

BRIGHT STARS FY 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



A PROGRAM OF
THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY PRESCHOOL NETWORK

Presented to

The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors





ALBEMARLE COUNTY
Department of Social Services
1600 5th Street, Suite A
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902



ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOLS
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Charlottesville, Virginia 22902

It is a pleasure to provide this introduction to the FY2016 Annual Report for the Albemarle County Bright Stars Program. With over two decades of collaboration between the Social Services Department of county government and the county schools, we have continued to demonstrate the benefits of a high quality pre-school program for at-risk county children, and to prepare them for success in school in the kindergarten year and beyond.

As a result of the community summit on pre-school in April 2015, a community-based Early Education Task Force was developed to answer the complex questions of how many children are not receiving quality preschool, and how best to meet the needs of all children who could benefit. Through a fiscal mapping process, it was determined our county is servicing approximately 70% of at-risk four year-olds. Through continued support and increased partnerships we are slowly increasing service to these children in need.

In the midst of those discussions, it is good to remember that in Albemarle County the importance of early childhood education has long been identified, and a successful program undertaken under the aegis of the Virginia Pre-School Initiative. The importance of the program has been highlighted in planning for the future on the part of both schools and local government, with a major commitment of local dollars as well as substantial dedicated “in-kind” services from both the schools and local government. In FY2016, the Bright Stars program served 186 at-risk four year-olds in eleven classrooms within eight county elementary schools, which is half of all at-risk four year-olds in the county. In addition, Social Services was able to secure a \$100,000 Virginia Preschool Initiative Expansion Grant to allow more children to receive quality preschool. Through this grant, and in partnership with the Early Education Task Force, thirteen additional Albemarle County at-risk four year-olds were placed in private preschool settings.

It is clear from program results that the Pre-K year in the Bright Stars classroom prepares children for successful transition to kindergarten. While few Bright Stars children are able to meet the Pre-K PALS benchmark when entering the program in the fall (9% in Fall 2015), a much larger percentage of the children are able to do so in the spring (63% in Spring 2016).

The gains made in the Pre-K year also hold up in kindergarten. When taking the KPALS at the end of their kindergarten year, 74 % of Bright Stars graduates from the class of 2015 achieved the KPALS target in the Spring of 2016.

The Bright Stars program continues to feature a robust, academic learning experience with daily opportunities for children to develop critical social and personal skills; and a strong family service component in which families are assisted in accessing community services to create stability, opportunity and a network of support.

Parent engagement is an important strategy in helping children to make best use of the classroom experience. Parents consistently note a high degree of satisfaction with the program and speak in glowing terms about their children’s experience. Their positive experience with the school and their involvement in their child’s education will continue to benefit the child in future years.

We believe that you will once again be impressed by the results achieved by the educational community - host schools, teachers and assistants, family coordinators, children and families - that are the result of this unique collaboration on behalf of young children in Albemarle County.

