



Evaluation results

2002-2003

Highlights of the 2002-03 results

- Scholars continue to demonstrate social competence, including positive behaviors at home and at school and strong relationships with family and peers.
- The majority of parents are involved in the scholar's education, including assistance with educational activities at home and attendance at school events.
- Most scholars had positive relationships with unrelated adults, including their Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentors and their Cargill Scholars coaches.
- Most scholars are involved in a range of extracurricular individual and group activities.
- Scholars' academic skills have improved, though results have been mixed. Many still show lower-than-average scholastic performance, and there are no meaningful differences in district test scores between scholars and a matched comparison group.
- Parents and scholars express high satisfaction with the program. Scholars' satisfaction with some activities has increased, while parent satisfaction has declined in some areas. Teachers are satisfied with the tutoring, though they would like more communication with tutors.
- While the overall picture formed by these results is positive, a number of suggestions emerge for further consideration by program staff.

Cargill Scholars is a comprehensive, five-year program that aims to improve students' school performance by raising academic expectations, preventing high-risk behavior, and improving life skills. The program serves 50 socioeconomically disadvantaged children who attend school in Minneapolis or its northern and western suburbs.

Beginning when the students were in the fourth grade, the program provides the following services:

- Helping scholars and families obtain needed services
- Academic tutoring
- Field trips and other off-site opportunities
- Participation in organized group and individual out-of-school activities and musical instruction
- Positive relationships with mentors and program coaches
- Working with parents on ways to be involved with their children's education

The Cargill Scholars in 2002-03 included 26 girls and 24 boys, all in the fifth grade. Almost half of the students were African American. Other racial and ethnic groups included Asian, Latino, American Indian, White, African Immigrant, and Multiracial.

In addition, this report includes information provided by Cargill Scholars staff, standardized test results provided by the tutoring company, and information from scholars' school report cards.

Services received by scholars in 2002-03

The wide array of services includes tutoring, music lessons, individual and group activities, program activities, family activities, mentoring, and meetings with Cargill Scholars coaches. On average, scholars received the following services in 2002-03: More than 53 hours of tutoring.

- 19 hours of music lessons (an increase from 5 hours in the first year, although one-fifth did not receive any lessons in 2002-03).
- 26 hours of academic activities and 22 hours of sports activities (participation in art, music, and other activities was relatively infrequent).
- Ongoing activities with mentors for the 24 scholars who had been matched by the end of the year.

In addition, most scholars (84%) attended at least one Cargill Scholars activity and their families attended an average of two activities.

Impact on students' school success

Scholars' report cards indicated that scholars improved in many academic areas during the 2002-03 school year. While scholars' spring scores were not the highest possible (i.e., there was still room for improvement), between fall 2002 and spring 2003, scholars showed significant improvement in 16 out of 19 aspects of English language arts and in 12 out of 18 mathematics domains. Significant improvement was not seen in social studies or health skills.

Some improvement also occurred in standardized test scores. Results from the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test show an increase in the percentile rank for receptive language (understanding what one hears or reads), from 20.2 in fall 2001 to 25.4 in spring 2003. Test age increased for both expressive language (from 7.6 in fall 2001 to 10.1 in spring 2003) and receptive language (from 7.4 in fall 2001 to 10.2 in spring 2003). Some of this improvement might be expected as the scholars' actual age increased.

In the first year of the program, reading results improved significantly on the Wide Range Achievement Test. Improvement in the second year was not as dramatic. The percentage of scholars who met or exceeded their grade level increased from 34 percent to 52 percent and the average grade level increased from 4.5 to 5.1. For arithmetic, the average grade level increased from 4.4 to 5.4 while the percentage of scholars who met or exceeded grade level increased from 38 to 40 percent.

Data from the Minneapolis public schools allow us to compare the academic status of Cargill Scholars to other similar youth. Despite the improvements seen in report cards and test scores, there were no statistically significant differences between the math and reading scale scores for Cargill Scholars and a matched comparison group.

