

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1138

92ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE RUPP.

Read 1st time January 15, 2004, and copies ordered printed.

STEPHEN S. DAVIS, Chief Clerk

3445L.011

AN ACT

To repeal section 160.545, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to A+ schools program.

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Section A. Section 160.545, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 160.545, to read as follows: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

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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

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

17 course of studies which will qualify a student for graduation from the school; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

60 5. For any school year, grants authorized by subsections 1 to 3 of this section shall be
61 funded with the amount appropriated for this program, less those funds necessary to [reimburse]
62 **repay federal Stafford loans for eligible students in the amount of tuition fees for any degree**
63 **programs** pursuant to [subsection 6] **subsections 6 and 7** of this section.

64 6. The commissioner of education shall, by rule and regulation of the state board of
65 education and with the advice of the coordinating board for higher education, establish a
66 procedure for the reimbursement of [the cost of tuition, books and fees] **federal Stafford loans**
67 **pursuant to this section** to any public community college, or vocational or technical school, or
68 **state four-year institution of higher education** for any student:

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

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

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

80 7. **As a condition of participating in the A+ schools program, an eligible student**
81 **shall apply for a federal Stafford loan, or its successor loan, as prescribed in subdivision**
82 **(2) of subsection 6 of this section, for which A+ schools program funding may be granted**
83 **for repayment of the loan balance plus interest for the amount of tuition. Such repayment**
84 **shall be conditioned upon the student's completion of the degree program in which the**
85 **student is enrolled by the end of a period calculated by taking the number of school terms**
86 **required to complete the program on a full-time basis, converted to calendar months**
87 **multiplied by one and one-half. Students who have not completed the program by such**
88 **date shall be required to repay the loan from their own funds. Repayment of loans under**

89 **the A+ schools program is limited to tuition and student fees; students shall be responsible**
90 **from their own funds for repayment of any loan amount beyond the limit established in**
91 **this subsection.**

92 **8.** The commissioner of education shall develop a procedure for evaluating the
93 effectiveness of the program described in this section. Such evaluation shall be conducted
94 annually with the results of the evaluation provided to the governor, speaker of the house, and
95 president pro tempore of the senate.