Dr. Pamela R. Moran
Superintendent, ACPSS

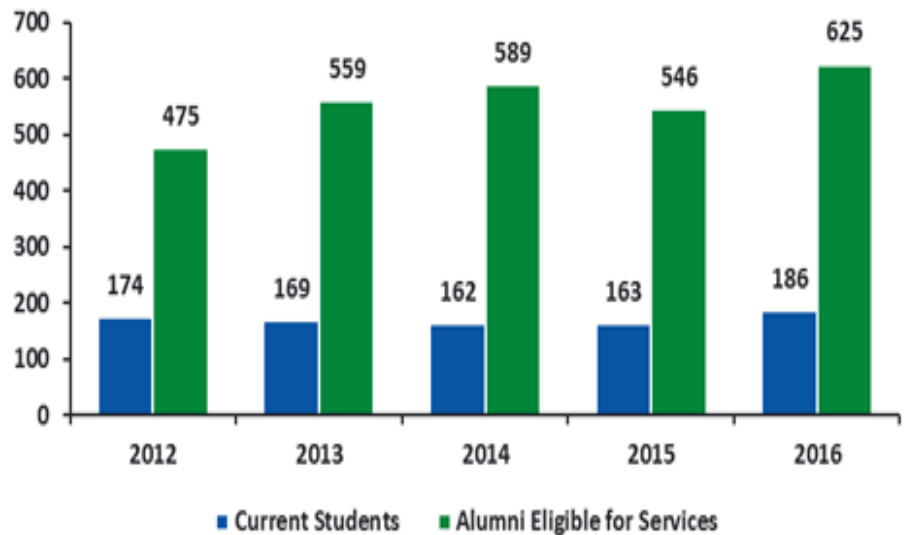
Phyllis C. Savides
Director, ACDSS

BRIGHT STARS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

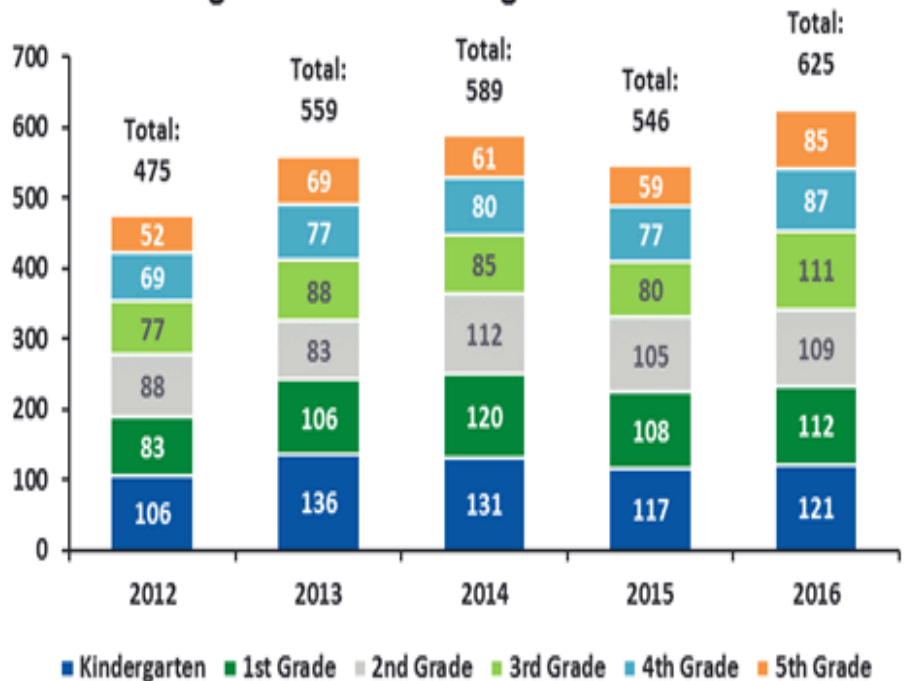
The Bright Stars Program enjoyed considerable growth in the 2015-16 school year. With the addition of a third classroom at Cale Elementary, the Bright Stars program operated 11 preschool classrooms at 8 Albemarle County schools in 2015-16. Class size was also increased by one which with the new classroom allowed for 28 more Bright Stars students in 2015-16. Three of these classrooms also served 3 and 4-year old students with special needs within a blended Early Childhood Special Education inclusion model. Funding from the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), ACPS Title I and Early Childhood Special Education programs, and funds from local government and Social Services supported Bright Stars classes and Family Coordinators. A total of 186 children were served in Bright Stars classrooms.

In addition, the Virginia Department of Education invited locales to apply for Virginia Preschool Initiative Expansion Grants to be used to find ways to bring more children into pre-k services. The Bright Stars Program competed and was awarded \$100,000 toward this end. In conjunction with the Early Education Task Force, 13 Albemarle County 4 year-olds were placed in private preschool settings between March and August of 2016. Nine children were placed at JABA Shining Stars Preschool and 4 at Foundations Child Development Center.

Bright Stars Program Participants by Academic Year



Bright Stars Alumni Eligible for Services

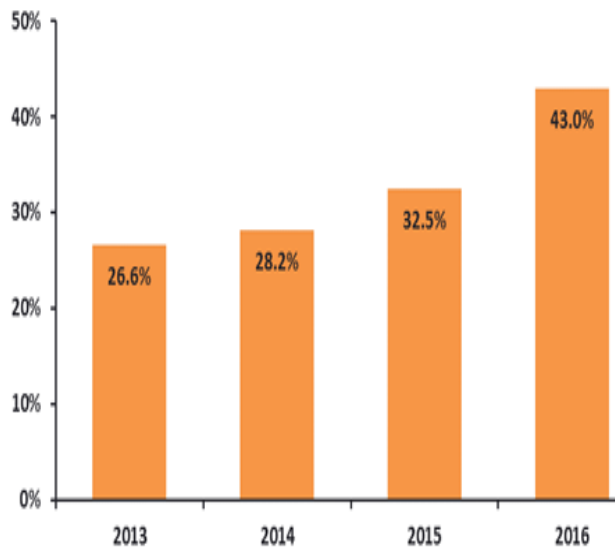


ABOUT OUR PARTICIPANTS

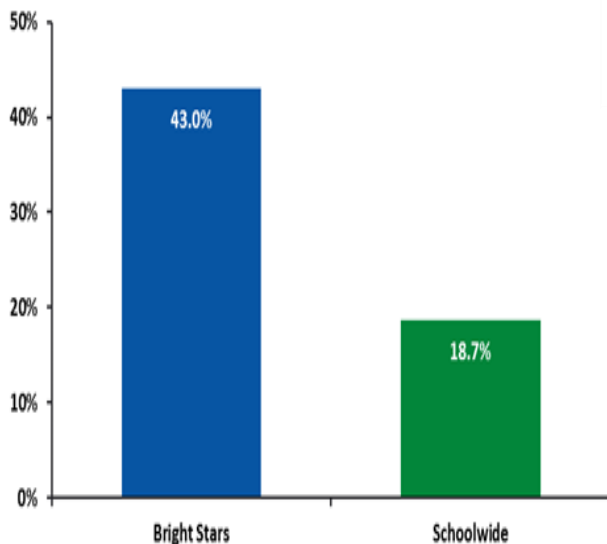
Bright Stars classrooms tend to be more ethnically and linguistically diverse than the overall student body in the same schools. Bright Stars students are more likely to be African American or Hispanic, and are less likely to have English as their primary language.

