



**Governor's Office of
Student Achievement**

GRASP: Graduates Ready to Attain Success in Postsecondary

End-of-Year Report

September 2019

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Executive Summary

Graduates Ready to Attain Success in Postsecondary (GRASP) provides grant funding to selected high schools in Georgia for one additional guidance counselor and is administered through the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA). Each GRASP counselor is responsible for a caseload of at-risk students identified with achieving academic, personal/social, and career development success.¹ The program began during 2018-2019 and ended its first operational school year in May 2019. Currently, GRASP includes the following nine schools in six Georgia school districts: Southwest High School (Bibb), Dooly County High School (Dooly), Banneker High School (Fulton), Tri-Cities High School (Fulton), Butler High School (Richmond), Glenn Hills High School (Richmond), Josey High School (Richmond), Central High School (Talbot), and Twiggs High School (Twiggs).

This final report presents and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data from GRASP's inaugural year. Overall, the data indicates both counselors and students positively benefited from participating in GRASP. Key evaluation highlights pertaining to participating GRASP schools and students include the following:

- *Student-Teacher Relationships:*
 - Fewer students reported having difficulty forming positive relationships with teachers at the end of school year (SY) 18-19.
- *Test Preparation Practices:*
 - About 66 percentage points fewer students reported not studying for tests outside of class from SY 17-18 (91 percent) to SY 18-19 (24 percent).
- *Programmatic Design:*
 - In focus groups, counselors reported an increased sense of capacity due to their smaller caseload.
- *Graduation Rates:*
 - Four participating GRASP schools had GRASP student graduation rates equal to or above 95 percent.
- *Tier Progression:*
 - Thirteen percent of GRASP students moved from Tier III to Tier I.
- *Behavioral Growth:*
 - The average number of GRASP students with in-school suspension (ISS) decreased by 1.25 from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.
 - The average number of GRASP students with out-of-school suspension (OSS) decreased by 1.75 from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.
- *Credits Earned:*
 - The average total number of credits GRASP students earned increased by approximately six credits from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.
- *Grade Level Attainment:*
 - Five participating GRASP schools decreased the number of students behind-grade level from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.

¹ GOSA defines at-risk GRASP students as those who have are at risk of not graduating, due to lack of sufficient credit attainment, ongoing behavioral issues, and/or persistent absences.

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Introduction

Counselors throughout the state of Georgia are accumulating larger numbers of students in their caseloads. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommends a ratio of 250 students for every one guidance counselor. According to a 2017 [ASCA study](#), Georgia averages 484 students for every 1 guidance counselor. In addition to the increase in caseloads, counselors are also taking on administrative duties and broadening their counseling responsibilities. The growing workload may lead to counselors exiting the profession and/or being unable to prioritize the unique needs of each of their students. Attrition complicates school and state-level measures to proactively support students' mental and emotional health. As Georgia continues to advance the whole child curriculum and school safety policy agenda, Graduates Ready to Attain Success in Postsecondary (GRASP) addresses the many challenges facing Georgia's school counselors.

The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) undertook GRASP in FY2019 to innovatively address the complex issues facing guidance counselors in Georgia's high schools. GRASP provides grant funding to selected high schools for one additional guidance counselor. Each GRASP counselor is responsible for a caseload of at-risk students identified with achieving academic, personal/social, and career development success. Counselors indicate students' risk level through a tier system, in which Tier I indicates lowest needs, Tier II indicates medium needs, and Tier III indicates highest needs. Each tier level requires distinctive monitoring styles and frequencies, as dictated by the counselors and GRASP coordinators. During school year (SY) 18-19, GRASP funded nine counselors in the following schools and school districts: Southwest High School (Bibb), Dooly County High School (Dooly), Banneker High School (Fulton), Tri-Cities High School (Fulton), Butler High School (Richmond), Glenn Hills High School (Richmond), Josey High School (Richmond), Central High School (Talbot), and Twiggs High School (Twiggs).

This report presents and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data at the student-level for SY 18-19. Data from SY 17-18 serves as the baseline comparison for all GRASP data from SY 18-19. Any information subsequently classified as baseline, beginning of the year, or pre survey, refers to data from SY 17-18. The report's first section, Pre versus Post Survey Data, compares data from the beginning of the year student survey (August 2018), to the end of year (May 2019) student survey. The second section, Focus Group Data, presents a qualitative analysis of the GOSA-led focus groups from all nine participating schools. The report concludes with the third section, Caseload Data, which includes a series of one-page reports for each school and overall recommendations moving forward into SY 19-20.

I. Pre vs. Post Survey Data

GOSA administered a post survey to all 478 GRASP students to evaluate GRASP’s impact.² Students were asked to complete the survey electronically in May 2019, and over half (50.6 percent) of GRASP students completed the post survey (N=242). The survey consisted of 13 questions, including 7 multiple choice and 6 open response.

This section compares the post survey results to those from the pre survey. The pre survey included similar questions, with equal numbers of multiple choice and open response questions. About 76 percent of GRASP students (363 students) completed the pre-survey (N= 363).

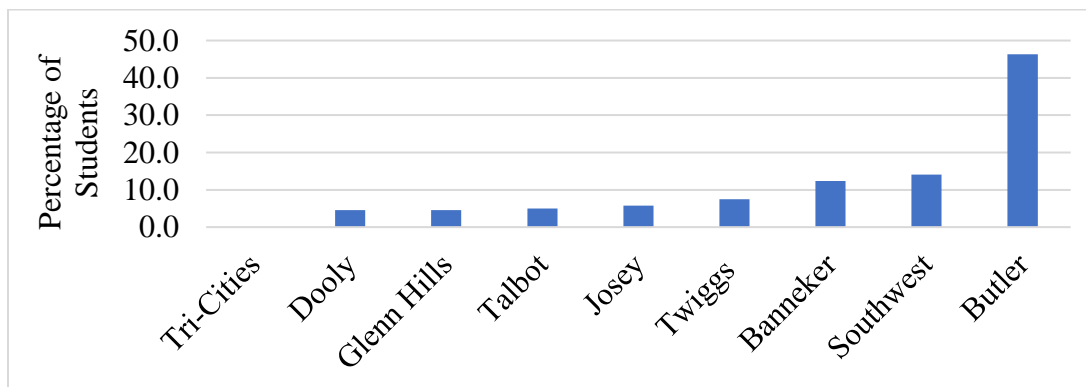
Demographics of Survey Respondents

Students from all grade levels responded to the post survey. The largest group of students who completed the post survey were seniors (33 percent). Student respondents represented eight of the nine participating GRASP schools.³ Of the 242 student respondents, 68 percent of them answered all 13 questions. The survey asked students to reflect on their GRASP experience in relation to the following topics:

- graduation credit awareness,
- academic success and study habits,
- relationships with teachers and counselors,
- school attendance and discipline, and
- future academic goals.

Figure 1 illustrates the percent of students from each school that completed the survey. Over 46 percent of student respondents (112 students) were from Butler High School. Dooly and Glenn Hills had equal survey completion rates of about 4.6 percent (11 students). No students from Tri-Cities High School completed the survey.

Figure 1: Percentage of student survey respondents.



² Tri-Cities High School did not submit post survey responses and is not included in the first section of this report.

³ There were no students from Tri-Cities High School that attempted the survey. Therefore, Tri-Cities is not included in this portion of the report.

Graduation Credits

A key aspect of a GRASP counselor's role is to increase their students' awareness and knowledge about high school graduation requirements. To accomplish this, GRASP counselors educate students on course credit and credit recovery throughout the year.

Pre survey data (N=363) from the beginning of SY 18-19 indicated about 41.6 percent (n=151) of students did not know the number of credits they had earned before working with their GRASP counselor. Post survey data (N=242) collected in May 2019 showed different results, with 34.3 percent (n=83) of students reporting they did not know the number of credits they had earned before working with their GRASP counselor.

Pre survey data also revealed 56.2 percent (n=204) of students reported having knowledge of graduation requirements. In the post-survey, 57.4 percent (n=139) of students correctly identified the number of credits needed to graduate high school in Georgia. Amongst survey respondents, this amounts to a near five percentage point increase in knowledge of graduation requirements after working with a GRASP counselor.

Attitudes Toward School

In an effort to build stronger and more personal relationships with students, GRASP counselors have smaller caseloads than traditional high school guidance counselors. More manageable numbers allow GRASP counselors to individualize and increase their student interventions. This positions counselors to provide their students with a unique level of support and accountability. It also has the potential to improve students' attitudes toward school.

