



PRESCHOOL NETWORK & BRIGHT STARS PROGRAM FY 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Presented to

**The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors
The Albemarle County School Board**





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COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE

Department of Social Services
1600 Fifth Street, Suite A
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902



ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOLS

401 McIntire Road
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902

We are pleased to write this introductory letter to the FY 2010 Annual Report for the Albemarle County Preschool Network/Bright Stars Program, in this fifteenth year of successful collaboration. The collaboration on behalf of young children between the County Schools and Social Services as a department of local government is unique in the Commonwealth. For this and other reasons, we are proud to report on this latest year of achievement.

For the first time this report includes students in our Title I and Early Childhood Special Education programs who are in blended and inclusion classes alongside the Bright Stars children. This enhanced program has eleven classes in eight elementary schools, including six inclusion classes, one blended Bright Stars and Title I class and one blended Title I, Bright Stars and Early Childhood Special Education class.

The preschool program strives to be holistic and comprehensive in the way it sets out to prepare at-risk four-year old children for future schooling. All the classes offer a robust, academic learning experience with daily opportunities for children to develop critical social and personal skills through on-going interactions with peers and adults. Family coordinators invite active parent engagement throughout the year because we respect the significant role parents play in the lives of their children. Families are assisted in identifying and accessing community services to create stability, opportunity and a network of support.

The Preschool Network concept allows for closer working relationships within the county, with Head Start and the City preschool. Preschool will fulfill its highest aspirations as we continually learn from our work with children and families, adapt to changing conditions in the community, and strive to improve our processes and performance.

The Albemarle County Preschool Network believes in the following:

Core Beliefs

- *All children have the potential to be lifelong learners*
- *Children learn through play. Play is the work of children and the medium through which children learn new concepts. Children play to solve problems and practice skills.*
- *Families play a key role in the learning process*
- *Classroom practices have a solid foundation in research and best practices*

Operating Principles

- *The role of the teacher changes throughout the year in response to children's growth. Sometimes, direct instruction is the most appropriate approach and at other times child exploration and discovery are more effective*
- *Learning is hands-on and interactive. Children explore, interact and engage with materials, peers and adults*
- *Teachers value the role of the parent/family in the educational process and actively reach out to communicate with them regarding their child's progress*

Dr. Pamela R. Moran
Superintendent

Kathy Ralston
Director



BRIGHT STARS PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S REPORT

In 2009-2010, the Preschool Network concept became more of a reality thus enhancing cooperation and coordination with school and community partners and identifying unmet needs for the economically and educationally disadvantaged and those needing special services.

Bright Stars . . .

- worked closely with Head Start, Title I and Early Childhood Special Education to **streamline our recruitment process** by developing a web-based system to track the disposition of all applications
- expanded the capacity of the Preschool Network on the Albemarle County Schools website
- expanded planning, service delivery and **professional development** for teachers, teaching assistants and family coordinators through the Preschool Network
- aligned program goals with the **Smart Beginnings Leadership Council**
- added a program at **Stony Point Elementary School** funded through Title I and Special Education Funds, the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant and additional support from the Virginia Preschool Initiative
- Referred 16 uninsured children for **intensive, pediatric dental services** provided by local specialists and funded by a Community Health Partnership award from **Martha Jefferson Hospital**
- Accessed and funded **interpretation services** for more than 25 limited English-speaking families.

