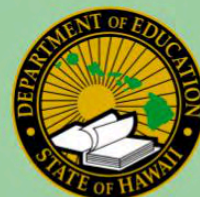




After-School Plus (A+) Parent Handbook

Hawaii Department of Education - Community Engagement Branch
School Year 2025-2026



Statement on the Handbook

This handbook provides information for parents and students regarding the Hawaii State Department of Education After-School Plus (A+) Program policies and services. This handbook supersedes any prior handbooks. The statements and policies in this handbook do not represent any kind of contract between parents and the Hawaii State Department of Education, nor do they create or confer any legal rights. The Hawaii State Department of Education needs to be flexible in order to keep pace with changing laws and requirements affecting and applicable to the goals and operations of After-School Plus (A+) Programs.

Because of that, this handbook may be modified at any time without notice. Parents are encouraged to consult with the schools' administration if they have any questions about this handbook, need an update, or need further information about a specific policy or rule discussed in this handbook.

NOTE: References to "parents" throughout this handbook should be understood to mean "parents and legal guardians."



After-School Plus (A+) Program Overview

A+ Program Overview

Welcome to the After-School Plus (A+) Program. The A+ Program is the outcome of a joint effort of former Governor John Waihee's Subcabinet on Early Childhood Education and Child Care (chaired by former Governor Ben Cayetano who was Lieutenant Governor at that time), the Hawaii State Board of Education and the Hawaii State Department of Education in 1989.

A+ Program Mission

The mission of the A+ Program is to reduce the high incidence of latchkey children and provide affordable after-school child care services to children in the public elementary schools whose parents work, attend school or are in job training programs. The program also provides a safe, secure and nurturing environment with a rich variety of activities for the children.

A+ Program Goals and Vision

- To provide after-school supervision for children in a stimulating and caring environment.
- To reduce the number of latchkey children.
- To enhance the relationship between home and school in collaboratively meeting the needs of children.
- To support the social-emotional and physical development of children.

The A+ staff appreciates your support and proudly provides a program that fits the interests and needs of children in a happy and stimulating environment. Please feel free to contact the A+ Site Coordinator at your school regarding your children's adjustment and progress in the A+ Program.

After-School Plus (A+) Programs

Annual After-School Plus (A+) Programs		
Name of Program	Program Operations	Monthly Fee
After-School Plus (A+) School Year (10-Month) Program	August – May Monday – Friday After School until 5:30 pm	\$200/Month
Summer After-School Plus (A+) Program	June – July Monday – Friday After Summer School until 5:30 pm	\$240/Month

Note: Department and individual A+ Leadership may vary program operations regarding dates and hours depending on need. Please check with your individual school for specific information. about the A+ Program.

Age Levels: Students in Kindergarten to Grade 6

Program Activities: All programs provide students with the following activities:

- Snack Time
- Free Play
- Enrichment Activities: arts, crafts, drama, music, and dance
- Physical development/coordination activities: aerobic exercise, sports activities and games.
- Social-emotional and character development activities including presentations on crime protection, drug abuse and prevention, and pedestrian safety.
- Supervised Homework Period

Health and Safety Requirements: All A+ programs are required to meet health and safety regulations for employees and facilities through the Department of Education and Department of Human Services Legally Exempt Centers. All A+ employees must complete mandatory background clearance and health and safety trainings including monitoring site visits.

Staff Ratios: All A+ programs maintain a ratio of 1 adult to 20 children (1:20) staff ratio to meet health and safety regulations.

Enrollment: The A+ Programs are voluntary programs. There are a limited number of children that can be served; therefore, children are accepted on a first come/first served basis and the availability of staff. All programs are contingent upon minimum enrollment at a site.

A+ Program Eligibility Criteria

Parents/guardians must meet the Hawaii Administrative Rules eligibility criteria to participate in the A+ Programs.

