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Abstract

Community organizing for education reform continues to expand across U.S. cities, and this article provides a framework for understanding how grass-roots advocacy organizations influence local education policy. Comparing two landmark policy reforms achieved by advocates in California, we analyze the complicated role advocates have in reform that they initiate and see through to implementation. We highlight how political context, ideas about social change, and advocacy strategies interact in the advocacy process. We find advocates must agitate enough to compel change, while maintaining legitimacy with public officials who can institutionalize reform. A framework for analyzing local advocates' work is particularly salient as community organizing for education reform continues to spread across US cities.

Keywords

education reform, educational policy, policy implementation, politics, bottom-up reform, advocacy organizations

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Organizations that advocate for and with urban youth face formidable obstacles in their efforts to secure greater voice and resources for their constituents. The difficulty begins with a challenge common to all child advocates: as minors cannot vote, their interests need strong representation to gain political traction. Yet that representation is especially hard to secure for urban youth due to the demographics of U.S. cities. Only a fraction of adult residents in the nation's largest cities have children in the public school system, so most voters have little direct interest in public education and other youth services. The problem of representation is compounded by the negative social construction that urban youth typically carry (Schneider & Ingram, 1993), as many adults only hear about urban youth in the context of school drop-out rates, teen pregnancies, and gang violence. Finally, the institutional landscape in which youth advocates operate further complicates their efforts. Public and private services for youth—including education, juvenile justice, and health services—are deeply fragmented by sector even though youth clearly lead lives that cut across departmental boundaries. To be effective then, advocacy organizations must change public perceptions of youth *and* coordinate typically isolated actors to this end.

Despite these challenges, organizations advocating for youth are growing in number across the United States—especially community organizations engaged in education reform (Shirley, 2009). Many of these organizations have managed to achieve social change in one of the most significant and concrete ways possible: by shaping public policy directly. In this article, we analyze the work of these increasingly influential actors whose efforts are often overlooked in studies bounded by the formal policy system, and, in doing so, we offer a framework for understanding how local advocates influence education reform. Using two landmark policy wins by California advocacy organizations, we focus on policy initiated by advocates at the local level for several reasons. This is where youth and their families most directly experience the shortcomings of public institutions, where citizens can most easily mobilize to affect change, and where reforms can be most responsive to individuals' daily needs.

This article begins by situating our investigation in the existing work on community organizing and education policy implementation, highlighting the need for more attention to organizations of the sort we study. We then explain the “hand-off” process that we examine: the point in the policy process at which advocates turn over their reform goals to public officials to institutionalize. We next describe the policies we study and the two organizations behind them. From these cases, we develop a framework to analyze the key contextual mechanisms that enabled passage of these policy reforms with a

focus on three features: the *political context* in which these policies emerged, the *ideas* about social change that motivated them, and the particular *strategies* advocates employed to realize their reform goals. Through these three lenses for analysis—politics, ideas, and strategies—our study highlights how contextual factors and reformers' beliefs interact in the framing, advocacy, and implementation of policy reform. We also address how organizations monitor reform once other actors are charged with implementing their reform goals—a critically important but underanalyzed facet of local advocates' work—by underscoring the different ways advocates may shape policy implementation, while recognizing the common challenges they face once their reform goals are embedded in local government structures.

Background

Like the broader body of scholarship on advocacy organizations in the United States (see Andrews and Edwards's 2004 review), much of the education research on advocacy groups tends to focus on their macro influences—that is, how they shape national policy (e.g., Itkonen, 2009 on special education policy; DeBray-Pelot and McGuinn, 2009 on federal policy more broadly). This research importantly sheds light on the political forces behind national- and state-level reform, but it does not address how advocates working at the local level shape education policy in particular communities. However, the growing body of research on community organizing for education reform does address local policy change of the sort we study. As Shirley (2009) highlights, scholarship in this field has grown dramatically in the past decade. Scholars of community groups have documented their impact on district-wide policy (Gold, Simon, & Brown, 2002; Oakes & Rogers, 2006; Shirley, 1997; Warren, 2001), how youth- and parent-led reform campaigns empower communities (Evans & Shirley, 2008; Ginwright, 2003; Ginwright, Noguera, & Cammarota, 2006; Su, 2009; Warren, 2005; Warren, Mira, & Nikundiwe, 2008), and how community organizing can improve student achievement (Mediratta, Shah, & McAlister, 2009).

Yet the community organizing research to date does not dedicate much attention to how community groups contend with the thorny implementation problems that arise once they win passage of their reform goals. This is an especially important area for scholars to address, given the policy wins that community organizations are achieving and how critical the implementation process is to the longevity of their hard-won reforms. A second area of research, though, helps situate our investigation of local advocacy organizations: the policy literature that addresses how “nonsystem” actors participate

in the implementation process. As education researchers over the past 30 years have focused more attention on policy implementation as an area of inquiry (for recent surveys of the field, see McLaughlin, 2006; Spillane, Gomez, & Mesler, 2009), scholarship today increasingly investigates how actors outside the formal education system influence the implementation process. Studies of “external” and “intermediary” organizations examine how nonprofits, regional collaboratives, and community groups facilitate the implementation of a range of policies including new reading curricula (Coburn, 2005), small school reform (Honig, 2009), and “collaborative education policies” that aim to engage neighborhood organizations in school reform (Honig, 2004). Although this work examines policies initiated by outside actors that local advocates help to implement or how more traditional, professionally managed school reform groups participate in policy implementation, it typically does not focus on policies that local advocacy organizations themselves craft in response to community concerns.

Existing implementation research, then, mostly does not address organizations of the sort that we study—that is, advocacy groups that not only participate in implementation as “external” actors once a reform has been passed but also actually initiate the policy change under study. In contrast to the external actors featured in most research, the advocates in our study are “home grown,” so to speak, proactively initiate new policy proposals, and must navigate the complexities of policy implementation in their own backyard. As studies of community organizing for education reform grow alongside the increase in the number of community organizations, the field can benefit from this analysis of advocates’ efforts to effectively engage in local reform at all stages, from proposal to policy implementation.

