JOURNAL ARTICLE REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

Correct Format: All written work done outside of class time must be typed using 1" margins, Times New Roman 12 font double, justified to the left, spaced, stapled or secured in a binder. Make sure the Journal article has been identified using the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Cover page with Student's name, Name of assignment, Date and Course Number attached to the work. All paraphrases or quotes must be footnoted. Spelling and grammar must be correct. Plagiarism will result in a 0 for this assignment.

Choose an article from a professional Journal related to your course (ECCE 1101- anything related to Early Childhood). If you have many choices, try to pick something of interest to you. Remember the cover page and rubric should be attached to the report.
Make sure that the text of the article is long enough 5-10 pages (disregard the pictures and graphs). Remember that you will have to:

a) Include a cover page;
b) write a full page summary of the article; and
c) write a full page evaluation.

So if the article is too short you will not have enough to write about.
You must submit your article for approval; and attach a copy of the approved article to your report.

JOURNAL ARTICLE REVIEW SUGGESTIONS

1) Develop an outline which includes:

   Summary Information

   a. The main theme (What were the authors attempting to prove or disprove?)
   b. The objective(s)
   c. Subjects involved and time period, if applicable
   d. Research involved
   e. Conclusion drawn
   f. Recommendation, if applicable; and

   Evaluation Information

   a. Focus of paper and subjects identified
   b. Methods and research used was understandable and useful to you? If useful, how?
   c. How did the article impact you in working with young children?
   d. How would you use the information when working with young children?
   e. Would you share any of this information with other teachers? If yes, what would you share? If no, why would you not share it?
   f. Would any of the information be helpful to families? If yes, what would be helpful? If no, why it is not helpful?
   g. What other information do you wish the author had addressed in the article?

2) Read the article

3) Then re-read writing down **in your own words** key information from the article that addresses your outline areas and questions.

4) Summarize the article (**in your own words in paragraph form**) by including
    a. 1st paragraph - An introduction that identifies the article, its author(s) and the main theme;
    b. 2nd & 3rd paragraphs – Discuss the objectives of the article and if subjects were used, describe them;
    c. 4th & 5th paragraphs – Note the research used by the author, the conclusion drawn, and any recommendations made.
    d. When citing direct quotes or information directly from the article, you must APA Style. (APA Examples attached)

5) Your evaluation (**in your own words**) of the article which includes:
    a. Did these researchers explain the focus of the paper and the subjects?
    b. Were the methods used in a way that was understandable and useful to you? Explain
    c. What impact did the results of this research have on you as a student of Early Childhood Education?
    d. Would you use any of this information in working with young children? Explain
    e. Would you share any of this information with other teachers? Explain
    f. Would any of this information be helpful in working with families? Explain
    g. What other information do you wish the researchers had addressed when conducting this study?

A FEW WRITING TIPS

1) Follow the format guidelines
2) Always refer to the rubric so you know how your journal article will be evaluated
3) Try not to be redundant in writing your thoughts
4) Be conscious of the length of your sentences
5) Be aware of and use punctuation marks, where needed
6) First time an acronym is used there should be an explanation. *Example: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Next time this organization is referred to you may just use NAEYC.*
7) Avoid using abbreviations
8) Use paragraphs as much as possible, as you change your sentence focus

ASSIGNMENT

1) Critique a newspaper article
2) Follow the steps given

Family Literacy Funding Reductions and Work-First Welfare Policies: Adaptations and Consequences in Family Literacy Programs

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ABSTRACT
This article examines the consequences of two concurrent policy changes for family literacy programs in Pennsylvania: (1) the transition from federal (Even Start) to state funding and (2) the elimination of adult education as a work activity for welfare recipients over 22 years of age. Using qualitative data from 10 family literacy programs, the article shows how the two policies triggered a cascade of changes in areas such as enrollment, recruitment, student composition, use of staff time, and interagency collaboration; and how professionals adapted to these changes. The study provides a nuanced understanding of how state- and local-level actors' responses to policy shape day-to-day operations in family literacy programs.

INTRODUCTION

Family literacy (FL) programs provide adult, parent, and early childhood education for low-income and immigrant families. In 2003–04, federal Even Start family literacy programs served 50,000 families, and thousands more families participated in state- and privately-funded programs. Prior research has illuminated how accountability (Belzer, 2003, 2007; Belzer & St. Clair, 2005), welfare reform (Imel, 1995; Martin & Fisher, 1999; Sparks, 2001; Strawn, 1998), and related policies affect adult basic education (ABE) programs. However, the scant research on family literacy-related policies (Alamprese & Voight, 1998; Knell, 1996; National Center for Family Literacy, 1998) has hindered our understanding of how FL professionals respond to shifting state and federal policies.

