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OF THE ROCKEFELLER BROTHERS FUND

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

MEETING THE CHALLENGE
OF UNIVERSAL ACCESS

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SYMPOSIUM HELD
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OF THE ROCKEFELLER BROTHERS FUND
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FOREWORD

Funding programs that promote universal access to high quality early education continues to be a top priority for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Over the past year, the Fund has supported national advocacy efforts to develop public policies that strengthen or expand early childhood programs at the city, state, and federal levels. It has funded training efforts to advance the professional development of early childhood educators, and it continues to support a variety of initiatives that enhance existing pre-K programs in the Fund's home city of New York.

In December 2000, when the Fund was undertaking a review of its education-related funding activities, it hosted a forum together with the Child Care Action Campaign and the Universal Pre-kindergarten Resource Partnership. The meeting, held at the Fund's Pocantico Conference Center in Tarrytown, NY, provided an opportunity for reform-minded public school superintendents to share strategies for effectively linking pre-K with the K-12 education system. Meeting participants formulated recommendations for education leaders in New York and other states that are implementing universal systems of early care and education. The Fund published the meeting's proceedings in a paper entitled *Embracing Our Children: A Report Based on a Forum About Universal Access to Pre-kindergarten Programs*, Pocantico Paper No. 3.

Building on the success of that conference, in November 2001 at Pocantico, the Fund convened a group of 33 early childhood development and education experts, including scholars, practitioners, and advocates. The conference, "Meeting the Challenge of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education," was meant to begin a process of moving this agenda forward in order to ensure that, over the next decade,

every child in America will be on a path to succeed in school. Discussion topics included: going beyond Head Start to universal access; what we know about early learning and its implications for policy, practice, and professional development; assessment of program effectiveness; financing of early childhood education and care; and the role of parents in early childhood programs.

This report summarizes the presentations of that meeting's featured speakers, including Edward Zigler of Yale, a founding architect of Head Start and the School of the 21st Century; Barbara Bowman, president emeritus of the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development and co-editor of The National Research Council's *Eager to Learn*; Mark Ginsberg, executive director of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; Melissa Welch-Ross, head of the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development; Samuel Meisels, professor of Education at the University of Michigan and president of the Erikson Institute; Sandra Feldman, president of the American Federation of Teachers; Steve Barnett, director of the National Early Education Research Institute, at Rutgers University; and Arthur Reynolds, professor of Social Work and Educational Psychology at the, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

It was a privilege to host a gathering of such distinguished thinkers who have demonstrated the importance and championed the cause of early childhood education. Their insights are crucial to shaping the Fund's priorities in the field of education.

Stephen B. Heintz, President

Annette U. Rickel, Education Program Officer

MOVING FROM HEAD START TO UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Presented by Edward Zigler

Edward Zigler, Sterling professor of Psychology at Yale University and founding architect of Head Start, opened the proceedings by reflecting on his 36 years of experience in early childhood education. Zigler felt that it was a particularly opportune time to bring together the leading advocates of universal preschool access to spur on what he sees as a growing national movement. While he acknowledged that “serious barriers stand in our way,” Zigler was optimistic that universal access could be achieved in the next 10 to 15 years, and he pointed to states such as Georgia, New York, California, and Connecticut that offer examples of model programs.

Zigler stated that although Head Start represents a major gain in overall access to early education, several problems remain, including the fact that it serves approximately 50 percent of children in need because children with family incomes only a few dollars above the poverty line are barred from the program. In addition, Head Start children are effectively segregated from their preschool peers by their socioeconomic status. Early childhood education should no longer be bound by these constraints, Zigler urged. “We must make the decision to move from the categorical approach of Head Start to a universal program of early care.”

By far the most serious challenge facing the implementation of a universal system of early care, Zigler felt, is the commonly held misconception that pre-kindergarten is somehow unrelated to “real education.” It is vital to convince educators, policy makers, and the private sector that a substantial investment in pre-kindergarten will yield substantial rewards all the way through the K-12 years. Despite recent calls by the Bush administration for higher lit-

eracy standards, Head Start is still regarded by the administration as a “social program,” not one geared toward enhancing the pre-literacy skills that culminate in the ability to read. “Literacy begins in the early interactions that predate kindergarten,” Zigler said, “and it is crucial to show decision-makers what a developmentally appropriate, high-quality pre-kindergarten program can do to enhance national education.”

