

Preschool for All San Francisco

*A study exploring the programs
current success and failures of implementation
and how they compare to other
universal preschool programs*

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Background:

In March 2004, San Francisco residents voted to pass Proposition H, an initiative that would funnel 10 million dollars from the city's general fund to education and each year subsequently increase this funding. One third of this money, 3.3 million, was to begin a "Preschool for All" program. The Preschool for All Program in San Francisco was designed in collaboration with FIRST 5 San Francisco and the Department of Children Youth and Families. The Preschool for All programs is currently in its first year of implementation.

Literature Review:*Implementation*

Several recent articles and books have reviewed the policy implementation literature. These reviews vary from definitions to models of implementation to best practices. The literature shows three methods for studying, a top-down model which contends that the policy designers are the key actors able to use their influence and power (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1989), the second model, a bottom up approach (Berman, 1980; Hull and Hjern, 1983; Lipsky, 1978) believes that the policy change occurs at this level with local service providers. There have been attempts to combine both of this models, a synthesis approach (Matland, 1995).

Definition

Policy implementation has many different definitions. The most comprehensive definition of policy implementation is provided by Theodoulou & Kofinis (2004) which state that:

- "Policy implementation is the stage in the policy process where policy action occurs to address a recognized policy problem.
- At this stage, the design of a policy proposal is put into effect.
- Policies are executed by respective administrative agencies

- Selected instruments are applied reflective of the legislative mandate, bureaucratic interpretation, and capacity.
- Specified target populations, and the society, experience the first tangible effects of the policy once implemented” (167).

This definition of policy implementation that Theodoulou & Kofinis (2004) provide takes a variety of different definitions, (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975: Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1989)

Policy design: Its relationship to implementation

Implementation, as a stage in the policy process was first studied by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973). Their research, a case study on federal jobs program administered by the Economic Development Agency, provided evidence that for a policy to be effective, it must involve a thorough plan for implementation. Pressman & Wildavsky (1973) argue that the success of a policy is based on how it is implemented by the agency. This notion is further supported by (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975: Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989: Berman, 1980: Lipsky, 1978: Elmore, 1980: McLaughlin, 1987: Theodoulou & Kofinis, 2004).

Implementation stage serves as the place in the policy cycle that allows the policy that is going to be implemented to either serve its goal or purpose, or fail. In order for implementation to be successful there must be strong design of the policy. To be successful a policy must be designed to address the specific nature of the problem, must identify the agency which it will be implemented, and must give this agency the instruments to implement (Goggin, 1986: Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1989: Matland, 1995: Theodoulou & Kofinis, 2004).

This relationship between the policy design and the implementation has been argued as the key way in which success of implementation can be measured. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) argue that policy design is directly related to implementation. If there is a poor policy design there will be negative impacts on the implementation, if policy design though is poor and

implementation is good there can be positive impacts. If policy design is good and implementation is good then this is an effective policy (Theodoulou & Kofinis, 2004). Furthermore, Ingram and Schneider (1997) define successful implementation as being “agencies comply with the directives of statutes; agencies are held accountable for reaching specific indicators of success; goals of statutes are achieved; local goals are achieved; or there is an improvement in the political climate around the program (335).

Successes of implementation are further distinguished by the two theories. Top down theorists’ measure success in terms of specific outcomes that are tied directly to the statutes of the program, while bottom-up theorists argue that success of the programs positive effects (Matland, 1995).

Top down Approach

Top down models (Van Meter and Van Horn 1976; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1989) believe implementation to be a function of the government. Mazmanian and Sabatier and noted throughout almost all of the literature as providing the conceptual framework for this theory. Their model presents three sets of facts that increase the probability of successful implantation. Theses are: tractability of the problem, ability of statute to structure implementation, and non-statutory variables affecting implementation. This model recognizes the various complexities of implementation and attempts to rationalize them with a set of variables related to the factors.

