

# Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School



## A+ Student Handbook

### CONTACT

Mr. Nate Jeter  
A+ Program Coordinator  
Nodaway-Holt R-VII  
318 S Taylor St.  
Graham, MO 64455  
660-939-2135  
[njeter@nodholt.org](mailto:njeter@nodholt.org)

*The Nodaway-Holt R-VII School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, or disabled conditions. The policy regards admission/access to treatment/employment in its program and activities.*

# **Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School**

## **A+ Program Guidelines and Requirements**

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The student financial incentive portion of the A+ Schools Program provides for applicants who meet the following requirements to be eligible for state reimbursement for the cost of tuition, general fees, and up to 50% of the book costs (currently the reimbursement for the book cost part of the law is not being funded) while attending any Missouri public community college or post-secondary vocational or technical school as a full-time student. The incentive will be available for up to two years of attendance during the 4-year period following graduation. The funding is dependent upon Nodaway-Holt R-VII School being designated as an A+ School prior to the applicant's graduation and upon legislative appropriation by the General Assembly. Student must sign up no later than the last day of the Fall Semester of their Senior year.

### **Requirement 1: Attend a designated A+ School for three (3) consecutive years prior to high school graduation.**

Students must attend Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School or transfer to Nodaway-Holt R-VII from another A+ designated school district during their entire sophomore, junior and senior years.

### **Requirement 2: Graduate from high school with a grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.**

This grade point average will represent the applicant's non-weighted cumulative GPA, which includes the freshman through senior years. A student with a 2.49 or lower will not be eligible.

### **Requirement 3: Have at least a 95% attendance record for the four-year period.**

The applicant must have a 95% or better average attendance record for the four-year period freshman through senior years. A student with a 94.99% or lower attendance record will not be eligible.

The following guidelines will be in effect:

- The attendance information will come directly from the official attendance record kept at Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School.
- A cumulative attendance record will be kept from the beginning of the A+ student's freshman year until graduation.
- At the end of each semester the cumulative attendance records will be collected.
- Parents wanting to know cumulative attendance information may request it from the High School Office.
- After receiving this information, the parent will have 15 days to file an appeal with the High School Office. If an appeal is not filed within 15 days of notification, the waiver for those days missed will not be considered.
- Parents of A+ students should use the "A+ Attendance Appeal form". A form can be obtained from the A+ Coordinator.
- Students with specific health histories must make sure that the medical documentation of chronic or long term health-related problems are on file with the school nurse and such health-related problems shall be considered in a possible review situation.

Those submitting a request for an A+ waiver of days missed shall provide the High School Office with official documentation.

### **Requirement 4: Perform and document fifty hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring to younger students during their high school years.**

The following guidelines should be followed for the completion of this requirement. Should questions concerning tutoring arise, please contact the A+ Coordinator or Guidance Counselor.

- All tutoring activities will be designed to involve the A+ applicant with students in the A+ district.
- Tutoring activities will provide, as an ultimate goal, encouragement to other students to get more deeply interested in school, stay in school, and strive for good grades.
- Tutoring activities will be school-based, academic in nature, and in the Nodaway-Holt R-VI School District (not private or public sector programs in which the school has no input into the activity).
- The tutoring activities must occur before, after or during the school day.
- All tutoring must be supervised and verified by a teacher, principal or the Guidance Counselor.
- The required fifty hours of tutoring must be completed prior to graduation to be considered for A+ status.

The A+ applicant is responsible for maintaining a time sheet indicating all tutoring hours. Exact times should be indicated. Only hours that have been verified with a signature by the tutoring supervisor (Teacher, Principal or Guidance Counselor) will be counted toward the fifty-hour requirement. The time sheet must be submitted to the A+ Coordinator.

**Requirement 5: Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs (including alcohol).**

In an effort to set forth the parameters of good citizenship, Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School A+ Program participants should understand that the following guidelines will be followed in establishing good standing:

Activities 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 and leadership. Poor school citizenship resulting in an out-of-school suspension (OSS) will result in the following action:

OSS (excluding tardies)	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	A+ Financial Incentive Probation
OSS	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	Dismissed from A+ Program

A student will be immediately removed from the program for drugs/alcohol/substance abuse, conviction of a felony, or conviction of violations of Safe Schools Act.

A+ participants who receive semester notification of immediate removal will have 15 business days from the date of the notification to file an appeal with the A+ Coordinator. The A+ Eligibility Committee will consider and decide appeals on a case-by-case basis. If an appeal is NOT filed within 15 days of notification, the appeal will not be considered. A+ Citizenship Appeal forms are available from the A+ Coordinator.

**Requirement 6:** All males must register for the Selective Service by the age of 18.

**Requirement 7:** Starting with class of 2015, students must have achieved Proficient or Advanced on the Algebra 1 EOC to get A+ Funds. If a student does not Achieve Proficient or Advanced, he or she must meet a minimum criteria score on either the ACT, ACT Math or Compass Test. Cut-off scores change yearly- please contact the A+ Coordinator to inquire about what the cut-off score may be for the current school year.

