

# ST. PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL



## **A+** School Program **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**St. Pius X High School  
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# A+ Schools Program

Success For Every Student

## MISSOURI'S A+ SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Missouri's Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 established provisions for the implementation of a 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 an opportunity to Missouri's public school districts that demonstrate a commitment to ensure that the program's goals are met in their high schools. The goals of an A+ School are to ensure that:

1. All students graduate from high school.
2. All students complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and has identified learning expectations.
3. All students proceed from high school graduation to a college, post-secondary vocational or technical school, or a high wage job with workplace skill development opportunities.

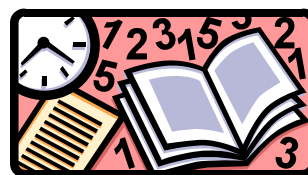
High schools that choose to become an A+ School must outline a plan that includes innovation activities to make progress toward achieving these three goals. If St. Pius X High School maintains designation, the students who

complete all A+ requirements and graduate from St. Pius X High School each year may be eligible to participate in the A+ School Financial Incentive Program.

The funding for the financial incentives is dependent upon St. Pius X High School maintaining its A+ Schools status and the availability of state appropriations from the Missouri General Assembly. The student financial incentive of the A+ Schools Program may provide, for applicants who meet the A+ requirements and are eligible, for the cost of tuition and general fees (subject to legislative approval) while attending any **A+ approved Missouri public** community college or post-secondary vocational or technical school ([dhe.mo.gov/ppc/grants/aplusscholarship.php](http://dhe.mo.gov/ppc/grants/aplusscholarship.php)) as a full-time student. These costs may be reimbursable only after secured federal financial assistance funds (FAFSA) that do not require repayment have been applied and all requirements are fulfilled. The incentive may be available for up to two years of attendance during the 4-year period following high school graduation.

## PURPOSE OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a clear understanding of the various aspects of the A+ Schools Program as established by the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. There are many aspects of the law that established the A+ Schools Program that require the St. Pius X to establish guidelines and policies. It is the



responsibility of the A+ School Coordinator to administer the A+ Schools Program in a fair and consistent manner. All A+ students must be treated fairly and equitably.

The first step of participation in the A+ Schools Program is the signing of the A+ Schools Agreement form by the student, parent and A+ Coordinator. After all signatures are obtained, the student is considered to be an A+ student at St. Pius X High School. It is then the responsibility of the student to continue to meet the requirements to be certified as an A+ student upon high school graduation.

The St. Pius X has a responsibility to maintain the status of an A+ School. It is the responsibility of the A+ School Coordinator to certify to the State of Missouri the students who have achieved this status upon graduation. It is realized that some students will not be able to meet the requirements as set forth in the A+ Schools Program. It will be the responsibility of the A+ School Coordinator to notify the student and parents immediately if it is determined that a student is not eligible for A+ student status. This handbook is designed to present in a clear and consistent manner, the guidelines and policies to be followed by the A+ Schools Program.

**Please read this handbook carefully.** It is provided for parents, students, and employees of St. Pius X so that a clear understanding of the requirements for becoming an A+ student is achieved.

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Any questions about this manual or the A+ Schools Program should be directed to the A+ School Coordinator at St. Pius X High School, phone (636) 931-PIUS.

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## STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

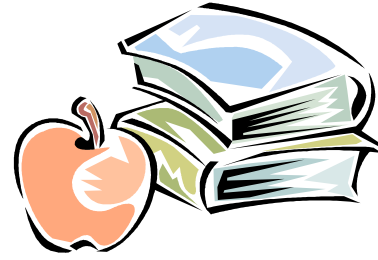
To be eligible for the financial incentives of the A+ Schools Program, a student must be certified as an A+ student by St. Pius X High School. As the official representative of the A+ Schools Program with the Department of Education of the State of Missouri, the A+ School Coordinator has the responsibility to certify that a graduate of St. Pius X High School has met the criteria of certification. To be certified as an A+ School student, an individual must:

- ☞ Sign an A+ Schools Agreement form (included in this handbook)
- ☞ Attend St. Pius X High School, or an A+ school for three consecutive years prior to graduation.
- ☞ Maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average over four years of high school.
- ☞ Maintain at least a 95% cumulative attendance record over four years of high school.
- ☞ Perform a total of 50 hours of unpaid tutoring/mentoring during 4 years of high school.

- ☞ Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol.
- ☞ Make a good faith effort to first secure all available federal postsecondary student financial assistance.
- ☞ Register with Selective Services within 30 days of any male student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- ☞ Achieve a qualifying score on the COMPASS exam published by ACT, Inc. or have a combine ACT math score and high school GPA in accordance with the established scale.

15 and 3.0 or greater

- ☞ Be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident.



