

## Research To Enrich Education Policy: A Challenge For the New PACE

**Policy making. It's a mysterious and unpredictable process.**

**I**n the education arena we have learned that the crafting—and subversion—of policy occurs not only in Sacramento or Washington. School superintendents, principals, and teachers often set their own policies, from how school budgets are spent to how teaching and children are organized in classrooms. Democracy and decentralized governance is both vibrant and messy.

Policy making at all levels often appears like a free-for-all. In many ways it resembles kids on a playground forming coalitions, voicing strong claims, and feigning high levels of confidence and personal influence.

California's citizens benefit from lively debates over how to improve its public schools. Education continues to be a front-burner policy issue nationwide. In California, important policy questions abound. Will smaller classes increase reading scores? If we raise high school graduation standards, will teachers and students raise their performance levels? Can the state's fragile child-care and preschool system grow fast enough to serve 500,000 single mothers being pushed into jobs under welfare reform?

Debates over such crucial issues are long on polemics and rhetorical claims and often short on hard evidence. Under democratic policy processes, evidence and expertise often play a limited role. PACE, however, remains dedicated to showing how research and empirical evidence can enrich the way public policy

choices are formulated *and* how alternative public policies impact schools and children.

### **Broadening PACE's Expertise**

Early last year, the deans of education at UC Berkeley and Stanford began a serious reassessment of PACE's future. They concluded that PACE could become a stronger enterprise, engaged in longer-term evaluation and research projects and involving a wider circle of faculty members. The Hewlett Foundation—a steady friend and backer of PACE—gently encouraged this recrafting of the organization.

The new PACE that emerged remains dedicated to the central aim that the "old PACE" accomplished so well. Its mission is to enrich educational policy discussions.

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## PACE

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through first-rate research and public information on California's K-12 educational system. PACE aims to balance quick-response, topical studies with a sustained focus on long-term issues such as tracking the effects of smaller classes, assessing California's early education system, and taking stock of teacher preparation programs. To that end, PACE intends to expand its dissemination efforts in order to keep policy makers, education practitioners and their associations, and California citizens informed on critical issues affecting education. Our newsletter furthers this aim, presenting research findings in bite-size servings.

Long-term empirical research requires new skill mixes and a new organizational strategy within PACE. The new PACE is now collaborating with a broader range of University of California and Stanford faculty members than ever before. (For a list of new affiliated scholars, see the sidebar, "New PACE Projects" on page 6.)

PACE will continue to benefit from the leadership of Jerry Hayward and Mike Kirst—our Sacramento and Stanford directors, respectively—who are leading policy thinkers. In addition to spearheading key research efforts, they will be actively involved in bringing the knowledge gained from this research to a variety of public policy debates. Among these is PACE's new seminar series which will bring together top scholars and leading Sacramento policy makers.

In this issue, we sketch our long-term efforts at developing state standards, evaluating the Class Size Reduction (CSR) initiative, and assessing the state's child care and early education system. Mike Kirst and Edward Wexler review new empirical findings on how California's \$1.5 billion CSR initiative is actually affecting teachers, classroom organization, and children's learning. Also included is an outline of new PACE projects and details on our new publication series.

### Partnership for the New Millennium

As we approach the new millennium, PACE will continue to play a key role in helping to shape educational policy in California. With renewed support from our education deans, a new board of advisors, and our governmental and foundation benefactors, Californians can count on PACE to provide timely, thoughtful, and well-researched reports intended to raise the quality of policy debates.

We welcome your comments on the new directions detailed in this issue of the newsletter. We encourage you to attend our public seminars, and to read and comment on our new publications. In short, we invite you to enrich education policy debates and school reform by studying and giving life to research results.

A sense of history, clear definitions of the policy problem, and sound evidence create smarter policy options. To ignore these ingredients leads to policies that seem appealing today, but prove ineffective tomorrow. All of us share the responsibility of injecting evidence and tough thinking into the long-term task of improving schools and student learning. —Bruce Fuller

## Smaller Classes Aren't a Cure-All

Eighteen state legislatures have passed, or are considering passing, bills dictating smaller classes as a way to improve the public schools. In New York, the Legislature authorized \$142 million solely for the hiring of some 3,600 new teachers by 1999 to relieve overcrowding in New York City schools.