Zigler also identified a second serious challenge in the very structure of the educational system. Unlike some European countries, universal care in America does not enjoy the advantage of an education ministry, where a central decision can be made and implemented relatively quickly. With 50 state boards, 16,000 school districts, and 80,000 schools, each jealously guarding its autonomy, Zigler believes that universal care will come about only gradually, state by state, district by district, and school by school.

Based on his life-long study of children, Zigler explained that his model of early care is predicated on the interaction of family, health, and education structures and the profound influence of early experiences on a child’s growth trajectory. He favors major school reform that will affect all of these areas, and he favors schools that can serve the needs of families and communities. “I’d like to see a new kind of school,” Zigler said. “Why do we close the doors at night? For three-, four-, and five-year olds, we should make the day as long as the workday of mothers and fathers, and provide childcare, healthcare, and pre-K instruction.”

Zigler pointed out that the nation has been slow to react to obvious changes in the typical American family. Recent demographic surveys, for

example, have found that 55 percent of mothers with infants under the age of one are engaged in the workforce, a number that rises to 62 percent for children in preschool, and 75 percent for school age. The increasing number of single parent homes and parents in the workforce, has resulted in a desperate need for day care, which is all too often met with an ineffective and poor quality “hodgepodge” of for-profit, not-for-profit, and home-based care. The problem is exacerbated, Zigler argued, by welfare reform, which cannot succeed without the provision of quality child care.

To Zigler, the issue of quality care is the most vexing question. Only 25 percent of America’s family day care is regulated and of this small minority just 12 percent can be considered quality care. Because state standards dictate the level of care that children receive, it is apparent that day care centers will only minimally comply with, and rarely exceed these standards. According to Zigler, only 17 of the 50 states maintain minimally acceptable standards. The regulatory standards of each state must be evaluated rigorously, and to attain truly high quality care, national standards should be implemented.

Zigler’s efforts to improve both child care and schooling outcomes led him to conceptualize the

School of the 21st Century (“21C”), a school-based, extended-day child care and family support model that provides a range of year-round services for children beginning at birth. “Believe it or not, Head Start doesn’t raise children, schools don’t raise children, day care doesn’t raise children. Parents raise children,” Zigler remarked. He reported that since 1988, some 1,300 21C schools—also known as Family Resource Centers—have been created in 20 states, and support for them is growing rapidly.

In summary, Zigler believes that Head Start is no longer an appropriate solution for the dearth of preschool education for poor children. As he stated, poor children will have preschool, when all children have preschool. Zigler urged advocates of universal access to look beyond the Head Start model toward a solution that includes all young children regardless of culture, ethnic background, and socioeconomic status; one that meets the needs of families and their communities by providing a continuum of services, including healthcare and before-and-after-school care. This approach will allow the children of increasing numbers of working parents, including the working poor, to take advantage of the benefits provided by an early educational start.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT EARLY LEARNING

PERSPECTIVES ON POLICY, PRACTICE, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Presented by Barbara Bowman & Mark Ginsberg

Barbara Bowman, president emeritus of the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development introduced the discussion of policy, practice, and professional development by reviewing some of the major findings from her co-edited volume, *Eager to Learn*. Perhaps the most significant piece of knowledge to emerge from that study, Bowman said, is the simple but often overlooked fact that children have a “prodigious enthusiasm for learning in the first five years of life...and it is the central task of any early childhood educator to nourish that interest.” Sustaining and developing this innate capacity to learn requires a total learning environment that integrates cognitive, emotional, and social domains, while building upon and extending a child’s existing knowledge.

Bowman revisited some of the recommendations made in *Eager to Learn* about the professional development of educators, emphasizing that the education and training of early childhood professionals is at the very heart of the effort to promote and realize a higher quality program. Some of the recommendations advanced in *Eager to Learn* involve sweeping changes in the professional community of early childhood educators. These include having all teachers earn a bachelor’s degree in a specialized area of early childhood education; gain a stronger knowledge of the development of affective and social behaviors, thinking, and learning; complete pre-service and in-service training under quality supervision; and master information on the pedagogy of teaching young children. Bowman acknowledged that “change can be difficult,” particularly when it affects longstanding traditions and practices. However, she stressed that professional practices must be respon-

sive to changes that occur at the level of “the knowledge base.”