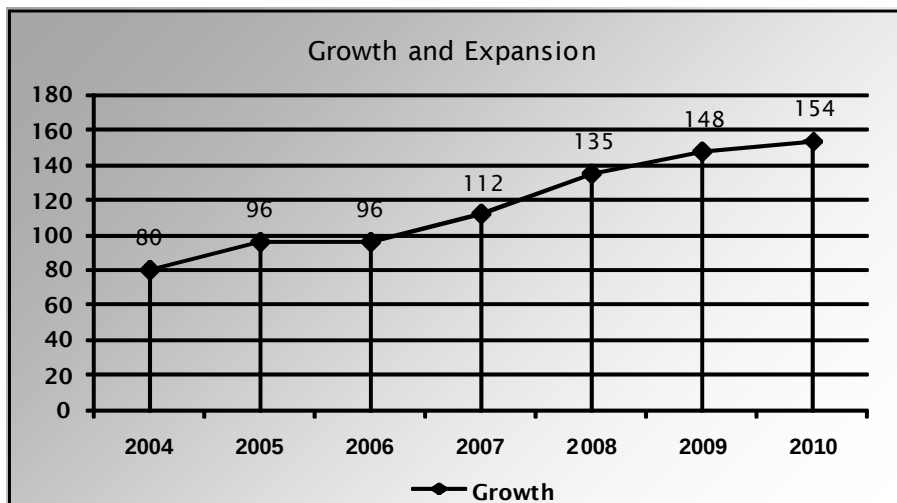


Chart includes Bright Stars, Early Childhood Special Education and Title I students served in blended preschool classes in years 2008, 2009 and 2010.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Are we serving the targeted, at-risk population?

Low income/poverty based on eligibility for free or reduced meals
Limited education/illiteracy of parent (Mother): did not complete high school
Single parent families
Teen parent at time of child's birth
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
Children who reside in Title I school districts (Title I designation if based on F/R lunch population)
Children with special needs whose abilities allow them to benefit from inclusion programs

2. How is the program funded?

The programs that comprise the Preschool Network are funded with local, state and federal dollars according to formulas based on a number of specified criteria

3. What results do we want to achieve?

- Close the gap between at-risk students and their peers
- Transition children successfully to kindergarten
- Engage parents in the education of their children
- Refer families to needed community services
- Develop positive social and emotional behaviors and skills
- Foster a life-long curiosity for learning

5. How are we changing and improving?

- Forming a Preschool Network with Albemarle County Schools: Title I and Early Childhood Special Education and Head Start
- Participating in Partnership for Children and Smart Beginnings initiatives
- Partnering with for-profit and not-for profit preschools to expand opportunities for our at-risk population
- Focusing on staff development and learning
- Intensifying efforts to reach out to the ESOL population
- Ensuring that families who need wrap-around services receive these services



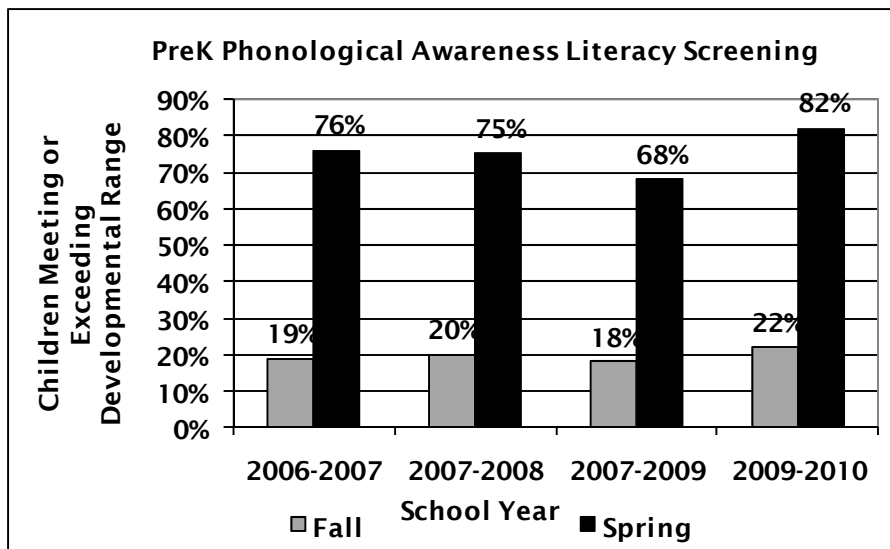
To increase the opportunities to learn for our children and their families by promoting family involvement and addressing risk factors that affect school performance.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS LITERACY SCREENING OVERVIEW 2007 – 2010

PreKindergarten language and literacy screenings are administered by classroom teachers in fall and spring. The screenings include questions about letters of the alphabet, letter sounds, rhymes and awareness of print in the context of a story. Children who are in preschool network classes for at least six months and who complete these assessments show substantial improvement between the beginning and end of the year. Children with higher Pre Kindergarten Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening scores are more likely to achieve benchmark levels in kindergarten and first grade because they have mastered basic skills that contribute to readiness to read.

