

BRIGHT STARS FY 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



A PROGRAM OF
THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY PRESCHOOL NETWORK

Presented to
The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors
The Albemarle County School Board





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We are pleased to provide the Albemarle County Bright Stars Program Annual Report for the 2018 fiscal year. This is the 23rd year of the collaborative model between the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, the Albemarle County Department of Social Services and the Albemarle County Public Schools. The program outcomes continue to demonstrate the benefits of a high-quality preschool experience for at-risk children in preparing them for success during the kindergarten year, the remainder of their academic career and beyond.

This is an exciting time for early childhood education, as discussions at the local, state and federal levels remain focused on the benefits of providing high-quality preschool experiences. Locally, the community-based Early Education Task Force continues to concentrate on expanding opportunities so that all at-risk four-year-old children living in the Charlottesville/Albemarle area, who are not currently enrolled in a high-quality preschool, have this opportunity. The task force, working closely with the Virginia Department of Education, is steadfast in its commitment to exploring how to best meet the needs of the unserved and underserved four-year-old children in the local community. Evidence of this commitment is the collaborative partnership between the Albemarle County Department of Social Services and United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area, which placed 17 children in private preschools, in addition to the children served in Albemarle County Public Schools.

Albemarle County continues to highlight the importance of early childhood education through the opportunities provided by the Virginia Preschool Initiative. Substantial financial support and “in-kind” contributions, on behalf of the school division and local government, enabled 176 children to participate in the Bright Stars Program. This represents 55% of all at-risk four-year-old children living in the county. The program operates in ten classrooms at seven county elementary schools.

The quantitative data again demonstrates the benefits for children who participate in the Bright Stars Program. As anticipated, in Fall 2016, 88% of the students who enrolled in Bright Stars did not meet the standards of the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS). However, after a year of intentional and engaging teaching and learning, 66% of the students met the PALS benchmark in the spring of 2017. In fact, after entering kindergarten, 74% of the 2017 Bright Stars graduates met or exceeded the PALS standards at the end of their kindergarten year.

The Bright Stars Program remains committed to providing a comprehensive experience to support the development of the whole child. In addition to the core academic components, the children engage in daily opportunities to develop critical socio-emotional and personal skills necessary to be successful in school and after high school graduation. To support the development of children across all domains, an effective family service component is a hallmark of the program. Bright Stars Family Coordinators partner with the preschoolers’ families to access community services and resources to ensure safe and stable families.

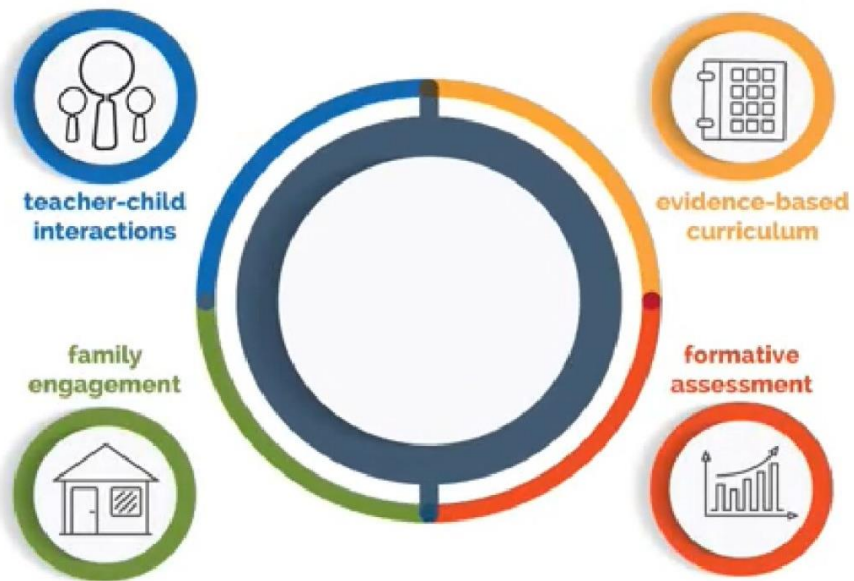
Parent engagement is an important component in fostering children’s success in school. Parents consistently report a high degree of satisfaction with the program and share many positive anecdotes about their children’s experiences. These early and positive experiences in a child’s school career will continue to benefit them as they work toward successfully graduating from high school to seek post-secondary education or employment within the workforce.