Bowman felt that the challenges of revising the professional development of early childhood educators are similar to those other professional communities have faced. For example, in the medical community, more sophisticated knowledge revealed the inadequacy of traditional practices. She also pointed out some of the very negative stereotypes that besiege the professional community of early childhood educators. “Early childhood programs are sometimes seen as employment programs for adults,” she explained. “There is this idea that we’re training low-income women to work with children.” To combat this misconception, Bowman again called for the professional community to place teacher education and qualification among its highest priorities. According to Bowman, “the more education and the more specific education teachers have around child development and early education, the more likely they are to do the kinds of things that promote early learning.”

Bowman also reflected on the quality of programs in early childhood education and care. She felt that, despite how frequently the concept of quality is invoked in discussions about early childhood education, the term remains vague. Although some professional differences about what constitutes a quality program amount to nothing more than “squabbles,” the definition of a quality early education program also has social and political dimensions. Bowman emphasized the need to better define and articulate exactly what constitutes a quality education program, as well as to consider the stakes involved in these definitions. She also pointed out that while nearly everyone can agree on the definition of uni-

versal access, program quality is more elusive. “The question is universal access to what?” Bowman asked. “Access to programs with good child-teacher ratios? That’s not everyone’s definition of quality. Some parents are more concerned with proximity and cost. The public has a different idea. Companies are interested in better performance, while others are more concerned with safety. What is it we want kids to have access to?” Bowman did not expect that an answer would be simple, but in order to advance the agenda of program quality to the public sector, to policy makers, and to educators themselves, it is imperative to better define the idea.

Bowman concluded by posing some questions that emerged from the challenge of defining quality care. Is it possible to provide greater access to all children by settling for lower standards? “How much quality is too much?” she asked. “Is there a moderate amount of quality that’s ‘good enough?’” This question is particularly relevant to students who are considered at risk. How would a rigorous standard of high quality affect children who lack basic skills, and who, in Bowman’s words, need to have the process of learning “sped-up.” Above all, Bowman felt that the issues of quality and of professional development are still in the process of being clarified and fully applied. She believes that the goals of *Eager to Learn* are best served and realized through continued dialogue and close attention to the different contexts of early learning.

Mark Ginsberg, executive director of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, characterized the field of early childhood education as a circular continuum, where knowledge produced through research enters the classroom, and extends beyond it to generate policy. Policy, in turn, has a concrete impact on teaching practices and research agendas. Ginsberg is committed to erasing the distinction between early childhood care and education. “It is not early care and education,” Ginsberg said. “Early care is education. We may not understand what we’re providing if we think it’s possible to somehow separate the two.”

Ginsberg focused on a handful of issues that he deems critical to the development and success of early education. Echoing Barbara Bowman’s concerns, he highlighted a direct link between the qual-

ity of a program and the delivery of professional development. For Ginsberg, the ongoing education of early educators is perhaps most essential to sustaining a quality program. Teachers need far stronger preparation in virtually every area, including cognitive development, literacy, and other content areas, as well as social and emotional competence. They should be supplied with research-based information that conveys the most effective principles of teaching and interacting, and be well versed in translating research-derived knowledge into practical interventions. Ginsberg recommended consistent, long-term programs of pre-service and in-service training for today’s early educators, rather than occasional, discrete “one shot workshops.” At the same time, Ginsberg felt that the managerial aspects of quality education should not be neglected. Indeed, he felt that many programs “begin with the very best intentions” only to be sabotaged by poor management. Ginsberg characterized a strong administrative infrastructure as a nurturing factor in the delivery of quality interactions between teachers and children.

Ginsberg further felt that the practice of teaching, and the nature of the interactions between educator and child, is open to change. He cited that the most significant challenge to today’s teachers is the ability to adapt to context. In other words, the need for teachers to be aware not only of differences between home and school environments and diverse students with special needs, but also to maintain the ability to reflect upon and evaluate the relative success or failure of their own day-to-day practices. Ginsberg also called for early education to celebrate and build upon the diversity of students of different cultures and backgrounds through diverse pedagogical practices and modes of interaction. “How is it possible to create a consistent pattern of high quality, but not one where every program looks exactly alike?” he asked.

