

READY FOR KINDERGARTEN!



The State of Local School Readiness in Charlottesville and Albemarle

The Impact of School Readiness on:
**Economy ❖ Education ❖ Family
Workforce ❖ Community**



READY FOR SCHOOL. READY FOR LIFE.

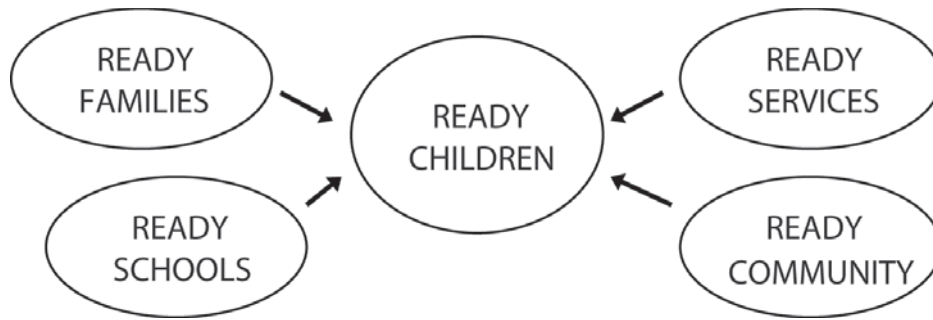
“The years from birth to age five are critical for developing the cognitive and social skills in children required for school achievement and eventual life success.

...[a] stronger, sustained commitment to a seamless continuum of child care and early childhood education will not only benefit every child, but also our communities, our workforce and Virginia’s economy.”

—Governor Timothy Kaine

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Getting Ready

When families, schools, services and communities all provide the necessary supports, services and community-wide commitment to school readiness, our youngest citizens will be ready for school.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Charlottesville and Albemarle County have a long-standing commitment to high-quality education, healthy families and economic vitality. Because healthy, well-educated children are key to building a strong community, our localities support a wide array of services and educational institutions that have significantly enhanced the quality of life for all our citizens.

In 2007, Smart Beginnings, an initiative of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children, was funded through a major grant from the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) and private and public contributions with the United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area as the grant manager and fiscal agent. Our local Smart Beginnings initiative is one of twenty public/private Smart Beginnings collaboratives working to increase school readiness in Virginia. The VECF goals for Smart Beginnings statewide include:

- Creating private/public partnerships across all sectors of the community to ensure an effective system of services for young children through coordination, oversight, and accountability.
- Providing families of children birth to five with access to the information, supports and services needed to help them promote their child's optimal development and school readiness.
- Developing community-supported voluntary systems of accessible, high quality early care and education in a variety of settings, for all children birth to age five.

A child's readiness to start school greatly affects his or her later success in life. Families, schools and communities provide the essential supports, all of which play crucial roles in children's success.

Unfortunately, 20% of children in Virginia arrive at kindergarten not ready.¹ All too often, children that start behind, stay behind.² Locally, 160 children—19% in Charlottesville and 9% in Albemarle—enter kindergarten in need of additional academic assistance.¹ 13% of local children arrive at school with no prior preschool or child care experiences. Many of these children enter kindergarten behind their peers in meeting academic benchmarks and remain behind by the end of their first year of school.^{3,4}

A national cost/benefit analysis found that every dollar invested in high quality early childhood programs deliver a rate of return of investment that ranges between 3% and 17%.⁵ Furthermore, children who don't succeed in school create enormous economic costs, including higher rates of repeating grades, increased special education needs, lower graduation rates and fewer employment opportunities. Each year a child repeats a grade in Virginia it costs taxpayers an additional \$7,654.⁶ In 2007-08, 58 local children were retained in kindergarten alone,^{3,4} for an estimated total cost of \$443,900, based on state figures.

High quality early care and education services that increase access for those who need it most yield the highest gains.

Since its inception in 2007, Smart Beginnings services and initiatives successfully increased the quality of local early care and education programs *and* the number of support services to families. Smart Beginnings has engaged new partners to increase our community's commitment to early childhood development. Additionally, it has established an analytical framework for evaluating the effectiveness of quality early learning programs and their efforts to improve school readiness.

Smart Beginnings' initial analysis of local school readiness data and services has found that:

- **Early learning program experiences prior to kindergarten correlated strongly with an increase in language and literacy readiness for economically disadvantaged children.** 83% of disadvantaged children with early learning program experiences achieved the language and literacy benchmarks during the fall of kindergarten. In comparison, only 60% of disadvantaged children *without* prior learning program experiences met those benchmarks.^{3,4}
- **For disadvantaged children living in Charlottesville's subsidized housing neighborhoods, the rate of public preschool program enrollment varies greatly, from 50-100%.** Additionally, because spaces are limited for 3-year-olds, only 19% of these 3-year-olds attend a public preschool program.⁴
- **High-quality child care is limited.** Only four local child care centers and preschools are nationally accredited.⁸ Furthermore, none of the 14 centers participating in Virginia's new five-star quality rating system were rated above three stars.⁹
- **Child care issues have a significant impact on the workplace.** Based on a Smart Beginnings employee survey of 13 local employers, over 52% of employees have missed work due to child care-related issues. Employees' top child care concerns are cost, availability and quality of care.⁸ See appendix.¹

This report, developed by the Smart Beginnings Leadership Council, assesses Charlottesville and Albemarle's state of school readiness and its impact on the workforce and economy through an examination of existing information and synthesis of new data and analysis.

The 2009 recommendations from the Smart Beginnings Leadership Council's Measure School Readiness work group address three key areas:

- 1. Increase the quality and accessibility of child care and family support services.**
 - Expand access to voluntary public or private preschool programs to serve all low-income 3- and 4-year-olds.
 - Increase to 60% the percentage of child care centers that participate in the local Seal of Quality Child Care (which works in conjunction with the new *Virginia Star Quality*

Initiative) a voluntary quality rating system administered by Children, Youth & Family Services.

- Provide additional family support services, such as home visitors and family support workers, in Charlottesville and Albemarle County.
- 2. Improve the community's ability to measure school readiness and increase program accountability through enhanced data analysis and reporting.**
 - Support local school systems' joint analysis and reporting on school readiness indicators, including expansion of the number of school readiness indicators evaluated.
 - Encourage public preschool programs to collect and provide common data on school readiness indicators.
 - Determine the number of County 3 and 4-year-olds in low-income neighborhoods attending preschool.
 - Determine the number of family home providers and number of children served by these providers in our communities.
 - 3. Strengthen collaborative partnerships among private and public entities, in order to enhance the efficiency of services and maximize resources.**
 - Increase public schools and child care centers collaborative efforts to share curricula and improve transition into school activities.
 - Enhance employer partnerships that increase employee access to quality, affordable child care.
 - Support a partnership of public preschool programs and housing organizations to increase preschool participation.
 - Ensure that private and public policies and funding decisions prioritize school readiness services and affordable, accessible quality child care.

Along with new findings and recommendations, this report raises additional questions that we, as a community, still need to answer. Our community has made significant strides in enhancing early care and education services, but we have much further to go. We know what helps children succeed. Working together, public and private partners will ensure that all 7,700 young children in our community have a Smart Beginning.

2. WHAT IS SMART BEGINNINGS?

Background

In 1999, the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families created the Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children, composed of 15 human service organizations and City and County school systems, to implement a community-wide partnership focused on children aged 0-6 and their families. Thanks to this forward-thinking effort, Charlottesville and Albemarle were poised to take advantage of a new approach to address the obstacles that have limited our children's readiness for school, contributed to the achievement gap and created workforce challenges.

