
**Brunswick
High School**

A+

Schools Program

Handbook

2024-2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- A+ Schools Program Overview and Goals
- How Does a School Gain A+ Designation
- Student Enrollment
- Student Eligibility
- Participation Agreement
- Attend a Designated A+ School for (2) years prior to high school graduation
- Grade Point Average
- Attendance
- Tutoring Requirements
- Good Citizenship
- Student Financial Assistance Funds
- Monitoring A+ Status
- Notification of A+ Certification
- Requirements for Maintaining Eligibility
 - *Ineligibility Appeal Form *(for use only if an appeal needs to be made)*
 - Tutoring Log Sheet
 - A+ Participation Agreement Form
 - A+ Tutoring Agreement Form
 - Citizenship & Attendance Agreement with Handbook Acknowledgement Form

The A+ Schools Program Overview and Goals

Missouri's Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 established provisions for the implementation of a grant award program to institute A+ Schools and improve the education of high school students within the State of Missouri. Beginning in 1994, the A+ Schools Program has provided grant awards to Missouri's public school districts that demonstrate a commitment to ensure that the Program's goals are met in their high schools. Currently, grants are not available, but applications are still accepted for A+ status. 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.

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 challenging high school coursework with measurable learner expectations.**
3. **All students will proceed from high school to a college or post-secondary vocational/technical school, or high wage job with workplace skill development and advancement opportunities.**

These goals illustrate the basic purpose of the A+ Schools Program, which 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?

High schools that apply for A+ Designation 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/business leaders, parents, faculty, and representatives from post-secondary schools.

The Brunswick R-II School District received A+ designation during the 2012-2013 school year. The students graduating from Brunswick High School in 2013 and each succeeding year may be eligible to participate in the A+ Schools Financial Incentive Program.

The funding for the financial incentives is dependent on Brunswick High School maintaining its A+ status and the availability of state appropriations from the Missouri General Assembly.

Student Enrollment

Students are encouraged to enroll in the A+ Program early. 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. **If there are any prior Citizenship violations (regardless of where the violation occurred) students will automatically be ineligible and will not be able to enroll as an A+ participant. Also, the GPA and attendance percentage are CUMULATIVE from Freshman year on regardless of when the A+ paperwork is filed.***

The first step toward participation in the program is completing an A+ Schools Program Letter of Intent 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 the most current handbook in order to be certified as an A+ student upon graduation.**

Student Eligibility

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

- Sign a written A+ Participation Agreement form, Tutoring Agreement form, & Citizenship and Attendance Agreement form.
- Attend Brunswick High School or an A+ designated high school for at least two (2) years prior to graduation. Transfer students may continue to participate in the program only if they are transferring to or from another A+ designated high school.
- Maintain at least a 2.5 or higher grade point average on a 4.0 scale or 6.875 on an 11.0 scale (no weighting or rounding) cumulative from all 4 years of high school.
- Maintain a 95% attendance record during all 4 years of high school.
- Perform at least 50 documented hours of approved, unpaid supervised academic, student tutoring within the four years of high school. Job shadowing is NOT an eligible activity at Brunswick R-II.
- Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol throughout 4 years of high school.
- ***Stay up to date on the latest A+ Handbook (updated yearly) and following the regulations/rules from the most up-to-date handbook. (Regulations and information in out-dated handbooks are considered null and void once new handbooks are published).
- Make a good faith effort to first secure all available federal post-secondary 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. A+ funds will not be dispersed if the FAFSA is incomplete.
- Register for the selective service, if required to do so by law.
- Graduating Class of 2015 and beyond must score *proficient or advanced* on the Algebra I End of Course Exam **or** meet the alternate requirements listed below
 - ACT Math Score of 17 or greater and 2.5 GPA or higher
 - ACT Math Score of 16 and 2.8 GPA or higher
 - ACT Math Score of 15 and 3.0 GPA or higher

**If a student does not meet one of the math academic requirements he/she is automatically ineligible to participate in the A+ Program.*

Participation Agreement

Students must complete and return to the A+ Coordinator a *Participation Agreement* form **before the third week of their senior year to be eligible for the program.** (See Appendix for copy of all forms)

Attend a designated A+ School for two (2) years prior to high school graduation

Students must attend an A+ school during 2 entire high school years (At least 2: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and/or Senior). The student financial incentive is dependent upon Brunswick High being re-designated as an A+ school each year before the applicant graduates and state appropriations from the General Assembly (*Note: State funding can fluctuate from year-to-year).

GPA: Graduate from high school with a grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale or 6.875 on an 11.0 scale

The grade point average (GPA) will represent the applicant's cumulative GPA which includes ninth through twelfth grades. A student with a GPA below 2.5 on a 4.0 scale or 6.875 on an 11.0 will not be eligible.

In the event that an applicant is not able to meet the grade point 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 her/his intent to appeal.* The A+ Coordinator shall then convene a meeting of an Eligibility Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days. This committee will consist of: High School Principal, Guidance Counselor, and two high school teachers. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within 5 days of the meeting. (See Appendix for copy of Appeal Form.)