In 2009-2010, 22% of the preschool students (Bright Stars, Early Childhood Special Education and Title I) reached or exceeded the benchmark range on the PreK Literacy Screening in the fall. However, by spring, 82% reached or exceeded this benchmark range. *

*For Bright Stars only see page 11



PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT 2009—2010

Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2007) is a document that "attempts to establish a measurable range of skills and knowledge essential for four-year-olds to be successful in kindergarten." The six Blocks are Literacy, Science, History and Social Science, Mathematics, Physical and Motor Development and Personal and Social Development.

Why is Personal and Social Development included as a standard?

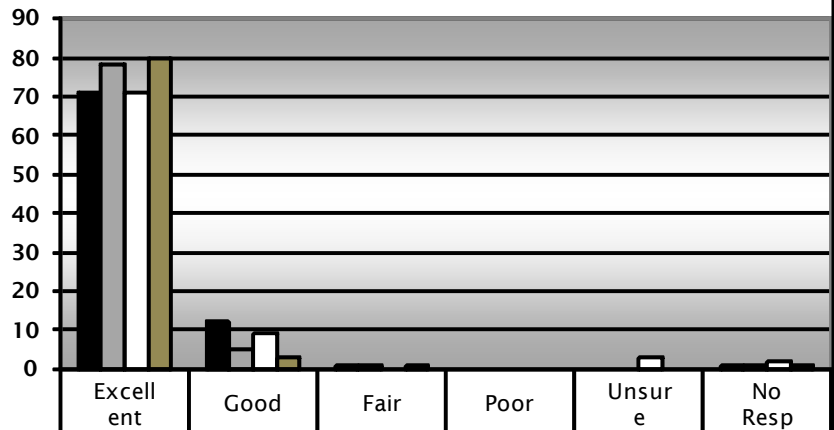
Teachers say that readiness for kindergarten is about knowing how to get along with others, to share, take turns, follow directions, to be curious and excited about learning. Teachers say that if preschool can teach these things, children will be ready to be successful. Extensive research in the field fully supports what teachers say.

Percentage of Children Who Usually and Consistently Met Objectives					
Block	Self-Concept The child will demonstrate self-confidence and self-reflection	Self-Control The child will show self-direction and responsibility	Approaches to Learning The child will show eagerness and persistence as a learner	Interaction w/ Others The child will interact easily with other children and familiar adults	Social Problem-Solving The child will learn and use non-physical ways to resolve conflicts
Fall 2009	51%	55%	58%	56%	49%
Spring 2010	77%	88%	95%	92%	88%

"Research has established a compelling link between personal and social development and school success. The personal, social and behavioral competence of young children is a strong predictor of academic performance in the early grades. Appropriate and supportive learning experiences provide an important foundation for personal and social growth."

Virginia's Foundation Blocks of Learning

End of Year Parent Evaluation 2010
155 Sent 85 Responses
(55% Return Rate)



■ Classroom environment	71	12	1			1
■ Teacher interaction w/children	78	5	1			1
■ TTA interaction w/children	71	9			3	2
■ Program rating	80	3	1			1

“The classroom was neat and orderly, the family events were fun and interactive. The teachers were wonderful, caring and kind! The field trips were age appropriate and well organized. My child learned social and educational skills daily. Our family is very thankful for the Bright Stars experience!”
 Scottsville Parent

Family Coordinator was, “great at helping figure out solutions to any problem..and always willing to listen and help any way she can.”
 Stone-Robinson Parent



LEADERSHIP TEAM 2009 - 2010

The Leadership Team for the county preschool programs brings together the coordinators and directors of the various public preschool programs and fulfills a requirement for the Virginia Preschool Initiative Grant. Members of the Leadership Team are drawn from Albemarle County Schools and Social Services Department as the two systems most closely connected to the personnel and operational aspects of Bright Stars, Title I and Early Childhood Special Education. In addition, the Director of MACAA Head Start is also a member of the Leadership Team.