A+ “Latchkey” Eligibility

All A+ programs must qualify students based on the definition of “latchkey” which refers to children who have no adult present in the home to provide after-school supervision. All families must be able to provide documentation.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. School age student (grades Kindergarten to 6 grade) attending a public elementary school with a participating A+ program.
2. Parent/legal guardian(s) who participates in any of the following activities
During A+ Operation Hours:
 - Employed (have a job or are self-employed)
 - Attend school (college, university, or other types of schools)
 - Engaged in job training
 - Work for the A+ program
3. Provide written documentation to verify employment and/or attendance in school or training programs for each parent/guardian. All documentation must verify that these activities take place during A+ Operation hours.

Self-employed parent/legal guardians must verify their status by providing all of the following documentation items:

- Verified work schedule during A+ operation hours
- Submit a copy of their general excise tax license
- Submit a copy of **one** of the following:
 - Income tax return for the past year including Schedule C
 - Printed business check
- If the business is new, the parent/legal guardian may have to pay A+ tuition (if there is space in the program) or may be denied eligibility until these items can be met.

A+ Eligibility Questionnaire for Parent/Legal Guardian(s)

Please answer the following question to determine your eligibility for the A+ Programs:

As a parent/legal guardian, do you meet any of the following eligibility criteria?

- ☐ Employed/self-employed during A+ hours ☐ Attend school during A+ hours ☐ Work for an A+ Program

You are eligible for the A+ program if you selected any answer above.

Hawaii State Department of Education Equity and Diversity Policies

In restricting enrollment, the Hawaii State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability.

In addition, the Hawaii State Department of Education does not tolerate acts of harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability. Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability, is encouraged to report such harassment. Students and parents may report allegations of discrimination or harassment to the school's administrator or to the Hawaii State Department of Education's Civil Rights Compliance Office at the address listed below.

The Hawaii State Department of Education is committed to conducting a prompt investigation. Support, including counseling and educational resources, will be available to students who are harassed, as well as to students found to have engaged in acts of harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability. Students found to have engaged in harassment may be disciplined, up to and including suspension or expulsion, if circumstances warrant. Students, parents, and the Hawaii State Department of Education staff should work together to prevent harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability.

The Hawaii State Department of Education will not tolerate retaliation for reporting discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability, and will take steps to protect those who wish to report the harassment.

Please direct inquiries regarding the Hawaii State Department of Education nondiscrimination policies to:

Civil Rights Compliance Office

Hawaii State Department of Education

P.O. Box 2360 Honolulu, Hawaii 96804 (808) 586-3322 or relay CRCB@k12.hi.us

A+ Program Registration

To select an A+ site, parents/legal guardians may search for participating Hawaii State Department of Education A+ Programs via the A+ website:

www.hawaiicommunityengagement.com/after-school-plus

All A+ programs are searchable via our Map of Hawaii and via our After-Schools Plus Schools page. All contact information for individual schools is provided for parents/legal guardians to request more information.

When registering a child for an A+ Program (school year or summer), parents/legal guardians have three options: 1) online registration via the A+ website, 2) printing the online application or 3) completing the paper registration forms that are included in hardcopy of the Parent Handbook.

Parent/legal guardian(s) will be asked to pay the first month's program fees and will be required to complete and submit the following A+ Program Forms:

Registration Documentation	Description
A+ Program Registration Form	A+ Program Registration Form (A+ program, background information on the child, departure arrangements, and names of people authorized to pick up the child)
A+ Program Emergency Form	A+ Emergency Form provides emergency contact names of people authorized to be notified in the event of emergency.
A+ Registration Agreement	A+ Program Registration Agreement (delineates program policies and expectations of parent/legal guardian and children, to be signed by the parent/legal guardian before a child can be admitted into the A+ Program)
A+ Eligibility Documentation*	Parent/legal guardian will provide written documentation to verify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment• In School or Training Program• Employment with A+ Program• Self-Employment: work schedule and business account information
A+ Admission Status Notification Form	A+ programs will provide parents/legal guardians with an electronic or hardcopy of the Admission Status Notification form via email or hardcopy to communicate the status of your application (e.g., enrolled, pending, waitlist, not eligible, and not available).