According to Ginsberg, one of the most significant challenges to the early education agenda has emerged only quite recently. He points to a “sea change” in American domestic policy after the September 11th terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. While education previously held a privileged status for the newly elected

Bush administration, it has since been displaced by a new emphasis on homeland security. How is it possible, Ginsberg asked, to articulate “the needs of our children as a national priority and revitalize the education agenda at a moment when attention is focused elsewhere?” In response to his own question, Ginsberg reiterated many of his colleagues’ emphases on using the news media to help translate the early education agenda into a shared national language.

In summary, Ginsberg declared America’s teachers the unsung heroes of the nation, and stated that early educators both need and deserve contin-

ued resources and support. “When we speak of professional development and think of the programmatic and policy implications necessary to promote high quality teaching and learning of young children, it’s my sense that we want to be part of a circular continuum from research to policy to practice and back again.” He believes that early education is the most significant factor in determining a national future, and that leadership and the willingness to be self-reflective are critical to realizing the goal of universal access.

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR EARLY LEARNING

Presented by Melissa Welch-Ross & Samuel Meisels

Melissa Welch-Ross, then Head of the new Early Learning and Child Readiness program of the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), discussed the aims of her program and the overall status of national early learning initiatives. While an abundance of information has been produced in the field of developmental psychology on the cognitive, emotional, and social needs of young children, not all of it is relevant to early childhood educators, Welch-Ross explained. In an effort to minimize national achievement gaps, the NICHD intends to build upon the current knowledge base, and also develop more progressive research designs and curriculum modules that can pinpoint specific cause-effect relationships between learning environments and specific interventions. “Until we can identify specific kinds of interactions between children and teachers... quality will remain a diffuse concept,” Welch-Ross added.

Welch-Ross characterized the NICHD strategy as an integrated, multidisciplinary approach to research that is “trying to encourage the process of learning as it’s actually happening.” The NICHD focuses on specific components of integrative curricula, and combinations of adult-child interactions that facilitate learning across three or more domains. “We’re asking investigators to look at education training closely. Did interactions occur as planned, did they lead to particular outcomes? It’s a multifaceted approach. We’re striving to frame the information in terms of usable knowledge.”

The program combines random observational experiments and qualitative methods with attention to the interaction between “individual difference factors” and “macro-level contextual factors.”

Through these investigations, Welch-Ross and her colleagues at NICHD not only want to collaborate with scientists and practitioners and add to the knowledge base, but also begin to articulate a response to some of the pressing issues facing early care proponents. These include determining the mediating approaches through which specific combinations of adult-child interactions lead to learning and development within each domain; the kinds of education and training adults need for structuring environments with children for more effective implementation of the integrative curricula; and the influence of children’s social relationships, social competencies, self-regulatory behaviors, and motivational dispositions on adult-child interactions.

The NICHD is making a special effort to evaluate a handful of highly specific areas. One is the area of cultural difference and diversity. This project, Welch-Ross explained, focuses on children with diverse characteristics and backgrounds, including those with disabilities, who struggle in our education system. What kind of training and education is required to meet the unique needs of students with different ethnic and minority backgrounds, and children who are considered to be at risk?

On a related issue, Welch-Ross noted that there are often discrepancies between home and school environments concerning goals for and approaches to children’s learning and development. Typically, research designs fail to take these discrepancies into account, and therefore produce an inaccurate or incomplete picture of the learning experience. It is essential, Welch-Ross believes, to develop an understanding of the ways that these discrepancies between home and school environments affect the

implementation and effectiveness of intervention.

In conclusion, Welch-Ross highlighted the multidisciplinary approach of the NICHD. She believes that collaborating with scientists and practitioners and focusing on the changing and contingent contexts of early learning could produce a more practical and lasting knowledge base. “There really is an urgent need to ensure that the parents, the early education and care workforce, and other adults who are responsible for children’s learning, have models that they can use to develop the full range of competencies, dispositions, and behaviors that are the foundations for school achievement,” she stated.

Samuel Meisels, professor of Education at the University of Michigan and current President of the Erikson Institute, referred to his predecessor, Barbara Bowman, in introducing the topic of readiness and assessment. Meisels suggested that the current emphasis on cognitive development over all other domains of early childhood pedagogy contributes to one of the longstanding “myths” of readiness. He applauded Bowman’s *Eager to Learn* for dispelling the myth and emphasizing the complementary nature of the cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development domains. “The task is not to emphasize one domain over the other,” Meisels warned, “but to not neglect any domain.”

