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ABSTRACT

This report focuses on 11 states' efforts to develop state-funded family literacy initiatives either through legislation or other actions. An introduction defines family literacy. Part I includes in-depth case studies on seven states that have either passed or attempted to pass state family literacy legislation. For each state (Kentucky, Washington, Hawaii, Louisiana, South Carolina, Colorado, and Arizona), the report describes the background before enactment or attempted enactment of the legislation, the legislation itself, the funding history, the administrative structure of the program, and the current status of the legislated family literacy program. Each description concludes with a summary of key points. This information has been compiled by acquiring legislation from each of the seven states and conducting interviews with people connected with the history of family literacy in each state. Part II looks at state-funded family literacy initiatives that have not relied on state legislation, but have been spurred by a keen interest from the Governor or First Lady or a particular state agency. The four states in this section are Nevada, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. A conclusion proposes that creation of a promising statewide program hinges on three issues: impetus, initiator, and support; climate of the legislature; and content of the legislation. Appendixes contain a sample outline for state family literacy legislation and Kentucky's and Arizona's statutes. (YLB)

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Family Literacy Legislation and Initiatives in Eleven States

Tony Peyton

February 1999

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The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), based in Louisville, Kentucky, is a nonprofit organization that provides advocacy, research, and training for thousands of family literacy programs throughout the country.

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Introduction

The family literacy field has enjoyed great support from the federal government. This is evident from the increased importance the 105th Congress placed on family literacy. The inclusion of family literacy in the Workforce Investment Act, the Head Start Act, the Community Services Block Grant Act and the Reading Excellence Act illustrates how family literacy has been recognized as a successful strategy for helping families achieve self-sufficiency.

Just as the federal government has placed more importance on family literacy, so have individual states. The 1996 passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) exemplifies the trend of the federal government to move funds to states in block grants that allow states to shape programmatic approaches to fit their needs. This flexibility creates opportunities for statewide family literacy programs. Analyzing what some states have done with these opportunities will help other states make informed decisions in designing their own programs.

Family literacy is unique in that it can address welfare reform, school reform, parent involvement issues and early childhood initiatives. As a result, since 1985, several states have pursued and won state-legislated family literacy programs, while others continue to develop family literacy legislation. Some states have also implemented state-funded family literacy initiatives without using specific legislation. The combined experiences of these states help provide some lessons about potential obstacles and keys for improving the likelihood of success. Advocates who are planning state family literacy initiatives can use as examples the eleven states outlined in this report.

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) has been pleased to assist states in the conceptual and implementation stages of their family literacy initiatives, which grew out of the work of the Kenan Family Literacy Project and the Toyota Families for Learning program. NCFL continues to work with states through the Building State Alliances Project; training and technical assistance; and the research, gathering and dissemination of information.

What follows is a report on eleven states' efforts to develop state-funded family literacy initiatives either through legislation or other actions. The first part of this report includes in-depth case studies on seven states that have either passed or attempted to pass state family literacy legislation. For each state—Kentucky, Washington, Hawaii, Louisiana, South Carolina, Colorado and Arizona—the report describes the background before enactment or attempted enactment of the legislation, the legislation itself, the funding history, the administrative structure of the program and the current status of the legislated family literacy program. Each description concludes with a summary of key points. This information was compiled by acquiring legislation from each of the seven states and conducting interviews with people connected with the history of family literacy in each state. This report also includes, in Appendix I, a sample outline for state family literacy legislation.

The second part of this report looks at state-funded family literacy initiatives that have not relied on state legislation, but were spurred by a keen interest from the Governor or First Lady or a particular state agency. The four states in this section are Nevada, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

The process of accomplishing a state-funded family literacy initiative has been unique in each state; but some factors emerge from the states' combined experiences that are essential to success both in passing legislation and developing quality programs through the legislation or other means. These factors include an understanding of the key personnel necessary to support the effort, the elements of the legislation, and how to present family literacy as a general solution to a variety of concerns rather than just another program competing for funding.

Family Literacy

Family literacy is clearly and consistently defined in the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of the Workforce Investment Act), Even Start, Head Start, and the Reading Excellence Act. The definition of family literacy services in these acts is as follows¹:

“The term ‘family literacy services’ means services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family and that integrate all of the following activities:

Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children.

Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.

Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.”

NCFL applies the term comprehensive program to programs that include the four components mentioned above and that: 1) work with at-risk families, 2) have broad goals, 3) offer multifaceted services that meet educational and other-than-educational needs of both parents and children, and 4) provide intensive, long-term program services. For the purpose of this project, “family literacy” refers specifically to programs conforming to a comprehensive model, using the federal definition. With the exception of South Carolina, which incorporated family literacy into a broader initiative, all the states in this report target a population of greatest economic and educational need to be served by programs integrating at least these four components, although the balance and degree of integration depends on the administration of the program as much as on the language of the legislation.

¹ The definition in the Reading Excellence Act specifies that the services are provided to participants on a voluntary basis.

Part I: State Family Literacy Legislation



Kentucky

Background to Enactment

Family literacy originated in Kentucky in the mid-1980s at a time when the Commonwealth had no state-funded at-risk preschool programs or mandated kindergarten programs. Head Start was reaching minimal numbers of children, and many counties had only a home-instruction program for adults. Kentucky traditionally has ranked near the top in the nation in the percentage of adults who have less than a high school diploma. Moreover, its dropout rate is consistently among the highest in the United States.

In 1984, family literacy began to take shape through the efforts of Sharon Darling, then Director of the Division of Adult and Community Education for the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE); State Representative Roger Noe, who was then chairman of the Education Committee working with Governor Martha Layne Collins on an education reform agenda for Kentucky; and Jeanne Heberle, an early childhood education specialist. Both Darling and Noe's earlier experiences—Darling's 15 years designing state and national programs to teach adults to read and her involvement in a state home-instruction program for adults that also targeted the children in the home, and Noe's participation in a program of preschool intervention in Appalachian homes with undereducated parents and his long-standing commitment to education reform—led them to realize the need to provide parents with a support group and children with a fresh start. Together, they decided that intergenerational education offered the best solution to the cycle of undereducation. Heberle emphasized the necessity for a strong, developmentally-appropriate early childhood program, and the adoption of the High/Scope preschool curriculum brought with it a base of research and training experience which was invaluable for the program as a whole.

Rep. Noe requested that a plan for intergenerational legislation be developed, providing Darling with the catalyst to write the proposal and draft legislation. Noe added the stipulation that, in order to apply for a grant, 50 percent or more of a county's adult population had to lack a high school diploma. The legislation was designed to accommodate the needs of the rural, most impoverished counties of Kentucky. The Parent and Child Education (PACE) legislation was designed as an experimental program and had no real opposition but also did not emerge as a high priority on the KDE legislative agenda. However, with Rep. Noe as its champion and the backing of legislators from rural communities, the bill passed in 1985 and became the first government-sponsored family literacy program.

Summary of Legislation²

Originally, the PACE legislation gave authority to the KDE to authorize grants to local school districts in areas of greatest economic and educational need. The program was administered under the Division of Adult and Community Education where Sharon Darling served as director. Later the authority to authorize

² See Appendix II for a complete copy of the PACE statute.

grants was given to the State Board for Adult and Technical Education, which is where that authority still resides. Programs had to provide the four components (adult basic skills education, early childhood education, parent education and support, and regular opportunities for parent-child interaction) and include services such as recruitment, screening, transportation, lunch and free GED testing. To be eligible, parents had to lack a high school diploma or its equivalent and have a three- or four-year-old child not enrolled in a public school program. Enrollment required at least 10 parents per site but was limited according to how many children could be served in the early childhood classroom. The children's age range (which often excluded parents with younger children unless additional child care was provided) and the stipulation that 50 percent of the adults in a county or district had to lack a high school diploma (which helped the legislation pass but prevented some concentrated urban poverty areas from being reached) have been viewed as limiting elements of the legislation. The high school diploma stipulation became increasingly limiting as more immigrants were included in programs. These parents needed to learn English but some had diplomas from their own countries. Additionally, some parents had high school diplomas, but still functioned at a very low literacy level and needed services. These limiting factors were later changed in the PACE legislation.

PACE underwent a period of transition after the 1990 enactment of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) changed the state's education environment. The Act mandated that schools in which 20 percent of the students are eligible to receive free lunches must offer Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FRYSC), which are to include "PACE or PACE-like" programs. No funds, however, were set aside for their operation. In 1991, the state legislature questioned the effectiveness, stability, and cost of the PACE program, but it withstood a state audit. Originally a stand-alone project, PACE legislation was amended in 1992 to allow blending with other programs and require coordination with KERA family resource centers and the JOBS program. Some minor adjustments also broadened participant and grantee eligibility. A proposed attempt in 1994 to further broaden eligibility was abandoned when the legislature advised against it. Challenged by the State Board for Adult and Technical Education to demonstrate PACE's effectiveness, efforts have been undertaken to develop quality indicators and collect stronger outcome data. This has resulted in an interagency initiative to develop goals, objectives, performance indicators, and measurable outcomes for family literacy programs.