In 2007, the Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children, United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area, University of Virginia's Curry School of Education and over 20 local community and business leaders formed a partnership that received a \$400,000 grant from the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation to develop a local public/private school readiness initiative called *Smart Beginnings*. This partnership was an early recipient of the Smart Beginnings grant opportunity and is now one of 20 Smart Beginnings collaboratives in Virginia. Smart Beginnings' goal is to make our community a place where children grow up healthy and arrive at school prepared to succeed.

Early Successes

Since 2007, the local Smart Beginnings initiative has served over 1,600 children through collaboration with multiple community service organizations and educational institutions. Highlights include:

- 150% increase (from 8 to 20 providers) in participation by child care center and family home providers in the Seal of Quality Child Care, a local voluntary Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).



Seal of Quality Child Care

- Established two new family educational support workers, one for Charlottesville City Schools Public Preschool Program children and one for Albemarle County Latino families with young children.
- 315 early developmental screenings for children 18 months to three years old.
- Over 1,000 books and parent literacy resources distributed to families.
- Three new school and community pilot partnerships to enhance children's transition into kindergarten.
- Increased public awareness and education about the importance of early learning and quality child care through a presentation from Arthur Rolnick, Vice President of Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank; TV and radio public service announcements; and a strong print, television and radio presence.
- Creation of a highly engaged Leadership Council of 27 community leaders from financial institutions, higher education, local hospitals, City and County governments, businesses, Chamber of Commerce, public school systems, civic organizations, media outlets and community services.
- Active participation with regional and state networks to advance school readiness efforts.

This report is a product of the first questions raised by the Smart Beginnings Leadership Council. What is school readiness? Where are we as a community? In 2007, there was no single definition of school readiness and no accepted comprehensive criteria for indicators of readiness at the state and local level.

Two years later, the state's new school readiness task force has developed a definition, framework and preliminary indicators. The local Smart Beginnings Leadership Council has mobilized and engaged business, school and community partners to utilize national and local research-based indicators to analyze existing data and gather new data. This will assist in determining the impact of our services, assessing need and beginning development of a local baseline.

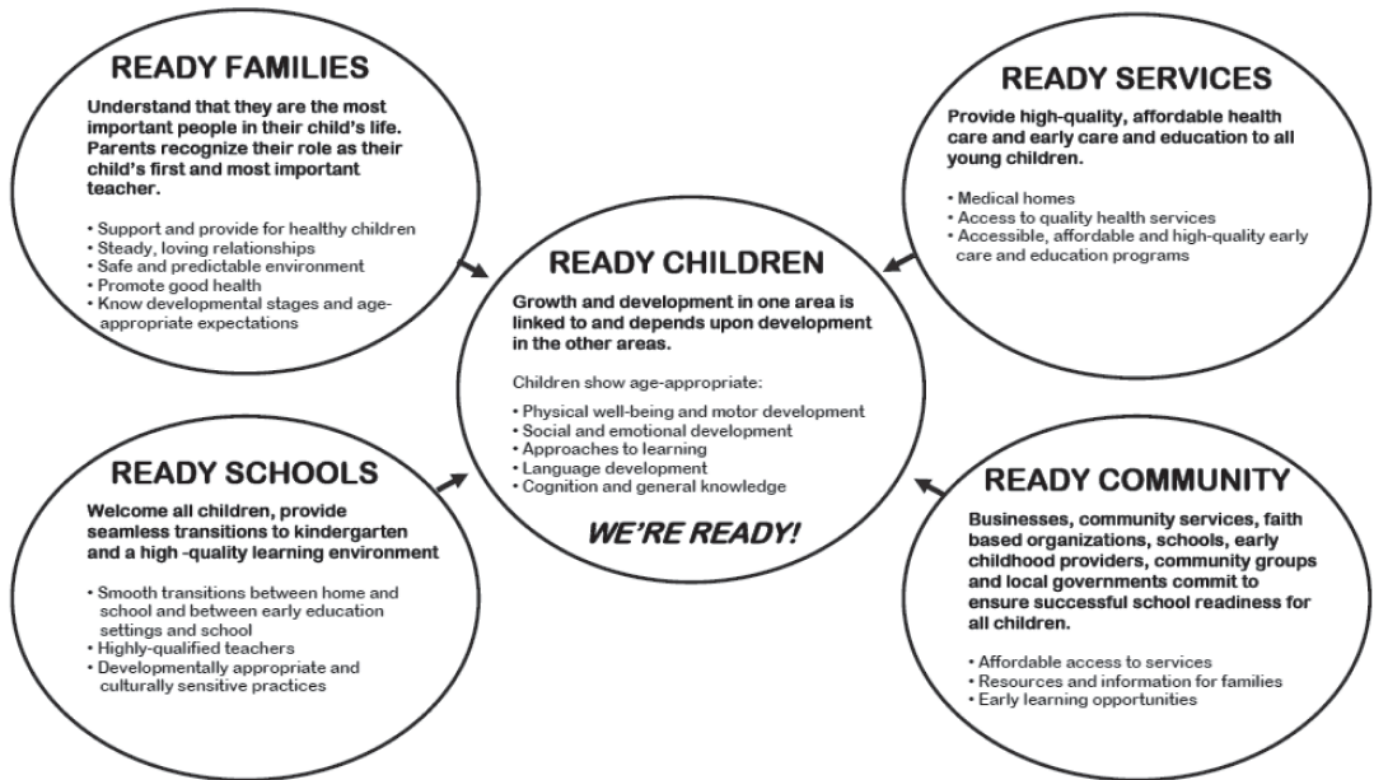


Figure 1: School Readiness Model

What Is a “School Ready” Community?

We know what children, families, schools and the community need to provide to ensure a child’s readiness for school. The *Getting Ready* research states that children “...need to be surrounded by strong structures in their lives: Caring families, Supportive communities, Ready schools and Effective services.... (and) Efforts to improve school readiness are most effective when they embrace the rich cultural and language backgrounds of families and children.” A young child’s readiness for school is influenced by a child’s development in five areas:

1. Physical health and motor development
2. Social and emotional development
3. Approaches to learning
4. Language development
5. Cognition and general knowledge¹

For our children to be ready for school, our community needs to be ready to prepare them for success. A child’s readiness for school is the result of: **Ready Children, Ready Families, Ready Services, Ready Schools, Ready Communities.** Each component plays an essential role in school readiness and no one component can stand on its own. Smart Beginnings’ initiatives and goals address the five areas.¹¹

Importance of Starting Early

The first five years of life have an enormous impact on how well children learn and grow throughout their lifetime. Early experiences have tremendous influence on the development of the brain’s neuron connections. This “wiring” impacts the capacity to learn and develop social, emotional and cognitive skills. In the first three years of life, the majority of a child’s language development occurs.¹²

“The best investment in economic development that government and the private sector can make is in the healthy development of children.”¹⁴

**—Arthur Rolnick
Senior Vice President and Director of Research
Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis**

During this critical time of development, we invest the least in children. The research shows that early learning experiences, the quality of young children’s environment and social experience have a decisive, long-lasting impact on children’s successful development and their ability to learn.¹³ However, during this period of rapid growth, communities invest the least in children’s education, care and services.⁶

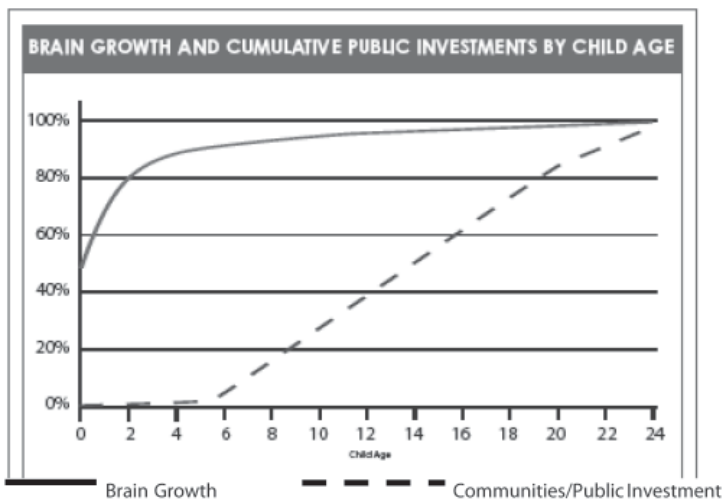


Figure 2: Gap between Early Childhood Development and Public Investment⁶

Economic Costs of “Not Ready”

Numerous economic studies conclude that there are significant costs when children are not prepared to succeed in school.