The “hand-off”

We call the policy reforms we study “hand-offs” to signal the transition from advocates’ mobilization of citizens to the institutionalization of policy in local government. The process of handing off reform goals to public officials brings both challenges and benefits to local advocates. On one hand, once advocates turn over their initiatives to government bodies, they relinquish significant control over the implementation of their reform initiatives, with the recognition that enacted policy may depart significantly from their reform ideals. This process of “letting go” can be challenging for local advocates, given the time, energy, and resources they have invested in their reform campaign. As one of the lead advocates in our study described it, “We wanted to let go, but we still occasionally find the loss difficult” (Brodkin & Coleman

Advocates, 1994, p. 63). On the other hand, this transition in many cases has the benefit of freeing advocates from the tough work of overseeing implementation so that they can mobilize citizens around new campaigns.

These benefits and drawbacks are felt most acutely by advocates of the sort we study, given the local nature of their work. Local advocates who initiate and win passage of policy reform will see, very directly, whether their reform ideals have been realized. The challenges at hand are different, then, from those usually discussed in the implementation literature where distance between the policy makers' desk and implementation sites may be the greatest obstacle to realizing reform goals (Bardach, 1977; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984). In the cases we study, this distance is minimal, and the advocates who initiate policy change must figure out if and how to participate in the implementation process that will bring their own policy creation to fruition, within their own community. The framework of context, ideas, and strategy that we offer accounts for the different ways advocates navigate these challenges and how they respond to the reality that the "hand-off" is likely to entail deviations from their reform ideals.

Case Selection and Method

We examine two landmark policy reforms achieved by advocacy organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area that have significantly affected students' educational opportunities.¹ The first case we examine is the New Small Autonomous Schools (NSAS) Act passed in Oakland in 2000. Initiated by Oakland Community Organizations (OCO), a coalition of community organizers, in partnership with the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools (BayCES), a nationally recognized school reform agency, NSAS led to the creation of 25 new small schools in the first 4 years of policy implementation and has become a national model for community-driven school reform. The second policy we examine is the passage of the "Children's Amendment" in San Francisco, advanced by Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth. This ballot initiative, first passed in 1991 and reauthorized through June 2015, dedicates a portion of San Francisco's property tax revenue (3 cents of every US\$100 of assessed value) to child and youth programs each year—the first policy of its kind in the nation (and since replicated in other cities). The Amendment funds a constellation of programs and services for children, including educational opportunities such as after-school programs, early childhood education, and arts education.

We selected Coleman and OCO for in-depth study after identifying the broader population of youth advocacy organizations in San Francisco and

Oakland. We identified members of this population based on three criteria. First, we limited our search to organizations that operate at the citywide level rather than at the neighborhood, regional, or state level. We chose to focus on the city level because this is where citizens directly experience public policy problems in their daily life and where they can most readily become engaged in politics and pressure elected officials to initiate reform. In addition, the San Francisco and Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) boundaries align with their respective city boundaries, which gives local advocates a unified target for education reform and which enables us to focus single school district policy within our city-level analysis. Second, as we were interested in understanding how organizations can influence local conditions through advocacy efforts, we excluded organizations that are primarily engaged in service provision (e.g., providing tutoring services or job training) as well as organizations that focus exclusively on young children, given our interest in urban youth. Third, and finally, because we wanted to understand how organizations *successfully* influence local conditions for youth, we excluded from our population organizations whose advocacy efforts were short-lived and not well recognized in their communities. We created a snowball sample of these organizations through key informant interviews, and we consulted Guidestar, an online searchable database of nonprofit organizations that compiles organizations' IRS 990 Forms, to confirm and augment the sample. Our sample included 9 organizations in San Francisco and 10 in Oakland, from which we chose to focus on Coleman and OCO. We selected these two organizations for in-depth study because of their reputation and track record and because their location in two different neighboring cities and distinctive advocacy approaches would enable comparative analysis of the contextual and organizational factors that shape advocates' work.

To advance our understanding of OCO's and Coleman's history and context, we conducted an in-depth review of an array of documents, including the organizations' annual reports and reports to funding agencies, newspaper articles, and a review of academic reports on youth organizations. We also conducted semistructured interviews with staff and board members of both organizations. We spoke with 12 individuals affiliated with OCO and 7 individuals affiliated with Coleman Advocates over the course of 23 interviews (some individuals were interviewed multiple times for a total of 10 Coleman and 13 OCO interviews). Finally, our data collection included 20 observations of OCO's and Coleman's staff meetings and public events.²

To analyze our interview data, we first coded field notes using NVivo software. We constructed general codes to identify and categorize the case organizations' strategies and tactics, political context, and theories of change.

We then identified subcodes to determine the most prominent strategies and contexts, challenges, and successes in policy implementation. Next, to further our cross-case analysis, we wrote a series of internal research memos to distinguish advocacy strategies and policy outcomes. In addition, we used our memos and research team meetings to verify our analysis with other sources (observations, documents, other interviews) and to validate our findings with community members and local advocacy experts.

Policy Triumphs: The NSAS Policy and Children's Amendment

The passage of two major local policies forms the crux of this analysis: the New Small Autonomous Schools Policy in Oakland (NSAS), and the Children's Amendment in San Francisco. Our analysis of these policies builds upon an earlier study of youth advocacy organizations in the Bay Area (McLaughlin, Scott, Deschenes, Hopkins, and Newman, 2009).³ These two focal policies provide an especially fruitful basis for comparative analysis, given the distinct approaches to social change that they represent and the different challenges that follow for how advocates are engaged with policy implementation. We begin with a brief summary of these policies and the organizations that initiated them.

Small Schools Reform: Turning OCO's Actions Into Lasting Educational Change

The NSAS policy began when OCO organizers heard concerns about overcrowded schools and limited opportunities for youth from Oakland community members in the early 1990s. The city's schools were outdated and overloaded, in no small part due to the fact that not a single new school had been built in Oakland since the 1960s and the city's population of children had grown in the last three decades. Parents' concerns about facility issues highlighted larger district problems, including significant disparities between conditions in the wealthier "Hills" neighborhoods and the more impoverished "Flatlands" areas. As the director of the Pacific Institute for Community Organizations (PICO) California and former OCO staff member described it, "Once OCO started to ask questions, there was an endless amount of energy . . . It started out with a focus on dirty bathrooms . . . we were all learning how complicated the problem was." However, instead of continuing to focus on resource allocation problems at specific schools in the Flatlands, OCO researched the problem and brought together a diverse citywide coalition of parents and

officials that enabled them to frame individual school failures as a systemic problem. Ron Snyder, executive director of OCO, describes the critical point that led to this policy framework:

Leaders at OCO decided to build momentum through deeper research. To understand more fully the power of the ideas behind small schools, twenty OCO leaders traveled to New York City to District 2 in Harlem to see small schools in action. They concluded that change could not take place one school at a time because pilot projects could be washed away at any moment. We needed to change district policy. (Snyder, 2008, p. 98).

