

# A+ Essentials: A Set of Commitments <sup>TM</sup>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Arts</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools the arts are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>experienced through education, integration and exposure</b></li> <li>• <b>inclusive of drama, dance, music, visual arts and creative writing</b></li> <li>• <b>included in curriculum planning and design</b></li> <li>• <b>integrated in all content areas</b></li> <li>• <b>valued as essential to creativity, learning and personal experiences</b></li> <li>• <b>a part of the whole school's identity</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Curriculum</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools curriculum is addressed through the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>curriculum exploration and mapping</b></li> <li>• <b>intentional cross-curricular and two-way integration</b></li> <li>• <b>cross-discipline, horizontal and vertical alignment</b></li> <li>• <b>enhanced conceptual connections</b></li> <li>• <b>teacher and student created essential and focus questions</b></li> <li>• <b>teacher created integrated lessons and thematic units</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Multiple Learning Pathways</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools learning takes varied pathways through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>multiple intelligences theory and practice</b></li> <li>• <b>brain research and brain-based philosophies</b></li> <li>• <b>a focus on building 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and the whole child</b></li> <li>• <b>on-going reflection on planning and assessment</b></li> <li>• <b>balancing learning opportunities for all students</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enriched Assessment</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools enriched assessment is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>designed for learning</b></li> <li>• <b>inclusive of arts and MI</b></li> <li>• <b>on-going and integrated</b></li> <li>• <b>experiential and collaborative</b></li> <li>• <b>a reflective practice</b></li> <li>• <b>used to help meet school system requirements</b></li> <li>• <b>used as a self-assessment tool by teachers &amp; students</b></li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Experiential Learning</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools experiential learning is grounded in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>student engagement</b></li> <li>• <b>arts-based and hands-on learning experiences</b></li> <li>• <b>the creative process and inquiry-based instruction</b></li> <li>• <b>the understanding of entry points and differentiated instruction</b></li> <li>• <b>multi-faceted assessment opportunities</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Collaboration</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>is intentional and valued</b></li> <li>• <b>is fostered by administration and faculty</b></li> <li>• <b>is given priority by providing time for classroom and special area teachers to plan together</b></li> <li>• <b>occurs throughout the day and in many ways</b></li> <li>• <b>helps to build relationships within and outside the school community</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Climate</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools climate is enhanced because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>students and teachers are excited about learning</b></li> <li>• <b>supportive environments build morale and reduce stress</b></li> <li>• <b>there is a focus on life-long learning for the entire school community</b></li> <li>• <b>teaching and learning through arts and MI is fun</b></li> <li>• <b>sharing and celebrating together builds joy</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p>In A+ Schools infrastructure supports the philosophy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>fostering supportive and shared leadership</b></li> <li>• <b>addressing daily logistics to allow for collaboration</b></li> <li>• <b>providing appropriate space and supplies for the arts</b></li> <li>• <b>continually developing faculty commitment and maintaining a shared vision</b></li> <li>• <b>providing relevant professional development and mentoring new faculty</b></li> </ul>