

# Berkeley News

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## CAL Prep shows higher expectations lead to greater success for minority students

By [Jeffrey Norris](#) | MAY 10, 2016

Although most of the 300 students at CAL Prep come from families where no one graduated from college, the secondary school founded by UC Berkeley and Aspire Public Schools in 2005 has seen all or nearly all of its seniors accepted to four-year colleges in recent years. Early data indicates that they are not only enrolling in college, but also staying in school once they get there.

A new book tells the story of CAL Prep's rise to success, first at its original Berkeley campus and now in Richmond — officially Aspire Richmond California College Preparatory Academy.

*Achieving College Dreams: How a University-Charter District Partnership Created an Early College High School* is co-edited by CAL Prep co-founders Rhona Weinstein, a UC Berkeley psychology professor, and Frank Worrell, a UC Berkeley education and psychology professor. Both — along with former Berkeley Chancellor Robert Birgeneau — are also among the book's 23 co-authors, including students, graduate students, faculty, staff, superintendents and administrators, and is published by Oxford University Press. A by-invitation book launch event will take place at Berkeley's Alumni House on Thursday, May 12.



CAL Prep is one of four public schools created by four UC research campuses — UCLA, UC San Diego, and UC Davis, as well as Berkeley — in conjunction with school districts and local communities, and is part of the UC

Network of College-Going Schools. The basis for founding the schools is to provide a rigorous college preparatory education for underserved students who have had limited access.

Research by Weinstein and others shows that low expectations lead to low achievement, while higher expectations foster greater accomplishments. Traditional schools often have been environments where expectations for minority students have been unfairly low. At CAL Prep, hierarchical environments that typify public schools have been eliminated, along with tracking and stratification in classes by skill level, replaced with an emphasis on building a positive culture at school with can-do messages.