

House _____ Amendment NO. _____

Offered By _____

1 AMEND House Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 1303, Page 1, Section A, Line 2, by
2 inserting after all of said section the following:

3 "160.545. 1. There is hereby established within the department of elementary and secondary
4 education the "A+ Schools Program" to be administered by the commissioner of education. The
5 program shall consist of grant awards made to public secondary schools that demonstrate a
6 commitment to ensure that:

7 (1) All students be graduated from school;

8 (2) All students complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and for which
9 there are identified learning expectations; and

10 (3) All students proceed from high school graduation to a college or postsecondary
11 vocational or technical school or high-wage job with work place skill development opportunities.

12 2. The state board of education shall promulgate rules and regulations for the approval of
13 grants made under the program to schools that:

14 (1) Establish measurable districtwide performance standards for the goals of the program
15 outlined in subsection 1 of this section; and

16 (2) Specify the knowledge, skills and competencies, in measurable terms, that students must
17 demonstrate to successfully complete any individual course offered by the school, and any course of
18 studies which will qualify a student for graduation from the school; and

19 (3) Do not offer a general track of courses that, upon completion, can lead to a high school
20 diploma; and

21 (4) Require rigorous coursework with standards of competency in basic academic subjects
22 for students pursuing vocational and technical education as prescribed by rule and regulation of the
23 state board of education; and

24 (5) Have a partnership plan developed in cooperation and with the advice of local business
25 persons, labor leaders, parents, and representatives of college and postsecondary vocational and
26 technical school representatives, with the plan then approved by the local board of education. The
27 plan shall specify a mechanism to receive information on an annual basis from those who developed
28 the plan in addition to senior citizens, community leaders, and teachers to update the plan in order to
29 best meet the goals of the program as provided in subsection 1 of this section. Further, the plan shall
30 detail the procedures used in the school to identify students that may drop out of school and the
31 intervention services to be used to meet the needs of such students. The plan shall outline counseling

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1 and mentoring services provided to students who will enter the work force upon graduation from
2 high school, address apprenticeship and intern programs, and shall contain procedures for the
3 recruitment of volunteers from the community of the school to serve in schools receiving program
4 grants.

5 3. A school district may participate in the program irrespective of its accreditation
6 classification by the state board of education, provided it meets all other requirements.

7 4. By rule and regulation, the state board of education may determine a local school district
8 variable fund match requirement in order for a school or schools in the district to receive a grant
9 under the program. However, no school in any district shall receive a grant under the program unless
10 the district designates a salaried employee to serve as the program coordinator, with the district
11 assuming a minimum of one-half the cost of the salary and other benefits provided to the
12 coordinator. Further, no school in any district shall receive a grant under the program unless the
13 district makes available facilities and services for adult literacy training as specified by rule of the
14 state board of education.

15 5. For any school that meets the requirements for the approval of the grants authorized by
16 this section and specified in subsection 2 of this section for three successive school years, by August
17 first following the third such school year, the commissioner of education shall present a plan to the
18 superintendent of the school district in which such school is located for the waiver of rules and
19 regulations to promote flexibility in the operations of the school and to enhance and encourage
20 efficiency in the delivery of instructional services in the school. The provisions of other law to the
21 contrary notwithstanding, the plan presented to the superintendent shall provide a summary waiver,
22 with no conditions, for the pupil testing requirements pursuant to section 160.257 in the school.
23 Further, the provisions of other law to the contrary notwithstanding, the plan shall detail a means for
24 the waiver of requirements otherwise imposed on the school related to the authority of the state
25 board of education to classify school districts pursuant to subdivision (9) of section 161.092 and such
26 other rules and regulations as determined by the commissioner of education, except such waivers
27 shall be confined to the school and not other schools in the school district unless such other schools
28 meet the requirements of this subsection. However, any waiver provided to any school as outlined
29 in this subsection shall be void on June thirtieth of any school year in which the school fails to meet
30 the requirements for the approval of the grants authorized by this section as specified in subsection 2
31 of this section.

32 6. For any school year, grants authorized by subsections 1 to 3 of this section shall be funded
33 with the amount appropriated for this program, less those funds necessary to reimburse eligible
34 students pursuant to subsection 7 of this section.

35 7. The commissioner of education shall, by rule and regulation of the state board of
36 education and with the advice of the coordinating board for higher education, establish a procedure
37 for the reimbursement of the cost of tuition, books and fees to any public community college or
38 vocational or technical school or within the limits established in subsection 9 of this section for any
39 two-year private vocational or technical school for any student:

40 (1) Who has attended a public high school in the state for at least three years immediately
41 prior to graduation that meets the requirements of subsection 2 of this section, except that students

1 who are active duty military dependents, and students who are dependants of retired military who
 2 relocate to Missouri within one year of the date of the parent's retirement from active duty, who, in
 3 the school year immediately preceding graduation, meet all other requirements of this subsection and
 4 are attending a school that meets the requirements of subsection 2 of this section shall be exempt
 5 from the three-year attendance requirement of this subdivision; and

6 (2) Who has made a good faith effort to first secure all available federal sources of funding
 7 that could be applied to the reimbursement described in this subsection; and

8 (3) Who has earned a minimal grade average while in high school as determined by rule of
 9 the state board of education, and other requirements for the reimbursement authorized by this
 10 subsection as determined by rule and regulation of said board.

11 8. (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 7 of this section, the commissioner of
 12 education shall establish a process, with the advice of the commissioner of higher education, by
 13 which any student enrolled in a public high school in a district that has been declared unaccredited
 14 by the state board of education, who otherwise qualifies for reimbursement under subsection 7 of this
 15 section but whose high school does not qualify under subsection 2 of this section, may apply for and
 16 receive reimbursement under this section.

17 (2) The commissioner of education shall designate school officers, such as but not limited to
 18 guidance counselors, who shall be authorized to validate a student's eligibility under this subsection.

19 (3) The commissioner of education shall monitor the accuracy of eligibility validation under
 20 this section and may, if ineligible students beyond a reasonable margin of error are validated, revoke
 21 an individual's authority to validate eligibility and may further require the school district to repay
 22 reimbursements made for ineligible students.

23 9. The commissioner of education shall develop a procedure for evaluating the effectiveness
 24 of the program described in this section. Such evaluation shall be conducted annually with the
 25 results of the evaluation provided to the governor, speaker of the house, and president pro tempore of
 26 the senate.

27 [9.] 10. For a two-year private vocational or technical school to obtain reimbursements under
 28 [subsection 7] subsections 7 and 8 of this section, the following requirements shall be satisfied:

29 (1) Such two-year private vocational or technical school shall be a member of the North
 30 Central Association and be accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as of July 1, 2008, and
 31 maintain such accreditation;

32 (2) Such two-year private vocational or technical school shall be designated as a 501(c)(3)
 33 nonprofit organization under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended;

34 (3) No two-year private vocational or technical school shall receive tuition reimbursements
 35 in excess of the tuition rate charged by a public community college for course work offered by the
 36 private vocational or technical school within the service area of such college; and

37 (4) The reimbursements provided to any two-year private vocational or technical school
 38 shall not violate the provisions of Article IX, Section 8, or Article I, Section 7, of the Missouri
 39 Constitution or the first amendment of the United States Constitution."; and

40 Further amend said bill by amending the title, enacting clause, and intersectional references
 41 accordingly.