This article examines how two concurrent policy changes—the transition from federal to state funding and new state guidelines for welfare-to-work activities—have shaped 10 FL programs in Pennsylvania. In recent years, Even Start funding has declined sharply—from $225 million in 2005 to $99 million in 2006 and $66 million in 2008–2010. To prevent closing FL programs, Pennsylvania administrators switched 11 of 21 Even Start programs to state funding between 2006 and 2008. The programs survived, but compliance with a different set of regulations triggered unanticipated changes. With further reductions in Even Start funding likely, this study provides timely insights into the ways FL programs adapt to such predicaments.

The new welfare policy also stemmed from the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (Pub. L. No. 109–171, 120 Stat. 4). It increased the "work participation rate" for welfare recipients by changing the base year used to calculate the rate. In 2006, Pennsylvania's work participation rate increased from 0% to 50% (Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare [DPW], 2006). To avoid forfeiting up to $70 million in federal funds, DPW redefined the "core activities" that count as "work participation." All employable welfare recipients must participate in core activities such as employment, job training, or community service, typically for 20–30 hours per week. However, as of October 2006, *adult education (ESL, FL, ABE, GED) is no longer a core activity for clients over age 22.*

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Adult education counts as vocational educational training "only when combined with a career-specific curriculum and embedded within a program that prepares the individual for employment" (DPW, 2009, p. 47). Clients may participate in adult education "directly related to employment" as a *non-core* activity (p. 36). Although intended to ensure DPW compliance with federal standards, this policy profoundly affected FL programs by disrupting the tradition of referring welfare recipients who were not deemed "work ready."

This article draws on Weaver-Hightower's (2008) metaphor of policy ecologies to trace the unforeseen consequences of Even Start budget reductions and the intensification of Work First welfare ideology. Both policy changes altered relationships within the policy ecosystem and triggered a cascade of programmatic changes—most but not all of which directors considered negative—in recruitment, student composition, use of staff time, and interagency collaboration, among other areas. The study elucidates how state administrators' and agency staff members' adaptations to federal and state policies, respectively, shape microlevel operations in FL programs serving predominantly poor families.

POLICY ECOLOGIES

Following Weaver-Hightower (2008), we conceptualize education policy as existing within a complex ecology of interdependent components. In brief, a policy ecology includes "the policy itself along with all of the texts, histories, people, places, groups, traditions, economic and political conditions, institutions, and relationships that affect it or that it affects" (p. 155). This theoretical lens helps us highlight connections among institutions, the "ripple effects" (p. 162) of policy, and the agency of less visible, less powerful actors.

A policy ecology includes four analytical categories: *actors*, *relationships* (e.g., competition, cooperation), *environments and structures* (e.g., boundaries, pressures, inputs), and *processes* (Weaver-Hightower, 2008). The most prominent actors in our study, from most to least powerful, were federal education and welfare policy makers, state-level DPW and ABE/FL administrators, and FL program directors and staff. (We include FL and ABE in the same policy ecology because FL programs provide adult education, both program types are subject to the National Reporting System for Adult Education [NRS], both typically report to the same state-level agency, and local organizations often administer both types of programs.) We focused on FL program directors and staff because they are the "frontline" workers who implement state and federal regulations (Mazzeo, Rab, & Eachus, 2003).

Program directors characterized the relationship between welfare and ABE/FL policy makers and service providers as competitive (they often served the same population), whereas funding changes affected programs' cooperative partnerships with other agencies. Important facets of the environments and structures included a steep reduction in inputs (Even Start funding), pressure to place welfare recipients in jobs, boundaries between welfare and education agencies, and various extant conditions, discussed below.

Finally, the salient *processes*, described further in the findings, included *entropy* ("the breakdown or disordering of an ecology"), *adaptation* ("change made by actors to align themselves with altered environments in an effort to move toward equilibrium"), *conversion* ("dramatic change to the basic structures and dynamics in an ecology"), *conservation* ("preservation or reduction in the use of resources in an attempt to maintain sustainable inputs"), and *anticipation* ("prediction of, and action based on, the future needs of actors in the ecology" [Weaver-Hightower, 2008, pp. 166–167]). Together, these processes create an atmosphere of "constant change" (Weaver-Hightower, 2008, p. 156).

Boundaries between federal, state, and local government institutions figure prominently in this policy ecology. Each shapes the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of educational policy (Deem & Brehony, 2000) and shares responsibility for ABE and FL funding, policy development, and administration (Chisman, 2002). The federal government distributes adult education funding to states through competitive grants and provides administrative guidance through regulations (Belzer, 2003, 2007; Belzer & St. Clair, 2005). State education agencies serve funding, policy making, and administrative functions (Chisman, 2002); as mediators between federal policies and local service providers, they are vital to understanding federal policy implementation (Belzer, 2003, 2007). Local programs are mainly involved with administration and policy implementation (Belzer, 2007; Chisman, 2002). The way policies are implemented depends upon local programmatic features (Belzer, 2003) and the congruence between the goals of policy makers and implementing agencies (Meyers, Riccucci, & Lurie, 2001).