Both the pre and post survey asked students to rate how much the following statements sound like them:

- I look forward to coming to school every day.
- I like school.
- It is hard for me to form relationships with my teachers and other staff.
- School is a place where I can be successful.
- School is boring.
- School is a place where I am not very successful.
- I have good relationships with my teachers and other staff.

Pre and post survey responses are largely consistent. The post survey responses most differ from the pre survey responses on questions related to student relationships. First, post survey respondents reported having less difficulty forming relationships with their teachers and other staff. Approximately six percentage points more students stated it did not sound like them to have difficulty forming relationships with their teachers and other staff. Additionally, the post

survey showed 2.6 percentage points fewer students selected “a lot like me” when asked if difficulty forming relationships sounded like them.

Second, the post survey had an increased percentage of respondents reporting good relationships with their teachers and other staff. Almost four percentage points more students stated having good relationships with teachers and other staff sounded “a lot” like them. *Table 1* outlines students’ responses to these questions in both surveys.

Table 1: Survey questions targeting student relationships. The data below shows the percentage of students who identified which each response option.

<i>It is hard for me to form relationships with my teachers and other staff.</i>			
	% Not at all like me.	% A little bit like me.	% A lot like me.
Pre Survey (N=363)	49.6	38.6	9.9
Post Survey (N=242)	56.0	36.6	7.3
<i>I have good relationships with my teachers and other staff.</i>			
	% Not at all like me.	% A little bit like me.	% A lot like me.
Pre Survey (N=363)	6.3	43.0	48.8
Post Survey (N=242)	6.5	41.0	52.6

Test Preparation Practices

Students reported relatively unchanged test preparation practices in the post survey data. The most prominent change corresponded to rates of outside studying in general. *Figure 2* illustrates pre and post survey data related to students’ studying practices outside of class.

Figure 2: I do *not* usually study outside of class to prepare for tests. This graph shows students’ responses to the pre and post survey question about test preparation.



In SY 17-18, over 90 percent of students indicated they did not study for tests outside of class. By the end of SY 18-19, only 24 percent of students reported not studying for tests outside of class.

II. Focus Group Data

At the end of SY 18-19, GOSA traveled to all nine participating schools to interview principals, counselors, and students about their GRASP experience. The principals' interview questions centered around the programmatic aspects of GRASP, including implementation and effectiveness. Counselors answered questions related to programmatic sustainability and improvements. Students' questions focused on their relationships with GRASP counselors, and how counselors impacted specific academic or behavioral goals.⁴

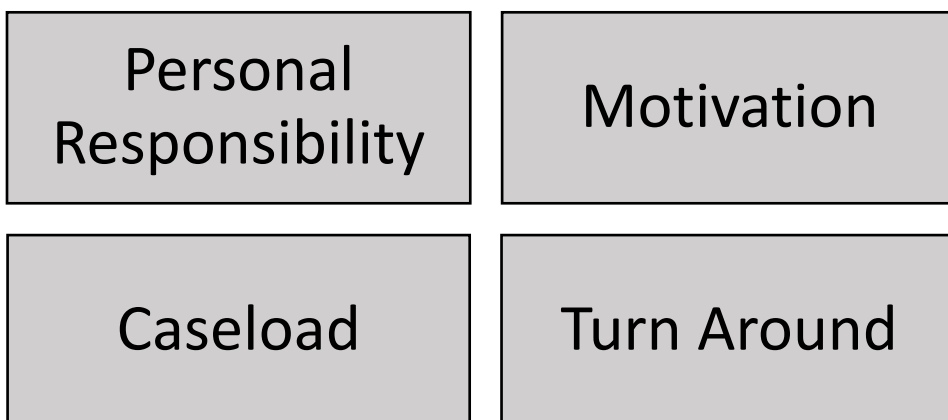
Emerging Themes from Interviews

GOSA began the qualitative portion of the GRASP evaluation by transcribing 30 focus group interviews with principals, counselors and students. The transcription software identified the most commonly used words in each interview, and GOSA aggregated these frequencies at the school level. This informed the major themes emerging from each schools' focus groups, of which we selected four to examine. The following figures detail the themes by school:

Figure 3: Banneker High School's Themes



Figure 4: Butler High School's Themes



⁴ Focus group questions can be made available upon request.

