

Missouri State Aid Cheat Sheet (2027-2028)

A two-page reference for counselors and families. Free to copy, print, and share.

Counselors: this sheet covers the **Class of 2027**, who file 2027-2028 forms during the 2026-2027 school year. Missouri has two front doors. The FAFSA determines Access Missouri, with no separate state application. The MDHEWD Student Portal is where Fast Track is applied for and where eligibility is visible, and Missouri does not mail notice of A+ or Access Missouri eligibility at all. Three things on most handouts are wrong: A+ is not a \$1,000 award, Bright Flight is the top five percent and not the top three, and April 1 is not the deadline that matters. Verified against MDHEWD, August 2026.

The Programs at a Glance

Program	What it pays and who qualifies
Access Missouri (need-based)	Statutory range by school type: \$500 to \$1,700 a year at a public two-year school, \$1,750 to \$3,500 at a public four-year, State Tech, private, or approved virtual school. Requires a Missouri resident undergraduate, an SAI of \$12,000 or less , and full-time enrollment at 12 hours . No application beyond the FAFSA. Renewal takes a 2.5 cumulative GPA. Capped at 5 semesters at a two-year school or 10 total. No summer awards.
A+ Scholarship (earned in high school)	The unpaid balance of tuition and general fees after non-loan federal aid , capped at State Technical College of Missouri's per credit hour rate. The 2026-2027 cap is \$240.00 per credit hour or \$8.00 per clock hour. Pays only at participating community colleges and vocational or technical schools. Seven high school requirements, listed on page 2. A Pell Grant that covers tuition can reduce the A+ award to zero .
Bright Flight (top five percent)	For 2025 and 2026 graduates: up to \$3,000 a year at an ACT composite of 32 or above, up to \$1,000 at a 30 or 31. Renewable up to 10 semesters, split between fall and spring, never paid in summer. No application and no FAFSA required. Must enroll first-time full-time in Missouri the year right after graduation. Scores for 2027 graduates are announced in fall 2026.
Fast Track (adults, workforce)	Can fully cover tuition and fees when combined with other government aid. For Missourians 25 or older , or under 25 and independent for federal aid, with no bachelor's degree, enrolled at least half time in an approved high-demand program or apprenticeship. Income cap is an AGI of \$80,000 filing jointly or \$40,000 otherwise . Separate annual application in the State Financial Aid Portal, plus a FAFSA. Three-year Missouri work commitment.
Advanced Placement Incentive Grant	\$500, one time . Two scores of 3 or higher on AP math or science exams at a Missouri public high school, plus an Access Missouri or A+ award the same year. A calculated award of zero still counts , so an A+ student whose Pell covered everything is still eligible. Paper application mailed to Jefferson City with the score report attached.
Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment Scholarship	Covers tuition and fees for dual credit or dual enrollment courses taken in high school. Rewritten in 2022 and no longer connected to A+ , so older guidance linking the two is wrong. Financial need is now an eligibility requirement. Worth pushing: hours earned before high school graduation do not count against the A+ 105 percent limit.
Also worth knowing	Public Safety Recruitment and Retention Act Scholarship, new under Senate Bill 71 effective August 28, 2025, for public safety personnel and their dependent children. Public Service Officer or Employee's Child Survivor Grant. Wartime Veteran's Survivors Grant, strictly limited in number. Kids' Chance, for children of Missouri workers killed or hurt on the job. Minority and Underrepresented Environmental Literacy Program. National Guard tuition assistance.

Deadlines to Post on Your Wall

Program	Deadline	Where it is submitted
Access Missouri	February 1 priority, the only date that guarantees an eligible student an award. April 1 final. Corrections through July 31. Eligibility locks August 1.	FAFSA only
A+ Scholarship	No application deadline. The controlling date is graduation : the written agreement must be signed before it, and eligibility ends 48 months after it.	High school A+ coordinator
Bright Flight	The June national test date immediately after graduation. July does not count, and residual tests do not count.	ACT or SAT score records
Fast Track	May 15, every year.	State Financial Aid Portal + FAFSA
AP Incentive Grant	June 1. Sources conflict on which June 1, see note below.	Paper form mailed to MDHEWD
Award amounts	Estimated until August , when MDHEWD sets final amounts against the appropriation.	MDHEWD Student Portal

Same calendar every year. For the Class of 2027 that means February 1, 2027 and April 1, 2027. Missouri sets a third Access Missouri date, the award deadline, between the two, and does not announce it until August. On the AP Incentive Grant, MDHEWD's page ties the June 1, 2027 deadline to the 2026-2027 year, which puts it after the year it pays for, while at least one Missouri university publishes it as the June 1 before. Call 800-473-6757, option 4.

The Rules That Trip Families Up

- **February 1 is the deadline, not April 1.** An eligible student who files the FAFSA by February 1 is guaranteed an Access Missouri award. April 1 only buys consideration, against an award deadline the state does not set until August.
- **A+ is last-dollar and it reduces Access Missouri.** Federal non-loan aid applies first, so Pell can zero out A+ entirely. Separately, by rule, an A+ reimbursement reduces the Access Missouri award. The two programs do not stack the way families assume.
- **Missouri counts completed hours, not enrolled hours.** A+ requires completing 12 credit hours every term it pays, or 6 in summer. Enroll in 15 and finish 12, and A+ will not pay for the 3 dropped hours. Access Missouri requires 12 hours of enrollment.
- **Nobody gets a letter.** MDHEWD does not notify students of A+ or Access Missouri eligibility. The high school A+ coordinator holds the high school side, the college financial aid office holds the college side, and the Student Portal holds the state's view.
- **Two of the three big programs need no test score.** Only Bright Flight is test-gated. See the A+ math routes on page 2.

