GEORGE V. VOINOVICH
GOVERNOR

STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COLUMBUS 43266-0601

Copy to
1) Bruce Reed
2) Jennifer O'Connor
3) Diana Fortuna

WR-OHIO

February 26, 1996

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I wanted to thank you for your assistance in moving Ohio's welfare reform waiver application forward. After months of delay and bureaucratic processing, I have been pleased with our recent dealings with the Department of Health and Human Services. I am certain this new level of responsiveness from HHS is attributable to your intervention, and for that I am grateful.

Our most recent interactions with HHS indicate that some of our waiver application will be approved. This is good news for the people of Ohio. As I mentioned to you previously, our welfare package was passed by the Ohio General Assembly with overwhelming bipartisan support. Interest groups ranging from the Children's Defense Fund to the County Commissioners Association endorsed our bill. Ohio's new welfare law, with its carefully balanced blend of incentives and sanctions designed to promote self sufficiency through employment, will end welfare as we know it in Ohio.

However, I am deeply concerned because we have been told several important elements of our waiver package will not be approved. Reasons for the anticipated denial range from policy objections to a lack of legal authority to grant our request.

The first provision in question, objected to by the Department of Agriculture on policy grounds, relates to food stamp benefits. Through our proposal, each welfare recipient must sign a self-sufficiency contract, detailing specific steps he or she will take to become independent. The state has increased its investment in programs to help recipients develop skills needed for employment. However, with these opportunities come obligations. Our proposal includes tough sanctions to encourage compliance with the terms of the self-sufficiency contracts. ADC benefits will be denied for increasing amounts of time to recipients who fail to meet their responsibilities.

We had asked that a decrease in ADC benefits not lead to an automatic increase in food stamp benefits. If food stamp levels are increased to compensate for the sanctions, we send the wrong message to sanctioned welfare recipients while creating a tremendous administrative burden for human services caseworkers. I feel very strongly that for sanctions to be effective, this food stamp provision must be waived.

Similarly, I am also concerned that the Health Care Financing Administration has expressed an unwillingness to approve our waiver request regarding Medicaid eligibility for those guilty of welfare fraud. We have asked that anyone who is caught defrauding the system be kicked off the system, while preserving Medicaid eligibility for children. We have been told that HCFA will require us to maintain Medicaid eligibility for these recipients. This is unfair to the hardworking citizens whose tax dollars are used to support the welfare system.

We have also been told that HHS will not approve our time limit request without a condition that essentially renders time limits meaningless. Our time limit provision is the product of intense negotiations with members of the Ohio General Assembly and interested advocacy groups, including the Children's Defense Fund. It was carefully designed to apply to those recipients who are actively participating in the JOBS program. After three years of receiving education, skill training, or work experience, a welfare recipient is expected to move from the program into independent employment. We include in our proposal a hardship exemption for exceptional cases of need.

Under the condition of approval laid out by HHS, any recipient who at the end of three years has an income less than Ohio's ADC grant plus a $90 income disregard would remain eligible for welfare benefits. This fundamentally undermines the assumption behind time limits. The burden of responsibility is shifted back from the individual to the state. This does not end welfare as we know it. It reinforces the status quo.

The food stamp provision, the Medicaid provision, and the time limit provision each could be approved by your Administration. I strongly urge you to consider our requests carefully. These provisions are important parts of our overall waiver package, because they reinforce the message that there are consequences for failing to live up to obligations.

I am also frustrated to learn that another important waiver we requested apparently is beyond the scope of the federal government to approve. This reinforces my very strongly held belief that welfare reform should be the responsibility of the states. If federal statute prevents your Administration from approving common sense, popularly supported reforms, then the federal government should be taken out of the equation. Program design and implementation should be a state responsibility. Block grants would give states the ability to make needed reforms.

For example, we have been told by HHS that our request to use the Subsidized Employment Program to put welfare recipients to work in businesses with existing vacancies cannot be approved. Apparently the federal government only permits use of SEP placements to fill new positions.

Our state has enjoyed an unemployment rate hovering around and below 5% for the last year. We have a large pool of jobs unfilled due to a lack of applicants. At least four major Ohio employers have indicated to the Ohio Department of Human Services that they would contract with the State to put welfare recipients to work if SEP could be used to fill existing vacancies. No workers would be displaced. We estimate that an additional 1,400 recipients could be employed each month if SEP could be used without restrictions. Denial of this waiver request amounts to a denial of jobs to Ohio's welfare recipients.

While I am pleased that some of our waiver request likely will be approved soon, I continue to question the wisdom of a system that subjects a package overwhelmingly supported by the people of Ohio and their elected representatives to the verdict of federal bureaucrats. The process wastes time. I am grateful that consideration of our application has been accelerated over the last few weeks, but my fundamental objection to the process remains. A welfare block grant would give states the ability to design their own welfare programs without federal delays and second guessing.

More specifically, I am concerned that parts of our package will be denied either because your Administration does not approve of the policy behind Ohio's proposals or because the federal government faces statutory barriers to approval. Regardless of the reason for denial, the result for my state is that we will be prevented from implementing our package as it was crafted. I strongly urge you to encourage your Administration to reconsider its preliminary decisions on the provisions I have raised.

Again, I am very grateful for your personal attention and for any assistance you can provide. Please let me know if I can provide you with any further information.

Sincerely,

George

George V. Voinovich
Governor

To Bruce Reed
From Diana
WR-Ohio

GEORGE V. VOINOVICH
GOVERNOR

STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COLUMBUS 43266-0601

February 2, 1996

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

During your State of the Union address, Republicans and Democrats alike were pleased to hear you express support for the passage of meaningful welfare reform legislation. I firmly believe that a fundamental overhaul of the current welfare reform system is long overdue, and I encourage you to fulfill the promise you made to the American people four years ago to end welfare as we know it by signing into law welfare block grant legislation.

Over the last several months I have become increasingly frustrated that reform rhetoric coming out of your Administration has not been matched by concrete actions. Twice you have vetoed legislation that would give states the flexibility to break the cycle of dependency through programs that foster self-sufficiency and employment. The federal waiver process you have touted as an alternative to legislation has been excruciatingly slow. Last week, Ohio received preliminary indications from the Department of Health and Human Services that the waivers needed to implement some of the most important provisions of Ohio's new welfare reform law may not be granted.

Ohio's experiences with our waiver application provide me with yet another reason to believe that the existing welfare system is broken beyond repair. Despite your assurance states' waiver applications would be approved within 30 days, we now have been waiting over 100 days for clearance to implement our package. Even taking the government shut down into account, we have been held back too long. My staff tells me we still are between six and eight weeks away from a final decision. Many of the elements of our package have been included in waivers granted to other states, so it is not as though we are asking for approval of anything that should be particularly complicated or time consuming. Even if much of our waiver is eventually approved, we will have wasted over five months filling out federal forms rather than helping welfare recipients find jobs through our new program.

As a former Governor, I am sure you can sympathize with my inability to understand why a group of federal bureaucrats is permitted through the waiver process to essentially rewrite portions of a welfare reform package passed with the overwhelming bipartisan support of Ohio's elected representatives. Our bill passed the Ohio Senate with a 32-0 vote and was endorsed by the House of Representatives by a 89 to 7 margin. Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives overwhelmingly supported the package.

Additionally, we received the endorsement of groups ranging from the Ohio Children's Defense Fund to the County Commissioners' Association and the Ohio Human Services Directors' Association. Clearly, our package is the product of extensive consultation with interested parties and enjoys widespread support. The enclosed newspaper editorials will give you a sense of this support.

Again, it is incredible to me that a group of Washington bureaucrats now sits in judgment over a welfare package that Ohio's elected representatives and advocacy organizations spent months developing in a spirit of cooperation and consensus. It is extraordinarily arrogant for these bureaucrats to assume that they are in a better position to know and protect the interests of the people of Ohio than those of us who live and work here everyday. We are better able to develop a specifically tailored solution to Ohio's welfare challenges than any group of federal bureaucrats. Washington does not always know best.

Let me be clear about our proposal. Ohio's welfare package is not extremist. We are not out to prove we have the shortest time limits or the most restrictive eligibility criteria in the nation. Instead, I believe we have the most balanced combination of incentives and sanctions yet set forth in a welfare bill on the state or the federal level. Time magazine calls our approach one of the "most intelligent in the nation." We create new opportunities for recipients to become self-sufficient while establishing parameters to ensure that welfare can no longer be a lifestyle choice. In our bill, opportunities come with obligations.

Some of the provisions identified as potential problems by HHS are precisely the sorts of reforms you have mentioned as policy priorities. For example, at the National Governors' Association meeting in July 1995, you expressed your support for "limiting welfare to a set number of years." Our proposal includes a very carefully designed time-limit on benefits, including explicit exemptions for all but those deemed eligible to participate in the JOBS program. Despite protections generous enough to satisfy Ohio's Children's Defense Fund, we are still being told that approval will be problematic.

Similarly, you have repeatedly stressed that welfare reform should put recipients to work. A main focus of our reform strategy involves partnering with the private sector to move recipients into employment. Under the existing Subsidized Employment Program (SEP), recipients can be placed only in newly created positions. Our waiver requested the ability to allow employers to use SEP for existing vacancies as long as no current employees are displaced. HHS claims it lacks the authority to grant this waiver, but, ironically, Ohio received approval of an identical request less than one year ago. If your administration continues to oppose this portion of our waiver, as many as 1400 welfare recipients per month looking for employment will be denied jobs.

The obvious reluctance of the Department of Health and Human Services to support real reform has made it painfully clear to me that the waiver process cannot be used to end welfare as we know it. I encourage you to intervene personally with HHS to allow Ohio's experiment to move forward immediately as endorsed by the people of our state. Every week that goes by without approval is an opportunity missed to help families become independent.

Passage of meaningful welfare reform legislation would eliminate the need for unnecessary and time consuming waiver consideration. I urge you to work with Congress to ensure the enactment of welfare block grant legislation this year.

I sincerely appreciate your personal consideration of my concerns. Please let me know if I can provide you with further information on Ohio's proposal.

Sincerely,

George V. Voinovich

George V. Voinovich
Governor

cc: The Honorable Donna Shalala

WR-Ohio

OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 630F
Washington, DC 20201

F A X C O V E R S H E E T

DATE: 3/14/96

TO: Bruce Reed

PHONE:
FAX:

FROM: John Monahan
Director

PHONE: (202) 690-6060
FAX: (202) 690-5672

RE:

CC:

Number of pages including cover sheet: 4

Message:

Ohio welfare reform gets federal OK

Columbus Dispatch

By Alan Johnson
and Jonathan Riskind
Dispatch Staff Reporters

3-14-96

Most of Ohio's welfare reform plan got the go-ahead from the federal government yesterday, but Gov. George V. Voinovich is miffed at what wasn't approved and how long the process took.

The Clinton administration — after a review that was supposed to take 30 days but took seven months — approved 17 of the 21 waivers requested, clearing the way for comprehensive welfare reform in the state by Oct. 1 at the latest.

"Our package will make real differences in the lives of thousands of Ohio's most vulnerable citizens," Voinovich said. "With our reforms, the state will become a true partner in helping recipients break free of the cycle of welfare dependency."

Voinovich blamed Clinton for subjecting the state to an "excruciatingly slow and cumbersome" process and failing to approve all requests.

The General Assembly overwhelmingly approved Voinovich's welfare overhaul in August 1995, but 21 provisions required waivers from federal government regulations before they could be put into effect.

After its seven-month review, the federal government refused to approve provisions that would have prevented a recipient's food stamp benefits from increasing when his Aid to Dependent Children benefits are cut and another that would have denied Medicaid eligibility to anyone guilty of welfare fraud.

Voinovich said the state program "was designed as a carefully balanced blend of incentives and sanctions. . . . By approving some of our waiver but not all of it, the federal government has upset this careful balance."

However, the Clinton administration said its approval will allow Ohio to put dramatic statewide changes into place, including time limits for welfare recipients, guidelines allowing recipients to earn more money without losing benefits, a mandatory "self-sufficiency contract" as a condition of benefits, and penalties if recipients do not cooperate with employment and child support enforcement agencies.

Donna Shalala, U.S. secretary of health and human Services, said the Ohio First plan, as it is called, "strongly reflects the president's welfare reform principles of moving people quickly into work and promoting parental responsibility."

Chinese checkers

Recently the Ohio House of Representatives passed a resolution urging the UN to recognize Taiwan — but not without some lively debate. First a Buchanan supporter questioned not Taiwan but the UN. Pat's army opposes everything about the UN. Then Democratic Rep. Wayne Jones reminded

March 7, 1996 COLUMBUS

Republicans that they had refused to support legislation on South Africa or Ireland on the grounds that "Ohio's only foreign policy should be 'Beat Michigan.' "

Ohio cleared for change in welfare

3-14-96

• Experiment will reward recipients who find work, limit cash benefits to 36 months in a 60-month period

AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

BY WILLIAM HERSHEY
Beacon Journal Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON: The Clinton administration yesterday approved a five-year Ohio experiment aimed at rewarding welfare recipients when they go to work but punishing them when they don't take advantage of job or training opportunities.

Gov. George Voinovich, who signed state legislation outlining the changes in August, praised the decision by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna A. Shalala. But he said real welfare reform won't come until the federal government returns authority to the states, as was requested last month at the National Governors' Association meeting in Washington.

"I remain frustrated that the excruciatingly slow and cumbersome waiver consideration process has required us to spend the last seven months filling out forms for federal bureaucrats rather than helping welfare recipients move toward self-sufficiency and independence," Voinovich said.

However, Mark Real, director of the Children's Defense Fund of Ohio and a key Voinovich ally in winning the approval, said Shalala's decision strikes the right balance.

It would continue cash welfare benefits as an entitlement, which poor families automatically qualify for based on factors such as income, but would withdraw the entitlement when welfare recipients don't live up to their end of the bargain. If a pure block grant approach were established, states

See ADC, Page D2

should be in place by Oct. 1.

Voinovich criticized the Clinton administration for not approving all the requested changes.

He had asked that decreases in cash benefits resulting from failure to meet work or training requirements not be compensated by an increase in food stamp allotments, but this was not approved.

