



# Graduation Re- Engagement Internship Program (GRIP)

Kim Lanoy-Sandoval, Executive Director, Future Focused Education  
Tony Monfiletto, Director, Instituto del Puente

# Comprehensive Strategy for Students Who Need Us the Most

Causes of chronic absenteeism:

1. Falling behind (bad grades)
2. Bored/Disengaged
3. Illness home issues
4. Misconceptions about missing school

Cochran, Lexi Lonas. "School Struggle to Solve Chronic Absenteeism Problem Since Pandemic." *The Hill*, 17 Aug. 2025, <https://thehill.com/homenews/education/5454764-school-attendance-challenges-post-pandemic>

# GRIP Prototype to Practice

## Prototype

- Identify students at risk of not graduating
- Give them a hands-on community based project to earn credits needed to graduate
- Pay students who participate
- Support their career goals after high school

## Pilot

- The pilot year recruited **343 students** reaching **79% of the proposed target** of 435.
- 99% of students were economically disadvantaged.
- 29% were English Language Learners (ELLs).
- 21% were students with disabilities.

Aligning with the equity priorities outlined in the Yazzie/Martinez decision and funded by the Attendance Initiative's line item in the PED Budget.

# Quotes

## Educator:

“A senior said, ‘when I thought there was no light at the end of the tunnel, then came the GRIP program... thank you, thank you, thank you!’”

“Sense of self-worth and self-efficacy was paramount for every child in this program. They realized they have value, talents to give, and the ability to succeed– despite years of struggle.”

“The overall idea of the program. Allowing students to reach out to the community and be more hands on and real world experience to recover certain amount of credits. I do like that there is a limit on the credits.”

**“Our largest challenge was lack of time, however, we appreciated the opportunity to help our students complete a large, big-picture project and complete graduation requirements. Given a few more months or even a year/semester to implement, this could be an even better experience.”**

## Students:

“I worked in a project this semester to make up for my missing credits and be able to graduate in time.”

”I participated in a WBL project that helped me recover the missing credits I needed to graduate”  
“The opportunity to graduate on time with all my classmates.”

# GRIP

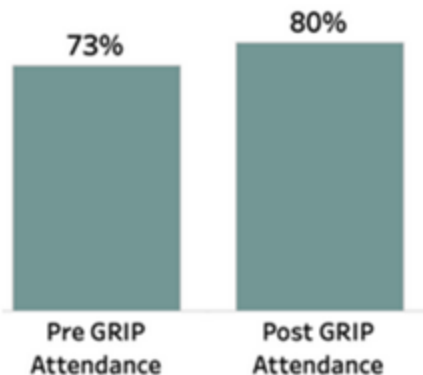
## Attendance:

- 69% of students participating in GRIP showed statistically significant improved attendance,
- ELL students showed particularly strong attendance (88%) compared to non-ELL peers (81%).

## Credit Recovery:

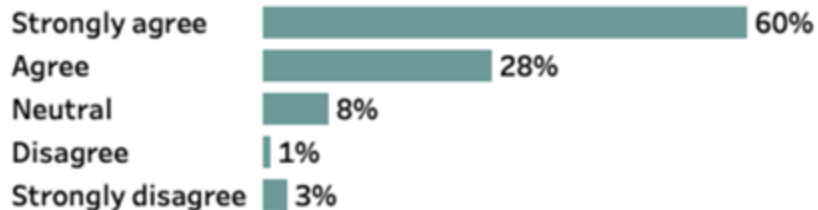
- Students earned 471.5 credits, averaging 1.6 credits per student.
- 88% recovered at least 0.5 credits, with 77% of educators reporting that most students recovered the needed credits.
- 84% of educators **rated** GRIP as "**very effective**" in increasing credit recovery.
- Students overwhelmingly rated the credit recovery experience as positive, with 87% saying it was "**much better**" than their original class.

**Figure 1: School attendance rates for students pre and post GRIP**



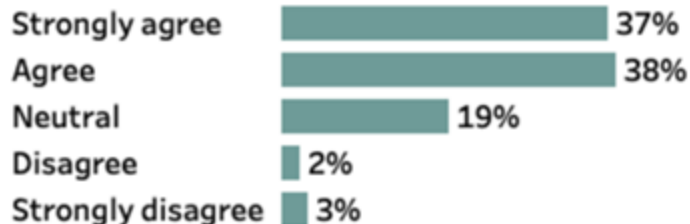
**Figure 2: How much do you agree or disagree?**

Wanting to graduate on time was my main reason for joining the program.