The top down approach or theory attempts to share policy advice (Matland, 1995). Because the theory had developed specific variables Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) use these variables as specific ways in which to make implementation successful. Furthermore, common top down advice argues that the most important piece of advice is to make policy goals both clear and consistent (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983, 1989).

Pressman and Wildavsky (1994) argued that limiting the number of actors aids in the implementation process.

Matland (1995) provides a clear analysis of the criticisms of this model, which include no consideration of any policy actions taken prior to implementation, viewing the implementation process as only administrative and that those who design the policy are the key actors. These criticisms of this model are also related to the criticism of a top down model of any organization. There is not enough emphasis on the people who are actually providing the service or goods knowledge.

Bottom-up approach

The bottom up approach method is quite obviously the opposite of the top-down. This model argues that there is more understanding of implementation by starting with those who are delivering the services and those who are receiving the services (Lipsky, 1978; Berman, 1980; Hjern, 1982; Elmore, 1980). Policy implementation in this model occurs on two different levels, the macro implementation and the micro-implementation (Berman, 1980). Macro implementation involves the key actors involved in a government level that design the governments plan. Micro-implementation is how these organizations reacted to the other level and implement the program. This approach argues that the goals, strategies, and actives must be understood in order to understand the implementation (Matland, 1995).

Hjern's research tends to be the most comprehensive measurement of implementation from a bottom-up approach. Hjern studies the policy problem at all levels and then maps out the relationships. Implementation success is based on how large the skills of individuals in the local structure can adapt the policy for their program (Hjern, 1982). Furthermore, in comparison to

top-down models policy advice, bottom-up models policy advice is strongly related to having flexible strategies that are based on adaptation at the program level (Palumbo et al, 1990).

Criticisms of this model are that it puts too much emphasis on bottom level because in a democracy the power remains with those in higher positions (Matland, 1995). Secondly, there is a strong belief that the bottom-up methodology overemphasizes how people work together at a local level. Furthermore, there tends to be disconnect to the actual policy design.

Synthesis: Combining the two models

Elmore attempts to combine both of these models through the concept of forward and backward mapping. Forward mapping includes defining policy objectives as specific as possible and providing places in the implementation stage to judge policy outcomes (Elmore, 1980). Backward mapping is when you start by specifically defining the outcome and what the policy is attempting to change at the lowest level. Then from each level above the bottom you make changes as you go up the levels which allow change to occur at every level until optimal change has occurred (Elmore, 1980). Sabatier (1991) has also tried incorporating a more synthesized view of implementation. He argues that advocacy coalitions, groups of policy advocates from different organizations, play key roles in the implementation process. Both Elmore (1980) and Sabatier (1991) attempt to provide changes in the approach to implementation but there still needs to be a better synthesis of both the top down model and bottom down model. One of the problems that are evident is that each model studies different types of policies.

Implementation of Universal Preschool Programs

Studies comparing universal preschool programs nationwide are appearing to become key pieces of information in the successful implementation of universal preschool programs. Gormley and Gayer (2003), Spiker and Golan, (2005) Mitchell, Ripple, & Channan (1998),

Poppe and Clothier, (2005). A study prepared by Bassoff et al (2001) provides one of the most comprehensive comparisons of universal preschool programs. Further research shows that examining other early literacy and preschool programs, doing extensive case studies, are the ways in which universal preschool programs are being implemented throughout the state of California (Spiker and Golan, 2005).

Spiker and Golan argue that “case studies are a particularly good way to explore new programs because they can provide in-depth descriptions of program operations and the history of decision making, highlight some of the conditions that facilitate or hinder the effectiveness of program activities, and suggest directions for future exploration” (220).

Preschool for All programs, or universal preschool programs vary throughout states and counties across the country. Some cities have programs that serve all four year olds while other define “universal” as children that are low income, at risk of school failure, and or special needs. Though programs such a Head Start which serves low-income preschool age children, often times there are not enough spaces for all children that are qualified for the program (Pamuk, 2002).