A noteworthy extant condition in the ABE/FL environment is the transfer of authority for design and management of social programs from the federal to state governments. This approach—the "devolution revolution" or

the "New Federalism" (Nathan, 2006)—"is reflected in block grants to states, reduced federal aid, and greater flexibility granted to states in implementing federal policies" (Hayes, 1999, p. 4). The Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA, Pub. L. No. 104–193, 110 Stat. 2105) replaced open-ended federal matching grants under Aid to Families with Dependent Children with capped block grants under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (Alamprese & Voight, 1998; Hayes, 1999), designed to help adults obtain jobs (Mazzeo et al., 2003, p. 45).

Welfare reform was not intended to shape ABE/FL policy or practice. Nevertheless, its emphasis on "Work First," coupled with mandatory work requirements and lifetime cash benefit limits, disrupted the ABE/FL policy ecology and program operations (Belzer & St. Clair, 2003; Fisher, 1999; Hayes, 1999). For instance, FL programs increased instructional hours, emphasized workplace skills, and incorporated more work-oriented activities (Alamprese & Voight, 1998).

The shift toward Work First accelerated when the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Pub. L. No. 105–220, 212.b.2.A, 112 Stat. 936) subsumed federal ABE funding under workforce development legislation (Belzer & St. Clair, 2003), compelling states to prioritize "labor force attachment" over "human capital development" (Fisher, 1999). Since states' TANF block grants are reduced if they do not meet the work participation rate, welfare recipients are directed toward work instead of adult education or training (Hayes, 1999; Knell, 1996). States have latitude, however, in deciding *how* to promote postsecondary access, define allowable work activities (Mazzeo et al., 2003), and use education and training in welfare-to-work programs (Hayes, 1999).

Increased pressure to meet accountability requirements is another relevant extant condition. As stipulated by the NRS (Belzer, 2007), ABE and FL programs must use standardized measures to demonstrate compliance with federal and state standards for employment, educational gains, and other indicators. These accountability measures create dilemmas and pressure for staff because of differing underlying philosophies (Sparks, 1999) and because changes in the policy ecology such as welfare-to-work requirements may impede attainment of accountability goals.

METHOD

This study arose from the first author's prior research with three Even Start programs, one of which could no longer serve its niche population—teen mothers in high school—after shifting to state funding. We wanted to learn what this funding change meant for all 11 such programs, especially since other Even Start programs would likely follow suit. After hearing FL professionals attribute declining enrollment to the new welfare requirements, we expanded the study to address both topics: How have changes in government funding sources and welfare policies concerning work and education affected family literacy programs? How have program personnel responded to these policy changes?

Ten of the directors from the 11 Even Start programs that switched to state funding agreed to participate in the study. We selected directors because they are the actors "who interpret and make these policies real" (Mazzeo et al., 2003, p. 166). We believed a focus group format would allow participants to compare and contrast experiences. Located in urban, rural, and suburban regions across Pennsylvania, the programs were contracted to serve, on average, 55 families. Most of the programs were managed by larger organizations that provided federally- and state-funded programs such as Early Reading First or Move Up. (Administered by DPW and the state adult education agency, Move Up is an adult education program for welfare recipients who meet certain criteria.) In 2007–2008, 2471 families participated in Pennsylvania's federally- and state-funded FL programs. Participants' median family income was $7,500, and 60% received public assistance.

In spring 2008, we conducted three focus groups by telephone with 10 individuals (9 program directors and 1 staff member) from nine programs, three programs per focus group. The director of the tenth program was interviewed separately. We used qualitative research procedures (Patton, 1990) to elicit participants' viewpoints concerning (a) the successes, benefits, and challenges brought by the switch to state funding; (b) how the funding change and new welfare guidelines affected their programs; (c) staff responses to these policies; (d) their opinions of these policy changes; and (e) their recommendations for changing welfare-to-work requirements. We recorded and transcribed each 60–90 minute focus group or interview. Some identifying information has been omitted to protect confidentiality.

We employed thematic analysis (Charmaz, 2006) to index and code the transcripts, using NVivo software, Version 8 (NVivo, 2008). We used interview questions to create a tentative coding system, which we revised after sentence-level coding began. These codes were used to take apart segments of text and to develop an "analytic handle" to

construct abstract ideas for interpreting the data (Charmaz, 2006). Member checks (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) entailed asking the directors to review a comprehensive report before distribution to state ABE/FL administrators. (We often share our anonymous findings with administrators because they have long supported our research by granting access to programs and quantitative data.)