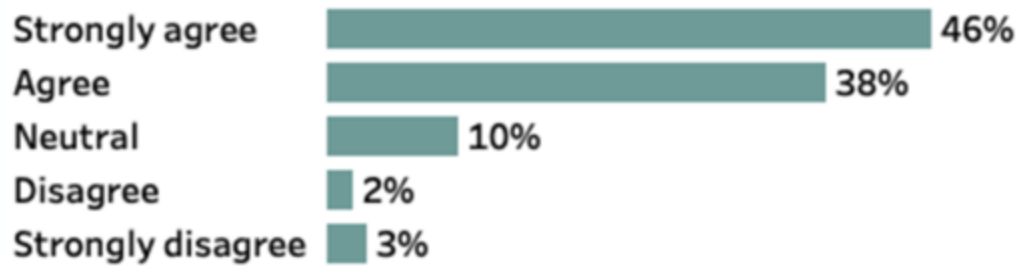


**Figure 3: How much do you agree or disagree?**

I was motivated by the opportunity to earn a stipend (money).



**Figure 4: How much do you agree or disagree?**  
**This program made me feel more motivated to come to school.**



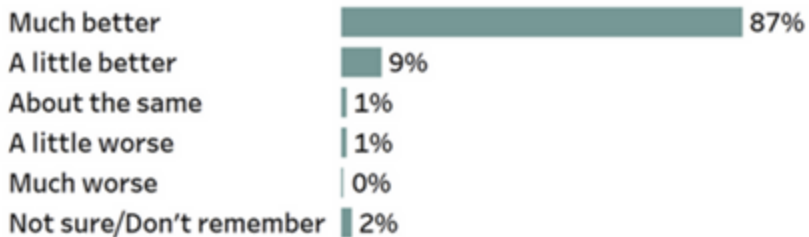
**Figure 5: Percentage of GRIP students who recovered credits during the program**



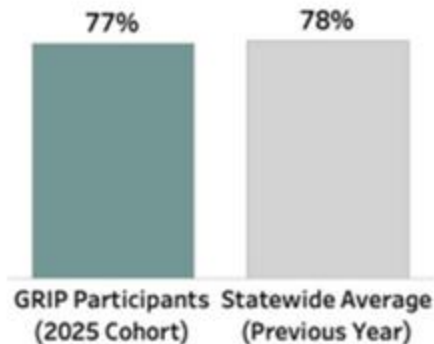
**Figure 6: Have you earned or do you expect to earn credit recovery this semester as a result of participating in any of these projects?**



**Figure 7: Compared to the original class, this credit recovery program was...**

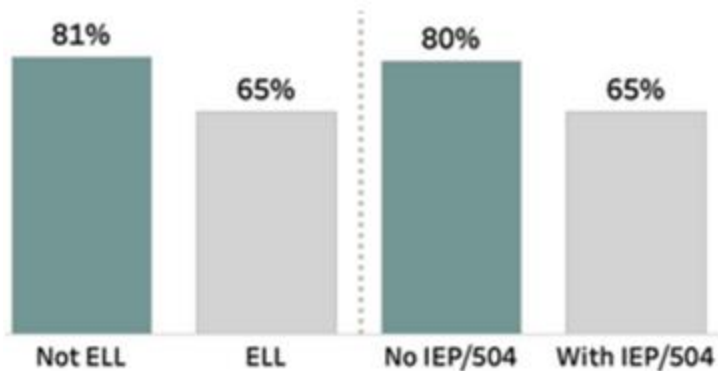


**Figure 8: Graduation Rate Comparison: GRIP participants vs. Statewide Average**





**Figure 9: Graduation Rates by Student Subgroup – GRIP Cohort 2025**



**Figure 10: Percentage of students who met 92% of the core competencies**



# Recommendations

By increasing the number of students served and educators trained, the state would build the capacity to meet the needs of all high school students that choose to graduate with a paid internship and/or capstone project.

## **Cost:**

1. 2,000 students and 100 teachers trained, \$7.0 million in 2026
2. 4,000 students and 200 teachers trained, \$14.0 million 2027
3. 8,000 students and 400 teachers trained, \$28.0 million in 2028

**Thank you!**