

Calhoun R-VIII School District



Schools Program Handbook

This handbook is designed to present the guidelines, requirements, and policies of the A+ Schools Program to students, parents/guardians, faculty and staff so that a clear understanding of the program can be shared.

Please read this information carefully. If you have questions you may contact the A+ Coordinator at Calhoun High School at 660-694-3422.

The following forms must be signed and on file with the A+ Coordinator before students can participate in the A+ program and earn tutoring hours:

- **Letter of Intent**
- **Signature page in back of Calhoun A+ Schools Program Handbook**
 - **Citizenship & Attendance Agreement**
 - **Student Handbook Receipt**
 - **Authorization for Release of Records**
- **Tutoring Agreement**

The A+ Schools Program Overview

While many Missourians see the A+ Schools Program as a scholarship program, it was created by the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 as an incentive for improving Missouri's high schools.

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.

Participating high schools are encouraged to:

- reduce the dropout rate.
- raise academic expectations by eliminating general-track courses.
- provide career pathways for all students.
- work closely with business and higher-education leaders to better
- prepare students for their lives after graduation.

Goals of the A+ Schools Program

As outlined by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the three goals of the A+ Schools Program are as follows:

- 1. All students will graduate from high school.**
- 2. All students will complete a challenging course of high school studies with identified and measurable learning expectations.**
- 3. All students will proceed from high school graduation to college or post-secondary vocational/technical school, or high wage job with opportunities for skill development and advancement.**

These three goals illustrate the basic purpose of the A+ Schools Program. The purpose of the program is to provide every student with the skills, background, and support required for them to successfully become responsible, productive citizens after graduation.

How Does a School Gain A+ Designation?

The district must establish and maintain district-wide performance standards regarding the primary goals of the A+ Schools Program, develop academic objectives and measurable standards for all courses, and develop a cooperative Partnership Plan in conjunction with community and business leaders, parents, faculty, senior citizens, and representatives from post-secondary schools.

Student Benefit

All students will benefit from improved curriculum; more effective instructional techniques; clearly defined, measurable course expectations and academic standards; extensive career exploration and guidance activities, and the development of a more focused graduation program. Those students identified, as being at-risk of not graduating will also benefit from targeted interventions and increased support to help them achieve success. Students meeting qualification requirements as set out in this handbook will also be eligible for two years of paid tuition and fees at Missouri community colleges and vocational/technical schools, **provided the state legislature continues to approve funding.**

Student Enrollment

Students are encouraged to enroll in the Calhoun High School A+ Program early in their freshman year. If they choose to wait, they will still be required to fulfill all criteria dating back to the beginning of their freshman year. However, enrollment in the A+ Schools Program must be completed no later than the third week of the fall semester of a student's senior year.

The first steps toward participation in the program are completing an A+ Schools Program contract with all appropriate signatures and filing it with the A+ Coordinator. **It then becomes the responsibility of the student to continue to meet the requirements of the program as outlined in this handbook in order to be certified as an A+ student upon graduation.** The A+ Coordinator will notify students and their parents/guardians immediately if it is determined that a student is not eligible for A+ status.

Student Eligibility

Students must also meet specific criteria. Doing so will make them eligible to receive paid tuition and fees to attend post-secondary schools in Missouri (as long as state funding is available). Transfer students may continue to participate in the program only if they are transferring to or from another A+ designated high school.

To be eligible for the financial incentives of the A+ Schools Program, a student must be certified as an A+ student by Calhoun R-VIII High School. To do so, the student must meet the following criteria while in high school:

- Sign a written A+ Student Agreement.
- Attend Calhoun R-VIII High School or an A+ designated high school for at least three consecutive years prior to graduation.
- Maintain at least a 2.5 or higher grade point average on a 4.0 scale (no weighting or rounding).
- Maintain a 95% attendance record during four years of high school.
- Perform at least 50 documented hours of approved, unpaid supervised academic, student tutoring over the four years of high school.
- Obtain a proficient or advanced rating on the Algebra I End of Course exam (effective with the Class of 2015).
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol throughout 4 years of high school.
- Make a good faith effort to first secure all available federal postsecondary student financial aid funds that do not require repayment, such as the Pell Grant, by submitting a FAFSA form after October 1st of the student's senior year.
- Register for the selective service, if required to do so by law.