The percentage of students who enter Bright Stars with Limited English Proficiency has been steadily climbing. These students benefit greatly from their preschool experience, usually picking up a considerable amount of English before entering Kindergarten. Some students' families require interpretive services. In addition to paid interpreters, the Bright Stars program utilizes volunteers to assist in the classroom and with family events whenever possible. We also provide families with bi-lingual books so they can share in their children's literacy-building activities at home.

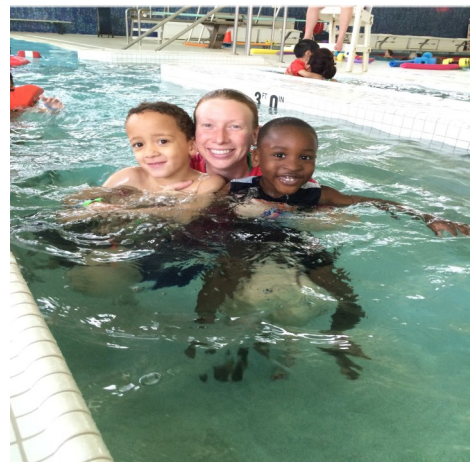
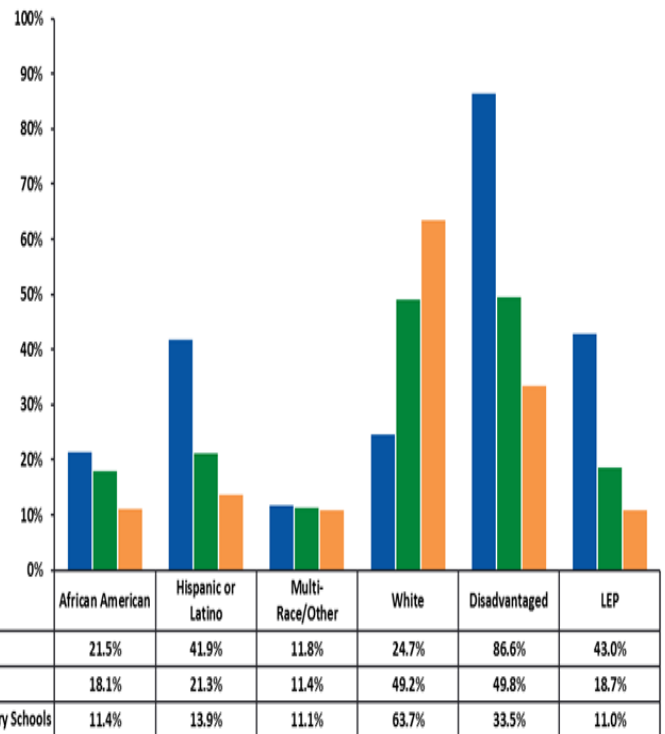
Bright Stars with Limited English Proficiency



Students with Limited English Proficiency



Race, Ethnicity, Language and Economic Characteristics



ABOUT OUR PARTICIPANTS

Children enrolled in the Bright Stars program are selected based on individual or family factors that could result in poor school performance over the years. Risk factors for Bright Stars children may include limited parental education or illiteracy, parents who are very young or parenting alone, poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, incarceration, a sibling having difficulty in school, previous child protective services reports or involvement with foster care, and substance use and/or mental health issues among family members.

Of the 186 preschoolers who participated in Bright Stars Classes:

- 89% lived with one or both biological parents, with about half of those in single-parent households.
- 11% were from families where all caretakers were unemployed.
- 87% qualified for free or reduced lunch.
- Most had parents without a college degree: 9% of children lived with a parent/guardian who earned an associates or bachelor's degree. Fifty-nine percent lived with a parent with a GED or HS Diploma while 51% of students had at least one parent who did not finish high school.

“My daughter could not have had a better year and is beyond ready for kindergarten.”

Scottsville Parent



BRIGHT STARS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES IN 2015-2016

The Bright Stars Program is more than just preschool; we focus on all aspects of family well-being. For example, we work to help children receive adequate health and dental care. Family Coordinators assist in making appointments and providing transportation when necessary. An award from the Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital Community Health Partnership allowed for children to receive pediatric dental care and services, sometimes their initial visit to a dentist. These services were provided by a variety of local specialists. In addition, we purchased dental care supplies for our pre-schoolers to use in the classroom and at home.

Because children learn best by doing, the Bright Stars program includes activities where the children travel to interesting venues and have the opportunity to create during hands-on activities. Bright Stars enjoy visits to apple orchards and farms, local firehouses, and the Paramount Theatre. They invite their parents into the classroom to help them make gingerbread and bird houses and host them for Thanksgiving Dinner.



