

# TINA-AVALON R-II SCHOOL



## A+ Manual

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2017-2018

Approved by the Board of Education

July 2017

## **Purpose of A+ Manual**

In an effort to enhance educational opportunities for high school students, the Missouri state legislature established the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 which includes provisions for the A+ Schools Program. The purpose of this manual is to provide a clear understanding of the various aspects of the A+ Schools Program. There are many guidelines established by the law that Tina-Avalon High School must implement and follow. These policies are explained in this handbook.

Tina-Avalon High School is seeking designation in the A+ Schools Program in 2011-2012. If the Tina-Avalon High School becomes designated in 2011-2012, the 2012 seniors graduating from Tina-Avalon will have the opportunity to participate in the A+ School Financial Incentive Program. The funding for financial incentives is dependent upon Tina-Avalon becoming designated and then gaining re-designation each year thereafter. The A+ Program is also dependent upon the availability of state appropriations from the Missouri General Assembly.

It is the responsibility of the A+ Schools Coordinator to administer the program in a fair and consistent manner. All A+ students will be treated fairly and equitably. Accurate certification of students is crucial to the integrity of the program. It is the responsibility of the students and parents to read this manual carefully to understand all the guidelines and regulations of the Tina-Avalon A+ Program.

Any questions about this manual or the A+ Schools Program should be directed to Shelly Rex, A+ Schools Coordinator, at Tina-Avalon High School, (660) 622-4211.

## **Goals of the A+ Program**

The A+ Schools Program is designed to achieve the three basic goals set forth in the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993.

1. All students will graduate from high school.
2. All students will complete a rigorous and meaningful path of studies with specific learning outcomes.
3. All students will proceed to college or technical school or vocational school or job opportunities with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful.

## **Benefits of an A+ School for Students**

Qualifying graduating students will be eligible for the following:

\*Tuition to attend any Missouri Public Community College or Public Vocational or Technical School.

\*Tuition incentives which will be made available after the student has made a good faith effort to first secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment.

Students will receive this incentive for **TWO** year of **SIX** semesters. A student must be considered a **FULL-TIME** student by the post-secondary institution maintaining a grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale. Students must complete **SIX** semesters of **FULL-TIME** enrollment at the institution within **FOUR** years after graduation from Tina-Avalon High School. ***Tuition reimbursement is contingent upon availability of state funds.***

### **Student Eligibility**

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 the students successfully meet the following requirements:

- \*Enter into a written agreement with the high school prior to graduation.
- \*Attend a designated school for three consecutive years immediately prior to graduation.
- \*Graduate with an overall GPA of 2.5 points or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- \*Have an overall attendance rate of at least 95 percent for grades 9-12.
- \*Perform 50 hours of district-supervised, unpaid tutoring or mentoring.
- \*Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the use of drugs and alcohol.
- \*In the year 2015, a student must score proficient or advanced on the Algebra I EOC.
- \*Make a good faith effort to first secure all available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment. Students need to fill out Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by April 1.
- \*Register for Selective Service (for males 18 and older).

To maintain eligibility, a student must attend a public community college or career/technical school on a full-time basis. While attending, they must maintain a cumulative 2.5 GPA to be eligible for the financial incentive. Students must also continue to make a good faith effort each year to first secure all available federal financial aid (FAFSA).

### **Signing the A+ Agreement**

An A+ School Agreement must be completed with all the appropriate signatures. The agreement simply states that the student and parents are aware of the A+ Schools Program requirements and incentives.

### **Enrolling in an A+ School**

\*If a student withdraws from Tina-Avalon or transfers to a non-A+ school after the beginning of their sophomore year, the student will not be considered eligible for the A+ schools Program.

\*If a student transfers to Tina-Avalon after the beginning of their sophomore year, the student may only participate in the program if the school transferred from was a designated A+ school.

### **Grade Point Requirement**

Eligible participants must graduate with a cumulative minimum un-rounded grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 grade scale. For purposes of this program, grade point average represents the actual figure and is not rounded (2.499 is not 2.5). It is the responsibility of each participant to closely monitor his/her grade point average. However, a summary sheet advising the student and parent(s) or guardian of the student's progress toward A+ status will be mailed after each semester. Final determination of A+ eligibility cannot be made until an A+ participant graduates and his/her final GPA is calculated.