Grade Point Requirement

For A+ certification, the 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 weighted or rounded.** The cumulative GPA will be calculated from all four years of the student's enrollment in high school, and the official transcript will document and certify that the GPA requirement has been met.

Career Paths

Each student will be required to declare a general career path. Career paths are a broad categorization of courses and educational activities targeted at a student's academic and career goals. Career paths are designed to give students direction and help selecting courses that will be relevant to their preferred field of study or chosen occupation after high school. A career path may be changed at any time.

There are six career paths that students may choose:

- **Arts and Communications**
- **Business, Management and Technology**
- **Health Services**
- **Human Services**
- **Industrial and Engineering Technology**
- **Natural Resources / Agriculture**

Within these career paths, students may choose to explore sixteen career clusters that will help them determine a postsecondary course of study or career. These clusters are:

- **Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources**
- **Architecture and Construction**
- **Arts, Audio-Visual Technology and Communications**
- **Business, Management and Administration**
- **Education and Training**
- **Finance**
- **Government and Public Administration**
- **Health Science**
- **Hospitality and Tourism**
- **Human Services**
- **Information Technology**
- **Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security**
- **Manufacturing**
- **Marketing, Sales and Service**

- **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics**
- **Transportation, Distribution and Logistics**

More information is available from the Guidance Counselor or the Missouri Connections website at www.missouriconnections.org.

Tutoring Requirement

Students seeking A+ certification must perform at least 50 hours of unpaid school-based tutoring. (A tutor may not tutor his/her brother or sister.) The tutoring activities must:

- Be approved by A+ coordinator before beginning;
- Be performed in the Calhoun R-VIII School District buildings; and
- Be performed with students enrolled at Calhoun R-VIII School District;
- Encourage younger students to become enthusiastic learners and to strive for good grades;
- Be school-based, approved by the A+ Coordinator, and under the direction of a district staff member.

Students participating in the A+ tutoring program will be required to:

- Sign a tutoring agreement, and file it with the A+ Coordinator as well as Liability release forms as needed.
- Participate in a brief training program for tutors.
- Keep tutoring log sheets and complete them as tutoring is done. Be sure to describe the tutoring assignments and have the supervisor sign the log sheet. Log sheets must be turned into the A+ Coordinator at the end of each quarter during which the tutoring occurred to be included in the quarter report. **It is the student's responsibility to maintain his/her log record and turn all log sheets into the A+ Coordinator in a timely manner.**

Tutoring may be done before school, after school or during school, including Summer school. Special arrangements may be made with the A+ Coordinator and the supervising teacher.

Failure to adhere to tutoring guidelines may result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the A+ Schools Program.

A+ Citizenship Policy

The criterion of the A+ Schools Program requires a student must maintain a good citizenship record to qualify for post-secondary financial assistance. Good citizenship is demonstrated by:

- HONESTY – Speak the truth no matter what the outcome;
- COMPASSION – Able to put self in another’s shoes and understand how he/she might feel;
- RESPECT – Show regard for others, self, property, law, and authority;
- RESPONSIBILITY – Accountable for own actions and words;
- SELF-DISCIPLINE – Work to continually improve self by making positive choices;
- COOPERATION – Willing and able to get along with others;
- TOLERANCE – Believe that people of different cultures, abilities, gender, race, religion, and socioeconomic groups are equally valuable members of our society; and
- EXTRA-CURRICULAR INVOLVMENT – Provide service to family, school, job, and community. (Examples, but not limited to, caring for a family member, sports, music, drama, art, clubs, job, 4-H, volunteer firefighter)

Citizenship eligibility will be determined three times per year (beginning of school year, end of first semester, end of school year.)

