



**South Holt R-1
School District**

A+

**Schools Program
Planning For Success**

A+ Program Established 2014-2015 School Year



A+
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL

Purpose of the A+ Program

Student Handbook

In an effort to enhance educational opportunities for high school students, the Missouri General Assembly enacted the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. Among several reforms included in this legislation was the establishment of the A+ Schools Program. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a clear understanding of the various aspects of the A+ Program. There are many guidelines established by the law that South Holt High School must implement and follow. These policies are explained in this handbook.

In the spring of 2014 South Holt R-1 Schools submitted the required paperwork to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to become an A+ School. Students graduating from South Holt R-1 that have completed the steps in the A+ Schools Program may be able to receive Financial Incentives. The funding for A+ financial incentives is dependent entirely upon continued support and availability of the state appropriations from the Missouri General Assembly.

It is the responsibility of the A+ Program Coordinator to administer the program in a fair and consistent manner. All A+ students will be treated fairly and equally. Accurate certification of students is crucial to the integrity of the program. It is the responsibility of the students and parents to read this handbook carefully to understand all the guidelines and regulations before signing the Participation Agreement.

Any questions about this handbook or the A+ Schools Program should be directed to the A+ Coordinator at South Holt High School. You may call or set an appointment by calling (660) 446-3454.



A + SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL

Goals of the A+ Program

The A+ Program concept is designed to achieve the three (3) basic goals that are set forth in the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. The three (3) goals of the A+ Program are:

- *All students will graduate from high school;
- *All students will complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and has identified learner outcomes; and
- *All students will proceed from high school graduation to a college or post-secondary vocational or technical school or high wage job with work place skill development opportunities.

All projects and efforts of the A+ Program in the South Holt R-1 School District are designed to achieve the three (3) basic objectives.



A+ Student Benefits
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL

The first South Holt class eligible to receive A+ Program financial incentives will be the class of 2015. These incentives may be made available by the State of Missouri **ONLY** after the student has made a good faith effort to secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment. A student must be considered a full-time student by the post-secondary institution and maintain a 2.5 GPA to continue receiving the incentive.

These incentives may be available for four years after the student's date of graduation from South Holt High School, pending continued appropriations by the Missouri General Assembly.

Although the actual A+ financial incentives appropriated by the General Assembly can only be used at a public Missouri community or vocational/technical school, several 4-year colleges and universities now offer scholarships to their institutions as a means of recruiting A+ certified graduates. Please check with your intended college or see if scholarship money is available, or check with the A+ Coordinator.



South Holt High School
A+ Schools Program Agreement

Last Name _____ First _____ MI _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Student MOSIS # _____ Anticipated Graduation Year _____

Social Security # _____

I wish to participate in the South Holt R-1 A+ Schools Program. This agreement only signifies that it is my intent to meet or exceed the following noted eligibility criteria that may allow me to be eligible to participate in the A+ Student Financial Incentive Program. I further understand that if I should successfully meet eligibility, the State of Missouri may provide tuition and general fees subject to legislative appropriation, to any public community college, career or technical school in the state of Missouri. **Eligible A+ students must meet ALL of the requirements below:**

1. Attend a designated A+ high school for at least three (3) non-consecutive years (one of which MUST be senior year) prior to high school graduation.
2. Graduate from a designated A+ high school with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
3. Graduate with a cumulative 95% ADA (Average Daily Attendance) record.
4. Perform and document fifty (50) hours of pre-approved, unpaid tutoring or mentoring.
5. Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol (citizenship guidelines detailed on the Good Citizen Policy).
6. Apply for non-payback scholarships by completing a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) during the student's senior year **
7. Register for selective service, if applicable.**
 **I understand that failure to complete the FAFSA and, if required, the U.S. Military Selective Service registration will jeopardize the receipt of A+ financial incentives.
8. Score Proficient or Advanced on the Algebra I EOC exam or meet the alternative eligibility requirements
9. Have a signed A+ contract on file with the A+ coordinator no later than the first full week of senior year.

Once A+ funding has been activated, the student must meet the following criteria to maintain A+ eligibility.

1. Attend a Missouri public community college or vocational-technical school as a full-time, degree-seeking student.
2. Maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

By signing this agreement, the student and parent/guardian are indicating they have been informed by the South Holt R-1 School District of the criteria for student participation in the A+ Schools Student Financial Incentive Program, and further understand and agree to the A+ Citizenship Guidelines. Permission is hereby given for the release of A+ Schools Program information, including student records, to the institutions chosen by the student as well as to DESE, as required by law.