Figure 5: Central High School's Themes

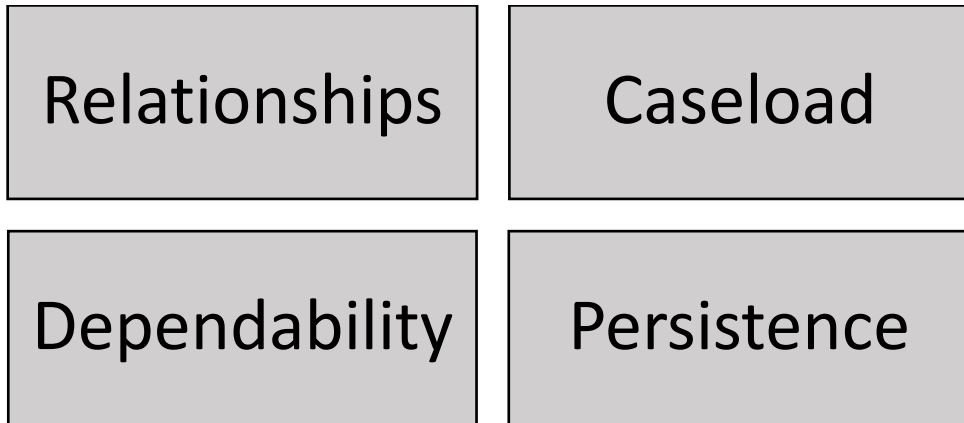


Figure 6: Dooly High School's Themes

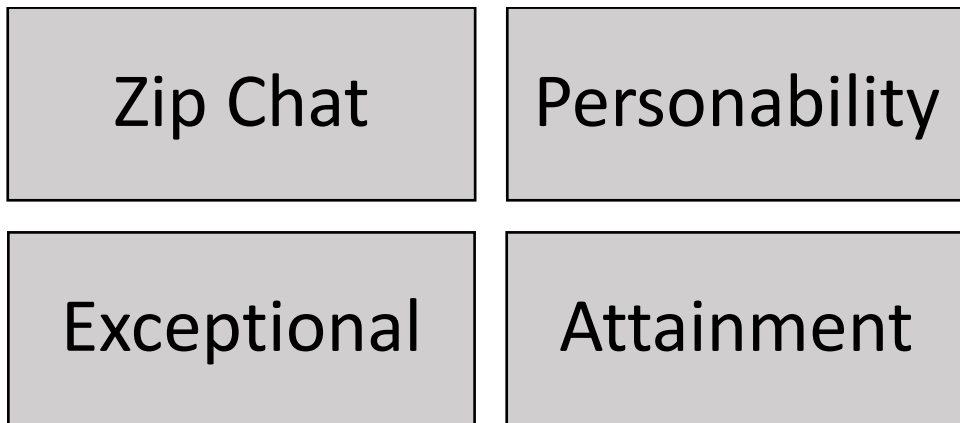


Figure 7: Glenn Hills High School's Themes



Figure 8: Josey High School's Themes



Figure 9: Southwest High School's Themes

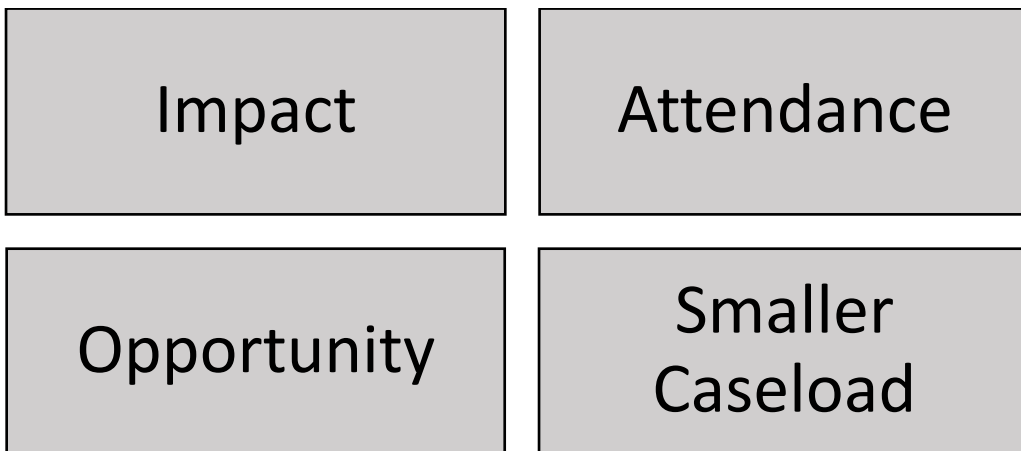


Figure 10: Tri-Cities High School's Themes

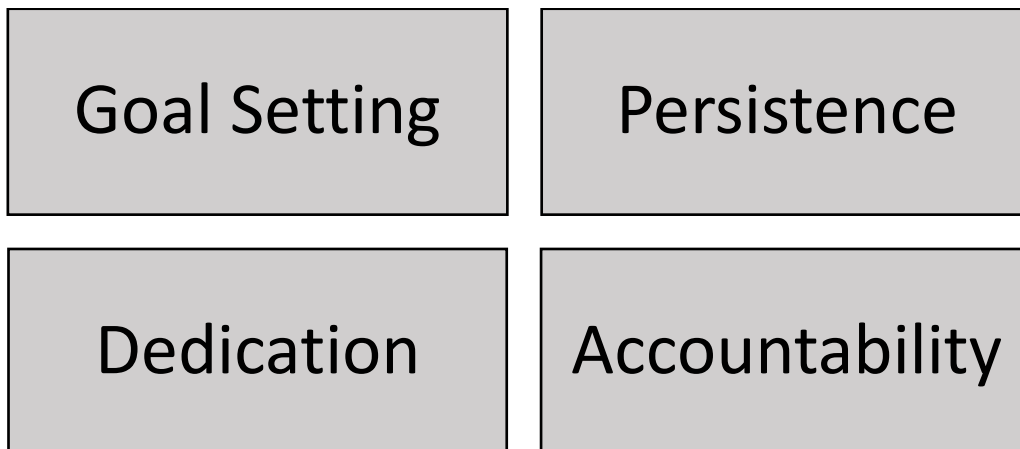
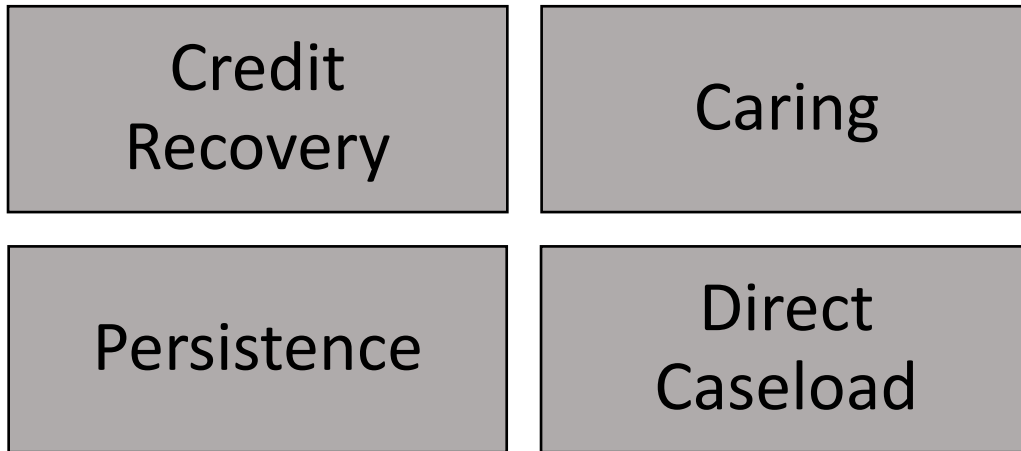


Figure 11: Twiggs High School's Themes



Summary of Focus Group Findings

Key findings from the thematic analyses of **principals'** focus group interviews include:

- Principals saw GRASP as an innovative way for counselors to reach struggling students.
- Principals credit GRASP counselors with getting to the root of students' academic and behavioral issues.
- GRASP's short grant cycle caused some principals to face hiring difficulties and question the program's sustainability.

Key findings from the thematic analyses of **counselors'** focus group interviews include:

- Counselors felt the smaller caseloads allowed them to focus strictly on counseling duties and meet more frequently with students on an individual basis.
- Counselors felt GRASP's structure granted them the flexibility needed to adequately address their students' needs.
- Counselors felt the program's limited funding for extracurricular activities thwarted their abilities to plan college visits and postsecondary-related fieldtrips.

Key findings from the thematic analyses of **students'** focus group interviews include:

- Students reported they formed authentic and meaningful relationships with their GRASP counselor.
- Students felt their counselors held them accountable for achieving the goals they set at the beginning of the year.
- Students learned a variety of skills related to postsecondary attainment, including how to apply to college, complete the FAFSA, dual enroll and track class grades.

Academic Outcomes and Outlooks

All nine schools had at least one emerging theme related to GRASP counselors improving students' academic outcomes or outlooks (e.g., credit recovery, personal responsibility, persistence and self-confidence).

When discussing credit recovery, one counselor said, "The majority of the kids have successfully excelled in credit recovery. So now it's like a light is coming on, 'I don't need to fail any more courses, I need to make sure that I'm focused because I want to go to Georgia Southern or I want to go to Georgia State. Now I'm thinking about going to college.'" A student said, "[My GRASP counselor would] sit down and talk to you about your grades, how you get this credit, what classes you need, which classes are necessary to take for this credit, or to pass and go to the next grade."

Students also noted that working with GRASP counselors increased their capacity to both check and improve their grades. One student mentioned they were unaware of how to check grades on Infinite Campus until working with a GRASP counselor.⁵ Another recalled, "My [class] grade dropped to a 64 and then [my GRASP counselor] called me and my parents and let them know how I was doing in school. Let's just say within a week, my grade in that class is now a 99."

Students struggling with academics recalled their counselors teaching them to be persistent in their efforts to succeed in school. Students appreciated the opportunity to rise to the challenge set forth by their GRASP counselors. One said, "[My GRASP counselor] shows you where you are, so you can push yourself." When reflecting on their progress, a student said, "[My counselor] told me in the beginning it's going to be hard, but when I get used to it, it'll be a whole lot easier." Another remembered their counselor's approach being, "If you've got work, you might as well go on and start doing it, because you don't know when it might add up – things just keep piling." An additional student said, "[E]ven if we were ahead, [my GRASP counselor told me] just keep doing it, go ahead and knock it out of the way. Don't just stop because we're ahead."

The focus groups results demonstrate that the impact of seeing positive results resonated with students, and their newfound sense of academic confidence was a common theme. A student proudly asserted, "[M]y GRASP counselor] made me believe that I can actually do well in school." Students' anecdotes revealed how their counselors revived not only their academic work ethic, but also their sense of hope for future success. Graduation became a real possibility for one student who recalled, "[My GRASP counselor] comes in and find[s] a way for you to be able to have the same credits as your peers do, so you'll have a chance to graduate." Counselors spoke of how that drive to inspire was a fundamental part of their approach. One counselor said, "[T]he advantage of being a GRASP counselor is that I am changing the lives of students that may not have hope; may not think there was hope to graduate. They have not had anyone to help them think they can succeed, to make up the classes that they need to build a structure to be able to graduate."

⁵ Infinite Campus is an online progress reporting system used to track students' grades and attendance.

Student-Counselor Relationships

These instances of personal and academic growth directly relate to one of the most common themes emerging from the focus groups: student-counselor-relationships. At least one principal or counselor from each of the nine schools mentioned the unique relationships GRASP counselors develop with students. Counselors and principals alike attributed this to the smaller student caseload.⁶ A counselor said with a smaller caseload, “It’s easier to identify when somebody’s struggling, because I’m still able to go through and check my students’ grades out every so often. So I can catch somebody that’s slipping, whereas if I have 500 students, I won’t grab you till the end of the year sometimes.” A principal also compared GRASP counselors to traditional school counselors, and said, “[The GRASP counselor] has a specific caseload, whereas the other counselor is responsible for the whole school system. So, [the GRASP counselor] can work directly one-on-one with [their] caseload of students. [They] can build a more positive relationship with those students.”