Teacher ratings indicate that many scholars continued to struggle academically in the second year. Most scholars were rated as demonstrating below average or average academic competence. However, the percentage of the scholars rated by teachers as showing average academic competence has improved from 38 percent in fall 2001 to 48 percent in spring 2003, while the percentage rated as below average decreased from 62 percent to 50 percent.

Twenty-eight percent of the scholars were rated as falling into the top 30 percent of the class in terms of math performance, while 23 percent were rated in the top 30 percent in terms of meeting math grade-level expectations. Ratings of reading performance have shown some improvement. In spring 2003, teachers rated scholars' overall motivation to succeed fairly high, with 57 percent rated in the top 30 percent of their class.

In spring and summer 2003, all parents and 95 percent of teachers said that the scholar put at least "a little" effort into their schoolwork. More than three-quarters of the parents (76%) and 59 percent of the teachers said that the scholar put "a lot" of

effort into their work. School adjustment was also rated highly, with almost all parents (95%), and 77 percent of teachers, rating scholars as having at least “somewhat positive” adjustment.

In summer 2003, 98 percent of scholars were rated by parents as having “good” or better attendance. Teachers also rated most scholars (94%) as having “good” or better attendance. Ratings were fairly stable throughout the second year of the program, but were lower than in the first year. While overall there has not been any significant trend in ratings, the average was significantly lower in winter 2003 than in winter 2002. Fifty-eight percent of the parents said that the program helped the scholar improve attendance at least “a little.”

More than three-quarters of the scholars (78%) have a library card and almost two-thirds (63%) go to the library at least twice a month. These results are similar to those the previous winter, but are higher than those obtained the first year, when about half of the scholars said that they went to the library twice a month. Overall, there has not been a significant trend in ratings for this item.

Almost all parents (98%) felt that it is at least somewhat likely that scholars will attend post-secondary education. Eighty-three percent of parents said their child would definitely attend college, compared to 76 percent for each of the three previous surveys. Parents felt that scholars will need support or assistance in order to attend, including financial support, ongoing encouragement, academic assistance, and positive role models. Almost all scholars (91%) said that they would attend college; the remaining scholars said that they might attend.

Most parents (93%) felt that the Cargill Scholars program helped scholars develop new career ideas. Fifty-seven percent of parents said that their child had talked about possible future careers in summer 2003. Most scholars identified a career

goal, including athlete, doctor, lawyer, entertainer, artist, and teacher.

Teachers rated scholars positively in areas such as respect for teachers and for materials and equipment. The behaviors with the lowest ratings were the demonstration of initiative and skills in the areas of writing, math, reading, and studying. While teachers’ ratings of five behaviors increased significantly in 2001-02, there were declines in their ratings of scholar math skills and respect for teachers in 2002-03.

Scholars also tended to rate themselves positively in terms of their school behavior, especially trying their best, following directions, following school rules, and liking to learn new things. Almost three-quarters of the scholars (74%) said that they do not get in trouble at school. Over time, scholars have given significantly higher ratings to their enjoyment of school and the frequency with which they ask for help when they do not understand something.

Most scholars were able to identify ways to get help with homework. Parents were mentioned most often. However, the percentage of scholars who said they ask their parents for homework help decreased steadily from 76 percent in winter 2002 to 41 percent in summer 2003. Other common sources of support included other family members and teachers. Several scholars mentioned services such as after-school programs.

Most parents felt that Cargill Scholars had helped youth improve academically, including enjoying learning new things, improving grades, and improving math and reading skills. Parents’ perceptions that the program had helped scholars develop skills in math, reading, and writing increased significantly over time. Scholars were most likely to report that the program helped them enjoy new things and improve their study skills. Parents were somewhat less likely to feel that the program had helped scholars complete school

assignments on time and increase class involvement. Scholars were also least likely to say that the program helped them complete schoolwork on time, with 20 percent saying the program had not helped with this behavior.