 Student Signature

 Date

 Parent/Guardian Signature

 Date

The South Holt R-1 School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability. This policy regards admission/access to treatment/employment in its programs and activities.



A+ ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL

Expectations: South Holt High School A+ Participants will attend school regularly.

To qualify for the A+ Schools Program, participants must have attended a designated A+ high school for three (3) non-consecutive years (one of which MUST be their senior year) prior to graduation.

In order to meet the state A+ attendance requirement, A+ participants must maintain a minimum cumulative attendance rate (grades 9-12) of 95%. Based upon 175 days of attendance (each school year), participants may miss no more than 8.75 days per year or no more than 35 days total for the four years.

According to state A+ rules, as adopted by the Missouri State Board of Education, participating A+ districts shall make no distinction between absences that are excused and absences that are unexcused.

Participant attendance is based on Monday through Friday when school is in regular session, from the district's official beginning hour and minute to the district's official ending hour and minute. Only days and times that are used for calculating the district's Average Daily Attendance (ADA) will be used to determine the 95% A+ attendance requirement.

Participant A+ attendance percentages will be calculated using the data found in the district's data management system. For A+ attendance purposes, participant attendance data as entered in/maintained by the district's data management system is presumed to be correct and accurate. ALL claims of error in the data management system MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT CLAIM(S).

South Holt High School has been designated an A+ high school by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Missouri State Board of Education. South Holt High School A+ participants who attend alternative schools will be eligible for the A+ School Program ONLY if all established A+ requirements have been met and the participant graduates with a diploma from the South Holt R-1 High School.

Attendance Appeal Procedures

The following steps must be taken to appeal an attendance issue:

1. Students will have 15 calendar days to appeal a decision that is made dealing with attendance, using the A+ Appeal form available from the A+ Coordinator.
2. Within 10 days of receiving a written appeal, the A+ Coordinator will convene the A+ Review Committee. The parent(s) and student must appear in person before the committee for the appeal to be considered.
3. The A+ Coordinator will act as a facilitator and a non-voting member of the Attendance Review Committee. After the committee reaches a decision, the A+ Coordinator will notify the parent(s) by letter within 5 calendar days.
4. If further appeal is necessary, due process must be followed starting with the superintendent.



**A+ ATTENDANCE APPEAL FORM
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL**

REQUEST FOR ATTENDANCE WAIVER

All information, including social security number, must be provided. Each request must include the specific date, the reason for the absence, and appropriate supporting documentation with signature. **This form and all supporting documentation must be submitted to South Holt R-1 School District's A+ Coordinator no later than April 25th of the current calendar year.**

LAST NAME: _____ **FIRST NAME:** _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____ **DATE:** _____

Reason for the Absence –Documentation Required

- *Hospitalization Physician Letter
- *Chronic Health Problems Physician Letter
- *Court Appearance Court Letter
- *Funeral Parent Letter
- *Religious Holiday Minister Letter
- *Personal/Family Calamity Principal Letter
- *Catastrophic Illness/Injury Principal/Physician Letter

SPECIFIC DATE(S)	REASON(S) FOR ABSENCE
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PLEASE ATTACH REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION



**A+ Welcome to mentor program
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL**

To qualify for tuition reimbursement, all A+ participants must accumulate a minimum of 50 hours of approved, school-based mentoring and/or tutoring throughout their high school career. Tutoring will be done in an approved program under the direct supervision of a member of the South Holt R-1 faculty or staff. Through a cooperative agreement with the South Holt Elementary School, tutoring opportunities will be made available to students that are qualified for the A+ Schools Program to enroll in the Cadet Teaching Class. It is important to the integrity of the mentoring/tutoring program that all guidelines are strictly adhered to. Participation in the A+ tutoring program is considered to be a privilege and failure to comply with these guidelines may result in:

- a) Revocation of tutoring privileges
- b) Removal from the A+ Schools Program
- c) Appropriate disciplinary consequences

The guidelines for participating in mentoring/tutoring activities with the South Holt R-1 School District are as follows:

*Eligible students may participate in mentoring/tutoring only during their assigned A+ Cadet Teaching period. Students who have no assigned Cadet Teaching Class may accumulate tutoring credit before or after regular school hours, and during classes at the discretion of the instructor of that class and the A+ Coordinator.