In many places, reducing the number of students per class is an end in itself, valued above many other educational goals. But so far the research about the effectiveness of cutting class sizes is inconclusive. It's not clear whether it improves academic performance, as measured in test scores.

Class size reduction is overwhelmingly popular with parents and teachers. In California, where legislation has recently gone into effect, teachers believe they have more time to help lagging students and to cover more material. Parents feel that decreasing the number of children in classrooms is worth doing no matter what, even though it creates many new problems. About 30 percent of the new teachers in California are uncertified and schools have given up libraries, computer labs, and pre-school centers to create more classroom space.

New York City schools already don't have enough space; classes are taught in closets and hallways. That squeeze, plus the logistical nightmare of hiring 3,000 more teachers for the school year that begins shortly, prompted the state to delay carrying out the new class-reduction policy for another year.

Researchers have had difficulty finding out whether smaller classes affect students' test scores because there has never been a national evaluation. Studies have had to rely on scattered samples of class reductions in a few school districts.

But a 1989 Johns Hopkins study that did a larger analysis of 14 different studies from around the country found that even when classes were reduced to 15 students, the effects were minimal. Students in the smaller classes only gained about four points on a 100-point test.

Urban parochial schools have proved that smaller classes may not be necessary. They tend to have large classes, but their students have higher achievement scores than their counterparts at many public schools.

Despite the studies questioning the effectiveness of reducing class sizes, policy makers keep pointing to one study in Tennessee that showed about a 10-point gain in test scores when classes were shrunk from 22 to 25 students to 13 to 17 students.

Granted, the study was well-designed. It followed more than 10,000 students from 75 schools for 10 years. But this was one study in one state

and may not apply to schools in urban areas. Tennessee already had ample facilities with licensed teachers, and the students were mostly white and African-American. In California, half the students are either Hispanic or Asian and many speak limited English, so the schools have difficulty finding enough bilingual teachers. Moreover, the effectiveness of teachers depends on their ability to change instruction styles when moving from a large group to small group.

Cutting class size is expensive. In California, it is costing an extra \$800 or so per pupil per school year (not counting the cost of new classrooms). Portable classrooms cost more than \$50,000 each for cities like New York and Los Angeles. National studies report increasingly tight labor markets for teachers because of rising enrollment and a large number of retirements.

Despite these pressures, politicians are taking advantage of the national economic boom to adopt strict rules on class sizes. In so doing, they are committing their states to one of the most expensive educational reforms possible and neglecting lower cost, effective alternatives like intensive teacher training, expansion of summer school, tutoring, and investing in technology.

When the good times end, states won't have the luxury to adopt sweeping, unproven reforms. And parents and politicians alike may discover that reducing class sizes was not the magic bullet they thought it would be. —Michael Kirst

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# Charter Schools: Are They More Effective?

Just six years after the first charter school legislation passed in Minnesota, 28 states have now enacted similar laws. Today there are over 600 charter schools operating throughout the U.S., serving 165,000 children. President Clinton hailed charter schools in his 1996 re-election campaign, and Congress recently tripled charter school funding from \$18 to \$51 million.

The charter school concept developed, in part, out of a dissatisfaction in some communities over the safety and quality of local schools, as well as a desire for greater local control over all aspects of running schools. In brief, charter schools make it possible for communities to create their own public school and to operate free of state regulations.

Charter schools are now extremely popular in the U.S. But will the current faith in charter schools result in concrete gains in student achievement? Will charter schools exacerbate an already serious problem in many districts of racial and academic stratification of students? Are charter schools more innovative than traditional schools? Will all commu-

nities have an equal opportunity to successfully implement charter schools? These are among the questions being advanced in a new PACE study.

## An Inside Look at Two Schools

Very little is known about how charter schools attempt to innovate, or whether such reforms make a real difference in teacher motivation, parental involvement, and children's learning. Our study is exploring the inner workings of two California charter schools in an attempt to discover what school and community members value most about them. Researchers are observing what occurs in the classroom, at staff meetings, and on the playground. They are also interviewing principals, teachers, students, parents, and district staff.