PERFORMANCE ON PROGRAM GOALS

The following table shows our progress towards achieving key program goals over the past five years:

Outcome Measure	Measurement	Goal	Actual
Preschool Literacy Skills Preschoolers who are in Bright Stars for at least six months achieve literacy benchmark scores for the preschool developmental range at the end of the school year	PreK Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (pKPALS)	FY16 Target: 80%	FY16 Actual: 63% FY15 Actual: 67% FY14 Actual: 68% FY13 Actual: 78% FY12 Actual: 81%
Kindergarten Literacy Skills Bright Stars alumni achieve literacy benchmark scores for the kindergarten developmental range at the end of the school year	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Kindergarten (KPALS)	FY16 Target: 80%	FY16 Actual: 74% FY15 Actual: 84% FY14 Actual: 86% FY13 Actual: 82% FY12 Actual: 85%
Family Events Parents of Bright Stars preschoolers attend at least 4 Bright Stars/school functions, not including parent-teacher conferences, during the school year*	Bright Stars database	FY16 Target: 90%	FY16 Actual: 86% FY15 Actual: 87% FY14 Actual: 62% FY13 Actual: 74% FY12 Actual: 86%
Parent-Teacher Conferences Parents of Bright Stars preschoolers attend both parent-teacher conferences offered during the school year	Bright Stars database	FY16 Target: 80%	FY16 Actual: 80% FY15 Actual: 80% FY14 Actual: 84% FY13 Actual: 72% FY12 Actual: 86%
Parent Goals Parents of Bright Stars preschoolers make progress on goals that support their child's success during the school year	Family Needs Assessment	FY16 Target: 80%	FY16 Actual: 84% FY15 Actual: 75% FY14 Actual: 83% FY13 Actual: 89% FY12 Actual: 89%

*In FY09-12, the target was attendance at 3 school functions. This was increased to 4 school functions in FY13.

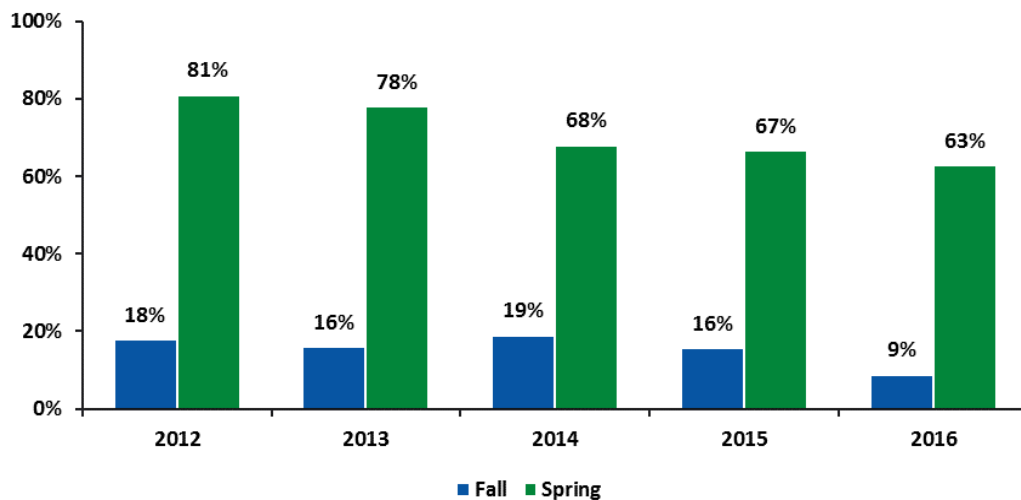
EMERGENT LITERACY SKILLS

Classroom teachers administer pre-kindergarten language and literacy screening in the fall and spring. The assessments include questions about the alphabet, letter sounds, rhymes, and awareness of how pictures and words work together in a story.

Our preschoolers show substantial improvement over the course of the year as they work to master the basic skills for reading readiness. More than four times as many students were able to meet the standard of passing 6 out of 8 subtests in the spring than in the fall.

This success carries over into kindergarten. Among Bright Stars alumni who entered kindergarten in 2014, 73% passed the kindergarten PALS in the fall, compared to 77% of students in the same schools overall.

**Bright Stars Preschoolers Meeting/Exceeding PreK
Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening Benchmark**



“Loved the program, the teachers helped the students love learning and grow as students.”

Stone Robinson Parent



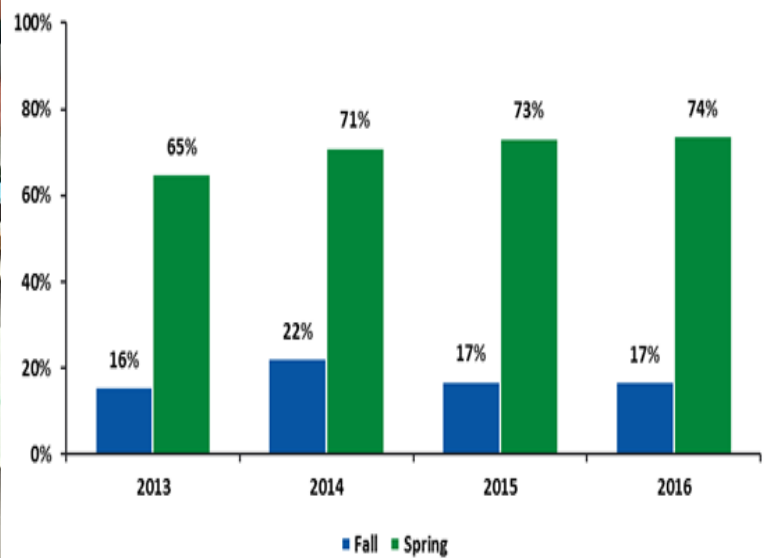
EARLY NUMERACY SKILLS

Preschoolers' abilities in the areas of numeral identification, completing patterns, identifying shapes and colors, and counting sequentially are assessed in the fall and spring using the Math Quick Screen.

