Conduct Interviews

Request Data

HCM facilitated 123 semi structured interviews with parents of 133 low-income, Hispanic children. The participants were separated into 3 cohorts:

- **Cohort 1**: Children who participated in HCM’s School Readiness Program between 2010 and 2013
- **Cohort 2**: Children who participated in other other preschool programs between 2010 and 2013
- **Cohort 3**: Children who did not participate in any preschool programs between 2010 and 2013

Interviews were conducted with the support of university student interns under the supervision of HCM and Dr. Cheryl Wright at The University of Utah's Department of Family and Consumer Studies.

The study included a submission of signed Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) releases to the Park City School District from 112 parents to request summary academic performance data for students in each of the three cohorts, including: Kindergarten Entrance Exams, DIBELS Scores, SAGE scores, English Language placement exams.
The study included coding and transcription of all interviews and an analysis of 112 records of student academic data with the support of research specialist Mark Innocenti.

**FINDINGS**

**Short-Term academic impact**
Children who participated in HCM's School Readiness Program scored significantly higher on the Kindergarten entrance screening exams compared to the children in the remaining two cohorts (those who attended a different preschool program or attended no preschool program). HCM also analyzed the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy (DIBELS) scores, a set of short instruments for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills. Overall, students who attended any preschool had higher Kindergarten DIBELS scores than students from the same demographic who did not attend a preschool program.

**English Language designation**
When looking at English language acquisition we found that children who attended HCM's School Readiness Program were more likely to be designated as English Language Learners (ELL) (88%) compared to children who attend other preschool programs (63%). In fact, they were designated as ELL at a higher rate than children who attended no preschool programs (80%). We see this as a great opportunity for program improvement.

**Long-Term academic impact**
Based on the end of year 3rd grade DIBELS score results, we found that the majority of children who participated in HCM's School Readiness Program scored at or above benchmark levels whereas the majority of children who attended no preschool scored below benchmark. Additionally, students who participated in any preschool program had higher SAGE math scores in 4th grade than students who did not attend a preschool program.

**Parental involvement**
Greater parent participation has the potential to help children sustain gains acquired in preschool and improve long term academic outcomes. Regardless of whether students attended preschool or not, there was a strong correlation between parent involvement and their elementary school students' short term and long term academic success. High parent participation was connected to positive academic outcomes and low parent participate was connected to poor academic outcomes.

**NEXT STEPS**
Utilize findings to **address identified unmet needs** by enhancing and expanding Holy Cross Ministries' programs for students and their families.

1. **Continue providing the School Readiness Program**
   HCM will continue providing the School Readiness Program to support long-term academic achievements of minority 3-year-old students.

2. **Improve classroom language immersion**
   HCM aims to make changes in support of additional language immersion and English learning opportunities for students in the School Readiness Program.

3. **Expand the Parents as Teachers home-visiting component**
   HCM aims to increase the number of parents served by expanding the number of staff providing evidence-based home-visiting services for parents with 0-5 year olds.

4. **Develop an avenue to support parental involvement**
   HCM aims to develop an effective and evidence-based parenting strategies toolkit and model for future implementation with parents of elementary-aged students.