"If food stamp levels are increased to compensate for the sanctions, we send the wrong message to sanctioned welfare recipients while creating a tremendous administrative burden for human services caseworkers," he said.

However, Real said that federal

ADC

• Voinovich is unhappy some sanctions left out

Continued from Page D1

could run out of money during hard economic times, Real said.

In Washington, Rep. Sherrod Brown, D-Lorain, also applauded the decision.

President Clinton's "flexible approach to this difficult issue is far preferable to the extremist positions taken by the Republicans in Congress," said Brown, whose district includes Medina County and parts of Summit and Portage counties.

About 620,000 Ohioans, including 400,000 children, receive Aid to Dependent Children cash benefits.

The monthly benefit for a family of three is $341. Even one high-state

BREAKDOWN

Numbers of people on welfare in the five counties in the region:

Summit — 32,500.
Stark — 19,200.
Portage — 5,300.
Wayne — 2,400.
Medina — 2,000.

There are 130,000 ADC recipients in Cuyahoga County, according to state records.

• Married parents would be able to work more than 100 hours a month and retain eligibility.

• Recipients would be required to sign a contract outlining steps they would take to become independent.

• Recipients would lose benefits gradually through a four-step

law prohibits Shalala and her department from cutting food stamps in such cases.

The governor said he was frustrated because federal officials didn't agree to withdraw eligibility for Medicaid — the medical program for the poor — for those who are guilty of welfare fraud.

"This is unfair to the hard-working citizens whose tax dollars are used to support the welfare system. . . . Our package was designed as a carefully balanced blend of incentives and sanctions. . . . By approving some of our waiver but not all of it, the federal government has upset this careful balance," he said.

of what Shalala approved:

* Eligibility for cash benefits would be limited to 36 months in any 60-month period, with exceptions for those unable to work or receive training.

* Applicants would be required to look for work while their AFDC application is processed.

* The first $250 earned each month and half of any earned income over $350 would be disregarded when calculating eligibility for benefits.

process if they don't cooperate with employment, training and child-support requirements.

* Those without high school diplomas must enroll in education programs.

* Pregnant women must get prenatal care and cooperate with substance-abuse treatment programs.

Ron Rhodes, deputy director of the state Department of Human Resources, said the changes will begin to take effect by July, and all

P.04/04

THE PLAIN DEALER

Cleveland Plain Dealer 3/14/96

Ohio

Washington approves Ohio welfare

By JOE HALLETT and BENJAMIN MARRISON
PLAIN DEALER REPORTERS

COLUMBUS — The federal government yesterday approved a less-restrictive version of Gov. George V. Voinovich's vaunted plan to reform the state's welfare system, evoking a bittersweet response from the governor.

Despite blistering the Clinton administration for delaying approval and eliminating elements of the reform plan, Voinovich nevertheless heralded it as one of the nation's strongest.

"With our reforms, the state will become a true partner in helping recipients break free of the cycle of welfare dependency," he said.

The plan, labeled "tough love" by Voinovich, combines incentives with penalties in an effort to move thousands of Ohioans from welfare to work. It contains 50 provisions, 20 of which required waivers from the federal government, a process that took seven months.

Voinovich and other GOP governors have beseeched President Clinton and Congress to turn over control of welfare programs to the states and fund them with block grants.

Under the plan enacted into Ohio law last August, welfare recipients can collect welfare benefits for just three years in any five-year period, effectively forcing them to get jobs. The federal government, however, watered that provision down by permitting benefits to continue for recipients who "through no fault of their own" cannot get jobs, according to Ronald Rhodes, deputy director of the Ohio Department of Human Services.

The new law, which Rhodes said would be fully implemented by October, requires welfare parents without a high school diploma to work toward their high school equivalency certificate to receive benefits, and stipulates that unmarried teen mothers on welfare must live with their parents until age 18.

Meanwhile, the law lets Ohioans on public assistance work more hours at part-time jobs while still remaining eligible for welfare benefits, and it promotes two-parent families by removing a rule that discouraged marriage.

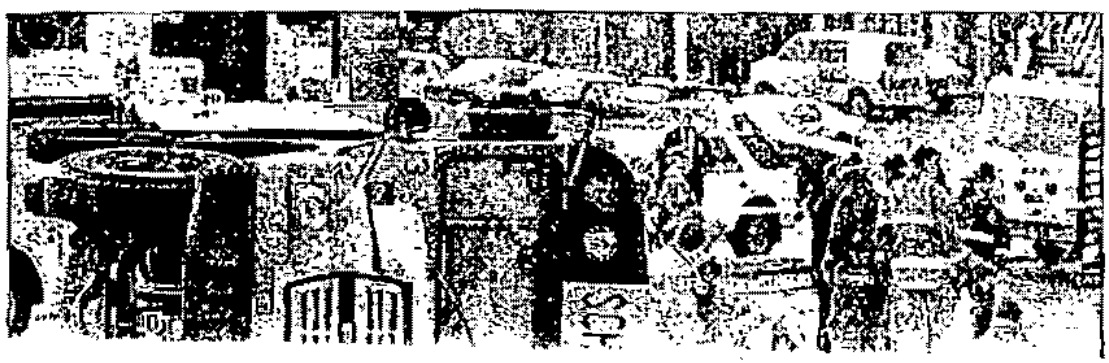
The law toughens child-support collection procedures, and permits courts to order the parents of teenage fathers to pay child support until the father turns 18. In addition, parents who owe child support will have their driver's license and any state-issued professional or occupational license yanked until they pay up.

Rhodes and the governor decried the federal government's failure to approve a state proposal to cut off Medicaid benefits to individuals guilty of welfare fraud.

Those who have to deal first hand with welfare recipients aren't sure there are enough available jobs and slots in high school equivalency programs.

"Most of the jobs that people are getting are low-wage, no-benefit jobs," said Jack Frech, director of the Athens County Depar

Children injured



Bill would fight at by common-law f

By T.C. BROWN
PLAIN DEALER BUREAU

COLUMBUS — Legislators will be asked to arm public officials with a law that allows them to fight back against attacks of "paper terrorism" from a fast-growing social movement.

Rep. William Schuck, a Columbus Republican, said he would according to human rights a right-wing watchdog organiz tions.

Should the bill eventually b come law, it's not likely to det such decrees issued by the co mon-law court, said Bill Ellwo the chief justice of "our one s preme Court" in Columbus.

"If anything, it will speed

MAR-14-1996 16:01 IGA

THURSDAY,
MARCH 14, 1996

plan

ment of Human Services. He added that requiring more of welfare recipients was a good idea.

Frech and Mary Lou Golski, director of the Lorain County Human Services Department, questioned whether the state plan's health care provisions were adequate for Ohioans moving from welfare into jobs.

Mark Real, executive director of the Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, said the key elements of the reform plan were kept intact by the federal government, including provisions "to make work more worthwhile and allow people to keep more of what they earn" while still receiving some benefits.

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ollowers

Geoffrey Kent, the Lake County recorder and president of the Ohio Recorder's Association. "These [common-law] people are absolutely serious and think they are operating under the letter of the law, and we find ourselves as the innocent middleman."

Kent said recorders sought clarification of the law because some officials had even subject to

TOTAL P.04

WR-Ohio

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 13, 1995

RECOMMENDED TELEPHONE CALL

TO: Governor George Voinovich (R-OH)

DATE: April 14-18

RECOMMENDED BY: Marcia L. Hale
John Emerson
Bruce Reed

PURPOSE: To reach out to Governor Voinovich about the important role he can play in getting a good bipartisan welfare reform bill.

BACKGROUND: Governor Voinovich has written to Senator Dole to express his reservations with the House welfare bill which he feels does not provide states with enough flexibility and puts states at considerable financial risk. He favors block grants but has been more vocal than other Republicans about cost shifts to the states.

As you know, Governor Voinovich is a moderate Republican governor who has worked with the Administration in the past. Governor Voinovich has endorsed Senator Dole for 1996, so you should expect that anything you say to the Governor could be repeated.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION: 1. What does he think we should do to make sure Congress passes a bill the states can live with?

2. Encourage him to continue to take an active role in this debate to counter the conservative influence of Engler and Thompson. Ask him whether other moderate Republicans share his concerns.

CONTACT PERSON AND
TELEPHONE NUMBER(S): Paul Mifsud 614/644-0817
Randy Fischer 614/644-0813

DATE OF SUBMISSION: April 13, 1995

ACTION: _____

GEORGE V VOINOVICH
GOVERNOR

STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COLUMBUS 43266-0601

March 27, 1995

The Honorable Bob Dole
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Dole:

As you know, the House of Representatives has completed its consideration of welfare reform legislation. While I strongly support the decision made by the House to convert welfare programs into block grants, I am concerned that the House bill fails to provide states with the flexibility needed to set our own priorities and conduct innovative experiments to promote responsibility and self-sufficiency. Many of my fellow Republican Governors share a number of my concerns.

I was disappointed with the allocation formula established through the Temporary Family Assistance Block Grant. It is the position of the National Governors' Association that any formula should allow states to use either a three year average or 1994 spending levels in determining base year allocations. While the House formula includes this choice, it then applies a 2.4 percent reduction factor to each state's allocation. The reduction factor leaves Ohio with a base year allocation of $700 million annually, which is lower than what we would have received using either formula without a reduction factor. Speaker Gingrich assured states he would support eliminating the reduction factor. We would like to work with you in the Senate to make this correction.

Although allowing each state to receive its most favorable allocation without a reduction factor requires funding for the block grant to be increased by approximately $200 million nationally, it is important to remember that states are making a significant financial sacrifice in supporting capped block grants. If states are disadvantaged in determining base year allocations, it becomes even more difficult to make the increased investments in work programs necessary to move individuals off welfare.

The House bill also does not include sufficient protections for states in the event of an economic downturn. If Congress replaces open-ended individual entitlements with capped state entitlements, states are placed in an extremely vulnerable position should the welfare-eligible population increase significantly. The state and federal governments should be partners in meeting the needs of expanded caseloads in recessions. The House bill contains a $1 billion rainy day fund designed to provide the states with short-term loans,

repayable with interest in three years. A loan fund does not represent a partnership; instead, it is a cost shift.

Ohio would be particularly disadvantaged in a recession due to aggressive steps already taken to reduce welfare caseloads. Today, 85,000 fewer Ohioans receive welfare than in 1992. States that have not been aggressive in reducing their welfare rolls will be better able to accommodate increased caseloads. Ohio's streamlined base makes it very difficult for us to absorb increased recessionary demands.

As part of our efforts to reduce welfare caseloads, Ohio has developed the strongest JOBS program in the nation. Ohio leads the nation with 33,911 recipients participating in JOBS. Only California comes close to matching Ohio's performance with 32,755 recipients enrolled in JOBS, and California has three times as many ADC recipients as Ohio. Our success with the JOBS program reflects a strong investment in training and education programs. Regardless of the extent of our investment, however, no work program can succeed without a commitment to making quality child care available for recipients. In Ohio, the state provides non-guaranteed day care to families with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level. The program currently has an average daily enrollment of 17,800. The State of Ohio is doing its part to provide child care to those in need. The federal government also must meet its responsibility.

I would like to see the child care and family nutrition block grants converted into capped state entitlements. In the House bill, funding for these block grants is discretionary. Key child care programs currently are individual entitlements. The need for child care only will grow as welfare recipients move into the workforce. My comfort level with the House package would increase significantly if states were guaranteed to receive a specified level of funding for child care and for child nutrition services for the next five years. That guarantee can only come through a capped state entitlement

Excessive prescriptiveness is a problem throughout the House legislation. The bill's work requirements are a perfect example. The federal government mandates how many hours per week a federally defined percentage of cash assistance recipients must participate in federally prescribed work activities. In a true block grant, states would be free to choose how best to allocate resources to meet goals developed jointly by the federal and state governments. The record keeping requirements in the House bill also are extraordinarily prescriptive. States remain concerned that our computer systems lack the capability to provide the information required by the House.

A true block grant should also give states the ability to determine their own program eligibility standards. The House legislation includes a number of specific eligibility restrictions. For example, cash benefits will be denied to unwed minor mothers and their children. Additional children born to mothers on welfare will be denied benefits. Decisions like these should be left to the states. By federally mandating these restrictions, the House is interfering with successful state reforms. For example, in Ohio we have developed a program designed to encourage minor mothers to remain in school. The LEAP (Learning, Earning, and Parenting) program supplements or reduces a teen mother's ADC cash grant based on her school attendance to teach her that there is a real value to completing her education. LEAP has led to a significant decrease in the drop-out rate for this vulnerable population. If the House prohibition on cash benefits remains in place, the LEAP program will have to be discontinued.

As the Senate begins to consider welfare legislation, I would be grateful for your assistance in addressing my concerns. Like many other Governors, I strongly support the broad outline of the House proposal, but it is important that these issues be resolved successfully. As a Governor, it will be up to me to implement welfare reforms in my State. I would like to work with you to ensure that block grants give the states the flexibility we need to implement innovative reforms designed to meet the specific needs of our communities. Without this flexibility, I cannot support this welfare reform package.

While Ohio watches federal welfare reform developments with tremendous interest, we have been actively pursuing a statewide reform agenda. I have enclosed a summary of Ohio's history of welfare reform innovation for your information.

Thank you for your personal consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

George

George V. Voinovich
Governor

HHS NEWS

WR-Ohio

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Contact: Michael Kharfen
(202) 401-9215

HHS APPROVES OHIO WELFARE DEMONSTRATION
25TH STATE TO RECEIVE WELFARE WAIVER

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala today approved "A State of Opportunity," a welfare demonstration project in Ohio designed to move welfare recipients into jobs ensuring family stability and self-sufficiency. Ohio is the 25th state to receive approval to test innovative welfare reform strategies under the Clinton administration.

"The Clinton administration has now given half of all states the opportunity to test innovative welfare reform approaches -- more than all previous administrations combined," said Secretary Shalala. "When these waivers are fully implemented, some 6 million people representing 42 percent of all recipients will be affected in an average month.

"This reflects our commitment to state flexibility. It equally reflects our commitment to end welfare as we know it and to create a system built on work and responsibility," Shalala said.

The Ohio demonstration has three components: Families of Opportunity, Children of Opportunity, and Communities of Opportunity.