In the spring, 74% of our preschoolers performed up to the minimum standards for numeracy skills (passing 7 of the 9 subtests), compared to only 17% in the fall.

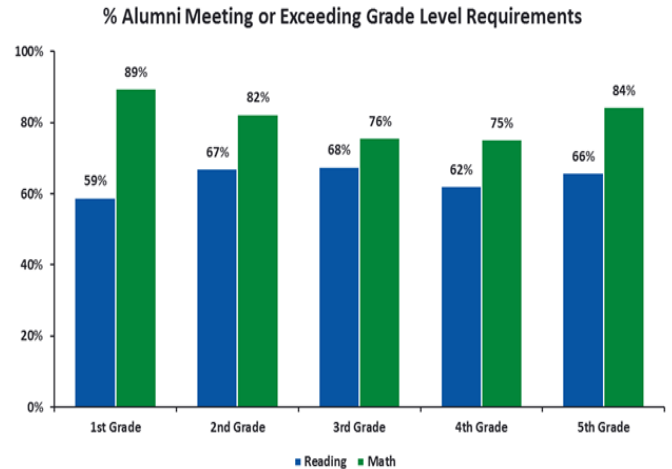


Bright Stars Preschoolers Demonstrating Desired Numeracy Skills

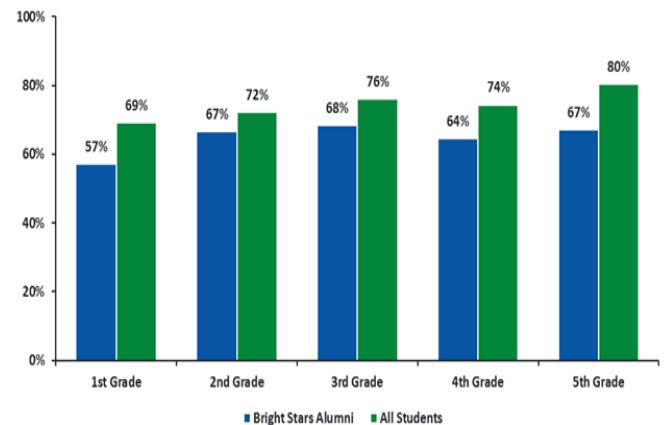


LONG TERM ACADEMIC BENEFITS

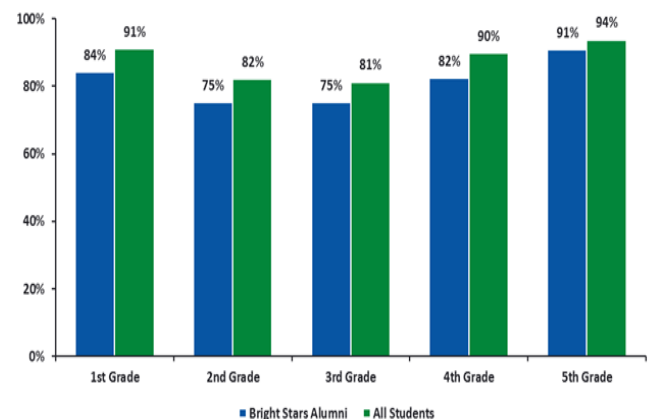
Some academic benefits of Bright Stars can be seen in alumni throughout elementary school. Among all Bright Stars alumni in grades K-5, 100% were promoted to the next grade.