During the 1998 session of the Kentucky General Assembly, PACE was "reengineered." With the widespread availability of at-risk early childhood programs and new federal directions in welfare, education, and training, PACE incorporated new concepts in the revised legislation. Now known as "PACE for Family Independence," the provider pool was expanded from only local school districts to "local educational agencies, public or private nonprofit agencies, postsecondary educational institutions, and other institutions that have the ability to provide model family literacy services to adults and families." The new legislation has also broadened the ages of eligible children from three to five years of age to zero to eight years of age, and there is an expectation that the components of family literacy emphasize "sufficient intensity and duration" necessary for families to achieve self-sufficiency. The 50 percent stipulation mentioned above was eliminated. Now grants are given based on the county's low level of literacy in the adult

population, high numbers of unemployed, and high levels of poverty. An emphasis on creating community partners is also included, which allows programs to blend as long as all the criteria for the PACE program are met. The intent of these legislative changes is to allow flexibility to develop and provide services that meet the specific needs of families in their communities rather than having to follow a narrow, prescriptive approach.

Funding

Some \$50,000 was allocated by the KDE for each of six sites in 1986 and 18 sites in 1987 to pay the salaries of an adult education teacher, an early childhood teacher and a teaching assistant, as well as to cover equipment and support services. The funding level of \$900,000, which was maintained through 1989, was doubled in 1990, along with the number of programs. Budget cuts in 1993 reduced the funds slightly so that approximately \$1.7 million in state funds have been designated to support 30-35 projects.

Administrative Structure

PACE originally was located in the KDE under the Division of Adult and Community Education. In 1990, PACE was placed under the Department for Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) in the newly-created Workforce Development Cabinet, which also has the responsibility for secondary technical education, job training programs and employment services. Kentucky is one of the few states that elevates adult education to the level of a department of its own, making it a strong choice for housing family literacy. The connection to workforce training is an advantage, though its position isolates it from KERA and Even Start, which are both in the KDE. This is a hindrance to greater blending with these programs.

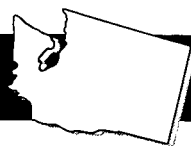
Developments and the Current Situation

Initially a low-profile program, PACE began to receive national visibility as Darling explained it to governors, state and federal legislators and U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett. In 1988, Kentucky's PACE legislation became the model for the federal Even Start program. That same year, PACE won the Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government/Ford Foundation Award for Outstanding Innovation in State and Local Government.

Family literacy in Kentucky is more extensive than the PACE program. Currently, the KDE administers 15 Even Start projects that receive a combined total of \$1.9 million in federal funds, and the DAEL provides adult education basic grant funds to support family literacy services in addition to the 35 local PACE programs. In 1996, for the first time, family literacy (including PACE) was included in the comprehensive planning process of local adult education providers. This process required that adult education service providers in each county address the broad needs of their community and the adult learner. Because no specific set-asides for family literacy are mandated, it remains to be seen whether family literacy is well enough established so that adult education providers without PACE funds will choose to support family literacy with a portion of their basic grant allocation.

Summary: Kentucky

- Grew out of governor-supported education reform efforts; success hinged upon a legislative champion who was a believer in the program.
- Originated from adult education, but quickly gained commitment from the early childhood community.
- Initially designed to serve a highly undereducated rural population.
- New appropriation, aiming at \$50,000 per program.
- Currently housed under adult education in the Workforce Development Cabinet where it enjoys department-level support.
- Has exerted a strong influence on family literacy programs at the national and state levels.



Washington

Background to Enactment

Washington's State Even Start Program, begun in 1987, is an example of a state legislature outpacing the U.S. Congress. Bill Daley, legislative assistant to the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Washington, was in Washington, DC, when the federal Even Start program was first under discussion. Upon his return to Washington state, he proposed the idea of piloting the program there. From observations made in Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), as well as in adult education programs, the idea of using family literacy began to develop out of attempts to address learning problems among the disadvantaged by focusing on parental involvement and child care. ECEAP, implemented in 1985 and intended to fill the gap in counties not reached by Head Start, derived its support from Governor Booth Gardner and the business community. Together with the federal Head Start program, ECEAP provides education, health and nutrition, parent involvement, and family support services to almost two-thirds of all eligible four-year-olds.

The concept of coordinating adult education with preschool programs for at-risk children received strong backing from the early childhood representatives in the community and technical college system and from the adult literacy community. Additional support grew out of concern over a growing welfare load due to an increased number of teenage pregnancies and an influx of Mexican immigrants and refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, the former Soviet Union, and Ethiopia. Beret Harmon, then state director of Adult Education in the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI), helped craft the language of the bill and marshal support. In 1987, at Governor Gardner's request, a group of representatives introduced the bill "Project Even Start" in the House and it passed.

Summary of Legislation

The legislation states its intent as helping parents be the most effective teachers for their children by providing eligible parents with "opportunities to acquire basic skills and child development knowledge" in order to "enhance their ability to assist and support their children in the learning process . . ." To be eligible, a parent must have a less than ninth grade basic skills ability as measured by a standardized test, and have a child enrolled in a program designed for children at risk (ECEAP, Head Start, Title 1, a community or technical college child care program, or a cooperative preschool). The adult literacy program falls under the responsibility of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Besides basic skills and parenting instruction, the state Even Start program may also provide transportation, child care and other services deemed necessary. The legislation mandates that funding first go to collaborations of existing adult literacy, parenting and early childhood programs before new programs are funded.

One limitation of this legislation on a pragmatic level is the reliance on existing at-risk childhood programs. As a result, the state providers are limited for the most part to parents of three- to five-year-old children, which excludes teenage dropouts with infants. Waiting lists for ECEAP and Head Start also exclude some

parents. Another consequence is that there are state Even Start classrooms with 15 adults whose children are in as many different childhood programs, an obvious obstacle to parent and child interaction time.

Funding

The legislation provided for a \$1.5 million biennial appropriation. It was reduced to \$746,000 a year when the legislature rescinded administrative dollars in response to the controversial decision to house the program in K-12. Despite the original plan to have one program in every ECEAP site, of which there are now 226 statewide, there has been no increase in appropriations or proliferation of programs. Eighteen of the original 22 programs are still in operation, averaging about \$40,000 per grant, which is intended to fund only the adult education and parenting components.

One criticism of the appropriation, besides its insufficiency, is that its lack of administrative dollars leaves little funds for staff training, a way to share “best practices,” the use of outside evaluators of program effectiveness, and the ability to afford special training in family literacy such as offered by NCFL. Recently, as a part of overall budget cuts, the state Even Start program has lost 6 percent of its funding.

Administrative Structure

After the legislation was enacted, Superintendent of Public Instruction Frank Brouillet directed Suzanne Griffin, then director of ABE, to turn the legislation into an actual program. With heavy input from education specialists, she and the counsel to the superintendent wrote the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). Among other things, the code provides for the inclusion of the English as a Second Language population in testing and programming, sets guidelines for the annual program evaluation report, establishes an advisory committee, mandates coordination with existing children’s programs, determines criteria for the awarding of grants to eligible grantees (any public agency or private nonsectarian program or organization) and requires 10 hours a week of adult instruction. The code passed the public hearings of the state education board with little trouble.

Housing the program was more problematic, due to conflicting interests of the common school system under the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the community college system which was run by an elected board. Adult education was originally located in the K-12 Board of Education in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). In 1990, an Investment in Human Capital Initiative, intended to consolidate workforce planning, transferred family literacy, along with ABE, workplace literacy, ESL, and related programs, to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges in the Office of Adult Literacy. The move was not without some controversy. Opponents of the move saw it as weakening the early childhood component of the family literacy model. Situating the program on a community college campus, they believed, would expose the parent to a peer group, a library, and job opportunities, but would make it difficult to focus on parent-child interaction or to track the children’s progress.

Current Situation

The state Even Start program is presently managed by the Office of Adult Literacy at the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Although 15 of 18 state Even Start contractors are community or technical colleges, less than a third of the programs are actually located on a campus. Most are housed in elementary schools or in community agencies. According to one source, most programs focus either on adult education or on the parenting and family aspects, rather than providing comprehensive family literacy services.

In the fall of 1998, the Office of Adult Literacy obtained \$1 million in welfare case reduction funds from the state's Department of Social and Health Services to expand present state Even Start programs to meet the needs of hard-to-employ or low-wage-earning parents. Called "Families That Work," the program is designed to build on the success of the Even Start family literacy model by offering work skills development integrated with adult basic skills, family management strategies, early childhood education, and structured family activities.

The federal Even Start program has been housed in the OSPI since 1992, and operates through the elementary schools with the adult education component supplied by community and technical colleges. It has a total of 12 programs, receiving an average of \$120,000 per grant. The discrepancy between the state and federal funding amounts could have made collaboration difficult. Instead, the more richly funded federal program has strengthened the state programs through collaboration and shared funding so that now the programs share an advisory committee, seven co-located sites, and resources for staff development training.