Impact on social skills

According to results of the Social Skills Rating Scale, most scholars demonstrate positive social skills. In summer 2003, most scholars (85% to 90%) were rated by their parents and their teachers as having “average” or better total social skills compared to their peers. At least 80 percent were rated by parents as having “average” or better skills in the areas of cooperation, assertion, self-control, and responsibility. The highest rating was for responsibility, with scores in this area increasing significantly over time. Teachers, in contrast, were most likely to rate scholars positively in the area of self-control, with 94 percent rated as showing “average” or better skills. Seventy-nine to 83 percent of the scholars received these ratings in cooperation and assertion.

The Social Skills Rating Scale also assesses behavior problems. Most scholars were rated by parents and teachers as showing average or fewer problems compared to their peers. Less than 10 percent of the parents rated scholars as showing more internalizing problems, externalizing problems, and hyperactivity than others. Overall, there were no significant trends in parent ratings, though scholars had significantly lower hyperactivity scores in summer 2003 than they had the previous summer. In spring 2003, teachers rated 87 percent of scholars as showing average or fewer total problem behaviors.

Similarly, scholars were described by teachers as having positive classroom behaviors, though decline has been seen in some areas. In spring 2003, almost-two thirds of the scholars (65%) were described on the Social Skills Rating Scale

as falling into the top 30 percent of the class in classroom behavior (compared to 77% the previous fall). At least 72 percent of the teachers rated scholars’ behavior as “good” or better in showing self-control, accepting responsibility for their own behavior, and interacting well with other students. Ratings of self-confidence were somewhat lower. The percentage of scholars rated as “good” or better has declined steadily for self-control (from 82% in fall 2001 to 72 percent in spring 2003). After showing significant improvement in the first year, the percentage rated as at least “good” for accepting responsibility declined over the last three rating periods (from 86% in spring 2002 to 75% in spring 2003).

When asked about social relationships and behaviors, both parents and scholars were likely to say that scholars got along with others. Parents were most likely to rate scholars as “good” or better in getting along with parents and getting along with peers at school. Similarly, 98 percent of the scholars said that they get along with other family members, while 88 percent said they get along with other kids in the neighborhood. Parent ratings of scholars’ ability to get along with other family members decreased significantly in the program’s first year, but increased significantly in summer 2003. Parents gave scholars somewhat lower ratings in areas such as showing self-control when frustrated or angry and carrying out responsibilities at home.

Most scholars said that they had supportive friends and family members. Eighty percent said that they talk to their parents about their feelings at least sometimes. Most scholars (87%) said that they have close friends that they can depend on, though only 59 percent talk to their friends about their feelings at least sometimes.

New questions were added to address bullying. Most scholars (89%) said that they did not bully or pick on other kids in the neighborhood or at school. However, 11 percent of the scholars said that they sometimes bully others and about one-quarter (24%) said that they are bullied or picked on by other kids at least sometimes.

Most parents felt that Cargill Scholars helped their children develop positive social relationships and behaviors, especially confidence. All parents said the program helped scholars increase their self-confidence at least a little, and most (89%) said scholars' confidence in trying new things had increased since they entered the program. Parent perceptions that the program helped the scholar increase self-confidence were significantly higher in summer 2003 than in summer 2002 or winter 2003. In addition, almost all parents (98%) felt the program helped scholars improve relationships with peers and work as part of a team. Fewer parents felt that the program helped scholars compete fairly (88%) or improve relationships at home (84%).

Most scholars also felt that the program had helped them develop social skills and relationships. At least 89 percent said that the program helped them at least "a little" with friendships, relationships with teachers, responsibility, and fair play. Their perceptions that the program helped them work as part of a team and learn to play fair increased significantly in summer 2003.

On the school report cards, teachers rate students on a variety of social skills. Average ratings for all seven social behaviors fell between "observed with reminders" and "consistently observed" at all three data points (fall, winter, and spring). In 2002-03, these ratings did not change significantly over the course of the school year.

A new measure, the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents, was added in summer 2003 to assess scholar's perceptions of themselves in a variety of domains. Scholars' scores suggest that they have generally positive self-perceptions, especially in the areas of close friendship, physical appearance, and general self-worth. Scores were slightly lower for scholastic competence, athletic competence, and behavioral conduct.