Although directors identified some benefits of state funding and several described an easy transition, this article emphasizes the negative repercussions because directors unanimously criticized the new welfare policy and identified more challenges than benefits from the funding switch.

TRANSITION FROM EVEN START TO STATE FUNDING

The funding transition triggered numerous ripple effects (described below in descending order of magnitude) not because it reduced funding per se, but because it meant following different regulations. These, in turn, prompted personnel to maintain equilibrium and avoid ecological breakdown, or entropy (Weaver-Hightower, 2008), through adaptation, conversion, conservation, and anticipation.

Dual Enrollment

Within this policy ecology, programs that had served dual-enrolled students and teen parents in school experienced the greatest disruption in equilibrium. Nine of the 10 directors cited the dual enrollment policy as a drawback of state FL funding regulations. State performance standards require Even Start and state-funded ("Act 143") FL programs to serve a certain number of families. Even Start programs can dual-enroll, or count as participants students who receive FL services such as parent education and simultaneously attend another agency's adult education classes. This means Even Start does not have to provide adult education. However, to prevent duplication of services, state-funded FL programs cannot dual-enroll; they must use state monies mainly to provide adult education (Pennsylvania Department of Education [PDE], 2009, p. 39). One person attributed this rule to state administrators' interpretation of regulations "rather than the way [they] were written," underscoring policy actors' latitude in interpreting federal and state policies (Hayes, 1999; Mazzeo et al., 2003).

First, the dual-enrollment policy hampered some programs' ability to meet enrollment targets. This matters because state program quality indicators—for instance, enrolling 95% of contracted families—are used in evaluation and funding decisions. Program staff adapted to the loss of dual-enrolled students and the increased pressure to meet enrollment standards by investing more time and resources in student recruitment. In some cases, directors lamented, meeting enrollment standards inadvertently influenced program placement decisions:

> What it really boiled down to most of the time, unfortunately, is not what program [in our organization] provides the best service, but do they have kids. You know, it's just that cut and dried: Do you have children, and if you do have children, this [family literacy] is where you're going. That is not a good way to run the program and provide services, but because we can't dual-enroll, we're always thinking of, "Well, we need the numbers..." That was something that we didn't think about before [as Even Start]. We thought about services first and then numbers later.

Thus, in organizations offering various educational programs, the dual-enrollment restriction placed personnel in the undesirable position of needing to enroll some students in FL even though it was "not one of the best places for them to be."

Second, the dual-enrollment policy reconfigured or eroded programs' partnerships with agencies that provided adult education for dual-enrolled students, illustrating entropy within the ecology. For instance, a director noted that if they could not continue dual-enrolling families with a community college, it would "devastate the way we have operated" and "reflect horrifically on how we have operated as a program [in terms of] meeting our standards."

These remarks highlight a third challenge: Because they now had to provide adult education themselves, some programs struggled to meet the 50-hour standard for annual adult education instructional hours per student, in addition to instructional hours in parent education, interactive literacy activities, and early childhood education. Programs adapted to this change by expanding adult education offerings, which required budget adjustments and a shift in skills, mindset, roles, and use of staff time. For instance, the "hardest transition" for one program was shifting from the Even Start collaboration model to providing adult education themselves, a "huge cultural change" for personnel accustomed to supervising field

staff, not teaching. These changes in programmatic structures (e.g., needing to provide all four program components as well as services at multiple sites), combined with lack of funding to hire more instructors, prompted programs to cross-train staff. They had to become "experts in ESL and adult ed and GED and distance learning and pretty much everything, whereas before, when we were dual-enrolling, we could put people in a very specific, targeted class." The ability to teach different subject areas at multiple sites "requires training." Although directors considered cross-training a "good thing," they believed it "took away from direct services."

Fourth, the dual-enrollment guidelines shifted staff time use. In one program, the staff adapted by spending more time on adult education instruction and less time conducting home visits and working with schools and other partners. Another director's "biggest concern" was that the dual-enrollment policy created a "disconnect" because teachers spent more time preparing for adult education, leaving less time to "bond" with students: "I feel like my program is getting watered down because we have to do the adult education component as well—not allowing our teachers adequate time to do planning and work with families individually." Finally, due to increased instructional preparation time and time spent traveling to sites, the staff in some programs worked longer hours without additional compensation.

Teen Parents in School

Four of the 10 programs identified the inability to serve teen parents enrolled in high school as a profound change within the policy ecology. (Only Even Start programs can enroll such students [PDE, 2009, p. 57].) Having lost 60% or more of their participants, these programs adapted by altering recruitment strategies to meet enrollment standards. One program's small size and rural location magnified the consequences of this regulation, since they had a limited population of potential students. Conversely, large programs and those serving few teen parents in school experienced few, if any, adverse effects.