Summary: Washington

- Grew out of a governor's initiative, addressed pressing statewide concerns and built upon an existing state preschool and adult education program.
- Mandates use of existing preschool programs and all possible collaboration.
- Appropriations average \$40,000 per program for 18 sites.
- Administered first by K-12 in the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction, then moved to the community and technical college system.

Hawaii



Background to Enactment

Family literacy programming made rapid strides in Hawaii in the last decade. Today family literacy continues to expand and involves broader support from school and community stakeholder groups. In 1987, Governor John Waihee established the Governor's Council for Literacy, housed in the Governor's Office on Children and Youth, and it was chaired by First Lady Lynne Waihee. A former school teacher who was personally interested in the underprivileged and families, she made family literacy her first priority for her eight years in office. The Council for Literacy conducted the 1988-89 Statewide Literacy Needs Assessment, which reported that 20 percent of Hawaii's population was functionally illiterate; 7.5 percent of Hawaii's 16-19 year olds were school dropouts; 23 percent of Hawaii's families had non-English speaking members and 5 percent were linguistically isolated; and 11 percent of families had incomes below the federal poverty level. Economic changes, such as the phasing out of sugar in Hawaii, added a level of urgency. Hawaii's first statewide literacy plan, *Bridges to Literacy*, identified family literacy as one of the priority strategies in reaching the goal of a literate Hawaii.

A subgroup of the literacy council began researching quality family literacy programs and invited NCFL President Sharon Darling to Hawaii's literacy conference. Afterwards, Governor Waihee organized a family literacy team, whose 12 members represented the Governor's Office, the Department of Education, the State Public Library System, Community Colleges/University of Hawaii, Head Start, Even Start, Junior League, the business community and the state legislature. This team, which also included the corporate marketer for Pizza Hut, participated in an implementation training at NCFL in October, 1989, and visited a Kenan Model family literacy site in Kentucky. After returning home, they recommended the adoption of the Kenan Model as optimal for garnering support, due to its clear design, the training and evaluation components provided by NCFL, and its adaptability. To build momentum for a bill, the Hawaii House of Representatives presented a resolution recognizing NCFL for its guidance and support of family literacy in Hawaii. Both First Lady Lynne Waihee and Sue Berg, coordinator of the family literacy team, were instrumental in keeping family literacy before the public and the legislators. The constant visible presence, direct engagement and sponsoring support of the corporate business community (which had a direct interest in educating the workforce) were likewise crucial factors in passing the legislation. Pilot legislation funding two family literacy programs for three years was introduced and passed due in part to state Representative Sam Lee's participation in NCFL training and his report to the 1990 Legislature. The funds were stretched to cover three programs, which opened in the fall of 1990 and received coordination, training and technical assistance from NCFL. All three were located on elementary school campuses, one of which had already piloted a successful six-week summer family literacy project through a collaboration between a community college and Head Start.

Summary of Legislation

The Hawaii Family Support Act established a family support center demonstration project in the Department of Human Services. Situating the need for coordinated, community-based support services in the changing family structures and economic demands facing families in Hawaii, the legislation cited the high proportion of women in the workforce and of single- mother households, of which 28% were below the poverty line. It provided, in part, for the establishment of two family literacy programs to address families' needs for educational, vocational, and parenting training through learning sessions for preschool-aged children and their parents. The legislation was not renewed after the first three years, and no new legislation has yet been submitted.

Funding

Hawaii's legislation appropriated the sum of \$200,000 for each of three years, to be expended by the Governor's Office of Children and Youth. The three programs continued after the legislation expired; two were funded partially with Even Start money, one by piecing together its own funding. In 1991, under the leadership of Lynne Waihee and Jack Tsui of the Bank of Hawaii, the private sector raised \$1.1 million which, when combined with an additional state legislative appropriation of \$400,000, created a \$1.5 million endowment for family literacy programs in Hawaii. Operated by the Hawaii Community Foundation and the Office of the State Librarian as a public-private partnership, the legislated trust fund provides an average of \$72,000 annually in family literacy grants. In later years, as the programs were jeopardized by an administrative change and an economic slowdown, the permanent fund helped sustain family literacy in Hawaii.

Administrative Structure

When Governor Waihee left office, the new governor placed priority on balancing the budget and Hawaii's literacy program was moved from the Governor's Office. It was legislatively transferred to the Hawaii State Public Library System, Office of the State Librarian, and renamed the Literacy and Lifelong Learning Program, with Sue Berg as director. Among its activities in support of literacy programs, it oversees the family literacy trust fund. Hawaii provides one of the clearest examples of the difficulty in deciding where to house family literacy. In the Governor's Office, family literacy avoided the education bureaucracies and was able to thrive with high level support, but it was vulnerable when there was a change of office. One advantage of the library system is that it maintains the potential for collaboration that diminishes once family literacy becomes responsible to a single agency. However, because the public library system lacks the large amount of funds that flow into Adult Education and Title I, the State Department of Education may be a better choice.

Current Situation

Hawaii has some 18-20 family literacy programs, including five funded through an Even Start grant of \$565,000 and four through a collaboration of Head Start and the Department of Education. Under the

“schoolwide” system of Title I, schools that have had successful family literacy programs in the past make them a priority when fulfilling the “parental involvement” requirement. Often, under a tighter budget, they adapt the Kenan model by reducing the emphasis on adult education. Family literacy is also a major theme of the State’s Parent Community Network Centers which are part of most public schools. In the past three years, Hawaii has worked to support its Even Start programs as they follow the four-component model, and has developed an NCFL-certified training team. In 1995, family literacy suffered under a reengineering of the library system. Stakeholders now are exploring the possibility of getting funds in place to make family literacy part of the Department of Education.

Summary: Hawaii

- Grew out of a governor’s and first lady’s initiative, NCFL involvement, and the leadership of a literacy council member and an influential legislator.
- Strong corporate business support.
- A \$600,000 appropriation for three programs for three years.
- Pilot was not extended due to economic conditions and a new gubernatorial administration.
- Unique in having a permanent, legislated trust fund for family literacy.



Background to Enactment

Louisiana's effort to pass family literacy legislation was successful; however, there has been no real funding commitment. The initial push for family literacy in Louisiana began in 1988 when Governor Buddy Roemer was elected, and First Lady Patty Roemer chose literacy as her priority issue. She created a six-month task force with the help of the newly-opened NCFL. This led to the creation of the Office of Literacy (now the Office of Lifelong Learning) in 1989. The following spring, with input from the state Department of Education and guidance from NCFL, the office spearheaded the development of legislation based on the Kentucky and Hawaii models. The Family Literacy Demonstration Program legislation was introduced by Representative Randy Roach and passed in 1991. Before the funds could be appropriated, however, Governor Roemer left office. The Family Literacy Demonstration Program legislation has not been funded by the two succeeding administrations.

Summary of Legislation

The act provided for a family literacy demonstration program to serve children who would be eligible to enter public school kindergarten in the following year and have a parent without a high school diploma or its equivalent. It was to consist of at least 10 demonstration projects (at least one but no more than two in each congressional district), with enrollment of 15 to 20 adults. It allowed for expansion upon appropriation of additional funds. The act mandated collaboration with the local public school system, social service providers, and other governmental agencies where possible; required external evaluation; and specified the four components plus vocational skills instruction for adults. Implementation was contingent upon public or private funding. No funds have been appropriated, but the legislation remains on the books.

Administrative Structure

The act placed administration in the hands of the Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, rather than in the Office of Literacy as originally conceived.

Current Situation

Louisiana primarily has three groups of family literacy projects: three Toyota Families for Learning projects in New Orleans (implemented in 1991 and originally funded through NCFL), 13 Even Start programs receiving \$2.8 million (FY 1998-99) in federal funds, and a program connecting isolated rural parishes electronically. The last grew out of Governor Edwin Edwards' 1994 Executive Order establishing a state-wide Family Literacy Advisory Council. The council was made responsible for developing a comprehensive family literacy plan for the state, organizing a family literacy leadership conference, presenting a teleconference, and implementing a statewide pilot project. The project began with Toyota funding and is now managed by the University of New Orleans in conjunction with the New Orleans Public Schools.

Title I receives some funding for family literacy from the Governor's Office, and is urging program directors to spend their "parental involvement" dollars on comprehensive family literacy.

Summary: Louisiana

- Grew out of a first lady's literacy initiative with input from NCFL.
- Passed in 1991 but was never funded due to a change in administration.
- Now focusing on non-legislative efforts.



Background to Enactment

In South Carolina, family literacy efforts are the result of broad-ranging legislation which aims at assisting parents of preschool children ages birth to five considered at risk for school failure. Commitment to education reform in South Carolina received a strong boost from Governor Richard Riley, now U.S. Secretary of Education, who supported the 1984 Education Improvement Act. Awareness of the large percentage of children in South Carolina entering first grade unprepared and the number of parents without high school diplomas provided a general impetus for action. Initiated by a business committee, on June 1, 1989, the South Carolina General Assembly passed "Target 2000: School Reform for the Next Decade." "Target 2000" began as a pilot program that provided comprehensive educational and support services for parents, children and families in 21 South Carolina school districts through a competitive grants process. It included a parent education program for parents of preschool children that required home visitation, group activities, community services, and adult education and literacy enhancement. Services offered at most sites included child care, transportation, health care, counseling, direct educational services to children and referral services. Both staff training and program evaluation were also required. Due to the success of the "Target 2000" sites, as indicated by status reports, the initiative's provisions for expanding the pilot program to every school district developed into legislation. Authored by Senator Nikki Setzler and backed by Governor Carol Campbell and House Chairman Olin Phillips, the bill passed with virtually no opposition in 1993.

