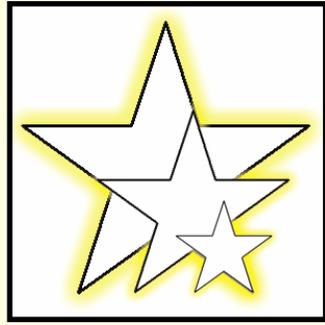




**BRIGHT STARS PROGRAM**  
**FY 2005 ANNUAL REPORT**



**10TH ANNIVERSARY**



*Presented to*  
**The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors**  
**December 2005**



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December 2005

To the Members of the Board of Supervisors:

We are proud to announce that this year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bright Stars. Our program began in a single classroom at Stone-Robinson Elementary School in September 1995 serving 16 children and families. Since then, it has grown to include six classrooms, strategically placed in areas of the County that demonstrate high educational and social services need, with a current enrollment of 96 children.

Bright Stars' service mission is to increase the opportunities to learn for our children and their families by promoting family involvement and addressing risk factors that affect school performance. We are pleased to be able to share our successes that reflect this mission:

- ☆ **Teachers report that Bright Stars children enter kindergarten with positive attitudes towards school and an understanding of appropriate school behavior.**
- ☆ **Referrals for early interventions are getting children and families the help they need earlier.** During the 2004-2005 school year:
  - 17 Bright Stars children received Speech/Language services
  - 2 children were identified for Special Education
  - 12 kindergarten alumni received Title I, 5 Speech/Language and 1 Gifted.
- ☆ **Bright Stars parents are actively involved in parent-teacher conferences**, interested in discussing their children's progress and how to help their children at home. 100% of the Bright Stars parents attended parent-teacher conferences during 2004-2005. Parents are also attending planned events (field trips, family nights, all-school events, breakfasts) with their children.
- ☆ **Bright Stars has begun to play a major socializing role for area immigrant students and families**, as the number of Limited English Proficient students continues to increase. Bright Stars Hispanic families have a Spanish-language interpreter/consultant and Spanish speaking staff at their service. African immigrant families are referred to language and other services in the community to facilitate their integration into the community.
- ☆ **Bright Stars students receive timely medical and dental services** as a result of a \$5000 Community Health Partnership Grant from Martha Jefferson Hospital awarded to Bright Stars for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year and \$2000 from a local church for extensive dental care.
- ☆ **Several Bright Star sites have incorporated JumpStart and My Teaching Partner programs.** JumpStart is the largest Serve-Study program in the country. It uses Federal

work-study funds to engage college students in community service. JumpStart partners with preschool programs that serve low-income children, providing UVA students with one-on-one language and literacy mentors and volunteer classroom assistants. My Teaching Partner is a project based at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education delivering and evaluating web-based support for teachers in pre-kindergarten programs to improve children's literacy and language development and positive social relationships.

Bright Stars has been able to provide high quality, comprehensive learning experiences that set children on a successful academic path, while teaching parents to see themselves as the first and best teachers of their children. Bright Stars' evolving partnerships with local government, schools and community agencies have empowered families to utilize services that prepare children to enter school ready to learn and help to strengthen families now and in years to come.

As Robert Coles, child psychiatrist, wrote, "The people who come to see us bring us their stories. They hope they tell them well enough so that we understand the truth of their lives. They hope we know how to interpret their stories correctly. We have to remember that what we hear is their story." We believe the Bright Stars Program captures the stories of the families and children we serve.

We hope you will recognize how Bright Stars fits well into the continuum of early intervention and prevention services envisioned by the Department of Social Services and local government more than 10 years ago. We hope you will also agree that Bright Stars plays a significant role in the achievement of the Strategic Plans of the Department, the Schools and local government.

Sincerely,

Charity Haines, Program Coordinator

## Rationale for Pre-School Education

Why do we invest in early childhood education? A recent report from The World Bank Group states that, “a child’s ability to think, form relationships and live up to his or her full potential is directly related to the synergistic effect of good health, good nutrition and appropriate stimulation and interaction with others.” This group cites several early childhood development research projects that prove that “children who participate in well-conceived programs tend to be more successful in later school, are more competent socially and emotionally and show higher verbal and intellectual development during early childhood than children who are not enrolled in high quality programs.” The World Bank Group concludes that “ensuring healthy child development is an investment in the in the country’s future, encourages greater social equity, increases the efficacy of other investments, addresses the needs of mothers while helping their children, thereby modifying some of the most entrenched causes of poverty.”