Communities of Opportunity will operate in up to five sites, primarily in Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Communities. At these sites, the state will work with local business, industry and community leaders to generate up to 2,500 wage-supplemented jobs during the five-year life of the demonstration. These jobs are expected to pay at least $8 per hour and provide the economic stability for a family to leave welfare permanently. Wages will be partially subsidized using funds that otherwise would have been paid as AFDC or Food Stamps.

Families of Opportunity increases opportunities for families to attain independence and ensure stability. It expands eligibility for two-parent families, extends transitional child care for up to 18 months for those leaving welfare as a result of employment, and increases the amount of earnings a family can retain before losing AFDC eligibility. It will operate in ten counties.

- MORE -

Also under the Families of Opportunity component, a one-time cash bonus of $150 will be paid when a child's paternity is established, and that amount will not count against AFDC benefits. In addition, in calculating AFDC benefits, the maximum value of a family-owned vehicle will be raised from $1500 to $4500.

Children of Opportunity will operate in two counties and will focus on education. Under this component, dependent children between 6 and 18 will be required to attend school regularly. Case management services will be available for families whose children have problems with school attendance, and there will be financial penalties for failure to comply.

"Ohio tests a number of promising ways to strengthen families, including incentives to establish paternity and ensure children regularly attend school," said Mary Jo Bane, HHS assistant secretary for children and families. "Now with 25 states exploring creative ways to reform welfare, millions of families are moving from dependency to real opportunity."

The project will operate for five years and will include a rigorous evaluation.

# # #

Talking Points
Ohio Waiver - "A State of Opportunity"

w/ Ohio

"Ohio has an exciting plan to change welfare from a hand out to a hand up. In partnership with local businesses, Ohio will create jobs that will raise working welfare families out of poverty to economic independence."
Secretary Shalala

On March 7, 1995, Ohio becomes the 35th state to receive approval from the Clinton Administration to test innovative welfare reform strategies, surpassing the amount of welfare waivers granted by all previous administrations. Continuing it's commitment to state flexibility and real welfare reform, the Clinton Administration supports Ohio's efforts to move families from dependency to real opportunity.

Ohio's welfare demonstration project reflects President Clinton's principles for welfare reform: work and responsibility. Ohio's "A State of Opportunity" program leads people toward the freedom of work rather than the confines of dependence, by strengthening families, providing opportunity, and demanding responsibility in return.

The Ohio program provides incentives and encourages families to work not stay on welfare, so they can achieve and maintain economic self-sufficiency. Ohio will increase the incentives for welfare recipients to go to work by providing wage subsidies and forging new public/private sector partnerships. Building on President Clinton's community economic development efforts, Ohio will subsidize employment primarily in Administration designated Enterprise Zones.

Ohio is making work pay. Ohio's waiver permits the state to increase asset limits and earnings disregards under AFDC, allowing individuals to save money and make work more attractive than welfare. In order to help ensure that families can get off and stay off of welfare, Ohio has received approval to extend child care benefits to families after they leave the welfare rolls. The state also will eliminate the 100 hour rule for recipients in the AFDC Unemployed Parents (AFDC-UP) program, removing a disincentive to work and promoting two parent families.

Unlike the House Ways and Means Committee Republicans, Ohio rightly focuses on increasing child support collections. Like the Clinton Administration, Ohio recognizes that establishing paternity and enforcing child support are critical to helping recipients move from dependency to self-sufficiency. Ohio is the first state to request and receive approval to pay a one-time cash bonus for paternity establishment for children on AFDC. The State will also increase the amount of child support "pass through", which allows families to receive payment directly and not be penalized in their normal AFDC benefits.

Ohio's demonstration project includes important prevention and parental responsibility components. The Administration and the American people agree that the best reform of welfare would be to ensure that people do not need it in the first place. That is why Ohio is going to expand its efforts to end long-term welfare dependency by focusing on school attendance and achievement for young parents and their children. Under Ohio's approved waiver dependent children will be required to attend school regularly with financial penalties for failure to comply, pregnant and parenting teens will receive incentive payments to attend school regularly, and exemptions from the JOBS program will be reduced for young parents.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

A fax message from:

Melissa T. Skolfield
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Phone: (202) 690-6853 Fax: (202) 690-5673

To: Kathy Hays

Fax: 456-7431 Phone:

Date: 9/16/94 Total number of pages sent: 3

Comments: Please forward to Bruce Reed for approval. Thank you

Amy Busch

FINE BY ME BR

200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Bldg. HHH, Room 647-D, Washington, D.C. 20201

TO: David Ellwood
Mary Jo Bane
Bruce Reed

FROM: Melissa Skolfield MS

DATE: September 16, 1994

As you know, MDRC will issue a press release Monday on its evaluation of the Ohio LEAP program. I understand that the results are very positive, both for the LEAP program and for welfare reform.

My suggestion is that we offer a statement from David and Mary Jo to answer any media inquiries, and the attached draft has been written in conjunction with ASPE and ACF staff. Could I please get your comments by the end of the day? Amy Busch will be working on this, and can be reached at 690-7850 if you have any trouble reaching me. Comments can be faxed back to 690-5673.

Thanks.

DRAFT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Melissa Skolfield
(202) 690-7850

HHS ASSISTANT SECRETARIES BANE AND ELLWOOD FIND MDRC'S CLEVELAND LEAP RESULTS PROMISING

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation has released the second in a series of reports on the effectiveness of Ohio's LEAP program. LEAP uses bonuses and welfare grant reductions, plus support services, to increase school attendance among teen parents on welfare.

David Ellwood, HHS Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, and Mary Jo Bane, HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, say they find the results of Ohio's LEAP program very promising.

"Like the Administration's welfare reform proposal, LEAP focuses on teen parents -- the group most at risk of long-term welfare dependency. The results of this study are significant because they provide strong evidence that services offered through the Administration's welfare reform plan can increase school attendance and graduation rates of teen parents on welfare.

Our proposal is similar to LEAP in that it requires teen parents on welfare to stay in school as a condition of receiving benefits and provides case management and child care assistance. Our proposal also allows states to use financial incentives like those used in LEAP to encourage school completion.

- More -

DRAFT

Like LEAP, our approach focuses on ending welfare for the next generation --- teenagers who have the most to gain and the most at risk. By initially focusing our resources on these younger recipients, we will send a message that staying in school, postponing pregnancy, preparing for work, and supporting their children are the right things to do.

LEAP's results for school drop-outs are less positive, and they underscore the importance of the Administration's national campaign against teen pregnancy. The link between teen births, completion of high school, and poverty is clear. Approximately 80 percent of children born to teenage parents who dropped out of high school and did not marry are poor. In contrast, just 8 percent of children born to married high school graduates aged 20 or older are poor. We need to send the strongest possible signal to teens that pregnancy and childbirth should be delayed. And we also need to focus on teens who are already mothers -- with mentoring, child care, time-limited AFDC benefits, and other services necessary to put them on the path to work and self-sufficiency. To prevent these teen parents from dropping out of school, our proposal extends the school requirement and supportive services to teen parents who are currently in school, while existing law only covers high-school dropouts.

Programs such as LEAP, which operated under a federal waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, show the important contribution innovative programs can make to reducing welfare dependency and encouraging work and responsibility. The Administration's welfare reform efforts will continue to support state flexibility, innovative demonstration projects, and comprehensive program evaluations."

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September 13, 1994

Mr. Bruce Reed
Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy
The White House
The Old Executive Office Building, Room 216
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Bruce:

On September 20, MDRC will be releasing new findings from our on-going evaluation of Ohio's LEAP program, a statewide initiative that uses bonuses and welfare grant reductions — plus case management and support services — to boost school attendance among teen parents on welfare.

Last year we reported that, across seven Ohio counties, LEAP prevented some in-school teens from dropping out and brought some dropouts back to school. The new results (which cover only the city of Cleveland) show that this effort paid off, translating into a significant increase in high school graduation and GED receipt.

The new results are encouraging: LEAP made a substantial difference for teens who were in-school when they entered the program. However, the program was not uniformly successful in increasing school completions: It had little, if any, impact on dropouts (a group who were also more likely to face repeated grant cuts), and the absolute number of LEAP teens who completed school was very low.

The report also contrasts the effectiveness of the relatively low-cost basic LEAP model with an enriched version, which offered additional services. The study provides some evidence that this "enhanced" version of LEAP substantially increased the success of the basic model in encouraging in-school teens to complete school.

These interim findings are of obvious importance for welfare reform, although we have yet to learn whether LEAP's school effects will ultimately increase employment and reduce welfare receipt. They also suggest that LEAP can be a useful complement to education reform efforts that seek to increase high school graduation.

I thought you would want to see an advance copy of the brief summary from the report (**embargoed until September 20**). Let me know if you have any questions or would like further information.

Sincerely,

Judith M. Gueron
President

JMG/tm
Enclosure

EMBARGOED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 20, 1994

[redacted] DRAFT

The contents of this draft are not for citation, quotation, or publication until September 20, 1994. Stories can be published or aired on that day.

Chapter 1 from

LEAP

THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTS OF LEAP AND ENHANCED SERVICES IN CLEVELAND

Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting Program for Teenage Parents on Welfare

David Long
Robert G. Wood
Hilary Kopp

with

Rebecca Fisher

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation

September 1994

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation's evaluation of Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program is funded in part by a contract with the Ohio Department of Human Services and in part by the Ford Foundation, the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, BP America, the Treu-Mart Fund, the Procter & Gamble Fund, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Cleveland Student Parent Demonstration also received financial support from these funders, as well as from the Cuyahoga County Department of Human Services. This is the third report in the evaluation.

Dissemination of MDRC publications is also supported by MDRC's Public Policy Outreach funders: the Ford Foundation, the Ambrose Monell Foundation, and the Alcoa Foundation.

The findings and conclusions presented in this report do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the funders.

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OVERVIEW

This report presents new findings on the effectiveness of Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program in Cleveland as well as initial results from the Cleveland Student Parent Demonstration, a special project undertaken as part of the LEAP evaluation. LEAP is a statewide initiative that uses financial incentives and penalties to promote school attendance by pregnant and parenting teenagers on welfare, the group most likely to become long-term welfare recipients. The program also offers teens case management and child care and transportation assistance. The program requires teens who are in school to attend regularly, while those who have dropped out must return to school or enter a program to prepare for the GED (General Educational Development) test, which one must pass to receive an Ohio Certificate of High School Equivalence. By requiring school attendance, LEAP seeks to increase the likelihood of teens' completing school and eventually finding jobs and leaving welfare. LEAP relies on the education system to provide all services to teens other than case management, transportation, and child care assistance.

Since the program began operations in 1989, the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) has been evaluating it in 12 counties throughout Ohio. Using an experimental research design, nearly 10,000 teenage parents were randomly assigned either to a program or a control group; the differences in the education and economic performances of these two groups reflect the impact of LEAP's combination of bonuses, sanctions, and support services. Thus far, two reports have evaluated LEAP's operation and impact on education outcomes.[1] Future reports, scheduled to be completed in 1995 and 1996, will update the education findings and assess LEAP's longer-term effects on employment, welfare receipt, family income, and other outcomes.

The aim of the Cleveland Student Parent Demonstration was to assess the effectiveness of enhanced services beyond LEAP. For this study, additional services were provided to approximately half the LEAP teens in Cleveland, who had been assigned to six "enhanced" high schools in the city (the enhanced group), while LEAP teens assigned to the other six "regular" schools (the regular group)

[1]The first report (Bloom et al., 1991) addressed the early implementation of LEAP. The second (Bloom et al., 1993) presented estimates of LEAP's bonus and sanction rates and its short-term education impact (primarily on school enrollment and attendance).

were eligible only for regular services. The additional services available to LEAP teens in the enhanced group were of two kinds: school-based — including intensive case management by staff stationed in schools, in-school child care, and instruction in parenting and life skills — for teens attending enhanced high schools; or community-based — including outreach, special GED preparation classes, and parenting and life skills instruction — for teens who, though assigned to one of these enhanced schools, did not attend regularly. By including both school-based services for teens who were attending school regularly and community-based services for teens who were not complying with LEAP, the demonstration was designed to provide most LEAP teens in the enhanced group with additional services.[2]

The Cleveland Student Parent Demonstration used a quasi-experimental design, in contrast to the experimental, random assignment research design used in the evaluation of the LEAP program. In a quasi-experimental design, two similar, preexisting groups are identified as the research groups for the study. For the test of enhanced services, these two groups were LEAP teens assigned to the enhanced high schools (which offered additional services) and LEAP teens assigned to the regular high schools (which offered only regular services). The difference in education outcomes between these two groups serves as the estimate of the effect of the enhanced services. Analysis suggests that these two groups are well matched and should, therefore, provide a reliable test of the effectiveness of the enhancements. Nonetheless, due to potential differences between the research groups in a quasi-experimental design, these impact estimates must be interpreted with more caution than estimates based on a random assignment research design.

The research in Cleveland indicates that LEAP is a viable, low-cost policy approach that significantly improves school completion. Despite operational problems during the first two years, LEAP's financial incentive structure affected virtually all eligible teens, with more than three quarters of teens earning bonuses and two thirds qualifying for grant reductions. LEAP increased teens' receipt of high school diplomas and GEDs by 5.6 percentage points after three years. LEAP's impact was particularly evident (8.8 percentage points after three years) for teens who were enrolled in school

[2]Two categories of enhanced teens were not covered by these services: (1) teens who regularly attended adult education/GED programs other than the enhanced GED programs; and (2) teens who were exempted from the LEAP school-attendance requirement and did not attend school or an enhanced GED program. As discussed in Chapter 3, LEAP teens were exempted from the attendance requirement during the last seven months of pregnancy, while caring for a child under three months old, when child care or transportation was unavailable, and for other specified reasons.

when they entered the program. These may be conservative estimates of the LEAP model's potential, because most sample members entered the program during the time it was experiencing start-up problems.

In addition, the research indicates that enhanced services added to LEAP's effect on teens' school completion rate (as well as to program costs). The results suggest that the enhanced services increased high school and GED completion by about 2 percentage points after three years. The full set of enhanced services was not in place for a year or more after many teens first entered LEAP. In addition, once in place, the enhanced services reached a smaller proportion of eligible teens than expected. Less than half of LEAP teens in the enhanced group attended school enough to receive any school-based services, and many of those who failed to attend school did not receive any community-based services. Among LEAP teens who did attend school, the enhanced services significantly increased the likelihood of their earning a diploma or a GED. Because of the late start of some enhanced services and because the additional services did not reach all teens in the enhanced group, the results presented in this report probably understate the potential effectiveness of additional services.