There are a variety of program goals for universal preschool programs nationwide.

Bassoff et al (2001) identify these as:

1. “To prepare children for successful entry into schools.
 2. To improve learning outcomes of children towards desired results
 3. To expand access to targeted groups of children to quality early care
 4. To improve the quality of early care and learning programs
 5. To support the needs of parents who are working or attending school”
- (pp. 1-4).

Furthermore they provide a list of advantages and disadvantages of universal preschool programs. Advantages of these programs include equity, accessibility, and affordability. Also, these programs are giving to the common good, increase teacher qualifications and provide

higher compensation for teachers. Common disadvantages cited are curriculum's may be not be developmentally appropriate, duplication, half day programs (Bassoff et al, 2001; Clothier, 2005)

Another important aspect of universal preschool programs is creating partnerships among community partners. These partnerships are an integral part of the success of the program. There must be buy in from a variety of actors, such as politicians, businesses, and child care providers (Bassoff et al, 2001; Gormley and Gayer, 2003). These partnerships are often based on strong collaborations or coalitions. This idea supports Sabatier (1991) advocacy coalition model of implementation. Collaboration amongst the many actors' leads to increase chances in funding and provides opportunity for more to be involved, thus having a larger group of stakeholders.

Resources are also important in successful implementation of universal preschool programs. These resources include the facilities, staffing, and needed support systems to keep programs going (Mitchell, Ripple, & Chananan, 1998). Resources such as funding also determine how well a preschool program has been implemented (Spiker and Golan, 2005). These resources can come from federal, state, or local governments. Often the resources that a program uses are a combination of sources. Funding strategies must be executed and funding secured.

Finally, the last aspect of implementation of preschool programs must be evaluation of the program. Is the policy making an impact on the people it intended to serve? The programs must have quality standards in place for successful implementation of the program (Clothier, 2005; Gormley and Gayer, 2003; Mitchell, Ripple, & Chananan, 1998).

Thus the framework established for universal preschool program implementation follows:

- Program Goals
- Partnerships
- Resources
- Quality Standards

Research question:

Preschool for All San Francisco is currently in its first year of being implemented as a program. Given this opportunity to examine key actors involved in the process will hopefully allow a theory of implementation to be evident, meaning there will either be a top-down approach, a bottom-up approach, or a synthesis of the two. I suspect that the approach followed will be the top-down method.

The second part of my research question will be to gauge opinion about Preschool for All San Francisco. By doing this I wish to determine if people feel as though implementation is successful. I hope that this will provide some common barriers to implementation.

Furthermore, I wish to examine how Preschool for All San Francisco compares with other programs both nation and statewide that already have a history of implementation which will hopefully show trends of implementation strategies.

Research methodology:

This research methodology took place using two different approaches. The first approach was a key-informant interview. I wanted to do key informant interviews rather than a survey method because it was important to get an insiders view. Furthermore, I wanted to conduct interviews with a wide range of actors involved in the implementation process. This range of people allowed me to talk with someone at almost every level of implementation, from administration to person being served.

I used pre-scripted interviews throughout the interview process. This gave me the opportunity to control the interview and keep it related to the research that I was interested in obtaining. By using a pre-scripted set of interview questions I also felt more comfortable about

conducting key-informant interviews for the first time. The interviews were conducted with someone from a specific agency or organization. The interviewees each have had a role in the implementation process. To protect the confidentiality of those interviewed I will only provide their place of work. Some people did not want their names published with their opinions.

Interviews:

First 5 San Francisco- This agency was chosen because they have designed the Preschool for All San Francisco and are responsible for distributing funding.

Department of Children, Youth, and Families- They are co-administering the program with First 5. They also have a vested interest in universal preschool.

Wu Yee Children's Services- They have been contracted out by DCYF and First 5 to administer the program to preschools in the four neighborhoods.