A few programs used other funds to provide some services for teen parents—an example of resource conservation—but they could not count the parents as enrollees or the services toward instructional hours. Thus, "Our numbers do not reflect what we truly do." This predicament evoked conflicting feelings: "You do not want to encourage them to drop out, but at the same time, when we find one did drop out, we almost cheer [because they can enroll in FL], which is not a correct thing." Moreover, directors related that teen parents no longer benefitted from FL services to help them stay in school, and that the programs' partnerships with high schools had diminished. One person lamented, "You built this relationship up for eight years and now all of a sudden you can't do it"; another noted that "when we could no longer work with their teen parents" school personnel no longer saw the FL program as a resource. From her perspective, "losing that relationship with the schools and not incorporating some of the federal guidelines [concerning teen parents] into the state guidelines" was short-sighted and "hurt the state." The loss of high school partnerships is an example of entropy.

Shift From Center-Based to Site-Based Programs

To adapt to the loss of dual-enrolled students, teen parents, and welfare recipients, three programs (two urban and one rural) shifted from a center-based model to one where teachers "go to different sites and provide the services in the community." However, the time spent driving to distant sites and unpredictable attendance complicated teachers' daily routines and lowered morale: If students "don't show up," then teachers have "to drive back to the center and wait to go to the next site. That is bothersome for them."

Several directors described the ramifications of the site-based model for students:

> There is not a sense of belonging to anything because they are out there in the hinterlands with two or three other families and they don't know from a bigger perspective what family literacy is all about, about how families are helping each other and things like that.

The center-based model created more of a "community feeling" because it gathered families across neighborhoods and helped students feel "like they were going to school."

The site-based approach also incurred extra costs for services and supplies, hindering directors' efforts to conserve resources:

> It's like we're excessively mobile now. ... It costs more money and I think it's not a good use of money to have to go somewhere to serve five families and...somewhere [else] to serve two more families because you are trying to meet your numbers.

Home Visiting Requirement

A fourth difference was that, unlike Even Start, state-funded programs were not required to conduct home visits. Most directors celebrated this change yet also identified drawbacks, illustrating the contradictory effects of alterations within this policy ecology. Most programs stopped or reduced home visiting, which relieved "pressure" and freed teachers' time for other duties, but simultaneously weakened relationships with families:

> When we were required to do home visits I think we knew more about the families and we did more. ... The families form a better bond with the teachers when they have them come into their homes. ... You also see the weaknesses and the strengths the parents have when you go into their homes and they are there with their kids. So that really helps the teachers know what's helping in class and what they need to work on.

To "retain some of [the] intimacy" afforded by home visiting, one program instituted monthly teacher-student meetings to review students' progress, while another resumed occasional home visits.

The elimination of required home visits also altered program partnerships. For instance, several school districts and child welfare agencies had relied on a FL program to conduct their home visits and also sent the program many referrals. When the program reduced home visits, these referrals subsided, foreclosing a longstanding student recruitment source.

Loss of Material Resources

The loss of resources or inputs triggered by the policy changes also shaped the ABE/FL ecology. Per state regulations, one program could no longer be a direct contractee and therefore lost the sub-contractees that had provided adult education. Due to the loss of matching funds (required by Even Start but not by state regulations) among other factors, the program "went from a huge program with a lot of funding to this little program with hardly any funding."

Four directors mentioned the loss of state summer reading program funds, used for staff salaries and other expenses. (These funds were cut to support state FL program operating budgets.) Consequently, programs provided fewer summertime services and scrambled to find new funding sources, a challenge one director described as "trying to leap across the gulley in three steps":

> Where do you put your foot when you are in the middle of the air? You know, if you don't jump from one end to the other in one fell swoop, it's a long way down when you are dancing on air.

During this period of uncertainty practitioners sought to maintain equilibrium by conserving resources, for example, offering summer services by collaborating with Head Start.

Additional Programmatic Responses

Finally, FL personnel adapted to state requirements by adjusting their services, recruitment, outreach, partnerships, and interpretation of accountability measures. To increase adult education hours, several programs initiated or expanded distance education offerings—one of the few benefits of the transition noted by directors. Some programs worked harder at recruitment, outreach, and forming new partnerships with Head Start, community colleges, Cooperative Extension, and other institutions. As one director remarked, with Even Start,

> A little bit of word-of-mouth went a long way, but we are out there beating the bushes now. We are always trying to build collaborations and partnerships, and with all of that effort it sometimes only results in three or four families.

To reduce its child care expenditures, another program began recruiting families whose children attended school or Head Start, illustrating resource conservation.