The results achieved by the partnership of committed and dedicated people, including the children and their families, teachers and teaching assistants, and the Bright Stars Family Coordinators, are cause for celebrating this unique and successful collaboration for the benefit of young children in Albemarle County.

Phyllis C. Savides
Director, ACDSS

Dr. Matthew S. Haas
Superintendent, ACPS

Key Ingredients of High-Quality Early Childhood Education



*These Key Ingredients are established by the Virginia Department of Education.



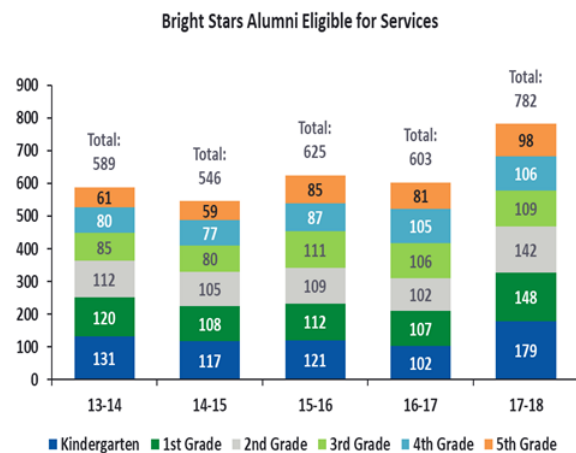
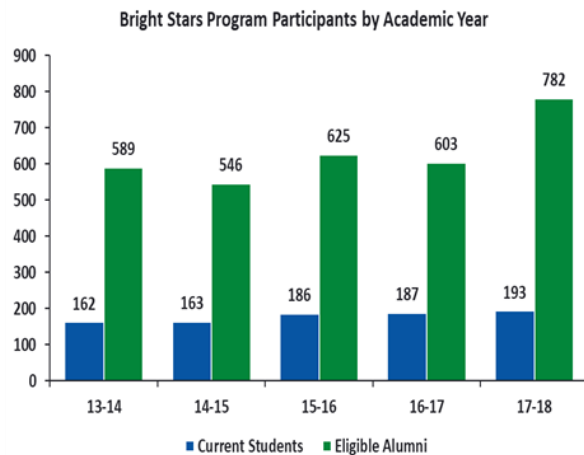
BRIGHT STARS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Bright Stars Program enjoyed another successful year, the 23rd year since the program began in 1995. Using braided funding from the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area and Title I, 193 at-risk four-year-old children participated in a high-quality preschool experience.

176 students attended preschool within Albemarle County Public Schools. Agnor-Hurt Elementary served four-year-old children in two classrooms, one of which was the Bright Stars Program's most braided funding classroom, receiving financial support from the VPI, Early Childhood Special Education and Title I. Cale Elementary and Greer Elementary each served children in two VPI funded classrooms. Scottsville Elementary, Stone-Robinson Elementary and Woodbrook Elementary served children in a VPI funded classroom in each school. Red Hill Elementary served children in a VPI classroom, supported by funding from Title I.

To serve an additional 17 at-risk four-year-old children in Albemarle community, the Bright Stars Program collaborated with United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area. These students attended preschool in private placements at Foundations Child Development Center and the Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA) Shining Star Preschool.

During the 2018 fiscal year, there was a 23% increase in the total number of graduates from the Bright Stars Program, "Alumni", who were eligible to be served by the Bright Stars Family Coordinators.

