

SECOND REGULAR SESSION
HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 1247
97TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

5075L.04C

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 160.545, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to A+ Program dual credit reimbursement.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 160.545, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 160.545, to read as follows:

160.545. 1. There is hereby established within the department of elementary and secondary education the "A+ Schools Program" to be administered by the commissioner of education. The program shall [consist of grant awards made to] **require** public secondary schools that **apply to be an A+ school to** demonstrate a commitment to ensure that:

(1) All students be graduated from school;

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

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

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

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

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

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

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

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

22 (5) Have a partnership plan developed in cooperation and with the advice of local
23 business persons, labor leaders, parents, and representatives of college and postsecondary
24 vocational and technical school representatives, with the plan then approved by the local board
25 of education. The plan shall specify a mechanism to receive information on an annual basis from
26 those who developed the plan in addition to senior citizens, community leaders, and teachers to
27 update the plan in order to best meet the goals of the program as provided in subsection 1 of this
28 section. Further, the plan shall detail the procedures used in the school to identify students that
29 may drop out of school and the intervention services to be used to meet the needs of such
30 students. The plan shall outline counseling and mentoring services provided to students who will
31 enter the work force upon graduation from high school, address apprenticeship and intern
32 programs, and shall contain procedures for the recruitment of volunteers from the community
33 of the school to serve in schools receiving program grants.

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

36 4. [By rule and regulation, the state board of education may determine a local school
37 district variable fund match requirement in order for a school or schools in the district to receive
38 a grant under the program. However, no school in any district shall receive a grant under the
39 program unless the district designates a salaried employee to serve as the program coordinator,
40 with the district assuming a minimum of one-half the cost of the salary and other benefits
41 provided to the coordinator. Further, no school in any district shall receive a grant under the
42 program unless the district makes available facilities and services for adult literacy training as
43 specified by rule of the state board of education.

44 5. For any school that meets the requirements for the approval of the grants authorized
45 by this section and specified in subsection 2 of this section for three successive school years, by
46 August first following the third such school year, the commissioner of education shall present
47 a plan to the superintendent of the school district in which such school is located for the waiver
48 of rules and regulations to promote flexibility in the operations of the school and to enhance and
49 encourage efficiency in the delivery of instructional services in the school. The provisions of
50 other law to the contrary notwithstanding, the plan presented to the superintendent shall provide
51 a summary waiver, with no conditions, for the pupil testing requirements pursuant to section
52 160.257 in the school. Further, the provisions of other law to the contrary notwithstanding, the
53 plan shall detail a means for the waiver of requirements otherwise imposed on the school related
54 to the authority of the state board of education to classify school districts pursuant to subdivision

55 (9) of section 161.092 and such other rules and regulations as determined by the commissioner
56 of education, except such waivers shall be confined to the school and not other schools in the
57 school district unless such other schools meet the requirements of this subsection. However,
58 any waiver provided to any school as outlined in this subsection shall be void on June thirtieth
59 of any school year in which the school fails to meet the requirements for the approval of the
60 grants authorized by this section as specified in subsection 2 of this section.

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

64 7.] The commissioner of **higher** education shall, by rule and regulation of the [state
65 board of education] **coordinating board for higher education** and with the advice of the
66 [coordinating board for higher education] **state board of education**, establish a procedure for
67 the reimbursement of the cost of tuition, books and fees to any public community college or
68 vocational or technical school or within the limits established in subsection [9] **8** of this section
69 for any two-year private vocational or technical school for any student:

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

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

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

83 **[8.] 5. Beginning with academic year 2015-16, the department of higher education**
84 **shall develop a procedure to permit the reimbursement of educational costs beyond tuition**
85 **and general fees incurred at an A+ eligible postsecondary institution by a student who**
86 **qualifies for reimbursement under subsection 4 of this section and applies for such**
87 **reimbursement upon the following conditions:**

88 (1) **The reimbursement shall be an amount no greater than tuition and related**
89 **academic fees, including book purchase or rental, for dual credit courses paid by the**
90 **student while in high school;**

91 **(2) The dual credit course was provided by an institution that is a qualified A+**
92 **postsecondary institution under subsection 4 or 8 of this section;**

93 **(3) The dual credit course is accepted for credit by the institution at which the**
94 **student uses the A+ program.**

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96 **The provisions of this subsection shall be applicable only to postsecondary students at**
97 **vocational-technical centers and those pursuing a certificate or an associate of science or**
98 **associate of applied science degree at any other qualified A+ postsecondary institution.**

99 **6. If insufficient funds are available to provide full reimbursement of all permitted**
100 **costs under this section, the reimbursement shall be prioritized in the following order from**
101 **highest to lowest:**

102 **(1) Tuition;**

103 **(2) General fees;**

104 **(3) Other educational costs as defined by federal student financial aid regulations.**

105 **7. The commissioner of education and the commissioner of higher education shall**
106 **develop a procedure for evaluating the effectiveness of the program described in this section for**
107 **improving high school outcomes and for effectiveness in providing access and completion**
108 **of postsecondary programs.** Such evaluation shall be conducted annually with the results of
109 the evaluation provided to the governor, speaker of the house, and president pro tempore of the
110 senate.

111 **[9.] 8. For a two-year private vocational or technical school to obtain reimbursements**
112 **under subsection [7] 4 of this section, the following requirements shall be satisfied:**

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

116 **(2) Such two-year private vocational or technical school shall be designated as a**
117 **501(c)(3) nonprofit organization under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended;**

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

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

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