Governor Mark Warner, speaking at his Early Childhood Summit in spring 2005 said, “statistics from the University of Virginia show that 20% of the Commonwealth’s children enter kindergarten without the basic skills needed to learn. Early childhood development is a vital part of every child’s education, and we must make sure that students have the foundation of learning necessary to succeed...”

Bright Stars is one of Albemarle County’s answers to narrowing and finally eliminating the achievement gap among all classes and races of children, making it a realistic goal for every child to be successful in school and every family to have hope for a brighter future for themselves and their children.



Ashby Kindler

*“I recently read that Virginia is making preschool education its top educational priority. It’s nice to know that Albemarle County was in the forefront of recognizing the need for good, quality preschool education.”*

**~Ashby Kindler, Principal  
Stone-Robinson**

☆ **II. Program Outcomes: FY 2005**

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	FY05 Target 90%	FY05 Actual 80% FY04 Actual 97% FY03 Actual 97% FY02 Actual 88%
Bright Stars alumni achieve the benchmark score on the KPALS during the kindergarten year.	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Kindergarten	FY05 Target: 80-85%	FY 05 Actual: 79%
Parents of BS children attend at least one Bright Stars/school function during the school year	Parent Involvement Log	FY05 Target: 100%	FY05 Actual 100%

\* Bright Stars who do not reach or exceed the benchmark or who demonstrate deficits in one or more areas are referred for extra help to the Bright Stars Summer School, PALS tutoring, Title I, ESOL services or Special Education. Approximately 1/4 to 1/3 of the students are referred to one or more of these services every year.

\*\*PreK PALS was revised for school year 2004-2005, increasing the difficulty in at least 2 areas

Note: Students tested include those who have English as a second language.



**BRIGHT STARS SERVICE MISSION:**

**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 All County Bright Stars Schools

Outcomes in Kindergarten and Grade One seem to indicate that Bright Stars students are able to sustain a satisfactory level of achievement as measured by the Kindergarten and Grade 1 PALS and classroom performance.

Kindergarten (Spring 2005)			
School	# Students Taking Test	% Students Who Met Benchmark	% of Bright Stars Who Met Benchmark
Agnor-Hurt	69	87% (60/69)	86% (12/14)
Cale	121	82% (99/121)	46% (6/13)
Greer	59	95% (56/59)	92% (11/12)
Scottsville	28	100% (28/28)	100% (10/10)
Stone-Robinson	67	78% (52/67)	71% (10/14)
Woodbrook	n/a	n/a	n/a

Grade 1 (Spring 2005)			
School	# Students	% Students Who Met Benchmark	% of Bright Stars Who Met Benchmark
Agnor-Hurt	43	88% (38/43)*	50% (2/4)
Cale	86	85% (73/86)	85% (11/13)
Greer	79	80% (63/79)	73% (8/11)
Scottsville	22	86% (19/22)	66% (6/9)
Stone-Robinson	67	98% (64/65)	100% (8/8)
Woodbrook	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*4 scores missing



Jenny Weinberg –  
 Bright Stars Teacher –  
 Cale

*“I think the Bright Stars program is such a great stepping stone to Kindergarten. The children have made adjustments socially and academically and it makes the transition a very smooth one.”*

~ Cale Kindergarten Teacher

## Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening Overview 2001-2005

% of students who met or exceeded benchmark score

	PreK PALS	KPALS	Grade I PALS
Bright Stars 2001-02	88%		
Kindergarten 2002-03		81%	
Grade I 2003-04			80%
Bright Stars 2002-03	97%		
Kindergarten 2003-04		82%	
Grade I 2004-05			85%
Bright Stars 2003-04	97%		
Kindergarten 2004-05		79%	
Grade I			n/a
Bright Stars 2004-05	80%		
Kindergarten		n/a	
Grade I			n/a

Notes:

1. Percentages are based on numbers of students who can be tracked if they remain in their original schools or move to another county school and who take both the fall and spring assessment.
2. Bright Stars classes differ each year in the number of risk points for each child. Risk points have been increasing over the years from a 2001-2002 average of 7.8 to a 2004-2005 average of 10.4.
3. Numbers of non-English speaking families has increased.
4. Children in the program with late summer birthdays are closer to 3 years old than 4 when they begin the program.