Gateway to Quality Childcare- Responsible for assessing all of the preschool and family day care centers participating in the program. Also assess preschools who are interested in participation.

Associate Professor, Child and Adolescent Development Program- Member of the planning council for PFA San Francisco. Has lots of experience working in the field of early childhood care.

Preschool Director- Director of program receiving funding from PFA San Francisco. Has been director at the school for 20 years. He has participated in planning and implementation process.

Preschool Teacher- Preschool teacher for last 12 years. Has participated in planning and implementation process.

Parent- child is attending PFA School. Parent active in learning more about PFA and process.

The following questions were asked during the interviews:

Background

When Preschool for All San Francisco was being designed who was involved in the process?

Describe your role.

What are your overall feelings about the design of Preschool for all San Francisco?

Program Goals

What are the program goals of Preschool for All San Francisco?
 Of these goals, which do you feel are most important? Why?
 What goals do you feel Preschool San Francisco are implementing well? Why have they been successful?
 What program goals do you feel Preschool San Francisco need improvement in their implementation? Why? Are there barriers to implementation of program goals?

Creating Partnerships

What partnerships is Preschool for All San Francisco creating?
 Are these partnerships collaborative among different levels, do they involve a variety of organizations and actors?
 What have they done to reach out to other people?
 How can PFA improve these partnerships?

Resources

What are the most important resources needed for successful implementation?
 What are the challenges in receiving and maintaining these resources?
 What can PFA specifically do regarding resources?
 Do you see any changes in the future?

Quality standards

What are the quality standards that PFA San Francisco is using?
 How would you measure the quality of care and delivery of services of programs that PFA is providing?
 Have there been improvements in quality of care and delivery of services? Has there been a decrease in quality?
 What can PFA do to increase quality of care and delivery of services?
 What are the barriers to implementing quality standards?

Proposition 82

How will Proposition 82 affect PFA San Francisco?
 What changes will PFA San Francisco have to make to implement the Preschool for All California program?
 What is your opinion on Proposition 82?
 If you were to design a universal preschool program that was to be implemented state wide what would it look like?

Future Research

If you were to study other universal preschool or prekindergarten programs nationwide, which programs would you study?

The interviews ranged in time from 45 minutes to 1 hour 20 minutes. The interviews took place at the respective interviewee's offices. Two interviews took place over the phone and one interview was through email. This was due to time constraints on both parties.

The second part of my research methodology included comparing and contrasting Preschool for All San Francisco to other universal preschool programs nationwide. From my key informant interviews two states were mentioned the most, New York and Texas. I conducted this analysis by looking at which states had prekindergarten programs and which of these programs were universal.

The three states that I looked at are Texas, Illinois, and New York. I feel as though these provide good comparisons for California as a whole due to size of populations of states. Also, these three states represent different geographical areas nationwide, meaning that the sample involves East Coast, Mid-west, South, and West Coast. My search began with an internet search of each of the programs websites so I could learn more information.

Illinois: <http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/default.htm>

New York: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/nyc/upk.html>

Texas: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/>

My initial research however found that both Illinois' and Texas' programs are not yet universal programs, and so I also added Oklahoma and Georgia.

Oklahoma: <http://title3.sde.state.ok.us/early/>

Georgia: <http://www.dec.state.ga.us/>

Findings:

The key-informant interviews provided a variety of information regarding Preschool for All San Francisco and the implementation of the program. The key informant interviews answered all three parts of the research. First, key informant interviews led to an implementation model of both top-down and bottom-up, or a synthesis model. Secondly, the key informant interviews provided first hand information regarding Preschool for All San Francisco. Third,

they provided the ability to seek future research on other universal preschool programs throughout the country, though two of the programs of interest were not universal yet.

Case studies of other programs provided more information about implementing both prekindergarten and universal preschool programs. These cases allowed a comparison of common trends in implementation and barriers to implementation. Some states had already begun to do program evaluations. The case studies provide some key strategies to successfully implementation.