Citizenship Standing: Probation and Withdrawal – Disciplinary probation is used with the understanding that everyone makes mistakes. Probation is designed to recognize this characteristic in young people. However, receiving the A+ Schools incentive is an honor and will be treated as such. Students who are designated as A+ Students should demonstrate distinctive qualities and be role models for other students. Their character and ethics should be of the highest standards. Students who are placed on disciplinary probation and are enrolled in the A+ Program will be evaluated at the end of each school year regarding their probation status. Evaluation will be completed by the A+ Appeals Committee consisting of the building Principal, A+ Coordinator/School Counselor, and two high school teachers selected at random. The school Principal will not have a casting vote. The student’s A+ citizenship status may be upgraded if deemed appropriate. In the event an applicant is not able to meet the citizenship requirement and becomes ineligible for the A+ financial incentive, the student and/or parent have the right to appeal. In cases of appeal, the student must notify the A+ Coordinator in writing of his/her intent to appeal by completing Appendix A of the A+ Handbook. The A+ Coordinator shall then convene a meeting of the Eligibility Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within 5 days of the meeting.

The following parameters will be followed in establishing citizenship standing:

- (1) Activities within the school setting are an important part of determining good citizenship. Students are expected to demonstrate patterns of good behavior as stated above. Poor school citizenship resulting in an in-school-suspension (ISS) or out-of-school-suspension (OSS) will result in the following action:

ISS	1 st Offense	Warning
ISS	2 nd Offense	A+ Schools Program Probation
ISS	3 rd Offense	Loss of A+ Schools Program Eligibility
OSS	1 st Offense	A+ Schools Program Probation
OSS	2 nd Offense	Loss of A+ Schools Program Eligibility
Expulsion	1 st Offense	Loss of A+ Schools Program Eligibility

(2) Good citizenship outside of the school setting is of equal importance. Before acceptance into the A+ Schools Program, each applicant and his/her parent or guardian is required to sign a release form authorizing the release of any records from the office of juvenile services or adult law enforcement to the Calhoun R-VIII School District. This information will be used in evaluating citizenship of the applicant:

Conviction of a Misdemeanor or Felony: Loss of A+ Schools Program Eligibility

- (3) Violation of Safe Schools Act: Students who are disciplined in accordance with the Safe Schools Act of 1996 will lose eligibility for the A+ Schools Program. These violations include, but are not limited to, assault, weapons possession, and drug distribution.
- (4) 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+ Schools 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.

A+ Attendance Policy

A+ Schools Program participants are expected to attend school regularly. Participants must graduate with a minimum cumulative (grades 9-12) attendance rate of 95% or higher. **The A+ Schools Program makes no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.**

Attendance is based upon all days when school is in regular session. Only the days and times, which are calculated for Average Daily Attendance (ADA), will be used to determine the 95% attendance requirement. **Attendance is calculated in minutes therefore coming to school late will affect a student’s overall attendance percentage.**

The A+ attendance policy allows relief in cases where the absence was beyond the control of the A+ participant. Request for Attendance Waivers must be filed in accordance with the established policy guidelines. (Appendix A) Each A+ participant should read and understand the attendance policy.

It is the responsibility of each A+ participant to closely monitor his/her attendance.

A+ attendance requirements are not to be confused with the general attendance requirements as printed in the Calhoun R-VIII School Student Handbook.

A+ Eligibility Appeals Process

An A+ School Appeals Committee will meet as needed for hearing cases of appeal. The Review Committee will consist of the building Principal, A+ Coordinator/School Counselor, and two high school teachers selected at random. The school Principal will not have a casting vote.

