

Osage County R-III High School



2013 - 2014



Student & Parent Handbook

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Created by: A+ Advisory Committee

School Mission Statement

The mission of the Osage County R-III School District, in partnership with parents and the community is to provide all students the opportunity to reach their learning potential in a safe environment and to prepare them to achieve their lifelong goals as responsible citizens.

Origins of the A+ Program

The A+ Schools Program was one of the educational opportunities brought about by Senate Bill 380 (also known as the “Outstanding Schools Act”) which was passed by the Missouri General Assembly in May, 1993. The primary goal of the A+ Schools Program is to ensure that all students who graduate from Missouri high schools are well prepared to pursue advanced education and employment.

Description of the A+ Program

Students who graduate from a designated A+ High School may qualify for a state-paid financial incentive to attend any public community college or career-technical school in Missouri if students meet all the requirements of the A+ Program. Those students who complete all of the requirements are eligible to receive two (2) years (six semesters – including summer school) of free tuition at a designated 2 year Community college or vocational/technical (state funded) school in Missouri. Financial need is not a factor in determining student eligibility for the A+ tuition incentive. Participants will have up to four (4) years (from the date of high school graduation) to access the A+ tuition incentive. Participants are under no obligation to use the A+ incentive. The tuition incentive is earned by each student and it is not transferable to any other student.

Purpose of the A+ Handbook

The purpose of the A+ Student & Parent Handbook is to provide a clear understanding of the A+ Program. The Outstanding Schools Act requires that Fatima High School establish rules, guidelines, and policies in order to meet the stipulations and requirements of the A+ Program. The A+ Program must be administered by the A+ Coordinator in a fair and consistent manner and this handbook helps ensure that all A+ students are treated equally and fairly.

To enroll in the A+ program the student must fill out the A+ Participation Agreement form. This form must be signed by the student, their parents, the high school principal, and the A+ Coordinator. After signing the participation agreement form, it is then the responsibility of the student to meet the requirements of the program as outlined in this handbook. The student must meet all the requirements listed in this handbook in order to be certified as an A+ Student upon graduation.

Fatima high school will go through the A+ review and hopefully be approved as an A+ School in the spring of 2010. Students graduating in the spring of 2010 will be the first graduating class at Fatima that may (pending approval from the state) be eligible for the A+ incentive. Each year in June, the A+ Coordinator is responsible to certify to the state of Missouri that the A+ students have met all the requirements of the A+ Program. If a student does not meet all the requirements of the A+ Program, they will be notified by the A+ Coordinator that they did not qualify for the A+ Incentive.

This handbook is provided for students, parents, employees, and patrons of the district to provide a clear understanding of rules, guidelines, and policies of the A+ Program. **Be aware that this program is funded by the legislative action of the state of Missouri and funding could vary from year to year.**

If you have any questions about the A+ Program, then please contact the A+ Coordinator at Fatima High School.

Goals of the A+ Schools Program

The three primary goals of the A+ Program are as follows:

1. All students will graduate from high school.
2. All students will complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and for which there are identified and measurable learner expectations.
3. All students will proceed from high school graduation to a traditional college or post-secondary vocational or technical school or high wage job with work place skill development opportunities.

General Participation Requirements

1. Osage County R-III High School must meet and maintain all the requirements for the A+ schools designation.
2. State funding must be available. As with any State program, the A+ Schools Program is subject to the political process of sustaining and maintaining a budget. The Missouri State Legislature will decide on a yearly basis, the amount of funding the A+ Program will receive.
3. The student must meet all the criteria of the A+ Program that is outlined in this handbook and the "Tutoring Agreement and Confidentiality Contract."