Triggered by the funding transition, the need to enroll students and increase instructional hours accentuated the importance of reporting all programmatic services. The staff in one program, for example, discussed what constituted "parenting" and "parent and child time" so that families could receive "credit" for eligible activities. That is, the staff sought to "translate" services for families "into a state requirement." However, a director worried that "spend[ing] a lot of time trying to figure out how to count [and] get credit for things" to meet standards could inadvertently diminish program "quality." In sum, the funding shift wrought multiple changes in this ecology, alterations that were compounded by new welfare guidelines for core activities.

CHANGES IN WELFARE POLICY

This section describes the consequences for FL students and programs of eliminating adult education as a core activity for welfare recipients over age 22. The repercussions underscore the conflict—and interdependence—between education and welfare agencies in the ABE/FL policy ecology.

Consequences for Participants

The redefinition of core activities most affected welfare recipients, the least powerful actors in this policy ecology. In most cases, directors asserted, limited transportation and incompatible schedules precluded attending FL in addition to core activities. Clients older than 22 who did attend FL had to choose between complying with regulations and pursuing education, a dilemma some resolved by not disclosing FL attendance to case workers. For instance, a director recalled, a FL teacher encouraged a student to seek public assistance funding for taking the GED® Tests. The student responded:

> If they knew that I was attending classes, they would make me stop because they want me to get a job first, but I know that I need to get my GED in order to get a better job. So I can't ask them to pay for this.

The director continued:

> I found that very troublesome. ... It really sends a conflicting message to the person who is trying to better their lives and seemingly, to me, realizes that they need more education if they are going to get a job, if they even have hope of supporting their family.

Unfortunately, concealing class attendance means "they don't have any financial help" for GED testing or other services.

Thus, the core activity guidelines increased pressure to find work and exacerbated tension between bureaucratic goals and those of welfare recipients. Reflecting on poor families' ability to abide by the regulations of multiple agencies, a director remarked,

> As we look at a shrinking population in our state...everyone [service providers] is competing for those same needy people. "This client should do this. They must do that." ... We have to be careful that we are supporting and not punishing people for being poor. ... We have to be careful that we are good advocates of the families that we serve and not caught in the bureaucracy only. Compliance is important, but advocacy for the families is also why many of us do this.

This statement highlights the predicament of welfare recipients who want to pursue education, a situation fueled by welfare and education agencies' competition for clients and redundancy—the "multiple, overlapping roles and actors" (Weaver-Hightower, 2008, p. 162)—within this policy ecology.

Consequences for Programs

Directors attributed the programmatic challenges outlined below to state administrators' insufficient consideration of how Department of Public Welfare policies would affect Department of Education programs, and to longstanding tension between "core goals" (see Sparks, 2001) of these agencies:

> CAO [County Assistance Office] or welfare wants them to get a job. They don't care if they get their education or not. We, on the other hand, want them to get their education so that they can get a job. [Another director added: "And stay in the job."] Right, and so that tension is so strong—and that is way up the food chain. It has nothing to do with us, yet we have to suffer the consequences.

In sum, directors perceived the relationships between institutions in the policy ecology as conflictual.

Second, several directors observed that the interpretation of welfare policy had changed, not the policy itself (see Hayes, 1999; Mazzeo et al., 2003), and that welfare departments and employees applied core activity guidelines inconsistently. The policy's effects on FL programs, then, depended on how local public assistance administrators and case workers, the "frontline workers" of policy (Mazzeo et al., 2003, p. 165), interpreted and enforced core activities.

According to directors, participant recruitment and enrollment were the greatest challenges under the new policy. Public assistance referrals plummeted because FL

could not provide sufficient instructional hours for clients. Previously, clients attended FL to "supplement" mandated hours, but under the new requirements it was not "feasible" for "someone who is depending on public transportation" and who has "other barriers to go from place to place" to complete the requisite hours through FL.

Participant recruitment became more difficult because "nobody is really out there promoting family literacy," especially to public assistance workers. Furthermore, directors believed "special projects" such as Move Up served the "cream of the crop," leaving FL programs to serve "what is left," such as struggling readers. Programs could recruit few participants from once-dependable sources such as WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) because they serve "the same clients that...are on welfare":

> I don't know where else even to look at this point, you know. I mean, you can't serve the teens. So what are our options? Where are we supposed to be recruiting...for clients who can actually stay in the program?

A director encapsulated their conundrum: FL programs are mandated to serve those "most in need." Women on welfare *are* most in need, but those over 22 cannot attend FL as a core activity.

Many of the TANF clients who previously would have enrolled in FL were instead placed in Move Up classes created for them, rendering many clients under 22 unavailable for FL. Organizations offering both programs had trouble meeting FL enrollment standards; they were robbing Peter (FL) to pay Paul (Move Up), further illustrating redundancy in the policy ecology. Moreover, the dual-enrollment policy prevented state-funded FL programs from counting as enrollees Move Up students who received "wrap-around" FL services such as parent education.