One answer researchers hope to discover is how the roles of these different school members have changed, if at all, from their traditional public school roles. Researchers also will be studying how school members perceive a number of school practices, including 1) the new organizational structure of the school; 2) freedom

Charter schools make it possible for communities to create their own public school and to operate free of state regulations

from regulation; and 3) challenges to be innovative in teaching and curriculum.

The two schools and communities chosen for the study reflect the wide variability seen among charter schools. One is an urban middle school serving a low-income Latino community. The other is a network of parents who are home schooling their children. The "school" is a set of local resource centers that provide materials and instructional assistance to families who are home schooling their children—and serves a rural, middle-income community.

Several interesting themes have emerged from our research at each site. At the urban school site, we have observed teachers struggling to balance their traditional classroom duties with the demands of shared governance in their new, autonomous organization. Also, strained relationships with the sponsoring district are requiring the school to expend valuable time negotiating to ensure that they receive all services and monies to which they are entitled. At the home school site, the school is challenged to accommodate the influx of students caused by the return of home-schooling families to the public school system.

More research is necessary to inform policy makers and local educators on the efficacy of the charter school movement. It is still too early to assess how charter schools will impact America's public school system. PACE's research effort will reveal exactly what unfolds inside charter schools in order to determine whether uplifting faith in charters matches long-term results. Stay tuned for two new research papers early next year. —Luis Huerta

## PACE Part of Consortium Designing CSR Evaluation

PACE is leading the work of a consortium of educational researchers in developing a comprehensive plan for evaluating California's Class Size Reduction Program. The State Board of Education, at its April 1997 meeting, allocated \$60,000 to support the group's work.

The consortium will present its findings to the state board this fall. Members of the consortium include PACE, RAND, American Institutes for Research, WestEd, CREST, and Ed Source. A group of California foundations is supporting planning work. A new grant to RAND from the U.S. Department of Education will aid initial work on the statewide evaluation.

### The plan will examine the effect of class size reduction on:

- student achievement and other student outcomes;
- educational opportunities for minority students, limited English proficient students, special education students, and economically disadvantaged students;
- quantity and quality of teaching, including professional development and instructional practice;
- educational facilities; and
- the parallel effects of other educational reform programs.



# Teachers Enthusiastic Over Small Classes, But Does the Initiative Foster Better Teaching?

Principals and teachers alike have welcomed California's Class Size Reduction (CSR) initiative. The program, which went into effect in July 1996, mandates participating school districts to reduce class size to 20 or less beginning in grades one and two.

One result of the new law is that a majority of schools are now facing classroom shortages. Districts are also having a difficult time locating qualified teachers to fill the new positions. And although many teachers now have smaller classes, nearly one-third report they have made few changes in their teaching practices. On the positive side, a majority of teachers report that smaller classes have made it possible to accelerate instruction and work with students more frequently in small groups.



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These are among the findings of a consortium of educational researchers, led by PACE, in the first comprehensive school-level study of how educators across the state view the new \$1.5 billion CSR Program. The current pilot study of five of California's largest urban school districts is part of a long-term, longitudinal study of the CSR Program. Our team has just submitted a comprehensive evaluation plan for the program to the State Board of Education (see article on page 3).

Later this month PACE will release its survey results, which are based on interviews with staff in 89 schools statewide. The report, titled *Small Is Beautiful: But Will Smaller Classes Boost Children's Achievement?*, explores the views of principals, teachers, and bilingual coordinators on how the reduction in class size has impacted four main areas: school facilities, teacher preparation, teaching strategies, and student behavior.

## Not Enough Classrooms

Close to 80% of all principals surveyed reported that implementing the CSR requirements created a shortage in classroom space. One in four principals found it necessary to double up classes, so that two teachers and 40 students end up



sharing the same classroom. In addition, principals often had to convert auditoriums, libraries, computer labs, and even teachers' lounges into classrooms, and sometimes this resulted in the elimination of educational programs.

## Inequities in Teacher Quality

PACE researchers surveyed principals about the number and credentials of teachers hired to accommodate CSR. They found that 40% of newly hired teachers are working with only emergency credentials, and more than half are not certified to teach Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. "Emergency credentialed" is a euphemism meaning not fully trained to teach.

PACE then asked teachers about their qualifications to work with LEP students. While 80% responded they were qualified, the majority are not bilingual, and over 40% have not been trained to provide LEP services.