A child that enters kindergarten behind all too often remains behind throughout school and into adulthood at tremendous cost to society. These costs include higher rates of repeating grades, increased special education needs, dropping out of high school, committing crimes, lower wages and higher consumption of social services.^{6, 13}

Early identification and support services for children with special needs, at least 2 years before they enter kindergarten, can produce savings of \$30,000–\$100,000 per child.⁷

Each year that a student repeats a grade it costs the taxpayers of Virginia an additional \$7,654. In 2005-06 in Virginia, 9,000 children in kindergarten through third grade repeated a grade, at a cost to the public of \$70 million.⁶

In 2007-2008, 58 local kindergarten children were retained. Albemarle County Public Schools retained 26 (3%) children in kindergarten and Charlottesville City Schools retained 32 (9%) children in kindergarten for an estimated total cost of \$443,900, based on state figures.^{3, 4}

Future Workforce Development

Preparing for school success is critical to ensuring a workforce ready to compete in today’s business environment.

Adults that participated in high quality early childhood programs received higher wages than their peers.

By age 27, children in low-income families that participated

in high-quality preschool programs earned \$2,000 more per month than nonparticipants.^{5, 14}

Quality early learning experiences provide the necessary foundation for successful employees. Before age five, children develop the foundation for desirable business skills such as critical thinking, teamwork and communication.¹⁵

“Programs that put real money into intensive preschooling pay off -- in productive workers. To stay competitive, companies need an educated workforce.”¹⁶

In recognition of the critical importance of child care on the workforce, in 2008 the Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution, *Support for Child Care & Education Success*. The resolution stated that:

“. . . support for public and private partnership investment in proven, successful child care programs as a critical means of strengthening the immediate effectiveness and competitiveness of today’s Virginia’s workforce while ensuring a stronger, more competitive, successful Virginia workforce in the future.”¹⁷

Quality early learning and education environments, whether in the home or with child care providers, are essential for later school success. Quality early education can reduce the achievement gap, if begun with babies, toddlers and preschoolers.¹⁸

Over 40 years of research shows that quality early childhood education programs have substantial and measurable economic benefits for individuals, families, schools and communities. This is especially true for children from low-income families that participate in high-quality preschool programs:

- Over 65% graduated from high school compared with 45 % of nonparticipants.
- 70% had fewer criminal offenses as compared with a control group ten years later.
- The majority had higher cognitive test scores from the toddler years to age 21.^{13, 19}

Impact of Family and Poverty Factors

Family characteristics and the presence of multiple risk factors have a significant impact on preschool enrollment and a child’s development. Four-year-olds are three times more likely to be enrolled in preschool if their mother is a high school graduate. The combination of multiple family risk factors, such as limited parent education, single parenthood, unemployment, poverty, incarcerated parent, domestic violence, mental health

issues or foster care placement dramatically increases the likelihood that a child will suffer academically without early education and intervention services.²⁰

As stated in Albemarle Bright Stars (public preschool program) 2007 Annual Report: “All children (in the program) are identified with individual or family risk factors that could result in poor school performance over the years. One risk factor in a child’s environment may not necessarily have a negative impact on a child’s growth and development. However, the more risk factors present, the more likely the child will suffer negative consequences in school and in life unless an intervention occurs that diminishes the impact of the risk. Risk factors are interactive and reinforce one another.”²¹

“Poverty is a strong predictor of delayed cognitive development due to the many risk factors associated with (it), including lack of quality health and child care...Poverty before age five is associated with fewer total years of schooling, school failure, and dropout. Children in low-income families have more health and nutrition problems than non-poor counterparts, two factors leading to a lack of school readiness.”²²

Almost 30% of Virginia’s four-year-olds come from single-parent households and 15% of four year olds are living in poverty. 43% of Virginia’s four-year-olds were not enrolled in preschool in 2005 and children from families below the poverty level had the lowest rate of preschool enrollment.²³

54% of public school children receive free or reduced lunch assistance in Charlottesville and 21% of children receive free or reduced lunch assistance in Albemarle. A multi-year trend shows an increase in both the number of children living in poverty and the number of children receiving free or reduced lunch assistance in the City of Charlottesville.²⁴

Although poverty is not always an indicator of a child’s school readiness, low-income children have been found to start school with a 5,000-word vocabulary while middle and upper class children often begin with 20,000 words.¹²

“Children from poor families score lower on standardized tests for verbal ability, and have lower cognitive skills such as reading, number skills, problem solving, creativity, and memory...All syntheses of research on variables that affect outcomes for young children conclude that poverty is the one most consistently associated with “compromised child development.”¹

Although disadvantaged children are the least likely to access high-quality child care programs, recent research

findings concluded that increasing access to high-quality preschool can narrow the achievement gap.^{6, 25}

High-Quality Accessible, Affordable Child Care: A Critical Priority

In Charlottesville and Albemarle, quality child care is limited.

- 6% (4) of local child care centers and preschools are nationally accredited.⁸
- 26% (17) of local child care centers participate in the local voluntary quality rating system (Seal of Quality Child Care) and serve 17% (1,200) of total children 0-5 years in our area.²⁶
- 6% (485) of total children 0-5 years are served by the three public preschool programs.^{3, 4, 27}
- Fourteen local child care centers are participating in Virginia’s new five-star quality rating system, Virginia Star Quality Initiative, the state equivalent to the local Seal of Quality Child Care. In the initial ratings released in June 2009, five centers were rated at two stars and nine centers were rated at three stars.²⁸

60% of Charlottesville residents that responded, noted that “expanding and improving affordable child care services” to be a “very important” strategic goal. Non-Caucasian households were almost twice as likely to report a need for child care for a child under the age of 1; they were 1 1/2 times more likely to need child care for a child between 1 and 6 years old.²⁹

The 2006 City of Charlottesville Neighborhood Planning Needs Survey results indicated that improved quality of education in schools was the top strategic goal and 72% of residents indicated that improved affordable child care services were very important. 30% of respondents reported that assistance to help parents prepare kids for kindergarten was also very much needed.³⁰

In the Fall of 2006, the Human Services Budget Advisory Committee of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families (CCF) recommended this strategic priority: “Local service providers should work together strategically to expand and/or create programming aimed at addressing access to affordable, early care and education for children from birth through age 5, which meets an agreed upon minimum standard of quality.”³¹

The existence of reliable child care is vital for working parents and a strong workforce. The national rate of absenteeism is on the rise, with 24% of unscheduled employee absences due to family issues, including child care problems.³²

Employee Perspectives: Child Care and Workforce Impact, a recent Smart Beginnings survey, was conducted between November 2008-January 2009 by 13 local employers. 62% of employees noted that child care problems have an impact on their work schedules and over half (52%) of those responding missed work to handle a child care issue. The respondents cited 1) cost, 2) lack of openings and 3) limited hours and low quality of care as their primary concerns.