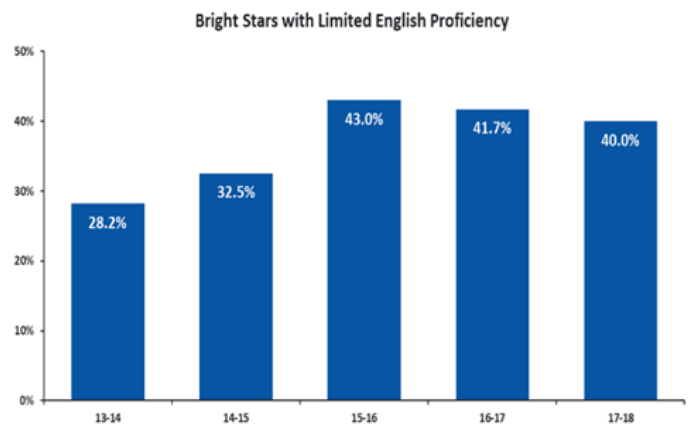
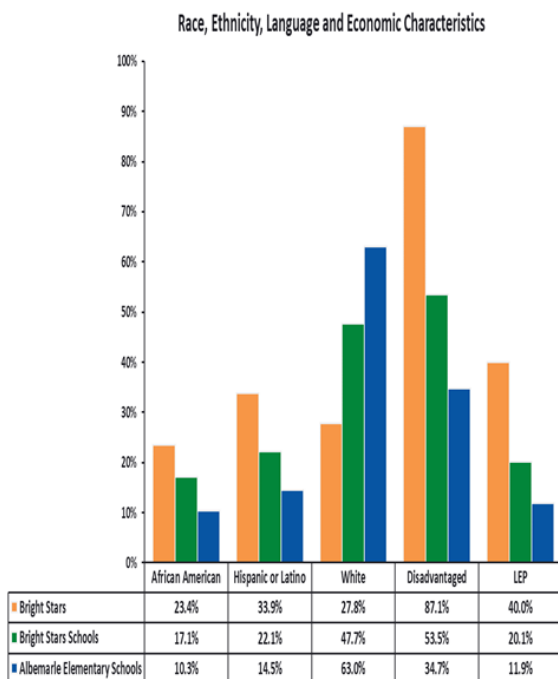


*"Thank you for helping my child
be the best that she can be."
~Woodbrook Parent*

BRIGHT STARS PARTICIPANTS

Bright Stars classrooms tend to be more ethnically and linguistically diverse than the overall student body in the same schools. 6.3% more students in the Bright Stars classrooms are African American and 11.8% more students are Hispanic or Latino. English was not the primary language of 19.9% more students in Bright Stars classrooms in comparison to the overall student body.

The percentage of dual language learners enrolled in Bright Stars remained consistent with the previous year at approximately 40%. These students demonstrated marked English language acquisition during their preschool year when comparing the fall PALS Pre-K assessment scores to the spring assessment scores. Suggested activities are offered to the family to do outside of school to support further language development. The families are asked to engage with their child to identify English letters and numbers in the world around them.



BRIGHT STARS PARTICIPANTS

Children enrolled in the Bright Stars Program are selected based on individual or family factors that a significant body of research indicates may negatively impact a child's ability to be successful in school. Bright Stars children may experience risk factors such as low family income, parents with limited education or illiteracy, homelessness, the need for special education services, single parent homes, parental unemployment, witnessing domestic violence, parental incarceration, involvement with child protective services or foster care, parental substance use and/or family members with mental health concerns.

Of the 176 preschoolers who participated in Bright Stars, 91% lived with at least one biological parent. 30% of those families were single-parent households.

Bright Stars children were from families with at least one parent/guardian who:

- Was unemployed – 8%
- Has a high school diploma or GED – 72%
- Has an associate or bachelor's degree – 12%
- Did not complete high school – 55%

87% of the students were eligible to receive free or reduced priced meals.



BRIGHT STARS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The Bright Stars Program is a comprehensive preschool experience that focuses on all aspects of family well-being. Families are supported to ensure that their children receive adequate health and dental care. Bright Stars Family Coordinators assist in making appointments and providing transportation, when necessary. A donation from Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital's community benefit programs provides children with access to pediatric dental care. For many of the children needing dental care, this may be their first visit to a dentist. The financial support from Sentara MJH allows dental care supplies to be purchased for the preschoolers to use in the classroom and at home.

To encourage the children's natural curiosity and extend their learning beyond the classroom, the Bright Stars classes travel to interesting and exciting local venues. Children engage in hands-on, active learning to support their development to think critically, explore and solve problems, communicate with others and to be creative. They enjoy visits to apple orchards, farms, the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA, local firehouses, the Virginia Discovery Museum, the Jefferson Madison Regional Library, local restaurants and The Paramount Theatre. In addition to chaperoning field trips, parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and join their children at special times of the year to make gingerbread houses, snuggle up in pajamas to read a book together or enjoy a holiday meal.