Student Eligibility Requirements

To become eligible for the financial incentives of the A+ Program, a student must be certified as an A+ Student by Fatima High School. The A+ Coordinator, along with the high school principal has the responsibility of making sure that a graduate of Fatima High School has completed all of the criteria of the A+ Program prior to graduation. The School Board must then give final approval for all students that have met the criteria for certification as an A+ Student at the May meeting. In June of each year the A+ Coordinator will report to the state all of the students that are eligible for the A+ incentive. To be certified as an A+ Student, a student must complete the following criteria before graduation:

1. Signed A+ School Participation Agreement Form

- The first step in participating in the A+ Student Incentive Program is for the student and their parents to read and sign the A+ Student Participation Agreement Form.
- Students should try to begin their participation in the A+ Program at the beginning of their freshman year.
- The student must turn this completed Agreement Form in to the A+ Coordinator.
- There is no specific deadline for students to enroll in the A+ Program. A student may enroll at any time as long as the student realizes that they must complete all program requirements, including the fifty (50) hours of tutoring.
- The A+ Coordinator will establish an A+ file for each student. Documentation of all A+ activities will be kept in this folder.

2. Enrollment Requirements:

- Students must be enrolled for three consecutive years at Fatima or another A+ designated high school prior to graduation.
- If a student withdraws or transfers from another school after the beginning of his/her sophomore year, the student will NOT be considered eligible for the A+ Program, even if

the student re-enrolls at Fatima High School before graduation: unless the previous school they attended is an A+ designated school at the time of the students' graduation.

3. Grade Point Requirements:

- Students must graduate with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Grade point average is figured only at the end of each semester and is cumulative for four years.
- Averaging or rounding up to the next highest grade point will not be allowed.
- Cumulative grade point information will be sent to parents/guardians of all students each semester.
- Final determination of A+ eligibility is made using student's official transcript.

4. Attendance Requirements:

- Students must maintain a minimum of 95% attendance for all four (4) years of high school.
- The cumulative attendance record will be kept for a four-year period from the beginning of the A+ student's freshman year until graduation.
- The cumulative attendance information given to the A+ Coordinator will come from the official attendance record kept by the secretaries in the Fatima High School office.
- Rounding up for attendance will not be allowed.
- Cumulative attendance information will be included on each students report card at the end of each term (six times a year).

- **Attendance Appeal Waiver**

Any student who is adversely affected by the 95% attendance requirement may, during the second semester of the student's senior year, submit an attendance appeal waiver to the A+ Coordinator. A student is considered to be adversely affected by this requirement, and, thus, entitled to file an appeal if it becomes apparent, during the last semester of the student's senior year, that the student has not met, or because of the number of accumulated absences simply cannot meet, the 95 % attendance rate requirement. The Attendance Appeal form is included in this handbook (also available in the high school office) and must be used to initiate the appeal process.

- A parent submitting a request for an A+ attendance waiver/appeal for days missed, must provide the A+ Coordinator with official documentation stating the reasons the student was absent from school. Absences (documentation) that will be considered for the attendance appeal include:
 - 1) Letters, appointments, or other documents from a professional and/or health care provider. (This allowance is NOT intended for routine appointments or for the student or parent's convenience, but rather for exceptional or extreme conditions.)
 - 2) Illness of student. (This must be a serious illness and documentation must be included from your physician)
 - 3) Death in Family (Obituary or a card from the funeral must be turned in with the dates of the funeral included)
 - 4) Court or legal proceedings that the student is required to appear or attend. (Court documents stating the student is required and did appear must be included)
 - 5) Other exceptional serious personal or family problems as recognized by the A+ Coordinator and/or the A+ Schools Attendance Appeals Committee.
- Students will **NOT** be permitted to claim a waiver for an absence if the absence is due to any of the following:
 - 1) Truancy

- 2) Skipping classes or participating in "skip" day
- 3) Personal or family vacation
- 4) Transportation problems
- 5) Suspension from class or from school for any reason