Members for 2009—2010

Cynthia Bayless	Director, MACAA Head Start
Debora Collins	Director of Elementary Education & Federal Programs
Charity Haines	Program Coordinator, Bright Stars
Kevin Kirst	Director, Special Education—ACPS
Deborah Morris	Coordinator, Special Education—ACPS
Kathy Ralston	Director, Department of Social Services
Cyndi Wells	Lead Instructional Coach, ACPS
Kristen Williams	Lead Instructional Coach & Title I Coordinator, ACPS

A Closer Look at Bright Stars

Bright Stars is one of the preschool programs within the Albemarle County Preschool Network. Funding for Bright Stars comes through the Virginia Preschool Initiative Grant which provides state funds matched with local dollars. Eligibility for Bright Stars is need-based reflecting the state and local commitment to providing opportunities for those children and families who face particular challenges. Family Coordinators can continue to work with families through fifth grade.

RISK FACTORS

All children enrolled in the Bright Stars program are identified with individual or family risk factors that could result in poor school performance over the years. High risk points for Bright Stars children are associated with limited parental education and/or illiteracy of parent(s), unemployment, domestic violence, incarceration of a parent, previous child protective services reports and/or foster care involvement, siblings having difficulty in school, mental health issues, poverty and living in a single parent family.

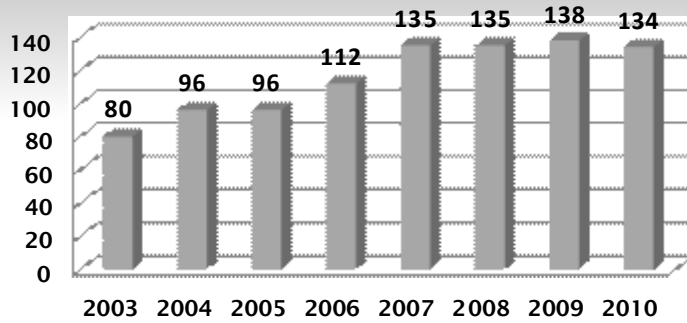
Despite these challenges, all children enrolled in the Bright Stars program, show considerable progress during the year. The Bright Stars Program sets specific and measurable goals for the children and families who are enrolled. Teachers and Family Coordinators assist children and parents in meeting these goals.

The following table shows how closely we came in meeting our goals over a three year period