After a number of local neighborhood meetings in schools and churches, in 1997 OCO launched a campaign focused on district-wide reform. This campaign, fueled by large public “actions,” created unexpected tensions as well as partnerships between OCO and local officials, tensions we address in the next section. Drawing on a long history of cultivating relationships with both community members and local organizations, OCO successfully collaborated with OUSD as well as with a nationally recognized school reform agency, BayCES. Together, from 2000 to 2002, the partnership and small schools campaign culminated in a state bond of US\$300 million for local school construction, the Oakland School Board’s unanimous passage of the NSAS policy, and a subsequent US\$15.7 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This policy has created at least 44 new small schools in a district of 131 schools and has earned OCO a national reputation for community-driven school reform.

How did this policy come to pass and make such an impact on Oakland’s public education system—especially given that its advocates were primarily volunteers navigating rough political waters? For one, OCO has been a significant presence in Oakland since its founding in 1977. OCO is a local affiliate of the PICO national network, which consists of faith-based community organizations throughout the United States and is one of the largest community-based reform efforts in the United States.⁴ The PICO model structures OCO’s approach to community organizing: OCO does not have a fixed advocacy agenda, but instead its campaign issues change to match the shifting interests and needs of its constituents. OCO therefore does not advocate exclusively for and with youth, but it addresses issues that affect the welfare of youth and families across sectors (e.g., education, housing, health care, and neighborhood safety). Moreover, the organization’s grounding in faith-based institutions has enabled it to attract a constituency of residents that crosses racial, economic,

and neighborhood lines. OCO's institutional members consist of congregations and schools that together represent 40,000 families throughout Oakland.⁵ The organization has a small staff of professional organizers, but the core of OCO's work is determined and carried out by trained volunteers in teams known as local organizing committees (LOCs), through which citizens identify and pursue issues of concern to them.

Thus, the campaign for and passage of Oakland's NSAS policy reflects OCO's core belief that social change can be achieved by empowering individuals and by collaborating with other organizations and public officials—in this case, including the very institution it sought to reform, the OUSD. OCO's focus on cultivating relationships in support of social change benefits OCO as well as public officials by making the task of policy reform easier in some ways. It grants OCO legitimacy at the grassroots level as constituents see that the organization is taken seriously by the powers-that-be, while OCO lends what one BayCES staff member describes as "street credibility" to the organizations and public agencies with which it collaborates. Through these relationships, OCO not only achieves policy reform but also works to change the policy process itself, as its small schools campaign illustrates.

Coleman's Children's Amendment: Making the City's Youngest Citizens a Public Priority

In contrast to the NSAS policy which originated in community concerns about conditions in schools, the Children's Amendment roots are more closely tied to the policy expertise of professional advocates. This reform's origins point up key differences between how Coleman and OCO have historically pursued social change. Coleman is a secular advocacy organization that operates independently of national networks like PICO, and its campaigns center exclusively on the needs of children and youth. Like OCO, Coleman has enjoyed an unusually long life for an advocacy organization, with its origin in San Francisco extending back to the 1960s. Yet for most of its history, Coleman has focused on staff-driven policy reform more than on bottom-up community-based change (McLaughlin et al., 2009: 110). This difference is clear in the reflections of Coleman's former executive director: "In many instances, the effectiveness of Coleman's advocacy depended on one person . . . Allowing that person to make quick judgment calls was absolutely necessary" (Brodkin & Coleman Advocates, 1994, p. 81). To be sure, Coleman has engaged citizens through its parent and youth organizing groups, which have operated as semiautonomous parts of the organization since the 1990s. And Coleman's approach has shifted in recent years toward a community

organizing model under the leadership of its current executive director. Yet for the bulk of its history—including the period that our study covers—Coleman has relied heavily on the policy expertise and advocacy acumen of its professional staff to frame and execute its campaigns.

This approach is evident in Coleman's attention to the development of the city budget as a political process and its careful tracking of how public resources are allocated. This advocacy strategy does present opportunities to engage a wider swath of citizens in important debates about how public resources are spent. Yet developing a nuanced understanding of San Francisco's complex budget process, including the city's sunshine laws that give advocates a foothold into the process—and then wading through official reports to discern and hopefully influence the bottom line—has been largely the purview of Coleman's professional staff.

The creation of the Children's Amendment (known as Prop J) in San Francisco arguably represents Coleman's signal policy hand-off. It exemplifies Coleman's budget advocacy and, more generally, how its staff has traditionally led its reform efforts. As Coleman became more involved with local politics, it learned that its first strategy of meeting with city officials would not always be fruitful. As a longtime Coleman board member put it, "We were at a point of diminishing returns of sitting down and being really nice with people in city government." It was such an impasse with San Francisco's mayor that gave rise to the Children's Amendment. Coleman could not win the mayor's support for more spending on children's services, and so its leaders decided to take the issue straight to voters in the form of a ballot proposition. Coleman staff drafted Proposition J, which dedicates 2.5% of assessed property taxes to children's services annually. The proposition first passed in 1991 with a clear majority—the first law of its kind in a city to guarantee annual funding for children's programs. The amendment was then reauthorized in 2000 for an additional 16 years by 74% of voters. This level of public support is especially notable, given that only about 19% of households in San Francisco have children below the age of 18 (US Bureau of the Census, 2000).

In addition to shaping policy directly, Coleman also hands off its reform campaigns to local officials through the creation of new public agencies and advisory councils. As one former Coleman staff member explained, Coleman's advocacy campaigns often leave a "trail of institutions" in their wake "because [Coleman] goes through a process of issue identification, building community, building consensus around an issue, and then saying, 'Well, what institutionally, structurally could we build to address this problem over the long term?'" The Children's Amendment, for example, led to the creation of the Mayor's Department of Children, Youth, and Families, which manages and allocates

the revenue set aside for children and youth programs and services. Coleman was also instrumental in the creation of youth and citizens' advisory councils to the mayor as well as a commission on juvenile probation.

How did these two significant policy reforms come to pass in San Francisco and Oakland? What factors enabled and constrained advocates' ability to institutionalize their reform efforts in local government? In the next section, we turn to these questions and lay out a framework for analysis of local advocates' work.