PERFORMANCE ON PROGRAM GOALS FY18

The following table shows progress toward achieving key program goals over the past five years.

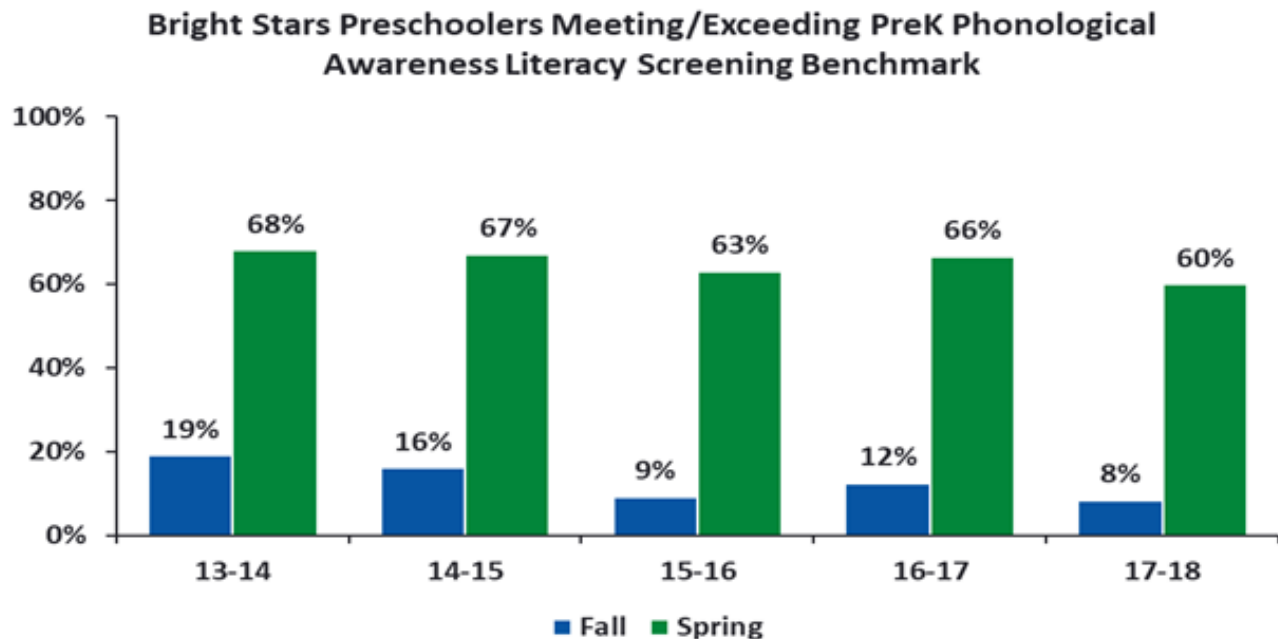
Outcome Measure	Measurement	Goal	Actual
Preschool Literacy Skills Preschoolers who are in Bright Stars for at least six months achieve literacy benchmark scores for the preschool developmental range at the end of the school year	PreK Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (pKPALS)	FY18 Target: 80%	FY18 Actual: 60% FY17 Actual: 66% FY16 Actual: 63% FY15 Actual: 67% FY14 Actual: 68%
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)	FY18 Target: 80%	FY18 Actual: 74% FY17 Actual: 73% FY16 Actual: 74% FY15 Actual: 84% FY14 Actual: 86%
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	FY18 Target: 90%	FY18 Actual: 79% FY17 Actual: 96% FY16 Actual: 86% FY15 Actual: 87% FY14 Actual: 62%
Parent-Teacher Conferences Parents of Bright Stars preschoolers attend both parent-teacher conferences offered during the school year	Bright Stars database	FY18 Target: 80%	FY18 Actual: 81% FY17 Actual: 84% FY16 Actual: 80% FY15 Actual: 80% FY14 Actual: 84%
Parent Goals Parents of Bright Stars preschoolers make progress on goals that support their child's success during the school year	Family Needs Assessment	FY18 Target: 80%	FY18 Actual: 83% FY17 Actual: 84% FY16 Actual: 84% FY15 Actual: 75% FY14 Actual: 83%

EMERGENT LITERACY SKILLS

Classroom teachers administer the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS-PreK) in the fall and spring. This assessment includes questions about alphabet knowledge and recognition, letter and beginning sound awareness, rhyme awareness, nursery rhyme awareness and the children's understanding of how pictures and words work together in a story.