Meisels noted a similar tendency with respect to early literacy. He characterized the current enthusiasm for phonics as a “magic bullet for teaching reading.” While the research behind phonics instruction is largely positive, Meisels feels that it forecloses on other diverse approaches to teaching literacy, and amounts to a polarizing, “either/or” method. Using a recent longitudinal study as evidence, Meisels demonstrated how different approaches to teaching early literacy, such as skill-based or meaning-based techniques, can produce vastly different outcomes with varying degrees of

effectiveness depending on the context in which they are employed. The point, Meisels argued, is not that one approach is more effective than the other, but that language instruction requires a balanced and diverse approach. “There is significant research that phonics and whole language can coexist and complement each other.”

Another commonly held misconception, according to Meisels, is the belief that a child’s readiness to learn can be measured in terms of a common set of indicators and achievements applicable to all children. In Meisels’ opinion, any universal standard of readiness fails to take into account the episodic and uneven development characteristic of the period between birth and kindergarten. Readiness can only become a meaningful category if it is sufficiently broadened to take into account all aspects of a child’s life that contribute to the ability to learn.

In summary, Meisels believes the challenge is to transform readiness assessment into a continuous and collaborative process that monitors performance, samples work, and provides ongoing analysis of a child’s skills, knowledge, and behaviors. “The meaningful question is not whether a child is ready to learn but what a child is ready to learn.... The appropriate policy question here is not what children need to know or be able to do when they get to school, but what schools need to do to meet the social and educational needs of the children who walk through their doors,” he suggested. Only when assessment is re-imagined as a form of intervention will the questions themselves become catalysts for a child’s improvement.

REFLECTIONS

Presented by Sandra Feldman

Sandra Feldman, president of the American Federation of Teachers, offered reflections on the current state of early childhood education, and reiterated her call to utilize the Head Start program as the foundation for a universal preschool initiative for three- and four-year old children. Feldman fondly recalled her own experience of pre-kindergarten schooling, where she first encountered music, books, and knowledge of the wider world; and where she acquired a foundation for positive interactions.

Sadly, the vast majority of America's young children are not being provided the kinds of positive and nurturing experiences that characterize a quality preschool program. "In spite of our greatness, America has not done well by its littlest children," Feldman said. Indeed, if America has failed to honor a promise to educate its young children during "prosperous, peaceful years," how would the early education agenda fare in the face of an approaching economic recession and increased attention to "national security"? Echoing Mark Ginsberg, Feldman stated that "the nation's security deserves to command our attention, but so do the children who are the nation's future."

Feldman underscored two basic problems with the current state of early education and child-care in the United States. The first is the issue of cost and accessibility, a problem that affects both poor children in working class families and middle class children with working parents. "According to the Children's Defense Fund," Feldman explained, "these families are paying \$4,000–\$10,000 a year for childcare. Or, they're settling for having a relative or neighbor take care of their kids, not really knowing much about the quality or content of the child's day."

The consequence of this lack of quality care is what Feldman identified as the second problem—a "socialization gap." The socialization gap indicates both a decline in school-related skills and a general neglect of emotional, social, and cognitive growth, and in some cases, even physical development. In other words, not having access to a quality preschool program not only jeopardizes future school success, it deprives children of experiences that are integral to personal competence and social participation.

Faced with these staggering challenges, Feldman advised her colleagues to act strategically and practice the art of compromise. She believes it is necessary to build upon existing education structures rather than attempt to rebuild from the ground up. Head Start is the most viable program to build upon because, according to Feldman, "we already have a federal commitment and a long-standing system that is in the process of improving." She advocated installing a cost-sharing system with a sliding-fee scale in which parents would pay their share based on their financial ability, and families who could not afford to pay would have the fee waived. She pointed to successful examples of a cost-sharing system for early education in the Defense Department program in North Carolina and throughout much of Europe. Feldman acknowledged that the Head Start model is not ideal, but she urged her colleagues to think of it "as basic leverage for building a federal commitment."

In a similar vein, Feldman encouraged early education proponents to establish alliances with public schools, since many are already equipped with some form of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs. "The schools are there, after all, and the kids will be going to them whether we like it or not,"

Feldman explained. “Can we agree that quality preschool programs need connections to public schools, and can we come up with how these connections can be made?”