“The cost (of child care) is just too much and I can’t afford it and because of that, I feel my child won’t get the early education she deserves to get her ready for school!”¹⁰

—Smart Beginnings Employee Survey
Appendix 1

3. OUR LOCAL SCHOOL READINESS LANDSCAPE

Demographics

The City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County serve diverse urban and rural communities. While the communities share many services, they maintain separate local governments and public school systems.

School Readiness Services for Families with Young Children

A wide range of additional services for children 0 to 5 years old exist to help young children be prepared for school. A majority of the service providers are collaborating partners of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children. These services include family support (home visiting programs and school-based family support workers), early developmental screenings, social service supports, prenatal/birth services, parent education and resources, literacy and therapeutic supports.

These school readiness services are supported by private, United Way, local, state and federal government funds. Albemarle and Charlottesville local governments make a significant funding commitment to early childhood development.

A portion of the city and county investment in early childhood development is funded through the joint Agency

Budget Review Process (ABRT). The programs funded include: Children, Youth & Family Services (CYFS) Child Care Quality and Play Partners program, home visiting collaborative (CYFS, Jefferson Area CHIP, Arc of the Piedmont), Monticello Area Community Action Agency (MACAA) Head Start and the United Way Child Care Scholarship program. From FY05 to FY10, County funding increased by 27% (\$428,500 to \$544,300) and City funding increased by 24% (\$516,000 to \$638,100). There was no increase FY09 to FY10³⁴

Family Support Services

Research has shown that direct parent support services such as home visitors and family support workers, separately and in conjunction with quality child care programs, have been found to have a significant impact on a family’s ability to prepare children for kindergarten.

In 2008, Partnership for Children’s home visiting program partners served over 660 families with children 0-5 years old.³⁵ Additionally, each public preschool program includes a family support component. In Albemarle County, a family support worker serves each public preschool program. However, in Charlottesville, there are only two family support workers serving six programs.

2007-2008 Children in Charlottesville and Albemarle

Children	Charlottesville	Albemarle	Total
0-5 years ³³	2,472	5,271	7,743
K-12 public school enrollment ^{3,4}	4,084	12,581	16,612
Kindergarten enrollment	366	1,021	1,387
Disadvantaged* students ^{3,4}	2,189 (54%)	2,617 (21%)	4,776
Limited English Proficient (LEP)** in public school ^{3,4}	400 (10%) (45 languages spoken)	918 (7%) (76 languages spoken)	1,131

Figure 3: 2007-2008 Children in Charlottesville and Albemarle

***Disadvantaged** – Students that receive free or reduced school lunches funded by the National School Lunch Program. Families with incomes up to 185% of the poverty level qualify.

****Limited English Proficient (LEP)**: Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or “LEP.”

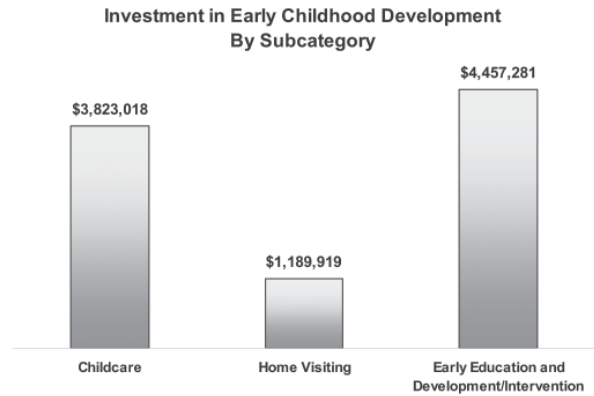
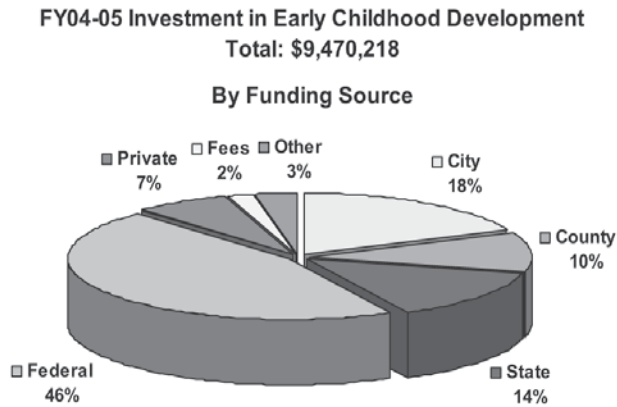


Figure 4: Local investment in Early Childhood Development³⁴

In addition, businesses, libraries, civic and faith-based organizations provide information and supports such as tutoring, family assistance, education and parenting information. Also, many community-based groups and organizations (such as Charlottesville/Albemarle Abundant Life Ministries, Creciendo Juntos, Quality Community Council, Urban Vision and Westhaven Nursing Clinic) provide a range of neighborhood and family supports that often include educational components for families with young children.

Local Child Care

In Charlottesville and Albemarle, various local child care options include child care centers, public and private preschools and family home child care providers.

Seal of Quality Child Care

The Seal of Quality Child Care is a local voluntary rating improvement system for child care centers and family home providers. It is an initiative of the Partnership for Children implemented by Children, Youth & Family Services. 17 centers and three family home providers are voluntary

participants in the program and together serve over 1,200 children.²⁶

National Accreditation

Four local child care centers are nationally accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the largest national accrediting association.⁸

Local Child Care Costs

- The average cost per child at a licensed child care center is \$160/week or \$8,320 annually.
- The average cost per child at an unlicensed family home provider is \$112/week or \$5,824 annually.³⁷

2008 Child Care Scholarship Assistance

The Albemarle and Charlottesville Department of Social Services and United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area provided child care scholarship assistance to 649 families in FY2007.

- 221 families received child care assistance from Albemarle Department of Social Services.³⁸

2009 Charlottesville and Albemarle Child Care Providers

2009 Charlottesville/Albemarle Providers	Number	Number of children	Ages	Licensed/Certified, Seal of Quality Child Care
Child care centers/ preschools	69 Charlottesville: 29 Albemarle: 40	unknown	0-5 year-olds	Licensed/certified/exempt: 69 Seal of Quality Child Care: 17 Virginia Star Quality Initiative: 14 National accreditation (NAEYC): 4
Family home providers (registered with Virginia Department of Social Services, VDSS)	72 Albemarle: 35 Charlottesville: 37	unknown	unknown	<u>Charlottesville</u> 12 licensed, 25 unlicensed <u>Albemarle</u> 12 licensed, 23 unlicensed Seal of Quality Child Care: 3
Public preschool programs Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Program MACAA Head Start Albemarle Bright Stars	3	485 Charlottesville: 169 Head Start: 128 Albemarle: 188	3 & 4 year-olds	State and Federal regulations

Figure 5: Local Child Care Providers, Number of Children Served and Certifications^{3, 4, 8, 26, 27, 36} (See Appendix 2 licensing category descriptions.)

- 351 families received child care assistance from Charlottesville Department of Social Services.³⁹
- 77 families received child care assistance from United Way.⁴⁰

Findings:

- The Virginia Department of Social Services tracks family home providers through voluntary registration and licensing. The total number of local unlicensed and unregistered family home providers is unknown because many family home providers choose not to register with the Department of Social Services.
- The child care scholarship data tracks children 0-12, and does not differentiate between families with children, 0 to 5 years old.