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

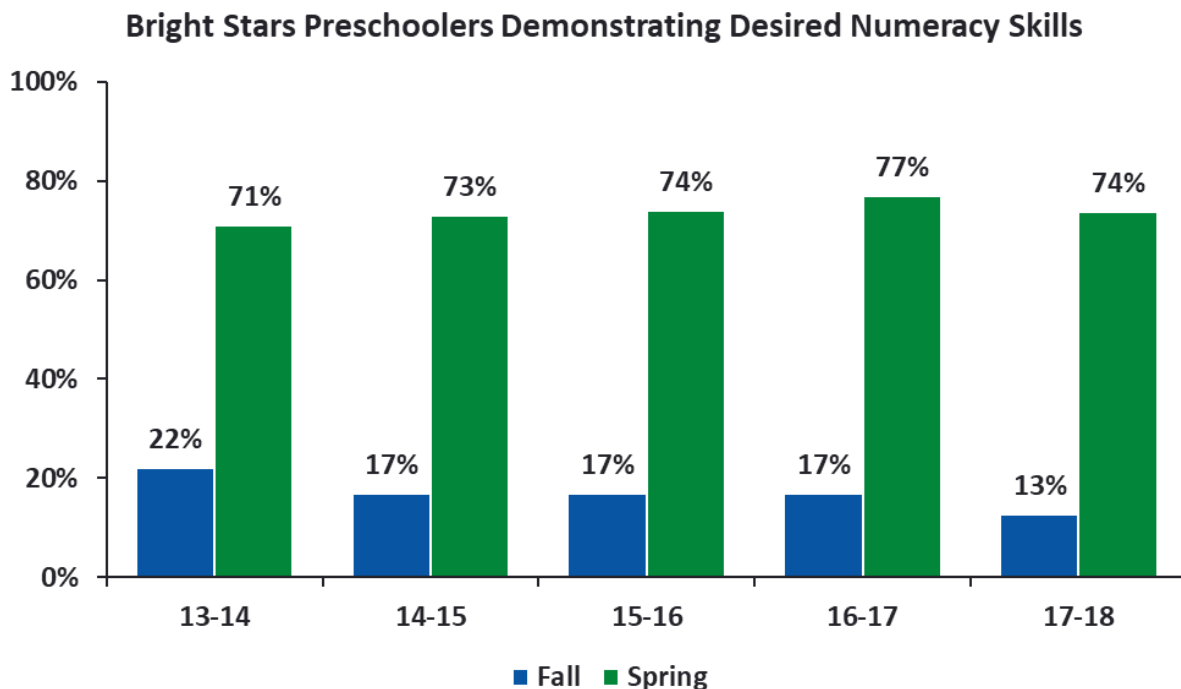
This success carries over into kindergarten. Among Bright Stars alumni who entered kindergarten in 2017, 74% passed the kindergarten PALS in the spring, compared to 75% of students in the same school.



EARLY NUMERACY SKILLS

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

In the spring, 74% of the Bright Stars met the minimum standards for numeracy skills on 7 of the 9 subtests compared to 13% in the fall. This growth represents a 470% increase.