Advocacy Campaigns Become Public Policy: The Role of Context, Ideas, Strategies

To understand the success of the San Francisco's Children's Amendment and Oakland's Small Schools Policy, we focus on three analytic categories that help explain the genesis of these landmark policies: the *political context* in which advocates execute their efforts, the *ideas about social change* that motivate advocates' reform goals and policy framings, and the *strategies* that advocates employ to press for change—mainly, whether they employ “insider” or “outsider” approaches. Although we consider each factor in turn for analytic purposes, we recognize that they are deeply intertwined. The ideas that guide policy proposals influence how advocates execute their campaigns, while advocates' strategies in pursuit of policy reform often shift in response to changing political opportunities. The directions of influence among these factors are necessarily fluid and multifaceted. Nonetheless, consideration of each factor in turn provides a snapshot of the dynamics behind the passage of these significant policies.

The Political Context in San Francisco and Oakland

Differences in city politics shape the type of policy reforms that are possible at the local level and the processes by which they may come about. The number of commissions in San Francisco and the transparency required by the city's Sunshine Ordinance, for instance, slow down the policy reform process. According to one health care advocate in San Francisco, these local norms are “effective largely in stopping things . . . It tends to be easier to advocate to stop something than to get something going because then you get the next group who is saying, no, no, no! We shouldn't do this! So if you think about it, commissioners feel safer by doing nothing.” Yet the benefit of having many commissions is that advocacy organizations have more public forums through which to voice their concerns and to more closely monitor elected officials and their policy proposals.

In contrast to the more formal public discussions that advocates can leverage in San Francisco, Oakland's political sphere requires a relationship-based, insider approach. As one political observer noted, "Oakland is more casual. People have much more access to the chief of police, for example, and it operates more like a small town." OCO, therefore, can operate through its networks and personal connections to affect citywide change. This contrast with San Francisco may be attributable to the fact that Oakland is just one of 14 cities within Alameda County (albeit the largest), whereas San Francisco is administratively both a city and a county, which arguably formalizes relationships there. Oakland's population is also about half that of San Francisco, and Oakland's "strong mayor" initiative gives the mayor more executive power, resulting in an easily identifiable target for advocates. Moreover, as child and youth services in Oakland are governed by county supervisory districts in addition to individual county and city agencies, groups like OCO have multiple access points, partnership opportunities, and campaign venues through which to pursue their causes (McLaughlin et al., 2009).

Although its population includes fewer children, San Francisco has more politically vocal interest groups, which makes the youth advocacy terrain there more contested as groups compete for public attention and support. In this climate, advocacy organizations often have to engage in cut-throat politics to be heard. Coleman took on this challenge, for example, by pitting its budget requests for children and youth against those of the city's fire department in 2004. After the fire department made a plea to the public for more funding by placing door hangers on homes throughout San Francisco, Coleman circulated its own door hangers just days later that described what it believed to be the fire department's excesses and sharply asked, "Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding?" Given limited resources and budget cutbacks, making claims for urban children and youth—a constituency with no voting power—is often a bare-fisted political struggle of this sort.

Although OCO certainly encountered political challenges in its education campaign, the institutional climate in Oakland was relatively open to the small schools reform that it championed. OUSD had been taken over by the state in 2003 due to its major budget deficit and low student achievement, and school reform was an urgent issue at the top of the public agenda. OCO, then, had a window of opportunity before and after the state takeover to press for small schools as sweeping change was sought; the district's support helped secure outside funding from the Gates Foundation which strengthened the small schools movement in Oakland and beyond.

In addition to influencing the ease with which advocates can press for policy reform, their institutional contexts also have different levels of permeability that influence *where* advocates can focus their policy reform efforts.

The city budget process has been a successful point of entry for Coleman to address changing conditions for children and youth in San Francisco. By mastering how the process works, Coleman has been able to influence the allocation of public resources at their source. This form of advocacy also helps direct public attention to Coleman's reform goals, as its former executive director described, "The budget process is the highest profile local policy-making endeavor; it receives the most press attention, and has the most staff resources attached to it. Simply by using the budget process as our podium, we automatically increased the public attention our issues received" (Brodkin, 1989, p. 13). Moreover, the legitimacy of Coleman's participation in this process is bolstered by the fact that the organization does not accept public funds and thus avoids potential conflicts of interest.

In contrast, the OUSD became more difficult for OCO to permeate after takeover by the state, compared with Coleman's access to San Francisco's budget process. Despite the city's general receptivity to education reform, OCO's efforts have met obstacles due to several factors, including the fact that Oakland has significant fiscal needs, heightened racial tensions, and a larger percentage of its population are youth. Moreover, Oakland Unified's takeover by a state administrator, whose appointment took leadership power from the district administration, largely severed OCO's partnerships with district officials, making it harder for OCO to access the public officials who had authority to enact their reform goals. Yet the length of OCO's involvement in Oakland and the relationships it has developed over time—both with parents and with organizations such as BayCES—allowed it to gain influence in the education policy arena as effective grassroots advocates, even as new government actors entered the arena. For example, OCO was one of the only community groups able to secure direct meetings with Randolph Ward, the state administrator, and through those talks ensured that NSAS policy persisted. Although conditions in Oakland presented OCO with formidable obstacles when targeting the school district compared with Coleman's access to the budget process, OCO was able to leverage its long-standing relationships and credibility in the community to press for change.

Along with its institutional landscape, each city's socioeconomic context deeply affects advocates' efforts, from the campaign issues they select to the reform strategies they employ. And the differences between San Francisco and Oakland here are significant—especially when it comes to the demographics for children and youth in each city. San Francisco has a very small percentage (14.6%) of children in its population compared with other major cities due in large part to the fact that housing prices there are four times greater than the average costs in other U.S. cities (U.S. Bureau of the Census,

2008). As a result of its high cost of living, San Francisco has one of the ten lowest poverty rates in the country and the third highest median income (Johnson, 2005). Its children, then, are relatively well-off; out of 12 major cities, San Francisco has the smallest number of children living below the poverty level, and only 16.1% of the city's children live in areas of concentrated poverty, compared with a rate of more than 59% in Los Angeles and Philadelphia and of more than 50% in New York, the District of Columbia, Baltimore, and Oakland (KIDS COUNT, 2000 Census).⁶ The relatively favorable socioeconomic conditions in San Francisco, coupled with the small number of children there, could arguably make advocates' task easier. Yet the small percentage of children in the city's population also makes it harder to keep children's issues on the public agenda, which prompted Coleman to engage in more aggressive, controversial, and persistent advocacy, as their battle with the fire department demonstrates.