In summary, Feldman proposed a universal system of early education that would be built in stages, proceeding from current resources like Head Start and public schooling, and gradually phasing in quality controls. At the same time, she called for

more of a consensus on curriculum content and ways to increase staff training. In Feldman’s opinion, the most serious challenge to the universal preschool agenda is the difficulty of compromise. “Can we agree that the biggest challenge of all is coming up with how to agree without killing off our chances of getting it done by fighting too hard with each other?” She urged the group to use the Pocantico forum as a means to articulate a common agenda.

THE ECONOMICS OF UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

Presented by Steve Barnett

Steve Barnett, Director of the National Early Education Research Institute, at Rutgers University, addressed some of the current and future funding issues facing the early care and education movement, and presented some revised statistics on early education financing. One important step toward a coherent early education policy, Barnett stated, is to develop an improved statistical base to assist in policy decision-making. He characterized much of the current statistical information on early care as extremely fragmented and inconsistent. “The data, much like the policies, doesn’t always add up to a consistent whole.” According to Barnett, even prominent studies such as the National Education Survey do not collect data consistently enough to produce a representative national survey. He further argued that parental information, one of the primary sources in gathering statistical data on early education, is simply not reliable. With this in mind, he presented his data, asking conferees to “understand the risk involved whenever we put the numbers out there.”

“Because we’re fragmented into child care, Head Start, and education, and they don’t collect data in the same way for the same purposes, it’s easier to get a picture of where kids are and how much is spent on them at the national level than it is at the state level, where things really break down.” According to Barnett, in 1995, public and private spending on childcare and education for children from birth to age five amounted to \$37 billion. He predicted the total for 2001 would exceed \$50 billion. Even when taking into account tax rebates and subsidies, the vast majority of private funding comes from parents. Barnett noted that parents typically account for 50-60 percent of their children’s first five

years, with more money coming from the federal government in the years K-12. State and federal funds are underestimated, according to Barnett, because statistics fail to take into account the substantial monies allocated to special education and children with disabilities.

Although a considerable amount of money is earmarked for children with disabilities, it is still unclear just where the federal money goes. According to Barnett, federal spending is heavily targeted to lower-income families, with over twice as much spent on children ages two-four than on children from birth through two years old. “When you’re talking about federal funding, two-thirds goes to three- and four-year olds.” Despite “increased government support over the last few decades,” the cost of care remains disproportionately high relative to the incomes of lower income families. Echoing Ed Zigler’s previous sentiments, Barnett noted that while current government programs such as Head Start provide some children with early care and education at little or no cost, other families with similar or only slightly higher incomes pay nearly the entire cost.

In order to estimate the cost and feasibility of universal access to early care and education, Barnett calculated a cost-per child expense (CPC) in conjunction with participation rates. These figures are then compared with the current statistics on public and private funding in order to determine what kind of transformations are required at the level of government funding to make universal access a reality. Barnett acknowledged that CPC is a difficult figure to calculate, and a controversial one at that. “When you talk about the full costs of pre-K, the public is

often surprised...People don't really have a sense of what education costs." The difficulty in defining the CPC is due to the varying levels of quality and quantity. Barnett contrasted already existing programs such as NAEYC, Head Start, and military child care — at an average cost per child of \$6,500 — with costs of model programs developed for research at \$8,000-\$11,000 per child. Given the discrepancies, Barnett calculated data according to two different figures: \$5,000 and \$10,000. Yet he felt the statistics ultimately depend upon a fixed definition and cost of quality. "So, the question is 'what's good enough'? What do we want to provide?"

The other major factor in calculating CPC is quantity. "When you go from a half-day to a full-day, or a 10-hour day in the context of a year, you're going to 2500 hours, or more than twice the number of hours of a half-day pre-K program," Barnett stated. "That's a huge differential."

Acknowledging the extreme variation in program costs according to quality and quantity, Barnett produced his new calculations. Employing the two figures, \$5,000 and \$10,000, and assuming that federal and state shares would be evenly split, he estimat-

ed that each would contribute \$17-\$36 billion annually for children ages three and four, and \$36-\$73 billion annually for all children under the age of five. While \$70 billion is large relative to current spending on preschool programs, the amount still represents less than four percent of the federal budget.