Exam	Minimum Score
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COMPASS Pre-Algebra(Class of 2017 only)	43
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COMPASS Algebra(class of 2017 only)	1
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**OR**

ACT MathScore		High School GPA
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17	And	2.5 or greater
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16	And	2.8 or greater
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**REQUIREMENT 1: Enter into a written agreement with the high school to participate in the A+ Schools Student Financial Incentive Program.**

A student may enter into this written agreement prior to the end of 1<sup>st</sup> semester their senior year. The earlier students sign up for the program, the easier it will be for them to meet the state requirements and avoid the missteps that might make them ineligible.

**REQUIREMENT 2: Attend a designated A+ School for three consecutive years prior to high school graduation.**

Student must attend an A+ designated high school beginning the first day of their sophomore, junior and senior years. The student financial incentive is dependent upon St. Pius X High School maintaining designated status as an A+ School before the applicant graduates and the availability of state appropriations from the Missouri General Assembly. If a student withdraws from St. Pius X High School after the beginning of his/her sophomore year, the student **will not** be

considered eligible for the A+ Schools Program, unless the student enrolls into another A+ designated school.

**REQUIREMENT 3: Graduate from high school with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.**

This average will represent the applicant's cumulative GPA, which includes all four years of high school. A student with a cumulative 2.499 or lower GPA will not qualify for A+ status.

The student's official transcript will serve as evidence of grade point average for admission into an A+ approved Missouri public community college or Missouri public vocational/technical school.

**REQUIREMENT 4: Maintain at least a 95% cumulative attendance record.**

The student must maintain a 95% or better average attendance record for all four years of high school. A student with a 94.999 or lower average will not qualify for A+ status. Students are expected to attend class regularly and be on time for classes. There are no excused or unexcused absences as set forth in the law of the A+ Schools Program.

The cumulative attendance information obtained by the A+ School Coordinator will come from the official attendance records of the St. Pius X.

At the end of each semester, a status letter will be sent to the parents/guardians of A+ students indicating the attendance percentage of their student.

**REQUIREMENT 5: Perform and document at least 50 hours of unpaid tutoring/mentoring.**

The A+ Coordinator in determining this requirement will use the following policies:

- ☞ Student must read the tutoring/mentoring guidelines and return the signed tutoring/mentoring agreement before they can start.
- ☞ The A+ Coordinator must approve academic tutoring or mentoring.
- ☞ Tutoring/mentoring cannot be started until end of 1<sup>st</sup> semester of student's freshman year
- ☞ Tutoring/mentoring must be done on school property under the supervision of school personnel.
- ☞ Tutoring/mentoring activities may occur before, during, or after the school day.
- ☞ Tutoring/mentoring may be done during the school year or during summer school.
- ☞ A tutoring/mentoring log must be kept by the student and signed by the school staff member supervising the activity.
- ☞ It is the responsibility of the A+ Student to make sure that all completed logs are turned in to the A+ Coordinator or A+ Secretary each semester.
- ☞ Only activities that have been documented on the A+ tutoring / mentoring log, signed by the supervising Archdiocese school staff member, and filed in the A+ office, will be counted toward the 50-hour requirement.
- ☞ All hours must be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup> of student's senior year.
- ☞ Tutoring/mentoring opportunities should not be confused with community service.
- ☞ See the tutoring/mentoring handbook for description of approved activities.

**REQUIREMENT 6: Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoid the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol.**

The St. Pius X A+ Advisory Committee believes that creditable school citizens are those citizens whose conduct, both in and out of school, will reflect positively upon themselves and the school. Students who are designated A+ students should demonstrate distinctive qualities and be role models for other students.

Certification of good citizenship will be based on the official discipline record maintained in the Administrative Office of the high school. The Principal in charge of discipline assigns consequences for infractions of the discipline code, and that administrator is responsible for certifying the accuracy of the student's discipline record.

☞ **Avoidance of drug or alcohol use:** Student use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol, as evidenced by civil conviction or suspension from school, will disqualify a student from the A+ program.

☞ **Record of Good Citizenship:**  
Students may be disqualified from A+ Tuition Reimbursement program based on the following guidelines:

1. Conviction of a felony that is verifiable and either a matter of public record or communicated to school officials in compliance with the Safe Schools Act.

2. Student is disqualified from the A+ program if they are involved in fights, assault or receive OSS.

**REQUIREMENT 7: Make a good faith effort to secure federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds.**

Parents must complete and send in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA information must be sent to the community college or approved vocational/technical school that the student is planning to attend.

☞ The FAFSA application is available online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

☞ Parents are encouraged to apply as early as possible, but not before January 1 or after April 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of the student's high school graduation.