Impact on parents' involvement

Teachers describe the scholars' parents as supportive of their children's academic efforts. In spring 2003, teachers rated 51 percent of the scholars in the top 30 percent of their class regarding their parents' encouragement to succeed.

Most parents are directly involved in the scholars' education. In summer 2003, about 40 percent of parents felt that their level of involvement had increased "slightly" or "significantly" since beginning the program. Two-thirds of the parents (67%) reported spending between 1 and 6 hours a week directly involved in education (such as discussing school activities or helping with homework). More than one-quarter said that it is "fairly difficult" or "very difficult" to help scholars with homework, however.

Parents were most likely to be involved in the scholars' education by talking to their children about school-related topics and by checking their homework. On average, parents said these things happened either "2 or 3 times a week" or "every day or almost every day." The rarest form of parent involvement was taking their child to the library. Overall, parents' level of involvement in educational activities at home has remained stable, except that reading to their children has declined significantly as the scholars have grown older.

Many parents also attend school and program events. In the summer 2003 survey, parents were most likely to have attended Cargill Scholars events and visited their child's classroom. They were least likely to have attended an athletic event at school or to have volunteered time at a school event or extracurricular activity; 70 to 80 percent of the parents reported that they had not done these activities in the previous three months. Teachers agreed that parents were likely to attend parent-teacher conferences, but unlikely to volunteer for school events. Ratings of parent attendance have fluctuated over time, with no clear trend.

In spring and summer of 2003, almost all parents and teachers (96%) reported speaking to each other at least once in the previous three months about how the child was doing in school. These conversations were generally about positive things that scholars were doing, rather than problems.

While many parents received resources to help them with parenting or to help their child with school, the percentage who used these resources has declined. The percentage of parents who learned about school- or community-based services to help their children with school increased steadily from 31 percent in summer 2002 to 53 percent in summer 2003. Twenty-two percent learned about resources to assist them with parenting. However, the percentage who reported actually using these resources declined steadily between summer 2002 and summer 2003, from 86 percent to 48 percent in for school resources and from 56 percent to 0 percent for parenting resources.

Impact on scholars' relationships with adults

Most scholars and parents (91%) felt that the program had helped scholars improve relationships with adults, and most scholars (83%) said that they had unrelated adults whom they could depend on. These scholars often identified

relatives other than their parents, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings. Some mentioned unrelated adults, such as teachers, friends' parents, or neighbors.

In general, scholars felt that they had adults to turn to when faced with an important decision. Most scholars would talk to their mothers. Other family members were also mentioned, including fathers, siblings, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Some scholars mentioned friends or teachers. When asked how this person would help them, scholars said that they would provide them with different options, help them figure out a solution, listen to them, and give them advice. Scholars and parents were asked specifically about scholars' relationships with mentors and coaches. According to both parents and scholars, 59 percent of the scholars had been matched with a mentor through Big Brothers/Big Sisters as of summer 2002. All parents said that scholars had at least a "somewhat positive" relationship with the mentor; 89 percent said it was "very positive." While all scholars enjoyed time with mentors and felt that their mentors listened to them, fewer said they spent enough time with their mentors or talked to their mentors about their feelings.

Just over 80 percent of both scholars and parents felt that Big Brothers/Big Sisters had made a difference in the scholar's life. Some parents said that the mentors exposed scholars to new activities or experiences. Others said that the relationship made scholars feel special and that it was good for them to receive the attention from a good role model. Some highlighted specific benefits for the scholars, including assertiveness, communication skills, and patience. Most scholars said that the mentors had helped them learn new skills and improve their attitudes. Others felt that they had benefited from the activities.

Similarly, all scholars said that they enjoyed the time spent with their Cargill Scholars coach “sometimes” or “all or most of the time.” Ninety-four percent felt that the coach listened to them at least “sometimes.” Some scholars said that the coaches helped them increase their academic skills or motivation. Others said that they provided encouragement and support. Some scholars said that they received information or went new places. A number of scholars either did not know how the coaches had helped or felt that the coaches had not helped them.

