

ACHIEVING COLLEGE DREAMS

How a University-Charter District Partnership Created an Early College High School

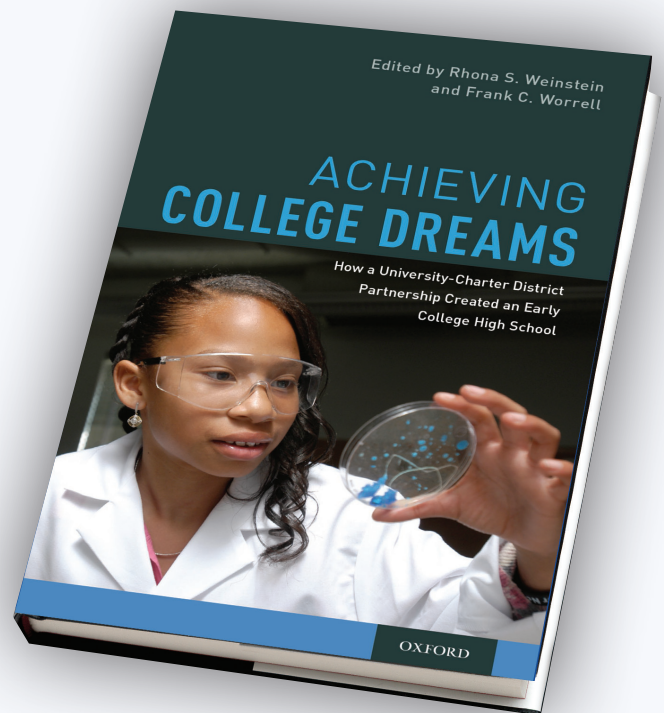
Rhona S. Weinstein and Frank C. Worrell

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Achieving College Dreams: How a University-Charter District Partnership Created an Early College High School tells the story of a remarkable 10-year collaboration between the University of California, Berkeley and Aspire Public Schools to develop and nurture the California College Preparatory Academy. Bridging the two cultures—artfully described as “Pac-Man (the charter district) meets chess (the university)” —the school serves as an exemplar in providing low-income and first-generation college youth with an excellent and equitable education. Framed by a longitudinal lens, findings from community-engaged scholarship, and a diversity of voices from students to superintendents, this book charts the journey from the initial decision to open a school to the high school graduation of its first two classes.

The book captures struggle, improvement, and success as it takes readers inside the workings of the partnership, the development of the school, and the spillover of effects across district and university. Confronting the challenge of interweaving rigor and support, its authors explore such critical ingredients as teacher-student advisories; school transition; the home-school divide; building a supportive college-preparatory culture; teaching with depth, relational power, and equity; the forging of an academic identity; and scaling up.

At a time of sharply unequal schools, glaring disparities in college readiness, and heightened expectations, *Achieving College Dreams* uniquely extends the knowledge base about how to better prepare underserved students for college eligibility and success. The book also calls for universities to step up to the plate as partners with districts to ensure both excellence and equity in secondary education for *all* children.



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“Achieving College Dreams is an honest and powerful story of a university committed to creating a high school that embodies equity and excellence. It tells a sometimes heartwarming, sometimes painful story of the trials and triumphs of a school in the making. The book’s value comes in part from the authors’ willingness to share, along with their success, what did not work and the lessons learned. I recommend it to anyone interested in connecting research and theory to practice, university-community partnerships, designing new schools, or school reform more generally.”

— DEBORAH STIPEK, Judith Koch Professor of Education, Graduate School of Education, Stanford University

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“Weinstein and Worrell take us inside the development and evolution of CAL Prep by focusing on expanding the opportunities for the education and socio-emotional development of low-income, under-represented secondary school students. They weave together diverse voices, data sets, theory and research into a volume that is compelling and engaging. The volume is of vital interest to practitioners, academics, policy makers, and laymen alike.”

— EDWARD SEIDMAN, Professor of Applied Psychology, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Development, New York University

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