*The student's official transcript will serve as evidence of grade point average for admission into a public community college or public vocational or technical school.*

### **Attendance**

To be eligible for the A+ School Incentive, a student must have a 95% (approximately no more than 8 days absent each year) cumulative attendance record for each year of high school. Students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes. Therefore, the student will acquire the habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. A student who does not meet the 95% attendance requirement will not be eligible for the A+ Financial Incentive. The following attendance guidelines are required of all students participating in the A+ Program:

- A cumulative attendance record will be kept from the beginning of the A+ student's high school career until graduation.
- Parents, guardians, and students will be provided information that includes the student's attendance record each semester.

After receiving this information, the parent, guardian, or student will have 30 days to file an appeal with the A+ Schools Coordinator. After the A+ Coordinator receives an appeal, he/she will have 10 business days to convene the Citizenship Committee to render a decision on the appeal. After a decision is reached, the A+ Coordinator will have five business days to inform the student and parents of the decision rendered. If an appeal is not filed within 30 days of notification, a waiver for days missed will not be considered.

- Anyone making an appeal should use the "A+ Attendance Appeal Form" available in the A+ office.

### **Attendance Waiver Guidelines**

Anyone submitting a request for an A+ waiver of days missed shall provide the A+ School Coordinator with the following official documentation.

### **Reason for Absence Documentation**

|                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Doctor/Dentist visits   | Doctor/Dentist's letter   |
| Hospitalization         | Doctor's letter           |
| Chronic health problems | School nurse verification |
| Civil court dates       | Court letter              |

|   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| Funerals  | Principal's letter           |
| Religious holidays                                  | Clergy's letter              |
| Exchange students                                   | Documentation from agency    |
| Personal family calamity<br>(Fire, flood, etc.)     | Principal's letter           |
| Catastrophic illness<br>(long term hospitalization) | Principal/Doctor's<br>letter |

\*Students who will be missing school for a long period of time due to hospitalization, illness, etc. may call the school and request homebound instruction, which helps the student maintain academic growth and avoid absences.

No student will receive a waiver if absences are due to any of the following:

- Truancy
- Skipping classes
- Personal/family vacation
- Transportation problems (unless late on a school bus)
- Suspension from school
- Employment or work purposes

The attendance policy was reviewed by the Partnership on Nov. 3, 2009 and approved by the School Board at the Nov. 12, 2009 meeting.

### **Tutoring Guidelines**

The A+ Schools student requirements include the participant perform 50 hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring.

- All tutoring must be supervised by a faculty or staff member who will verify all activities were Tina-Avalon sponsored activities.
- Students are responsible for maintaining records of tutoring activities and securing the verification. (Log sheets are available from the A+ Coordinator, and should be returned by the student to the A+ Coordinator's office upon completion.
- A student must complete 50 hours of tutoring. Students can start tutoring the summer after their 8<sup>th</sup> Grade year.
- All activities are to be unpaid.
- Tutoring may include younger students, students of the same age group, or older students.
- Mentoring activities must be academic in nature and should be discussed with the A+ Coordinator prior to their performance.

### **Citizenship**

Student eligibility for the A+ School Financial Incentives is based on their ability to meet five requirements during a four-year period prior to graduation with one of those requirements being: "a student must maintain a record of good citizenship and must have NO incidents of drug or alcohol use/abuse." Any infraction of this sort will result in automatic removal from the A+ Schools Program.

In an effort to set forth the parameters of good citizenship, Tina-Avalon R-II A+ participants should understand that the Tina-Avalon R-II handbook as well as the following guidelines will be followed in establishing good standing.

1. Any student guilty of criminal actions that result in a felony conviction will not be eligible for A+ incentives. Other criminal actions for which legal information is available to the school district will be evaluated by the Citizenship committee, which shall meet for the consideration of information on this requirement of the program.
2. Activities within the school setting are an equally important part of determining good citizenship. Students who are suspended or expelled for activities set forth in the discipline policy are not eligible for the A+ Financial Incentives. Students are expected to demonstrate patterns of good behavior that would include but are not limited to cooperation, respect for ones self and others, respect for property, punctuality, and leadership.

**FIRST ISS**—The student will automatically be put on A+ probation by the A+ Coordinator and their parents will be notified of that action.