Each of the following six chapters focuses on a particular aspect of this attempt to find answers to the ongoing problem of teenage parents on welfare:

- *Chapter 2:* **Why are teenage parents as a group important to welfare policy?** At any given point in time, parents under the age of 20 make up a small fraction of all cases receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the nation's largest cash welfare program. However, teen parents receiving AFDC are much more likely than other recipients to stay on welfare a very long time. For this reason, welfare cases that begin with a teen birth account for more than half of all AFDC expenditures, making this a critically important segment of the welfare population. However, there is limited evidence about which policy approaches work best in promoting teens' self-sufficiency.

- *Chapter 3:* **How effective has LEAP been so far?** Chapter 3 summarizes the research findings on LEAP that were released last year.[3] These preliminary results were promising. The program's financial incentive structure was implemented relatively smoothly throughout Ohio, and at least one bonus or sanction was directed to almost all eligible teens (93 percent) within an 18-month period. LEAP improved school retention, substantially reducing the likelihood that initially enrolled teens would drop out of school during their first year in the program. LEAP also induced a significant number of dropouts to enroll in a

[3]Bloom et al., 1993.

school or a GED preparation program. These enrollment impacts appeared to be translating into small effects on high school and GED completion, based on the limited data available at that time. The findings were relatively consistent across counties, although in Cuyahoga County, where Cleveland is located, LEAP operated with more start-up problems and recorded smaller impacts on school enrollment than in other counties.

- *Chapter 4:* **How has LEAP succeeded in Cleveland?** The additional data collection and analysis in Cleveland permit an updating of the LEAP results, presented in Chapter 4. The most important of these new findings is that LEAP's combination of bonuses, sanctions, and support services increased the percentage of eligible teens who completed a high school diploma or GED within three years of entering the program from 15.5 percent to 21.1 percent, a statistically significant impact of 5.6 percentage points. LEAP's effect was much larger for teens who were enrolled in school when they entered the program than for teens who entered as dropouts. Among initially enrolled teens, LEAP increased the proportion completing high school or earning a GED by a statistically significant 8.8 percentage points (from 20.4 to 29.2 percent). In contrast, among teens not initially enrolled, LEAP increased completion by 2.6 percentage points (from 8.6 to 11.1 percent), an effect that is not statistically significant.

  LEAP's effect statewide may be different from its effect in Cleveland. The next LEAP report (scheduled for 1995) will examine the program's effect on high school and GED completion in seven Ohio counties.

  Based on data collected in Cleveland, the direct cost of LEAP per eligible teen is estimated as $971 (in fiscal year 1993 dollars). This cost corresponds to the entire period of program eligibility, which, depending on the teen, could last as little as a month and as much as eight years (the average was a little less than two years). This estimate excludes the indirect cost to schools that results from LEAP's effect on school enrollment.

- *Chapter 5:* **What has been learned from the implementation of the enhanced school- and community-based services?** The evidence discussed in Chapter 5 suggests that the school- and community-based services, which together cost $1,965 per teen, had different accomplishments and encountered different problems. The school-based services, which were directed to teens who attended school, were implemented relatively easily. In particular, since the school-based case managers monitored students' attendance and performance closely, they were able to quickly follow up on any problems and help teens finish school.

  The community-based outreach effort, which targeted teens who never attended school or who dropped out, proved more difficult: about a third of the teens referred for this service could not be located; communication with the two thirds who were contacted was often limited or sporadic; and many of the teens who

were successfully contacted posed a special challenge (for example, many had been out of school for a long time). The enhanced GED programs managed to enroll a substantial share of out-of-school teens, and to achieve surprisingly high attendance rates, but most enrollees entered with poor skills and relatively few completed a GED.

- *Chapter 6:* **To what extent do these enhanced services improve teens' educational performance over LEAP's efforts alone?** The findings in Cleveland indicate that the effect of enhanced services on school completion — beyond LEAP's own effect — was relatively small for the eligible population as a whole. LEAP's completion impact in the third year after random assignment was about 8 percentage points when combined with the additional services, compared with a 6 percentage point impact for LEAP alone. As with LEAP, the enhanced services appear to have had more effect on initially enrolled teens than on school dropouts.

  An important reason for the small additional effect of the enhanced services is that many teens did not receive the services. For example, the school-based services were provided only to teens who attended high school. However, only 43 percent of LEAP teens attended school at least 20 days in any given school year during the three years examined. Among the teens who did attend, the effect of the enhanced services was substantially larger and statistically significant.

- *Chapter 7:* **How important is the improvement in education outcomes achieved by LEAP and the enhanced services?** The overall results in Cleveland are encouraging, suggesting that LEAP's impact extended beyond enrollment to completion, and that the enhancements added to LEAP's effect. However, the success of both LEAP and the enhanced services appears to have varied substantially by initial enrollment status. The results are very encouraging for teens who were already enrolled in school at the time their eligibility for LEAP was established, but disappointing for school dropouts.

  On their own, 20 percent of initially enrolled teens earned a high school diploma or a GED within three years. The LEAP program substantially improved this performance, increasing overall completion rates from 20 to 29 percent. Further, most of these additional completions were high school graduations. In addition, the enhanced services appear to have increased school completion beyond the effect of LEAP alone, among these teens.

  In contrast, without intervention fewer than 9 percent of dropouts received a diploma or GED within three years. Neither LEAP nor the enhanced services significantly improved this outcome. Moreover, because the dropouts' behavior was not altered appreciably, their families endured a substantial reduction in welfare grants resulting from LEAP sanctions. Fortunately, LEAP, operating as an ongoing program, will encounter a smaller proportion of teens entering the

> program as dropouts than it did during the period it has been evaluated, particularly if enhanced services are available. If teens were exposed to LEAP from the point they first had a child and went on welfare, as would be the case in an ongoing program, fewer of them would already be dropouts and it is likely that more would be encouraged by LEAP to finish school or earn a GED.

A distressing aspect of the findings in Cleveland is that, with or without LEAP, few teen parents finished high school or received a GED. While the low completion rates partly reflect limitations of the study — teens were not followed beyond three school years, and graduations from schools outside Cleveland were not counted — they also speak to the difficulty of encouraging this important segment of the welfare population to reach a key milestone on the road to economic self-sufficiency. While LEAP and the enhanced services together had a substantial impact on school completion, more than three quarters of the teen parents who were exposed to them still did not obtain a diploma or a GED during the period evaluated.

The results in Cleveland are, consequently, mixed. On the one hand, LEAP has been shown to be a workable and relatively inexpensive program that significantly improves the school performance of teen parents on welfare. Further, given earlier findings, it is likely that LEAP's impact on school completion in other Ohio communities will be larger than it was in Cleveland. Moreover, the results suggest that improved services in schools and in the community can increase the effect of LEAP, and there is evidence that the services could potentially achieve even more than has been documented in Cleveland.

On the other hand, the package of financial incentives and services implemented in Cleveland lessened, but certainly did not solve, the problem of teen parents' economic hardship and welfare dependency. The package significantly reduced the proportion of teen parents who did not finish their schooling, but that fraction was still large. Moreover, it remains to be seen how much LEAP's effect on school performance will translate into improved employment, increased income, and reduced welfare receipt. Future LEAP reports will speak to this important point.

File
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EMBARGOED UNTIL APRIL 12, 1993

The contents of this draft are for discussion only and are not for quotation, publication, or distribution until April 12, 1993.

LEAP

INTERIM FINDINGS ON A WELFARE INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AMONG TEENAGE PARENTS

Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting Program

Dan Bloom
Veronica Fellerath
David Long
Robert G. Wood

Manpower Demonstration
Research Corporation

April 1993

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program is an unusual statewide initiative that uses financial incentives and penalties to promote school attendance among pregnant and parenting teenagers on welfare, the group most likely to become long-term welfare recipients. LEAP requires these teens to stay in school and attend regularly or, if they have dropped out, to return to school or enter a program to prepare for the GED (high school equivalency) test. By improving the teens' school attendance in the short term, LEAP seeks to increase the likelihood that they will complete school and, in the longer term, find jobs and leave welfare. The program, developed by the Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS) and operated by County Departments of Human Services (CDHS), has reached more than 20,000 eligible teens since it began operating in mid-1989. LEAP has attracted substantial interest in Ohio, other states, and at the federal level.

This is the second report in a six-year evaluation of LEAP that began in 1989. The study is being conducted by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) with funding from ODHS, the Ford Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Cleveland Foundation, BP America, the Treu-Mart Fund, the Procter & Gamble Fund, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The report assesses the operation of LEAP and provides early evidence on the program's effects on school enrollment, attendance, and completion in seven Ohio counties that include about half of the statewide LEAP caseload. The evaluation's final report, which is scheduled to be completed by early 1995, will address the program's longer-term impacts.

The LEAP Model

Participation in LEAP is mandatory for all pregnant women and custodial parents (almost all are women) under 20 years old who are receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and do not have a high school diploma or GED certificate. This includes both teens who head welfare cases and those who receive assistance on someone else's case (usually the teen's mother).

Under program rules, all eligible teens are required to regularly attend a school or program leading to a high school diploma or GED. This applies both to teens who are in school when they become eligible for LEAP -- they must remain enrolled -- and to dropouts, who must return to high school or enter an Adult Basic Education (ABE) program to prepare for the GED test. LEAP uses a three-tiered incentive structure to enforce this mandate. First, teens who provide evidence that

they are enrolled in a school or program receive a bonus payment of $62. They then receive an additional $62 in their welfare check for each month in which they meet the program's attendance requirements. For teens in a full-time high school, this means being absent no more than four times in the month, with two or fewer unexcused absences. (Absences for which the teen obtains a physician's statement are not counted.) Different attendance standards apply to part-time ABE programs, but the same financial incentives apply.

Second, teens who do not attend an initial LEAP assessment interview (which commences participation in LEAP) or fail to provide proof of school enrollment without an acceptable reason have $62 deducted from their grant (i.e., they are sanctioned) in every month until they comply with program rules. Similarly, enrolled teens are sanctioned $62 for each month in which they exceed the allowed number of unexcused absences.

Third, enrolled teens who exceed the allowed number of total absences but not the allowed number of unexcused absences in a month earn neither a bonus nor a sanction.

Since teens have several opportunities to provide evidence of "good cause" for absences that schools define as unexcused, bonuses and sanctions occur three months after the attendance behavior that triggers them. Teens may be temporarily exempted from the LEAP requirements if they are in the last seven months of a pregnancy, if they are caring for a child under three months old, if child care or transportation is unavailable, or for other specified reasons.

LEAP sanctions and bonuses can substantially change the income of participants. During most of the study period, a teen living on her own with one child (the most common situation) was eligible for a monthly AFDC grant of $274. A bonus raised her grant to $336. A sanction reduced it to $212. Thus, the total difference in AFDC payments between a teen who enrolled and attended regularly, and one who failed to enroll without a good reason, was $124 per month.

Each LEAP teen is assigned to a case manager, who is responsible for explaining the program's rules, monitoring the teen's compliance to determine whether a bonus or sanction is warranted, and helping the teen overcome barriers to school attendance. Teens are also eligible to receive assistance with child care and transportation as needed to attend school.

Under Ohio's county-administered welfare system, LEAP is operated by County Departments of Human Services in all 88 of the state's counties. Many aspects of the program's implementation, including the staffing structure and specific responsibilities of case managers, are left to the discretion of counties.

The Policy Significance of LEAP

LEAP is an important initiative for three reasons. First, the program attacks a critical social problem – long-term welfare receipt – by encouraging and assisting teen parents on welfare to stay in or return to school. Recent data show that more than half of all welfare households are headed by women who first gave birth as teens, and that the route from adolescent childbearing to long-term welfare receipt often begins when pregnant or parenting teens drop out of school. This is not surprising given the growing disparity between the earnings of high school graduates and dropouts. In addition, teenagers who drop out at the time of their first pregnancy or birth account for a substantial proportion of all female dropouts, making this population important to broader efforts to increase school completion rates.

Second, unlike most other programs for this population, LEAP operates on a large scale and targets an unusually broad group of teens. It is only the second statewide effort to enforce a school attendance mandate for all teen parents on welfare, including those who are already in school. The first, Wisconsin's Learnfare program, targets all teens on welfare (not just those who are parents), uses only grant reductions, and did not initially include case management. Until recently, most initiatives for teen parents were small-scale programs serving volunteers; welfare agencies rarely targeted programs to this group. The Family Support Act, the major welfare reform legislation passed by Congress in 1988, urges all states to target teen parents on welfare for services and to require school attendance. However, few states have moved as aggressively as Ohio.

Third, LEAP's approach, which uses both financial incentives and penalties to encourage teens to use existing education services, is unique. Programs that seek to change the behavior of welfare recipients through financial inducements have attracted wide attention in recent years, although little is known about their effectiveness. An exception is programs that use the threat of welfare grant reductions to encourage employment and participation in education and employment-related activities. Rigorous evaluations have shown that these programs can be effective for adults, although it is not known how much these impacts were driven by the use of sanctions versus the services that were provided. However, LEAP's use of both financial incentives and penalties, and its application of these inducements to all eligible teens on an ongoing basis, constitutes an important departure from past practices.

The findings from this report, along with results from other ongoing evaluations of interventions for teen parents, will help inform the search for effective policy approaches for this important population. In the context of these findings, it is critical to note that LEAP, unlike some other

existing or proposed "learnfare" strategies, targets only teenage custodial parents, and represents an integrated "package," including both financial incentives and penalties, case management, child care and transportation assistance, and extensive due process procedures that provide opportunities for teens to respond before grant reductions are imposed. Thus, the results do not offer evidence on the effectiveness of other learnfare approaches that include only parts of the LEAP package, such as financial penalties alone.

An Overview of the Findings

LEAP has operated relatively smoothly during its first three years. However, because the evaluation began at the same time LEAP operations commenced, most of the teens in the study experienced LEAP at least partly during the early months of the program's operation, when there were start-up problems and the financial incentives operated least efficiently. Since the evidence suggests that LEAP operations have become smoother over time, the results presented here should be seen as a conservative estimate of the model's potential.

