

# Proposal to Increase Graduation Credit Requirements from 225 to 250 Credits for Hastings Senior High School ([PowerPoint](#))

## Purpose

The goal of increasing the graduation credit requirement is to improve student attendance and engagement in all enrolled classes throughout their high school career. This initiative aims to address a common issue among upperclassmen who often attend only the minimum required classes needed to graduate, resulting in poor attendance in other courses and a lower GPA.

## Background

- The current graduation requirement is 225 credits by the end of the senior year.
  - Senior year - 50 credits
  - Junior year - 60 credits
  - Sophomore year - 70 credits
  - Freshman year - 70 credits
- The average credits earned by seniors over the course of the last three years is well above the current requirement of 225 credits.
  - Graduating Class of 2025 - 259
  - Graduating Class of 2024 - 258
  - Graduating Class of 2023 - 255
- Some students in the Hastings area “school shop” by enrolling in schools with the lowest credit requirements to graduate on time, with less course engagement and lower expectations.
- The majority of neighboring area and conference schools have higher credit requirements for graduation and a higher graduation rate.
- With Computer Science and Personal Finance now required for graduation, the overall credit requirement did not increase. As a result, students have fewer available slots for elective courses while still meeting the current graduation requirements.

Area Schools	Eastern Midland Conference Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kenesaw - 270               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 91% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Doniphan Trumbull - 260               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 90% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Adams Central - 250               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 95% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Kearney - 245               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 94% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● St. Cecilia - 245               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 99% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Blue Hill - 240               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 90% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Grand Island Senior High - 240               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 84% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blair - 260               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 95% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Bennington - 250               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 95% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ LPS - 245               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Average 86.7% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Waverly - 240               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 98% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Norris - 240               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 99% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Gretna - 230               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 98% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Hastings - 225</b></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● GI Northwest - 240 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 95% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Lexington - 225 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 95% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Hastings - 225</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>90% graduation rate</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Harvard - 200 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 90% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>90% graduation rate</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Elkhorn - 210 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Elkhorn High - 95% graduation rate</li> <li>■ Elkhorn North - 98% graduation rate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## Key Points

- **No Increase in Required Classes:** The increase from 225 to 250 credits **does not** require students to take more classes each year. Instead, it emphasizes the importance of attending and passing all classes in which students are enrolled.
- **Encouraging Attendance:** By increasing the total credits needed, students are incentivized to attend classes consistently rather than focusing solely on courses strictly necessary for graduation.
  - Some students are picking and choosing which classes to attend and are negatively affecting peers and teachers. Other students are not able to take certain classes because those seats are taken by upperclassmen who are choosing not to attend classes.
- **Phased Implementation:**
  - The new requirement **will not apply** to the current juniors (Class of 2027) and seniors (Class of 2026), as their graduation paths are already established.
  - The new requirement **will apply** to current freshmen (Class of 2029), sophomores (Class of 2028), and any incoming student (starting Fall 2026) who will be guided through the transition.
  - Through this plan, the implementation will be a two-year cycle, rather than a four-year cycle.
- **Supporting Student Success:** The change supports a well-rounded education and reduces credit loss due to absences, which can impact student learning outcomes and readiness for post-secondary plans.

## Expected Benefits

- Reinforcement of the value of a comprehensive high school education
- Increased daily attendance across all grade levels, particularly among upperclassmen
- Reduced credit loss due to absenteeism and improved GPA
- Greater alignment with local and conference schools, minimizing enrollment shifts based on credit requirements
- Closer alignment with regional standards addresses the competitive enrollment issue
- Exposure to more elective courses, offering diverse and engaging learning experiences, by attending class the entire semester

## Conclusion

Raising the graduation credit requirement from 225 to 250 credits is a strategic step to improve student attendance and engagement without increasing the course load. This change will help ensure students remain connected to Hastings High School, better preparing them for graduation and beyond.

<p>Option #1</p> <p>4-year cohort implementation (26-27: 9th only)</p> <p>(Class 2027) 225 credits</p> <p>(Class 2028) 225 credits</p> <p>(Class 2029) 225 credits</p> <p>(Class 2030) 250 credits <b>NEW</b></p> <p>(Class 2031)</p> <p>(Class 2032)</p>	<p>Option #2</p> <p>Immediate implementation (26-27: 9th/10th/11th)</p> <p>(Class 2027) 225 credits</p> <p>(Class 2028) 250 credits <b>NEW</b></p> <p>(Class 2029) 250 credits <b>NEW</b></p> <p>(Class 2030) 250 credits <b>NEW</b></p> <p>(Class 2031)</p> <p>(Class 2032)</p>
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<p>Option #3</p> <p>Staggered implementation (26-27: 9th/10th/11th)</p> <p>(Class 2027) 225 credits</p> <p>(Class 2028) 235 or 240 credits <b>NEW</b></p> <p>(Class 2029) 235 or 240 credits <b>NEW</b></p> <p>(Class 2030) 250 credits <b>NEW</b></p> <p>(Class 2031)</p> <p>(Class 2032)</p>	
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