Summary of Legislation

The Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act of 1993, known as Act 135, added to Education Improvement Act funds to provide for the expansion of "Target 2000" to all 91 school districts by the year 1994-95 and allows schools more flexibility in using funds. In their five-year plans for serving children from birth to age five, districts must include a parenting/family literacy component that creates partnerships with health and human service agencies, adult education programs and community organizations. Districts also must make intensive efforts to recruit parents whose children are at risk for school failure, must provide parent education and are encouraged to offer parents opportunities to improve their education if they do not possess a high school diploma or its equivalent. The legislation provides for the State Board of Education to promulgate regulations, but these regulations have not yet been approved by the General Assembly.

Funding

Under "Target 2000," the \$1.2 million allocated in 1989 funded 14 sites for two years; part of the \$2 million in 1990 funded seven new projects; and \$2.3 million were allocated in 1991 for continuation of all 21 projects. With the passage of Act 135, the 21 original projects were reorganized as 17 technical assistance sites and funded at the original level through 1995. Provisos to the General Appropriations Act have

allowed these sites to operate through 1997-98 at a level not less than 85 percent of the amount received in the prior year, or according to the Parenting/Family Literacy funding allocations as established in Act 135, whichever is greater. In 1998, these sites entered the formula with the rest of the sites, receiving a base funding amount of at least \$40,000 with additional appropriation distributed based on a percentage of students in grades one through three who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. In each of the first two years of Act 135, the sum of \$6.9 million was appropriated; this amount dropped in 1995 to \$6.4 million and then to \$4.2 million in 1996. The remaining \$2.2 million was rolled into a "School Innovation Funds" block grant which can be expended for a number of programs including parenting and family literacy. Programs continue, but operate on less money. The number of families served in each program ranges from about 25 to 200.

Administrative Structure

The "Guidelines for Implementing Parenting/Family Literacy As Required By Act 135" address service delivery methods, needs assessment and developmental screening. They call for an annual evaluation of each program and collaboration with other local agencies. In the "Guidelines," at-risk children are defined according to criteria including developmental delays, unstable homes, poverty, limited English proficiency, low educational level of parent, unusual age of caregiver, poor health, child abuse and neglect, inadequate parenting and inadequate access to critically needed family services.

The components of Act 135 were, for a time, housed under different divisions of the State Department of Education. Currently, the Office of Community Education coordinates federally-funded Even Start Family Literacy, state-funded Act 135 Parenting/Family Literacy, the State Literacy Resource Center, Parents As Teachers, Parent-Child-Home, Volunteerism, Adult Education, McKinney Homeless, Head Start Collaborative and other family literacy-related programs.

Current Situation

Without regulations, each district has had the freedom to interpret "parenting/family literacy" and not necessarily follow the federal definition. In some programs, Kenan model family literacy has developed, while other programs have or emphasize only some of the components. Often, especially with diminishing funds, parents are simply referred to adult education services. Training usually takes place, though is not required, and no evaluative study has been done to determine program effectiveness. A Technical Assistance Network, facilitated by the State Department of Education since 1994, provides the framework for assistance to school districts. This network connects the 17 designated technical assistance sites to other districts in early stages of program development. The Department provides regional seminars (fall and spring) conducted for school district staff working with Even Start and Act 135 parenting/family literacy programs. A Parent Education and Family Literacy State Conference is sponsored annually to provide training and technical assistance in the implementation of quality parent education and family literacy initiatives. Act 135 programs collaborate on training and technical assistance with Even Start, which funds 15 programs. Since 1994, annual reports have been published and made available to reporting entities and for statewide distribution. These contain program summaries and data collected by the 17

technical assistance sites. Data indicate that children whose parents have participated in parenting/family literacy programs have met the CSAB (Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery) readiness standard at rates higher than the overall first grade populations in their district. In addition, these sites report an increase in parents' educational level, improvement in parent-child interaction and an increase in parental participation in their children's education.

Summary: South Carolina

- Success of pilot legislation that was part of a governor's education reform efforts led to statewide implementation, backed by a state senator and the House chairman.
- Does not exclusively target the typical family literacy population or require a comprehensive family literacy model.
- Funding levels were \$6.9 million in 1993, \$4.2 million in 1996 for all 91 districts.
- Lack of regulations leads to widely varied program implementation.

Colorado

Background

Given that Colorado is one of only two states in the country that provide no state financial support for adult education, it is not surprising that family literacy legislation has not been passed. Since 1983, advocates in the adult literacy field have led the push for some adult basic education legislation in response to the need indicated by census data: 400,000 Coloradans have not completed high school; low literacy levels correlate to high unemployment, poverty, crime, and teenage pregnancy rates; and more than 13,000 youth drop out of school each year. Although support has been bipartisan, it has not been sufficient to pass legislation. In the past several years, additional administrative support from the Governor's Office and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has made family literacy more prominent within the goal of increasing the overall educational level of the adult population.

In 1990, passage of the Colorado Adult Literacy Act allowed the CDE to develop a fund for adult literacy, but made no appropriation for that purpose. In 1992, a literacy bill, including family and workplace literacy, ABE, English as a Second Language and correctional/institutional programs, was proposed but withdrawn once the funding was dropped. First Impressions, the 1987 assistance program for children under six that was started by Governor Roy Romer and headed by First Lady Bea Romer, formed the Colorado Initiative on Family Literacy in 1993. The intent was to pull together existing literacy efforts, including the "Read to Me, Colorado" campaign, which drew on Hawaii's success, and the Metro Denver Family Literacy Program, which received NCFL's Toyota Families for Learning grant in 1993.

The initiative formed a statewide coalition comprised of representatives from the CDE's Office of Adult Education, the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System (CCCOES), the Governor's Job Training Office, the Governor's Office, adult education and family literacy programs, businesses, libraries and community-based organizations. In 1994, a press event at the Governor's mansion invited guests to hear presentations by First Lady Bea Romer; former First Lady of Hawaii Lynne Waihee; NCFL President Sharon Darling; and representatives from Toyota, Pizza Hut and Rotary Clubs. Two efforts that were developed in 1995 had parallel concerns to the coalition and involved many of the same people. The Strategic Planning Group began a cooperative endeavor focusing on adult basic skills/literacy education. The second parallel development, the Legislative Steering Committee, derived from the joint efforts of three professional organizations (Colorado Alliance for Lifelong Learning, Colorado Association for Continuing Adult Education, and Colorado Association of Community Educators) and the Adult Literacy Commission created by the Colorado State Board of Education. The Legislative Steering Committee chose to concentrate on family and workplace literacy. The bill created, based on the Legislative Steering Committee's work, was sponsored by Representatives Peggy Kerns (D-the minority leader) and Moe Keller (R). The Governor, in his state-of-the-state address, requested \$500,000 for family and workplace education.

Summary of Unpassed Legislation

The Family and Workplace Literacy Bill defined “family literacy” according to the four-component model. It provided for a nine-member joint commission to supply structure to workplace and family literacy programs, grants for services in local communities, standards and procedures for coordination and quality assurance, evaluation, a cash fund to receive contributions and a local match of 40 percent cash or in-kind donations from providers. The \$500,000 appropriation request to the commission in the Governor’s Office was to be shared evenly between the CDE for family literacy and the community colleges (CCCOES) for workplace training. The legislature chose the CCCOES as the fiscal agent for the funds. In 1995, the legislation was passed by the House Education Committee, but went no further. The House Appropriations Committee, claiming that the community colleges lacked the statutory authority to administer the grants program, tabled the bill.

Under the proposed bill, the family literacy program would have been administered by the CDE. Currently, CDE administers Even Start and the Office of Adult Education (OAE) and encourages the development and improvement of family literacy programming across the state.

In 1997, Governor Romer appointed 23 members to the Business Commission on Adult Learning. They represented banking, communications, small businesses, large corporations, human resources training, unions, economic development and financial services. Their goal was to create a long-term plan to finance and promote adult basic education as the means to develop a well-prepared workforce as well as healthier families and communities. After intensive study they created a report, *Learning Lasts a Lifetime*, that included eight recommendations with goals and suggested actions for Colorado. The fourth recommendation states, “establish, through the Colorado Legislature, funds specifically invested in adult basic education programs.” The Commission concluded its work after the report was produced and distributed. Recommendation 4 has not been implemented.

Current Situation

At this time, 34 agencies are operating family literacy programs. They receive technical assistance from the OAE. The programs that provide family literacy accept the four component model as articulated in Colorado’s definition of family literacy, approved by the Adult Literacy Commission in 1992. However, the lack of funding sometimes prevents full implementation. Many of the ABE programs, using federal Adult Education dollars as leverage, have identified and received community and foundation funds to initiate and expand family literacy programs.