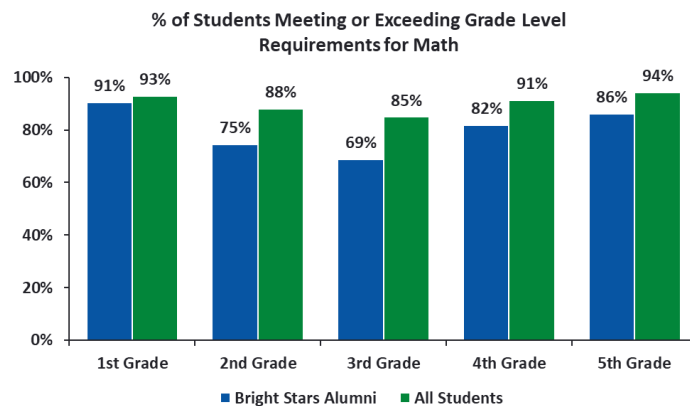
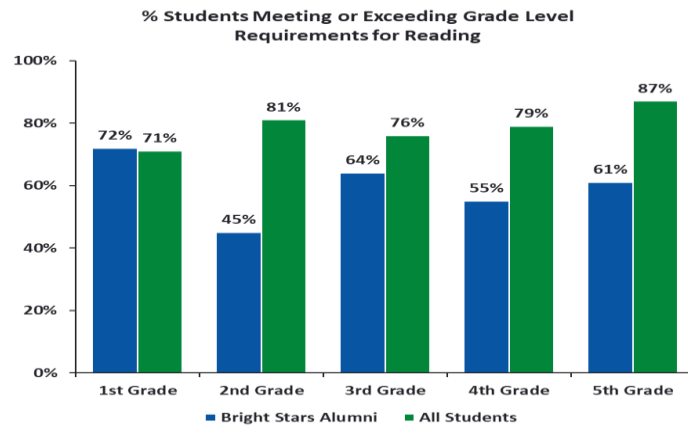
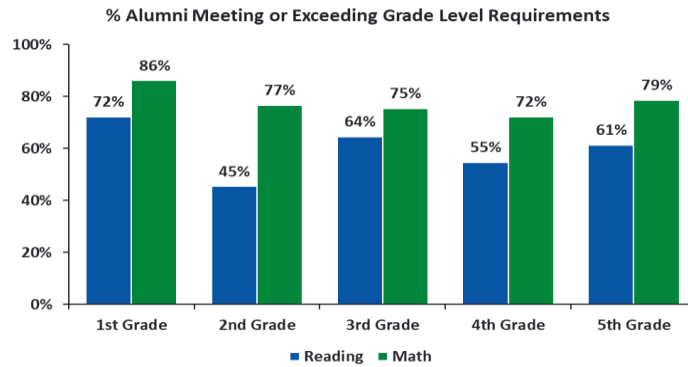


"My child has learned so much. He has learned much more than if he had not been in the Bright Stars Program."

~Agnor-Hurt Parent

LONG TERM ACADEMIC BENEFITS

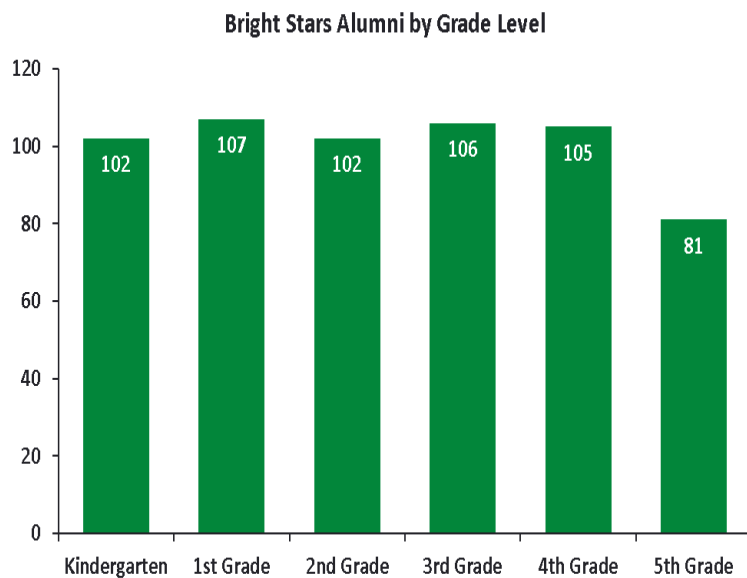
Academic benefits of participating in the Bright Stars Program can be seen in alumni throughout elementary school. Among all Bright Stars alumni in grades K-5, 100% were promoted to the next grade.



BRIGHT STARS “ALUMNI” SERVICES

Bright Stars Family Coordinators provide ongoing services to families beyond the preschool year on a voluntary basis. Many families continue to receive services as needed throughout their child’s elementary school years. 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 Bright Stars Family Coordinator is a key element of the program. The goal of promoting self-sufficiency for each family is enhanced by connecting families with community resources and continuing to foster the relationship between home and school.