**Progress from fall to spring of the Bright Stars year is notable on the PreK PALS: in fall 2004, 18 out of 88 children (20%) met or exceeded the benchmark range; in spring 2005, 70 out of 88 children (80%) met or exceeded the benchmark range.**



Kristi Friday-  
 Bright Stars TA - Greer

*“The Bright Stars staff is an integral part of the school community. They bring in an aspect of the family piece that is sometimes overlooked. They offer support, not only to the families, but also to the school.”*

~Greer School Staff

## Bright Stars Alumni Classroom Performance/Grade Level Status

### READING AND MATH SCORES

READING 2005		
GRADE	AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL	BELOW GRADE LEVEL
Kindergarten	45	16
Grade 1	35	13
Grade 2	31	9
Grade 3		
READING 2003-2004		
Kindergarten	40	18
Grade 1	29	16
Grade 2	29	12
Grade 3	18	7

MATH 2005		
GRADE	AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL	BELOW GRADE LEVEL
Kindergarten	51	10
Grade 1	35	13
Grade 2	32	8
MATH 2003-2004		
Kindergarten	47	11
Grade 1	30	15
Grade 2	34	7

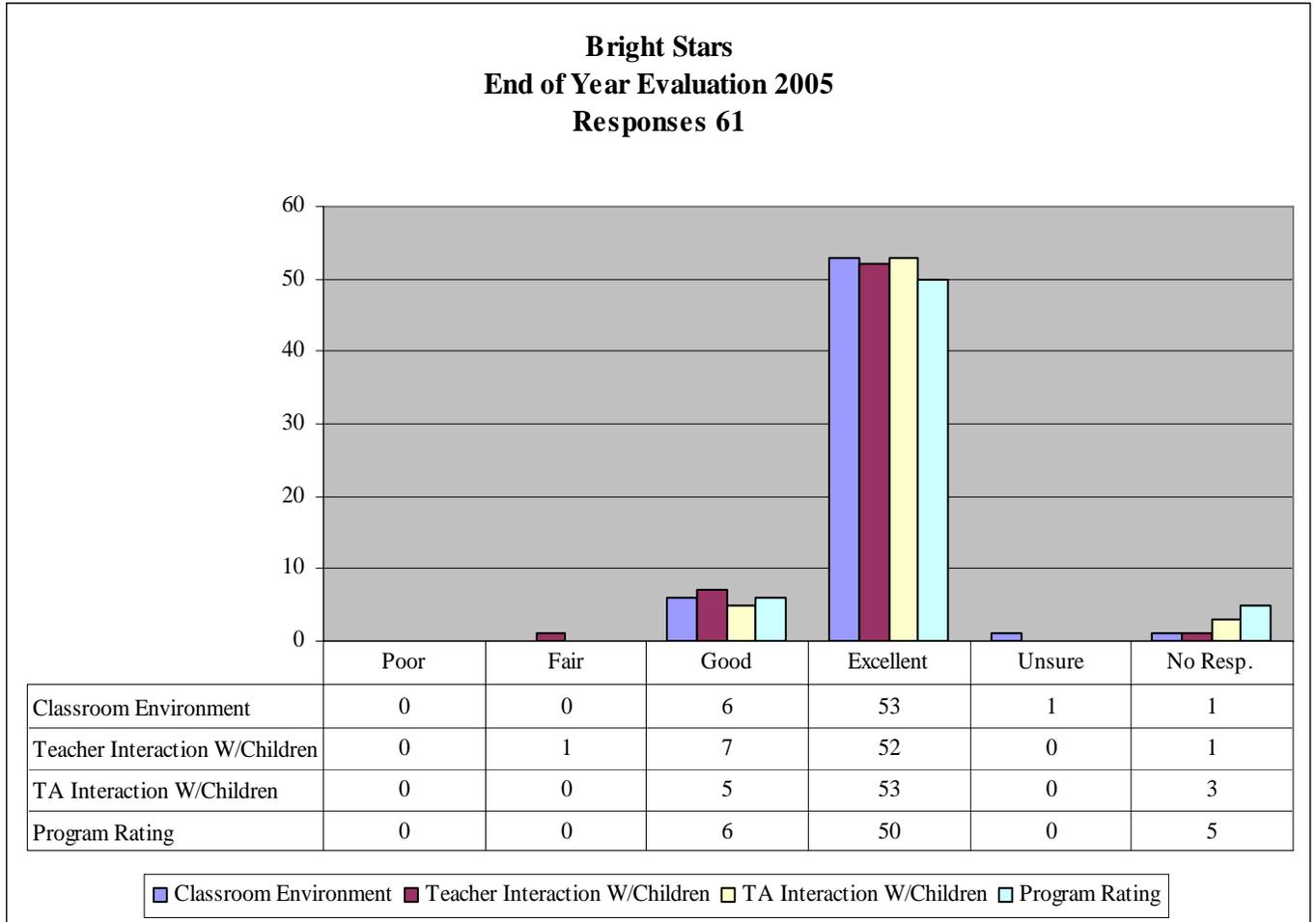
### STANDARDS OF LEARNING SCORES

Grade 3 – Reading/Writing SOL (63% Passed or Exceeded Pass on R/W SOL)			
ADVANCED	PASS	FAIL	TOTAL
5	28	19	52
Grade 3 – Math SOL (78% Passed or Exceeded Pass on Math SOL)			
15	24	11	50

These numbers include children who moved from their original Bright Stars school to another County school.

- All 3<sup>rd</sup> grade scores, including former Bright Stars students:
- ✓ English – 824 students took the test and 80.8% passed.
  - ✓ Math – 846 students took the test and 87.2% passed.

## Family Survey



### Parent Comments

*“The teachers do a great job about informing us about everything.”*

*“Bright Stars Coordinator always kept us informed about meetings and followed up on my two other sons who were also Bright Stars. Very beautiful personality and kind spirited.”*

*“I like Family Nights, my child loves Family Nights. At Family Nights you bond with your child and get to understand what’s going on with your child in and out of the classroom.”*

*“Bright Stars Coordinator helped find activities for my daughter that were going on in the community, she also gave information on GED classes for my husband.”*

*“When ever I had a question or a situation she would use a lot of her resources to get the best information.”*

*“Helped me get my child’s teeth fixed when needed, someone to listen to when she was there.”*

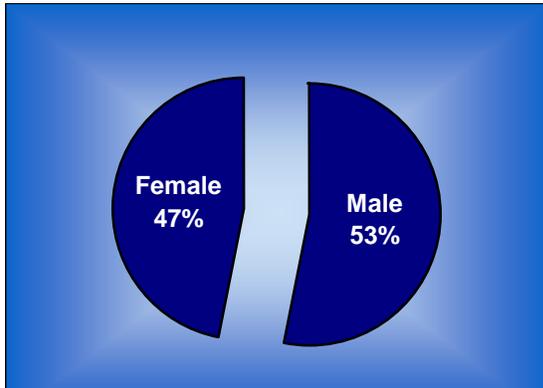
*“I liked that you got to meet the other children and their parents, and the teachers updates with things.”*

*“It gave me much pleasure in how I had to do with my family, in how the example they told us of 123 Magic and now I talk less, I repeat less. Thank you, learned much.”*

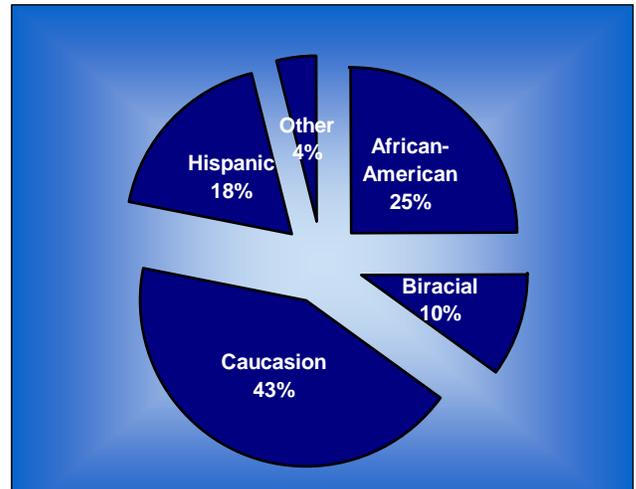
*“She has been a great source of information as far as programs for my Bright Star and for my family.”*