** Partial-day absences may count toward the attendance rate calculation! **

- The A+ Coordinator will convene the A+ Attendance Appeals Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days of receiving the attendance appeal from the student or their parents/guardians. After the A+ Schools Attendance Appeals Committee reaches a decision, the parents/student will be notified.
- The A+ Schools Attendance Appeals Committee will consist of the principal, counselor, and three teachers. These individuals will be selected by the administration.
- The A+ Coordinator will then meet with the A+ Attendance Appeals Committee to review the attendance appeal request. The A+ Coordinator will oversee this meeting, but will not be granted a vote in determining the appeal.
- After the committee reaches a decision, the A+ Coordinator will notify the parents by letter of the results of the decision.
- If the A+ Schools Attendance Appeals Committee makes a decision adverse to the student, then the parents/student will have ten (10) days from the receipt of the decision to appeal the committee's decision to the Board of Education. The appeal to the Board of Education shall be in writing, and the parent or student's written appeal will be reviewed by the Board of Education in a manner determined by the Board of Education.
- All attendance appeals must be concluded by May 1 of the year in which the student graduates in order for the student to receive A+ certification

5. Tutoring Requirements:

- Students will perform fifty (50) hours of school sponsored unpaid tutoring. Students may NOT be paid for this work.
- Job shadowing will NOT count towards the fifty (50) hours of tutoring and/or mentoring.
- Only time actually spent tutoring students will count toward the minimum of 50 hours of required tutoring. Tutoring must be done one-on-one or in small groups. These duties will be assigned by the supervising teacher.
- Tutoring time must be documented on the official A+ Tutoring Log. No other record will be accepted by the A+ Coordinator.
- All guidelines and policies for tutoring can be found in the A+ Tutoring Handbook.

6. Citizenship Requirements-Standards:

Participation in the A+ Program is a privilege and not a right; therefore, the Osage County R-III School District requires students to adhere to the standards of behavior, which will bring credit to the students, the A+ program, the school, and the community. Students who represent Fatima High School must demonstrate good citizenship and conduct at all times.

The Osage County R-III School District requires student behavior to be in compliance with school board policy, with the school's Student Handbook Regulations, and local, state, and federal laws. Behavior not in compliance with these policies may result in the student's loss of eligibility from the A+ Program. The citizenship requirements are as follows:

- A. Students who sign an agreement to be part of the A+ Program must maintain good citizenship during all four (4) years of high school.
- B. Good citizenship is expected in school and in the community. Any incident that takes place during the time the student is enrolled at Osage County R-III High

School will be considered in evaluating the student's citizenship.

Termination Procedures: These will result in automatic removal from the A+ Program.

- 1) Students who violate the district's Alcohol/Drug policy during their high school career will be automatically removed from the A+ Program.
- 2) Illegal use of drugs and alcohol will not be tolerated if a student is part of this program. Any possession, use, sale, or transfer of alcohol or drugs that results in a "conviction" or is witnessed by a member of the school administration will result in immediate removal of the student from the A+ Program.
- 3) Criminal activities, as defined by the Safe Schools Act, will result in the immediate removal of the student from the A+ Program. Any student convicted or pleading guilty to a felony or misdemeanor offense will be removed from the program. Some examples of violations of the Safe Schools Act include:

* First and second degree murder	* First degree arson
* Kidnapping	* Voluntary/Involuntary manslaughter
* First and second degree assault	* Sexual assault
* First and second degree burglary	* Felonious restraint
* Robbery	* Property damage
* Distribution of drugs	* Intimidation of school staff
* Distribution of drugs to minors	* Physical threat to staff
* Assault on a student	* Expulsion from school
* False fire alarm/bomb threats and misuse of emergency equipment	* Possession of a weapon
- 4) Any combination of five (5) or more days assigned to In-School Detention, In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) in any school year will result in automatic removal from the A+ Program. The maximum number of infractions (discipline referrals resulting in Detentions, ISD, ISS or OSS) a student may have in any school year is three (3). On the third discipline referral that results in any type of detention or suspension the student will be immediately removed from the A+ Program.
** Infractions = Disciplinary referrals that result in Detentions, ISD, ISS or OSS.
- 5) Probation and Appeals Guidelines:
 - a. Any A+ student that receives two referrals in a school year that results in Detentions, ISD, ISS or OSS will automatically be put on probation. Students' parents/guardians will be notified by the A+ Coordinator informing them that their child is on probation. Probation will last until the end of that school year.
 - b. Any A+ student who receives a notification of probation or immediate removal from the A+ program will have 10 days from the date of notification to file an appeal with the A+ Coordinator. The citizenship appeal form is included in this handbook. It is also available in the high school office and must be used to initiate the appeal process.
 - c. The A+ Citizenship Appeals Committee shall consist of the high school principal, high school counselor, and 3 teachers. These individuals shall be selected by the administration.
 - d. The A+ Coordinator will act as a facilitator and a non-voting member of the A+ Citizenship Appeals Committee. The A+ Coordinator will convene the A+ Citizenship Appeals Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days

of receiving the attendance appeal waiver form from the student or their parents.