Welfare-to-work regulations complicated retention of those students who attended FL while "meeting their core activities through another program." As a director related, "You can't keep them because it is overwhelming and/ or they have to find a job." Parents stayed in the program until "welfare taps them," creating a "revolving door" that decreased FL student retention.

Lastly, TANF recipients were required to attend all four FL program components, so losing these students hampered programs' ability to meet standards for instructional hours in parent education (25) and parent-child interactive literacy activities (35). Since many non-welfare families wanted only to attend the adult education component, "your adult ed hours are just shooting through the roof, [but] you're struggling to get them to do the parenting and the PACT [parent and child together time, or interactive literacy activities]." These examples illustrate how the concurrent changes in welfare policy and funding sources magnified challenges such as meeting accountability requirements.

Programmatic Adaptations

Program personnel adapted to these changes in the policy ecology in several ways. First, they intensified recruitment to compensate for declining welfare referrals by developing relationships with entities such as Head Start, food pantries, and schools with early childhood education programs. Second, they became more "aggressive" in publicizing FL to welfare case workers and pursuing the "few people that they send." One program sent a staff member to the welfare office every other day:

> We have to spend a lot more time doing those kinds of things because the pool of available clients is just shrinking. So we have to go over there and kind of fight for the few that are eligible. ... Before it was almost like a revolving door [regular referrals from welfare]. But now...you have to be more aggressive to try to get them to understand that their clients may be eligible for one of your programs.

The time invested in such efforts, the director argued, "takes away from direct services" such as "teaching or doing something for the clients. ... It's a lot of effort for [recruiting] a few students."

Third, the staff weighed more carefully which families to enroll in FL because programs had to meet other standards such as child language development and adult attainment of employment or educational goals. With fewer welfare referrals, staff members needed to enroll all eligible families, yet enrolling one family that didn't meet standards could "bring down your averages in small programs." A director summarized their quandary: "You do have to weigh the pros and cons as to who you are going to put in and why, because you are rated as a program and families are not necessarily meeting all of the requirements."

Here again, accountability-related pressures—a key extant condition—converged with the new welfare requirement to structure FL decision making in unanticipated ways.

Believing that stable, well-paid employment depends on education, directors considered the emphasis on work placement to be misguided and short-sighted (Strawn, 1998). Directors anticipated "the future needs of actors in the ecology" (Weaver-Hightower, 2008, p. 167), predicting that TANF clients would seek adult education after reaching the five-year cash benefits limit:

> So five years down the road you use all of your welfare benefits and you still have a lousy job and you still have no GED. And because education isn't higher up in the hierarchy, eventually it's going to come back and bite us.

Adult education, directors asserted, should be a core activity for anyone who reads below a certain level or lacks a GED or high school diploma. Similarly, they recommended that DPW establish "realistic" time expectations for obtaining a GED credential—especially for the many welfare recipients with basic literacy skills—and provide credit and financial support for education after finding work. Such recommendations would require the reversal of Work First welfare policies, a change so dramatic that it would result in conversion of the policy ecology.

DISCUSSION

Based on family literacy directors' firsthand accounts, this study reveals how policy disturbances in two domains—Even Start funding reductions and increased work participation rates—reconfigured the ABE/FL ecology in Pennsylvania. These policy shifts were mediated by state administrators (Belzer, 2007; Mazzeo et al., 2003), with myriad repercussions for FL programs, personnel, and participants. State ABE and welfare policy actors, respectively, adapted to federal policy changes by (a) shifting 11 Even Start programs to state funding, which entailed following different regulations, and (b) redefining core activities to avoid forfeiting federal funds. Using their flexibility in interpreting TANF (Hayes, 1999; Mazzeo et al., 2003), state administrators excluded ABE and FL as core activities for thousands of welfare recipients and in so doing decoupled nearly two decades of policies linking welfare reform and ABE (Imel, 1995).

The findings provide a foretaste of how similarly positioned actors might adapt to Work First welfare policies and Even Start reductions, while also highlighting the resourceful ways practitioners redesign programs in response to subtle and dramatic changes in their ecology (see e.g., Belzer, 2007). In particular, extant conditions such as federal (NRS) and state performance standards created a sense of urgency. State FL and Work First welfare requirements mattered precisely because in some ways they unintentionally undermined programs' attainment of certain performance standards. The study illustrates how accountability pressures and changes in multiple policy domains converged to exacerbate challenges for FL programs, for instance, by simultaneously eliminating dual-enrolled students, teen parents, and older welfare recipients. Our research also highlights the difficulties arising from differing federal and state FL regulations.