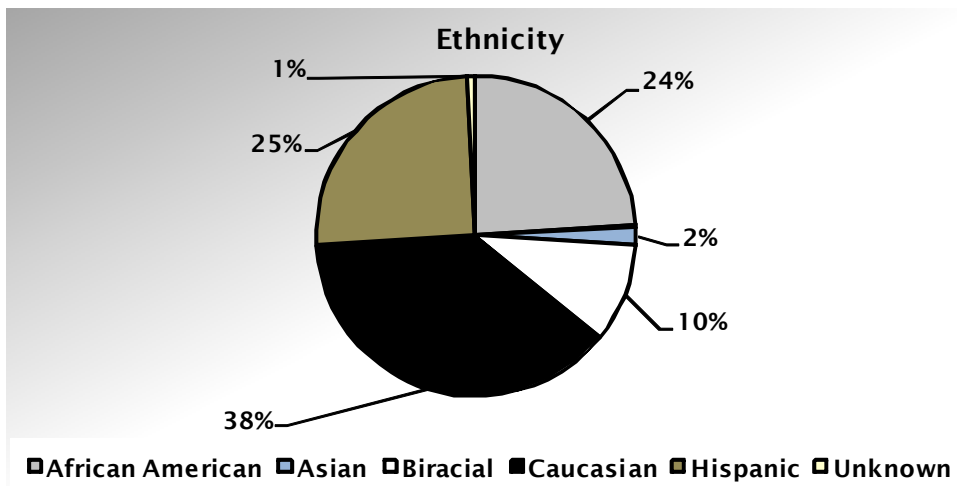
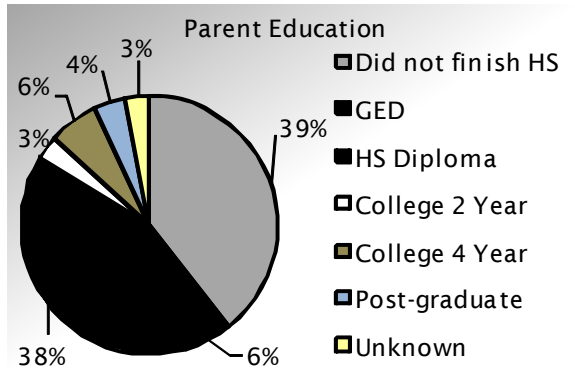
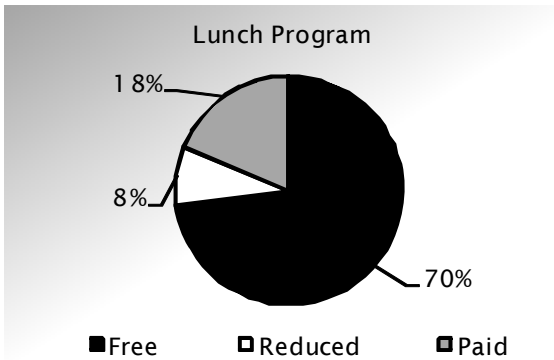
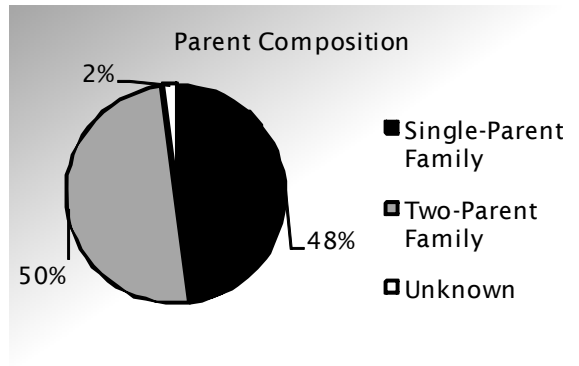
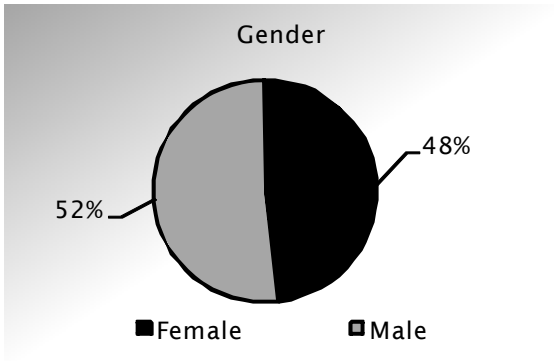
OUTCOME MEASURE	MEASUREMENT	GOAL	ACTUAL
Children who are in Bright Stars for at least six months reach or exceed the benchmark developmental range scores on the PreK PALS* at the end of the preschool year	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening Summary Report	FY10 Target: 80%	FY 10 Actual 80% FY 09 Actual 68% FY 08 Actual 75%
Bright Stars alumni achieve the benchmark score on the KPALS during the kindergarten year.	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Kindergarten	FY10 Target: 80-85%	FY 10 Actual 78%* FY 09 Actual 85% FY 08 Actual 86%
Parents of BS children attend at least three Bright Stars/school functions during the school year	Bright Stars database	FY10 Target: 85%	FT 10 Actual 88%* FY 09 Actual 93% FY 08 Actual 86%
Parents of BS children attend two parent-teacher conferences during the school year	Bright Stars database	FY10Target: 85%	FY 10 Actual 91%* FY 09 Actual 88%* FY 08 Actual 91%*
Parents of BS children make progress on goals that support their child's success during the school year.	Family Needs Assessment	FY10 Target: 80%	FY 10 Actual 85% FY 09 Actual 91% FY 08 Actual 71%