Other counselors reflected on how GRASP’s smaller caseload allowed them the time and structure to strictly focus on counseling duties. One said, “I’m able to actually have more one-on-one’s [with] my students because I know I have a fraction of what [other counselors do].” A different counselor echoed those sentiments and said, “[B]eing a counselor as long as I have been, this was the best year of counseling I’ve ever had. As a GRASP counselor, we were able to kind of step out of that typical box that counselors are put in. So for myself, being able to do the home visits, [the students] opened up more.”

A counselor also spoke of how the smaller caseload improved their own practice by holding them to a higher standard. They said, “[With] a direct caseload, [...] you need to really deal with students on a first name basis. My students, they know when I come in the building, or when they see me, they can get whatever they need from me.”

While students were not directly aware of the program’s structural intricacies (e.g., smaller caseloads), they all recognized the relationship formed with their GRASP counselor. Students detailed a sincere and meaningful connection with their counselors during the focus group interviews. Students also recalled their relationship with GRASP counselors went beyond just school-level issues.

Programmatic Areas of Success and Growth

Principals saw GRASP as an innovative way to harness the potential of students struggling with academics and behavior. One principal noted that with particularly behind or defiant students, “[The GRASP counselor] has a way of breaking [...] barriers.” Similarly, another principal said their school’s GRASP counselor “would find a way to bridge the gap between those kids that we really can’t connect with.” Upon reflecting on their student body, another principal said, “Most

⁶ GOSA recognizes the inherent difficulty of analyzing students’ comparisons between GRASP counselors and traditional school counselors. GRASP counselors receive comparatively increased levels of resources and supports, and work with a smaller student caseloads. The nature of GRASP is, therefore, one that allows students to form stronger relationships with their counselors.

of the kids are from marginalized groups. Some have the cognitive ability to be college and career ready, but don't necessarily have the support. [Our GRASP counselor] has come in and done quite a bit of work. Not only would [they] just build a relational capacity with the students and their families, but just also [be] a generally great resource."

Some counselors attribute their ability to reach these students to the programmatic structure of GRASP. A counselor said, "One thing that I like about [GRASP] is that there is a measure of flexibility in place to customize the [counselor's work] and tailor it to the needs of the school." Based on that flexibility, a principal noted the GRASP counselor was free to find "a good path for [each student] to take." Another said it allowed their counselor to "drill down to the root cause of [...] the issues" facing struggling students.

Counselors from all nine schools spoke of ways in which GRASP positively impacted their students. One counselor noted, "I've seen kids have a lightbulb that goes off, because they're all in this kind of program. When they see their peers be successful, [...] they get motivated to do better." One counselor spoke of how necessary GRASP was, saying, "I truly feel that this is something that should be at every school – someone who could totally work with that difficult group that no one else could even probably reach."

Principals and counselors also offered suggestions to improve the program's functionality for next year. GRASP's annual renewal structure resulted in some principals having difficulty planning their hiring decisions. A principal noted, "We were on pins and needles this year, [about] whether or not it [would] be reauthorized." Others argued GRASP's short life span came at the expense of quality of hires. One administrator said, "You're not going to find good, quality people with one- to two-year grants. I think with any successful program, you need longevity." Counselors voiced concerns over GRASP's limited funding for extracurricular activities. A counselor stated, "There needs to be money set aside for field trips and activities with the students, because a lot of our students could have benefited from going to tech schools and seeing what they had to offer. Right now, they're applying to colleges that they've never seen, so everything is unknown."

III. Caseload Data

GOSA required GRASP counselors to upload data to the secure online portal once a month.⁷ This data included any updated metrics on students' attendance, behavior, credits and interventions.⁸ In an effort to display this information in a more meaningful way, GOSA created a series of one-pagers, specific to each school's caseload data.⁹ All GRASP data are classified as "SY 18-19" in the one-pager, while "SY 17-18" is the baseline comparison year. The following section includes the one-pagers, followed by individually crafted recommendations for continuing or new counselors to consider implementing in their GRASP practices during the upcoming school year.¹⁰

Summary of Quantitative Findings

Key findings on GRASP students' **graduation attainment**:

- Four participating GRASP schools had GRASP student graduation rates equal to or above 95 percent.
- Five participating GRASP schools had caseloads with higher graduation rates than their school's overall SY 17-18 rate.¹¹

Key findings on GRASP students' **tier progression**:

- Thirteen percent GRASP students moved from Tier III to Tier I by the end of SY 18-19 .
- Half of participating GRASP schools had 100 percent of their Tier I students remain at Tier I by the end of SY 18-19.

Key findings on GRASP students' **absences**:

- Five schools had a decreased average of total absences from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.
- Four schools had an increased average of excused absences from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.
- Four schools had a decreased average of unexcused absences from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.

Key findings on the number of GRASP **students with ISS/OSS**:

- The average number of students with in-school suspension (ISS) decreased by 1.25 from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.
- The average number of students with out-of-school suspension (OSS) decreased by 1.75 from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.

Key finding on GRASP students' **grade level attainment**:

- Six schools decreased the number of students performing below grade level from SY 17-18 to SY 18-19.

⁷ In the upcoming GRASP cycle (FY20), counselors will upload this data only three times (beginning, middle, and end of the year).

⁸ This report does not include intervention data.

⁹ Banneker High School did not submit any final data and is not included in any of subsequent section's analysis.

¹⁰ Banneker High School did not submit final data and is not included in this section of the report.

¹¹ Graduation rate data applies to the 4-year cohort and comes from GOSA.

One Pager Data Guide

While every school's one-pager is unique, each one follows a general format described in further detail below:

- *Graduation Attainment & Credit Recovery*
 - Included only for schools with expected graduates.
 - Indicates the number of expected graduates, along with their actual grade level outcomes and credits attained at the end of SY 18-19.
- *Grade Level Progression & Credit Recovery*
 - Included for schools with either no expected graduates or a graduation rate of 100 percent.
 - Indicates the number of students either progressing or not progressing at each grade level at the end of SY 18-19.
- *Tier Progression*
 - Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students had the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students had the highest.
 - Indicates how many students were in each Tier at the end of the baseline year (17-18) and GRASP year (18-19).
- *Behavioral Growth*
 - Average Absences¹²
 - Indicates the average number of unexcused, excused, and total absences for the student caseload during the baseline and GRASP year.
 - Number of Students with ISS/OSS
 - Indicates the number of students with ISS and/or OSS during the baseline and GRASP year.
 - Average Credits Earned
 - Indicates the average total course credits students earned during the baseline and GRASP year.
 - Grade Level Attainment
 - Indicates the number of students who were behind or on/above grade level during the baseline and GRASP year.¹³
 - Grade level is determined by the number of credits earned.¹⁴

¹² Dooly High School only recorded total absences and does not have absence-related data on their one-pager.

¹³ A student's grade level attainment is determined by subtracting the student's expected grade level (by high school entry date) by the student's actual grade level (by earned course credits).

¹⁴ All school districts in Georgia establish their own cutoffs related to high school grade level and credits earned. GOSA used each district's specific cutoffs to determine their one pager's grade level attainment calculations.

Butler High School

GRASP

Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

Caseload Demographics

Students: 132
 Males: 47 | Females: 85
 Withdrawals: 10
 Tier III Students: 8.3%



Grade Level Progression & Credit Recovery

132 GRASP students were expected to progress in their respective grade levels at Butler High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 132 students:



Grade Level Progression Rate: 89.4%

Students Recovering Credits: 1

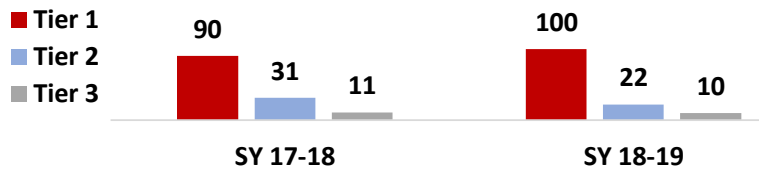
Grade Level Regression Rate: 10.6%

Max Credits Recovered: 21



Tier Progression

Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.