By contrast, the size of Oakland's child population is closer to the national average for major cities (23%). This demographic makes children's issues a more prominent public concern. Oakland's children face far worse socioeconomic conditions than do children in San Francisco. Oakland has the 10th highest child poverty rate among U.S. cities, and more than twice as many families there live below the poverty level compared with San Francisco, with more than three times the number of children living in areas of concentrated poverty (McLaughlin et al., 2009: 48). Although the Oakland housing market is not as prohibitively costly as San Francisco's, the city's higher poverty rate still makes home ownership unattainable for many families; Oakland ranks 87th in homeownership among the 100 largest cities (Brookings Institution, 2003). Clearly, advocacy organizations working on behalf of Oakland youth confront a more economically deprived constituency than do their counterparts in San Francisco. These challenges are then compounded by an advocacy landscape that is more polarized around race and ethnicity than in San Francisco. One observer and former Coleman staff member suggested that this fragmentation has made it difficult to advance a shared agenda for Oakland's children and youth via a Coleman-like organization.

Policy Ideas and Frames: Whom to Target and With What Message?

Ideas, broadly understood in this context as the beliefs, values, and mission that motivate advocates, deeply shape the reforms advocates seek and how they go about realizing their goals. Ideas about social change may be in the background of advocates' daily work and taken for granted or in the foreground

and subject to contestation (Campbell, 2004). Ideas also encompass the ways an organization strategically frames its reform goals for public advocacy campaigns (Benford & Snow, 2000; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996; (McLaughlin et al., 2009)). Although the two organizations we study prioritized different conceptions of *how* social change might be realized and often pressed their calls for reform in different terms, they shared a foundational belief in *who* is ultimately responsible for citizens' basic welfare. This perspective gave them a common advocacy target: the state and, more specifically, local public officials.

The shared belief among Coleman and OCO that the government is accountable for children's basic well-being reflects a particular moral rationale for publicly funded support programs. For example, political philosopher Robert Goodin argues that responsibility for vulnerable citizens' welfare falls on the state rather than individual citizens, as individuals cannot reasonably be held responsible for fulfilling certain moral duties (e.g., caring for other people's children in need). Therefore, Goodin argues, "collective moral agents" must assume responsibility when individuals do not (Goodin, 1989). A similar belief about the state's responsibility was at the core of Coleman and OCO's work. After all, their campaigns were directed exclusively at local public officials rather than at private individuals who might be implored to pitch in. This foundational belief often operates in the background of advocates' efforts but was made explicit in Coleman's guiding principle: "We believe that all children have a right to have their basic needs met, to be educated and prepared for full participation in society, and that it is the responsibility of government to ensure that these rights are fully realized."⁷ OCO similarly measured its success in part by its influence on state actors: "The voices and victories of our leaders are well known from the offices of Oakland City Hall to the Governor's Chambers."⁸

However, the world in which advocates work departs significantly from the ideals of theory and mission statements. Advocacy organizations' very presence underscores this gap: they exist to compel the state to fulfill its duties to citizens when it is derelict or is likely to become so absent external pressure. This reality, coupled with the ideal of a welfare state that *should* provide for children's basic needs, means that OCO and Coleman implicitly held together two ideas that might be at odds. On one hand, they were deeply concerned about the extent to which the state, in their view, has failed the youth and families with and for whom they advocate, be it through shortcomings in public education, juvenile justice, or economic opportunity. On the other hand, when calling attention to these problems, Coleman and OCO implicitly

conveyed their belief in public institutions' ability to do better by their constituents, as public institutions are their targets for reform. Advocates simultaneously act on the idea that the state has fallen woefully short of its obligation to citizens and that it can be prodded to fulfill its duties—a precarious balance that Coleman and OCO had to strike.

Although both organizations shared a belief in the state's obligation to provide for their constituents, they have held different beliefs about how to hold the state accountable for its obligations. OCO's faith-based model was more process oriented and was characterized by a deeper concern for fostering relationships between citizens and the public officials and institutions they target. Coleman's staff-led model, conversely, enabled the organization to seize political windows of opportunity to push ahead with policy change, which has resulted in a lengthier list of policy hand-offs but perhaps fewer engaged citizens—a trade-off which Coleman's former leadership accepted to get reforms like Prop J drafted: "I have seen lots of advocacy efforts die because the process is just interminable . . . If we had waited for the group to write [Prop J] collectively, or to vote on every single sentence, it simply would not have happened" (Brodkin & Coleman Advocates, 1994, p. 80).

Strategies for Change: Bringing About Policy Reform From Inside and Out

The way advocates pursue their reform goals reflects their beliefs about social change; the different ideas that animate Coleman and OCO carry through to the strategies they employ. There are certainly significant commonalities, given their overlapping goals: both were focused on accessing power and building bridges between marginalized community members and governance structures. Yet their strategies differed in important ways that follow from the relative priority they placed on policy reform and engaging citizens. Coleman's historical focus on paid staff to lead campaigns has enabled the organization to nimbly adapt to shifting political opportunities. Conversely, OCO's focus on organizing from the bottom up might have hampered its ability to leverage political opportunities but realized its goal of fostering community empowerment. These different guiding beliefs are especially reflected in the extent to whether advocates employed "insider" and "outsider" strategies; the passage of the Children's Amendment and NSAS policy each exemplify a different approach on this front.

The Children's Amendment is largely the product of Coleman's *outsider* approach—meaning strategies that press public officials to enact change rather than forging partnership with them. As noted earlier, this policy came about

only because Coleman's budget talks with public officials had stalled, and so it turned to ways to work around city hall. Much of Coleman's work continued in this spirit—monitoring and shaping the political process in San Francisco in very public ways, as outside observers, to hold city officials accountable for the well-being of children and youth in the city. It did this by holding rallies and public forums, leading public education campaigns about the budget and other policy issues, and conducting extensive budget analysis.