Students in the A+ Schools Program who feel they have been declared ineligible unfairly may appeal to the A+ School Appeals Committee. In cases of appeal, the student and/or guardian must notify the A+ School Coordinator of his/her intent to appeal within five (5) school days of receiving the ineligibility letter using the guidelines provided. See Appendix A for additional information.

The A+ School Coordinator will then convene a committee meeting for consideration of the appeal within ten (10) school days. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student and guardian in writing within five (5) school days of the meeting. The decisions of the committee will be considered final.

Monitoring A+ Status

It is the responsibility of the student to continue to meet the requirements of the program as outlined in this handbook in order to be certified as an A+ student upon graduation.

Notification of A+ Certification

The A+ Coordinator will review all records of the A+ students. A list of eligible students will be submitted to the principal and the 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 to Secure Funding

A student with A+ certification is eligible for the A+ financial incentives only if they first demonstrate a good faith effort to secure all available federal postsecondary student financial aid funds that do not require repayment. **Parents must complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) before the student graduates. Failure to do so may jeopardize the student's ability to access A+ financial incentives.**

- The FAFSA form will be available from the Counseling Office in October of Senior Year. Parents are encouraged to apply as soon as possible after October 1 of the student's senior year.
- The FAFSA summary report must be sent to the community college or public vocational/technical school that the student is planning to attend.
- Tuition incentives will only be awarded to reimburse the unpaid balance of the cost of tuition, books and fees after available federal postsecondary student financial aid funds have been applied to these costs.

A+ Financial Incentive

Once A+ status is certified, and the FAFSA has been completed, qualifying students will be eligible for **two years** of free tuition (provided state funding remains available). Students must enroll full-time at a community college or public career/technical school **within four years after graduation from Calhoun**. To receive tuition reimbursement, they must enroll in programs of study leading to diplomas, certificates or associate degrees approved by the Department of Higher Education.

Students must maintain a 2.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale and complete a minimum full-time academic load consisting of 12 credit hours per semester (or the equivalent of 24 clock hours weekly) in order to continue to receive financial benefits from the A+ Schools Program.

INTENTIONALLY

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Calhoun R-VIII High School
Ineligibility Appeal Form (Appendix A)

This request is to appeal: (check all that apply)

Attendance Good Citizenship Status GPA
Please provide the following student information:

Last Name: First: Middle:

Address: City, State, Zip:

Date of Birth: Age:

Year of Graduation: Phone Number: () -

Students in the A+ Schools Program who feel they have been declared ineligible unfairly may appeal to the A+ Schools Appeals Committee. In cases of appeal, the student and parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the A+ Coordinator.

Please attach a separate sheet of paper with a written explanation as to why you feel you should still be eligible for the A+ Schools Program. You should address the following points in your explanation:

Attendance:

- Date(s) of Absence
Reason for Absence/Documentation Required
Hospitalization or Chronic/Physician's Letter
Catastrophic illness, injury, serious illness/Physician's Letter
Personal/family calamity (i.e. flood, fire, etc.)/Letter from parent and school counselor
Religious Holiday/Minister's Letter
Court Appearance/Court Letter
Funeral/Parent Letter and copy of Death Certificate, obituary, or memorial pamphlet.
Attendance Waivers will NOT be granted for the following: truancy, suspension, routine doctor visits, personal/family vacation, dentist/orthodontist visits, transportation.

Citizenship:

- Describe the offense(s) for which you were suspended.
What will you do and what have you done to avoid being in trouble again? (Give specific examples)

This appeal must be made within five (5) days of receiving written ineligibility notification from the A+ Coordinator. The A+ Coordinator will convene an Appeals Committee meeting to consider the appeal within ten (10) school days. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student and parent/guardian in writing within five (5) school days of the meeting.

Student Signature Date Parent/Guardian Signature Date



**Calhoun R-VIII School District
Citizenship & Attendance Agreement**

All A+ Schools participants and their parent/guardian must sign and return this agreement of the A+ Schools Program Citizenship & Attendance Guidelines to the A+ Schools Office at Calhoun R-VIII School District.