Number of Children Served by VPI Grant

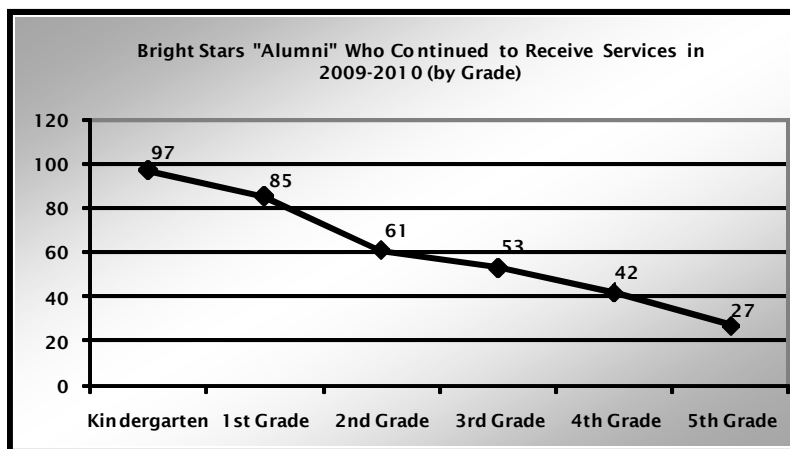


DEMOGRAPHICS 2009-2010



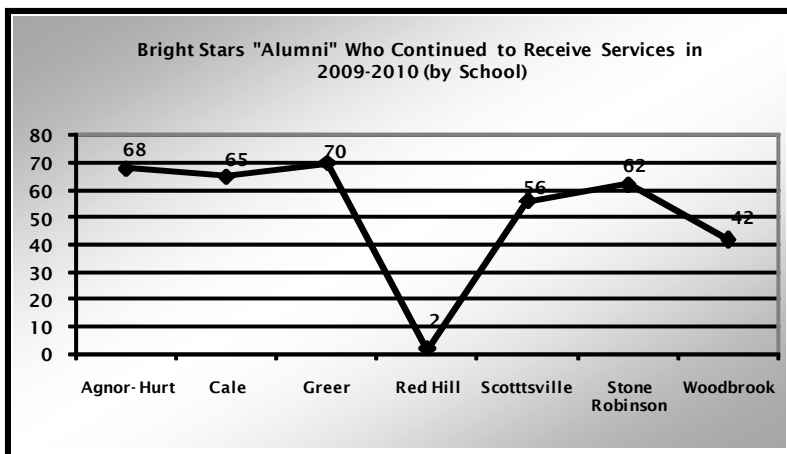
BRIGHT STARS "ALUMNI" WHO CONTINUED TO RECEIVE SERVICES IN 2009 - 2010

Bright Stars Family Coordinators are able to provide on-going services to eligible children and families past the Bright Stars year. These services are entirely voluntary; parents agree to participate or not depending on their circumstances. Providing a link between home and school, family members and community services and ensuring that families have the means to be safe, secure and self-sufficient throughout the elementary school years are the ways the Bright Stars Program enhances education, health and workforce development in the community.



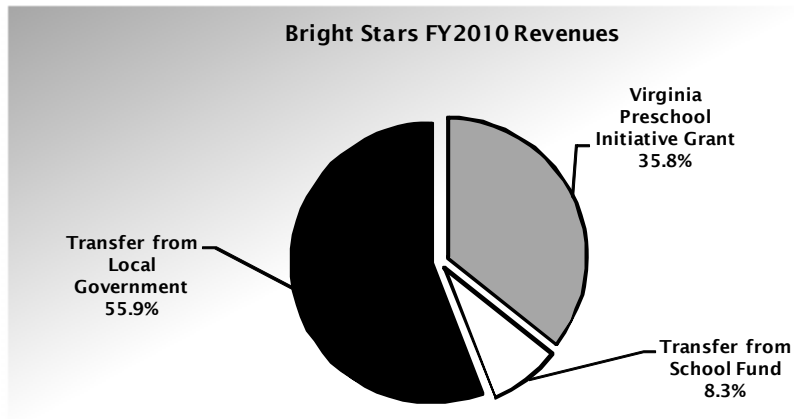
Bright Stars children and families continue to receive services, as needed, throughout elementary school. The charts show the number of "alumni" receiving services by grade (Chart 1) and by school (Chart 2). This continuity of care and support is a unique characteristic of the program. Results show that children and families benefit from an on-going relationship with the family coordinator.

