

Ruben Perez



Ruben Perez of Houston, Texas, has been in education since 1988. His firsthand experience with students considered at-risk (school dependent) comes from various positions. In K–8 he taught general education, English language learners, and performing arts. As a district administrator for K–12, he focused on closing the achievement gap, teacher retention, economic and cultural diversity, and districtwide dropout interventions. He specialized in working with students who felt disenfranchised with school and the community around them. He is well familiar with effective techniques that work with students who are predisposed to tantrums and apathy.

Perez was the director and supervisor of an off-campus tutoring program for a Section 8 apartment complex where he wrote curriculum and managed both teachers and students. He also served as an advisor on professional development, economic/cultural diversity, classroom management, gender differences, forming school culture/climate, and he served on a board for various in-district and out-of-district committees. As a behavioral specialist, Perez helped open a Title I elementary school, organized an annual parent symposium, conducted/supervised home visits with parents, and mentored individual students.

Perez is the creator of *Welcome to U.S. Schools: A Guide for Spanish-Speaking Immigrant Parents*. This video is in Spanish with English subtitles targeting Spanish-speaking parents. It aids in their transition to a new environment by highlighting cultural and academic differences that are often the source of conflict and confusion. The video helps to educate and empower monolingual parents to advocate for their children's education. He also gives presentations to parents in Spanish on transitioning between cultures while taking pride in and encouraging their children's academic success, cultural trends their children might adopt, and understanding how to maintain their position of authority, which is often lost in "the language battle."

Perez's motivational talks for students are centered on how to stay out of trouble, the benefits of self-reflection, cultural diversity, why keeping relationships with parents and staff strong is necessary, and the value they themselves add to this world.

Perez's motto is: "To be educated is to be liberated."

Selected workshops presented by Ruben Perez

- ♦ A Framework for Understanding Poverty
- ♦ Understanding Hispanic/Latino Students and Their Parents
- ♦ Boys in Crisis (Working with Boys Who Struggle with School)
- ♦ How the African-American Experience Affects the Classroom and Strategies for Success
- ♦ Working with Students (Classroom/School Management)
- ♦ Pre-K to Grade 2—Preventive Discipline and Students out of Control

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