We have studied and understand the A+ Schools Program Citizenship and Attendance Guidelines outlined in the Calhoun R-VIII High School A+ Handbook.

Student Name (printed) _____ Graduation Year _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook

We have received the Calhoun R-VIII School District A+ Schools Program Handbook.

Student Name (printed) _____ Graduation Year _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Authorization for Release of Records from the Office of Juvenile Court Services

We hereby authorize the release of any Office of Juvenile Court Services records concerning me/my child to the Calhoun R-VIII School District. We understand that it is to be used in monitoring the good citizenship requirement of the student financial incentive part of the A+ Schools Program.

Student Name (printed) _____ Date of Birth _____

Student Signature _____ Date Signed _____

Parent Signature _____ Date Signed _____

*****Letter of Intent and all portions of this form must be signed and returned before students can be accepted into the A+ program and begin earning tutoring hours.***



**Calhoun R-VIII School District
Letter of Intent**

Mission of Missouri's A+ Schools Program

"All students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for success in school, in the workplace and in life."

I understand the following statements:

- Students must have attended a designated A+ School for three (3) consecutive years prior to graduation (a military exemption is available for military dependents moving into the district as a direct result of a military transfer).
- Graduates from a designated A+ School with an overall 2.5 GPA (grade point average) or higher on a 4-point scale.
- Have at least an overall 95% attendance rate for grades 9-12.
- Perform 50 hours of district-supervised unpaid tutoring or mentoring of other students, of which up to 25% (12.5 hours) may include job shadow. Job shadowing must be set up through the A+ Director.
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol. Use of drugs or alcohol will immediate result in loss of A+.
- Achieve a score of Proficient or Advanced on the Algebra I EOC exam.

To maintain eligibility while in college/technical school, each designated A+ student must be enrolled as a full-time student and must maintain a 2.5 GPA or higher on a 4-point scale.

This agreement signifies it is my intent to meet or exceed the above noted eligibility criteria that may allow me to participate in the A+ Student Tuition Reimbursement Program. If I successfully meet the criteria set by Missouri State Law and have made an effort to secure federal assistance (FAFSA) that does not require payment, the State of Missouri may provide for the reimbursement of the cost of tuition and common student fees.

Printed Student Name

Student's Signature

Student's SSN

Parent/Guardian Signature

Today's Date



Calhoun A+ Tutoring Time Sheet

Instructions: Please complete this report legibly, then turn it in to Counselor.

Student Name _____

Date _____

	Date of Activity	Location of Activity	Time Started	Time Ended	Number of minutes of activity	Signature of Verifying Staff Member
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						

Total Minutes: _____

Student Signature: _____

Graduation Year: _____

For Office Use Only	
Total Hours This Page:	_____
Total # of Pages:	_____
Total Hours:	_____
Acumulative Hours:	_____
Date:	_____
Verified by:	_____

A+ TUTOR PLACEMENT AGREEMENT

PRINT STUDENT NAME: _____

PRINT TEACHER NAME: _____

SCHOOL: _____

HOUR: _____ TERM: 1ST Semester 2nd Semester

This form acknowledges the tutoring placement agreement between student and teacher.
Student/Tutor Responsibilities:

- Be punctual in reporting to tutor assignment.
- Follow all classroom and teacher expectations.
- Complete duties as assigned by teacher (clerical – 1/3 of total hours).
- Tutoring and working with students (2/3 of total hours).
- Keep a detailed log of tutoring hours to be turned into counselor.

Cooperating Teacher Responsibilities:

- Monitor student attendance
 - For students tutoring, please just note any absences and contact the counselor to report absences.
- Assign clerical tasks (can be up to 1/3 of total hours) or assign tutoring (2/3 of total hours) as needed.
- Monitor student on task time.
- Sign off on student's log sheet.

Student Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date