### ☆ III. Bright Star Demographics 2004-2005

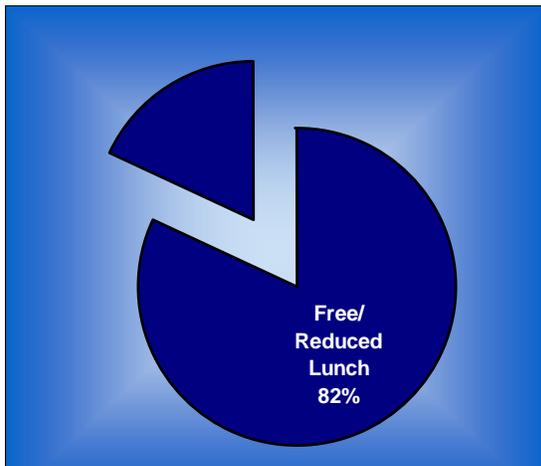
Gender



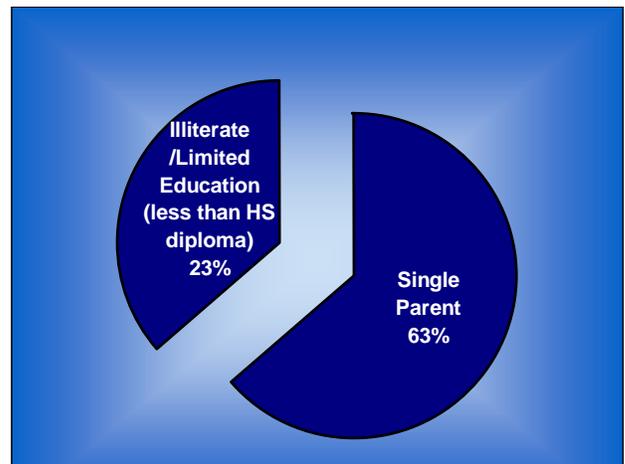
Ethnicity



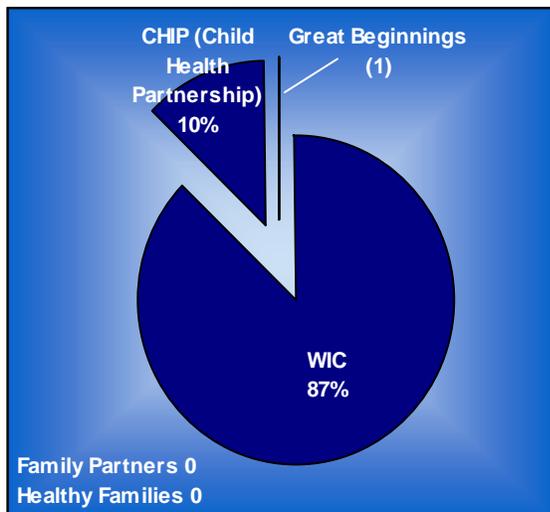
Free/Reduced Lunch



Family Characteristics



Received or Currently Receives Prevention/Early Intervention Services



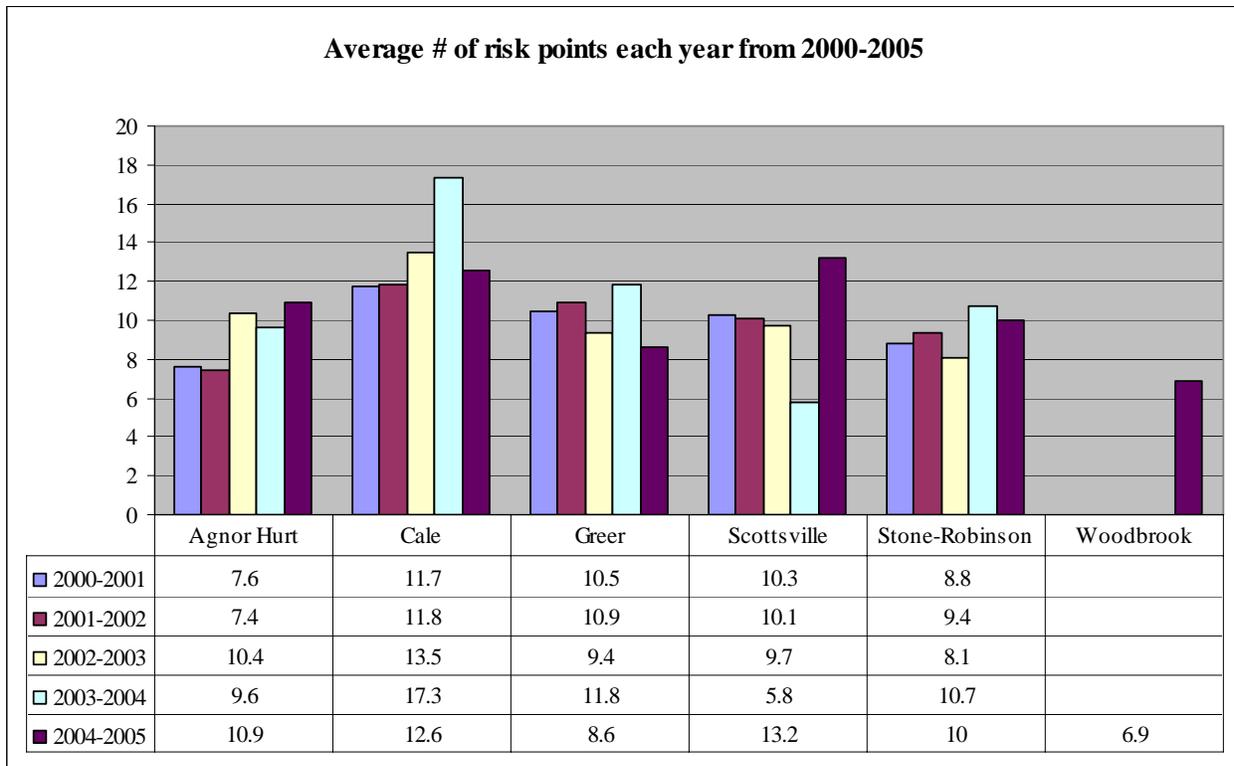
#### ESOL

There are no formal ESOL services provided in the preschool year; however, 23% of families across the program have limited English proficiency and in two of the Bright Stars classes the number is 50%.

## Risk Points

High risk points are associated with limited education and/or illiteracy of parent(s), unemployment, domestic violence, incarceration of a parent, previous child protective services intervention and/or foster care involvement, siblings having difficulty in school, mental health issues, poverty and living in a single parent family. One risk factor in a child’s environment may not necessarily have a negative impact. However, the more risk factors present, the more likely the child will suffer negative consequences. Risk factors are interactive and reinforce each other. So the presence of some risk factors may cause other risk factors to appear.

The graph below illustrates the 5 year trend of higher risk factors for families enrolled in each Bright Stars Program site.



## Attendance

Daily, on-time attendance is stressed with parents from the beginning of the application process. Children who don't attend regularly or come into class late miss opportunities to develop good attendance habits, to explore and master a variety of learning experiences and to develop positive social and behavioral skills.