Local Public Preschool Programs

The three local public preschool programs (Albemarle County Bright Stars, Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Programs, Monticello Area Community Action Agency Head Start) are free to families, state or federally funded and primarily serve low-income children or children with identified risk factors. The Charlottesville and Albemarle public preschool programs utilize income as one of the factors to qualify for public preschool enrollment. The programs primarily serve 4 year-olds. The majority of disadvantaged children's program experiences prior to kindergarten (Pre-K experience) are in public preschool programs.

The three local public preschool programs and enrollment in 2007-2008:

- Albemarle County Bright Stars (4 year olds)—188 students⁴⁴
- Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Programs (4 year olds, 1 three-year old classroom)^{3, 43}
- MACAA Head Start (3 and 4 year olds)—128 students (45 Charlottesville, 83 Albemarle)²⁷

Public Preschool Assessments and Data Collection

As required by state and federal funding, Albemarle County Bright Stars, Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Programs and Monticello Area Community Action Agency (MACAA) Head Start enroll students based on family need and risk factors. Public preschool programs collect extensive data related to family and child factors such as children's developmental domains and academic abilities.

Albemarle Bright Stars student measures:⁴⁴

- Prekindergarten PALS (language and literacy)
- Math Quick Screen (SNAP)
- Personal and Social Development Tool (based on Virginia Foundation Blocks)

Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Programs student measures:⁴³

- Prekindergarten PALS (language and literacy)
- CORE and HighScope/Child Observation Record
- Devereux Social Emotional Assessment Tool for Children
- CORE -Math and logic

MACAA Head Start student measures:²⁷

- Prekindergarten PALS (language and literacy)
- Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R) for developmental screening
- Fluharty-2 for speech/language screening or DIAL, Preschool Language Scale Screening
- Pure-tone Audiometric screening for hearing screening
- Lea Symbols for vision screening
- Mental Health Checklist
- Heights, weights and assessment of growth and under/over weight issues
- Four domains of social/emotional development, physical development, cognitive development, language development

Public Preschool Programs Transition into Kindergarten Initiatives

School-initiated transition to kindergarten activities have a significant positive impact on a child's school readiness.⁴¹ Transition into kindergarten activities prior to the start of school may include:

- Parent involvement opportunities
- Parent and child resource information
- Home visits and calls
- Summer kindergarten orientation camps
- Kindergarten orientation meetings
- Parent and child visits to the school and classroom
- Early and on-going two-way communication between families and school
- School communication and information-sharing with child care providers
- Formal school transition plans shared with families

Currently, there is no coordinated transition into kindergarten activities between private child care providers and the public schools. However, each public preschool program has a plan for transition into kindergarten and provides extensive transitional activities for both parents and students.

Public Preschool Programs and Neighborhood Participation

2008-2009 Public Preschool Program Participation in Charlottesville Neighborhoods

The charts below indicate the number of Charlottesville 3 and 4-year-old children enrolled in public preschool programs (MACAA Head Start and Charlottesville City Schools Public Preschool Programs) from designated low income or subsidized housing neighborhoods. The Charlottesville neighborhoods and areas included in the data collection: Westhaven, South First Street, Riverside

Drive, Sixth Street, Madison Avenue, Michie Drive, Friendship Court and Blue Ridge Commons.

10 (19%) 3 year-olds are enrolled in public preschool programs.

(9 MACAA Head Start, 1 Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Programs)

54 (93%) 4 year-olds are enrolled in public preschool programs.^{27, 43}

(11 MACAA Head Start, 43 Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Programs)

Total Number of Three and Four Year Olds Living in Designated Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Total No. 3 Yr Olds	Total No. 4 Yr Olds	Total by Neighborhood	4 Yr Old Enrollment
Westhaven	13	14	27	50%
S First St	6	7	13	57%
Riverside Dr, Sixth St, Madison Ave, Michie Drive	9	5	14	100%
Friendship Court	13	18	31	100%
Blue Ridge Commons	13	14	27	86%
Total	54	58	112	

Figure 6: Charlottesville public preschool program enrollment by neighborhood

Data provided by Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Association, Urban Vision, Blue Ridge Commons, Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Program and MACAA Head Start. When the data sample was very small, it was summarized with multiple neighborhoods. There was some variability due to ages of children when data was collected and transience of families.)

2008-2009 Public Preschool Program Participation in Albemarle Neighborhoods

Albemarle County Bright Stars programs identified 13 low-income or subsidized housing neighborhoods that it serves. Bright Stars serves 54 children from these neighborhoods. The total number of three and four-year-olds in these neighborhoods is unknown. It was noted that there is a potential unmet need for the Wilton Farms neighborhood because the designated elementary school does not provide a public preschool program.⁴⁴

Findings:

- The local public preschool programs utilize different assessment and measurement tools.
- There is no common data collection or assessment process for private child care center or family home providers.
- Of the 112 children (three and four year olds) that live in the Charlottesville designated neighborhoods, 93% of four year olds are enrolled in public preschool programs and 19% of three year olds are enrolled in public preschool programs.
- Each public preschool program conducts outreach

efforts to publicize, inform and recruit eligible children.

- Blue Ridge Commons and Friendship Court neighborhoods both have 100% enrollment of 4 year olds. Both locations have full-time neighborhood-based community organizations that actively recruit children for public preschool programs.
- In 2008-2009, Charlottesville City Schools Preschool program provided their first three-year-old classroom. 72 children applied for 12 spaces.⁴³
- The total number of public preschool spaces available for three year olds is unknown.



Kindergarten registration

4. ARE OUR CHILDREN READY? WHAT OUR LOCAL DATA TELL US

Early Learning Experiences Prior to Kindergarten

In 2006, the Virginia Department of Education required local school systems to collect information about children’s participation in formal early care and education programs called prekindergarten (Pre-K) experience data. The prekindergarten experience categories include child care centers, school-affiliated public preschool programs, Head Start, private child care providers, home-based child care, none, other or unknown.

This data collection effort provides extensive new data that is tremendously valuable in analyzing the impact of Pre-K program experiences on school readiness. However, the value is somewhat mitigated because it does not:

- Ask for the length of time with a prekindergarten program or provider.
- Ask for any early learning experiences prior to public preschool programs participation
- Request names of providers to determine if they are affiliated with quality rating improvement programs.
- Include prekindergarten experience categories for home-based educational services such as family home visiting programs.
- Ensure accuracy during with the data collection and entry process. The information may be completed by parents, kindergarten teachers, school administrators or public preschool directors. Therefore, there may be some variability with interpretations of the categories.
- Ensure completeness, as there is a higher-than-ideal portion of responses of responses of “unknown/other,” which reduces the accuracy of the estimates of the percentages of children who have a Pre-K experience.