Despite the early implementation problems, LEAP has incorporated most eligible teens into its incentive structure. LEAP staff requested at least one bonus or sanction for 93 percent of eligible teens in the three largest counties in Ohio during the first 18 months after these teens entered the program. Seventy-five percent of eligible teens earned at least one bonus, and 56 percent were slated for at least one sanction (many teens earned both bonuses and sanctions). However, it is important to note that, for several legitimate reasons, teens generally did not qualify for grant adjustments in every month; about half were scheduled for six or more actions over the 18 months. In addition, especially during the early months of program operations, many of the sanctions that were requested by LEAP staff did not actually lead to grant adjustments because of administrative problems.

LEAP has also made substantial progress toward its key short-term goal of inducing teens to enroll in or remain enrolled in school. This report's impact analysis, which compares the behavior of LEAP teens (the program group), to that of a randomly selected group of similar teens (the control group), found that the program affected both teens who were already enrolled in school when they became eligible for LEAP, making them less likely to drop out, and teens who were initially dropouts, making them more likely to return to school or enter adult education programs.

Among teens who were already enrolled in school when they became eligible for LEAP (about half of all teens), 61.3 percent of the program group and 51.1 percent of the control group remained enrolled continuously (or graduated) during the 12 months after entering LEAP. This difference –

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Judith M. Gueron, *President*

April 5, 1993

Mr. Bruce Reed
Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy
The White House
The Old Executive Office Building
Room. 216
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Bruce:

In April, MDRC will be releasing new findings from two studies of major state initiatives under the Family Support Act that I thought would be of particular interest to you:

1. **On April 12**: The first results on the effectiveness of **Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program**. LEAP is a statewide initiative that uses financial incentives (monthly increases or reductions in AFDC grants, tied to school attendance) and some case management to keep teen mothers on AFDC in school. (Note that LEAP's more balanced financial incentives, more extensive due process provisions, case management, and exclusive focus on teen parents – rather than all teens in welfare households – distinguishes it from the Wisconsin Learnfare program.)

While the final, longer-term results are not in yet, the early evidence is encouraging. LEAP both prevented some teen mothers from dropping out of school, and brought some dropouts back to high schools and GED programs. This may be an important first step toward preventing long-term welfare dependency and may also be of value in meeting the national education goal of increasing high school graduation rates.

2. **On April 21**: New findings on **California's Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) Program**, the largest state JOBS program. You may recall that first-year findings released last year generated widespread interest and were viewed as an encouraging early report card for JOBS. The second-year results are more positive, with larger earnings gains and welfare savings in most of the counties.

I thought you would like an early warning, since both reports are likely to generate substantial press coverage and you may get calls. An Executive Summary of the LEAP report is enclosed. I will send the GAIN summary as soon as it is available.

I will give your office a call to see if you would be interested in my coming by to discuss the findings.

Best wishes,

Judy

Judith M. Gueron

Enc.

10.3 percentage points (after rounding) – represents a statistically significant increase in school *retention*.

Among teens who were dropouts when they entered LEAP, 46.8 percent of program group members and 33.4 percent of controls enrolled in a high school or adult education program at some point during the following 12 months. This 13.4 percentage point impact on school *return* is also statistically significant. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, even with the LEAP incentives and penalties, more than half the dropouts never returned to school during the first year.

The pattern of school return impacts varied depending on how long dropouts had been out of school when they were identified as eligible for LEAP. Among recent dropouts (those who had been out of school less than a year), many of those who resumed their schooling because of LEAP returned to high school. In contrast, among longer-term dropouts, virtually all of those who returned entered part-time adult education programs rather than full-time high schools.

Importantly, these impact estimates include many teens who already met the LEAP eligibility criteria when the program began. When compared with teens who became eligible for LEAP after operations began, these "on-board" teens were more likely to have been out of school a year or more and to have had two or more children at the point they were brought into LEAP. Teens with these characteristics had smaller overall impacts, took longer to respond to the LEAP incentives, and, when they did, were more likely to enter adult education programs. In an ongoing program, teens would generally be identified closer to the time they become parents and, as a result, fewer would enter the program as school dropouts or as the parents of more than one child. This, together with the improvement in program operations during the study period, suggests that LEAP's impacts might have been larger if they had been measured for an ongoing program.

In addition to promoting retention in high school and inducing some dropouts to return to these schools, LEAP also improved the *attendance* of teens enrolled in high school. In contrast, program group teens who enrolled in adult education programs attended those programs somewhat *less* than controls. However, because many more program group than control group teens enrolled in adult education programs, the total number of days attended was greater for the program group.

Finally, early evidence on school completion suggests that LEAP's success in promoting high school enrollment and retention may ultimately translate into comparable increases in high school graduation. In addition, the program has already produced a small but statistically significant increase in the proportion of teens taking and passing the GED test. However, the evidence on LEAP's impact on graduation and GED receipt is necessarily preliminary because many of the teens studied

in the analysis were not old enough to have graduated or obtained a GED during the study period. In addition, at this early point in the study, it is unclear whether impacts on school completion will translate into longer-term effects on employment, earnings, or welfare receipt.

The LEAP Evaluation

The LEAP evaluation, which began in 1989, includes a randomly selected group of 12 of Ohio's 88 counties. This report focuses on seven of these counties, which include Ohio's three largest cities – Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati – as well as suburban and rural areas. Although they encompass half of the statewide LEAP caseload, it should be noted that these seven counties are mostly urban, and therefore underrepresent LEAP teens in rural areas. The seven counties are: Cuyahoga (Cleveland), Franklin (Columbus), Hamilton (Cincinnati), Lucas (Toledo), Stark (Canton), and two smaller, rural counties, Lawrence and Muskingum.

The evaluation uses a random assignment research design to assess LEAP's effectiveness. To implement this design, all teens who were found to be eligible for LEAP in the research counties from the time the program began operating in July 1989 through September 1991 – just over 7,000 individuals in the seven counties – were assigned, at random, to one of two groups: a program group, which was eligible for LEAP's incentives and case management, or a control group, which was not. LEAP staff did not work with teens in the control group or monitor their school absences, and these teens' welfare grants were not adjusted based on their attendance. Also, control group teens were ineligible for payments (other than for child care) or case management from Ohio's Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) Program for adult welfare recipients. Because teens were assigned to the program and control groups at random, there were no systematic differences between them except for the fact that one group was subject to the LEAP mandate and the other was not. Thus, as the evaluation tracks members of the groups over time, any measured differences between them in school behavior, employment, earnings, AFDC receipt, or other outcomes, can be attributed to LEAP.

This analysis uses a wide variety of data sources – including a survey of a random subset of more than 2,000 program and control group teens, LEAP and AFDC casefiles, records obtained from selected school districts, statewide GED testing data, and discussions with small groups of LEAP teens – to assess LEAP's operations and its impacts on teens' school enrollment, attendance, and completion during their first 12 to 18 months in the program. The analysis focuses most heavily on the three largest urban counties, where the most complete data were available.

Findings on Program Implementation

One goal of the evaluation is to describe how the LEAP model has been translated into an operating program at the county level, and to examine the key issues that have emerged during the first two to three years of operations. This topic was the primary focus of MDRC's first report on LEAP, and is updated in this report. Key findings include the following:

- **LEAP has operated relatively smoothly during the study period, considering that the program is complex to administer. Not surprisingly, all counties experienced operational problems, particularly during the start-up period.**

The LEAP model requires a variety of complex linkages, within and across agencies, that generally did not exist prior to the program's implementation. For example, monitoring teens' attendance necessitates close cooperation between schools and welfare agencies, and implementing welfare grant adjustments requires coordination across divisions of a county welfare agency. Because the planning period preceding implementation was extremely compressed, the research counties were forced to develop these linkages – and to deal with other formidable challenges – under intense pressure, with little relevant experience on which to build.

Given these challenging circumstances, it is noteworthy that all of the research counties were able to begin operations roughly on schedule and that, despite a range of problems, they have managed to identify large numbers of eligible teens, obtain attendance information for most of those in school, and implement large numbers of grant adjustments. Perhaps more important, the counties have made steady progress in addressing the key problems, and operations have become smoother over time. However, as noted earlier, most of the teens who are studied in this analysis experienced LEAP at least in part during the less efficient start-up period.

- **LEAP has reached a large and diverse population of teens. However, identifying eligible teens – particularly those who do not head welfare cases – was quite difficult, in large part because of the limitations of the welfare computer system.**

More than 7,000 teens were identified as eligible for LEAP during the first two years of program operations in the seven counties studied for this report. This was an extremely diverse group, including 18- and 19-year-olds, who were quite likely to have two or more children and to have been out of school for more than a year, and younger teens who had one child and were still enrolled in school when they entered the program. Overall, about half the eligible teens reported being enrolled in school when they were identified as eligible for LEAP.

more experienced staff. More extensive training was necessary in counties where AFDC workers became case managers.

- **School districts have generally cooperated with LEAP. Still, it often has been difficult for LEAP staff to establish reliable attendance reporting systems.**

Despite the lack of preexisting linkages between county welfare agencies and schools, and the unusual nature of the LEAP model, the vast majority of school districts in the research counties have been willing to supply the attendance information necessary to trigger LEAP's incentives and penalties. However, the process of establishing and maintaining reliable monitoring systems has been extremely complex and time-consuming, and these systems have sometimes broken down. Attendance reports have often arrived too late to implement the grant adjustments on schedule. Reporting problems have been most severe in large urban areas and for teens attending ABE programs; these programs traditionally served volunteers, and did not always maintain detailed individual attendance records. As with other implementation problems, attendance reporting has generally improved over time, as counties have devised new organizational approaches and school staff have become more familiar with LEAP.

- **Because it provides no education services, LEAP is dependent on the local school environment, which varies across counties and school districts. One particularly important factor in the operation of LEAP is the availability and accessibility of alternatives to traditional high school.**

Many LEAP teens who have dropped out of school have failed in the mainstream education system and are extremely reluctant to return to traditional high schools. For these teens, the availability of education alternatives can be a critical determinant of LEAP's success. In most counties, ABE programs, which help students prepare for the GED test, are the most common alternatives. However, owing to the interaction of state and federal laws, teens under 18 years old are not permitted to enroll in these programs unless they have officially withdrawn from school, and the frequency with which teens are permitted to withdraw varies considerably across school districts. Thus, the menu of available education options differs across counties, as does the involvement of LEAP staff in steering teens toward particular educational options.

Another important aspect of the local school context is a preexisting Ohio Department of Education initiative known as GRADS (Graduation, Reality and Dual-Role Skills), which funds and trains home economics teachers to provide special instruction to pregnant and parenting students in more than 500 Ohio schools. Although GRADS is not formally linked to LEAP (and is also available

to teens in the control group), the caseloads and missions of the two programs overlap, and the LEAP and GRADS staff have developed close working relationships in many schools. GRADS has greatly aided LEAP in establishing linkages with schools, and the efforts of GRADS teachers may also contribute to LEAP's ability to encourage teens to stay in school and obtain their diplomas. This, in turn, may bolster the program's longer-term effects on employment and self-sufficiency. Two-thirds of LEAP teens who were attending high school reported that they were enrolled in GRADS.

- **LEAP has largely avoided the legal challenges that initially hindered the Learnfare program in Wisconsin, which includes only grant reductions. It is likely that this has resulted in part from specific aspects of LEAP's design.**

LEAP's inclusion of bonuses and case management in addition to sanctions may make it more acceptable to AFDC recipients and critics of programs that sanction welfare recipients. In addition, the program's due process procedures, which give teens several opportunities to respond before sanctions are taken, have probably avoided numerous erroneous sanctions. However, this lengthy process is also partly responsible for the long (three month) lag between the teens' behavior and the financial response, which may weaken the ability of the bonuses and penalties to change behavior.

Findings on Bonus and Sanction Rates

The assessment of LEAP operations, which focused on Ohio's three largest counties – Cuyahoga (Cleveland), Franklin (Columbus), and Hamilton (Cincinnati) – shows that the program's incentive structure has incorporated most eligible teen parents. It also indicates that program operations improved over time, which means that teens were exposed to a much more efficient and predictable structure during the 1991-92 school year than the one they faced during 1989-90. Specific findings include:

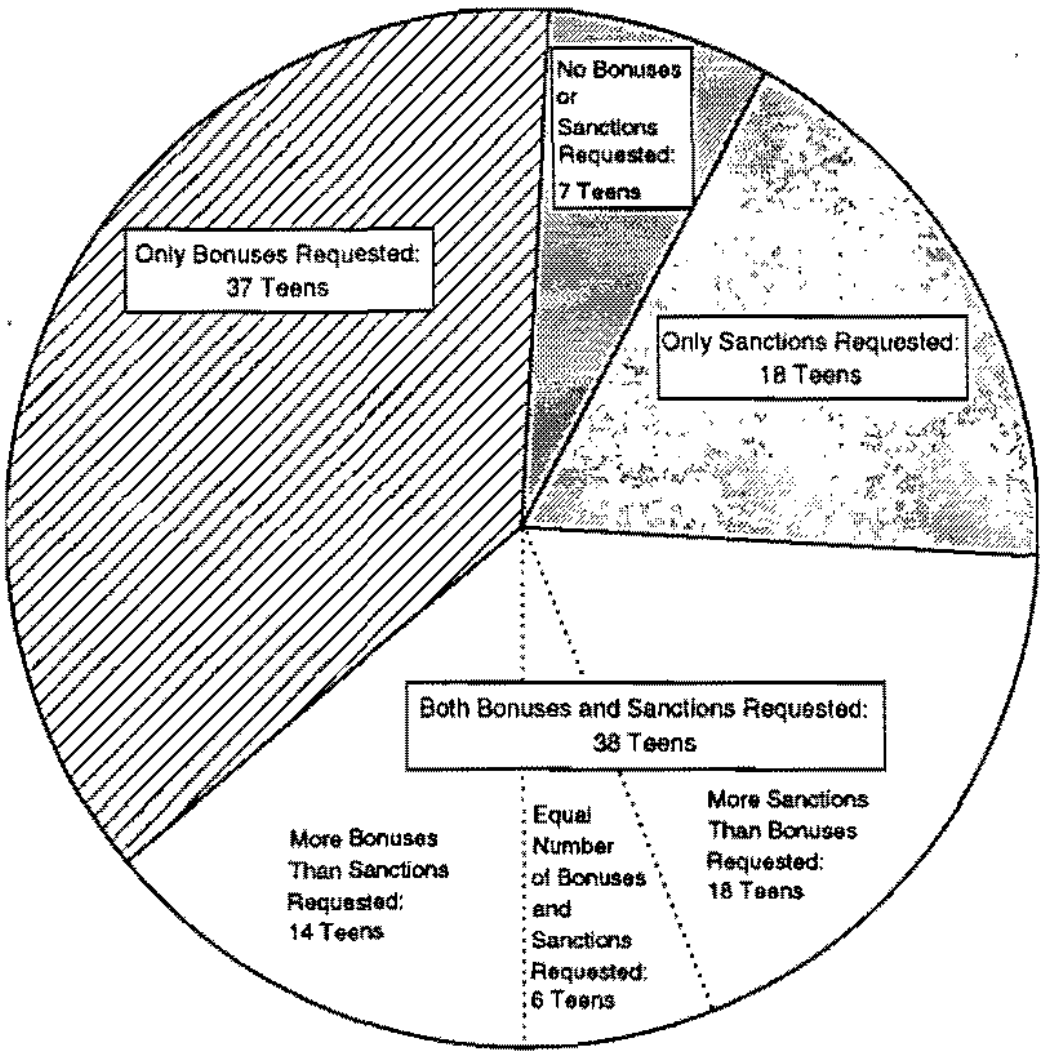
- **The vast majority of teens have been scheduled for at least one bonus or sanction during the time they have been eligible for LEAP. More teens earned bonuses than sanctions.**