Key informant interviews: What “key” people had to say

Background information

The first sets of question were related to background information on Preschool for All San Francisco. These questions were meant to gauge the person’s role in the design of PFA San Francisco and how they felt the program was designed. It was important to gauge information on the policy design first because the literature shows that policy design can make or break implementation. All 8 people interviewed said that they had some kind of involvement within the design process of PFA. This was not a surprising response because I chose people based on their experiences with the design and initial implementation. “PFA San Francisco was designed with the concerns of many people. We established a policy council that would establish the best way to administer the program. We tried to involve as many as people as possible with a wide variety of backgrounds in care. We had preschool teachers, life long advocates, and administrators of programs”. 6 of 8 interviewees were satisfied with the design of the program, the two who were not wanted to have seen more involvement of parents in the policy design. This was based on their experiences in the design process. The person who was unsatisfied, “My

ideas on how to administer a successful preschool program seemed to be a lot different than those who came up with the original ideas. I would not have included day care centers because they often don't have the same quality of care and education".

Program Goals

The literature provides 5 common goals that universal preschool programs have. At least one of these goals was identified by every participant. 5 of 8 interviews discussed preparing children to enter school as a program goal. Expanding learning outcomes in early childhood care was mentioned by two participants. Expanding access to children was the most identified program goal; all eight participants responded. The fourth goal that is often associated with universal preschool program is supporting quality of care; 3 of 8 respondents cited this as a goal. Finally, regarding support of parents 4 of 8 identified this as a goal.

In response to which of the goals were the most important there was more variety in answers. 5 people responded that you needed to have all of these goals in order to have successful implantation. "Implementation can not be successful unless you have everything, without access to preschool you can't enter children prepared to succeed. Without expanding learning outcomes there isn't high quality education".

Creating Partnerships

Some of the key findings regarding partnerships were that 62.5% (5) of the respondents felt as though PFA San Francisco was working hard to create partnerships and were satisfied with these partnerships. Three themes emerged as key to having successful partnerships throughout the implementation stage. These are involving people with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, engaging public opinion about the program and establishing relationships with the preschool programs. "As a preschool director I would like to see PFA really reaching out

and providing more of a community for directors that are involved in the program. I think that this would really be beneficial to establishing what is and isn't working. I want to see what other directors are doing and if we are all involved in this program together we should be able to share our ideas and give feedback”.

Partnerships between teachers and families seem to be the biggest concern. Only 3 of the participants felt as though the relationships between teachers and the families at the preschools or child care were positive relationships. “Teacher qualifications remain low because who wants to work and get paid so little? Why not try to continue to improve teacher relationships with families by providing more training? Why not empower this group of highly important people”. Training on working with families and recognizing their needs was clearly the consensus on how to improve these relationships. The teacher interviewed however stated, “Some parents come and go so fast. They have many other things to do then listen to me as a teacher. I don't know if they don't want to hear what I say or if they just don't have the time”.

Resources

Clearly participants felt that resources included more than just money. Resources that are important for implementation include transportation, site upkeep, teachers, and materials. “Parents need to be able to get their children to and from school. There needs to be a plan to deal with the fact that many of the families do not live within walking distance of their PFA preschools”. Transportation was mentioned by every participant as something that needed to be implemented better. Half of the respondents felt that there needed to be more city wide events that would allow more information about the program, but resources seemed to be responsible for not allowing any more than the two that have already taken place.

Quality standards

Quality was one of the hardest ideas to measure because it can be interpreted in many different ways. Half of the respondents felt that the programs were still lower quality programs than other preschools throughout San Francisco. Some of the reasons behind this were “they’re serving a minority population” “the schools prior to PFA have not been high quality” “there still isn’t enough funding”. The second idea that emerged was the idea of more training being necessary for teachers and school administrators to help implement high quality preschool programs.

