

Appendix H. Funder Protocol

Study on Sustaining the Positive Effects of Preschool *Funder Protocol*

Interviewer _____ Interviewee ID # _____

Site _____ Date/Time _____

Introduction

My name is _____, and I work for American Institutes for Research (AIR). We've been contracted by the U.S. Department of Education to conduct case studies on sites that are implementing particular programs to support early elementary students.

As you may know, the purpose of the study is to document characteristics of programs and policies in early elementary school that support student growth and development, such as PK–3 alignment, differentiated instruction, and other programs designed to sustain the advantages of preschool. We are interested in learning more about the theoretical or practical background of these programs, how they are implemented, how they are sustained and funded, and their outcomes.

I want to reassure you that your *responses to this interview will be used only for research purposes*. Though the district will be named, no part of the study involves evaluation of any individual, and we will not provide information that identifies you as an individual in any reporting. I will now give you a consent form that provides more details about the study and your rights as a participant.

Do you have any questions about the study?

I plan to audio record this session, solely for our note-taking purposes. Only research staff will use the audio recording, and we'll destroy it when the project is done. Is that okay with you?

Role and Perspective

1. I'd like to start by asking you to tell me a bit about yourself. I understand that you are from [FUNDING ORGANIZATION]. Briefly, can you tell me what your role has been in relation to [PROGRAM]?
 - a. How did you come to be involved with [PROGRAM]?
2. Can you tell me more about the organization that you work for and about the kind of work they typically engage in? What are your funding priorities?
3. Why did [ORGANIZATION] become interested in partnering with [or supporting] [PROGRAM]?
 - a. At what point did [ORGANIZATION] begin funding [PROGRAM]? Did the program already exist, or did it begin as a result of [ORGANIZATION]'s support?
 - b. When is current funding for the program planned to end or expire?

Funding Questions

4. What was the cost of developing and implementing this program initially? What were the start-up costs?
 - a. How much did [ORGANIZATION] fund?
 - b. What types of personnel and nonpersonnel costs did [ORGANIZATION] cover?
 - c. What costs did the district cover?
5. What are the ongoing costs of continuing [PROGRAM]? Which of these costs does [ORGANIZATION] support?
6. How does [PROGRAM] measure students' progress? What data do you receive?
7. How do you decide whether or not to continue funding the program? What would make you decide to withdraw funding early?
8. What sustainability challenges, if any, do you anticipate for the program going forward?
 - a. What resources does it need to maintain its quality and success?

Success, Challenges, and Closing

9. What challenges have you encountered working with a district on this type of initiative? How have you overcome those challenges?
10. Overall, what is working well with [PROGRAM]?
11. In your opinion, what are the most important aspects or characteristics of this program that make it successful?
12. What aspect of [PROGRAM] needs strengthening? Why?

13. What challenges have you noticed in the district(s) and schools in implementing [PROGRAM], and what steps may be needed to address them?
14. [We already have (XX DOCUMENT)] OR [We do not have any written documents on (PROGRAM)]. Are there [other] written resources that document the program and its funding?
 - a. Could we get a copy of those?
15. Those are all the questions I have. Are there any questions that I should ask about [PROGRAM] that I didn't? Is there anything else you'd like to share with me today in regard to [PROGRAM]?