

House _____ Amendment NO. _____

Offered By

1 AMEND House Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 1303, Page 1, In the Title, Lines 2-3, by
2 deleting the words, "religious liberties of students" and inserting in lieu thereof the word,
3 "education"; and
4

5 Further amend said bill, page, Section A, Line 2, by inserting after all of said section the following:
6 "160.545. 1. There is hereby established within the department of elementary and secondary
7 education the "A+ Schools Program" to be administered by the commissioner of education. The
8 program shall consist of [grant awards] scholarships made to graduates of public and private
9 secondary schools [that demonstrate a commitment to ensure that] who:

10 (1) [All students be graduated from school;

11 (2) All students] Complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and for
12 which there are identified learning expectations; and

13 [(3) All students] (2) Proceed from high school graduation to a college or postsecondary
14 vocational or technical school or high-wage job with work place skill development opportunities.
15

16 2. Pursuant to the A+ program, the state board of education shall promulgate rules and
17 regulations [for the approval of grants made under the program to schools that:

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

20 (2)] that specify the knowledge, skills and competencies, in measurable terms, that students
21 must demonstrate to successfully complete any individual course offered by [the] a school[,] and any
22 course of studies which will qualify a student for graduation from [the] such school[;] and does not
23 include any general track course, that upon completion, counts toward a high school diploma, and

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

26 (4) Require] further specify rigorous coursework with standards of competency in basic
27 academic subjects for students pursuing vocational and technical education [as prescribed by rule
28 and regulation of the state board of education; and

29 (5) Have a partnership plan developed in cooperation and with the advice of local business
30 persons, labor leaders, parents, and representatives of college and postsecondary vocational and
31 technical school representatives, with the plan then approved by the local board of education. The

Action Taken _____ Date _____

1 plan shall specify a mechanism to receive information on an annual basis from those who developed
2 the plan in addition to senior citizens, community leaders, and teachers to update the plan in order to
3 best meet the goals of the program as provided in subsection 1 of this section. Further, the plan shall
4 detail the procedures used in the school to identify students that may drop out of school and the
5 intervention services to be used to meet the needs of such students. The plan shall outline counseling
6 and mentoring services provided to students who will enter the work force upon graduation from
7 high school, address apprenticeship and intern programs, and shall contain procedures for the
8 recruitment of volunteers from the community of the school to serve in schools receiving program
9 grants.

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

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

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

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

40 [7.] 3. The commissioner of education shall, by rule and regulation of the state board of
41 education and with the advice of the coordinating board for higher education, establish a procedure

for the [reimbursement] payment of the cost of tuition, books and fees to any public community college or vocational or technical school or within the limits established in subsection [9] 11 of this section for any two-year private vocational or technical school for any student:

(1) Who has attended a public or private high school in the state for at least three years immediately prior to graduation [that meets the requirements of subsection 2 of this section], except that students who are active duty military dependents, and students who are dependants of retired military who relocate to Missouri within one year of the date of the parent's retirement from active duty, who, in the school year immediately preceding graduation, meet all other requirements of this subsection and are attending a school that meets the requirements of [subsection 2 of] this section shall be exempt from the three-year attendance requirement of this subdivision; and

(2) Who has made a good faith effort to first secure all available [federal] sources of funding that could be applied to the [reimbursement described in this subsection] costs covered by this scholarship program; and

(3) Who has earned a [minimal] grade point average of at least two and one-half points on a four-point scale, or its equivalent on another scale, while in high school [as determined by rule of the state board of education,]; and

(4) Meets other requirements for the [reimbursement] payment authorized by this subsection as determined by rule and regulation of said board.

4. Student financial incentives shall be available for a period of four years after high school graduation.

5. To be eligible for a student financial incentive, each student shall:

(1) Have attended a public or private high school in Missouri for three consecutive years prior to high school graduation;

(2) Have graduated from high school with an overall grade point average of two and five-tenths or higher on a four-point scale, or its equivalent on another scale, or have graduated from a high school with documented mastery of institutionally identified skills that would equate to a two and five-tenths grade point average or higher on a four-point scale;

(3) Have performed at least fifty hours of unpaid tutoring or mentoring;

(4) Have at least a ninety-five percent attendance record overall for grades nine through twelve; and

(5) Have maintained a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol.

6. To maintain eligibility, each participating student shall, during the four-year period of incentive availability:

(1) Enroll in and attend on a full-time basis a Missouri public community college, vocational or technical school, state technical college, or within the limits established in subsection 11 of this section, any two-year private vocational or technical school;

(2) Maintain a grade point average of two and five-tenths points or higher on a four-point scale, or its equivalent on another scale; and

(3) Maintain a record of good citizenship and avoidance of the unlawful use of drugs and alcohol.

1 7. The financial incentives shall be made available, subject to appropriation, only after the
 2 student has made a documented good faith effort to first secure all available postsecondary student
 3 financial assistance funds that do not require repayment.

4 8. Subject to appropriation, the financial incentives shall only be made available to pay the
 5 unpaid balance of the cost of tuition, general fees, and up to fifty percent of the book cost after all
 6 postsecondary student financial assistance funds have been applied to these costs. If changes are
 7 made to the above incentives, the department of elementary and secondary education shall provide
 8 payments in the following order of priority:

9 (1) The full amount of tuition;

10 (2) The general fees; and

11 (3) Up to fifty percent of the book cost.

12 9. Missouri public community colleges, vocational or technical schools, state technical
 13 colleges, and two-year private vocational or technical schools shall verify, prior to payment, for each
 14 student intending to participate in the program at their institution that:

15 (1) By the end of the first semester of the student's participation:

16 (a) Verification of student eligibility has been received from the high school from which the
 17 student graduated;

18 (b) The eligible student is enrolled as a full-time student;

19 (c) A good faith effort has been made to secure all available postsecondary student financial
 20 assistance funds; and

21 (d) After all available postsecondary student financial assistance funds are applied, the
 22 student shall receive financial incentive funds. The amount of funds shall depend on the remaining
 23 costs of tuition, general fees, and up to fifty percent of the book cost to attend that institution, subject
 24 to appropriation; and

25 (2) During the second and subsequent semesters of the student's participation:

26 (a) The eligible student continues to be enrolled as a full-time student;

27 (b) Good faith efforts continue to be made to secure all available postsecondary student
 28 financial assistance funds;

29 (c) The student has earned and maintains a grade point average of two and five-tenths points
 30 or higher on a four-point scale, or its equivalent on another scale; and

31 (d) After all other available postsecondary student financial assistance funds are applied, the
 32 student shall receive financial incentive funds. The amount of funds shall be subject to appropriation
 33 and shall depend on the remaining costs of tuition, general fees, and up to fifty percent of the book
 34 cost to attend that institution.

35 [8.] 10. The commissioner of education shall develop a procedure for evaluating the
 36 effectiveness of the scholarship program described in this section. Such evaluation shall be
 37 conducted annually with the results of the evaluation provided to the governor, speaker of the house,
 38 and president pro tempore of the senate.

39 [9.] 11. For a two-year private vocational or technical school to obtain reimbursements under
 40 subsection [7] 3 of this section, the following requirements shall be satisfied:

41 (1) Such two-year private vocational or technical school shall be a member of the North

1 Central Association and be accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as of July 1, 2008, and
2 maintain such accreditation;

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

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

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

11
12 Further amend said bill by amending the title, enacting clause, and intersectional references
13 accordingly.
14