Proposition 82

Opinions on Proposition 82 varied among the participants. All 8 respondents felt as though universal preschool is important, that it has numerous benefits, and that it is something we should provide all children. “San Francisco has already started its own program. This program will allow San Francisco’s program to grow even more even faster”.

However, not every person supported Proposition 82. 6 people said that they planned on voting for the proposition and two people were undecided. Though people may be voting for the proposition people still had some negative opinions. “Parents were not involved in the design of this policy and so I think a lot of people feel that they alienated a large group of people”. A majority of people discussed the idea that statewide County Offices of Education would be responsible for implementing the programs. “Why would you allow agencies who can’t even get people to graduate their high schools the ability to run preschool programs? Here we are giving power to people who aren’t very successful”.

Case Studies:

Universal preschool program are an emerging trend among the states. There are only 6 states, Idaho, Mississippi, Montana, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming, which do not provide

any state funds for preschool programs (Spiker and Golan, 2006). These case studies have provided more in-depth knowledge on preschool programs and how they have been implemented.

Illinois

The state of Illinois program, Illinois Prekindergarten Program, was established in 1985. The program is administered by the State Board of Education. Funding for the program, which comes of the state budget, is based on grants to the school districts, which can then contract the services out to public, nonprofit, Head Start, and child care centers. Funding for FY 2005 was \$224 million dollars. Each program that receives funding must have an evaluation process in place. In 2002, 22% of the statewide population was served. Children ages 3 and 4 can enroll in the program if they are determined to be at risk for school failure. These factors are determined at a local level but include family income, if the family receives any public assistance, or if they are ESL students. Program guidelines require that there are no more than 20 children per class with a staff to child ration of 1:10.

Illinois has completed numerous research projects on their prekindergarten program as part of their evaluation process. This has provided some of the barriers that have been found in implementation which include lack of qualified teachers, issues surrounding transportation to and from preschool centers, not enough spaces for all children who are qualified for the program, and lack of space and resources for more centers. This year the Illinois Governor, proposed legislation that would implement a universal preschool program.

Texas

Texas program, Public School Prekindergarten, is not a universal program, but began in 1984 as a legislative mandate to ensure all high risk four year olds received some kind of early

care. In FY03 they served 46% of the all 4 year olds. The funding is based on state budgets to the Texas Education Agency and in FY 04 \$367 million dollars was budgeted for the program. The program increased from half-day care to full day care in 2001, though school districts can choose in what kind of program they wish to implement. School districts then contract out services to other agencies to provide the program. Though school districts have choice in whether or not they have a program, if there are more than 15 children that are eligible they must accept funds and provide services. Texas had no requirements for class size, staff/child ratio, or a required curriculum, but recently they have implemented a 1:22 staff/student ratio. They do however require teachers to have either an early childhood education permit or a kindergarten endorsement, though it was difficult to assess what this endorsement meant.

New York

The state of New York is different because it is implementing to preschool programs. For the purpose of this study I only examined their universal preschool program. The program began in 1997 after legislation passed an education reform act. The State Department of Education implements the program with a budget of 350 million dollars (FY04). All school districts are able to participate in the program and priority is given to “disadvantaged” students, though all 4 year olds are eligible to participate. Children whose parents go to school or work are also given enrollment priority. The staff/child ratio is 1:9 for classes up to 18 children, and 3:20 for classes with 20 children. There is also a requirement that teachers must have a certification in elementary education, elementary education with an early childhood, or bilingual early education. This has led to difficulty in finding teachers who are qualified.

An Early Childhood Strategic Group was formed in the city of New York to help implement the program. This organization involved over 20 different agencies to help successful implement and provide strategies for improvement. This idea was based on strong collaborative practices. New York City is one of the more successful areas providing preschool for all of their children.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma's universal preschool program, the Early Childhood 4-Year Old program was established in 1998 after all public schools were expanded to cover all 4-year olds. The State Department of Education is in charge of the administration though school districts provide the services. These services are contracted to other agencies which include private, nonprofit, and Head Start centers. The state provides services to 65% of all 4 year olds. The program has a 1:10 student ratio, a maximum class size of 20, and head teachers in classrooms must have a special permit that is received after a certain amount of years teaching and successful completion of early childhood education tests. The program operates both full and half day programs. The educational program is very strict in guidelines developed for participating schools.