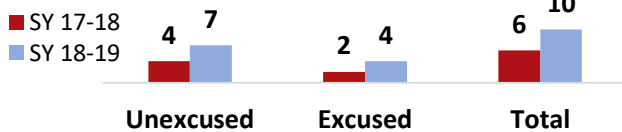
From of SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:

- 36% of Tier III students moved to Tier I
- 52% of Tier II students moved to Tier I
- 89% of Tier I students remained at Tier I

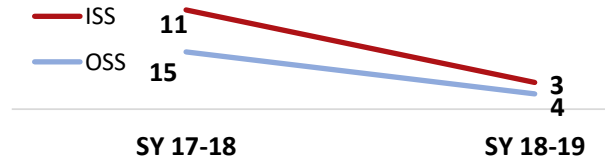


Behavioral Growth

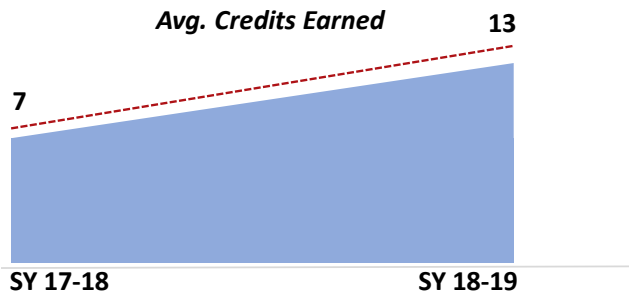
Avg. Absences (Day)



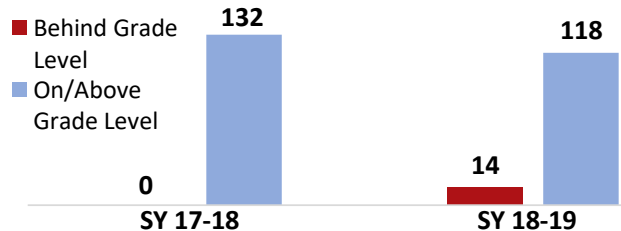
Students with ISS/OSS



Avg. Credits Earned



Grade Level Attainment



Central High School

GRASP

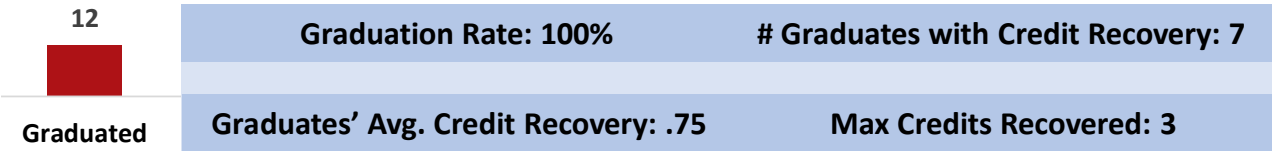
Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

Caseload Demographics

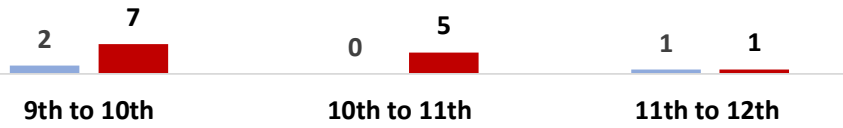
Students: 28
 Males: 20 | Females: 8
 Withdrawals: 3
 Tier III Students: 61%

Graduation Attainment & Grade Level Outcomes

12 GRASP students were expected to graduate from Central High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 12 students:

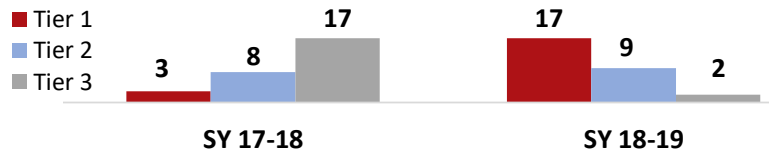


The following data detail the SY 18-19 grade level outcomes of the remaining 16 students:



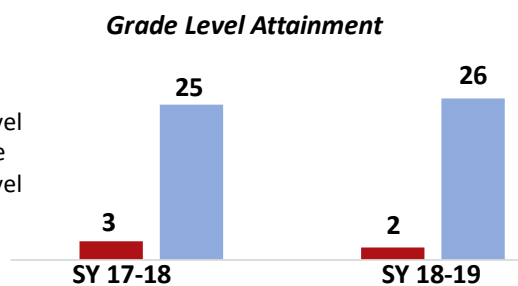
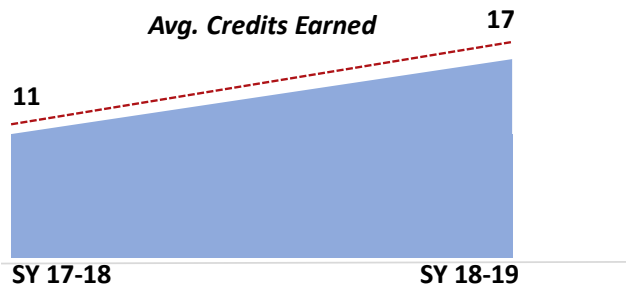
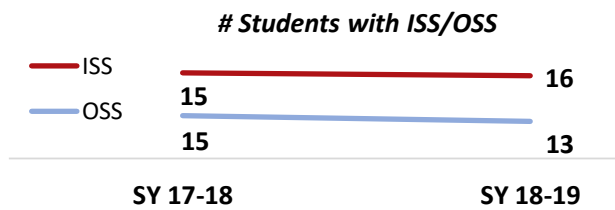
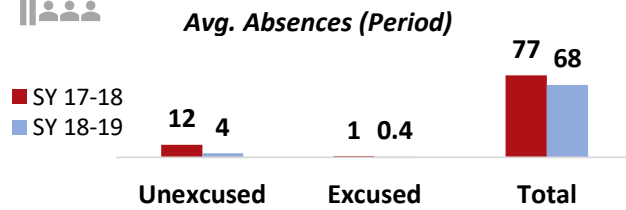
Tier Progression

Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.



- From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:
- 53% of Tier III students moved to Tier I
 - 63% of Tier II students moved to Tier I
 - 100% of Tier I students remained at Tier I

Behavioral Growth



Dooly High School

GRASP

Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

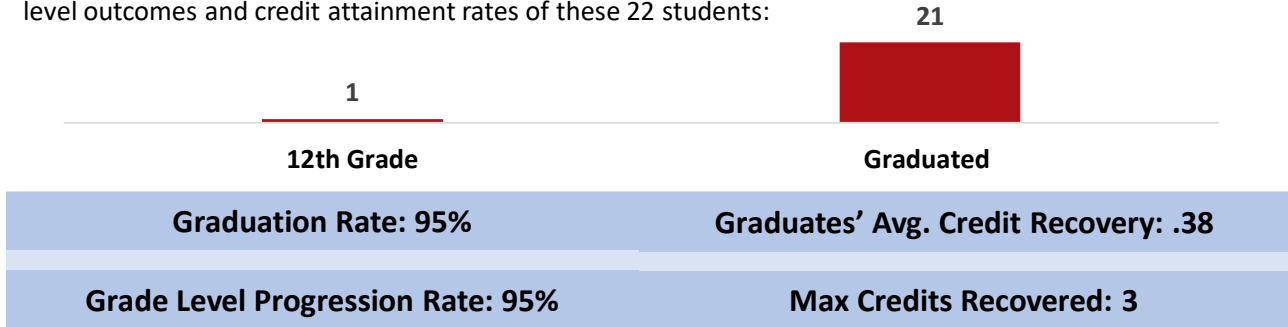
Caseload Demographics

Students: 30
 Males: 25 | Females: 5
 Withdrawals: 3
 Tier III Students: 50%



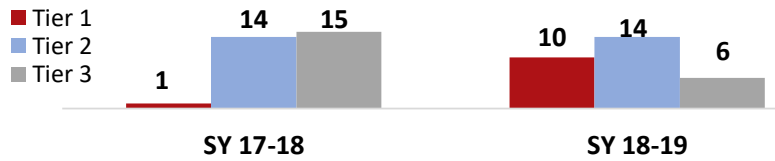
Graduation Attainment & Credit Recovery

22 GRASP students were expected to graduate from Dooly High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 22 students:



Tier Progression

Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.