Impact on students’ pursuit of interests

In summer 2003, 63 percent of the scholars said they were involved in activities outside of school. This is lower than in any of the three previous surveys. Sports were listed frequently, especially basketball, football, swimming, and soccer. Music lessons were also mentioned frequently. More than three-quarters of the scholars were interested in trying new activities, primarily sports.

According to parents, most scholars (89%) have developed new skills, interests, or hobbies since becoming involved with Cargill Scholars. This is higher than the 79 percent of parents who said so six months earlier. Almost all parents (94%) and scholars (95%) felt that Cargill Scholars has helped scholars develop musical skills at least a little. Most parents (93%) said that the scholar practiced their musical instrument, with most practicing between one and four days a week.

Other information about the scholars

Other information was added to the survey in summer 2003 to learn more about the scholars and their families. The program does not have formal goals in these areas.

Changes in family relationships. About one-third of the parents (35%) said that they had seen changes in their parenting. Some described better interactions with the scholars, including increased

patience and improved discipline. Others said that they were more involved with the scholar. Almost all of the parents (93%) have other children at home. Of these parents, one-third said that there have been changes in their behavior with these children since they became involved with the program. Parents generally described changes similar to those they reported regarding the scholars. A few parents said that their other children were feeling left out or neglected because they were not receiving the same services.

Scholars’ emotional well-being. Most scholars reported positive emotional well-being. In summer 2003, 61 percent of the scholars described their mood in the past 30 days as “very good” or “excellent.” The remaining 39 percent said that their mood was “up and down a lot.” Twenty-two percent of the scholars said that they felt sad some of the time in the past 30 days, while 26 percent sometimes felt nervous, worried, or upset. Most scholars reported experiencing little to no stress or pressure.

Alcohol and drug use. In summer 2003, none of the scholars reported using alcohol or drugs in the last 30 days. They also said that they had not smoked any cigarettes.

Concerns about middle school. In summer 2003, 39 percent of the parents had concerns about the scholars’ upcoming transition to middle school, such as adapting to a new school, being able to complete schoolwork, and making new friends. Most scholars looked forward to the transition. They were especially excited about learning new things and taking new classes. Most scholars were not worried about starting the sixth grade, though some worried about their ability to do the harder work or to get to school on time.

Program accessibility

For all accessibility items except for parental input in selecting activities, all parents rated each feature as at least “OK” in summer 2003.

Average ratings for all items were higher than “good,” and ratings for four items fell above “very good.” Parents were most satisfied with the responsiveness of staff to telephone calls, the amount of information received from program staff, and the convenience of service times and locations.

During previous surveys, parents gave relatively low ratings to their level of input in selective activities. In summer 2003, the percentage of parents who rated their level of input as at least “OK” improved to 84 percent compared to 62 percent the previous winter.

Almost all parents (96%) rated their satisfaction with the amount of service received as at least “good.” Just over three-quarters of the parents (76%) rated the level of service as “very good” or “outstanding.” Almost all parents (98%) said that scholars were receiving the right amount of service to meet their needs.

Most parents (93%) also agreed that scholars were receiving the right kinds of services to meet their needs and interests. A few parents requested computer courses, testing, and programs involving animals. One parent requested assistance with transportation.

Cultural competence

Parents highly rated the cultural competence of the program. For all four items assessing cultural competence, 95 percent or more of the parents gave ratings of at least “OK.” At least two-thirds of the parents gave ratings of “very good” or “outstanding.” There have been no significant trends in these ratings.

How parents rate Cargill Scholars

Parent satisfaction with program activities was high. In summer 2003, virtually all parents (98% to 100%) rated the end-of-year trip, trips to the Science Museum, science camp, tutoring services and both individual and group activities as “good” or better. Opinions of the summer academy were mixed. While the average rating for this item fell above “very good,” 22 percent of the parents gave ratings below “good.” The two items with the lowest ratings were events for parents and family meetings with the coaches, though the average ratings for these items still fell above “good.”