An illustrative example includes Coleman's 2004 "Rally for Kids" held in front of San Francisco City Hall, to encourage the newly elected Mayor, who spoke at the event, to fulfill his promises to support programs for children and families. Coleman's leadership in organizing such events not only facilitated networks among relevant service providers and advocates who might not otherwise collaborate but also let public officials know, in a very public setting, that they were being carefully monitored. By pressing from the outside in this way on behalf of kids, Coleman was also able to leverage the moral high ground of their cause, which is especially effective in the context of San Francisco's liberal, progressive politics. As its former executive director described it, "No real argument can be made against investing in children. Forcing the debate into the public is a way to capitalize on this" (Brodin & Coleman Advocates, 1994, p. 47). Notably, Coleman's advocacy efforts did not stop after calling attention to the allocation of public funds; it also proposed solutions. This stance is certainly politically risky as budgeting is often a zero-sum game. Coleman's success on this front exemplifies how well it leveraged its outsider stance to influence local politics and compel public officials' accountability to its constituents.

The NSAS policy, by contrast, grew out of OCO's commitment to approaching reform from an insider, relational model—by empowering individuals and forging partnerships with public officials. In contrast to Coleman's historic focus on monitoring, leadership development is the backbone of OCO's work. As the director of PICO California and former OCO staff member explained,

I think we're really different from other organizations in that our primary focus is leadership development and that we have the capacity to develop regular people in the community to create change in the communities . . . It's not staff saying, hey, you guys really need to organize for a school! But it's really tapping into people's pain and interests and passions and using that as a motivating factor to get people involved.

Community members thus assumed leadership roles in OCO's policy campaigns, from running internal meetings to leading public actions along with public officials. This relational engagement characterized not only OCO's internal structure but also how it approached the public officials from whom it sought change. Rather than pressing against officials as Coleman has historically done, OCO aimed to collaborate with them. OCO's small schools campaign is a case in point. It brought together teachers, parent groups, and schools officials—partnerships that brought OCO into collaboration with some of the very people and institutions it was pressing on to enact reform.

This insider approach can heighten the tension we described at the outset of this article between advocates' need to challenge the status quo, while maintaining legitimacy with public officials whose support is necessary to enact reform. As OCO worked more collaboratively with public officials, it had to grapple more seriously with the challenge of advocating for change without appearing co-opted by those in power. This challenge became especially acute in the context of OCO's small schools campaign, which took place in a highly charged political environment, given community frustration with the status of the district's schools and skepticism about state-appointed leaders. This context dealt OCO a thorny balance to maintain, between constituents who firmly believed that organizing success is grounded in strong trusting relationships—even relationships with those officials who share opposing political viewpoints—and those eager to engage in contentious tactics to air community concerns and compel meaningful change. The challenge of the insider approach in this context was to press firmly enough to realize change, without jeopardizing the relationships OCO had cultivated with the school district's leadership.

In sum, the policies that organizations like Coleman and OCO were able to initiate and institutionalize were significantly influenced by the landscape in which they were situated as well as their beliefs about and strategies to achieve social change. In the concluding section, we turn to a critically important question that arises *after* an advocacy organization has successfully initiated policy reform: What role do advocates play once reform efforts are in the hands of public officials? And to what extent can advocates work to ensure faithful implementation of their reform goals?

Advocates and Implementation: Watchdogs, Critical Friends, and Witnesses

The general challenges of implementing education policy have been identified and analyzed in the last several decades since implementation studies took hold as a field of inquiry (McLaughlin, 2006). As this research highlights,

programs implemented by local actors may depart so significantly from policy makers' intentions as to be almost unrecognizable to their designers; in some cases, local actors may entirely subvert, deliberately or not, a policy's purpose (Cohen, 1990; McLaughlin, 1987; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984; Spillane, 1998; Sutton & Levinson, 2001; Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977). Moreover, as Cuban (1998) emphasizes with respect to school reform, competing ideas about what counts as a success (e.g., fidelity to ideals, popularity, longevity, adaptability) further complicate evaluations of reforms.

Yet the challenges facing local advocates like Coleman and OCO are of a different and underanalyzed sort, and little research to date has focused squarely on the role that advocacy organizations play when advocates see, up close, their brainchild succeed or flounder in their community. Advocates working at the local level to initiate policy reform do not have to contend with multiple levels of government to see their efforts realized: the policies they advocate are devised and enacted locally. This localness eliminates some of the problems that follow from greater distances between the policy makers' desk and implementation sites. However, localness bears its own challenges—most notably, that advocates must figure out whether and how to engage with an implementation process that is close at hand but largely beyond their control, especially if they want to preserve their limited resources to initiate new reform campaigns.

In this context, advocacy organizations occupy an important but complicated role. Having crafted the policy at stake, they are most intimately familiar with its goals and most deeply invested in its success. And yet they must rely heavily on others to bring it to fruition—all the while continuing to work and advocate in the community where policy reform may (or may not) make the difference they intended. As a policy hand-off does not guarantee advocates will see their vision for reform fulfilled, advocates often remain engaged to some extent in various implementation roles that we consider in this section.

Coleman's former executive director described the possibilities this way: "The role of the advocacy organization in monitoring reform legislation involves balancing the roles of adviser, booster, and critic. There is probably no one right way to do this" (Brodkin & Coleman Advocates, 1994, p. 67). Our study of Coleman and OCO suggests that there is a continuum of roles that advocates might adopt representing levels of engagement with the implementation process once an initiative is handed off. We begin by considering end positions on this spectrum, which we call "watchdogs" and "witnesses," which are the roles Coleman tended to occupy. We then turn to the middle terrain, where OCO's work was more frequently located; we call this position that of a "critical friend."

Although Coleman's and OCO's implementation efforts were generally different in character as we highlight below, it is important to underscore that their strategies were neither rigidly fixed nor mutually exclusive. Both organizations reconsidered the balance between pushing for policy reform and empowering constituents in the context of individual campaigns. OCO's executive director described this ongoing evaluation as part of a "healthy tension" between working with existing leaders to advance and complete particular campaigns and investing time and resources to find and train new leaders and to move on to new concerns. Organizations' evolving approach to this tension is also evident in Coleman's recent restructuring (after our data collection period) to focus more on empowering parents and youth, in contrast to executing reform campaigns that are largely led by the organizations' professional staff. According to the executive director, this change aims to engage parents and students in Coleman's work more substantially to ensure that its efforts reflect constituents' needs and to develop a new cadre of leaders to realize Coleman's goals.