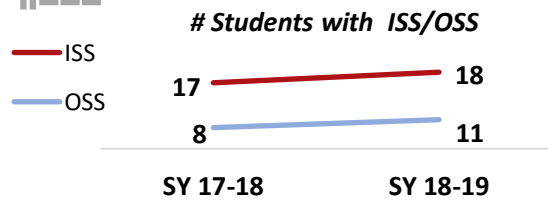


From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:

- 73% of Tier III students moved to Tier II
- 64% of Tier II students moved to Tier I
- 100% of Tier I students remained at Tier I

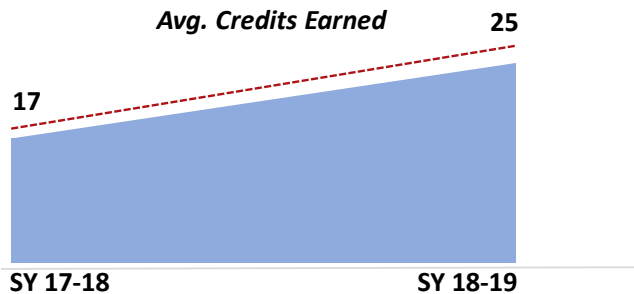


Behavioral Growth

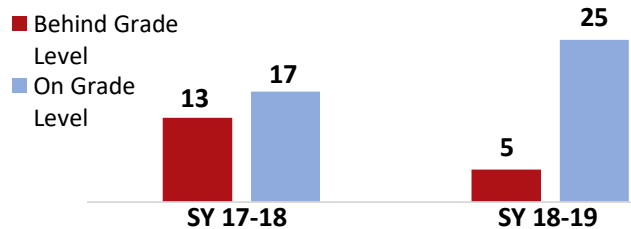


From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:

- 29% of students with ISS had 0 days of ISS
- 75% of students with OSS had 0 days of OSS
- 59% of students with ISS had increased days of ISS
- 25% of students with OSS had increased days of OSS



Grade Level Attainment



Glenn Hills High School

GRASP

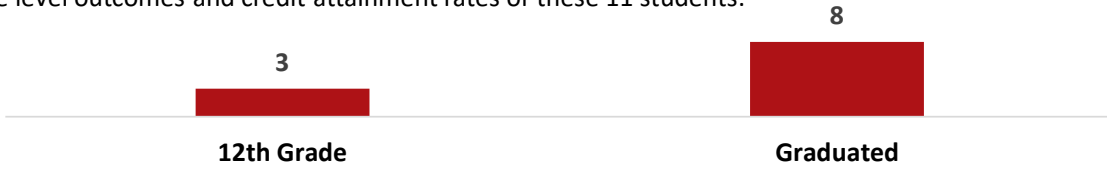
Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

Caseload Demographics

Students: 20
 Males: 12 | Females: 8
 Withdrawals: 23
 Tier III Students: 25%

Graduation Attainment & Credit Recovery

11 GRASP students were expected to graduate from Glenn Hills High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 11 students:

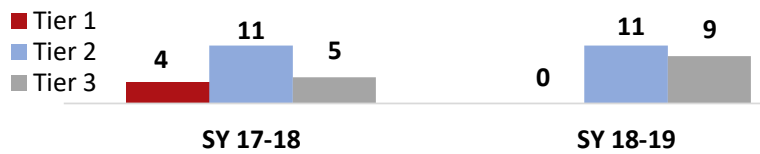


Graduation Rate: 73% **Graduates' Avg. Credit Recovery: 3.3**

Grade Level Progression Rate: 100% **Max Credits Recovered: 7**

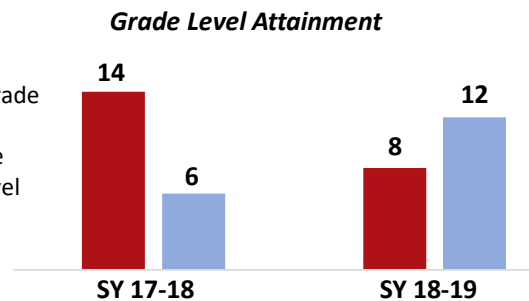
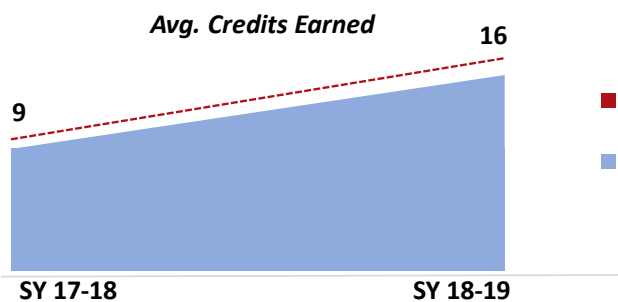
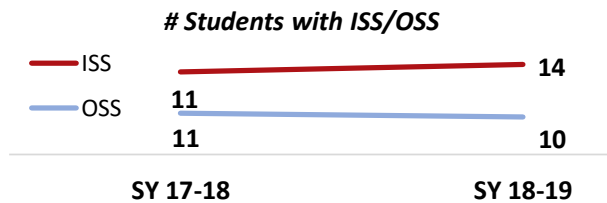
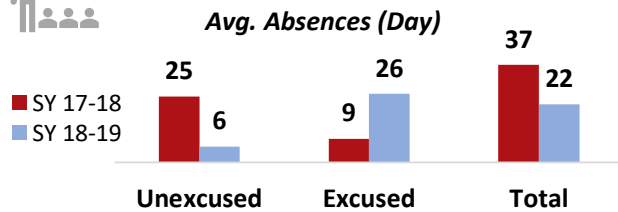
Tier Progression

Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.



- From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:
- 100% of Tier I students moved to Tier II
 - 36% of Tier II students moved to Tier III
 - 100% of Tier III students remained at Tier III

Behavioral Growth



Josey High School

GRASP

Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

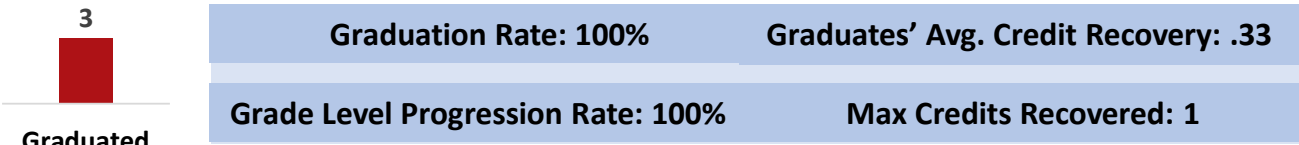
Caseload Demographics

Students: 36
 Males: 24 | Females: 12
 Withdrawals: 51
 Tier III Students: 42%

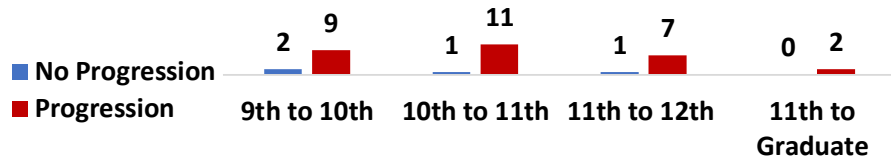


Graduation Attainment & Credit Recovery

3 GRASP students were expected to graduate from Josey High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 3 students:

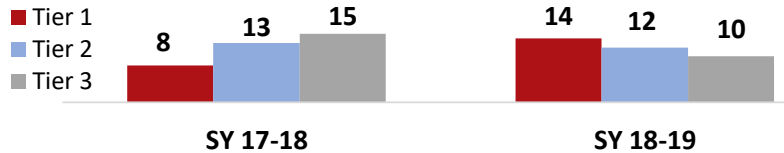


The following data detail the SY 18-19 grade level outcomes of the remaining 33 students:



Tier Progression

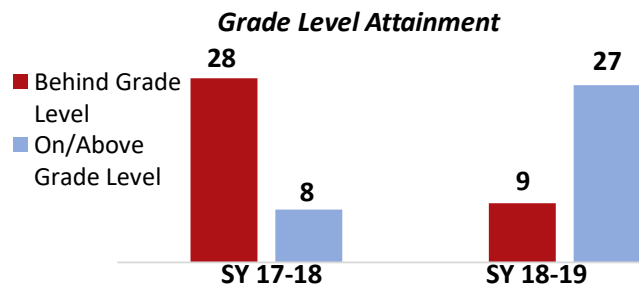
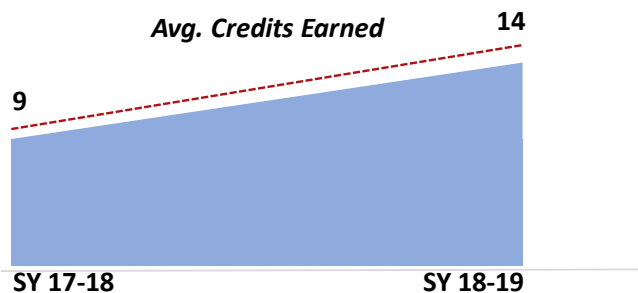
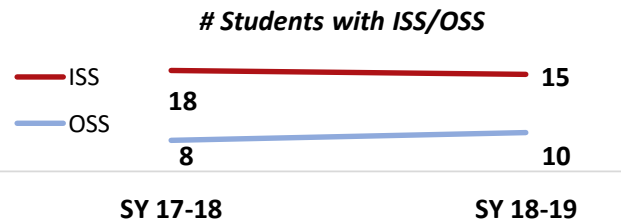
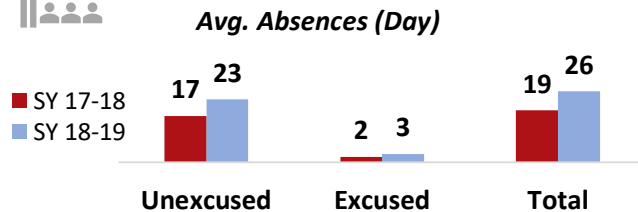
Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.