Georgia

Georgia's universal preschool program, Bright from the Start, was created in 2004. This program is administered by the Department of Early Care and Learning. The program is funded through state lottery taxes, with \$ 253 million dollars going to the program in FY04. The programs are contacted out to private, public, and Head Start centers. The program operates on a voluntary basis meaning parents can choose whether or not to enroll their children. The program

is a full day program that requires a statewide approved curriculum to be implemented. Staff-child ratios are 1:10 with maximum class sizes of 20. Teachers must have an associate's degree in early childhood education. Georgia, like other states, has had difficulty in finding qualified teachers to work in classrooms.

Analysis:

Key informant interviews provided information on how PFA San Francisco is being implemented. Overall, implementation has been positive. Preschool for All San Francisco's implementation approach has been to provide opportunities for both top level actors and bottom level actors to be involved in the implementation process. This therefore has been one of the key successes of the implementation process so far because it is involving everyone who has some kind of vested interest in the implementation process. Research (Elmore, 1980; Sabatier, 1991) argues that this is the best approach for successful implementation. Thus, PFA San Francisco is taking a very positive approach throughout this stage.

Key informant interviews provided the opportunity for a variety of knowledgeable people to share their ideas. All of those interviewed were satisfied with the way the program is being implemented. This may be due to the fact that they all have some kind of role already with the program and thus are biased in their answers, but people still provided key areas of improvement for PFA San Francisco. These included providing more opportunities for people involved to network and get together, provide more training for teachers, and involve more parents. In regards to Proposition 82 no clear conclusions were made about the affects that it would have on Proposition 82. There were both positive and negative discussions, but nothing was able to be concluded by the direct results.

Case studies however provided key pieces of background information about other universal preschool programs. Several common themes and factors developed from the study of the five organizations. These features are that program administration is on the state level which then depends on school districts to provide services. School districts then contract out to public programs, private programs, Head Start. This allows community agencies to provide direct services. Target populations of programs are first developed for “at-risk” or disadvantaged students first, and then if a universal program provide services for all children on a voluntary basis. Almost all programs had a staff/child ratio of 1:10 with a maximum class size of 20 children. Teachers are required to complete some kind of certification process though this varies amongst the states. Furthermore, barriers to implementation across the board include the lack of qualified teachers and space for programs. The programs have also had a gradual implementation process.

Some key recommendations for PFA San Francisco and other universal preschool programs include:

- Continue to involve key political leaders so that public support for the program will remain as the program is implemented.
- Provide opportunities for service providers to be involved in the process as much as possible.
- Develop stronger early childhood curriculums that will enhance program quality.
- Continue training for teachers and preschool directors, specifically focusing on family involvement.

Conclusion:

This research project was able to examine a variety of implementation practices by 5 different states and one cities universal preschool program. This research is intended to provide Preschool San Francisco feedback for the continued success of their program. There have been a variety of limitations throughout this research project though. First, with Proposition 82 being

such a contentious issue within the field of early childhood education, there seemed to be hesitation to participate in this study. This also may have affected the way in which people answered the questions. Also, the interviews were all conducted with people who have had some kind of role in either the policy design or the current implementation. Secondly, the literature lacks in developing key issues of implementation and the literature has been based on comparing other studies. Though it would be interesting to do a nationwide study of implementation in preschool programs, case studies provide the easiest way to develop patterns among programs. Future research on a local level also has the opportunity to be conducted.

Overall I am happy that I was able to take a research project from beginning to end. I have first hand experience in how difficult it is to do research and am appreciative of this learning opportunity.

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