Coleman as Watchdog and Witness: Contrasting Approaches to Policy Implementation

Once advocates have succeeded at getting a new policy passed or program supported, their relationship to that reform effort necessarily changes when they pass control over to local officials and institutions. At the more aggressive end of the continuum, advocates may operate as vigilant watchdogs of the public officials and institutions that execute their initiatives. Coleman, more so than OCO, occupied this position on the spectrum, where it carefully monitored elected officials to ensure, as much as possible, that its reform goals were faithfully implemented. This stance cohered with Coleman's outsider approach to social change and exemplifies again how Coleman pressed against public officials more often than it worked collaboratively with them. On the other end of the spectrum, Coleman may have also adopted the more distant role of a witness when its capacity to engage in implementation and oversight was very limited—a situation that also reflects its outsider stance.

When it took on the role of a watchdog, Coleman employed a variety of tactics to this end, many of which have been discussed above: monitoring the local budget process, tracking and publicizing officials' promises to enact change, and reporting back to community members what goals have been realized and what work remains. Yet as carefully as Coleman may have watched over relevant actors and institutions, its engagement at this stage of the policy process was nonetheless constrained by the fact that other entities were now

in charge, and Coleman had to move on to initiate new campaign issues. As Coleman's former executive director put it, assessing the effectiveness of policy like the Children's Amendment is largely beyond the reach of an organization like Coleman. Coleman can track how many additional dollars are spent on children as a result of its efforts and how many children and families those funds reach. Yet these numbers are, at best, crude approximations for an element of effectiveness that Coleman cannot easily assess at the implementation stage: the *quality* of enacted programs on the ground. Coleman's focus on achieving policy reform enabled it to answer a black and white question, as its former executive director described it, "It either got passed or it didn't." However, determining the impact of a passed policy in more nuanced ways—whether it is reaching its intended recipients and whether high-quality services are being offered—extended beyond what Coleman could typically do. Coleman's former executive director made this point most clearly in describing her outlook on what happened after her advocacy goals were institutionalized via new policy and programs: "There are either clinics in the schools or there aren't . . . they either cut childcare in the budget or they didn't. But don't ask me whether the clinics are working." Coleman could readily employ the fidelity standard (Cuban, 1998) when it served as a watchdog of implemented policy but may not have been able to evaluate reform effectiveness in more nuanced ways.

This is not to say that Coleman was unconcerned with issues of quality once its initiatives hit the streets. Far from it, this inability to control policy at the implementation level was a great source of frustration, but a limitation that was accepted as a fact that distinguishes advocates' work from that of public officials and service providers. This became especially vexing in the context of the Children's Amendment. Coleman's staff rightly felt great pride in this advocacy triumph but expressed equal frustration with how the fund has been administered—a problem largely beyond their control and that compelled Coleman to assume the role of a witness as certain aspects of its policy goals were implemented. Again, Coleman's former executive described this most poignantly in the context of complaints she received about the application process for Children's Fund resources: "It pains me. . . . I listen to stories about how the Children's Fund is being implemented and . . . I don't think that we can do anything about this." Similarly, Coleman could and did press on the mayor of San Francisco to select a chief probation officer whose views aligned with its own take on juvenile justice—but it could not "get in there and supervise the probation officers" under that leader's direction, as Coleman's former executive director explained.

These constraints stem from the difference between those who seek to reform policy and public institutions from the inside and those who operate from the outside. As outsiders working between citizens and the state rather than within state agencies, advocates have limited oversight of policies in the hands of public officials. In response, Coleman tended to adopt a watchdog stance: working from the outside to monitor the implementation of policy and programs by public officials from a more macro level. Is the money that was promised being delivered? Will it be there next year? Answers to such questions are often the best measurements of effectiveness that advocates as watchdogs can obtain. This information, though certainly crude indicators of a program's quality, nonetheless facilitates advocates' ability to monitor public officials' efforts through the implementation process. And when necessary, it can also trigger advocates' switch in role from watchdog to bulldog when officials' fidelity to reform goals wavers. Yet at times, even monitoring for these rough indicators of quality extends beyond what Coleman could do, if its attention and resources needed to be directed to other community problems. In such contexts, then, Coleman was likely to occupy the opposite end of the spectrum and reverted from being a watchdog or bulldog to a witness as its policy goals unfolded in the community.

OCO as a Critical Friend: Relational Reform and Policy Implementation

Unlike Coleman, OCO's insider, relational approach typically precluded it from occupying the more distant, watchdog end of the spectrum. Neither was OCO likely to be a watchdog as it sought to work through relationships nor was the organization likely to drop out of the policy process and completely hand off its reform efforts because of its interest in preserving long-standing partnerships. Instead, OCO positioned itself as an engaged ally that continued to monitor and involve itself in the policy process to ensure that implementation matched constituent intent. To this end, OCO drew on its partnerships with public officials and other organizations throughout the city of Oakland. These types of networks might have otherwise been short-lived without the stability of the organization's faith-based membership and long-standing PICO affiliation. OCO's post-reform role therefore was remarkably distinctive for an advocacy organization. It uniquely continued to invest in nurturing relationships to help implement policy long after a campaign victory was realized. Like Coleman, OCO took a stance during the implementation process that reflects its overarching view about realizing social change - that is, that "insider," carefully cultivated partnerships are key."

In the case of the small schools campaign, OCO spread its arms far and wide. Fostering direct links to families across the city, the Oakland School Board, and local nonprofits advocating for educational equity allowed OCO to penetrate and eventually rewrite district policy. Because of its critical involvement in the policy process, many concerned constituents believed that without OCO's ongoing involvement in the implementation phase, the reform could not be carried out faithfully. The formal relationships with BayCES and OUSD enabled OCO to become a "critical friend" from beginning to end, from the start of the small schools campaign to the development and founding of individual school sites today.

The relationships OCO maintained during policy implementation served not only furthered the organization's goals—pursuing more organizing work—but also ensured that the policy wins were enacted and money dedicated properly. Unlike Coleman's watchdog status during budget deliberations, OCO was directly involved in the tense discussions when it was unclear that small schools would remain a priority after the district take over by the state. As OCO's executive director remembers it, "We spent six months positioning to hold on to the small schools"; and while OCO was invited to talks with the state administrator who led OUSD during the state takeover—talks that some city officials were blocked access to—there was a lot of "jockeying around the table."