“Bright Stars has been an excellent experience for my son and our family. I like everything about the program.”
~Red Hill Parent

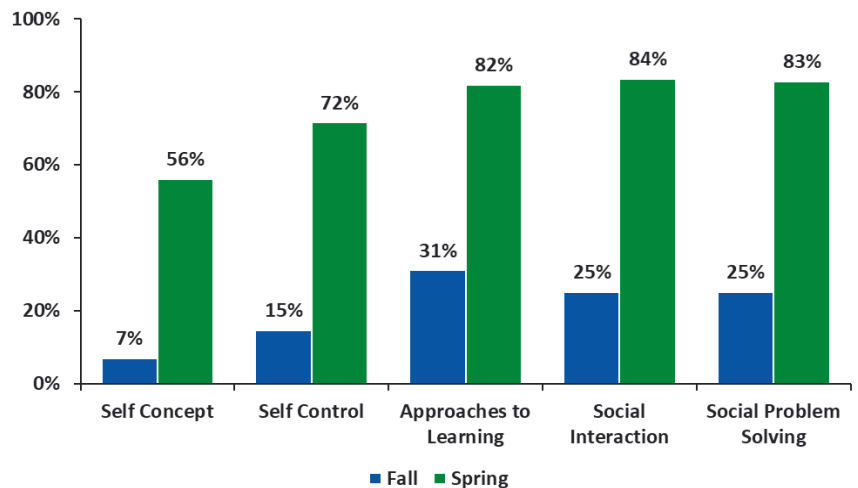


PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Early childhood education research demonstrates a positive correlation between children's mastery of developmentally appropriate personal and socio-emotional school-readiness skills and success in kindergarten. Skills, such as knowing how to interact and get along with others, to share, to take turns and follow directions, as well as being curious and excited about learning, are fostered in the Bright Stars classrooms. The preschoolers are assessed in the fall and spring on multiple domains of personal and socio-emotional development as indicated below. When compared to their performance at the start of the year, Bright Stars made significant growth because of the frequent and regular opportunities to practice these skills while learning through 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



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Engaging a child's family in the school community is one of the four key ingredients identified in a high-quality preschool experience and a predictor of long-term success in school. Measures of parent engagement include attendance at parent-teacher conferences, Open House and Back-to-School Night, as well as participation in Bright Stars classrooms, family events and field trips. Parents play a critical role in the success of the Bright Stars Program. Their active involvement in the classroom and the school community helps strengthen the home-school connection, supporting the work of the school staff.

Bright Stars Family Coordinators partner with parents to support them in working toward self-identified goals. By the end of the school year, 83% of the parents had demonstrated meaningful progress toward partially achieving, or fully achieving, their goal. Historically, parents have indicated a desire to set a goal to further their own education related to finances or other areas, which may lead to finding employment, finding more rewarding employment and supporting increased self-sufficiency. Often, parents with limited or no English will endeavor to enroll in English language courses. A frequent goal identified by parents is to learn positive parenting and discipline strategies. Additionally, spending more time reading with their child or engaging with the school is an important goal families have identified. Family engagement with the Bright Stars Program is a central tenet of the Family Coordinators' work as they support the family in articulating strategies and connecting them with resources to achieve their goals. Directly working with the families has a lasting effect on student achievement across all domains.

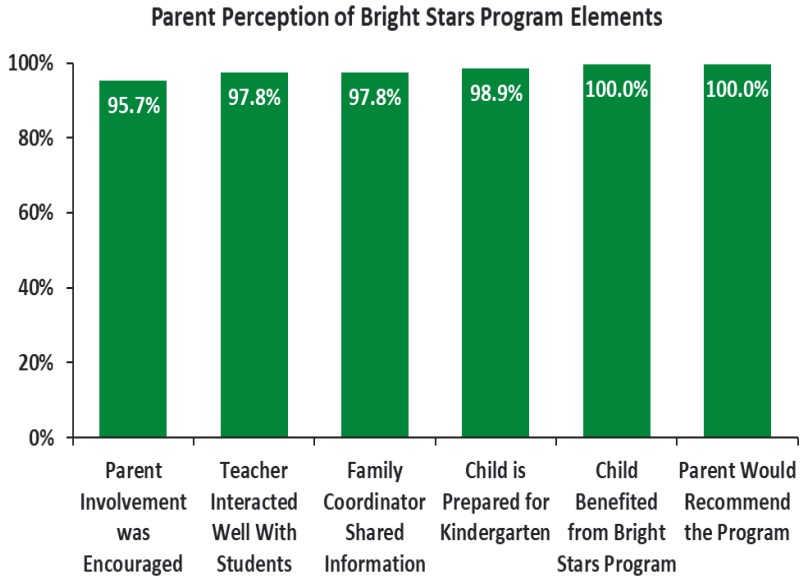
After 17 years of working toward a goal, a Bright Stars parent earned her GED! When her son entered Bright Stars in August 2001, the parent set a goal to earn her GED that she had been wanting to earn for many years. The Bright Stars Family Coordinator and the mother partnered to work toward this goal which included many steps, re-starts and challenges.