2004-2005		
Grade	< 16 Absences	> 16 Absences
Bright Stars	66% (63/96)	34% (33/96)
Kindergarten	88% (53/60)	12% (7/60)
Grade I	92% (44/48)	8% (4/48)

2003 - 2004		
Bright Stars	84% (67/80)	16% (13/80)
Kindergarten	84%	16%
Grade I	89%	11%



Sue Tansey

*“I think the positive impact of the Bright Stars program can be measured in part by considering how our students would fare in Kindergarten (and beyond) if they had not been in Bright Stars. During year 2004-05 there were 8 children who entered Agnor-Hurt Bright Stars speaking little or no English. In addition, 6 children started the program and were soon found eligible to receive Speech and Language services. By June '05 all of these students had made remarkable progress in their English speech and language skills.”*

~ Sue Tansey  
 Bright Stars Family Coordinator

## ☆ IV. Activities

### Family Component

- Parents are the most important teachers their children will ever have. Consequently, meaningful parent involvement is a key factor in children's academic success. In order to facilitate parental involvement, each Bright Stars classroom has a family coordinator who assists in bridging the gap between home and school. This position provides for family-centered assessments, home-school services and referrals to other community resources. Some of the opportunities for parents to be involved during the Bright Stars year are open house at the beginning of school, home visits by the teacher and family coordinator, parent-teacher conferences, family events throughout the year including parent education, breakfasts and dinners, field trips and recreational activities.