Attendance: Have at least a 95 percent attendance record for the four-year period

The applicant must have a 95 percent or better average attendance record for the four-year period—ninth through twelfth grades. A student with a 94.9 percent or lower attendance rate will not be eligible.

1. A cumulative attendance record will be kept from the beginning of the applicant's ninth grade year until graduation.
2. The official record of attendance will be kept in the high school principal's office.
3. Cumulative attendance information will be monitored by the A+ Coordinator.
4. Upon request, parents/guardians and students will be provided information that includes the applicant's attendance record.
5. The A+ Program does **not** distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Therefore, even if BHS excuses an absence during the school day it will NOT be excused for A+ purposes.

In the event that an applicant is not able to meet the attendance 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.* The A+ Coordinator shall then convene a meeting of the Eligibility Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days. This committee will consist of: High School Principal, Guidance Counselor, and two high school teachers. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within 5 days of the meeting. (See Appendix for copy of Appeal Form.)

Tutoring Requirements: Perform and document 50 hours of unpaid tutoring to younger students during high school

The following guidelines should be followed when completing the tutoring requirement:

1. All tutoring activities will be performed with students enrolled in the Brunswick R-II School District and on school grounds.
2. Tutoring activities will provide encouragement to students to become enthusiastic learners, strive for good grades and to graduate from high school.
3. Tutoring activities will be school-based and academic in nature. *Coaching or assisting with sporting events does NOT count towards A+ tutoring hours.*
4. The tutoring activities may occur before, during, or after the school day, including summer school.
5. All tutoring must be supervised and verified by school staff.—The A+ Coordinator MUST verify the tutoring **prior** to the hours being logged or those hours will not be eligible for A+ documentation.

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

1. Sign a tutoring agreement and submit it to the A+ Coordinator as well as Liability release forms as needed by the district.
2. Maintain tutoring log sheets and document tutoring time as it is completed (see Appendix for copy of Log Sheet). Be sure to describe the tutoring activities and have the supervisor sign the log sheet. Log sheets must be submitted to the A+ Coordinator by the student. Students will not be reminded to turn the logs in to the A+ Coordinator. *If students do not complete the full 50 tutoring hours prior to their Senior release date (including Early Graduation release dates), then the A+ Status will automatically be revoked.*

**** It is the student's responsibility to maintain and turn in all log sheets to the A+ Coordinator in a timely manner.**

Good Citizenship: Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol

The criterion of the A+ Schools Program requires participants to maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol to qualify for post-secondary financial assistance. Citizenship eligibility will be determined throughout all four years of the student's high school career and if a violation occurs prior to a student filing A+ paperwork, the students will still be deemed as ineligible for A+ status.

In an effort to identify citizenship parameters, the Brunswick R-II School District has developed the following guidelines to determine if participants meet the citizenship eligibility requirement:

- Activities occurring within the school setting are an important part of determining good citizenship. Students are expected to demonstrate patterns of good behavior that include, but are not limited to, cooperation, respect for oneself and others, responsibility, punctuality and leadership. Poor school citizenship resulting in an out-of-school suspension (OSS) will result in the following action:

➤ OSS	1 st Offense	A+ Financial Incentive Probation with probable loss of eligibility as determined by the A+ Committee
➤ OSS	2 nd Offense	Not Eligible for A+ Financial Incentive
➤ Expulsion	1 st Offense	Not Eligible for A+ Financial Incentive

- Good citizenship outside of the school setting is of equal importance. Therefore, any actions for which legal information is available to the school district will be used in evaluating the citizenship of the applicant as follows:

➤ Misdemeanor	1 st Offense	A+ Financial Incentive Probation with probable loss of eligibility as determined by the A+ Committee
➤ Misdemeanor	2 nd Offense	Not Eligible for A+ Financial Incentive
➤ Felony	1 st Offense	Not Eligible for A+ Financial Incentive

- Violation of the Safe Schools Act: Students who are disciplined in accordance with the Safe School Act of 1996 will automatically lose eligibility for the A+ Schools Program. These violations include, but are not limited to: assault, weapons, possession, and drug distribution.
- Any involvement with illegal drugs or alcohol (use, manufacturing, possession, transport, distribution, or sale) at school or in the community will result in the immediate 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 school authorities determine that a participant has illegally used or possessed alcohol or other illegal drugs or is found guilty of crimes that relate to the use, manufacturing, possession, transportation, distribution or sale of a controlled substance, including alcohol.

In the event that an applicant is not able to meet the citizenship requirement and becomes ineligible for the A+ Program, 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. The A+ Coordinator shall then convene a meeting of the Eligibility Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days. This committee will consist of: High School Principal, Guidance Counselor, and two high school teachers. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within 5 days of the meeting. (See Appendix for copy of Appeal Form.)

Student Financial Assistance Funds: Make a good faith effort to secure federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds

During the applicant's senior year, he/she will be required to complete an application for securing federal post-secondary financial assistance. Reimbursement from the state will be given only after secured federal funds that do not require repayment have been applied.