After-School Plus (A+) Program Fees and Subsidies

A+ Program Fees and Subsidies

Program Fees

A+ Program Fees/Payment Information	Description
A+ Monthly Fees (School Year Program)	The A+ School Year Program's monthly fee is \$200/month per student. The school year program runs for 10 months from August through May.
A+ Monthly Fees (Summer A+ Program)	The Summer A+ Program's monthly fee is \$240/month per student for the months of June and July.
A+ Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A+ fees are charged on a monthly basis and will be paid on or postmarked before the first school day of each month. • Cash will be accepted; however, checks are preferred. • Checks should be made payable to the school, e.g., A+ Program - Kaala Elementary School and mailed attention to the A+ Program. • Payments made in person must be delivered directly to the A+ Site Coordinator by the parent/legal guardian. • Cash should not be sent to school with children or by mail. • Original receipts of payment will be issued and sent home with children to their parent/legal guardian. • Online payments are available based on the provider.
Refunds	In accordance with our Hawaii Administrative Rules, A+ programs do not provide monthly fee refunds. This policy applies to student absences or months with shorter service days due to breaks, intercession, or holidays.
Late Payments	A \$5.00 late charge shall be imposed per family for each school day a payment is overdue.

Termination for late/non-payment	<p>If a child's parent/legal guardian has not paid the monthly tuition within the first five (5) A+ Program days of the month, the child shall be terminated on the sixth (6th) A+ Program Day.</p> <p>Failure to pay any outstanding fees by the end of the month shall result in termination from the program.</p> <p>Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the A+ District Coordinator.</p> <p>The child may re-enroll if the parent/legal guardian pays all outstanding fees, and a penalty fee of \$25 for reinstatement.</p> <p>If there is more than one child enrolled in the A+ Program, the family is penalized for a flat reinstatement fee of \$25.</p>
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A+ Financial Assistance

Families who need financial assistance can qualify for subsidies from the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS). More information on how to apply is provided in the following table.

DHS Subsidized A+ Fees Information	Description
DHS Subsidized Monthly Fee (Optional)	<p>Families must meet the following criteria to apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet A+ Latchkey eligibility requirements • Meet DHS Income Eligibility requirements with income documentation • Families who meet both requirements may apply for the DHS Subsidy. The subsidy pays the A+ monthly fee directly to the program for qualifying families. • The application is available online via the A+ website and hardcopy in the Parent Handbook. • Qualifying families may submit the completed form and income documentation to their A+ program Site Coordinator. • One DHS subsidy application per family.

<p>DHS Child Care Connections Subsidy (Optional)</p>	<p>Families must meet the following criteria to apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet A+ Latchkey eligibility requirements • Families who do not qualify for the DHS subsidy based on income can qualify for partial tuition reimbursement through the DHS Child Care Connections Subsidy. • The subsidy provides partial A+ monthly fee payment reimbursement based on income level. • DHS sends the reimbursement directly to the family. • A+ programs will require full tuition payment from the family. • The application is available online via the A+ website. • Qualifying families may submit the completed form and income documentation to their DHS office for approval.
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After-School Plus (A+) Program Policies

A+ Program Policies

A+ Arrival and Attendance Procedures

A+ Program Arrival:

The A+ Program starts immediately after the close of the school day. Children are required to report to the base site for the A+ Program at their school. Attendance is taken daily by A+ Program staff. The A+ Program responsibility for your child begins when your child checks in with the A+ Program staff.

A+ Program Attendance:

If a child is to be absent from the A+ Program, the parent/legal guardian must call the A+ Program number to notify A+ staff of the absence prior to the end of the regular school day.

If the child is absent on a day he or she is scheduled to be in the program and the school has received no prior notification, staff will follow up with a call to the parent/legal guardian or another adult designated as a contact in case of emergencies, to verify the child's absence.

If, after a period of time, the parent/legal guardian is uncooperative with this notification procedure, or the child is habitually truant, it may be grounds for termination of the child from the program.

If the child is signed out of the A+ Program or during the school day, he or she cannot be re-signed back in within the same day. If a child arrives late to A+ due to working with school staff, he or she must provide a note written by the school staff explaining the tardiness.