### Educational Component

- High/Scope Curriculum supplemented by Virginia Foundations Blocks for Learning in Reading and Math
- Albemarle County's Best Practices for Preschool and other resources.
- Required coordination with Head Start for recruitment, training, program development and sign-off on VPI grant. (new in 2005)

### Social Services Component

- Comprehensive case management services for all enrolled children and their families
- Includes referrals for benefits, assistance with completing and renewing benefit applications, access to Career Center for education and employment opportunities, facilitating access to health, dental and mental health care, housing assistance, parent education, translation services, legal services and adult education.

### Health Component

- All children are required to have physical and dental health screenings and vision, hearing and speech screenings
- More extensive health services are provided by referral

### Transportation

- All children are provided with transportation to and from school daily
- Parents can receive transportation assistance to appointments and school events as needed

### Community Support

- Supporting organizations include: Albemarle County Schools, Martha Jefferson Hospital, Community Idea Stations (PBS), Book Baskets, Luck Stone Corporation, Thomas Jefferson Emergency Food Bank, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, Needlework Guild, Partnership for Children, CARES/MACAA, Westminster Presbyterian Church

### Community Outreach

- Participation in Albemarle County Day, Bright Stars 5K Run and Week of the Young Child



Beverly Anderson –  
Bright Stars TA -  
Agnor-Hurt

*“We can always count on the BS children coming prepared for Kindergarten. They know how to hold scissors, write their names, count, follow directions, walk in the halls, and are eager to learn. We have other children who come not knowing how to do these things, and we have to spend the first month teaching them, instead of working on other skills.”*

*~Greer Kindergarten  
Teacher*

## ☆ V. Our Bright Star Schools

### AGNOR-HURT



**The Bright Stars Program at Agnor-Hurt began in 1997.** This program has always been characterized as a culturally diverse classroom reflective of the diversity of the entire school and the neighborhood in which the school resides. This program has benefited from being located inside the building in the kindergarten/first grade wing where the four year-olds and their teachers can easily interact with other students and teachers and where the four year-olds can learn about school expectations.

### CALE



**The Bright Stars Program at Cale began in 1998.** During the first year the classroom was located within the school but has since been moved to a learning cottage. Cale expansion plans call for new Bright Stars classroom space in the main building. The program at Cale has been successful in integrating a growing number of Hispanic families. This has presented an opportunity and a challenge to staff to reach out to limited English speaking children and parents. For the past 3 years, Cale has received more applications than there are spaces available in the class. In 2004-2005, Cale received more than 30 applications for 16 openings.

### GREER



**The Bright Stars Program at Greer began in 1996.** Until recently, the program was housed in a learning cottage but in 2005-2005, school administrators found classroom space in the kindergarten wing. Greer Bright Stars reflects the highly diverse character of the rest of the school community. Many cultures and languages are represented by the families served including Hispanic, Indian, African and Asian. This cultural mix presents many opportunities and challenges for staff. This is also a highly mobile population, resulting in considerable variability in alumni.

### SCOTTSVILLE



**The Bright Stars Program in Scottsville began in 2000.** This program draws from rural areas around the community of Scottsville and enjoys connectivity with small town services such as the post office, fire department and library. Scottsville Bright Stars has strong parental involvement. Family Nights are well attended by parents and extended family. The classroom is located in a learning cottage beside the main school building and close to the kindergarten and Grade 1 classes.

### STONE-ROBINSON



**Stone-Robinson is where Bright Stars first began in 1995** under the leadership of a team of local government and school employees. They established a strong connection with the Curry School at UVa, ensuring that program implementation was grounded in the best early childhood developmental/educational research and practices. Stone-Robinson set the standard for programs that incorporated exceptional, certified instructional staff, concentrated outreach to families, and connectivity and visibility in the community. The oldest alumni are in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

## WOODBROOK



**The Woodbrook Bright Stars Program began in 2004 and is the newest Bright Stars program in the County.** The class is housed in the main school building in the kindergarten/first grade wing allowing for ease of access among the early grade levels. The instructional staff has a combined 36+ years of teaching experience. This program reflects the diversity of the urban area in which it is located, as many of the families live in apartment complexes off Rio Road East and Rt. 29. It is anticipated that this program will receive more applications than can be accepted into the program in the coming years.