Schools serving greater percentages of LEP students—particularly within the Los Angeles and Long Beach Unified School Districts—are actually hiring fewer teachers qualified to provide LEP services (40% of teachers) than are schools with lower percentages of these children (55% of teachers). This is due in part to the statewide shortage of LEP-certified teachers, but also may be exacerbated by district teacher allocation policies, and therefore warrants further study. That such schools are located within communities with

lower median household incomes raises legitimate equity concerns about the quality of education in such neighborhoods. As CSR expands this year, this inequity in the distribution of quality teachers will likely worsen.

## CSR and New Classroom Practices

It seems unlikely that CSR will yield its intended benefits unless teachers are appropriately trained to work with fewer students. Recognizing this, California policy makers require districts to offer staff development aimed at improving teachers' instruction and classroom management in smaller classes. According to 30% of teachers interviewed, however, their district and school inservice programs have not addressed skills specific to working with fewer students.

While many teachers seem to have rethought their teaching approach due to the reduction in class size, there is evidence that others have not. Nearly 70% reported they had not changed their approach to grouping since CSR, and more than one-third indicated they had not changed their instructional approach.

Nearly 80% of the teachers said that CSR affected their pace of instruction, with 75% characterizing this change as somewhat or substantially faster. And although an overwhelming majority of teachers still group children by ability, two-thirds reported that reduced class sizes allowed them to spend more time providing small group instruction. As a result, students were moving more frequently from lower to higher ability groups.

Approximately two-thirds of teachers also reported spending more or the same amount of time providing whole-class instruction. They told researchers that smaller classes make both whole-class and small-group instruction more effective. Many mentioned it was easier to facilitate discussions with a group of 20 students. On the other hand, teachers indicated that having fewer students frees up additional space to set up learning centers in the classroom. While some children work cooperatively at these centers, teachers can then provide direct instruction to small groups.

Teachers, principals, and coordinators alike believe CSR will lead to higher student achievement, and so far most seem to view the program as a positive change for public education. Burgeoning student enrollment, however, coupled with high teacher retirement rates leave CSR's future viability in question. In future studies, researchers will need to distinguish between potential long-term difficulties with CSR and those associated with its hasty implementation. —Edward A. Weiler

# Creating State Curricular and Graduation Standards

## An Ambitious Initiative

Amidst all the public attention and the flurry of activity surrounding class size reduction, California schools also are embroiled in an effort that may prove, in the long run, to be a more significant and difficult reform—the implementation of rigorous curricular standards.

School districts are girding themselves for the onslaught of reports and edicts from an assortment of boards, task forces, commissions, advisory panels, and gubernatorial and legislative directives. This comes at the same time they are facing increased pressure from parents and the general public to improve student performance.

Underlying this apparent pandemonium, however, lies a core of important activities which, if carefully implemented, have the potential to improve outcomes for students. At the heart of these efforts is the current California attempt to agree upon a set of standards for its students, and PACE has been centrally involved in this work.

PACE Director Gerald Hayward chaired the commission that developed high school graduation standards in mathematics, and PACE Director Michael Kirst has served as an advisor to the State Academic Standards Commission. In addition, Hayward serves as PACE's representative to the State task force that is grappling with the challenge of determining rewards and penalties for school districts' compliance with the new standards.

## High School Graduation Standards

Among the most important of these activities have been the efforts of the California Education Roundtable to define rigorous content standards for mathematics and English for all California high school graduates. After more than a year of study by task forces involving high school teachers, administrators, college and university faculty, and community and business representatives, the Roundtable forwarded its recommended standards to school districts. We hope these will be used as benchmarks for the high school English and mathematics curriculum.

These standards—resulting from a year of study by task forces involving high school teachers, administrators, college and university faculty, and community and business representatives, and endorsed unanimously by the Roundtable—have been forwarded to school districts in the hopes they will form important benchmarks for the high school curriculum. New task forces are currently at work converting the content standards into performance standards for distribution in the spring of 1998.