- e. After the committee reaches a decision, the A+ Coordinator will notify the parents by letter of the results of the decision.
- f. If the A+ Citizenship Appeals Committee makes a decision, adverse to the student, then the parents/student will have ten (10) days from the receipt of the decision (letter) to appeal the committee's decision to the Board of Education. The appeal to the Board of Education shall be in writing, and the parent or student's written appeal will be reviewed by the Board of Education in a manner determined by the Board of Education.
- g. If an appeal is NOT filed to the Board of Education within 10 days then the appeal will not be heard by the Board of Education.
- h. Each student's citizenship record is subject to review by the A+ Coordinator and the A+ Citizenship Appeals Committee.

7. Good Faith Effort to Secure Financial Aid Requirement:

- Students and their parents must make a good faith effort to secure all available post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment.
- Students and parents should complete and send in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form by April 1st of their senior year. .
- The FAFSA application form is available online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>
- Students and parents are encouraged, to apply as early as possible, not before January 1st or after April 1st during the student's senior year.
- After students (parents) receive their Student Aid Report (SAR) in the mail, verifying the financial aid information on the original FAFSA, the student will show the A+ Coordinator this copy to certify that the student has attempted to secure federal financial assistance.

8. Selective Service Registration Requirement:

- All males are required to register with the Selective Service upon reaching eighteen (18) years of age or forfeit their eligibility.
- Proof of registration must be certified by the A+ Coordinator.

9. End of Course Exam Requirement:

- Beginning with the graduation class of 2015, a score of proficient or advanced on the Algebra I, or a higher level math, end of the course exam will be required. Students not meeting this criterion may become eligible with a qualifying score on the math component of the ACT. The MDHE will set the qualifying scores each year.

Osage County R-III A+ Student Participation Agreement



Student Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Student MOSIS Number: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ **Graduation Year:** _____

A+ Incentive Program Consent Information:

By signing below you give your consent to participate in the Osage County R-III High School A+ Program. The A+ Schools Incentive Program is contingent on the Osage County R-III High School successfully achieving designation as an A+ School in the spring of 2010. These incentives are subject to the state legislature appropriating sufficient funds towards this program. The incentives provided by this program will pay for tuition, and general fees at any Missouri publicly-funded technical college, community college, or vocational technical school. This financial incentive provides funds to prospective A+ students for a total of two years (6 semesters including summer school), but students are eligible for this program for up to four years immediately following their high school graduation. This program will not pay for housing, transportation, supplies, or program specific fees.

Students must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the A+ Program:

1. Students and their parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign an A+ student participation agreement.
2. Students must attend Fatima High School or another designated A+ school for three years immediately prior to graduation.
3. Students must graduate with at least a cumulative 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
4. Students must graduate with a 95% attendance average or higher over a four-year period immediately prior to graduation.
5. Students must perform 50 hours of unpaid tutoring.
6. Students must maintain a record of good citizenship as stipulated in the A+ citizenship policy. This includes the avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol.
7. Students must make a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds (PELL/SEOG) that do not require payment. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be filled out during the last semester of your senior year before April 1.
8. Students must register for Selective Service (Males 18 or over). Go to <http://www.sss.gov/> to register.