**Requirement 8: 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 (FAFSA). The student must file the FAFSA form by April 1 to be considered as a good faith effort to secure federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds. Reimbursement from the state will be given only after securing federal funds **that do not require repayment** have been applied. The student must be a United States Citizen or eligible non-citizen in order to use funds generated by the filing of the FAFSA form. The institution to which the student applies for post-secondary training will make the final determination of student qualification.

### **MONITORING/NOTIFICATION OF A+ STATUS**

At the beginning of each semester, students who are participating in the A+ program will receive a letter reporting their progress in each of the required areas. Any questions or concerns about the information reported should be directed to the A+ Coordinator within 15 business days of notification.

At the end of each school year, the A+ Coordinator will review all records of A+ participants, and the names of eligible students will be submitted to the K-12 Principal and Guidance Counselor for official certification prior to graduation. The A+ Coordinator will review all records of A+ students, and names and social security numbers of eligible students will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education after graduation.

### **APPEALS PROCESS**

In the event that an applicant is not able to meet the requirements and becomes ineligible for the A+ financial incentive, the student and/or parent has the right to appeal. In cases of appeal, the student must notify the Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School Office in writing of her/his intent to appeal by May 1 of the year of their graduation (with the exception of Attendance as that must be requested within 15 days of grading period with the days in question). For incidents declaring ineligible after May 1 of their graduation, an appeal must be filed no later than one week after graduation. The A+ coordinators shall then convene a meeting of an Eligibility Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days. The committee shall consist of the High School Principal, A+ Coordinator, Guidance Counselor, and three (3) High School Teachers. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within five days of the meeting. The student or the student's parents/guardians may appeal expulsions from this program, in accordance with written district procedures, to the Board of Education. The Board will hear the student's appeal in closed session and will notify the student of its decision.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY**

The student financial incentive will be available for up to two 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 a participating 4-year Missouri college or university, Missouri public community college or vocational-technical school.**

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

**Requirement 3: Provide to the Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School Office or the Guidance Counselor information concerning semester grades and proof of full-time student status.**

Please remember that post-high school funding is dependent upon the funding provided by the state. The Nodaway-Holt R-VII School District will not be held responsible for inability to fund the post-high school program due to financial cuts to the program on the state level. While the State of Missouri is committed to this program, this does not guarantee the future availability of funding on the state level. A+ funds will be available for the student to use for four years after high school graduation, on two years of post-secondary school attendance.

### **TO APPLY FOR THE A+ PROGRAM**

**To apply for acceptance into the A+ Program, complete the A+ School Agreement and Citizenship Agreement, and return to the A+ Coordinator. Keep this information as a reference concerning the A+ Program.**

The Nodaway-Holt R-VII A+ Advisory Council has developed the specific guidelines for the Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School in accordance with the Missouri Senate Bill 380. The eligibility requirements and guidelines for the Nodaway-Holt R-VII A+ School Program were approved by the Nodaway-Holt R-VII Board of Education.

**A+ SCHOOL AGREEMENT**  
**Nodaway-Holt R-IV High School A+ Program**

**NOTE: This application must be completed and approved during the four (4) years the student is in high school. The record keeping of the 50 hours of unpaid tutoring must be done by the Nodaway-Holt R-VII School student after this contract has been filed. Students must sign up no later than the last day of the Fall Semester of their Senior year.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone/Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to participate in the Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School A+ Program. Assuming state funds are available, and Nodaway-Holt R-VII receives and maintains A+ designation, I will receive reimbursement for any unpaid balance of the cost of tuition, after federal post-secondary financial assistance funds have been applied. This agreement is on the condition that I meet all the following requirements:

1. Attend a designated A+ school for three consecutive years prior to high school graduation.
2. Graduate from high school with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
3. Have at least 95% attendance record for high school.
4. Perform 50 hours of supervised tutoring of students during the last two years of high school.
5. Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and/or alcohol.
6. All males must register for the Selective Service by the age of 18.
7. All students must have achieved Proficient or Advanced on the Algebra I EOC, or meet other criteria.

OR:

Pre-ACT or ACT Math Score	And	High School GPA
17 or greater	And	2.5 or greater
16	And	2.8 or greater
15	And	3.0 or greater

8. Make a good faith effort to secure federal post-secondary student financial assistance funds.

Financial incentives will be available for a period of four years after graduation. To retain this eligibility, students must maintain a 2.5 grade point average while enrolled and attending a Missouri public community college, vocational or technical school, on a full-time basis.

I have read, understand and agree to the A+ Program guidelines and requirements listed in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**If the state of Missouri is unable to fund this program, this agreement is void.**

**Nodaway-Holt R-VII**  
**A+ Program Citizenship Agreement**

Students participating in the A+ Schools Program must maintain a record of “good citizenship” to qualify for post-secondary financial assistance. Good citizenship is demonstrated by respect for school, community and self. Any student who participates in the A+ Schools Program must be a creditable citizen and be judged so by the proper school authority certifying the list of students for participation. A student whose character or conduct reflects credit upon him/herself and/or his/her school is considered a credible citizen and is therefore eligible to participate in the A+ Schools Program.