- From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:
- 27% of Tier III students moved to Tier I
 - 46% of Tier II students moved to Tier I
 - 50% of Tier I students remained at Tier I



Behavioral Growth



Southwest High School

GRASP

Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

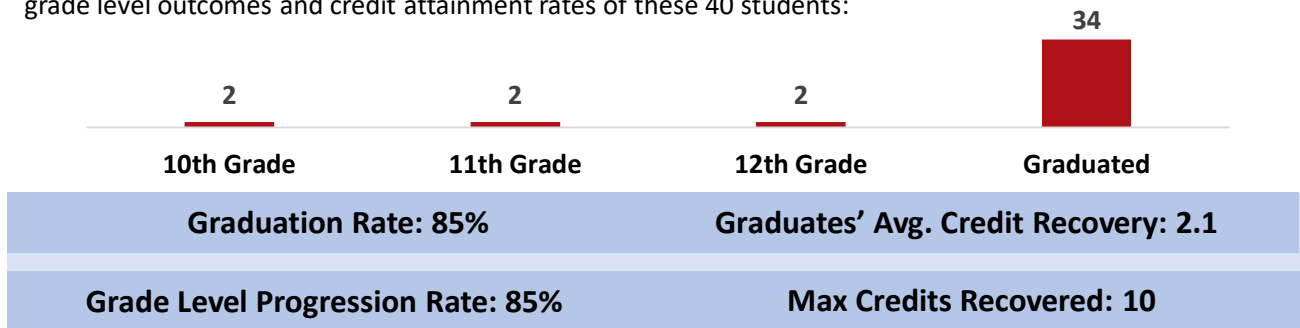
Caseload Demographics

Students: 41
 Males: 23 | Females: 18
 Withdrawals: 3
 Tier III Students: 63%



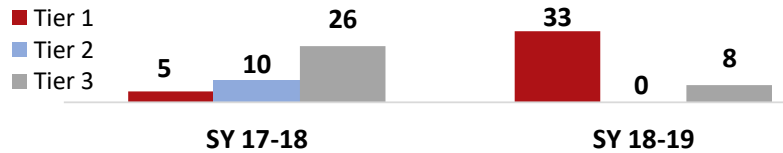
Graduation Attainment & Credit Recovery

40 GRASP students were expected to graduate from Southwest High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 40 students:



Tier Progression

Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.



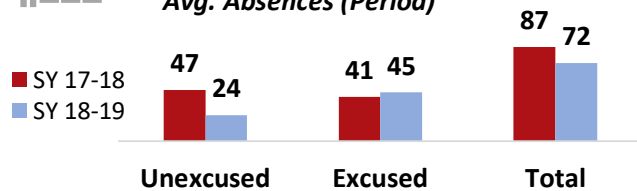
From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:

- 69% of Tier III students moved to Tier I
- 100% of Tier II students moved to Tier I
- 100% of Tier I students remained at Tier I



Behavioral Growth

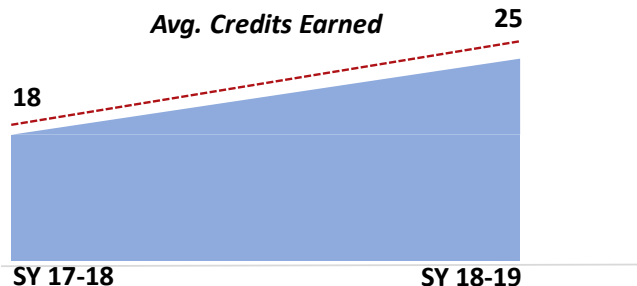
Avg. Absences (Period)



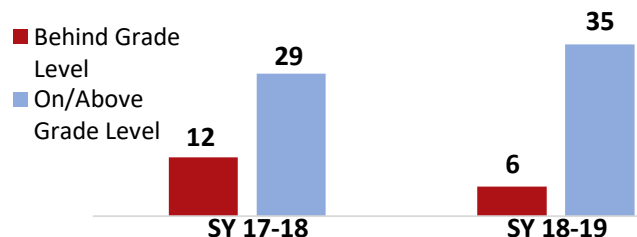
Students with ISS/OSS



Avg. Credits Earned



Grade Level Attainment



Tri-Cities High School

GRASP

Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

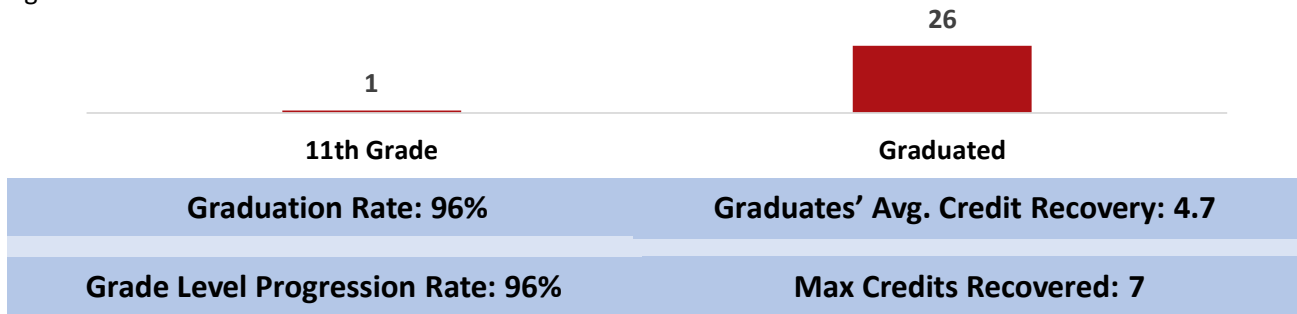
Caseload Demographics

Students: 27
 Males: 16 | Females: 11
 Withdrawals: 1
 Tier III Students: 56%



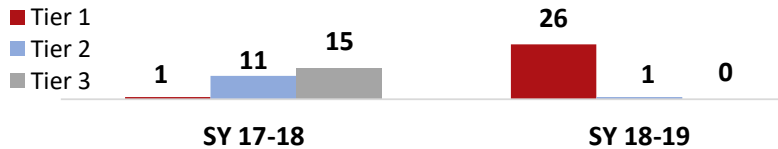
Graduation Attainment & Credit Recovery

27 GRASP students were expected to graduate from Tri-Cities High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 27 students:



Tier Progression

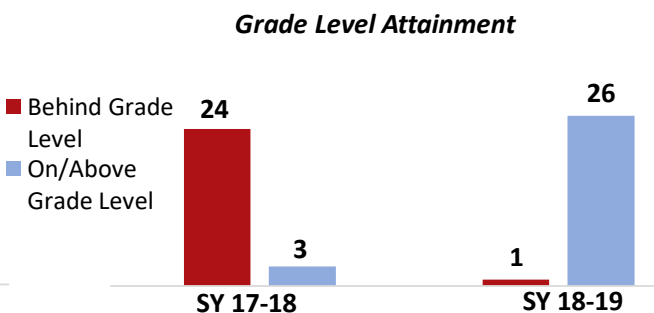
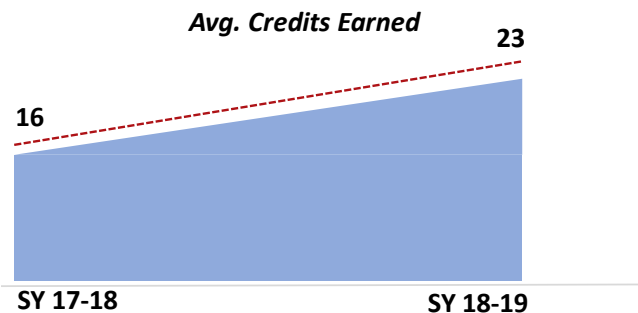
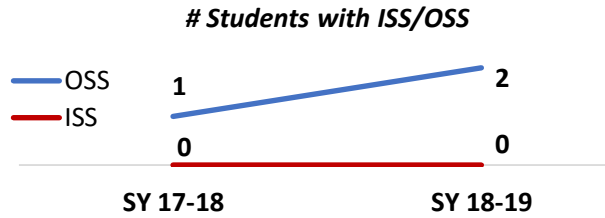
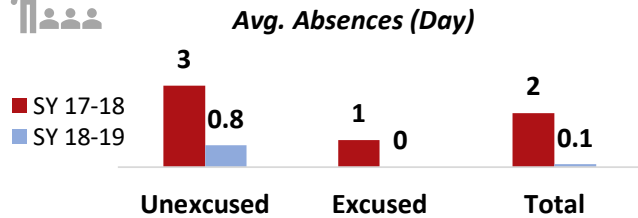
Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.