A+ Program Departure and Release Procedures

Pick Up Procedures:

Children shall be picked up only by the parent/legal guardian or authorized adults on registration forms. The parent/legal guardian must give advance permission for any other type of arrangement, such as:

- If the child is to be picked up by someone else that day.
- If the child is to walk, bike, skateboard, or take other means home, A+ staff is authorized to dismiss the child.

Photo ID Requirement:

A photo ID is required for the release of your child. The child will only be released to his/her parent/guardian and/or those adults whom the parent(s)/guardian specifically

designates on the enrollment form. If a parent/legal guardian needs to have their child picked up by someone who has not yet been authorized for pick-up, the parent/legal guardian must:

1. Call the A+ site and provide his or her name and current ID information so that his or her identity can be verified.
2. Provide the name and current ID information of the alternate designated to pick up the child.

If a person not previously authorized or phoned in by the parent/legal guardian comes to pick up a child, A+ staff will not release the child until the parent/legal guardian or other authorized adult has been contacted to confirm the identity of the pick-up adult to approve the child's release.

Procedures for Pick Up by Unauthorized Individuals:

All A+ Programs follow the policies and procedures established by the Hawaii State Department of Education regarding working with families with custody issues. If a parent/guardian is not allowed to pick up a child, the A+ Program must have a copy of the court order signed by a judge. Without this documentation, we are obligated to release a child to either parent/guardian, if both are listed on the enrollment paperwork. The A+ Program will only follow what the court order states. In the unfortunate event of a difficult/dangerous custody situation where a court order is in place, please contact the A+ Site Coordinator to set up guidelines regarding the release of your child. You must have a copy of any court documents regarding the restriction of release of children in our care. Parents are responsible for resolving any issues that may arise from their child's participation in the A+ Program. The Hawaii State Department of Education and their A+ providers will not get involved in disputes between parents.

Releasing Unaccompanied Students:

If the parent/legal guardian wants A+ staff to release a child from school on his or her own, the parent/legal guardian must sign an "Authorization for Release of an Unaccompanied Child" form, releasing the A+ Program and staff of all responsibility once the child leaves the school.

When completing the form, the parent/legal guardian should select release times carefully. During the winter months, the sun may set before 6:00 p.m. Traffic may be heavier because of workers going home. When a child is released on his or her own, there will be fewer children on the streets than at the close of the regular school day. Upon completion of the form, the parent/legal guardian should consult with the A+ Site Coordinator.

A+ Sign Out Procedures

The parent/legal guardian or authorized adult must sign out the child on a sign-out sheet and note the time of departure. This procedure is essential for security purposes so that staff will have a record of when children have left.

A+ Late Pick Up Policies

If for any reason the child cannot be picked up by the time the program closes, the parent/legal guardian should contact one of the designees previously authorized by them for pick-up of their child.

If the child is not picked up within 15 minutes after closing, the A+ Site Coordinator will try to contact the child's parent/legal guardian first then other adults authorized to pick up the child. Children will only be released to authorized adults. In the event that parent/legal guardian cannot be reached the A+ Site Coordinator will contact the police for follow up.

There will be a late fee assessed for children who are picked up 5 minutes past the assigned pick-up time. The late fee is \$15 for the first 5 minutes and \$1 a minute thereafter. This fee will be charged to cover the cost of additional employees needed for this service. Repeated late pick-ups may result in the removal of the student from the program, with no refund.

A+ Medical Policies and Procedures

Student Illness Procedures

Sick children should be kept at home so they can rest and are less likely to infect other children. Children kept at home during the regular school day should not be sent to the A+ Program.

If a child becomes ill during the A+ Program, the Site Coordinator (or designee) will contact a parent/legal guardian or other responsible adult named on the child's registration form to pick up the child. Staff will have the child rest quietly until he or she can be picked up. Children with communicable diseases excluded from school as required by the Department of Health, also will be excluded from the A+ Program. Once readmitted to school, they may return to the A+ Program.

Medication Policy

A+ staff will not be responsible for storing, holding, dispensing, or administering medication to children. An exception may be made for life threatening situations as prescribed by the child's physician and approved by the district coordinator, with administration by the A+ staff person certified in first aid.