*Tutoring participants are to consider themselves as guests of their assigned activity and are to conduct themselves in accordance with all rules, regulations, and guidelines found in the student handbook and in accordance with the supervisor in charge.

*All established "Mentoring and Tutoring Guidelines" are to be followed in completing a tutoring assignment at South Holt Elementary and High School activities.

South Holt R-1 School District

A+ Mentoring and Tutoring Guidelines

The South Holt A+ Schools tutoring program exists to provide:

- *A meaningful service activity
- *Academic assistance to younger students
- *Role modeling opportunities for younger students
- *A+ participants with opportunities to meet the mentoring/tutoring requirement for A+ tuition reimbursement



A+ Mentoring/Tutoring Guidelines South Holt High School

A+ participants must perform a minimum of 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring during their high school career. The mentoring/tutoring must be:

- *Coordinated through the SHHS A+ School Coordinator
- *Performed under the direct supervision of a South Holt R-1 employee
- *Performed at a South Holt R-1 District site
- *Performed with South Holt R-1 students

Guidelines

- 1. A+ participants must complete all tutoring application paperwork, which includes the mentoring/tutoring application and TWO teacher recommendation forms. Students must also attend a tutoring training session BEFORE they can begin a mentoring/tutoring assignment.**
- 2. A+ participants must approve the mentoring/tutoring assignment with the A+ School Coordinator prior to engaging in the mentoring/tutoring assignment.**
- 3. Mentoring/tutoring time must be documented on the A+ Student Tutor Log. These will be given to the student when they sign up for a tutor assignment. Additional logs will be available in the A+ Office.**
- 4. Mentoring/tutoring activities are to be conducted in a controlled, disciplined, and orderly manner and only for as long as the experience is productive and necessary.**
- 5. Mentoring/tutoring activities may also be conducted as a community service as long as it meets the guidelines of both programs and appropriate forms for each program are completed and turned in.**
- 6. Participants should consider themselves in accordance with all rules, regulations, and guidelines in the student handbook. A+ participants that do not meet the behavioral expectations of the supervising teacher during any portion of the tutoring experience risk forfeiture of tutoring opportunities.**
- 7. The signature of the supervising teacher must verify all mentoring/tutoring time. Mentoring/tutoring time must be recorded and verified on the A+ Student Tutoring Log that is available from the A+ Coordinator. Students will not receive credit for unverified tutoring activity or for activity documented on forms that are lost or not turned in.**



**A+ Mentoring/Tutoring Student Recommendation Form
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL**

This form is to be completed by a South Holt Teacher or Supervisor

Student Name: _____

The A+ participant listed above is applying to become a mentor/tutor for younger students. This is an important job that requires students to be role models for younger students. Please complete this recommendation so the A+ Coordinator can evaluate the student's potential as an effective role model. If you feel you are unable to complete this form, please return it to Haylee Olberding.

5= Always True 4=Usually True 3=Sometimes True 2=Rarely True 1=Never True

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Student has good attendance and is seldom tardy. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Student follows through on commitments. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Student relates well with others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Student exhibits patience when working with others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Student has a positive impact on class environment. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Student is motivated to help others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Student consistently has a positive attitude. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Student "works" and "plays" well with others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Student respects authority. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Student consistently demonstrates good character. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Please list any comments that would be helpful in determining student's potential as an A+ mentor/tutor.

Evaluator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO MISS OLBERDING



**A+ Mentoring/Tutoring Student Recommendation Form
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL**

This form is to be completed by a South Holt Teacher or Supervisor

Student Name: _____

The A+ participant listed above is applying to become a mentor/tutor for younger students. This is an important job that requires students to be role models for younger students. Please complete this recommendation so the A+ Coordinator can evaluate the student’s potential as an effective role model. If you feel you are unable to complete this form, please return it to Haylee Olberding.

5= Always True 4=Usually True 3=Sometimes True 2=Rarely True 1=Never True

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Student has good attendance and is seldom tardy. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Student follows through on commitments. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Student relates well with others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Student exhibits patience when working with others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Student has a positive impact on class environment. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Student is motivated to help others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Student consistently has a positive attitude. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Student “works” and “plays” well with others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Student respects authority. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Student consistently demonstrates good character. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Please list any comments that would be helpful in determining student’s potential as an A+ mentor/tutor.