LEAP staff requested at least one bonus or sanction for 93 percent of eligible teens in the three largest counties at some point in the 18 months following confirmation of these teens' eligibility for LEAP.[1] For 100 typical LEAP teens, as depicted in Figure 1, 37 qualified for bonuses only, 18 were

[1]This analysis focuses primarily on grant adjustment requests, rather than actual adjustments, so as not to give undue weight to the early operational period, when there was a disparity between the two in some counties.

FIGURE 1

BONUS AND SANCTION REQUESTS FOR 100 TYPICAL LEAP TEENS WITHIN 18 MONTHS OF ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION



NOTE: Numbers are weighted averages reflecting 263 randomly selected teens in three counties (Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton) who were assigned to the program group through November 1990.

scheduled for sanctions only, 38 earned both bonuses and grant reductions, and only 7 did not qualify for either a bonus or a sanction during the 18-month period covered by the study. Among the 38 teens who were slated for both bonuses and sanctions, 14 earned more bonuses, 18 were slated for more sanctions, and 6 qualified for an equal number of each. Thus, overall, 75 percent of teens earned at least one bonus, and 56 percent were scheduled for at least one sanction.

- **Although almost all teens earned at least one grant adjustment, many were not scheduled for large numbers of adjustments during their time in LEAP.**

LEAP staff requested 3.5 bonus payments and 2.8 sanctions per eligible teen during the 18 months covered by the study. About half of the teens were scheduled for six or more grant adjustments during this period. This means that in a typical month more than one-quarter of all teens were slated for bonuses, and about one-fifth were scheduled for sanctions. It is important to note that a substantial fraction of bonuses were for initial enrollment in school, rather than for good attendance.

These data suggest that, in a typical month, about half of all eligible teens were not scheduled for either a bonus or a sanction. Aside from administrative problems, there are a number of legitimate reasons why this might occur. First, as noted earlier, teens with large numbers of excused absences in a month may qualify for neither a sanction nor a bonus. Second, about one-third of the teens were exempt at some point; exemptions were more likely to be granted after a 1990 rule change created an exemption for pregnancy (a large fraction of teens became pregnant or had additional children at some point after entering the program). Third, bonuses and sanctions generally do not apply to the summer months, when school is not in session. Thus, one would not expect teens to earn bonuses or sanctions in all of their eligible months.

- **There are important differences across counties, both in the rates of sanction and bonus requests and in the proportion of requested adjustments that actually occurred.**

Among the three counties studied in this part of the analysis, the fraction of teens who were scheduled for at least one sanction during the 18 months following eligibility determination ranged from 50 percent in Cuyahoga County to 64 percent in Hamilton County. Rates of bonus requests also varied. County variation in the percentage of teens earning bonuses and sanctions was affected by a variety of factors including teen behavior, county practices in granting exemptions and responding to noncompliance, and the ability of counties to obtain attendance information.

As described in the previous section, LEAP case managers in most counties are not directly

responsible for processing grant adjustments and, in some counties, staff report that adjustments requested by LEAP staff are frequently not applied. The data support this contention, but suggest that the severity of the problem varied by county. Among the three largest counties, the problem was particularly serious in Cuyahoga County, where only about half the requested sanctions were actually processed during the study period. However, there is evidence that the gap between requested and actual adjustments narrowed considerably over time.

The teens' responses to the survey, which covered all seven counties, suggest that the proportion of teens who were actually sanctioned – which reflects both the patterns of sanction requests and the likelihood that these requests were processed – also varied considerably across the seven counties.

- **Some teens were scheduled for many sanctions and never cooperated with LEAP.**

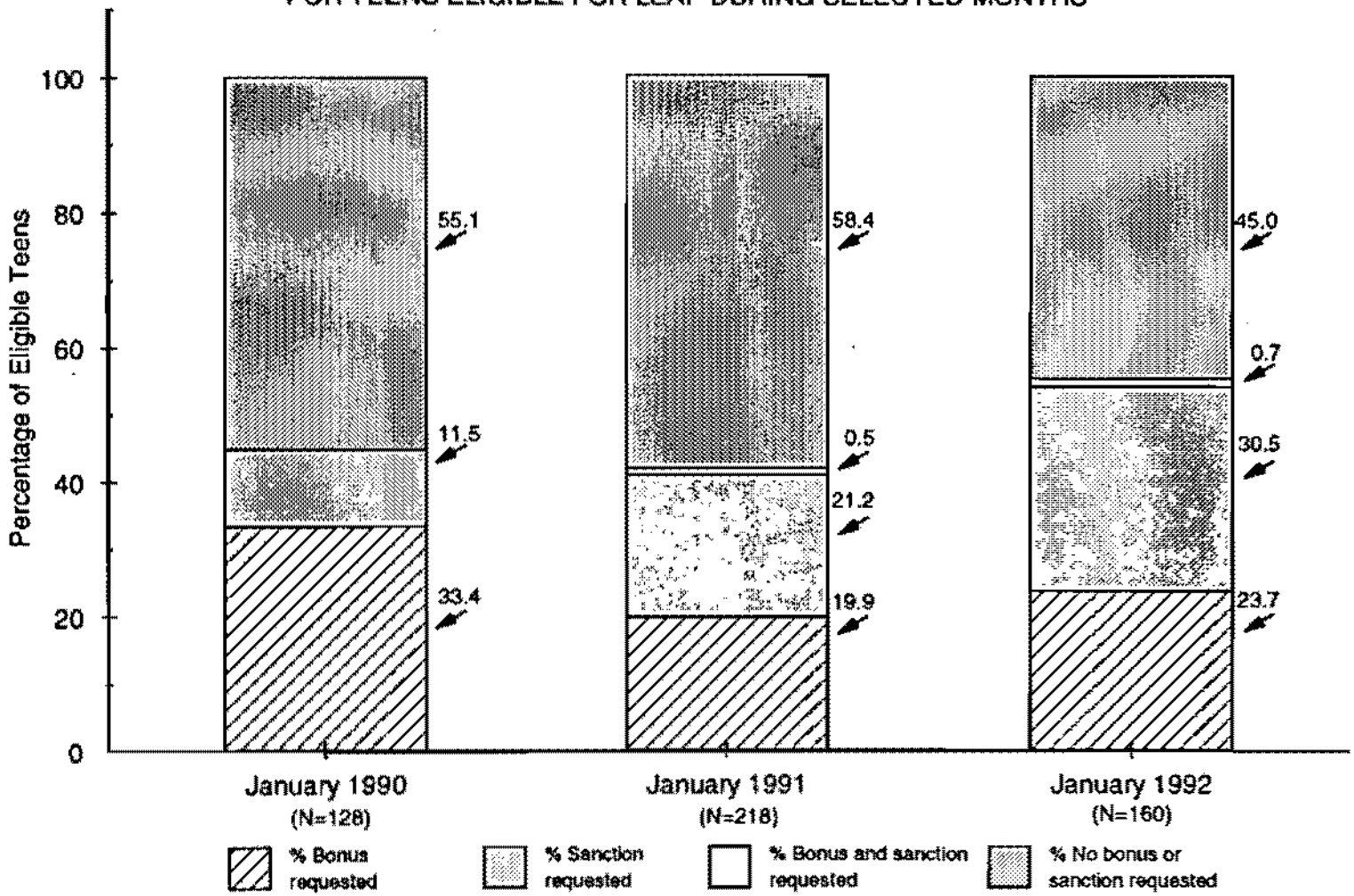
Thirteen percent of LEAP teens qualified for four or more sanctions and no bonuses during the first 18 months following eligibility determination, and most of these sanctions resulted in grant reductions. This group was made up largely of teens who had dropped out of school more than a year prior to entering LEAP. Clearly, the LEAP model had little effect on the behavior of these teens. However, it is important to note that longer-term dropouts should account for a smaller share of the teens entering LEAP over time.

- **There have been important changes in the operation of the financial incentive system over time.**

Figure 2 shows that in January 1990, six months after LEAP started, neither a bonus nor a sanction was requested for more than half the eligible teens in the three largest counties. Sanctions were requested for one in nine teens (less than half of these sanctions were acted upon), while bonuses were requested for one in three teens. Two years later, in January 1992, actions were requested for a majority of teens, the sanction request rate had more than doubled (and most requested sanctions resulted in grant reductions), and the bonus request rate had declined to a level that was lower than the rate for sanctions. The drop in bonus requests is attributable in part to the fact that, during the early months of program operation, bonuses were issued to enrolled teens when the program could not obtain school attendance records (in accordance with program rules). In addition, during these early months, a relatively large fraction of the total caseload was in its first months of eligibility, and teens tend to earn enrollment bonuses fairly quickly upon entering the program.

FIGURE 2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF BONUS AND SANCTION REQUESTS FOR TEENS ELIGIBLE FOR LEAP DURING SELECTED MONTHS



NOTE: Bonus and sanction rates are weighted to reflect the sizes of the full research samples in Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton counties. Not all of the teens were eligible in all three of these months.

- **Largely because of the program's unusual design, LEAP's sanctioning rate was much higher than the rates measured in previous evaluations of welfare-to-work programs for adults.**

The proportion of LEAP teens for whom sanctions were requested was more than three times the highest sanction rates MDRC has estimated for mandatory employment and training programs for adult welfare recipients. This result is not surprising because LEAP generally demands a more profound behavioral change than these earlier programs, monitors compliance and applies sanctions more regularly, and provides fewer options for case managers in responding to noncompliance. It also may be noted that Wisconsin's Learnfare program and a recent test program for teen parents in three cities have recorded high sanction rates.

In addition, as shown in Figure 1, more than half of the LEAP teens who qualified for sanctions also earned bonuses. Fewer than one-fifth of teens were slated *only* for sanctions. Overall, more than half of teens experienced a net gain because they earned more bonuses than sanctions; about a third experienced a net loss.

- **Overall, in a survey, about half of eligible teens characterized LEAP as "fair" and a third called it "unfair." Not surprisingly, teens who had been sanctioned had much more negative views of the program than did other teens.**

In responding to the survey, 49 percent of program group teens judged LEAP to be fair, and another 17 percent thought LEAP was sometimes fair and sometimes unfair. Thirty-four percent thought the program was unfair. In small group discussions, some teens seemed to feel that the LEAP rules are fair, but also that there are problems in the application of these rules. For example, teens said they knew of instances in which the grants of clearly noncompliant teens had not been reduced, and they voiced frustration that bonuses and transportation checks earned by good students were often delayed. However, it was not always clear whether the teens who expressed these grievances fully understood the program rules.

Among teens who had been sanctioned by LEAP, the proportion who thought LEAP was unfair exceeded the proportion who thought it was fair. In the group discussions, some teens expressed resentment that they had no choice in whether or not to enroll in LEAP.

- **Many teens report that child care arrangements are critically important to their decisions about school attendance. However, most LEAP teens did not use child care assistance offered by the program.** ?

When out-of-school teens in both the program and control groups were asked for the main

reason why they were not enrolled, lack of suitable child care was cited most frequently. However, when surveyed, fewer than one-fifth of in-school teens in the program and control groups reported using LEAP-funded child care; most relied on their own mothers or other relatives to provide care. (LEAP-funded child care is also available to teens in the control group who attend school.) This low utilization rate is attributable to a number of factors, including teens' preferences for informal care provided by relatives and Ohio rules that restrict reimbursement to certified or licensed providers. It is not clear how these child care utilization patterns are affecting teens' school attendance, although many enrolled teens reported missing school because of child care problems.