Student and Parent Consent

By signing this agreement, I understand that I will be working with Fatima High School to fulfill all of the requirements outlined above to be considered a candidate for the A+ financial incentive.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

High School Principal Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

A+ Coordinator Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Board Of Education
Steve Brune, President
Brenda Rehagen, Vice President
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Jim Boehm, Member
Keith Cavender, Member
John Nilges, Member
Kevin Thoenen, Member
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**OSAGE COUNTY R-III
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

143 E. Main, P.O. Box 37
Westphalia, MO 65085
PHONE (573) 455-2375
FAX (573)455-9884

Joe M. Scott, Superintendent

High School Principal
Chuck Woody
High School Asst. Principal
Mitch Gier
Elementary Principal
Jeff Buthod
Sp Education Director
Paula Logan
PreSchool Director
Christy Varnadore

A+ Citizenship Probation Notification Letter

Today's Date: _____

Student's Name: _____

Date of Review: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Upon careful review of your child's discipline (citizenship) record during _____ term, the A+ Citizenship Review Committee has placed your child on probation for the rest of the current school year. This letter is being sent to inform you that your child is at serious risk of being removed from the A+ Program. If your child receives another school discipline referral during the current school year they will likely be removed from the A+ Program.

The specific behavior that has caused your child to be put on probation includes:

Please review the A+ Citizenship Policy with your child and stress to them the importance of good citizenship. Also, remind them that additional discipline referrals for the rest of the school year could result in their immediate removal from the A+ Program.

If you have any questions then please contact the A+ Coordinator or myself at (573) 455-2375.

Sincerely,

Chuck Woody
High School Principal

Board Of Education
Steve Brune, President
Brenda Rehagen, Vice President
Wayne Baumhoer, Member
Jim Boehm, Member
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A+ Citizenship Removal Letter

Today's Date: _____

Student's Name: _____

Date of Review: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The A+ Program has specific requirements that students must follow and maintain in order to remain a part of the A+ Program. These requirements are based on grades, attendance, citizenship (in and out of school), and tutoring. An important part of maintaining eligibility is for students to maintain good citizenship and to avoid the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol.

We regret to inform you that it has become necessary for the A+ Citizenship Review Committee to remove your child from the A+ Program.

The specific behavior causing the removal of your child includes:

Please review the citizenship policy in the A+ Student and Parent Handbook. If you wish to appeal this decision you are required to send a letter of appeal to the A+ Coordinator within ten (10) days of receiving this letter. If you have any questions, then please contact the A+ Coordinator or myself at (573) 455-2375.

Sincerely,

Chuck Woody
High School Principal

OSAGE COUNTRY R-III SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTENDANCE APPEAL FORM

Date of Appeal: _____

Student Name: _____

Parent and/or Guardian Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Please write a short paragraph explaining the reason(s) for exceeding the absence limit.

This request is to appeal a school absence(s) for the following school year and semester:

School Year: _____ Semester: (Check One) First: _____ Second: _____

In the space provided below, please indicate the date(s) of the absence(s) you are appealing and also the reason/excuse for the absence(s). See the back for reasonable excuses and documentation needed!!

Absence Date: _____	Reason/Excuse: _____

Total Absences: _____ School Year: 20__ 20__ 20__ 20__

For Office Use Only

Cumulative GPA: _____ Date of Appeal Hearing: _____

Tutoring Hours: _____ Committee Decision: Appeal Granted: _____
Appeal Denied: _____

Written Notification Mailed On: _____

OSAGE COUNTRY R-III SCHOOL DISTRICT CITIZENSHIP APPEAL FORM

Date of Appeal: _____

Student Name: _____

Parent and/or Guardian Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Please write a short paragraph explaining the reason(s) for appealing your loss of citizenship and why you feel the A+ Appeal Committee should reinstate you in the A+ Program. If ISD, ISS, or OSS are not the reasons for your suspension/loss of citizenship then please indicate that below.

This request is to appeal a school citizenship issue from the following school year and semester:

School Year: _____ Semester: (Check One) First: _____ Second: _____

In the space provided below, please write in the ISD, ISS, or OSS dates and the reason you were suspended.

Suspension Date(s): _____ Reason: _____

For Office Use Only

Cumulative GPA: _____

Date of Appeal Hearing: _____

Tutoring Hours: _____

Committee Decision: Appeal Granted: _____
Appeal Denied: _____

Written Notification Mailed On: _____