Evaluator’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO MISS OLBERDING



**A+ SCHOOLS GOOD CITIZEN POLICY
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL**

A Position Statement on the Citizenship Requirement for the A+ Schools Program

Participation in the A+ Schools Program is an honor and a unique privilege for South Holt High School students. Student eligibility for the A+ School Financial Incentives is based on their ability to meet five requirements during a three-year period prior to graduation with one of these requirements being: “a student must maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs, including alcohol”. The student is responsible for maintaining all of the requirements under the A+ Program, on a year round basis, from the first day of school of their freshman year until their date of graduation from high school.

Certification of good citizenship will be based on two factors:

1. The official discipline record maintained in the high school office.
2. Other public records.

In accordance with the state A+ rules, involvement with illegal drugs or alcohol, whether on or off school premises, will result in immediate dismissal from the A+ program. Offenses requiring out of school suspension or legal intervention with consequence will serve as adequate knowledge for potential dismissal from the program.

An A+ Schools student will not sell, possess or use any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined by law and stated in the South Holt School District Policies. The use of prescription medicine is allowed under Board Policy. Students and parents are responsible for understanding and following these guidelines.



**A+ SCHOOLS PROGRAM CITIZENSHIP GUIDELINES
SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL**

To be eligible to participate in the A+ Schools Program requires certain behaviors and attitudes. Specifically, students who participate in the A+ Schools Program must be good citizens and be judged so by the proper school authority.

A student whose character or conduct is such as to discredit his/her school is not considered a good citizen. His/her conduct shall be satisfactory in accordance with the standards of good discipline. Students who participate in the A+ Schools Program should remember not only the financial rewards, but also the individual discipline and responsibilities that come with it.

The following criteria regarding the school's discipline policy will serve as a measurable indicator for self, school, and good citizenship.

Criminal Activity: Students who are convicted of a felony will not qualify.

Substance Abuse: Students shall not possess or use alcoholic beverages or controlled substances. Any violation (possession, use, manufacturing, sale or transportation) that results in suspension (ISS or OSS) will result in loss of eligibility from the program.

Suspension: Students will lose eligibility for the program if they accumulate fifteen (15) days of suspension (ISS or OSS) during their high school career for offenses other than alcohol/drugs or violations of the Safe Schools Act.

Violations 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.

Due Process: Students who feel that they have been declared ineligible for the A+ Program unfairly may appeal to the A+ Schools Appeals Committee. In cases of appeal the student/parent/guardian must notify the A+ Schools Coordinator in writing of his/her intent to appeal. The A+ Schools Coordinator shall then convene a committee for consideration appeal. The committee shall hear the appeal and return its decision to the student. The decision of the committee will be final. The A+ Schools Appeal Committee will consist of the following individuals: the High School Principal, the A+ Coordinator, and three at-large faculty members. The A+ Coordinator will facilitate the appeal, but will not be involved in the voting process. Appeals will be considered at semester or the end of the school year when the student is declared ineligible.

Students may appeal the A+ Appeals Committee's decision to the Superintendent.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



A+ FAQ's – Frequently Asked Questions SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL

***What does signing the A+ agreement mean?**

By signing and submitting the A+ Agreement, students and their parents are simply indicating an interest in participation in the A+ Schools Program and that they understand the requirements that qualify the student for the A+ Program.

When an agreement has been signed by all parties and returned, a file will be established for that student and will be located in the A+ Coordinator's office. This file denotes the student's active participation in the A+ Schools Program and will contain all pertinent information relative to the student's eligibility for A+ funds.

***What are the participation requirements for the A+ Schools Program?**

Students must sign an A+ agreement to the effect that they will:

1. Attend an A+ school for three (3) non-consecutive years (one of which MUST be their senior year).
2. Graduate with a minimum 2.5 cumulative unweighted GPA.
3. Graduate with a minimum 95% cumulative attendance rate.
4. Be a good citizen at school and in the community.
5. Avoid the use of illegal drugs, including alcohol.
6. Perform a minimum of 50 hours of unpaid tutoring/mentoring in the Rock Port School District.
7. Make a documented, good faith attempt, to secure free financial aid.
8. Register with the selective service (if required by law).
9. Score proficient or advanced on the Algebra I EOC exam or meet the alternative eligibility requirements.
10. Have a signed A+ contract on file with the A+ coordinator no later than the first full week of senior year.

***Does participating in the A+ Program restrict a student's choices?**

Participating in the A+ Program DOES NOT in any way restrict a student's educational choices. The A+ Schools Program is designed to provide greater opportunities for students. Signing up will not restrict the options available to a student while in high school or upon graduating from high school.

