship Certification Form

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____ Phone No. _____

Parent/Guardian's

Address _____

City

State

Zip Code

SEMESTER: ____ Fall ____ Spring SCHOOL YEAR: _____

Disciplinary Infraction: _____ Date: _____

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

This form must be given to the A+ Coordinator within 30 days after the disciplinary action occurred.