After years of attempting the GED assessment without success, the mother asked the Family Coordinator to attend the ceremony this fall as she was presented with her GED!

~Stone-Robinson Parent

PARENT SATISFACTION

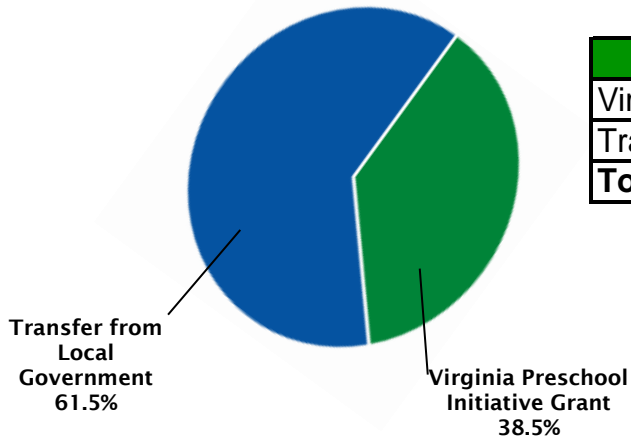
Parents' satisfaction with the Bright Stars Program remains above 95%. Parents reported significant growth in their child's development across the 6 domains identified in the chart below. 99% of parents reported that their child is better prepared to enter kindergarten. 100% reported that their child benefitted from participating in Bright Stars. Parents reported positive relationships with the Bright Stars staff and that their participation in their child's preschool program was encouraged. 100% 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	91.3%
Social	Getting along with other children and adults	98.9%
Self-Care	Meeting own needs for feeding, toileting, dressing, etc.	92.4%
Motor	Moving large muscles and using small, fine muscles	95.7%
Pre-Academic	Recognizing colors, letters, numbers, songs, etc.	95.7%
Problem Solving	Using cooperation, asking for help, etc.	96.7%

BRIGHT STARS FINANCIAL REPORT

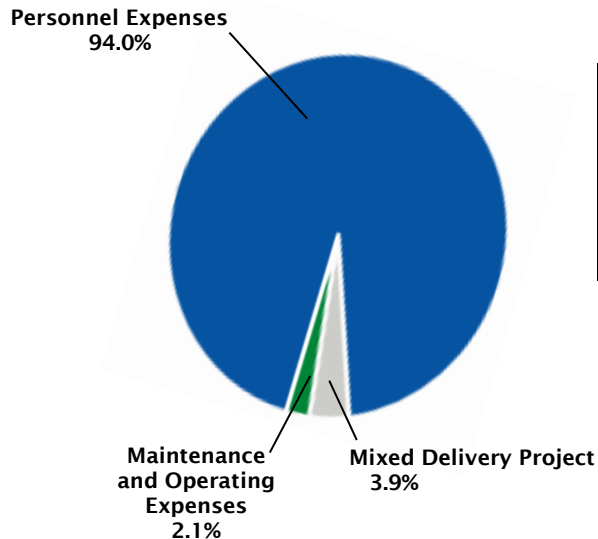
FY 2018 Revenues



Bright Stars Revenues FY2017-2018	
Virginia Preschool Initiative Grant	\$ 539,000
Transfer from Local Government	861,977
Total Bright Stars Revenues	\$ 1,400,977

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 2018 Expenditures



Bright Stars Expenditures FY2017-2018	
Personnel Expenses	\$ 1,315,829
VPI Funding to United Way for Mixed Delivery Pre-School Project	55,125
Maintenance and Operating Expenses	29,140
Total Bright Stars Expenditures	\$ 1,400,094