Colorado first received Even Start funding under the federal Pilot Program ten years ago. Originally two projects were funded, both of which are still providing family literacy services, even though they no longer receive Even Start funding. In 1997-98, Colorado received \$1.05 million to support 11 Even Start family literacy programs. Serving some 29 sites, these programs all follow the four component national family literacy model. In addition, Migrant Even Start received a statewide grant that is supporting services in 11 communities.

Summary: Colorado

- Family literacy legislation has not been passed.
- The impetus for family literacy in Colorado grew out of the broader goals of the adult education community.
- Term limits for legislators, governors and other office holders make building support for and passing family literacy legislation more difficult.
- Strong coordination/cooperation among state agencies and professional organizations must be maintained and increased.
- Stronger, sustained support from the business community is essential for the success of family literacy in Colorado.

Background to Enactment

Arizona's 1994 enactment of family literacy legislation best illustrates the elements necessary for success: background preparation, political astuteness and persistence. Arizona had thriving model demonstration programs operating in the Mesa Family Tree Project and the Tucson Toyota Families for Learning Project, both begun in 1991. Gary Eyre, then deputy associate superintendent of adult education in the Arizona Department of Education (DOE), and C. Diane Bishop, the new DOE superintendent in 1990, made adult education and family literacy a top priority.

In 1993, private funding sources for the Mesa and Tucson programs were reduced. The Pima County Adult Education program (PCAE), directed by Greg Hart, partnered with Child Parent Centers, Inc. (the grantee for southeastern Arizona's Head Start programs) to help the state initiative push. The legislative initiative was supported by the Mesa Unified School District, and the original family literacy model was operated by the Isaac Elementary District. Greg Hart had begun meeting with Democratic Representative George Cunningham, from a district in the Tucson area. Cunningham had been supportive of adult education and chose to support family literacy as the most meaningful effort towards improving a comprehensive adult program. Despite the Republican majority in the House, Cunningham had a strong political base from his position as chief-of-staff for the former governor. Greg Hart, Gary Eyre and John Garth, the state director of adult education, met with Rep. Cunningham and a House staffer to draft a bill to expand family literacy statewide. They sought and obtained Republican support from Speaker of the House Mark Killian and Governor Fife Symington, as well as the Joint Budget Committee and the Office of Strategic Planning. Rep. Cunningham and Rep. Ruth Solomon co-sponsored the bill. Rep. Lisa Graham Keegan a Republican legislator and chair of the powerful House Education Committee, was very supportive of the pilot legislative effort and was influential in obtaining the appropriation level. In 1994, she was elected as State Superintendent of Public Instruction. As superintendent, she continues to be the principle state official supporting the family literacy/intergenerational approach to increasing the literacy competencies of children, adults, and families.

NCFL was brought in as an "outside expert" on six occasions between 1991 and 1996. Sharon Darling met with legislators and with the editorial board of the *Arizona Star*, which endorsed the effort and helped build public awareness.

What began as an isolated family literacy bill became incorporated in 1994 in the popular Success by Six measure. This was a child-oriented piece of legislation providing for health screening and intervention in potentially abusive families. Although Success by Six supporters initially feared dilution of their bill's strength, all acrimony dissipated as they realized that family literacy had some conservative appeal and that either bill might not have passed separately. During the second session of the Arizona legislature in 1994, the bill lost a close vote due to general educational reform and school finance issues. However,

during the 1994 Special Session in June, Gayle Gibson of Mesa Schools, with strong access to Speaker Killian, urged the Speaker to reintroduce the bill. Speaker Killian reintroduced the bill and it passed.

Summary of Legislation³

The 1994 Arizona Children and Family Stability Act, titled “Healthy Families, Family Literacy, Health Start,” established a two-year family literacy pilot program “intended to serve the parents of preschool children by improving their basic academic skills in order to increase family literacy.” Participant eligibility is restricted to parents who have a three- or four-year-old child, who lack sufficient mastery of basic educational or English language skills to function effectively in society or who lack a high school diploma or its equivalent, and who are citizens or legal residents of the United States. Enrollment is set at a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 parents per program. The legislation specifies the four components and stipulates that projects are to use a nationally recognized model such as that developed by NCFL. Programs must provide for recruitment, screening, food services, instructional programs, child care and transportation.

Local education agencies and adult education programs funded by the Department of Education are eligible for grants if a high percentage of adults in the county, the district, or the local targeted school service area have not graduated from high school. The request for proposal (RFP) process is based on geographical distribution and economic and educational disadvantage. Programs are encouraged to form organizational partnerships involving public schools, private preschools and adult education programs. Two additional grants are available to existing literacy programs in the state, one in the northern and one in the southern half, that can serve as models and training resources for other programs. Through these resources, Arizona was able to participate in the NCFL trainer certification process and now has a team of family literacy trainers. An annual programmatic evaluation by the state Auditor General is mandated and outlined in detail.

The perceived strengths of the legislation are numerous. First, the mandated participation of both adult education and early childhood providers counteracts the tendency to view education as solely a child’s issue. Also, the stipulation of the NCFL model or better ensures a comprehensive and intensive program. The accountability and trial period components are crucial from the perspective of the Arizona legislature; having the Auditor General’s office provide a third-party evaluation, besides the local program and state agency reports, has greatly strengthened the program’s position.

A potential weakness of the legislation is that the legislation does not provide funds for state administrative services, state site monitoring and evaluation, or state sponsored professional staff development institutes. As a result, Dr. Eyre allocated a considerable amount of Section 353 funds from the National Literacy Act state grant to conduct summer teacher training conferences. Another weakness to be overcome was the lack of a provision for bringing the program out of the pilot stage. This was remedied

³ See Appendix III for a complete copy of the Arizona Family Literacy Program statute.

during the 1998 session of the Arizona state legislature. In 1998, the family literacy program was reauthorized and the article heading of Title 15, Chapter 5, Article 8 of the Arizona Revised Statutes was changed from “Family Literacy Pilot Program” to “Family Literacy Program.”

Funding

The initial legislation funded the program at \$975,000 in 1993 and \$1 million in 1995. Since 1995 to the present, the appropriation has remained at \$1 million per year. For 1997-98, contractors are providing services at 21 sites. The legislation does not stipulate the number of programs, but the aim is to provide funds for each site based on an agreed services contract. There are provisions for funding matched by other groups through collaboration and in-kind support. Other programs, like those begun with Toyota grants, are unaffected by the legislation and have their own funding sources.

Administrative Structure

As legislated, the State Board of Education administers the programs and awards grants through the Division of Adult Education in the Department of Education, which has strong state funding and leadership. The Arizona Department of Administration (DOA) is responsible for the application and procurement process. Even Start operates under Title I and in FY 1998 received \$1.7 million for nine programs.

Current Situation

In fiscal year 1994-1995, the experienced Mesa and Tucson staff helped provide training and technical assistance for the new sites, which opened late the first year due to the 90-day implementation period set by the legislation. As the first two years drew to a close, advocates sought a continuation grant model. Lisa Graham Keegan, Mark Killian, Gary Eyre, Greg Hart, educators and family members testified before the House and Senate Education and Appropriation committees. Tight education funds almost stood in the way of reauthorization, but Speaker Killian made a plea that one and a half years was an insufficient trial period given the types of long-term benefits expected through family literacy. The Auditor General’s programmatic report showed initial positive outcomes. This, along with strong data supporting the connection between a child’s school success and the parent’s education level and indicating the program’s enormous potential, was a significant factor in the renewal of the pilot in 1996 for two more years. By this time, Success by Six was solidly behind family literacy, and they worked in concert to help bring together votes.

As mentioned earlier, supported in part by favorable Auditor General programmatic reports as well as a study by NCFL on the successes of the pilot project, the family literacy program was reauthorized in 1998 and given a \$1 million appropriation for FY 1999.

Summary: Arizona

- Grew out of successful demonstration projects and strong leadership from education administrators and multiple key legislators.
- NCFL provided credibility as an “outside expert.”
- Legislation has been renewed and the family literacy program is no longer a pilot program.
- Funding levels at \$1 million a year for 21 programs.
- Administered by the Adult Education Division of the Department of Education.
- Strong evaluation components of the legislation and political astuteness are crucial to success.

Part II: State-funded Family Literacy Initiatives



Nevada

Nevada has developed the Nevada Even Start Family Literacy Program (NEST), but does not have any specific family literacy legislation. NEST is an initiative that was developed by Governor Bob Miller and was one part of the early childhood package which he proposed to the Nevada state legislature in 1997. The program is based on the federal Even Start model, and its components include early childhood education, adult education, parent education, and parent and child interaction.

To fund the program, the legislature approved a \$1.83 million line item in the Nevada Department of Education's (NDE) budget for FY 1998 and FY 1999. In 1997, the NDE disseminated a request for proposals (RFP) that encouraged local communities to collaborate in the development of competitive applications that included the four Even Start components mentioned above. As a result, the NDE awarded \$1.656 million to seven two-year projects.