## College Preparation Standards

Simultaneously, the Academic Senates of the three segments of public higher education have adopted

expectation statements for students who intend to pursue higher education. These are aligned with the Education Roundtable graduation standards, but higher levels of mastery in mathematics and English are expected of these students than of high school graduates. These standards are designed to send clear signals to students and teachers about the appropriate level of preparation essential for being able to do college level work.

■

*State leadership must provide clear, unequivocal expectations of what students are expected to know and be able to do.*

■

## Standards for All Grade Levels

The Standards Commission authorized by AB 265 has the awesome burden of designing content and performance standards for all core curricular areas in all grade levels by July 1998. AB 265 directed the Commission to adopt standards comparable in rigor to academic content and performance standards used in the "school systems of America's global economic competitors." These standards were also to reflect the knowledge and skills necessary for "California's work force to be competitive in the global, information-based economy of the twenty-first century."

The first set of standards, almost completed, will cover reading, writing, and mathematics, followed by standards in history, social science, and science. Once adopted by the State Board of Education, these standards will form the basis for:

- The development and adoption of a statewide, standards-based assessment of basic academic skills in grades 4, 5, 8, and 10.

All students will be tested in reading, writing, and mathematics. Similar requirements will follow for history, social science, and science. These will be matrix-sample tests, designed to yield valid and reliable estimates of statewide, school district, and school performance.

- The alignment of the newly adopted standards with a second test, the new Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, for grades 2 through 11.

The new STAR test will be administered for the first time in the spring of 1998 and will be

aligned with the standards for administration in the spring of 1999. This test is intended to provide individual student scores, as well as scores by school, district, county, and state.

- The alignment of each of the core curriculum frameworks with the new standards as the frameworks come up for adoption.
- The adoption of statewide instructional materials aligned with the standards.
- The adoption of district learning standards.

The state standards are not mandatory. Districts are required to adopt their own standards consistent with the state standards.

Once the new standards are approved they will drive statewide tests, curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, and, ultimately, local district standards.

## Completing the Accountability Circuit

The 20,000 pound gorilla in all this is the SB 1570 Task Force. SB 1570 requires the Superintendent to submit a plan for State Board of Education approval by December 31, 1997 for a system of "positive and negative incentives." Such incentives will reward schools for absolute levels of academic achievement and improvement. They will also intercede with schools that fail to meet the expectations through a system of graduated interventions.

SB 1570 completes the accountability circuit by assuring that performance on the tests adopted to meet the new standards will have consequences, both positive and negative, for schools and districts. Current drafts of the Task Force's work call for high stakes rewards and sanctions—a necessary component of a successful standards reform package. A detailed draft of this Committee's work will be available for distribution in the winter or in early spring 1998.

## Getting From Here to There

Standards are a vital but not sufficient condition for reform. If the goal becomes the establishment of the standards and sufficient attention is not paid to the conditions required so students can meet the new standards, the standards effort promises to be another in a long line of promising but unproductive reform efforts.

Improved curriculum, instructional materials, assessment systems, better prepared teachers, and changes in the organization and management of schools are all necessary to bring about improvement in student performance. The goal is not establishing the standards—the goal is achieving the standards.

Ensuring that students are able to meet these higher standards will require a substantial and unprecedented commitment by all those associated with education.

*State leadership must provide clear, unequivocal expectations of what students are expected to know and be able to achieve.*

*Continued on page 6*



Schools must engage parents and the community to help students reach the new standards.

Parents need to know and understand early on—even as early as the primary grades—the increased expectations. Parents should become familiar with the school's curriculum, engage in a continual dialogue with school personnel regarding their child's achievement levels, and provide continuous support and encouragement.

Students must be prepared to work harder and must accept responsibility for their own learning, with support from parents and teachers.

Sufficient attention must be paid to the conditions required so students can meet new standards.

Prospective employers and postsecondary institutions must take into account more than grades or the receipt of a diploma in assessing readiness for employment or collegiate studies.

Schools of education play an important role in this effort and must increase their emphasis on the strong preparation of new teachers. Furthermore, teacher preparation programs must expect new teachers to understand the importance of these content standards, to rethink their role as effective teachers, and to change their teaching practices so that all their students meet these standards.

School districts must demand that prospective new teachers have the necessary background to adequately teach to the new standards.