In summary, a sound and consistent statistical base of information is required before the U.S. can develop a coherent funding policy for early childhood care and education. Wide-ranging levels of quality and quantity are complicating factors in determining the cost of universal access. Statistical information that would be useful to decision-makers ultimately depends on establishing a consensus on the definition of quality and quantity, and therefore the cost and feasibility, of universal pre-kindergarten.

THE INCLUSION OF PARENTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Presented by Arthur Reynolds

Arthur Reynolds, professor of Social Work and Educational Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, presented recent findings from the Chicago Longitudinal Study, an ongoing, 16-year study of the long-term effects of the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, and of family and school experiences in general. The project, which Reynolds directs, examines the experiences of 989 children with 550 in a comparison group. It is now entering the early adult phase in which it will examine educational, economic, and mental health outcomes.

Reynolds explained that each center is organized around a handful of basic features. It targets high-risk children; provides greater levels of intensity, longer duration, and comprehensive services (including health); stresses parental involvement; and allots significant time and resources to staff development. The major conclusion derived from the study is that participation in an established early childhood intervention program for low-income children is associated with better educational and social outcomes up to age 20 years. Reynolds highlighted some of the most noteworthy outcomes from this study. Relative to the preschool comparison group, children who participated in the preschool intervention for one or two years had a higher rate of high school completion (49.7 percent vs. 38.5 percent); more years of completed education (10.6 percent vs. 10.2 percent); lower rates of juvenile arrest (16.9 percent vs. 25.1 percent), violent arrests (9.0 percent vs. 15.3 percent), and school dropout (46.7 percent vs. 55.0 percent). Preschool participation was also associated with lower grade retention (23.0 percent vs. 38.4 percent), and special education placement (14.4 percent vs. 24.6 percent).

Reynolds differentiated among the Child-Parent Centers, Head Start models, and typical child care centers by describing a number of unique characteristics. He feels the Child-Parent Centers “add something to the Head Start model” by combining attention to basic skills with increased family, especially parental, involvement. Parents interact not only with their own children, but also with other parents in educational workshops, reading groups, and craft projects, and volunteer in the classroom. This in turn creates stronger family support mechanisms at home, according to Reynolds, and contributes to a decrease in neglect and child abuse. Because the centers are located close to the local public school, often directly across the street, it effects an “enhanced social climate,” increases attendance, and places children in proximity to other peers who value education. This reduces mobility, which Reynolds cites as a primary cause of juvenile crime.

Reynolds identified family involvement as an important force in educational attainment and reduced juvenile arrest. According to Reynolds, in the case of high school completion, roughly one-half of the positive, 10 percentage point difference (49.7 percent vs. 38.5 percent) is attributable to parental involvement, while one-third is attributable to school instruction itself. “It makes a huge difference to get parents involved in school...Parents have higher expectations for kids’ educational attainment,” he said.

Reynolds also added that it is advisable to work through the existing public schools. “My sense is it’s a structural issue. Ninety-five percent of all kids are going to be in public school, and now all teachers in public schools have to have a bachelor’s degree. We

can't leave the school out as a partner. In an urban community, mobility is a major issue. If you run the program through public schools you affect that. Public schools should be a major partner.”

In summary, the Chicago Longitudinal Study shows that preschool participation is associated with higher rates of school completion, lower rates of juvenile arrest, and lower rates of special education and grade retention. Family involvement proved to be a decisive factor in producing these

results. The study demonstrates that public investments in early education programs in the first 10 years of life can contribute positively to a child's success through early adulthood. Given the high cost to society of school dropout and crime, the study's findings suggest that the benefits of such public programs can exceed costs.

CONCLUSIONS

As we concluded our discussions and looked for unifying ideas, the following major themes emerged, centered around the need to meet three main challenges.

I. *The universal pre-K movement must formulate and promote a vision and advocacy strategy to link early learning with school readiness and academic success, thereby generating greater public demand for pre-school.* In discussing this challenge, Stephen Heintz, of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, suggested that advocates use information and education strategies that have been proven effective in building public will. He also recommended that they tactically intervene at major decision points, such as during the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant and Head Start. Barbara Bowman commented on the need to determine exactly what kind of demand we want to create. Gary Knell, of Sesame Workshop, reminded participants of the importance of the media. “Big Bird is an effective messenger,” he said.