**REQUIREMENT 8: Register with Selective Services.**

☞ All male A+ students must register within 30 days of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This may be done online when you complete the FAFSA or by going to [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov).

**REQUIREMENT 9:**

☞ Achieve a qualifying score on the COMPASS exam published by ACT, Inc. or have a combine ACT math score and high school GPA in accordance with the established scale.

**REQUIREMENT 10:** Student must be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident in order to receive reimbursement under the A+ Scholarship program.

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### **PARENT NOTIFICATION**

The A+ School Coordinator will provide every parent/guardian with an update of the continued progress of his/her student toward A+ School status.

A status letter will be sent after the completion of each semester of the school year.

Parents are encouraged to call the A+ Coordinator.

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### **PROCESS OF APPEAL**

A student (and/or parent) has the right to request an appeal when he/she becomes ineligible for the A+ financial incentive. The student/parent will be notified if they are eligible for the appeal process.

The student/parent must file an appeal within 10 working days from receipt of ineligible notice.

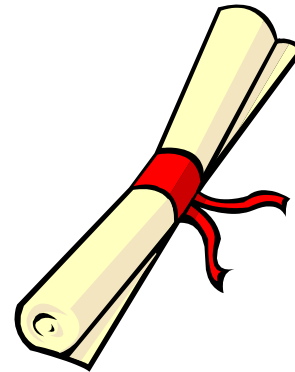
At end of student's senior year, the A+ appeals committee, composed of five members appointed by the A+ Coordinator, will meet to review the appeal.

Upon receiving a written appeal, the A+ Coordinator will convene the A+ Appeals Committee during student's senior year. The student/parents will be notified in advance of a hearing date and can choose to meet in person with the committee or submit their appeal in writing. The A+ Coordinator will act as facilitator and a

nonvoting member of the Appeals Committee.

After the Appeals committee reaches a decision, the A+ Coordinator will notify the student/parents. Any and all appeals will be conducted following policies set by the St. Pius X.

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### **REQUIREMENTS FOR MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESSING TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

The student financial incentive may be available for up to two (2) years of attendance, during the four-year period after the recipient graduates from high school. To maintain eligibility, the student must:

- ☞ **Requirement 1:** Enroll in and attend on a full-time basis an A+ approved Missouri public community college or vocational-technical school and be enrolled in a certification or degree program.
- ☞ Students must meet the full-time requirement of 12 hours during the fall and spring or six hours in the summer. Students may attend any

semester they choose but **will not** be reimbursed if he/she attends less than full-time.

- ☞ **Requirement 2:** Maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

## **OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS ACT OF 1993**

The specific guidelines of this student handbook for St. Pius X High School have been developed in accordance with Missouri Senate bill 380. Other state legislation may impact future requirements.

### **APPENDIX**

- ☞ A+ Schools Agreement
- ☞ Other Awards available to A+ Schools Award recipients
- ☞ A+ information can also be found on the Missouri Department of Higher Education at:

**<http://dhe.mo.gov/ppc/grants/aplus scholarship.php>**





# St. Pius X High School A+ Schools Agreement

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street or P.O.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

Parent's Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

A student who qualifies according to the following criteria and continues an education at an A+ approved Missouri public community college or vocational-technical school may be eligible for state reimbursed tuition and general fees for up to two years within 4 years after graduation, **contingent upon state appropriation and allocation of funding, and St. Pius X High School maintaining designation.** Each student should enter into a written agreement with the school prior to the end of 1<sup>st</sup> semester their senior year. To be eligible, the student must:

- Attended a designated A+ School for three consecutive years prior to high school graduation.
- Graduated from high school with a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 (a 2.499 GPA is not eligible).
- Maintained at least a 95% cumulative attendance record for all four years of high school. (Note: this is more stringent than the attendance rate for the rest of the student body).
- Perform a total of 50 hours of unpaid tutoring/mentoring of other students under the supervision of an Archdiocese School employee.
- Made a documented, good faith effort to secure available federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds that do not require payment (FAFSA application must be completed and mailed to the school that the student is planning to attend).
- Maintained a record of good citizenship as outlined on page 5 of the student handbook. Note the disqualifications and appeal process if one qualifies.
- Male students must register with the Selective Services within 30 days of 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Achieve proficient or advanced on the EOC Algebra I; or achieve a qualifying score on the alternate math test that is established annually by the MDHE/CBHE.
- U.S. Citizen or permanent resident in order to receive reimbursement under the A+ Scholarship Program.

The student's financial incentive is contingent upon state appropriation and allocation of funding. Dependent on said, funding may be available for up to four years after high school graduation. To maintain eligibility during that time, each participating student must enroll and attend a Missouri public community college or vocational school on a full-time basis and maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
A+ Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date