***What is meant by graduating with a 2.5 cumulative GPA?**

To be eligible for the tuition reimbursement benefit, students must complete all studies (grades 9-12) and graduate with a cumulative unweighted grade point average of not less than 2.5. For A+ purposes, the GPA is not rounded. In other words, the minimum acceptable GPA is 2.5 and not 2.4999.

***What happens if the participant falls below the required 2.5 during any one grading period?**



A+ FAQ's – Frequently Asked Questions SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL

The key word is “cumulative”. A student’s GPA may drop during a grading period and the student is still considered part of the A+ Program. The final GPA will not be calculated until after graduation and at that time, the cumulative GPA must be a minimum unweighted, unrounded 2.5.

***What about the 95% attendance rate?**

All A+ participants are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Based upon a 175-day school year, participants may miss up to 35 days of school and still be eligible for the tuition benefit. There is no difference between an excused or unexcused absence. Illness, injury or other circumstances may combine to keep a student out of school. Un-avoided absences are covered in the 5% policy.

***How is a violation of the alcohol/drug policy determined?**

Any violation (possession, use, manufacture, sale, transportation) that results in a discipline assignment (ISS or OSS) will result in the immediate removal of the student from the program. This policy is also in effect at all school sponsored events. In the community, a plea of guilty or no contest or a finding of guilt in a drug-related case will result in the removal of the participant from the program.

***Where can I get a FAFSA form and when is it due?**

The FAFSA is available toward the end of November. The FAFSA is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov or you may obtain worksheets from the public library or your school guidance counselor. The earliest the FAFSA can be submitted is 12:01 a.m. , January 1 of the year in which the student is to graduate.

FAFSA is different each year and the form is color coded. One year it may be green and the next year it might be blue. Be sure that you have a form for the current year. FAFSA can also be submitted online. It is best to complete the form and submit it as early as possible. You will need your W-2 form(s) and a copy of your current taxes because of the income information that is reported on the FAFSA.

***Suppose a student completes an A+ agreement. What is the reward?**

You may use your A+ grant benefits at any Missouri public community college or technical or vocational school. The benefits will help with the cost of six semesters of fees (Fall, Spring, Summer, Fall, Spring, Summer) or the completion of a degree program, whichever comes first.

The benefits are available to a qualified student for up to four years after his/her high school graduation. You may work for a while and then attend community college or a vocational/technical school. Or you may attend another college or university and then return to a community college or vocational school on a full time basis and use your grant benefits as long as you transfer with a 2.5 GPA.



A+ FAQ's – Frequently Asked Questions SOUTH HOLT HIGH SCHOOL

Several four-year colleges and universities offer their own incentives to entering freshmen that graduate with A+ status. When visiting the financial aid office of a 4-year university, a student is encouraged to ask about incentives available to students who have received A+ certification.

***What is an A+ participant decides to attend a four-year college or university?**

There are no repercussions for participating in the A+ Program and completing the student eligibility requirements. Many students will develop plans to attend a four-year college or university following high school. The A+ Schools Scholarship incentive MAY NOT be applied to costs associated with a four-year college or university. Students eligible for A+ tuition benefits may choose to attend a community college for two years, earn an Associate Degree, or simply earn basic credit hours; then transfer those credits to a four-year college/university.

If for whatever reason an A+ eligible student should withdraw from the four-year institution with at least a 2.5 GPA he/she could enroll at a Missouri public community college or vocational/technical school and be eligible for A+ tuition benefits.

***What if an A+ participant decides not to attend a community college or vocational/technical school?**

Participation in the A+ Program in no way restricts a student's post high school career or educational opportunities. It is simply a funding resource for post-secondary education should the student choose to utilize it. A student who participates in the A+ Program is NOT required to attend a community college or vocational/technical school.

***Does enrolling in the A+ Program guarantee that students will receive the tuition benefits?**

There are at least three (3) factors that will impact the availability of tuition benefits to a particular student. First, the high school from which the student graduates must meet and maintain all of the requirements for A+ Schools designation. Second, state funding must be available. Third, the student must meet all the criteria outlined in the A+ Schools Program and the participation agreement, which the student signed.

***Does a student qualify for A+ tuition benefits if his/her grade point average is 2.47 on a 4.0 scale upon graduation?**

No. The A+ Schools Program does not permit rounding up of the GPA .