The funds received by the projects may be used for child care and transportation for participating families, training and salaries for family advocates/early childhood educators, educational materials, program evaluation and other costs to coordinate the services of the project. An early childhood consultant in the NDE provides leadership in early childhood education and technical assistance to local community programs in the development and refinement of the approved NEST projects.

Currently, the NDE is preparing to present reports on NEST to the Nevada State Legislature in February and April of 1999. With a new governor, the goal is to receive continued funding for the next biennium.

Maryland



The state of Maryland is taking an innovative approach to funding family literacy. Governor Parris Glendening has designated \$2.17 million of his 15% discretionary funds, available as part of the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) Block Grant, for family literacy programs. The Governor did this because he sees family literacy as a way to address the needs of undereducated individuals in a welfare reform environment.

The Maryland Department of Education, in coordination with the Maryland Department of Human Resources, has drafted a Request for Bids (RFB) document that will be distributed in four selected jurisdictions within the state. The four areas were selected based on need: Baltimore City, Charles, Wicomico and Prince George's counties.

The Maryland WtW-Family Literacy Project will be based on various state and national family literacy models, provided in combination with at least one of the following activities:

- Work Experience
- Community Service
- Life Skills, including parenting
- Basic and Secondary Education
- Skills Training
- Job Readiness
- Post Employment Services
- Support Services (Child Care and Transportation when otherwise not available)

The participants in these family literacy programs will be hard-to-place Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) customers and non-custodial parents of TCA customers' children. After a competitive process, selected vendors in each jurisdiction will be awarded contracts to provide essential services – the most significant being services that help participants secure gainful employment and move towards self-sufficiency.

The Department of Education will play a prominent role in assisting with finalizing specifications for use by representatives of local social services departments who will issue the RFBs. Department staff will also assist in program monitoring and evaluation, and will provide ongoing professional development in the areas of assessment, family education curriculum and adult education instruction. Emphasis will also be given to identifying and providing accommodations for program participants who have learning disabilities. The two departments, Human Resources and Education, are working closely to make this program comprehensive and well defined to help participants achieve their academic and economic goals.



Pennsylvania

In 1996, the Pennsylvania General Assembly completed a series of amendments to the state Adult Literacy Act. One of those amendments added a definition of “family literacy” as “an educational program designed to provide literacy training for adults, educational services for children and activities for parents and children together, at same or different sites.” The amendments were supported by the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Literacy and the Pennsylvania 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force.

This amendment was transformed into a statewide family literacy initiative after Governor Tom Ridge earmarked \$3 million dollars in the FY 1998-99 state budget for family literacy programs. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has been allocated this money under the state Adult Literacy Act to initiate family literacy programs through local educational agencies (school districts, intermediate units, area vocational-technical schools and charter schools) and/or eligible public or private nonprofit organizations. The state began delivering family literacy services to its adult population most in need and their families in September 1998. With the recent changes under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, the state has decided to complement its welfare-to-work provisions with family literacy in order to strengthen families and help prepare adults for the “world of work.”

The Department’s Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) has been given responsibility for the family literacy initiative. It also administers the federally-funded Even Start Family Literacy Program. By combining the state’s \$3 million with the federal Even Start grant of \$4.9 million, Pennsylvania is allocating almost \$8 million for direct family literacy services.

Although the state funds are designed to deliver a new range of services, communities are expected to work with existing providers with proven track records in providing services to adults and children. By combining and leveraging family literacy funds with other resources, such as Head Start, Title I, pre-school and child care, and TANF funds, programs will be able to provide educational services for parents and children, adult work experience and job skills training.

All Pennsylvania’s family literacy programs provide four integrated components that uniquely serve families:

- Adult education for parents;
- Literacy-focused early childhood education;
- Parent group for life skills education, peer support and resources for effective parenting; and
- Regular parent and child “together time.”

The adult, early childhood and parenting components provide intensive, frequent and long-term education and family support services to parents and their children. For example, adult services of up to 25 hours per week are available to meet local welfare-to-work requirements. Integrating these components is critical because the combined activities help parents transfer skills from their families to the workplace and their communities. To help ensure the integration of these components, NCFL provided a “Family Literacy Implementation Training” for 90 practitioners and a “Focus on Work Seminar” for an additional 51 practitioners in the fall of 1998. The workshops drew their audience from adult education, early childhood and social services. Participants left both sessions with a better understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of family literacy. Many designed program strategy schedules and lesson plans for families on welfare.

NCFL has also discussed developing a certified trainer system for Pennsylvania. These trainers could potentially support all family literacy programs with technical assistance visits.



Massachusetts

Massachusetts has a family literacy demonstration program that originated in the Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) division of the Massachusetts Department of Education (MDOE). In 1996, ACLS leveraged state adult education dollars and a significant local investment to fund 15 “Family Literacy Challenge Grants” (FLCG), modeled on the Even Start program but on a smaller scale, for a five year period based on satisfactory performance. Grantees include public schools, Head Start programs, and nonprofit and community-based organizations. The FLCG programs build on an existing child educational program that is, in most cases, the major source of the matching requirement for the challenge grant. In FY 1999, a total of 15 FLCG were awarded at an average of approximately \$34,500, for a total of \$517,000 in state investment in family literacy. Massachusetts is also funding 13 Even Start programs for a total of \$1,855,594 in FY 1999.

The FLCG demonstration program is designed to conserve resources, eliminate duplication of services, and encourage collaboration. The FLCG family literacy programs serve families with children from ages three to twelve. The required FLCG components build upon educational programs for children, but include an adult education class which incorporates a parenting education curriculum (for a minimum of five hours per week of instruction for 32 weeks per year) as well as Parent and Child Time (PACT). Programs are encouraged to offer “creative” components such as child care, transportation, and home visits, and received bonus points for providing these additional supports to families in the original grant competition.

This demonstration program attempts to build local financial support for family literacy by demanding a significant local matching requirement that increases over the five year funding cycle. Grantees were required to match funds equal to the amount of the FLCG in each of the first two years. In years three, four and five, the matching requirement increases so that by the end of the funding cycle the FLCG programs will be 100% funded by and fully assimilated into the local communities. Thus, adult education dollars are a catalyst for sustainable local investment in family literacy.

In partnership with representatives from the FLCG and Even Start family literacy programs, and with grant support from the U.S. Department of Education, Massachusetts has also developed a statewide family literacy initiative: the Massachusetts Family Literacy Consortium (MFLC). The lead agency for the MFLC is the MDOE and its membership consists of representatives from the major state agencies providing education, human and health services; family literacy providers, advocates and other community organizations; and parents enrolled in family literacy programs.

MFLC members are committed to this systemic change effort to strengthen and expand family literacy statewide. The vehicle for such change is an ambitious plan that provides for activities and events such as needs assessment, public awareness, training, and the advancement of state policies and priorities with respect to family literacy. The MFLC looks to the federally-funded Even Start and state-funded FLCG

programs for models of family and programmatic success. But more importantly, it looks to engage its state agency members as full partners in the integration and institutionalization of family literacy within the multi-billion dollar health and human service systems of Massachusetts.

Conclusions

The easiest lesson to be drawn from these examples is that there is no set formula for success. However, it is important to have a clear understanding of the issues central to creating state-funded family literacy initiatives with respect to each individual state. At the same time, some background preparation is definitely advisable. In states with the greatest success, there was an accumulation of ongoing efforts that were sustained even after the legislation was passed or the initiative was in place. Having demonstration projects in place builds public awareness and shows that effective models can be successfully adapted to a state's particular needs. Forming a literacy commission or an advisory committee that can serve as an advocacy base allows family literacy to present a united front. Gaining media recognition and corporate business support is advantageous.

The very attempt to pass family literacy legislation—whether or not it is enacted, funded or maintained—can bring about positive results. As stakeholders come together to form commissions and discuss partnerships, they raise awareness in education communities and in the legislature. By confronting obstacles and getting feedback from legislators, stakeholders learn how to strengthen their presentation or, sensing that the timing is inopportune, turn to extra-legislative means of promoting family literacy. The passage of legislation is not necessarily an end solution. If sites are inadequately funded, lack trained staff, and are insufficiently accountable to a comprehensive model of family literacy and quality indicators, they can discredit family literacy. In order for pilot legislation to become permanent, and permanent legislation to maintain funding levels, programs must prove themselves by standing up to outside evaluations.

The creation of a promising statewide program hinges on three issues:

1: Impetus, Initiator and Support

Accomplishing a state-funded family literacy initiative depends a great deal on the driving forces behind it; i.e., who or what initiates the process. Typically, family literacy ties in with a governor's education reform efforts and/or a first lady's literacy initiative which addresses broadly recognized needs. Strong leadership from education administrators, often those in adult education, and from one or two influential legislators, seems to be a significant factor for success.

Politically adept advocates have recommended the following actions:

- Identify a small number of legislators with clout and keep them informed.
- Monitor the legislative process daily; win over certain elements, such as the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, in order to gain the legislature's or governor's support.