*“The Bright Star alumni are a valuable part of our classroom community as they help each other and work together to solve problems. As far as instruction, the former Bright Stars challenge me as a teacher. When I introduce something to the class, the Bright Stars are the first ones to raise their hands and say, 'Oh I did that last year in Bright Stars.' This challenges me to take the instruction to another level, a deeper level of understanding.”*

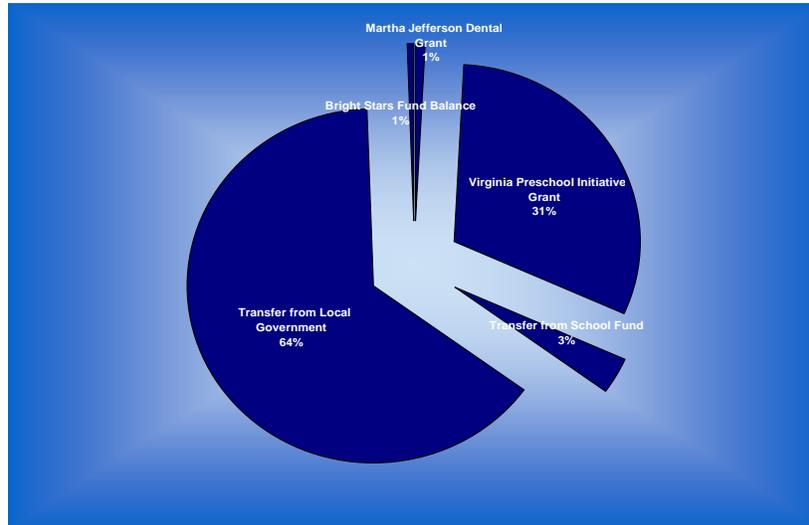
**~ Michelle N. Hall, Kindergarten Teacher**



Jodi Miller – Bright Stars  
Teacher - Greer

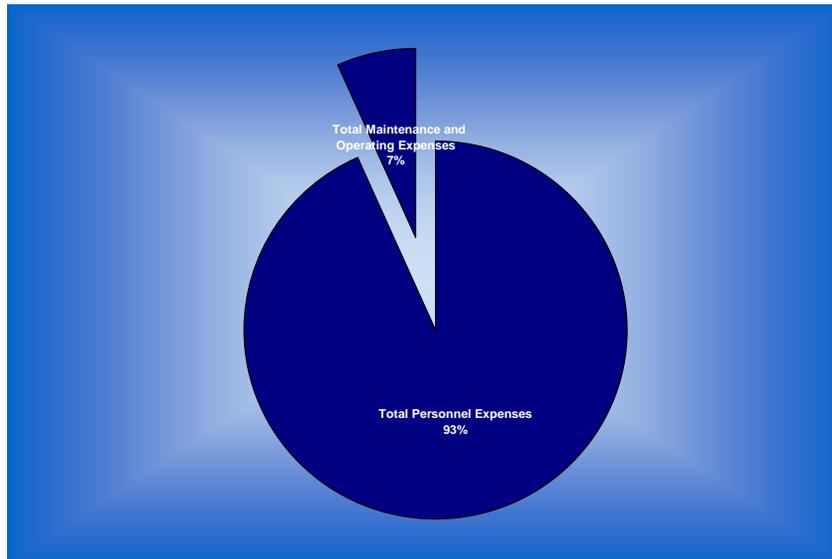
## ☆ VI. Program Budget

### Program Revenues



Bright Stars Revenues FY2004-05	
Martha Jefferson Dental Grant	5,000
Virginia Preschool Initiative Grant	204,561
Transfer from School Fund	23,000
Transfer from Local Government	427,037
Fund Balance Used to Balance Budget	4,603
<b>Total Bright Stars Revenues</b>	<b>664,201</b>

### Program Expenses



Bright Stars Expenses FY2004-05	
Total Personnel Expenses	619,494
Total Maintenance and Operating Expenses	44,707
<b>Total Bright Stars Expenses</b>	<b>664,201</b>