Finally, communities need to hold schools accountable for providing the educational environment that will foster student success.  
—Gerald C. Hayward

## NEW PAGE PROJECTS:

### Widening the Circle of Affiliated Scholars at UC and Stanford

The new PACE is sparking the development of policy research projects, conducted by a diverse range of faculty members and graduate students at UC campuses and Stanford University. New affiliated scholars include:

Russ Rumberger (UC Santa Barbara) is studying why drop-out rates in southern California high schools vary substantially among low-income communities. The major explanations relate both to family mobility, as well as how inviting high schools appear to be in the eyes of parents and students.

Patricia Gandara (UC Davis) and Eugene Garcia (Berkeley) are leading PACE's efforts to focus on Limited-English Proficient (LEP) children as a major part of our evaluation of the Class Size Reduction Program. Little is known about how the hiring of emergency credentialed teachers—who often are not fluent in Spanish or other non-English languages—is affecting the learning of LEP students.

Martin Carnoy (Stanford) is leading a study of how the quality of secondary schooling varies across low-income communities, and the effects of variable educational quality on the early labor market experiences of Latino and African-American youths. ▲

Susan Holloway (Berkeley) is conducting PACE's longitudinal study of how young children's early development is being affected by welfare reform and corresponding changes in preschoolers' child-care settings. ▲

Eric Rofes (Berkeley), an advanced doctoral student, is directing a national study of how charter schools are influencing local school districts' responsiveness and commitment to innovation.

Norton Grubb (Berkeley) is leading the *New School Finance Project*, an attempt to understand how the financing of local schools could be better tied to investments and school improvement strategies that boost achievement. Such efforts have been tried in Kentucky but not yet in California.

Those projects with a ▲ have published working papers or journal articles that can be ordered from the publications list on page 7. Future PACE newsletters will list publications with our research partners, including WestEd, RAND, Yale University, and the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network.

# NEW PAGE PUBLICATIONS

To order publications, please complete and cut out the form below.  
Each of the publications costs \$15, which includes shipping and handling.

**Martin Carnoy and Richard Rothstein (1996). "Hard Lessons in California: Minority Pay Gap Widens Despite More Schooling, Higher Scores."**

This timely paper examines whether higher levels of educational attainment among Latino and African-American youths in California is leading to more equal wage rates in early adulthood. The authors conclude that school attainment and test scores have risen for both groups of students, but the gap in initial wage levels (relative to Anglo youths) is growing wider. Implications for affirmative action and wage policies are discussed. Published jointly with the Economic Policy Institute, Washington, D.C.

**Bruce Fuller and Susan Holloway (1996). "Family Selection of Child Care Centers."**

This nationwide study examines disparities as to which parents—across

social-class and ethnic groups—enroll their children in a child-care center or preschool. The report describes how inequalities in access are linked to family income, ethnicity, and parents' own beliefs about school readiness. Summaries of the report appeared in the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* and also may be ordered from PACE. Published in the December issue of *Child Development*.

**Gerald C. Hayward, Barbara C. Brandes, Michael Kirst, and Chris Mazzeo (1997). "Higher Education Outreach Programs: A Synthesis of Evaluations."**

This report analyzes the evaluation methods and conclusions of the University of California's current outreach program, identifies effective practices, and makes recommendations for the improvement of programs and methods used to evaluate the programs. The report is critical of prior evaluations and the

guidance they provide to increase or decrease specific interventions. Among its findings: the lack of comparison groups limits the usefulness of evaluations in California and other states. Included is a detailed examination of how to improve UC Outreach evaluations and implications for UC policy. Commissioned by UC for use in recent UC Board of Regents' decisions to expand outreach programs.

**Bruce Fuller, Fran Kipnis, Yvonne Choong, and Casey Coonerty (1997). "An Unfair Head Start: California Families Confront Gaps in Preschool and Child Care Availability."**

This paper reveals sharp gaps in the per capita availability of formal preschool and child care organizations between affluent and working-class communities in four California counties. The analysis also focuses on the state's 200 poorest zip codes and reveals similar disparities. The authors

argue that working-class and middle-income youngsters will start school already behind children from affluent families. In addition, the scarcity of organized child care may undercut new welfare reform efforts and place preschool-age children at even greater risk. This is the first report from PACE's Growing Up in Poverty Project, financed by the Packard Foundation.

