

Week 2: Creative Writing Assignment:
Analyzing Public Policy Through a Lens of Federalism

Vaccine Policies: The influence of political ideology and trust on willingness to vaccinate

In recent years, there has been an increase in parents refusing to vaccinate their children, as many parents believe that vaccinating their child/children will eventually develop autism, although there are no evidence-based studies providing evidence that vaccination does cause autism, many parents are still hesitant to immunize their child/children due tot his allerfied association (Gabis et al., 2021). This hesitation involves factors including emotion, culture, religion, and socio-political context (Baumgaertner et al., 2018).

State Constitution and Role:

Under the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the states have the authority to protect the health and safety of their population. This means that public or private places must have vaccination requirements to ensure protection, including schools, employers, and healthcare facilities. This is why most schools require children entering or continuing school to provide proof of immunization or a medical exemption.

Federal Government Policies:

Federal government policies on vaccines focus on guidelines, approvals, funding, and recommendations issued by agencies such as the CDC and FDA. Because of the Public Health Service Act, agencies like the FDA help regulate vaccine safety and effectiveness, which is why it is safe and recommended that children should be vaccinated, while the CDC develops and continues to develops immunzzaion schedules for parents or guardians to follow with the child's primary care provider to be updated with their required immunizations. The CDC also supports state-level programs with funding through Medicaid and Medicare (CDC, 2023).

Power Sharing Example: Vaccine Policy

An example of power sharing in the vaccine policy is the U.S. Federal-state partnership, which includes the FDA and CDC, that evaluated vaccine safety and effectiveness. Power sharing in vaccine policy also refers to the distribution of decision-making authority between levels of government (federal, local, and state). Local authorities, such as school boards or institutions, have the power to require vaccines for children, exercising shared authority with state health departments.

Advocacy and Public Rights:

The First Amendment protects citizens' right to advocate for or against a child receiving vaccines through speech, petition, and protest. Vaccine policy advocates balance public health initiatives –including vaccine mandates for school entries and strengthening immunization systems. The focus includes ensuring equitable access through the Vaccines for Children program, which promotes vaccine education and prevents vaccine misinformation to protect public health, as noted in the 2025 Family Vaccine Protection Act (ACP, 2026).

Reference:

American College of Physicians. (2026). Toolkit: Protecting Access to Vaccines. https://www.acponline.org/advocacy/state-health-policy/toolkit-protecting-access-to-vaccines

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