

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
A+ SCHOOLS Agreement

Rules and availability for the A+ Scholarship Program are subject to change under the rule making authority of The Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE). For a complete and updated list of High School and Post Graduate eligibility rules and regulations you can visit <http://www.dhe.mo.gov/ppc/grants/aplusscholarship.php>.

A+ PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A+ qualifying graduate earns scholarships which may be used to attend participating public community colleges, vocational/technical schools, or certain private 2-year vocational/technical schools. A+ graduates may qualify for competitively awarded, privately funded first year and transfer scholarships or incentive scholarships from 4-year institutions. Springfield Public School graduates who meet all state-mandated A+ participation requirements may be eligible for these financial incentives provided state funds are appropriated by the legislature annually.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (Eligibility updates are provided annually or by request to students with a signed agreement on file.)

To qualify for A+ eligibility upon graduation from high school, students must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Enter into a written agreement with your high school prior to graduation.
- Attend an A+ designated high school for 3 years immediately prior to graduation. *If a parent is a member of the military on active duty or has retired from the military and relocated to Missouri within one year of his or her retirement, the student is exempt from this requirement. However, the student must attend an A+ designated high school and meet all of the other high school eligibility requirements in the school year immediately preceding graduation.*
- Graduate with an overall, GPA (grade point average) of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Have at least a 95% attendance record overall for grades nine through twelve (9-12).
- Perform at least 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring, of which 25% percent (12.5 hours) may include job shadowing. Hours must be completed prior to graduation. All hours must be pre-approved with the A+ office and meet building and district requirements.
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol while in grades 9-12 as defined by district policy.
- File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). (This may result in a zero award if a Pell grant is sufficient to cover all tuition and general fee charges.) The FAFSA must be completed before students can be awarded A+ scholarship funds.
- Meet one of the following college readiness indicators:
 1. 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 **OR**
 2. Meet other criteria as established annually by the MDHE.

POSTGRADUATE ELIGIBILITY

- A+ qualifiers may use their A+ Scholarship the summer semester immediately following high school graduation.
- Eligibility expires when the earliest of the following occurs:
 - 48 months after the graduation date documented on your high school transcript (students providing service to any branch of the US armed forces can defer their eligibility - see MDHE website for deferment requirements)
 - Students graduating from high school mid-year may be eligible for a spring award if their high school transcripts indicate the mid-year graduation date.
 - Receipt of an associate's degree
 - Completion of 105% of the hours required for the program in which you are currently enrolled.

CITIZENSHIP GUIDELINES

Good Citizenship is defined by a student's behavior in compliance with building, district and state standards. Disciplinary infractions may result in a student being considered "under warning", "on probation" or "out of compliance" with the A+ Programs Citizenship Requirement.

Communication of citizenship warnings, probations and out of compliance status will occur annually or by student/parent request for students with a signed A+ agreement on file. Students may appeal citizenship out of compliance building decisions with the SPS District A+ Appeals Committee. All appeals must be filed with the district **10 days before the first Monday in December and the first Monday in April**. Citizenship appeal forms, protocol and requirements can be found on the building and district's A+ webpages. Students transferring to an SPS high school, who are ineligible due to citizenship from a previous school, will also be considered ineligible at SPS.

| A+ Citizenship Scope & Sequence | | ISS | OSS |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| WARNING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter/e-mail to student | Accumulation of 1-15 days | Accumulation of 1-3 days |
| PROBATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter/e-mail to student Letter/e-mail to parent/guardian | Accumulation of 16+ days | Accumulation of 4-9 days |
| OUT OF COMPLIANCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter/e-mail to student Letter/e-mail to parent/guardian Student may appeal at the district level | Accumulation of 17 or more days | Accumulation of 10 or more days |
| <p>Days of ISS/OSS refers to the original day(s) assigned and NOT the amount of days served. A WARNING does not have to occur for a student to be placed on PROBATION. A PROBATION does not have to occur for a student to be OUT OF COMPLIANCE.</p> | | | |

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

In reviewing a student’s final attendance average, the entire attendance history (grades 9-12) is considered and is based on Monday through Friday attendance when school is in regular session. Any student appropriately counted for average daily attendance will be considered in attendance, whether physically present or not. Summer school attendance is **NOT** included. A senior who chooses to be an Early Leaver/Graduate may not have enough days of attendance accumulated to meet the 95% attendance requirement.

The A+ Program makes no distinction between Excused and Unexcused absences. All unexcused and many excused absences, including those which a parent or school official is aware of in advance, count against the student’s attendance average. A doctor’s note for an excused absence for colds, flu, strep, or other short-term illnesses does not automatically qualify a student to have that absence waived. The 95% vs. 100% requirement is meant to cover those routine visits and incidents.

The following absences **DO NOT** count against the student’s attendance average for A+ purposes: school-sponsored activities; pre-approved, documented college visits; SPS district-provided *Homebound Instruction* (a minimum of 10 consecutive days are required to apply for this); and SPS district-approved disability accommodation plans (504 plan).

Students may appeal attendance out of compliance (building) decisions with the (district) Site A+ Attendance Appeals Committee. All appeals must be filed 10 days prior to the first Monday in December and the first Monday in April with the building A+ Coordinator. of the student's graduation year. Attendance appeal forms, protocol and requirements can be found on the building and district’s A+ webpages. Documentation from the appropriate agency is required for an A+ attendance appeal and should include specific dates, times and appropriate signatures.

- The following are examples of absences that could rule a student ineligible for an attendance appeal: elective, skip, truancy, and/or late absences.
- The following are examples of absences that could qualify a student for an attendance appeal: catastrophic illness/injury/event with student or immediate family. Immediate family includes all members of the student’s family who reside in the same location as the student and/or persons approved by the A+ Attendance Appeals Committee.

STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT

Signatures indicate that the student and parent/guardian(s) have reviewed and understand the Springfield R-12 School District A+ Schools Agreement. This informs them of the opportunities afforded by participation and/or eligibility in the program, the expected standards of behavior for the program, and the rules, requirements and regulations of the A+ Program. Signatures are do **NOT** signify an obligation to participate in the A+ Schools Program or to use the A+ Scholarship funds. Signatures do **NOT** guarantee qualification for the A+ Scholarship.

Student Name (Last, First, Middle) - PRINT: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this signed form to the A+ office at your high school.