II. *Build a public, private, and parental partnership committed to universal early education for children from birth through five years old.* Conference participants agreed that a racially, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse range of stakeholders at the community, state, and federal levels must partner in building public interest in financing early education programs for all children. Anthony Colon, of the National Council of La Raza, stated that “we need to change the complexion of the stakeholders.” Michael Levine, of the I Am Your Child Foundation, suggested that representatives from a wide range of sectors, including government, business, philanthropy, education, health, media, and the grassroots community,

must work in concert if this goal is to be realized.

III. *Improve the quality of early education by investing in on-going professional development for teachers and caregivers in both center and home-based programs.* Carol Day, of the Council for Professional Recognition, remarked on the importance of maintaining a diverse workforce by encouraging teachers to pursue both informal and formal training as a bridge to higher degrees in early childhood education. Maria Benejan, of the Bank Street College of Education, stated that higher education must do a better job of providing professional development, especially to students of color. At a time when colleges are graduating students who are unable to pass teacher certification exams, institutions of higher education must take the necessary steps to meet the increasing need for more effective teacher training, she added.

The Fund’s grantmaking over the last year has been greatly influenced by the results of the conference. In an effort to address the first two challenges, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, together with the Pew Charitable Trusts, funded a new initiative of the Education Trust—a major advocacy and constituency-building campaign promoting universal pre-K. In support of professional development for early childhood educators, the Fund made a grant to the Bank Street College of Education to create a program to train mentors for new teachers in community-based and Board of Education-sponsored early care and education programs in New York City. It also funded Reading is Fundamental’s innovative train-the-trainer model program, developed especially for home and center-based child care staff. In addition, the Fund supported the Board of Education’s

Principals' Institute in giving special attention to pre-kindergarten programs.

In the end, participants agreed it would be beneficial to come together in a year to assess the status of the universal pre-kindergarten movement. We also feel that inviting other groups could inform the dialogue and move the agenda forward. For example, state governors that have implemented universal pre-K programs; advocates working in the states; deans of higher education who understand the critical importance of training early childhood educators;

superintendents of school systems that have implemented successful programs; as well as state legislators and members of Congress.

The Pew Charitable Trusts will partner with the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to sponsor the next conference. During the intervening year, all of our participants will have done their part to advance the cause. We look forward to learning about the challenges met, lessons learned, and on-going contributions they make to the field of early childhood education.

THE ROCKEFELLER BROTHERS FUND AND ITS POCANTICO PROGRAMS

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund was founded in 1940 as a vehicle through which the five sons and daughter of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., could share a source of advice and research on charitable activities and combine some of their philanthropies to better effect. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., made a substantial gift to the Fund in 1951, and in 1960 the Fund received a major bequest from his estate. On July 1, 1999 the Charles E. Culpeper Foundation of Stamford, Connecticut merged with the Fund. The Fund's major objective is to promote the well-being of all people through support of efforts in the United States and abroad that contribute ideas, develop leaders, and encourage institutions in the transition to global interdependence. Its grantmaking aims to counter world trends of resource depletion, conflict, protectionism, and isolation which now threaten to move humankind everywhere further away from cooperation, equitable trade and economic development, stability, and conservation.

The Fund currently makes grants in nine program areas: Sustainable Resource Use, Global Security, the Nonprofit Sector, Education, New York City, South Africa, the Charles E. Culpeper Arts and Culture program, and Health; in 2001, the RBF approved a three-year program in the Balkans as a Special Concern. The RBF periodically reviews its programs and strategies. Please visit the RBF's website (www.rbf.org) for an up-to-date statement of the Fund's mission and grantmaking guidelines.

The Pocantico Conference Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund is located in the Pocantico Historic Area, the heart of the Rockefeller Family estate in Westchester County, New York. The Historic Area, which is owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and leased by the Fund, includes John D. Rockefeller's home, Kykuit, the surrounding gardens and sculpture collections, and the Coach Barn meeting facility. At Pocantico, the Fund convenes a wide range of meetings and conferences related to its philanthropic programs. In connection with its conference program, the Fund publishes a series of occasional reports, called Pocantico Papers, designed to widen the impact of selected RBF-sponsored meetings at the Conference Center. The Pocantico Programs also include a public visitation program and year-round stewardship of the site.