OCO's focus on citizen empowerment also carried through to implementation, where its efforts remained community driven. The parent and teacher leadership OCO generated pre-reform translated into sustained community involvement post-reform in school design teams called "incubators." To this end, OCO worked to institutionalize its policy goals while sustaining parent involvement: parent participation throughout the cycle of organizing—playing part in relationship building, research, and public actions—meant that parents also played a significant part in school design. Although the NSAS policy passed at the district level, the opening of new small schools varied to meet the needs and concerns of each school and its community. The policy stated that new schools must create individual visions and philosophies; and, much like OCO's LOCs, new school incubators empowered community members to take part in realizing their vision, the creation of NSAS.

OCO's insider strategy has not gone without challenge. While OCO remained engaged after the passage of the small schools policy, the coalition between OCO, BayCES, and OUSD started to fray, in large part due to the state takeover. OCO's sustained involvement in school design strengthened their commitment to education reform and their resolve not to lose control of the reform process. One OCO organizer explained, when referring to a recent school

reform meeting, the new state administrator “sets it up like the military . . . and it’s really troubling because it puts OCO in a weird place where we need to remove ourselves and approach the district as an outsider.” In 2003, OCO’s role of critical friend weakened and at times organizers were positioned more as watchdogs and outsiders, not by choice. However, OCO made it clear that beyond its firmly structured membership base, OCO does not promise friendship forever. The organization’s philosophy “no permanent allies and no permanent enemies” suggests that collaboration is not always a given. OCO tested whether relationships with certain organizations are in its best interest. As one education reformer noted, “you have to prove yourself to them, but you also have the chance to stand in their good graces.” He added, “It was only OCO that really brought forward an agenda,” and in partnership with BayCES, “they developed an amazingly intellectual school reform agenda.”

It was OCO’s adaptability to circumstance that was critical. In a more recent account, OCO’s executive director Ron Snyder emphasized the importance of applying an organizing model that creates a common structure, language, and experience that sustains leaders. OCO’s broader network of institutions allowed organizers to apply leverage and harness political power and gave the organization the flexibility to seize on political opportunities (Snyder, 2008). Snyder explained, “We could say we’re done but we don’t.” OCO did not see a policy win as a victory in itself; after handing off a policy to be implemented by local officials, the organization took a *hands-on* approach to ensuring success in projects related to past policy wins. OCO set its goals on a longer term horizon and concerned itself primarily with whether the policies enacted truly reform systems. To this point, OCO is concerned more with the “tipping point” of policy implementation. Snyder asked, “If we get enough schools in ten years, will it stay?” As a result, organizers had, at times, to put a tremendous amount of effort into one large campaign like NSAS to ensure the sustainability of their district-wide education goals—which could potentially detract from newer, neighborhood-specific issues that their constituents also cared about.

Conclusion

The NSAS Act and Children’s Amendment provide contrasting examples of how local advocates can actively influence institutional structures by initiating campaigns that culminate in changed public policy. Each policy success came as the result of distinct modes of organizing. The Children’s Amendment came about from a staff-led operation characterized by an “outsider” stance to reform, whereas Oakland’s small schools policy came from constituent-driven,

“insider” reform. Advocates initiating such reforms are able to enact their goals to varying degrees reflective of their beliefs about social change and their situation in different political contexts.

Moreover, while the policies fundamentally changed operations at the government and school district level—moving the focus of reform from agitation in city streets to implementation in executive suites—these advocates took on very different roles post reform: Coleman assumed its watchdog position as an outsider while OCO took an insider approach by being actively engaged in forming new schools and acting as a critical friend to constituents and public officials alike.

Although changed public policy is often taken as a sign of organizing success, the “hand-off” to public agencies can also be a source of frustration and is not in and of itself a guarantee of successful reform. Often, the translation of the intent of the initiative is partial or undeveloped and brings in its wake additional questions about implementation and sustainability. When triumphant, advocacy organizations may wish to continue to advocate for successful implementation or even have a hands-on role in determining how policies are executed, as did OCO.

Handing off advocacy work has its risks and limitations. The evaluation and implementation of a newly won reform are typically beyond the purview of the advocate’s job but are often viewed as critical indicators as to whether the organization is proving to be effective. Measuring the “outcomes” proves difficult when attempting to separate the effectiveness of the organization from other political or contextual factors. Nevertheless, Coleman’s campaign to create the Children’s Fund and OCO’s ability to help institutionalize a district policy for small schools are examples of distinct policy reforms initiated by advocates with significant organizational and community gains.

This analysis provides a framework for understanding local advocacy efforts often overlooked in implementation studies that are bounded by the formal policy system, despite the central role advocates can play toward improving conditions for urban youth. By highlighting the importance of the context in which advocates work, the ideas they hold, and the range of strategies they pursue, we can better understand how advocates may effectively bring about new policies and programs to improve children’s opportunities in the education arena and beyond. Moreover, by underscoring the challenges of policy implementation once advocates’ efforts have become institutionalized, we call attention to a facet of the policy reform process that warrants more research attention, especially as local advocates become more proactively involved in initiating policy reform. These developments at the local level raise new questions for future research. How do advocates differently balance

the desire to see their policy initiatives through the implementation stage with the need to turn to new reform campaigns? And what are the policy consequences of the approach that local advocates choose? As more education scholars turn their attention to community-based organizations, developing a broader corpus of case studies attentive to such questions will further advance answers to the questions this analysis begins to address.

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Notes

1. The analysis in this article expands on arguments made by [McLaughlin, Scott, Deschenes, Hopkins, and Newman, 2009].
2. Although both organizations necessarily cultivate relationships with the public officials and bureaucrats who approve and enact their reform ideals (as discussed in subsequent sections), we did not include interviews with these individuals, given that our focus is on *how* local advocates initiate reform rather than on the perceptions of the policy makers to whom the reform is handed.
3. At the outset of our larger study, we first identified the greater population of youth advocacy organizations in the Bay Area. A third organization, the San Francisco Organizing Project (SFOP), was also selected for in-depth study but is not explored here.
4. Pacific Institute for Community Organizations (PICO) website, www.piconet-work.org, accessed August 23, 2009. Oakland Community Organizations (OCO) is a member of the state and national network of PICO organizations, and works with PICO on national policy agendas. Yet OCO is best able to have a significant policy impact and take part in policy implementation.

5. OCO website, <http://www.oaklandcommunity.org/about>
6. Concentrated poverty here is defined as areas where 20% or more of residents are living below the poverty line. Kids Count 2000 census data, available at www.aecf.org/kidscount/census.
7. Coleman's "Principles We Support," available at www.colemanadvocates.org/about_us/mission.html
8. About OCO, available at <http://www.oaklandcommunity.org/about>

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Bios

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