A+: Check These Things Early

The seven high school requirements, all of which must be met

Written agreement	Signed with the high school before graduation . This is the step families discover too late, and it cannot be fixed afterward.
A+ designated school	Any 2 of the 4 years before graduation. Non-public high schools can be designated. Military relocation exemption applies.
2.5 GPA	Overall and unweighted , on a 4.0 scale.
95% attendance	Overall, across grades 9 through 12 . Roughly nine absences a year is the ceiling. Ninth grade counts, and it cannot be repaired senior year.
50 tutoring hours	Unpaid tutoring or mentoring. No more than a quarter of it, so 12.5 hours, can be job shadowing. District policy may allow completion up to 6 months past graduation in exceptional circumstances.
Good citizenship	And no unlawful use of drugs or alcohol during grades 9 through 12.
Algebra I EOC	Proficient or advanced, on Algebra I or a higher DESE-approved math end of course exam. If it was missed, there is a second door almost nobody mentions. For 2018 graduates forward, a student who meets every other requirement can qualify instead on a Pre-ACT or ACT math score of 17 with a 2.5 GPA, 16 with a 2.8, or 15 with a 3.0 . The score can be earned in high school or after enrolling in college, as long as eligibility is established before the school submits its reimbursement request.

Counselor Calendar: What to Tell Students When

When	What has to happen
Freshman through junior year	The A+ attendance clock is already running: pull the cumulative percentage and flag any student under 95 percent while it can still be recovered. Start logging tutoring hours. Confirm the Algebra I end of course result for every A+ candidate and route anyone who missed it to the math ladder. Create the MDHEWD Student Portal account using a personal email, not the school one, with the name exactly as on the Social Security card. A Bright Flight qualifying score earned as a sophomore or junior still counts.
Senior fall 2026	File the 2027-2028 FAFSA as soon as it opens. MDHEWD announces the Bright Flight qualifying scores for 2027 graduates. Any student with a 30 or higher superscore should send it from their ACT account using code 2379 . Confirm the A+ written agreement is signed.
February to spring 2027	February 1 is the Access Missouri priority deadline , the guarantee date and the single most important line on this sheet. April 1 is the final deadline. Bright Flight approval letters go out, MDHEWD announces the A+ reimbursement cap for 2027-2028, and the A+ agreement must be signed before graduation, no exceptions.
June 2027	The June national test date is the last one that can qualify a 2027 graduate for Bright Flight. Send superscores well ahead of it: MDHEWD takes six to eight weeks to receive score data after each test date.
Summer 2027	July 31 is the last day for FAFSA corrections affecting Access Missouri. Eligibility locks August 1 and final award amounts are set in August. Check the Student Portal, do not wait for mail.

Three Mistakes That Cost Missouri Students Money

- **Treating A+ as a grades scholarship.** The GPA bar is a 2.5 and it is rarely the problem. Attendance, the 50 tutoring hours, and the unsigned agreement are what actually disqualify students, and all three are settled before senior spring.
- **Skipping the FAFSA on an income assumption.** The Access Missouri cutoff is an SAI of \$12,000 or less, which reaches well into the middle class, especially with more than one child in college. The FAFSA is also required for A+ and Fast Track, and the AP Incentive Grant requires an Access Missouri or A+ award to exist at all.
- **Assuming A+ works anywhere.** A+ pays only at participating community colleges and vocational or technical schools, plus certain private two-year programs. A student who completes every requirement and enrolls at a four-year university gets nothing from it.

The 2379 problem

MDHEWD has recognized ACT superscores for Bright Flight since the 2023 graduating class, and states plainly on its own page that **it does not automatically receive them**. The student has to log into their ACT account and send the superscore using **code 2379**, for a fee. A student who never does it is evaluated on individual test composites only. A 29 in the fall and a 31 in the spring is a qualifying superscore Missouri will never see. Ask every student between 28 and 32 whether they have sent it.

Free Resources: No Account, No Cost, No Data Collection

All Missouri programs and official rules

dhewd.mo.gov/ppc/grants-scholarships

Eligibility status, Fast Track application

MDHEWD Student Portal, 800-473-6757 opt 4

Our Missouri guide, plus scholarships at 400+ colleges in all 50 states

collegereadyparent.org/missouri

Produced by CollegeReadyParent.org, an independent, parent-built resource. No paywall, no accounts, no lead forms, no student data collection. Counselors and educators: you may freely copy, print, and distribute this sheet. Questions or corrections: leo@collegereadyparent.org. Verified against MDHEWD program pages, August 2026. Access Missouri figures are statutory minimums and maximums, and actual awards are not final until August. Bright Flight scores shown are for 2025 and 2026 graduates; scores for 2027 graduates had not been announced. A 2026 bill to pay Bright Flight recipients full in-state tuition from 2027-2028 did not become law. Confirm current details with MDHEWD before applying.