Seal of Quality Child Care staff and child care director



MACAA Head Start

2007-2008 Pre-K Program Experience Data Findings

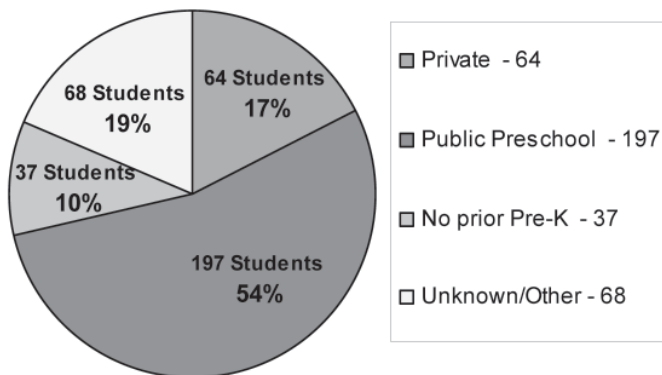
2007-2008 Kindergarten Children	Charlottesville	Albemarle	Total
Kindergarten enrollment	366	1,021	1,387
Pre-K Experience*	250 (68%)	771(76%)	1,021 (74%)
Disadvantaged students	222 (61%)	292 (29%)	514 (37%)
Disadvantaged students+Pre-K Experience	164	199	363 (26%)
Disadvantaged students+ Public preschool Pre-K Experience	150	171	321 (23%)

Figure 7: 2007-2008 Kindergarten Children in Charlottesville and Albemarle^{3, 4}

*Pre-K experience = prior to kindergarten program experience in private or public child care centers, preschools or family home child care providers.

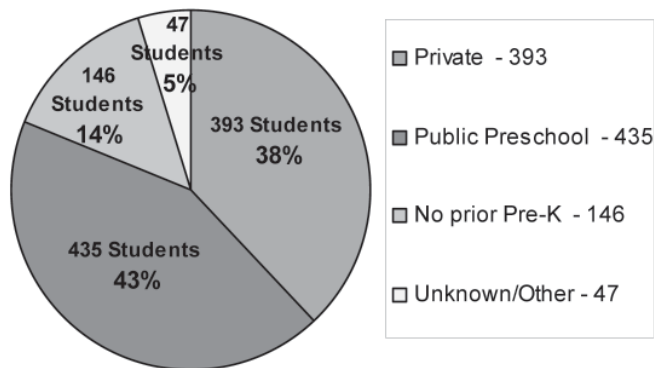
2007-2008 Charlottesville and Albemarle Kindergarten Students Enrollment and Pre-K Experiences

**2007-2008 City Kindergarten Enrollment
and Pre-K Experiences**



City – 366 total enrollment*

**2007-2008 County Kindergarten Enrollment
and Pre-K Experiences**



County – 1,021 total enrollment*

Private = Pre-K Experiences with private child care centers, preschools, family home child care providers

Public Preschool = Pre-K experiences with Head Start, Albemarle Bright Stars, Charlottesville City Schools preschool programs

No Pre-K Experience = Response provided was “none”

Unknown/Other = No response provided or other program listed

*Totals include all students enrolled in kindergarten at any time during the 2007-08 academic year.

Figure 8: 2007-2008 City and County Kindergarten Enrollment and Pre-K Experiences^{3,4}

Findings:

- A majority of City (71%) and County (81%) kindergarten students have had some type of Pre-K experience.
- Only 17% of City kindergarten students have had private Pre-K experience as compared to 38% of County kindergarten students.
- 26% (58) of City disadvantaged kindergarten students have had no known Pre-K experience as compared to 32% (93) of County disadvantaged kindergarten students who have had no known Pre-K experience.

One School Readiness Measure: PALS and Pre-K Experience Correlation

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Kindergarten (PALS-K)

Currently, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) utilizes one screening tool, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) to identify students who are below grade level in language and literacy fundamentals. PALS was originally developed to measure an individual student’s need for additional reading intervention

services. Additional data may already be collected by some schools and available on a school-based level to assess math skills, social-emotional development, health and additional children’s developmental domains.⁴²

A child’s school readiness for kindergarten should assess multiple developmental domains; however PALS is the only common measure of school readiness used locally and by the Virginia Department of Education.

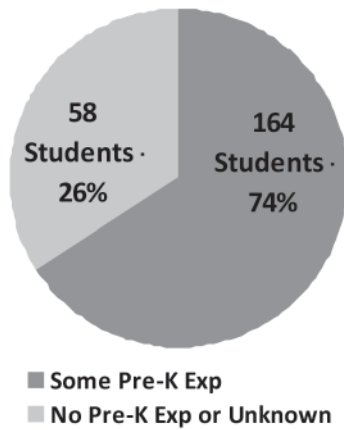
The number of children identified by PALS for reading intervention services has decreased in the past five years. In 2002, 14% of County and 30% of City students were identified as needing additional assistance based on the PALS scores.^{4,24} Last year (2007), 9% of County and 19% of City students needed additional academic assistance.⁴²

2007-2008 Analysis of Kindergarten Students

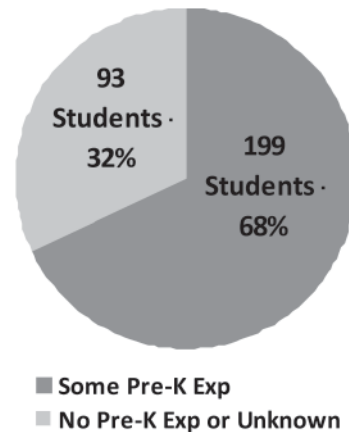
It is important to note that the tables below provide comparisons in Charlottesville and Albemarle of 1,179 (85% of total kindergarten enrollment) entering kindergarteners that took *both* the Fall and Spring PALS assessments. City and County data analysis are combined. In general, the data and percentages of achievement rates for PALS benchmark performance are not materially different between the City and County scores.^{3,4}

2007-2008 Charlottesville and Albemarle Disadvantaged Kindergarten Students and Pre-K experiences

**Disadvantaged Students and
Pre-K Experience - City
(222 Students)***



**Disadvantaged Students and
Pre-K Experience - County
(292 Students)***



*Includes all students enrolled in kindergarten at any time during the 2007-08 academic year.

Figure 9: 2007-2008 City and County Disadvantaged Kindergarten Students and Pre-K Experiences^{3, 4}

City and County Kindergarten Students Pre-K Experiences Correlation to PALS Assessment