**SECOND ISS**—If a student receives a second ISS, then the student and their parents will be asked to meet with the Citizenship Committee.

**THIRD ISS**—If a student receives a third ISS, the student will be expelled from the A+ program with the opportunity to appeal. In cases of appeal, the student must notify the A+ Coordinator in writing of their intent to appeal within 30 days. (Appeal forms are in the A+ Coordinator's office). The A+ Coordinator shall then convene a committee meeting for consideration of the appeal within 10 business days. The committee shall hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within five days. If the student is still unsatisfied with the committee's decision he/she has the opportunity to appeal to the Tina-Avalon R-II School Board and then to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**FIRST OSS**- A student receiving an OSS will automatically be put on A+ probation by the A+ Coordinator and their parents will be notified of that action.

**SECOND OSS**—A student receiving a second OSS is automatically expelled from the A+ program with an opportunity to appeal to the School Board. The committee is trying to be fair, but we do expect good citizenship from our A+ students.

*Any action that would result in an unacceptable citizenship evaluation for a student will automatically terminate the student from the A+ Schools program. The school district reserves the right to remove a student from the A+ Program who has been charged, convicted, or pled guilty in a court of general jurisdiction (Missouri Circuit Court or Federal Court) for the commission of a felony violation of state or federal law.*

**Citizenship/Appeals Committee**

The Citizenship committee shall be composed of the following:

- Guidance Counselor
- 1 High School Teacher (the student appealing can pick the teacher)
- 3 A+ Advisory Committee Members

### **FAFSA**

The State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education says: **IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A+ FUNDING**, students must apply for any non-repayable federal student financial aid -- **EVEN IF THEY DON'T PLAN TO USE A+ RIGHT AWAY**. *Those who do NOT complete the FAFSA will NOT be A+ eligible.*

If a student does NOT qualify for any federal funds, the student IS still eligible for A+ funds. The student must still apply. A+ is a program funded by the Missouri legislature. Before the legislators spend *state* money on the education of A+ qualified students, they want to make sure that the students are not eligible for other "free" money from the *federal* government. That is why they made it a requirement to apply for any non-repayable federal aid.

To meet this A+ Schools Program requirement, SENIORS must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form *regardless of whether they think they will qualify for federal funds or not*.

FAFSA forms are available in the guidance office beginning in January of the senior year. If you have access, you may also complete the FAFSA online at the following web site: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. The site also allows you to check the status of your application.

FAFSA information is based on income tax information from the year prior to enrollment in a postsecondary school. For example, if a student wants to enroll in summer or fall courses in 2011, the FAFSA information would come from the 2010 tax return.

Many types of financial aid (scholarships, grants, and loans) use FAFSA information to determine a student's financial need. Some of these forms of aid are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Because of this, it is a good idea to fill out the FAFSA form as soon as possible rather than waiting for the federal income tax deadline in April.

### **SELECTIVE SERVICE**

The State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has ruled that all males age 18 must register for the selective service in order to be declared A+ eligible. This can be accomplished online at <http://www.sss.gov/>.

### **Eligibility Expires**

48 months after completion of high school coursework (Students providing service to any branch of the U. S. armed forces can defer their eligibility beyond the 48 months if they return to full-time status within 12 months of the end of their military service) Completion of 105% of

the hours required for the program in which you are currently enrolled. 105% includes: All hours, including developmental/remedial hours, taken at the student's current institution. All known hours, including developmental/remedial hours, taken at any other A+ eligible institution. Hours taken at any non-eligible A+ institution, including out-of-state institutions, that the student's current institution accepts in transfer.

105% excludes the following:

Hours earned for work completed before high school graduation, including (but not limited to ): dual credit, dual enrollment, technical education articulation, Advanced placement, international baccalaureate. Hours from a non-participating institution not accepted in transfer by a participating institution. Recipient of an associate's degree.



### **A+ Requirements**

- \*Enter into a written agreement with the high school prior to graduation.
- \*Attend a designated school for three consecutive years immediately prior to graduation.
- \*Graduate with an overall GPA of 2.5 points or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- \*Have an overall attendance rate of at least 95 percent for grades 9-12.
- \*Perform 50 hours of district-supervised, unpaid tutoring or mentoring.
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