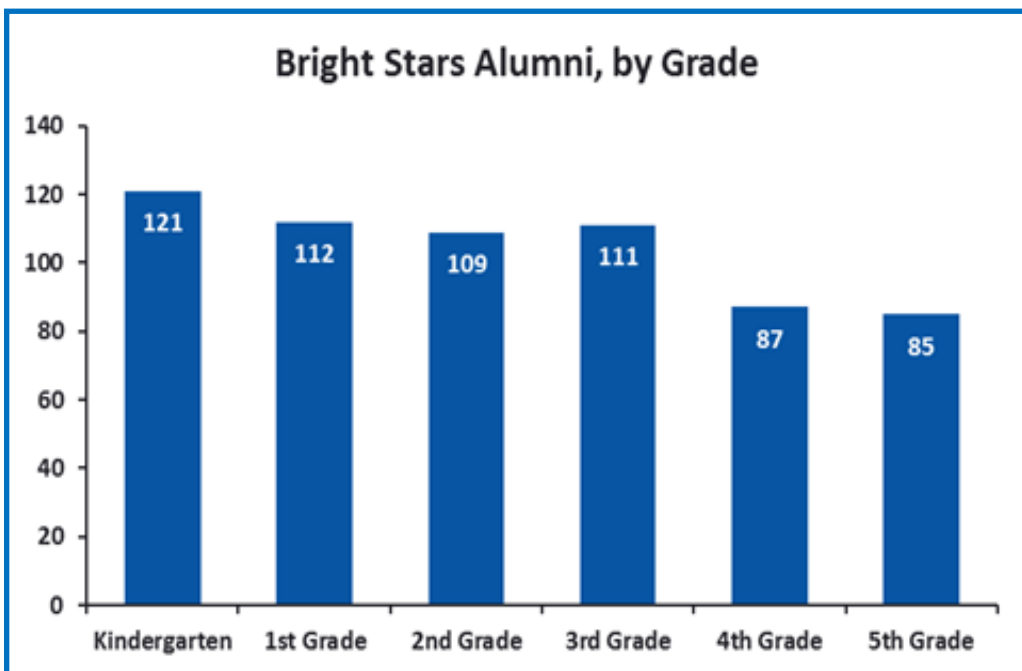
% Students Meeting or Exceeding Grade Level Requirements For Reading (Bright Stars Schools)



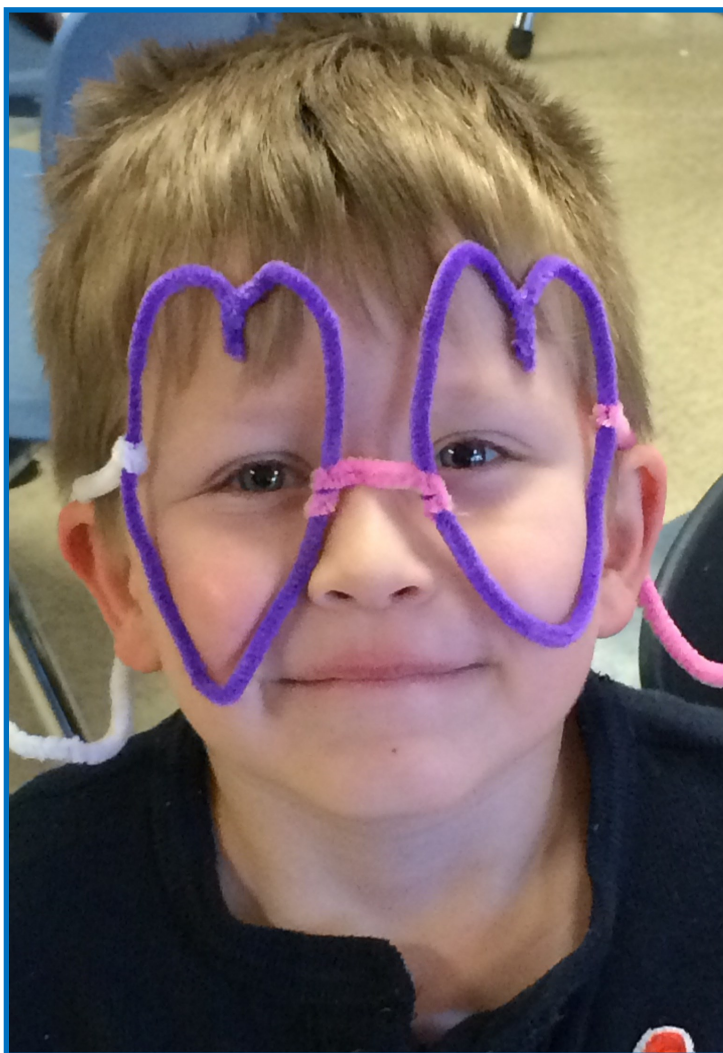
% Students Meeting or Exceeding Grade Level Requirements for Math (Bright Stars Schools)



Family Coordinators are available to provide ongoing services to families past the preschool year. Many families continue to receive services on an as-needed basis throughout their child's elementary school years. Services for Bright Stars alumni families are entirely voluntary. Bright Stars parents may agree to participate or not depending on their own needs and circumstances.



Bright Stars Family Coordinators work with families to encourage regular and timely school attendance, participation in parent-teacher conferences, engagement in school events and preventive dental and medical health practices. Some parents seek support to improve their educational, housing or employment circumstances. The continuity of care and support that is provided by each Family Coordinator is a key element of the Bright Stars program. By linking our families to needed resources, while also facilitating connections between home, school and community services, we aim to encourage and promote self-sufficiency.