Although directors emphasized the policies' negative consequences, the study reveals that (a) these effects were mediated by such factors as student characteristics, local infrastructure, geographic location, and program size and structure (e.g., smaller and rural programs were generally hardest hit); and (b) some requirements had contradictory effects. Eliminating home visitation, for example, freed staff time yet reportedly weakened teacher-student bonds and program partnerships, thereby reconfiguring relationships among the ecology's actors and institutions. These findings, then, underscore the need to understand the variegated ramifications of policy changes within different types of FL and ABE programs.

Finally, two aspects of this study demonstrate how "one change in one facet of the [policy] ecosystem can have consequences for the entire ecosystem" (Weaver-Hightower, 2008, p. 162). First, the study shows that policy consequences leach through porous agency boundaries, yet directors perceived that welfare and ABE/FL policy makers in this case did "not necessarily know about or plan for their interdependence" (Weaver-Hightower, 2008, p. 159). By increasing coordination and anticipating how other state agency policies might affect ABE/FL programs, state administrators and policy makers can reduce competition for students and funding among welfare and ABE/FL service providers. Similarly, examining the cumulative, combined effects of concurrent policy changes instead of one policy in isolation can illuminate how disruptions in one component of the ABE/FL policy ecosystem affect the other components.

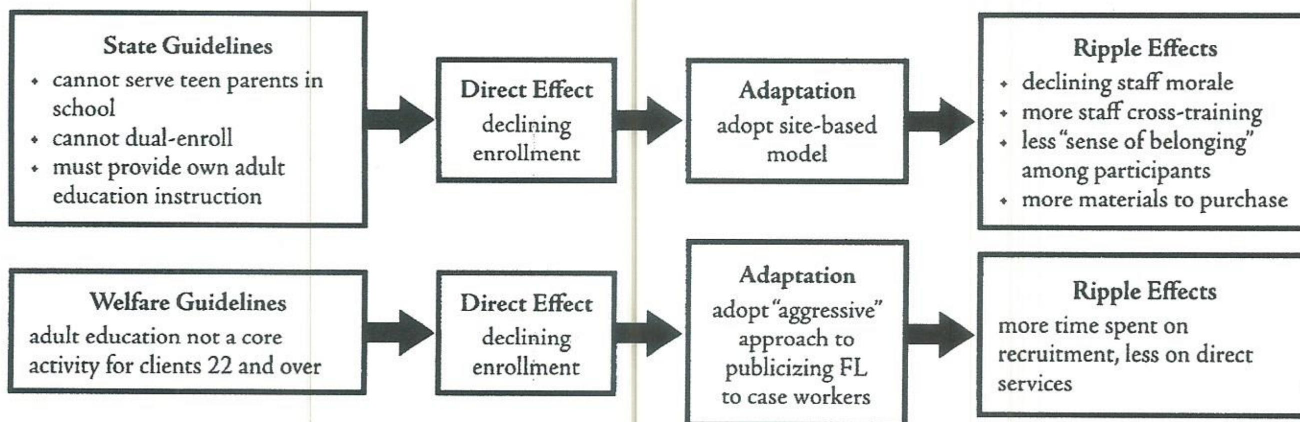

Figure 1. Directors' Perceptions of Direct and Indirect Effects of Policy Changes

Second, this article reveals how federal policies, as interpreted by state and local actors, precipitate direct and indirect ripple effects in myriad program areas (Figure 1). For instance, directors believed several state FL requirements contributed to declining enrollment; this prompted some programs to adopt a site-based model, which triggered unforeseen consequences. Adult education policy makers and administrators should expect that, like a pebble tossed into a pond, new requirements may alter programmatic domains far beyond the point of origin. We know policies have unintended consequences, but without systematic inquiry we do not necessarily know what they are. It is not self-evident, for example, that a change in funding sources would precipitate a programmatic "identity crisis" and diminish learners' sense of belonging, or that a welfare policy intended to boost the work participation rate would reduce FL enrollments and complicate efforts to meet accountability requirements. By elucidating the nature, extent, and import of these consequences in a seldom-studied policy ecology, this study can help us to anticipate the potential repercussions and trade-offs of a given policy and to imagine how differently situated policy actors may grapple with these changes.

Directors' accounts suggest vital topics for future research, including the viability of family literacy in an era of reduced ABE/FL spending and the ramifications of eliminating adult education as a core activity for older welfare recipients. How do programs in states with less FL funding weather these policy shifts? How do programs respond to the demands of welfare reform? How do welfare recipients who are required to work before obtaining a GED credential negotiate conflicting desires, demands, and regulations pertaining to work and education? By viewing flux in the policy ecology as normal, FL and ABE professionals will be better equipped to adapt to the changes triggered by the decisions of policy makers in education, public welfare, and other government agencies.

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