**Disqualification:**

Requirement 5 listed in the guidelines and regulations states that students will maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs (including alcohol). In an effort to set forth the parameters of good citizenship, Nodaway-Holt R-VII High School A+ Program participants should understand that the following guidelines will be followed in establishing good standing:

Activities 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 and leadership. Poor school citizenship resulting in an out-of-school suspension (OSS) will result in the following action:

OSS (excluding tardies)	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	A+ Financial Incentive Probation
OSS	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	Dismissed from A+ Program

A student will be immediately removed from the program for drugs/alcohol/substance abuse, conviction of a felony, or conviction of violations of Safe Schools Act.

A+ participants who receive semester notification of immediate removal will have 15 business days from the date of the notification to file an appeal with the A+ Coordinator. The A+ Eligibility Committee will consider and decide appeals on a case-by-case basis. If an appeal is NOT filed within 15 days of notification, the appeal will not be considered. A+ Citizenship Appeal forms are available from the A+ Coordinator.

**Appeal Process:**

The following process is used by students/parents to appeal decisions that may affect the student’s A+ qualification:

In the event that an applicant is not able to meet the requirements and becomes ineligible for the A+ financial incentive, the student and/or parent has the right to appeal. In cases of appeal, the student must notify the High School Office in writing of his/her intent to appeal by May 1 of the year of their graduation (with exception of Attendance as that must be requested within 15 days of the grading period with the days in question).

For incidents declaring ineligible after May 1 of their graduation, an appeal must be filed no later than one week after graduation. The High School Principal shall then convene a meeting of an Eligibility Committee for consideration of the appeal within 10 days.

The committee shall consist of the High School Principal, A+ Coordinator, Guidance Counselor, and three (3) High School Teachers. The committee will hear the appeal and return its decision to the student within five days of the meeting. The student or the student's parents/guardians may appeal expulsions from this program, in accordance with written district procedures, to the Board of Education. The Board will hear the student's appeal in closed session and will notify the student of its decision.

**Citizenship Agreement  
A+ Schools Program**

All A+ Program participants must sign and return this acknowledgement of the A+ Schools Program Citizenship Guidelines.

We have received, studied, and understand the A+ Schools Program Citizenship Guidelines as stated above and in the Program Guidelines and Requirements.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**This agreement must be on file to complete student's enrollment in the A+ Schools Program.**

**A+ Attendance Regulation and Appeals Process**

In order to qualify for the A+ financial incentive, a student must graduate with 95% attendance. If a student does not meet the 95%, he or she will be ineligible for the A+ financial incentive. Students have the right to appeal their attendance and A+ eligibility status using the following guidelines.

**A+ Attendance Regulations:**

The current attendance policy states that **only two types of absences will not be counted as absences** in computing the 95% attendance needed to meet the A+ School Program requirements:

1. **Curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities** will not be counted as days absent since students are attending a school sponsored activity and are therefore counted as present.
2. Students with extended absences due to medical or extenuating circumstances who are on the **Homebound Program** will not be counted as absent since school instruction is taking place in the home.

The following **WILL be counted as absences** and **WILL** impact the student's attendance percentage, unless the absences meet the appeal criteria set forth below and are waived by the A+ Appeals Committee:

1. Doctor, dentist, orthodontist, counselor, therapist, etc. appointments that take place during the school day;
2. Family vacations;
3. Except as set forth below, days absent for illness (with or without a doctor's note);
4. Individual class periods when students are checked out or are truant (this includes periods such as seminar);
5. Any absence that does not fall under field trip or homebound status, or which is not otherwise waived by the A+ Appeals Committee.

**Attendance Appeals Process**

A student's calculated attendance percentage or specific days missed may be appealed by a student, in a manner consistent with the A+ Appeals Process. However, the A+ Appeals Committee will accept and consider attendance-based appeals if the absences are due to one of the following:

1. **Absence related to catastrophic events** within the immediate family (which includes all members of a student's family who reside in the same location as the student and/or other persons, approved by the A+ program on a case-by-case basis)

2. **Absences related to extenuating circumstances** within the immediate family verified by documentation such as doctor’s notes, school records, and/or treatment center records.

*Each attendance appeal will go through the A+ Appeals Process and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. A student will be notified of the Appeal Committee’s decision. Submission and consideration of an attendance-based appeal does not guarantee that the absence will be waived by the Committee.*

**Nodaway-Holt R-VII School District A+ Schools Program**  
**Attendance Appeal Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

In order to appeal a calculated attendance percentage or specific absences, and in order to request a review by the A+ Appeals Committee, please complete this form and attach any additional information you believe will be helpful in determining that your absences were related to (1) catastrophic family events, or (2) extenuating circumstances. Documentation of health problems, catastrophic events, or extenuating circumstances should be in the form of doctor’s verification of condition and subsequent days missed, counseling appointments, diagnosis, education plans, letters of support, or any other type of validation of the circumstances.

**How many days are you appealing to the committee:** \_\_\_\_\_?

**Please list either specific dates or time frames to be reviewed:**

**Please describe the circumstances involved in this appeal.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**How did these circumstances contribute to days missed?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Explain why you should be retained in/readmitted to the A+ Program.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_