- From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:
- **87%** of Tier III students moved to Tier I
 - **100%** of Tier II students moved to Tier I
 - **100%** of Tier I students remained at Tier I



Behavioral Growth



Twiggs High School

GRASP

Graduates Ready to Attain Success Postsecondary

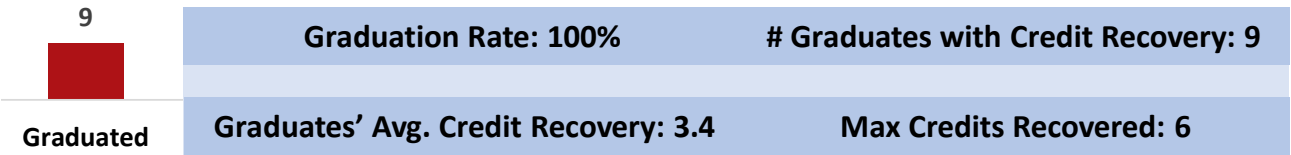
Caseload Demographics

Students: 44
 Males: 27 | Females: 17
 Withdrawals: 10
 Tier III Students: 23%



Graduation Attainment & Grade Level Outcomes

9 GRASP students were expected to graduate from Twiggs High School. The following data detail the grade level outcomes and credit attainment rates of these 9 students:



The following data detail the SY 18-19 grade level outcomes of the remaining 35 students:

■ No Progression
 ■ Progression



Tier Progression

Tiers classify GRASP students according to their academic and behavioral records. Tier I students have the lowest needs, whereas Tier III students have the highest.

■ Tier 1
 ■ Tier 2
 ■ Tier 3



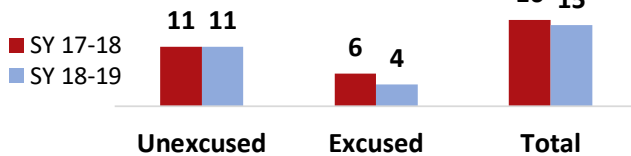
From SY 17-18 to SY 18-19:

- 0% of Tier III students moved to Tier I
- 9% of Tier II students moved to Tier I
- 24% of Tier II students moved to Tier III

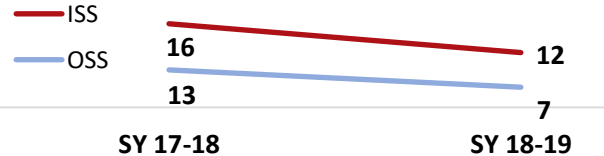


Behavioral Growth

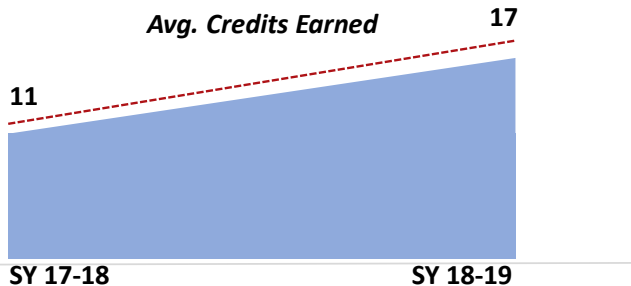
Avg. Absences (Day)



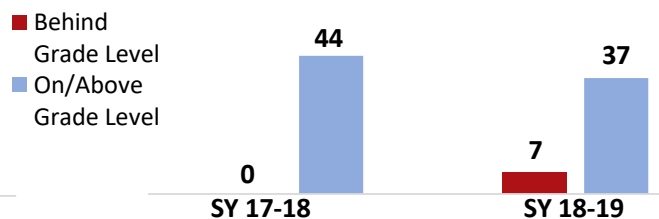
Students with ISS/OSS



Avg. Credits Earned



Grade Level Attainment



Recommendations Moving Forward

Based on SY 18-19 data and practices, GOSA recommends GRASP counselors implement the following changes for SY 19-20:

Caseload Selection

- Oversee the caseload selection process for SY 19-20.
- Increase the average number of students in the caseload from 45 to between 50-70.¹⁵

Grade Level Representation

- Select students from grades 9-12, in order to establish a caseload of students representing all high school grade levels.

Tier Levels

- Increase the percentage of students identified as Tier III (or highest needs) to at least 75 percent.

Behavioral Growth

- Implement student-specific strategies and interventions to mitigate the conditions causing students to receive ISS and/or OSS.
- Ensure all students who received ISS and/or OSS make a goal to not incur any additional days of ISS and/or OSS during SY 19-20.

Grade Level Attainment

- Align students' grade level attainment with their need level for SY 19-20.
- Ensure any students who fell behind in grade level during SY 18-19 are back on the caseload and identified as having the highest needs for SY 19-20.
- Continue to offer guidance and instruction on how caseload students, who are behind grade level, can pursue credit recovery.

¹⁵ If the counselor identifies 100 percent of their caseload students as having the highest needs, the number of students on the SY 19-20 caseload can remain the same.

Conclusion

GRASP represents one of Georgia's most current efforts to address the challenges facing guidance counselors. In its inaugural year, GRASP successfully placed and monitored nine counselors in schools with graduation rates below the state's average. Due to their smaller caseloads, GRASP counselors were able to form unique relationships with approximately 358 high school students.¹⁶ Additionally, qualitative focus group data indicate GRASP counselors felt the program enabled them to solely focus on counseling duties, thereby empowering them to improve their practice. Interviews with the schools' principals substantiate that sentiment. Focus group data also reveal students recognized the benefits of the unprecedented type of relationships they were able to form with their GRASP counselors. Quantitative student- and school-level data also bolster this claim in the following ways:

- In the post survey, six percentage points fewer students reported having difficulty forming relationships with faculty at their schools.
- Four participating schools reported a graduation rate of 95 percent or higher for their senior caseload students.¹⁷ This rate is nearly five to 16 percentage points higher than overall graduation rates at the schools' in SY 17-18.
- The average number of students' ISS and/or OSS incidences, along with unexcused and total absences, decreased overall.
- The number of caseload students performing below grade level decreased in six schools.

GRASP will continue into SY 19-20.¹⁸ In early 2019, the State Board of Education approved a second year for the first GRASP cohort, as well as an expansion into the following nine schools and school districts: Berkmar High School (Gwinnett), Clarkston High School (DeKalb), Douglass High School (Atlanta Public Schools), Forest Park High School (Clayton), McNair High School (DeKalb), North Clayton High School (Clayton), Osborne High School (Cobb), Stone Mountain High School (DeKalb), and Towers High School (DeKalb). In an effort to improve data validation during GRASP's second operational year, new and returning counselors can expect a revised data reporting process. This includes fewer master data uploads and more standardized intervention reports.

As GRASP enters its second year, the state has a valuable opportunity to assess how investment in high school guidance counseling relates to students' postsecondary success. GOSA's improved data collection methods will aid in further analyzing this relationship and making inferences about GRASP's overall impact.

¹⁶ This number does not include students who withdrew during SY 18-19.

¹⁷ This metric does not include Banneker High School.

¹⁸ The Georgia Department of Education has partnered with GOSA in overseeing and directing GRASP for SY 19-20.

Appendix

The map below indicates the 11 participating GRASP school districts.