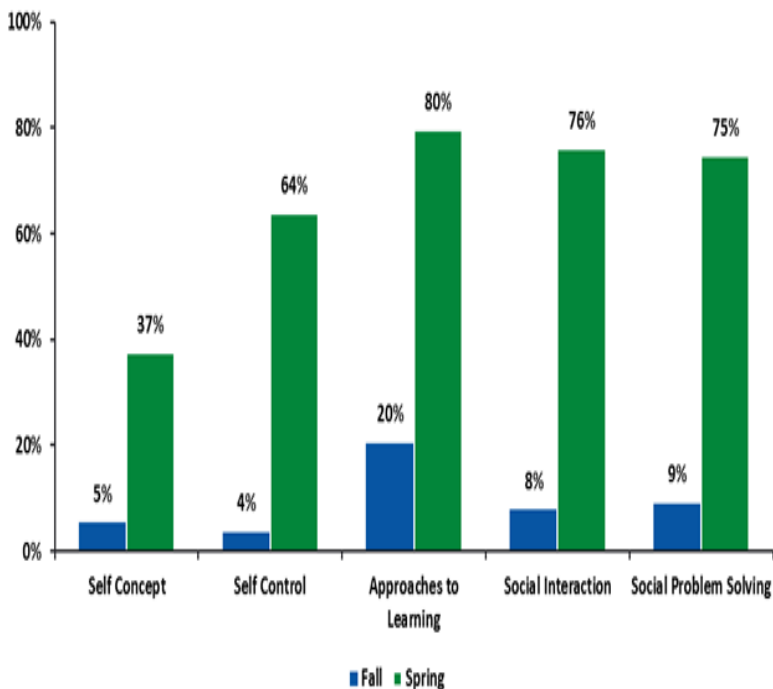
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and early childhood researchers agree that readiness for kindergarten includes knowing how to get along with others, to share, to take turns and follow directions, as well as having curiosity and excitement about learning. We assess preschoolers in the fall and spring on multiple domains of personal and social development as indicated in the accompanying chart.

When compared to their performance at the start of the year, Bright Stars made significant behavioral improvements over the course of the year. Bright Stars are regularly presented with opportunities to develop and practice these skills in the course of work and play.

Personal/Social Development Domains and Definitions
Self Concept : Self-concept and self-reflection
Self Control : Self-direction and responsibility
Approaches to Learning : Eagerness and persistence as a learner
Social Interaction : Ease of interactions with other children and familiar adults
Social Problem-Solving : Use of non-physical ways to resolve conflicts

Preschoolers Who Consistently Demonstrate All Aspects Within The Given Domain



“The Bright Stars at Red Hill are wonderful and have made a difference in our lives!”

Red Hill Parent

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Engaging a child's family in the school community is viewed as key to long-term success in school. Measures of Parent Engagement include attendance at Parent-Teacher Conferences and school events such as Open House and Back-to-School Night, as well as participation in Bright Stars classrooms, family events and fieldtrips. Parents play an important part in our Bright Stars' success. Their active involvement in the classroom and at home supports the work the teachers do at school.



This year:

- 80% of parents attended both parent teacher conferences
- 84% of parents attended four or more non-conference school functions

"The program was a lifesaver for my child, with all the emotional stuff going on she had a refuge."

Cale Parent

Outside the classroom, Bright Stars Family Coordinators also worked with parents towards parents' personal goals. By the end of the school year, 84% of our parents had demonstrated meaningful progress or fully achieved their goal. Examples of goals might include getting financial education, learning English, being more consistent with consequences for their children's behavior, finding employment, increasing reading time with their children, getting a driver's license, taking care of an ill relative, being involved with their children's school and improved eating habits.



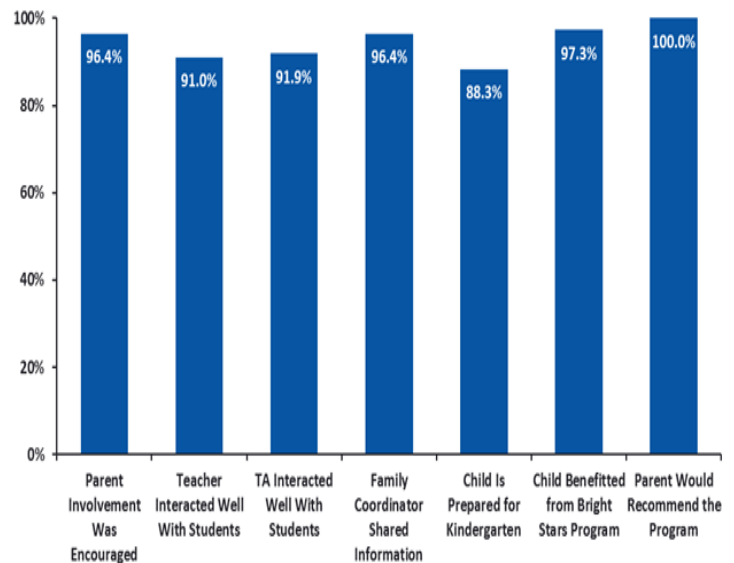
PARENT SATISFACTION

Parents' satisfaction with the Bright Stars Program remains very high. They report significant growth in their children and believe them to be better prepared to enter Kindergarten. Parents report positive relationships with the Bright Stars staff and feel that their participation in their child's preschool program is encouraged. One hundred percent of parents would recommend the program to others.