Family Coordinators continue to encourage regular school attendance, parent participation in parent-teacher conferences, prevention of dental and medical problems and improved housing, and employment.



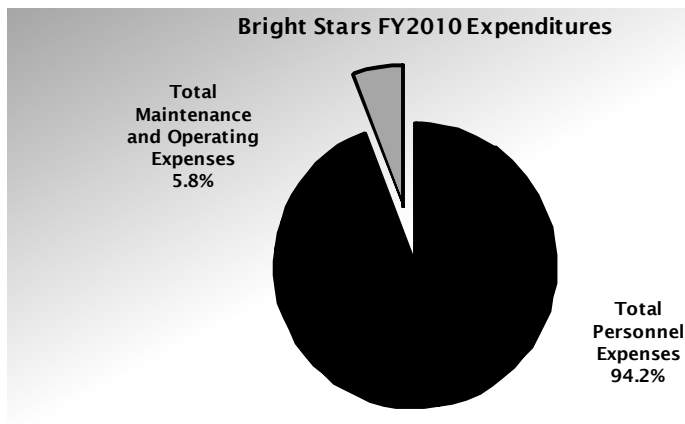
VII. PROGRAM BUDGET: FY 2010

Revenues



Bright Stars Revenues FY 2009-2010	
Virginia Preschool Initiative Grant	414,000
Transfer from School Fund	95,535
Transfer from Local Government	647,086
Total Bright Stars Revenues	1,156,621

Expenditures



Bright Stars Expenditures FY 2009-2010	
Total Personnel Expenses	997,266
Total Maintenance and Operating Expenses	61,784
Total Bright Stars Expenditures	1,059,049

Community Supporters/Partners

The following community businesses, agencies, organizations and individuals provided assistance to Bright Stars during 2009-2010:

Alliance for Community Choice in Transportation * Albemarle County Schools

Ann Mallek * Applebees * Book Baskets * Bright Beginnings * Charlottesville

Lioness Lions Club * Chick-Fil-A * Children, Youth and Family Services

Chili's * Dr. Larry Brannon * Dr. D.J. Bickers * Dr. David Hamer * Dr. Miles

Wilhelm * Dr. Carlos Armengol * First United Methodist Church Preschool

Giant * Guadalajara * Martha Jefferson Hospital * NGA (formerly Needlework

Guild of America) * Piedmont YMCA * The Villa * Thomas Jefferson

Emergency Food Bank * United Way/Smart Beginnings * University of Virginia

Health Sciences System * University of Virginia Curry School of Education

Virginia Cooperative Extension Service * Virginia Discovery Museum

Virginia Film Festival * Wendy's * Whole Foods

Bright Stars 5K Run Supporters: C&O, Hamilton's, Outback Steakhouse, Melting Pot, Ivy Inn, Ten, Blue Light Grill, Cheeseburger in Paradise, Wild Wing Café, Five Guys, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Sticks Kebob Shop, Mona Lisa Pasta, Gearhart's Fine Chocolate, Boat House, Raising Cane, Papa John's, Zazu's, Mudhouse, Hampton Inn and Suites, Courtyard Marriott, The Omni, Doubletree Hotel, Charlottesville Pavilion, LLC, The Paramount, Live Arts, Heritage Repertory Theatre, Bikram Yoga, Don's Florist, Harris-Teeter, Kroger, Great Scott's Popcorn