Parents must complete and file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA summary report must be sent to the Missouri community college or vocational/technical school the student is planning to attend or A+ funds will NOT be dispersed.

The FAFSA form is available @ www.fafsa.gov. Parents are encouraged to apply as soon as possible after October 1 of that school year.

Tuition incentives may only be awarded to reimburse the unpaid balance of the cost of tuition and general fees after available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require repayment have been applied to these costs. *For direct and current information regarding the A+ Program students should access the Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development website at: <https://dhewd.mo.gov>.*

Monitoring A+ Status

At the end of each semester, students who are participating in the A+ Schools Program may request a report stating their progress and status in each of the required areas. Any questions or concerns about the information should be directed to the A+ Coordinator. Students will not be officially notified of their status until Senior year unless the student and/or parent/guardian request that a status update letter be issued. **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+ participants. A list of eligible students will be submitted to the principal's office for official certification prior to graduation. If students have met all the criteria upon the graduation date then the student transcript will reflect A+ status.

Requirements for Maintaining Eligibility Past High School Graduation

The student financial incentive will be available for a period of four years after high school graduation. To maintain eligibility each participating student must, during the 4-year period of incentive availability:

1. Attend on a full-time basis a Missouri public community college or vocational-technical school.
2. Maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
3. Verify FAFSA submission by providing proof to school officials at the post-secondary educational facility through a Student Aid Report prior to May 1st.

NOTE: Eligibility details for renewal will be published by the Missouri Department of Higher Education each year. Once the student completes High School Graduation it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the college/tech school in regards to maintaining eligibility.

Brunswick High School A+

Ineligibility Appeal Form **(for use only if an appeal needs to be made)*

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: _____

Social Security Number: _____-_____-_____ 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 "Appeal Letter" 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—attach with your Appeal Letter**)
 - 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 (except for late bus).

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)

Grade Point Average

- Describe any special circumstances that affected your G.P.A.

*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. **Failure to return an appeal by the deadline will result in your loss of eligibility in the A+ Program.** *NOTE: Filing an appeal does not guarantee that A+ Eligibility will be reinstated.*

_____/_____/_____
Student Signature Date Parent/Guardian Signature Date

(This form should NOT be filled out unless an appeal needs to be made)

A+ Tutoring Log Sheet

Name _____ Graduation Year: _____

DATE Mo/Day/Yr	ACTIVITY	Time* <small>(by decimal increments- see below)</small>	Teacher/Supervisor Signature
			1
			2
			3
			4
			5
			6
			7
			8
			9
			10
			11
			12
			13
			14
			15
			16
			17
			18
			19
			20
			21
			22
			23
			24
			25

*Put time in 15 minute increments using decimals--0.25 hour, 0.5 hour, 0.75 hour, etc.

A+ SCHOOLS PROGRAM
(A+ *Participation Agreement*)

Student's Full Name: _____ Graduation Year: _____

I agree to abide by the district's A+ policies and procedures and the following conditions so that upon successful completion I will be considered a certified A+ graduate. I agree to:

1. Attend a designated A+ high school for two (2) years prior to graduation.*
2. Maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
3. Have at least a 95 percent attendance record over a four-year period.
4. Perform 50 approved and documented hours of unpaid tutoring.
5. Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of alcohol and drugs.
6. Perform all other duties and obligations required by state law to be eligible for and receive the benefits of the A+ program.
7. The student **MUST** achieve a score of proficient or advanced on the Algebra I End of Course exam **or** meet the alternate math requirements as listed in the handbook and/or published by the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

* Students who are active duty military dependents and students who are dependents of retired military personnel who relocated to Missouri within one (1) year of the date of retirement from active duty are excused from the designated 2-year attendance provision if the student attends a designated A+ school in the school year immediately preceding graduation and has met all other eligibility requirements.

This agreement is entered into this _____ day of _____, 20____. 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 the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Missouri Department of Higher Education, as may be required by law.

Signature of Student

Signature of Parent/Guardian

*****All portions of this form must be signed and returned before students can be accepted into the A+ program and begin earning tutoring hours. Additional forms required include Citizenship & Attendance Agreement and Tutoring Agreement.***

Brunswick High School A+ Citizenship and Attendance Agreement

All A+ 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 Brunswick High School.

We have studied and understand the A+ Schools Program Citizenship and Attendance Guidelines outlined in the Brunswick High School A+ Handbook and acknowledge that all criteria must be followed from the most current handbook and MDHEWD guidelines.

Student Name (printed) _____ Graduation Year _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook

We have received and read the Brunswick High School A+ Schools Program Handbook. We acknowledge that the handbook may be updated yearly due to State guideline changes and all regulations in the most current handbook must be followed since the information in prior handbooks will be considered inactive. Signatures of this acknowledgement and agreement will remain valid for the duration of the student's A+ participation.

Student Name (printed) _____ Graduation Year _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/ Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

*****All portions of this form must be signed and returned before students can be accepted into the A+ program and begin earning tutoring hours. Additional forms required include Participation Agreement and Tutoring Agreement.***