Findings on Program Impacts

To determine the effects of LEAP on school behavior, the experience of teens who were randomly assigned to the program group was compared to that of teens who were randomly assigned to the control group. The *differences* between the two groups – in terms of enrollment, attendance, and completion – are the impacts of the program. The key results include:

- **LEAP had two important and statistically significant effects on teens' enrollment in high schools and adult education programs: It increased school *retention* among in-school teens and induced many dropouts to *return* to a school or program.**

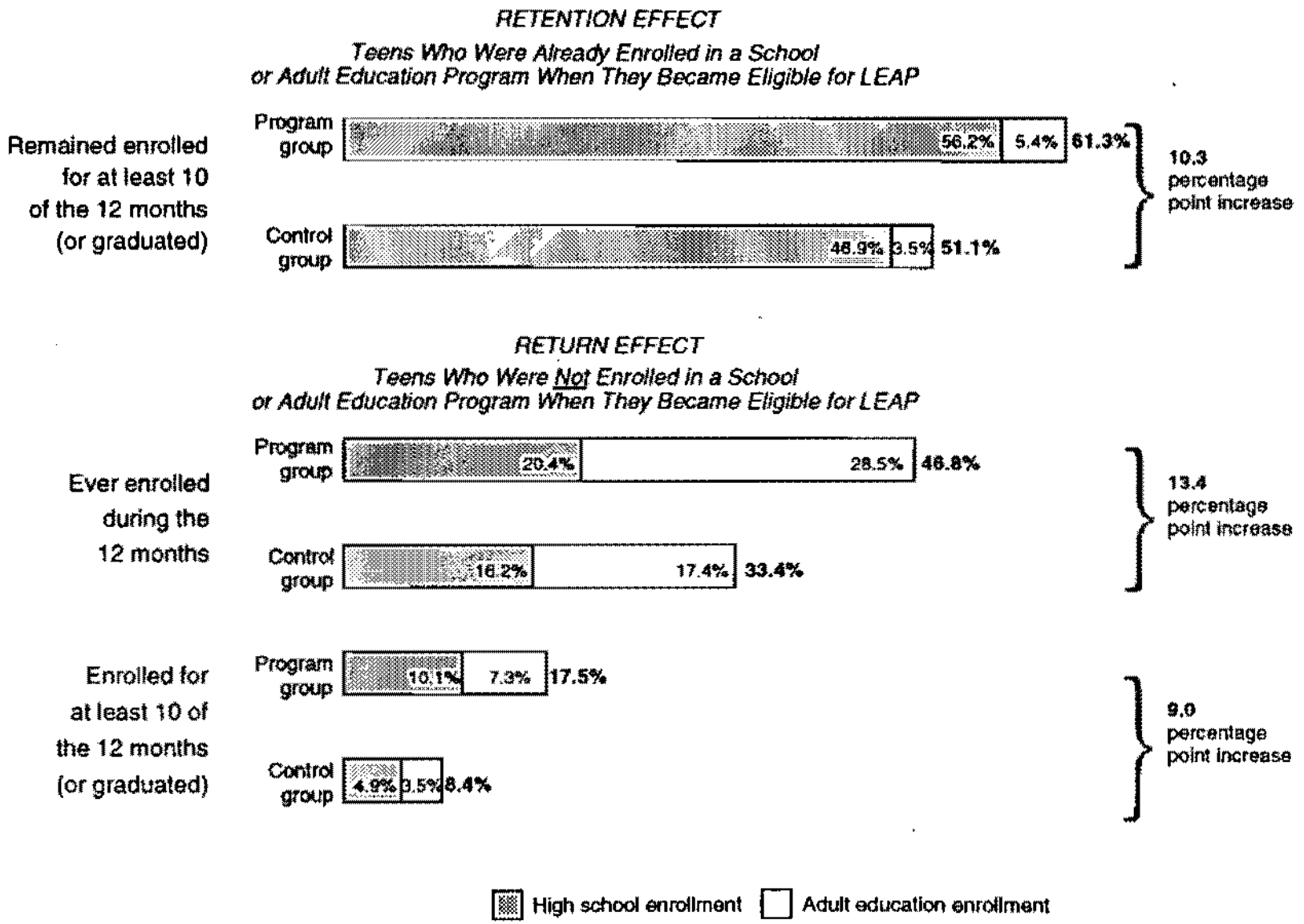
- **Most teens who were recent dropouts and resumed their schooling because of LEAP returned to high school. Longer-term dropouts who returned almost always entered adult education programs.**

As indicated in Figure 3, 61.3 percent of LEAP teens who were enrolled in a school or adult education program when they became eligible for LEAP reported that they remained continuously enrolled – i.e., enrolled for at least 10 of the next 12 months (allowing that teens may not have been enrolled during summer months) or graduated within the 12-month period. Of their counterparts in the control group, 51.1 percent were continuously enrolled. This 10.3 percentage point difference (after rounding) is statistically significant. As shown in the figure, most of this impact on retention was concentrated on high school enrollment.

Among teens who were not enrolled when they became eligible for LEAP, a significantly larger fraction of the program group returned to school or entered an adult education program within the first year: 46.8 percent of LEAP teens who were dropouts returned, compared to 33.4 percent of controls. Moreover, many of these dropouts resumed their education very quickly – quickly enough

FIGURE 3

LEAP's FIRST-YEAR IMPACTS ON HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULT EDUCATION RETENTION AND RETURN



NOTE: The high school and adult education figures do not always sum to the total enrollment figures. This is true for several reasons, including the fact that teens could have been enrolled in both types of education during the period. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in calculated differences.

to have been enrolled for at least 10 of their first 12 months in LEAP – as evidenced by the statistically significant 9.0 percentage point increase in the proportion of dropouts who were enrolled for at least 10 months.

As shown in Figure 4, both the magnitude and the make-up of LEAP's impacts on dropouts depended on how long the teens had been out of school at the time they became eligible for LEAP. Among recent dropouts (i.e., those out of school less than a year), 53.5 percent of LEAP teens returned to school or entered an adult education program within the first year, compared to 42.8 percent of controls; and most of the teens who resumed their education returned to high school. In contrast, 42.5 percent of longer-term dropouts in the program group (i.e., those out of school one or more years) resumed their schooling, compared to 27.6 percent of longer-term dropouts in the control group. In this case, however, teens took longer to respond to LEAP, and the vast majority of those who returned because of LEAP enrolled in adult education programs, not high schools.

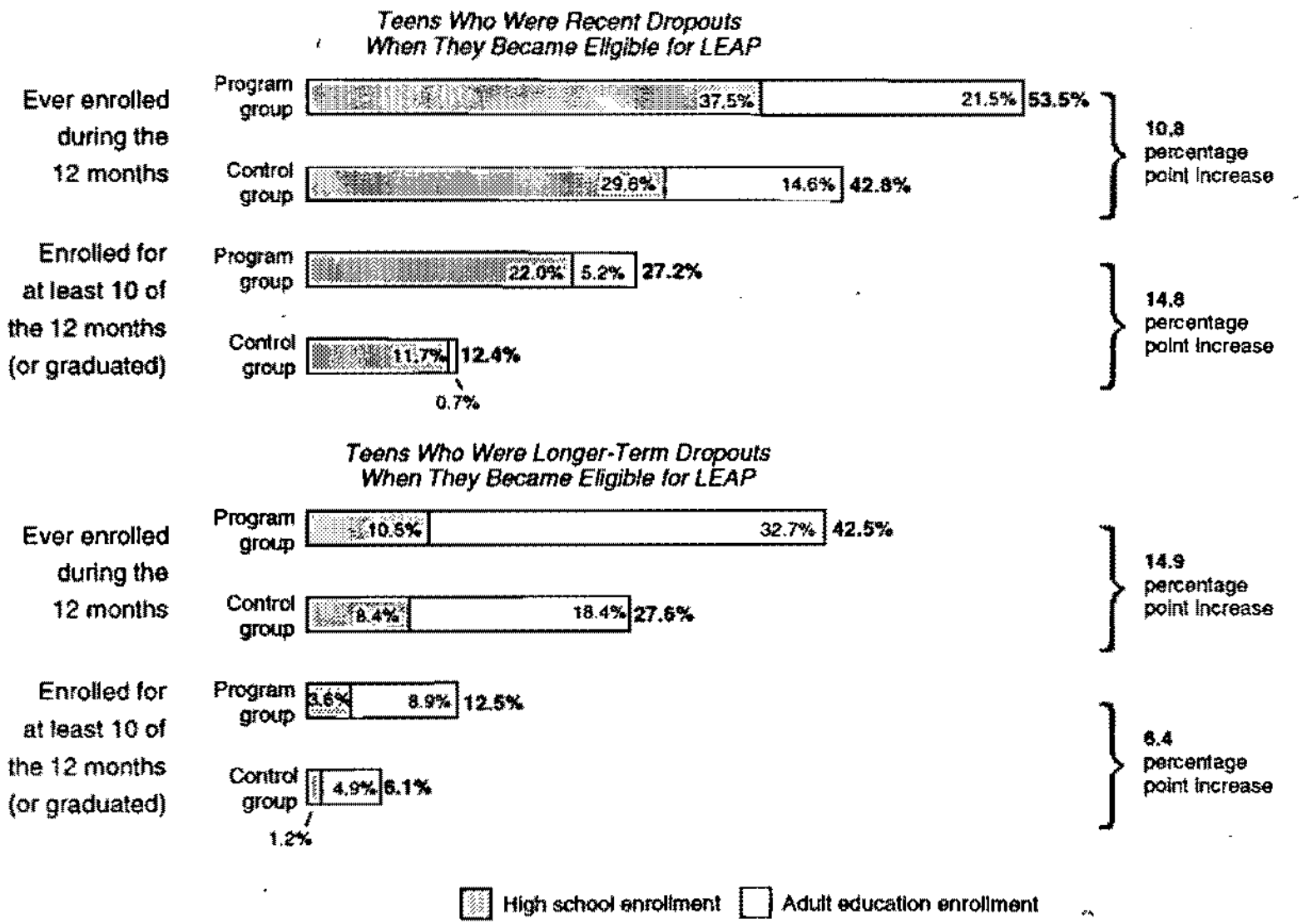
Table 1 presents some of the material above in tabular form, and also shows LEAP's impact on the number of months teens were enrolled in school or an adult education program – a measure that captures both LEAP's retention and return effects. For teens who were already enrolled when they became eligible for LEAP, the program increased their average months enrolled from 7.3 to 8.3 during the first year, a 13 percent improvement that was statistically significant. For dropouts, the increase in months enrolled, from 1.9 to 3.2 months, constituted a 68 percent improvement and was also statistically significant.

- **LEAP's impact on enrollment was significant for most subgroups of eligible teens. However, LEAP appears to have been less effective for older teens and those who had two or more children when they were identified as eligible for the program.**

LEAP was most likely to affect teens who were under age 18 when they became eligible for the program (age-specific results are not shown in tables). Teens who were 12 to 15 years old when they started LEAP were enrolled, on average, for 1.8 more months than controls during their first year. Since most of these teens were already in school when they became eligible for LEAP, this difference almost entirely reflects increased retention of teens in junior high or high school. For 16- and 17-year-olds, the impact was similar – 1.5 more months of enrollment – but is attributable both to high school retention and to increased enrollment among dropouts in schools and adult education programs. In contrast, LEAP teens who were 18 or 19, who were quite likely to be dropouts at the point they entered LEAP, were enrolled for only half a month more than controls, and this effect

FIGURE 4

LEAP's FIRST-YEAR IMPACTS ON SCHOOL RETURN FOR DROPOUTS



NOTE: The high school and adult education figures do not always sum to the total enrollment figures. This is true for several reasons, including the fact that teens could have been enrolled in both types of education during the period. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in calculated differences.

TABLE 1

LEAP's FIRST-YEAR IMPACTS ON SCHOOL AND ADULT EDUCATION ENROLLMENT

Subgroup and Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference
Teens who were initially enrolled in a school or program			
Enrolled (or completed) 10 or more months in (%)			
High school or adult education	61.3	51.1	10.3 ***
High school	56.2	46.9	9.3 **
Adult education	5.4	3.5	1.9
Average months enrolled in or already completed			
High school or adult education	8.3	7.3	0.9 **
High school	7.3	6.6	0.7 *
Adult education	0.9	0.7	0.3
Teens who were initially not enrolled in a school or program			
Ever enrolled in (%)			
High school or adult education	46.8	33.4	13.4 ***
High school	20.4	16.2	4.3
Adult education	28.5	17.4	11.1 ***
Enrolled (or completed) 10 or more months in (%)			
High school or adult education	17.5	8.4	9.0 ***
High school	10.1	4.9	5.2 **
Adult education	7.3	3.5	3.8 *
Average months enrolled in or already completed			
High school or adult education	3.2	1.9	1.3 ***
High school	1.5	1.0	0.5 *
Adult education	1.7	0.9	0.8 ***

NOTES: This table is based on the survey responses of 1,188 teens in the program and control groups.

"Completion" refers to high school graduation or GED receipt. A teen who achieved either outcome is counted as "enrolled" or "already completed" for the month of graduation (or GED receipt) and all subsequent months. For example, if a teen was enrolled in month 1, and then graduated in month 4, she is counted as enrolled (or completed) for all 12 months.

The proportion ever enrolled in high school and the proportion ever enrolled in adult education programs may sum to more than the proportion ever enrolled in high school or adult education because teens may have enrolled in both types of education.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in calculated differences.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

was limited to additional months of enrollment in adult education programs. There was no effect on high school enrollment for these older teens. In addition, LEAP was much more effective for teens who were pregnant with their first child, or had only one child, when they became eligible for the program, than for teens with two or more children.

- **LEAP had a consistent overall impact on enrollment across counties. However, the composition of this impact – i.e., the proportion of the effect that is attributable to high school versus adult education program enrollment – varied substantially, partly owing to school district policies.**

Differences in LEAP's overall impact on enrollment across counties, which were relatively small, reflect differences in county operations – such as grant adjustment performance – as well as in the characteristics of the teens they served. For example, analysis shows that county impacts are correlated with the proportion of teens who experienced grant adjustments in each county.

Overall county impacts reflect effects on both high school and adult education program enrollment. In individual counties, this effect was often concentrated in one type of enrollment or the other. To some extent, these differences appear to reflect school policies in the largest school districts in the counties. For example, in Cuyahoga County, most of the impact was in high school enrollment; this probably reflects the Cleveland Public Schools' policy of not allowing teenagers to enroll in adult education programs until they reach age 18. In contrast, LEAP did not induce dropouts to return to high school in Lucas County, but it had a relatively large impact on adult education program enrollment, partly because the Toledo Public Schools more readily allow younger teens to withdraw from high school to enroll in adult education programs.

- **The impact estimates probably understate the effects that would be found in an ongoing LEAP program because the groups of teens for whom LEAP had slight impacts were larger during the period covered by this study than they will be later in the program's operation.**

When LEAP began, several thousand teens statewide already met the program's eligibility requirements. Many of these teens had more than one child or had been out of school more than a year when they were brought into LEAP. As noted earlier, LEAP had smaller impacts on teens with two or more children, and its effects on longer-term dropouts were delayed and almost entirely reflected enrollment in adult education programs. As LEAP continues to operate, teens should be brought into the program closer to the time they become eligible and, consequently, teens with these characteristics should become a smaller proportion of the LEAP caseload. Thus, the effectiveness of an ongoing LEAP program, especially in promoting high school enrollment, is likely to improve over time.