- Make contact with other positions, such as an administrative assistant, legislative clerk, bill drafter, or the secretary of the speaker, since legislators are concerned with so many programs.
- Honor legislators by recognizing their support with awards.
- Ensure an appropriate division of duties, allowing local programmers to focus on grassroots support, while a state advocacy group does the daily monitoring.

2: *Climate of the Legislature*

Stakeholders in each state should be aware of the legislature's mood and central concerns—adult literacy, children, the family, crime, school dropouts, the workforce, or the budget—and modifying their presentation accordingly or incorporating family literacy into a piece of related legislation that is being submitted. Grassroots pressure needs to emphasize that family literacy is part of a broad initiative—along with adult education, welfare reform, Even Start, and ESOL—which impacts families as a whole. The message should be collaboration towards a common goal rather than competition for limited funds. Family literacy must show its short-term economic return and the long-term payoffs, based on evidence that the single best predictor of a child's success is the parent's education level.

3: *Content of the Legislation*

It seems clear that the legislation, even if adapted to the concerns of the legislature, should retain a focus on some crucial elements: a definition of family literacy, eligibility requirements, evaluation and training components, the funding mechanism and the administrative structure.

In general, stakeholders never regretted that legislation was too broad, except in terms of outlining and regulating the program. Clearly defining family literacy is important in that it allows for accountability, making sure that the money is spent for comprehensive family literacy. Required training is beneficial, and less restrictive age ranges seem desirable. By stipulating the number of participants, programs with insufficient numbers can be phased out. A successful technique is to begin with pilot legislation and have external evaluation in place from the beginning. Demonstrating the value of family literacy, in terms of aiding both participants and taxpayers, is essential. At the same time, with pilot legislation, policy makers must consider what direction it will take in the future and how it is to move from a grants process to a more stable funding process. It is better to have fewer programs with sufficient funding than to stretch an appropriation too thinly.

Perhaps the most central issue to the prosperity of a legislated program is where to house family literacy, yet no solution seems entirely satisfactory. At stake are the permanence of pilot legislation, prominence of the program, sufficient funding, ease of collaboration and the balance of the components of family literacy. The choice of the administrative agency depends partly on each state's organizational structure. The Department of Education (DOE) seems to have been the strongest choice in the states illustrated here,

rather than the community college system or the more vulnerable governor's office. Within the DOE, the adult education agency, when it is strong enough in terms of funding and direction, may be appropriate; in other cases, housing the program wherever Even Start is located helps with coordination. The program tends to assume the focus of its administering agency, although the degree of collaboration appears to depend more on individual state histories.

Success or failure of state family literacy initiatives is contingent on a small number of well informed people in key positions. Strong supporters within the legislature and administrators who are capable and willing to collaborate make all the difference, both in establishing state-funded family literacy initiatives and making them strong family literacy programs.

Appendix I: Sample Legislation

Family Literacy for Family Independence

Section 1. [*Short Title.*]

This act may be cited as the “Family Literacy for Family Independence Act of 1999.”

Section 2. [*Statement of Purpose.*]

The purpose or preamble may vary depending on what initiative family literacy is attached to in each state. Always keep in mind that undereducation and poverty are passed from generation to generation. The following are some examples of how family literacy legislation could be introduced:

1. Welfare Reform / Workforce Enhancement. If public assistance reduction is the initiative, family literacy could be a useful strategy because study after study has shown the inextricable link between chronic welfare dependency and intergenerational undereducation. The most basic measures indicate that many welfare recipients need to improve their literacy skills in order to succeed in the workplace. For instance, almost 50 percent do not have a high school diploma or GED; welfare recipients aged 17-21 read, on average, at the sixth grade level⁴.

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) has strong, long-term evidence that family literacy not only helps families with educational obstacles but also moves them from welfare dependence to self-sufficiency while at the same time strengthening the family. One follow-up study showed that dependence on public assistance was reduced by approximately 50 percent⁵.

(This scenario may call for the Department of Social Services to be the lead agency in the project team, so that the adult education portion of the program can be made to satisfy the needs of a state’s welfare plan.)

2. School Reform / Parent Involvement. If school reform or parent involvement is the initiative, family literacy would be a natural strategy. A study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education showed that the only consistent predictor of a child’s success in reading is the level of involvement of the parent in the child’s education. Where parents were involved in their children’s education, children scored 28 points above the national average on a standardized reading test⁶. In addition, research studies show that children achieve higher grades and test scores, have better attendance in school, complete more homework, demonstrate more positive attitudes and behavior, graduate at higher rates, and enroll in higher education when their families are involved in positive ways in their education.

(This scenario may call for the Department of Education to be the lead agency in the project team.)

⁴ Barton, Paul E. and Lynn Jenkins, *Literacy and Dependency: The Literacy Skills of Welfare Recipients in the United States*. (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ: 1995).

⁵ National Center for Family Literacy, “Facts and Figures.” (NCFL, Louisville, KY: 1997).

⁶ U.S. Department of Education. *Reading Literacy in the United States: Findings From the IEA Reading Literacy Study, 1996*.

3. Early Childhood Initiatives. Many states are looking closely at the new brain research and are creating various early childhood initiatives. This research reveals the usefulness of family literacy in this type of initiative. The research shows that social development is affected by the way a child connects with his or her parent. This interaction physically alters the structure of the brain⁷. A child raised in an environment of fear and pain will have a brain that is wired for hostility, aggression, and violence. A lack of stimulation can also result in slowed brain development. However, the research tells us the brain is remarkably flexible. Early identification of problems can be compensated for, and normal brain growth and development can be enhanced.

This research highlights the critical role of parents in orchestrating those experiences in their child's first three years. The fact that parents are a child's first and most influential teachers can not be disputed.

(This scenario may also call for the Department of Education to be the lead agency in the project team.)

Section 3. [Definitions.]

IN THIS ARTICLE, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

1. "ELIGIBLE PARENT" means a parent/caregiver who meets the following requirements:

- (a) has a child, from birth through age eight (this could be expanded to include all children).
- (b) is 16 years of age or older, not enrolled in a regular secondary school program and has not earned a high school credential, or who has a high school credential yet functions below a 12th grade level.

2. "FAMILY LITERACY SERVICES" means services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family and that integrate all of the following activities:

- (a) Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children.
- (b) Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.
- (c) Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency.
- (d) An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

⁷ Shore, Rima. *Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development*. Families and Work Institute, 1997.

3. "LITERACY" used with respect to an individual, means the ability of the individual to speak, read and write English, and compute and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to:

- (a) function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.
- (b) achieve the goals of the individual.
- (c) develop the knowledge potential of the individual.

4. "ELIGIBLE GRANTEES" can include Head Start and other early childhood programs, adult education providers, local education agencies, family resource centers, post secondary educational institutions, public or private nonprofit agencies, technical schools, and other institutions that have the ability to provide model family literacy services to adults and families.

Section 4. [Family literacy program; procedures; curriculum; eligibility plan.]

A. The [appropriate state entity] shall authorize the [appropriate agency] to make "Family Literacy for Family Independence Grants " of up to \$50,000⁸ to applicants who provide family literacy services to young children and their parents.

B. Eligible grantees must match "Family Literacy for Family Independence" grants on at least a one-to-one basis with local community funds or any other non-state dollars.

C. Each project shall include representatives from the following:

- 1. One or more local school districts or the county school superintendent's office.
- 2. An adult education provider funded by the [appropriate state agency].
- 3. A private or public early childhood education provider.
- 4. A representative for the Department of Social Services and any other governmental or private agency that may provide assistance for the planning and operation of the project.

D. Selected projects shall use either:

- (1) a nationally recognized family literacy model such as models developed by the National Center for Family Literacy or its successor; or
- (2) models such as those described in federal law.

⁸ Even Start grants in the 95-96 year ranged from \$112,000 to \$355,000, serving 20-190 families.

E. Priority will be given to projects:

- (1) that are located in counties, districts, or local school service areas with low levels of literacy in the adult population, high numbers of unemployed, and high levels of poverty.
- (2) that demonstrate the greatest effort in generating matching funds and other local support to provide services to families.

OR

based on the degree to which community collaboration and partnership demonstrate the ability to bring additional resources to the program and the readiness and likelihood of the proposing organizations to establish a successful family literacy project.

- (3) that provide family literacy services to eligible parents (or primary caregivers), placing equal emphasis on teaching both parents and children.
- (4) that work with heads of families who are economically disadvantaged, who are eligible for welfare or who are unemployed.
- (5) that require the achievement of set goals and objectives, and target three or more of the following outcomes (increased parents skills, increased child development, increased parent-child interaction, employment, reduced dependence on public assistance, long-term family impacts, etc.). Employment goals shall be coordinated with the Department of Social Services partner in the project to ensure that the parent is in compliance with the state/county welfare rules.
- (6) which evaluate the overall effectiveness of the program based on performance-based outcome measurements such as improved educational levels, improved parenting and life skills, reduced dependency on welfare, increased employment, and increased self-sufficiency of the adults; improved developmental skills and independent learning of the children; increased parental participation in their children's education; and home environments that are supportive of educational endeavors.
- (7) that allocate at least 5% of funds and develop a plan for professional development and training for family literacy program staff and administrators to ensure the proper integration of adult education and early childhood programs and the blending of human and financial resources.