Some changes have occurred in ratings of program quality. While parents’ ratings of the quality of the music lessons increased during the second year of the program, decreases were seen in some other activities, including family meetings with coaches, the end-of-year trip, trips to the Science Museum, science camp, and time spent with mentors.

Most parents (89%) attended at least one parent meeting, an increase from 75 percent in winter 2003. Of those parents, 73 percent said that they found the information presented at the meeting “very useful” and 22 percent found it “a little bit useful.” Most parents found the parent meetings valuable in providing information about the program and educational issues. Some wanted more information about teen issues, such as drugs. Others requested information about other services that might be helpful to their scholars.

Almost all parents (98%) rated the overall program as at least “good.” Half of the parents rated the program as “outstanding” and 33 percent rated the program as “very good.” Two-thirds of the parents (67%) said their child has a “very favorable” response to the program; another 30 percent described their response as “favorable.” Satisfaction with the coaches and other staff was also high, with an average rating of “very good.”

Most parents identified the program activities, especially tutoring, as the most positive feature of the program. A number of parents also talked about the benefits of the program, saying that it had a positive influence on their children or helped them to develop new skills or characteristics. Several parents specifically said that their child had gained confidence and motivation. When asked what they would change about the program, many parents said that they would not change anything or that the program is good the way it is.

How students rate Cargill Scholars

Almost all scholars (96%) enjoy being in the program; the remaining scholars enjoy it “sometimes.” Almost all scholars liked the activities, especially the end-of-year trip, the group activities, and the trips to the Science Museum. Satisfaction with the summer academy received the lowest rating, though 85 percent of the scholars enjoyed this activity. Scholars’ satisfaction with tutoring has declined significantly, while their satisfaction with the year-end trip, visits to the Science Museum, and individual activities all increased.

Almost all scholars (94%) were satisfied with the progress they made toward their goals while in the program. Compared to winter 2003, fewer scholars in summer 2003 said that they had earned incentives (57% compared to 71% the previous winter), and fewer said that earning incentives was “very important” to them (44% compared to 60% the previous winter).

When asked what they liked best, by far the most common response was that scholars liked the field trips, including the end-of-year trip. Some also mentioned other activities, including tutoring and music lessons. Some scholars described benefits of the program, including making new friends and developing new relationships with adults. Many scholars said that they would not change anything about the program or that they did not know what

they would change. For those who did provide suggestions, the most frequent was a request more activities, especially field trips.

How teachers rate Cargill Scholars

Teachers expressed high satisfaction with the tutoring that scholars received. They were most satisfied with the quality of the tutoring, with 91 percent rating it as “good” or better. Eighty-one to 86 percent of the teachers rated the benefits of the tutoring, the time of the day the tutoring was provided, and the frequency of the tutoring as at least “good.” When asked about the benefits of tutoring, some teachers said that it had been helpful in improving academic skills or in promoting other benefits, such as motivation or confidence. As was the case during the program’s first year, teachers also expressed some concern with the tutoring, especially their level of communication with the tutors.

Most teachers also expressed satisfaction with their relationship with the Cargill Scholars coaches. Most rated the quality of their relationship with the coaches and the frequency of their communication as “good” or “very good.”

Most teachers identified specific benefits of the program for scholars. Many mentioned changes in academic skills. While some said there had been specific academic gains, others mentioned improvement in confidence and attitude. In addition to these improvements, teachers mentioned the benefits of scholars participating in a variety of activities and services, and having positive relationships with Cargill Scholars staff.

Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, the results from the second year of the Cargill Scholars program indicate that scholars are generally doing well in all the areas the program aims to strengthen. Scholars continue to demonstrate high levels of social competence, including positive behaviors at home and at

school and strong relationships with family and peers. The majority of parents are involved in the scholar's education, including assistance with educational activities at home and attendance at school events. Most scholars had positive relationships with unrelated adults, including their Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentors and their Cargill Scholars coaches. Most are also involved in a range of extracurricular activities. There have been some improvements in scholars' academic skills, though results have been mixed. Many still show lower-than-average scholastic performance, and data provided by the Minneapolis Public Schools yielded no meaningful differences in district test scores between scholars and a matched comparison group.