Child Improvement in Growth Domains		
Growth Domain	Definition	Parents Reporting Improvement
Language	Understanding and using oral speech	91.9%
Social	Getting along with other children and adults	94.6%
Self-Care	Meeting own needs for feeding, toileting, dressing, etc.	93.7%
Motor	Moving large muscles and using small, fine muscles	90.1%
Pre-Academic	Recognizing colors, letters, numbers, songs, etc.	91.9%
Problem Solving	Using cooperation, asking for help, etc.	93.7%



Parent Perception of Bright Stars Program Elements



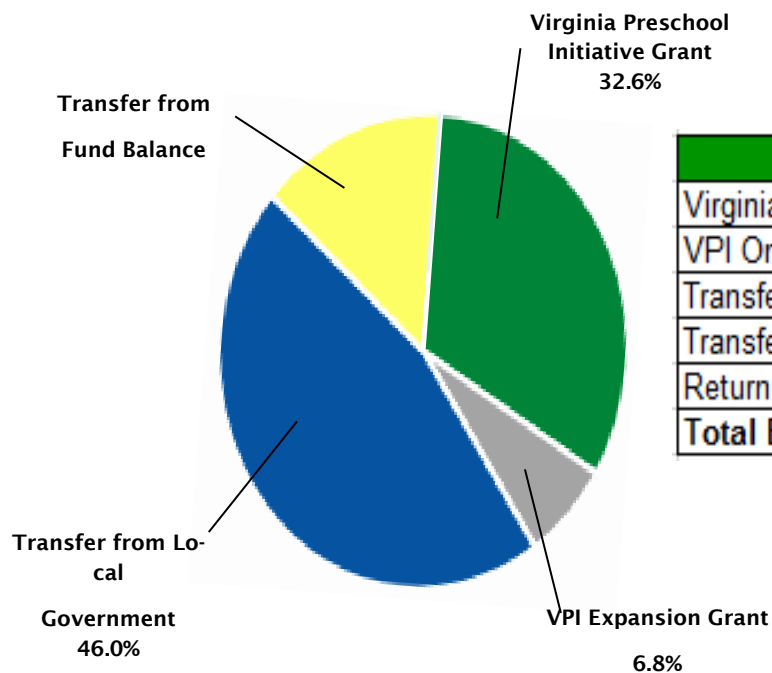
“They involved the parents as much as possible.”

Cale Parent



BRIGHT STARS FISCAL REPORT

FY 2016 Revenues

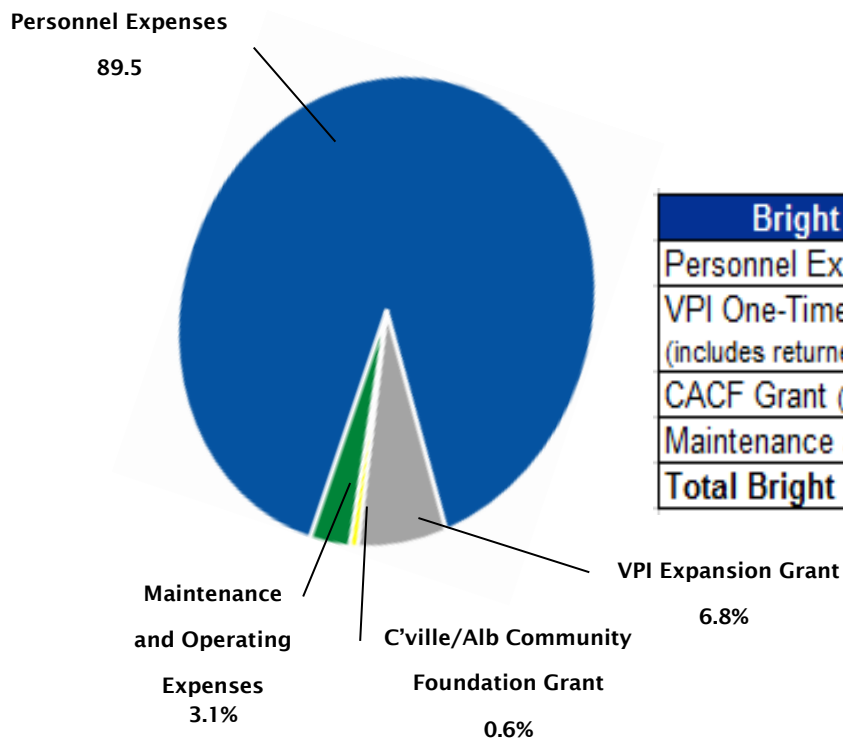


Bright Stars Revenues FY2015-2016	
Virginia Preschool Initiative Grant	\$ 477,000
VPI One-Time Expansion Grant	100,000
Transfer from Local Government	671,789
Transfer from Fund Balance	213,904
Return of Unused CACF Grant Funds	(741)
Total Bright Stars Revenues	\$1,461,952

The above Bright Stars Program budget includes 40% of the Bright Stars Family Coordinator

positions and the remaining 60% is funded in the Albemarle County Department of Social Services General Fund

FY 2016 Expenditures



Bright Stars Expenditures FY2015-2016	
Personnel Expenses	\$1,307,661
VPI One-Time Expansion Grant (includes returned unused funds of \$35,592)	100,000
CACF Grant (Received 2015 Expended 2016)	9,259
Maintenance and Operating Expenses	45,032
Total Bright Stars Expenditures	\$1,461,952



Listening to the need.



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