F. Each grant application shall include a plan to address at least the following:

1. Provision of child care through either private or public providers for children not eligible for family literacy services.
2. Food services for program participants.
3. A transportation plan for participants.
4. Recruitment and screening of eligible parents and children.
5. Instructional programs that promote academic and literacy skills and that equip parents to provide needed support for the educational growth and success of their children.
6. A plan for assessment of parents, children and overall program.
7. Integration of the four family literacy components.
8. Organizational partnerships involving at a minimum a common school, a pre-school provider, an adult education program funded by the *[appropriate agency]*, and the Department of Social Services.
9. A plan for the effective and legal blending of resources, including, but not limited to monies allocated for early childhood education, adult literacy, community education, dropout prevention, welfare reform, and/or parent education. Specifically, Even Start, Head Start, Title I, TANF, and Community Service Block grants, to name a few.
10. A determination that at least *[number]* but no more than *[number]* parents with children will enroll and be eligible for the program.

Appendix II: Kentucky

The Parent and Child Education for Family Independence Programs Statute KRS 158.360

- (1) The State Board for Adult and Technical Education shall approve grants and authorize the Department for Adult Education and Literacy to disburse funds to selected local educational agencies, public or private nonprofit agencies, postsecondary educational institutions, and other institutions that have the ability to provide model family-literacy services to adults and families. The programs shall be known as Parent and Child Education for Family Independence Programs. The Department for Adult Education and Literacy shall annually report to the State Board for Adult and Technical Education, and the Legislative Research Commission for each grantee, the total funds expended, the number of parents and children served, the number of participants receiving public assistance at the time they enter the program, and the number of participants who have been removed from public assistance because of participation in the program.
- (2) The programs shall:
 - (a) Provide parents with instruction in basic academic skills, life skills which include parenting skills, and employability skills;
 - (b) Provide the children with developmentally appropriate educational activities;
 - (c) Provide planned high-quality educational experiences requiring interaction between parents and their children;
 - (d) Be of sufficient intensity and duration to help move families to self-sufficiency and break the cycle of undereducation and poverty; and
 - (e) Be designed to reduce duplication with other educational providers to ensure high quality and efficient services;

The programs may operate on a year-round basis. The programs may also be blended with other programs as long as all criteria in this subsection are met.

- (3) Eligible participants shall be those parents who are sixteen (16) years of age or older, not enrolled in a regular secondary school program, and who do not possess a high school credential, or who have a high school credential but function below a twelfth grade level and their children, age zero (0) to eight (8) years.
- (4) Priority in the selection of grant awards shall be based on the county's low level of literacy in the adult population, high numbers of unemployed, and high levels of poverty.
- (5) A minimum of five percent (5%) of the funds appropriated to support the Parent and Child Education for Family Independence statewide effort shall be retained by the Department for Adult Education and Literacy to provide a statewide professional staff development program.

Appendix III: Arizona

The Arizona Family Literacy Program Statute

ARS 15-191. Definitions

In this article, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. “Eligible parent” means a parent who meets the following requirements:
 - (a) Has a three year old or four year old child.
 - (b) Lacks sufficient mastery of basic educational or basic English language skills needed to function effectively in society or lacks a high school diploma or its equivalent.
 - (c) Is a citizen or a legal resident of the United States or is otherwise lawfully present in the United States.
2. “Family literacy program” means a program that is established pursuant to this article and that is designed to promote the acquisition of learning and reading skills by parents and their preschool children in a shared instructional setting.

ARS 15-191.01. Family literacy program; procedures; curriculum; eligibility plan

A. The family literacy program is established in the state board of education through the division of adult education to increase the basic academic and literacy skills of eligible parents and their preschool children in accordance with this article. The state board of education shall establish family literacy projects as part of the overall program at locations where there is a high incidence of economic and educational disadvantage as determined by the state board of education in consultation with the department of economic security and, as appropriate, other state agencies.

B. The state board of education shall adopt procedures necessary to implement the family literacy program.

C. The state board of education shall establish guidelines for requiring program participants to engage in community service activities in exchange for benefits received from the program. Participants shall be allowed to choose from a variety of community and faith-based service providers that are under contract with the department to provide community service opportunities or program services. Participants shall be allowed and encouraged to engage in community services within their own communities. Participants shall be allowed to fulfill the requirements of this subdivision by providing community services to the program from which they received services.

D. Submit an annual report by December 31 to the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate regarding the community service activities of program participants pursuant to subsection C, including information on the number of participants, the types of community service performed and the number of hours spent in community service activities.

E. Local education agencies and adult education programs funded by the department of education are eligible for grants if the state board of education determines that a high percentage of adults in the county, the local school district or the targeted local school service area have not graduated from high school. Selection criteria for grant awards shall include at a minimum the educational needs of the adult population, the incidence of unemployment in the county, district or local targeted school service area, the degree to which community collaboration and partnership demonstrate the ability to bring additional resources to the program and the readiness and likelihood of the proposing organizations to establish a successful family literacy project.

F. Each project team shall include representatives from each of the following:

1. One or more local school districts or the county school superintendent's office.
2. An adult education provider funded by the division of adult education.
3. A private or public early childhood education provider.
4. Any other social service, governmental or private agency that may provide assistance for the planning and operation of the project.

G. In addition to the grants prescribed in subsection H, the state board of education shall authorize two grants to existing literacy programs in this state that can offer training and serve as models and training resources for the establishment and expansion of other programs throughout this state. Existing literacy programs shall submit a grant application to the state board of education in the same manner as prescribed in subsection I.

H. The state board of education shall authorize additional grants through the division of adult education in areas of educational and economic need.

I. Selected projects shall use either:

1. A nationally recognized family literacy model such as models developed by the National Center for Family Literacy or its successor.
2. A model that, in the determination of the project team and the state board of education, is superior to a nationally recognized family literacy model.

J. Eligible parents shall be instructed in adult basic education and general educational development. Pre-school children shall receive instruction in developmentally appropriate early childhood programs. Other planned, structured activities involving parents and children in learning activities may be established as a part of the curriculum.

K. Each grant application shall include a plan to address at least the following:

1. Identification and recruitment of eligible parents and children.
2. Screening and preparation of parents and children for participation in the program.
3. Food services for program participants.
4. Instructional programs that promote academic and literacy skills and that equip parents to provide needed support for the educational growth and success of their children.
5. A determination that at least ten but no more than twenty parents with children will enroll and be eligible for the program.
6. Provision of child care through either private or public providers.
7. A transportation plan for participants.
8. An organizational partnership involving at a minimum a common school, a private preschool provider and an adult education program funded by the department of education.

Program evaluation

A. The auditor general shall conduct an annual programmatic evaluation of the healthy families program and the family literacy program, as amended by this act. The auditor general shall provide annual programmatic evaluations to the speaker of the House of Representatives, the president of the senate and the governor on or before December 31.

B. The annual programmatic evaluations shall examine the effectiveness of the programs in meeting program goals, the organizational structure and efficiency of the programs, the level and scope of services included within the programs, the type and level of criteria used to establish eligibility within the programs and the number and demographic characteristics of the persons who receive services by the programs.

C. The annual programmatic evaluations shall include:

1. Information on the number and characteristics of the program participants.
2. Information on contractors and program service providers.
3. Information on program revenues and expenditures.

4. Information on the number and characteristics of enrollment and disenrollment and information from participants on the reasons for each.
5. Information on the average cost for each participant in the programs.
6. Information concerning progress of program participants in achieving goals and objectives.
7. Information on any long-term savings associated with program services.
8. Recommendations regarding program administration.
9. Recommendations regarding informational materials distributed through the programs.

D. In addition to other program evaluation requirements in this section, the auditor general shall also evaluate the healthy families program to measure the effect of the program on encouraging parental responsibility in various areas, including employment, self-sufficiency and child safety. The audit shall also document the income level and family size of those receiving program services.

E. In addition to other program evaluation requirements in this section, the auditor general shall evaluate the family literacy program to determine which program models are most effective in meeting program goals.

F. In preparing the annual programmatic evaluations, the auditor general shall not rely solely on information concerning program participants and program performance prepared by contractors, but shall independently develop information for the annual programmatic evaluations.

G. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the auditor general has access to all relevant information and records held by the department of health services and the department of economic security in order to conduct the evaluations required by this section. The auditor general shall keep this information confidential.

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1989. NCFL works to ensure that all families at the lowest ends of the literacy and economic continuum will have opportunities to expand their education and improve their economic and social well-being through quality family literacy programs. This vision underlies all our work as we provide leadership for family literacy development nationwide; promote policies at the national and state level to support family literacy; design, develop and demonstrate new family literacy practices that address the needs of families in a changing social, economic and political landscape; deliver high quality, dynamic, research-based training, staff development and technical assistance; conduct research to expand the knowledge base of family literacy; and create and support systems which will help sustain family literacy programs.

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