Parents and scholars continue to express high satisfaction with the program, including the staff and the activities. Parents report that the program is generally providing the right amount and the right kind of services. While satisfaction ratings are generally positive, parent satisfaction has declined for some activities, as well as with the program overall. In contrast, scholars' satisfaction with some of these same activities has increased. Teachers also reported high satisfaction with the quality of the tutoring, though they continue to wish for more communication with tutors.

While the overall picture formed by these results is positive, the following suggestions emerge for further consideration by program staff.

Promoting scholar social competence

Scholars continue to demonstrate social competence, though ratings have declined for their classroom behavior, including self-control and responsibility. Further efforts to help scholars strengthen these skills may be important.

Scholars have generally positive views of themselves. To maintain or enhance these perceptions, the program should continue to

provide opportunities for scholars to have positive experiences in scholastics and athletics.

As the scholars mature, it will be important to provide speakers and resources relevant to the issues they face. Parents continue to express interest in information about adolescent issues, such as drugs.

In addition to parent meetings, the program could consider similar meetings or activities for the scholars. Most are not demonstrating significant emotional or behavioral difficulties, though some are experiencing moodiness, sadness, or nervousness. Providing opportunities to discuss these issues or to receive resources and support may help ensure that these concerns do not grow to exceed those experienced by most adolescents or interfere with the gains scholars have made thus far in the program.

Promoting parent involvement

While the program has been successful in suggesting resources for parents, the percentage of parents who use these resources has declined fairly dramatically. It is possible that barriers prevent families from using the resources or that the resources are not a good match with the needs of families. Further efforts to clarify this may be important.

As scholars continue in school, parents may have increased difficulty helping them with homework. The program may want to consider additional opportunities or resources for scholars who require assistance with their schoolwork.

Promoting scholars' relationships with family and other adults

At the end of the second year, many scholars did not have a mentor. The program has already made further efforts to recruit additional mentors and match more scholars. In order for scholars to receive the full benefits of mentoring, it will be important to match as many as possible in the near future.

Some parents mentioned jealousy on the part of scholars' siblings. The program might want to consider additional opportunities to involve siblings to ensure that these issues do not disrupt family relationships.

Promoting scholar academic success

Most parents feel that scholars are likely to attend post-secondary education, but they continue to express concern about financial barriers. The program is encouraged to continue providing information and guidance to parents, including options for funding post-secondary education.

While the scholars are demonstrating academic improvement, the results were less positive in the second year than in the first year. Staff and tutors are encouraged to continue to focus on strategies for enhancing academic development.

Scholars are attending school regularly, however attendance was lower during the second year than the first year. Because attendance is a strong predictor of academic success, staff are encouraged to monitor this and to promote high attendance.

Across the first two years of the program, teachers expressed concern related to their level of communication with tutors. While increased interaction may be difficult due to scheduling limitations tutors are encouraged to continue their efforts to maintain communication.

Promoting scholar involvement with activities

- Many scholars are both interested in sports and already participating in sports. However, some scholars were interested in other activities that were provided less frequently. As scholars move through middle school, their interests may also shift. Staff may want to review the list of activities generated by scholars to identify future activities or services.

Increasing parent and scholar satisfaction

In the program's first year, parents expressed concern about their level of input in selecting activities. They were more satisfied in the second year. Staff are encouraged to continue this focus, as it may not only promote parents' support for the program, but may also increase their general ability to speak up for their children.

- Staff are encouraged to review the ratings of scholars and parents related to specific activities and to consider options for modifying activities. In the second year, some scholars and parents expressed lower satisfaction with the summer academy, parent meetings, meetings with coaches, trips to the Science Museum, and science camp.
- As noted in a previous report, it will be important to ensure that extrinsic incentives are replaced over time with more intrinsic forms of motivation. Continued efforts in this area will be important, especially due to the declines in the percentage of scholars who said that they had earned incentives and in the percentage who said that earning incentives was very important

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