



## Scientific Approach to Mitigating Discipline Problems: *Perspectives Experience Program*



**What is it?** The program involves online development workshops designed to help administrators and teachers better understand how to make all of their students feel comfortable and motivated at school. It also involves online workshops to help student better understand their development and navigate relationships with teachers. The program is designed to improve mindsets about misbehavior and to protect the quality of teacher-student relationships. Teachers and students participate in two online modules (total ~70 minutes to complete) where they are invited to engage with research articles and stories about the effectiveness of valuing student's perspectives and need for teachers' support, especially for students who are otherwise likely to be viewed as troublemakers (e.g., African American students, students from poverty, etc.).

**What are the research-based results?** In an initial implementation, Perspectives Experience Program (PEP) was employed at middle schools in three districts that served thousands of students. By the end of the school year, it halved student suspension-rates, from 9.6% to 4.8%, across all the schools. It also bolstered the perceived respect the most at-risk students, those who had been suspended in the prior year, observed from teachers. PEP is now being tested in implemented in districts across the United States that serve nearly half a million students. Further, this program now tests a component to benefit administrators in addition to teachers. This work has been funded by organizations like *Google*, published by premier scientific journals like the *National Academy of Sciences*, and covered in popular press like *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Here we outline participation. NOTE: These dates can be adjusted according to school schedules.

- **Spring (Early April-late May)**
  - *Archival Data*: District provides school records of participating schools for 1 – 3 years prior to the project
  - *Administrator & Teacher Assessment*: Administrators and teachers complete an initial online assessment of their implicit theories about student behavior, motivation, and achievement (~30 minutes)
- **Mid-Fall (late September-early November)**
  - *Parent Letters*: Schools send home parent information letters (provided by PEP team) to inform parents that their children will complete a brief survey unless they opt-out
  - *Student Survey*: Administrators or teachers organize times for classes of students to complete an online survey designed to learn about their school experiences (~40 minutes)
  - *Teacher Session*: All math or science teachers complete online activities. (~45 minutes)
- **Mid-Winter (late January-early February)**
  - *Teacher survey*: All math teachers complete a follow-up survey (~30 minutes)
  - *Student survey*: Students complete a follow-up survey (~30 minutes)
  - *1<sup>st</sup> semester school records*: The school administration provides PEP team with participating academic records. This is how we will determine the success of the program. We will not request personally identifiable information
- **Spring (June)**
  - *2<sup>nd</sup> semester school records*: The school administration provides PEP team with students' academic records

Contact: Dr. Jason Okonofua ( [okonofua@berkeley.edu](mailto:okonofua@berkeley.edu) )  
Assistant Professor; University of California, Berkeley