A+ Emergency Care and First Aid Procedures

All A+ programs ensure that a minimum of one staff person at each site is appropriately trained and certified in first aid.

A parent/legal guardian or other adults authorized by the parent/legal guardian in emergencies will be contacted in cases of serious injury. If the injury or illness requires an ambulance, A staff will coordinate with the appropriate emergency personnel and continue to update the parent/legal guardian(s). In all cases of injury or illness, attempts will be made to contact the parent/legal guardian immediately and involve them in the decision regarding treatment. An adult staff member will accompany the child to the source of emergency care, if appropriate. The adult will stay with the child until the parent/legal guardian or parent/legal guardian's designee assumes responsibility for the child's care.

The A+ Program does not provide medical insurance for your child. The parent/legal guardian is financially responsible for any medical care or special transportation incurred on the child's behalf.

Emergency Procedures for Closing the A+ Program

The A+ Program will follow the regular school procedures for closing school in case of emergencies such as flooded roads, heavy rains, earthquakes, breakdowns in utility services, etc. If school was closed earlier in the day before the start of the A+ Program, the A+ Program will also be closed.

In the event of a site evacuation, children will be taken to a local emergency location. The location will be posted at the A+ site. Efforts will be made to contact the parent/legal guardian should evacuation be necessary. A+ staff will remain with the children until they are picked up by a parent/legal guardian or other authorized adults.

Snacks

The parent/legal guardian is responsible for providing snacks for their children. The nutritional value and perishability of foods should be considered. The parent/legal guardian may also check with the A+ Site Coordinator for possible snack options that may be available.

Student Accommodations Policy

The A+ program shall be made available to all eligible children on a nondiscriminatory basis. For the child with a disability, who is identified by parents or who is known to the A+ program staff to have special needs, the district will provide such reasonable accommodations as are necessary to afford the child an opportunity to participate.

Note: The A+ program is voluntary and is not part of the compulsory educational service and not part of the individualized education program (IEP) of the child.

Request for Accommodations Procedures

1. The parent/legal guardian makes a written request to the A+ Site Coordinator using the A+ Request for Accommodation Form. Please request the form from the A+ Site Coordinator.
2. The A+ Site Coordinator, School Principal, and other school team members shall meet with the parent/legal guardian to discuss the request and consult with other school staff familiar with the child to identify the particular needs of the child; determine what program modifications if any, will be necessary to reasonably accommodate the special needs of the child and whether these modifications can be reasonably provided and consider possible alternatives that may offer the child a comparable program.
3. The determination of the school team for each case, in consultation with the district coordinator, shall be final.
4. Once the School Team formulate their recommendation, the A+ Site Coordinator shall send the A+ Request for Accommodation Form filled out by the parent/legal guardian and the A+ Program Recommendation Form with all the relevant information as a PDF via email or fax and mail a hard copy to the District and State A+ Office for processing.
5. The State A+ Office will determine funding, if any will be provided, and process a memo for signature by the Community Engagement Branch Director.
6. Once the memo is approved, the original will be sent to the A+ Site Coordinator with copies to the Complex Area Superintendent (CAS), Principal, and the A+ District Office.

Transportation

Transportation to and from the A+ Program will not be provided as children are enrolled at their own school. Transportation arrangements are the parent/legal guardian's responsibility. The parent/legal guardian must notify the A+ Program in advance of how children are to get home.

Proactive Student Behavior Policy

Self-management skills and positive social interactions among children and adults are encouraged and maximized. The A+ Program uses positive guidance methods including reminders, distraction, logical consequences and redirection. Self-management skills are taught according to the following guidelines:

- Consistent rules are clearly posted, stated, and enforced
- Behavior expected of children is age appropriate and based on the developmental level.
- A+ staff focus on developing relationships with students to build trust and connection.

In the event disciplinary actions do not result in the desired behavior, the child may be referred to the Site Coordinator. Parent conferences may be arranged where there are repeated offenses.

If all efforts to control disruptive and/or abusive behavior are unsuccessful, this may constitute grounds for termination from the program. For the success of the program, children must not be disruptive or abusive to themselves or to others.