**Lisa Carlos and Mike Kirst (1997). "California Curriculum Policy in the 1990s: 'We Don't Have to be in Front to Lead.'"**

This paper examines the political and policy context surrounding the evolution of California's statewide curriculum as it relates to language arts, math, and science frameworks in the last decade. This period of reform is recounted from the perspective of a wide range of state officials, experts, and researchers whose opinions formed the basis for this study.

## Order Form

Please indicate the reports you are ordering (@ \$15 each), and return this form with your check made payable to "UC Regents."

- "Hard Lessons in California" (Carnoy & Rothstein)
- "Family Selection of Child Care Centers" (Fuller & Holloway)
- "Higher Education Outreach Programs" (Hayward & others)
- "An Unfair Head Start" (Fuller & others)
- "California Curriculum Policy in the 1990s" (Carlos & Kirst)

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# PACE Helps to Shape Child Care and Preschool Portion of Welfare Reform Legislation...

California's new welfare reforms approved by Governor Wilson in August, incorporate key PACE recommendations put forward last year in its final report on child care policy and management.

Child care and early education has become a huge enterprise over the past three decades, with state spending growing by over \$300 million this year, rising to \$1.3 billion in total appropriations. But the child care "system," managed largely from Sacramento, remains a patchwork of several programs, each with separate eligibility criteria, regulations, and a hopeless amount of paperwork.



*A major aim of the new welfare reform bill is to make it easier for parents to use the state's child-care system.*



Last summer PACE issued its final report on child care reform, following a three-year study conducted jointly with the departments of education and social services in Sacramento. PACE was delighted to see its core recommendations included in the welfare reform bill approved in August. The two departments administering child care and preschool funds must now report on how to consolidate and simplify their programs' many requirements.

A major aim of the new welfare reform bill is to make it easier for parents to use the state's child-care system. The bill calls for the development of a single, streamlined application for child-care programs. The new application is intended to help parents decipher the sometimes confusing array of programs and subsidies available for child care and preschool. The Legislature also approved

additional funding so that the state's 62 resource and referral agencies can make consumer information more widely available on the quality of local child-care options.

The welfare bill urges local agencies to build a single waiting list for parents. Currently parents may be placed simultaneously on many waiting lists, one for each center or preschool. In many parts of the state access seems impossible because the numbers on waiting lists are in the thousands. At the same time, vacancies at other locations—such as within family child-care homes—may go unfilled. Policy makers believe a consolidated application process will remedy this problem. A central waiting list and vacancy date will lessen the wait for thousands of families, many of whom are under enormous pressure to find a job due to welfare reform.



Under the legislation, local child-care councils will receive additional funding and be held accountable for conducting more thorough needs assessments. The types of questions they will need to ask may include the

following: Is after-school care sufficient? Can welfare recipients find child care on weekends or in the evenings when they are at work? How can the supply of infant care be increased? ■

## ... and PACE Begins New Study of Impacts on Children's Early Learning

How will welfare reform affect where young children spend their days as their mothers return to work? What is the quality of child-care and preschool education that is utilized by single mothers as they struggle to get off welfare? When young children spend less time with their working mothers and more time in child-care, how will this affect their early development and learning? These are the central questions that PACE will be studying over the next three years under new grants from the Packard Foundation and federal agencies.

To date, most evaluation work linked to welfare reform has focused on the mother's employment experience.

Over 60 percent of welfare recipients are single mothers with at least one preschool-age child.

Comparatively little attention has been paid to their children, whose lives and daily care will be changing substantially due to the new welfare reform laws. Over 60 percent of welfare recipients are single mothers

with at least one preschool-age child. These women may now be given as little as 48 hours notice to find child care before they are expected to attend job search or training activities.

Although the Legislature has added over \$300 million in new child-care support in anticipation of a significant increase in demand for child-care services, it is not known what type and quality of services will result. Also unknown is how patterns of child-care use will change. Welfare reform means that a half-million children will see their mothers much less during the work week. No one knows where these infants, preschoolers, and school-age children will spend their days, or what the quality of these home- and child-care settings will be like. —Gerald C. Hayward ■

*Descriptions of this study are available from PACE. Initial research papers will be published this fall and winter.*