- **In addition to promoting enrollment and retention, LEAP improved the daily attendance of teens enrolled in high school. Among teens who enrolled in adult education programs, LEAP teens attended less than controls. However, there was still an overall small positive impact on attendance in these programs.**

Attendance, which LEAP's incentives directly promote, is a crucial link between the program's enrollment impacts and its potential effects on graduation and GED completion. Table 2 compares the attendance of LEAP and control group teens during a typical four-week period during the 1990-91 and 1991-92 school years (the period depends on when a teen became eligible for LEAP). These data provide a "snapshot" of enrollment and attendance at a point in time, just as Figure 2 provided a point-in-time view of aggregate LEAP bonus and sanction requests. As a result, the proportion of teens who are shown to be enrolled in school *at this point* is lower, for both LEAP and control group teens, than in Table 1 or Figures 3 and 4, which all cover *a full year*.

As illustrated in Table 2, LEAP's impact on school retention and dropout reenrollment together translate into a moderately large difference in enrollment during this brief period: 44.7 percent of LEAP teens were enrolled in a school or adult education program compared to 34.0 percent of controls. This would produce a comparable difference in the number of days attended for the program group if LEAP and control group teens *who enrolled* attended at exactly the same rate. In fact, program group enrollees' attendance was slightly better than that of control group enrollees (13.3 days versus 13.0 days). Thus, as shown in the shaded columns, LEAP teens' overall attendance, 5.9 days per teen, was 34 percent (or 1.5 days) better than controls' during the four-week period, a statistically significant difference.

The next rows of the table show that the overall impact on days attended resulted primarily from LEAP's positive effect on high school attendance. While LEAP's impacts on high school and adult education program enrollment were comparable, the attendance story for enrolled teens was not. Program group teens who were enrolled in high school attended 15.2 days (out of 20 during the four weeks) compared to 13.9 for control group enrollees. However, among teens who were enrolled in adult education programs, LEAP teens attended 1.6 fewer days in the period than their control group counterparts. This suggests that some of the teens who were induced by LEAP to enroll in adult education chose programs that met relatively infrequently or did not attend as regularly as other teens. However, there were many more program than control group teens enrolled in adult education programs. The *total* number of days attended was larger for the program group.

- **Data on the performance of in-school teens indicate that LEAP's impacts on high school enrollment have already translated into more graduations, although it is**

TABLE 2

THE EFFECT OF LEAP ON ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL AND ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS DURING A TYPICAL FOUR-WEEK PERIOD

	Program Group			Control Group			
Outcome	Percent Enrolled During the Period	x Average Days Attended *Per Enrollee* During the Period	= Average Days Attended Per Program Group Member During the Period	Percent Enrolled During the Period	x Average Days Attended *Per Enrollee* During the Period	= Average Days Attended Per Control Group Member During the Period	Difference in Average Days Attended During the Period
High school or adult education program	44.7	*13.3*	5.9	34.0	*13.0*	4.4	1.5 ***
High school	30.4	*15.2*	4.6	24.5	*13.9*	3.4	1.2 ***
Adult education program	14.3	*9.0*	1.3	9.5	*10.6*	1.0	0.3 *

NOTES: This table compares the attendance of LEAP and control group teens during a representative four-week period (at least six months after a teen became eligible for LEAP). It shows the percentage of LEAP and control group teens who were enrolled in high school or an adult education program, and the number of days they attended, during the period; multiplying these two figures gives the average days attended by all LEAP teens (enrolled and not enrolled). The last column shows the difference in average days attended by the two groups.

This table is based on the survey responses of 1,987 teens in the program and control groups.

Figures for average days attended per enrollee are in italics because they include only teens who were enrolled in school (rather than all program and control group members).

The asterisks in the last column indicate that attendance differences were statistically significant (significance levels are indicated as *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; and * = 10 percent).

too early to tell how large this increase may eventually be. LEAP has also led to an increase in the proportion of teens who have passed the GED test.

School records data collected from Ohio's four largest school districts suggest that, on average, program group enrollees attended school more regularly than control group enrollees and that this difference grew over time. Moreover, 26 percent of an early cohort of LEAP teens who attended school graduated within two years compared to 19 percent of control group enrollees. These are early results, but the differences are statistically significant. LEAP has also led to a small but statistically significant increase in the fraction of teens taking and passing the GED test. If these early differences continue in the future, LEAP will result in a substantial increase in school and GED completion.

- **Many teens have negative views of their high school experiences. These perceptions appear to have affected their decisions about enrollment and whether to attend high school or adult education programs.**

LEAP is not the only factor that affects teens' decisions about school enrollment. For example, focus group discussions suggest that aspirations for the future, family and peer pressure, and levels of maturity all affected teens' behavior. In addition, for many teens, the decisions about whether to return to school, and whether to attend high school or an adult education program, appear to have been affected by their negative experiences in high school before, during, and after their pregnancies. A large fraction of teens saw their high schools as unruly and dangerous, and said they were made to feel uncomfortable because they were parents. These perceptions were less likely to apply to adult education programs.

Policy Issues

These findings represent a positive interim report card for LEAP. They suggest that the LEAP model is feasible to operate, that its incentives have reached most eligible teens, and that the program has made noteworthy progress toward its immediate goal of encouraging teens to stay in or return to school or adult education programs. Given the importance of this group of young mothers, the recent interest in using financial incentives to alter the behavior of welfare recipients, and the fact that other states are considering programs of this type, these findings are timely. Because of this, it is important to reiterate that these LEAP results were measured for a policy package that includes bonuses as well as sanctions, and case management, child care, and transportation assistance in addition to financial incentives. It is not clear that seemingly similar approaches that omit or alter

some of these components would achieve the same results. Moreover, although the results to date point to the potential promise of this particular model, several cautionary notes are in order.

Early Results. Most important, the story of LEAP's effects on school graduation and GED completion is not yet complete. Although the preliminary evidence is encouraging, a more complete assessment will have to await the evaluation's final report. In addition, the likelihood that any gains in school completion will translate into labor market impacts and/or reductions in welfare receipt is unknown at this point. It is also important to note that, as a welfare-operated program, LEAP has a limited ability to affect teens' experiences in school, and these experiences undoubtedly influence whether they will stay and whether there are long-run effects on employment. Thus, for example, if high schools are perceived to be inhospitable and dangerous – as they are to many LEAP-eligible teens in Ohio's largest cities – the enrollment results may yield fewer long-term payoffs.

Adult Education Programs. A substantial part of LEAP's effect on enrollment, particularly among older dropouts, is attributable to increased use of adult basic education (ABE)/GED preparation programs. This raises two important issues. First, although LEAP's incentive system implicitly considers a GED to be equivalent to a high school diploma, there is considerable controversy about the value of a GED in the labor market. Second, there is strong evidence that at least some LEAP teens have chosen ABE/GED programs that meet infrequently, and are not attending regularly. Several policy changes could potentially address this issue. For example, LEAP could require a minimum number of hours of ABE/GED attendance in order to earn a bonus (as some counties have already done), or design its incentives to encourage high school-age teens to choose high school over ABE/GED programs. (Of course, school districts' application of the adult education age requirements also affect the choices facing teens.) Steps such as these might increase high school enrollment and improve attendance in ABE/GED programs. However, they also might decrease the proportion of dropouts who are willing to enroll in the first place, thereby increasing the sanction rate and decreasing the program's impacts on these teens. This might be especially true in areas where there are few alternative high school diploma programs available.

Subgroup Impacts. In designing interventions for this population, policymakers will have to make difficult resource allocation decisions. Fundamentally, they will have to decide whether to target a broad group of teens and spend relatively little on each teen, or target a narrower group and spend more per teen. LEAP represents a broad-coverage approach and has a low cost per teen: the program's direct cost is less than $300 per eligible teen per year, based on preliminary data (however, this reflects low utilization of program-funded child care due primarily to Ohio day care regulations,

and excludes indirect costs resulting largely from increased schooling costs).

Although the program's impact on school enrollment has been positive overall, it has not affected all groups of teens equally. Almost half the teens in the program group would have stayed in or returned to school with or without LEAP (as illustrated by the behavior of the control group). It is the other half whose behavior the program seeks to change. Within this latter group, there appear to be at least three categories of teens: (1) teens who are in school but are in danger of dropping out, (2) teens who are out of school but dropped out relatively recently, and (3) teens who have been out of school for an extended period.

LEAP has been relatively successful in promoting retention among teens in the first group and inducing some teens in the second group to return to high school. However, the program appears to have been less successful with the third group of teens, who tend to be older and are more likely to have more than one child. Teens in this group took longer to respond and, when they did, they rarely attended regular high schools. This relative lack of success was accompanied by a substantial amount of sanctioning. It may be that additional services or different requirements are necessary for this group. The LEAP model provides no such services directly, but services could easily be offered in conjunction with LEAP. A separate study within the LEAP evaluation currently under way in Cleveland is assessing the incremental effects of special services for in-school teens and dropouts offered in addition to LEAP's incentives. Results will be available later this year. ?

Ohio's Circumstances. Although Ohio counties have been able to implement LEAP, this has been a challenging process, which was assisted by several special circumstances that might not apply in other states. For example, by the end of the study period, Ohio had a highly sophisticated statewide welfare computer system. Advanced computer capability seems to be vital to operating a program of this type, especially in large urban areas with many eligible teens. Attempts to identify eligible clients, track their attendance, and adjust their grants without automated support are bound to be quite difficult, and the ability of a program to deliver what it promises may be vital to maintaining teens' respect and cooperation. Similarly, Ohio's GRADS program – which offers special classes and services to in-school teen parents – has assisted LEAP's implementation by providing an in-school infrastructure for establishing and maintaining contact with school staff and LEAP students. Just as negative school experiences may hinder LEAP's effectiveness, so positive school-based programs may bolster the strength of LEAP's incentives.

Program Design Issues. Several important implementation issues should be considered before starting an initiative of this type. Anecdotal evidence suggests that it would be difficult to successfully

implement a financial incentive program for teens without providing case management. Especially in dealing with this vulnerable population, staff play a vital role by making sure teens understand the program, receive needed support services, and are treated fairly. Initially, financial incentives – specifically, the threat of sanctions – may induce teens to pay attention to staff. Ultimately, however, it may be the way staff present the incentives to teens and the relationships that develop between them that determine how teens will perceive the program. Other issues include:

- **Policies toward repeat pregnancy.** Rates of repeat pregnancy are quite high among LEAP and control group teens (a finding common to studies of other programs as well), and LEAP appears to have smaller effects on teens who have subsequent pregnancies. It is important to carefully consider exemption policies for this group. Originally, LEAP did not automatically exempt pregnant teens (although teens with problem pregnancies could receive medical exemptions). However, after the first year, a pregnancy exemption was added.

NO EXEMPTION

- **Policies for "on-board" eligibles.** In starting a program like LEAP, it may be necessary to consider special policies or different requirements for teens who are eligible for the program when operations begin. In some cases, these teens will have had children and dropped out of school several years earlier, and the imposition of a new mandate requires them to make a profound change in behavior. In an ongoing program, teens learn about the consequences of their school behavior earlier, often before they drop out; for "on-board" teens, the rules of the game change abruptly several years after the key decisions have been made. These teens are less likely to respond to the incentives, and more likely to incur repeated sanctions.

- **Post-program transition.** LEAP eligibility ends when teens reach age 20 or earn a diploma or GED. Many of the teens still have young children at this point and thus are exempt from mandatory participation in Ohio's JOBS program for adults. This may hinder a smooth transition into further education or training that may be vital to achieving the program's longer-term goals.

At this juncture, LEAP has achieved its primary short-term goals: It has exposed virtually all eligible teens to its financial incentive structure, and it has improved these teens' enrollment and attendance in schools and adult education programs. Its effect on some categories of teens has been small, and its general effectiveness might be improved with certain program changes. Nevertheless, its performance to this point has been impressive. It remains to be seen, however, whether LEAP's ability to induce teen parents to stay in and return to school will produce substantial changes in the proportion of teens who finish school and ultimately leave welfare.

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Judith M. Gueron, *President*

May 1, 1996

Mr. Bruce Reed
Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy
The White House
Old Executive Office Building, Room 216
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Bruce:

Today, more than 20 states require teen parents on welfare to attend school — an approach heavily influenced by Ohio's LEAP program, which has been operating statewide since 1989. Enclosed is the latest report from MDRC's multi-year evaluation of LEAP. The study is being conducted for the Ohio Department of Human Services, with additional support from private funders and the federal government.

LEAP is based on financial incentives — teens who attend school regularly receive a $62 monthly bonus in their welfare checks; those who don't are penalized $62 — but it also offers case management services, child care, and transportation. Analyzing three years of follow-up data for teens in seven Ohio counties, the new study concludes that LEAP has had very different effects for two groups of teen mothers:

1. ***For teens who were in school when they were found eligible for LEAP,*** LEAP increased school completion (primarily in the form of GED — high school equivalency — receipt) by almost 20 percent (compared to a control group) and increased employment by over 40 percent. The study suggests that improvements in the school systems themselves might further increase LEAP's effectiveness.
2. ***For teens who had already dropped out of school when they were found eligible for LEAP,*** the program showed no such improvements, and many of these teens were repeatedly penalized, with a loss of income for their children and themselves. These results reaffirm a finding common to many studies: While it is critical to improve the prospects of disadvantaged young people once they have dropped out of school, it is also very difficult.

Interestingly, Cleveland — which has a large share of Ohio's welfare population — showed the greatest increase in high school graduation rates of all the locales studied. The report points to Cleveland's greater availability of special services designed to keep teens in school, a restrictive policy on allowing teens to leave high school to enter a GED program, and a wide range of alternative high schools. Next year's final report on LEAP will present fuller, longer-term results and a benefit-cost analysis.

We hope you find the report of interest, and welcome your comments and reactions.

Sincerely yours,

Judy

Judith M. Gueron
President
JMG/ll

LEAP: Three-Year Impacts of Ohio's Welfare Initiative to Improve School Attendance Among Teenage Parents

Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting Program

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April 1996

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