If necessary for the health and safety of the child or other participants in the program, Hawaii Administrative Rule Chapter 19 will prevail.

The parent/legal guardian of children who are responsible for vandalism or the damaging of school property shall make restitution to the school.

Behavior Management Procedures

The following procedures will be followed for behavior management. All A+ Discipline Reports will be discussed privately (in writing or verbally) with parents/guardians and a copy of each report will be kept in the student's file.

1. In the event a child's behavior is a repeated behavior and cannot be corrected by A+ Program staff with a verbal warning or other form of behavior modification, a first incident report will be written to document and correct behavior. A copy of the report will be given to the parent/guardian the same day as the incident.
2. A second incident report will be written if the behavior is repeated or new behavior problems occur with the same child. This report will follow the same process as the first incident. However, depending on the severity of the behavior the A+ Site Coordinator could implement a one or two-day suspension from the A+ Program. No refund will be provided for suspended days. A copy of the report will be given to the parent/guardian the same day as the second incident.
3. A third incident report will be completed using the same process as the first two. A+ Program staff will write this report. Staff will provide this report to the parent/guardian. Behavior reports will be discussed privately with a parent/guardian by the A+ Site Coordinator and school principal. Dismissal from a program can occur at this time.
4. Immediate dismissal from the program can occur at any time given severe circumstances such as physical or verbal threats to another student or staff member. Refunds for missed days due to a discipline dismissal will not be granted.

Termination from the A+ Program

Termination from the A+ Program is determined by several factors. Each student's circumstances are treated individually with respect to the reason for termination. Students may be terminated from the program for the following reasons:

1. Failure to pay the monthly non-refundable fee (see A+ Program Fees section) or any outstanding fees (e.g., late payment fees, late pick-up fees, bad check fees, etc.) by the end of the month
2. Chronic late pick-up (see late pick up policy)
3. Conduct which disrupts the program's activities or jeopardizes the safety and welfare of the program's staff or participants (see Behavior Management policy)
4. The child is habitually truant 3 consecutive days or 5 days total

Each A+ program follows the following termination process and procedures:

- Prior to termination from the program, the A+ Site Coordinator at the school site shall meet with student and parent/legal guardian of the student to apprise them of the problems and to afford them a reasonable time to take corrective action.
- In an emergency situation, for health and safety reasons, a child may be immediately terminated from the program, and a follow-up meeting with the parent/legal guardian shall be offered.
- Parent/guardian receives written or verbal notification from the A+ Site Coordinator of a student being terminated.
- Termination from the A+ Program will apply to the remainder of the current school year.
- Parents/guardians are able to reapply to the A+ Program in the new school year.

Personal Electronics Policy

The personal electronics policy is determined individually by each school's leadership in collaboration with the A+ Program. Rules regarding the use of electronics during the A+ Program will be posted and shared with families at your site. For more information, please contact your A+ Site Coordinator.

Please remember the school will not be responsible for lost, misplaced, stolen or damaged cell phones, smartphones or other personal electronics.

Safety and Security Procedures

Procedures for reporting absences, staff follow-up on unreported absences, and daily sign-in and sign-out requirements are designed to maintain the safety and security for the children.

Children will be accompanied by staff whenever movement from one area of the campus to another is necessary.

The staff is instructed to be aware of strangers. Strangers will be asked to leave the school premises if they have no legitimate reason for being there.

Monthly fire and safety drills are conducted to ensure proper training of children and staff in fire evacuation and other emergency response procedures.

A+ Program Communication

Notices

A monthly activity schedule for the program will be prepared, posted and modified as plans change, so that the parent/legal guardian, as well as their child(ren), may know ahead of time what their child(ren) will be doing each day.

Other notices will be prepared as necessary and sent home with children to their parent/legal guardian.

Conferences

Parent conferences are not required, but will be arranged at the request of the parent/legal guardian, Group Leaders, or the A+ Site Coordinator.

Program Evaluation

Parent evaluation of the A+ Program is an important factor in planning for improvement in subsequent years. The parent/legal guardian will be surveyed toward the end of the school year to solicit feedback.