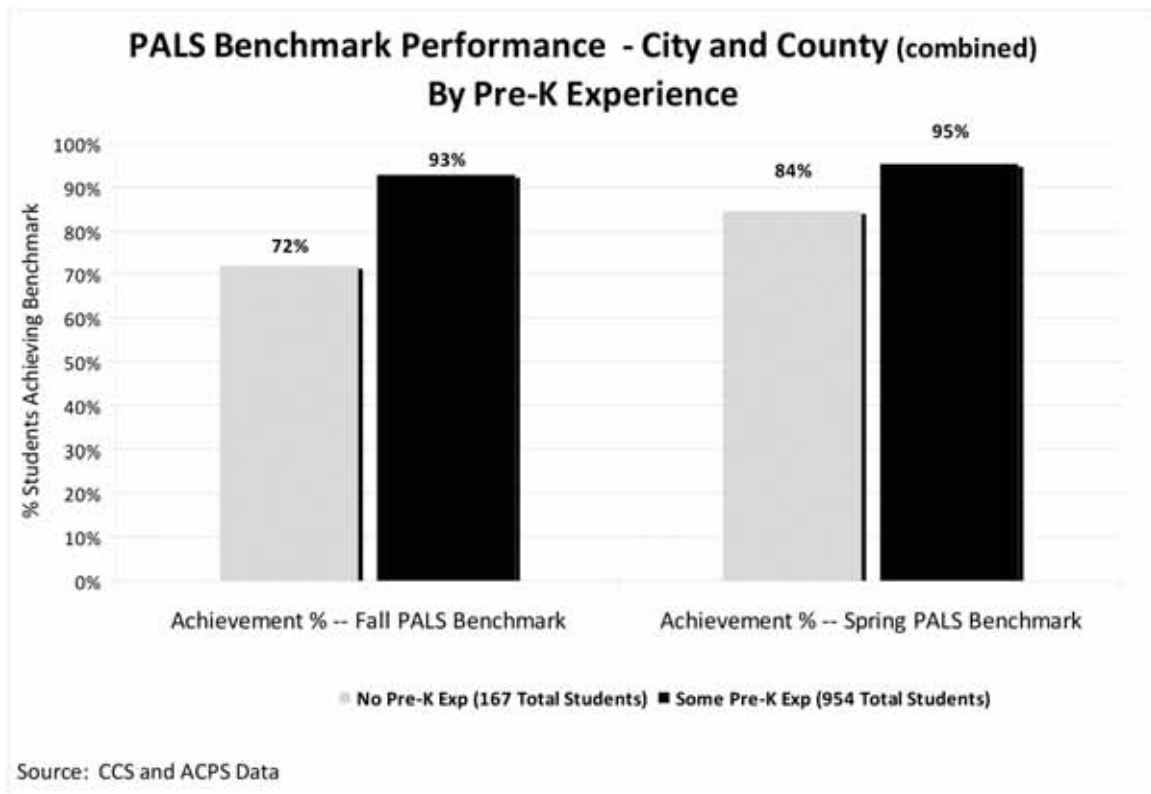


Figure 10: PALS Fall and Spring Benchmark correlated with Pre-K experience^{3, 4}

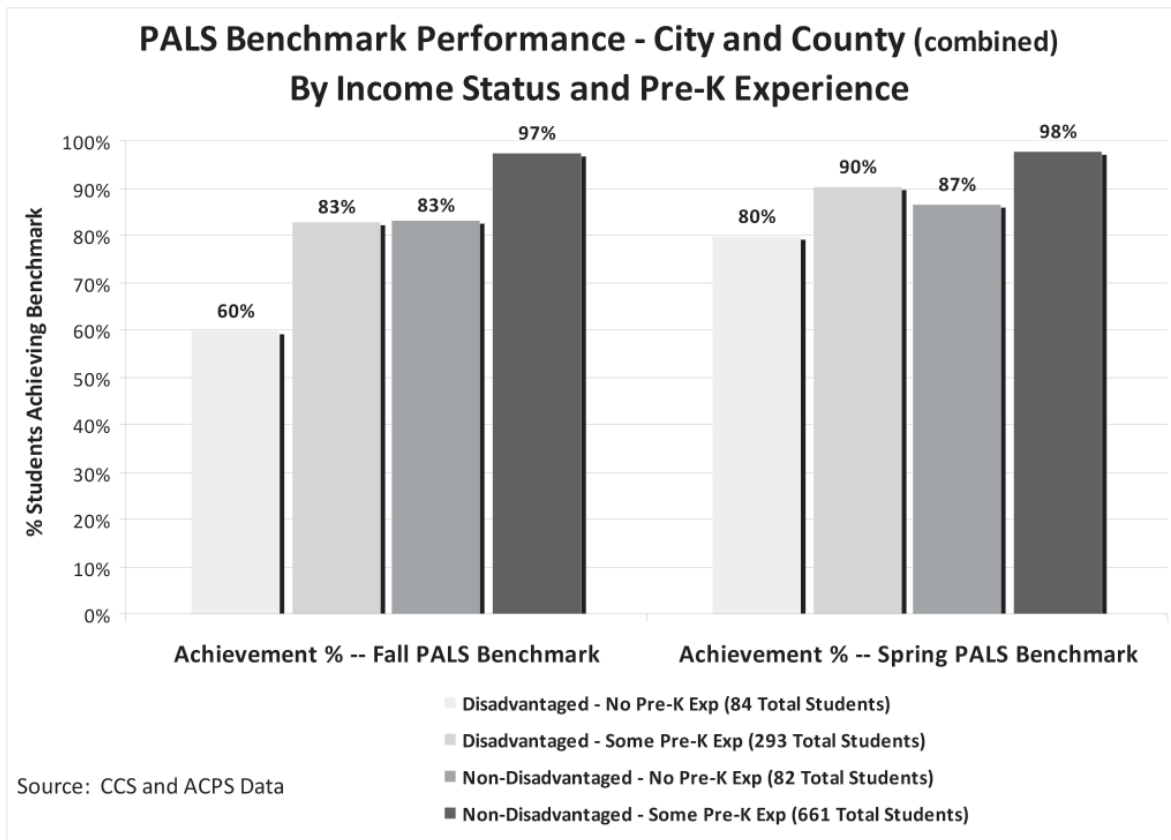


Figure 11: PALS Fall Benchmarks correlated with Income and Pre-K experience^{3, 4}

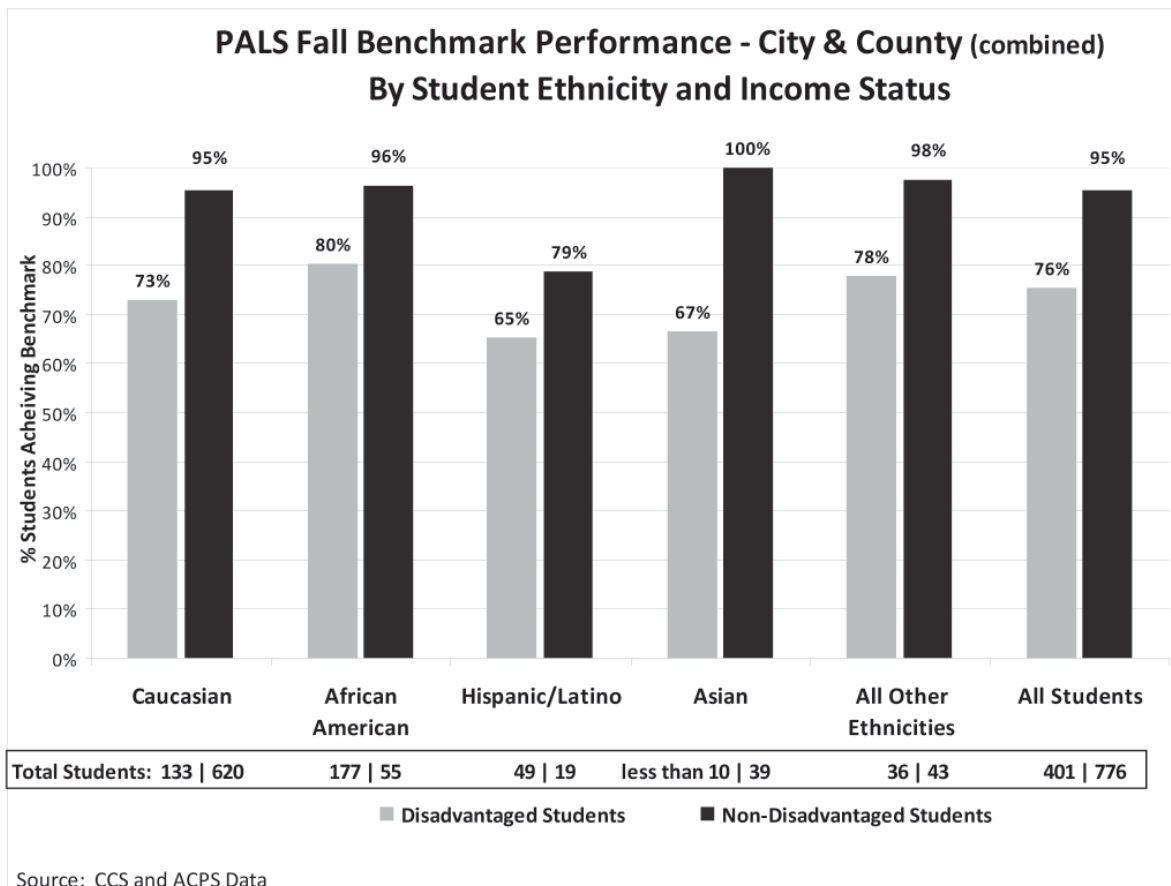


Figure 12: PALS Fall Benchmarks correlated with Ethnicity and Income^{3, 4}

Findings:

- 93% of kindergarten children with early learning program experiences prior to kindergarten (child care centers, preschools, family home child care providers) achieved school readiness benchmarks for language and literacy during the fall of kindergarten. In contrast, only 72% of their peers without prior early learning program experiences achieved the benchmarks. (Figure 10)
- 40% of disadvantaged children without Pre-K experience entered kindergarten needing additional language and literacy assistance. (Figure 11)
- Disadvantaged children with Pre-K experiences achieved the fall benchmarks in language and literacy 23 percentage points higher than their disadvantaged peers with no prior kindergarten program experience. They maintained higher levels of achievements by the end of kindergarten. (Figure 11)
- Disadvantaged children with Pre-K experiences achieved fall benchmarks in language and literacy at the same rate as their non-disadvantaged peers with no Pre-K experience. (Figure 11)
- African-American students slightly outperformed Caucasian students in achieving the language and literacy benchmarks in both the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. The population size varied significantly between these two groups. (Figure 12)
- Hispanic/Latino students in Albemarle County lagged behind all other students in language and literacy skills. (The English as a Second Language percentage is very high for this population.) (Figure 12)



Family support for parents with young children

5. READY TO MOVE FORWARD— RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations from the Smart Beginnings Leadership Council’s Measure School Readiness work group are intended to address three key areas of need and propose strategies to advance our community’s success in achieving school readiness for all children.

- 1. Increase the quality and accessibility of child care and family support services.**
- 2. Improve the community’s ability to measure local school readiness through enhanced data analysis and reporting.**
- 3. Strengthen collaborative partnerships among private and public entities, in order to enhance the efficiency of services and maximize resources.**

1) Increase the quality and accessibility of child care and family support services.

- a) Expand access to public preschool programs or subsidized private child care provider spaces to serve all 3 and 4 year-old disadvantaged children on a voluntary basis. The extent of need for additional 3-year-old spaces in Charlottesville and Albemarle should be assessed.
- b) Increase to 60% (from 20 to 40) the percentage of local child care centers that participate in the Seal of Quality Child Care/Virginia Star Quality Initiative and increase involvement from child care centers and family home child care providers that serve low-income children.

- c) Encourage elementary schools to provide transition to kindergarten plans that include public school outreach to parents prior to kindergarten.
- d) Provide additional family support workers to serve all the City public preschool programs to strengthen family stability and involvement with their child's education.
- e) Increase family support services, such as home visiting and family support workers, that enhance school readiness skills for families with young children in the County and to families living in low-income and subsidized housing neighborhoods, especially those with limited English proficiency.

- Number of 3 and 4 year olds in Albemarle County's low-income neighborhoods and whether they participated in public preschool programs, family home providers or child care centers.
- Number of family home providers in Charlottesville and Albemarle and the number of children that they serve.

2) Improve the community's ability to measure local school readiness and increase program accountability through enhanced data analysis and reporting.

- a) Support Charlottesville City Schools and Albemarle County Public Schools' data collection efforts to jointly report on kindergarten data related to school readiness measures and pupil demographic data.
- b) Expand the public schools systems' school readiness indicators and prekindergarten experiences data collection to include:
 - Additional indicators such as social-emotional, health and math readiness.
 - Length of time with a prekindergarten program or child care provider.
 - Early learning experiences prior to public preschool programs participation.
 - Names of participating child care providers with local and state quality rating improvement programs.
 - Additional prekindergarten experience categories to include home-based educational services such as family home visiting services.
 - Consistent interpretation of categories, collection methods and entry of Pre-K (prior to kindergarten program) experience data.
- c) Encourage the public preschool programs to collect and provide common data on school readiness indicators and prior child care provider experiences of their students.
- d) Enhance community-wide data collection to determine:

3. Strengthen collaborative partnerships among private and public entities, in order to enhance the efficiency of services and maximize resources.

- a) Increase communication and curriculum alignment between child care providers and public schools that support successful transitions into kindergarten.
- b) Develop business and employer partnerships that enhance employees' abilities to access affordable, quality child care options.
- c) Enhance public preschool programs' outreach to families with 3 and 4 year-olds in subsidized housing neighborhoods through collaboration with the local housing authority and property management organizations.
- d) Ensure that private and public policies and funding decisions prioritize school readiness services and affordable, accessible quality child care.

Our community has made significant strides in enhancing early care and education services, but we have much further to go. We know what helps children succeed. Smart Beginnings welcomes the opportunity to work with private and public partners to ensure that each of the 7,700 young children in our community is ready for school.

Ready for School. Ready for Life.

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6. THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children
Charlottesville City Schools Preschool Program
Charlottesville City Schools
Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority
MACAA Head Start
United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area
Urban Vision
University of Virginia Curry School of Education PALS Project

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Miriam Rushfinn, Smart Beginnings
Cathy Train, United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area
Dave Uhlig, Charlottesville City Schools
Cyndi Wells, Albemarle County Public Schools



Community leaders visit Salvation Army child care center

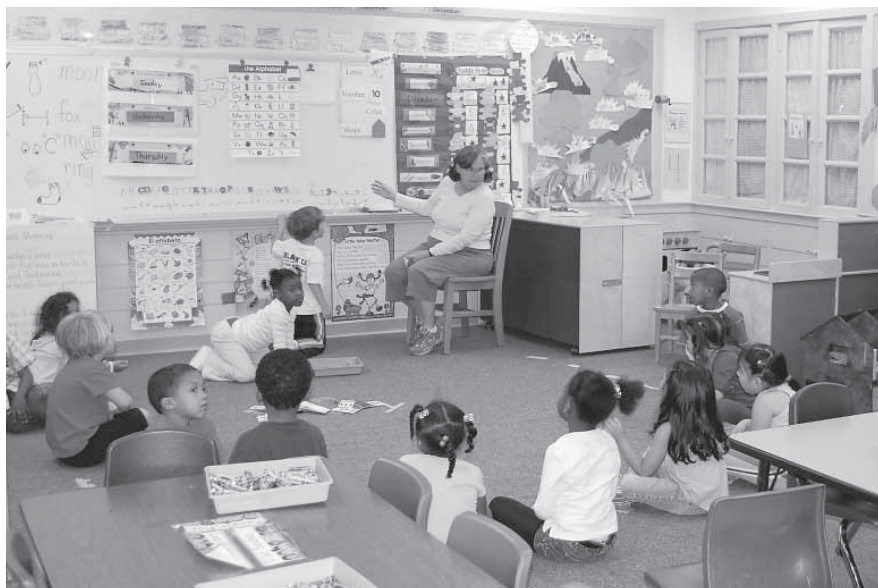


Barrett Early Learning Center

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Johnson Elementary Preschool Program

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Smart Beginnings Employee Perspectives: Child Care and Workforce Impact Survey Responses

The employee survey *Employee Perspectives on Child Care and Work Force Impact* was sent to 4,400 employees at 13 businesses. Over 700 responses were received. The response rate was 71% for small businesses, 27% for mid-size businesses and 14% for large employers. Participating employers included: CB Richard Ellis, Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce, City of Charlottesville, County of Albemarle, LexisNexis, Piedmont Virginia Community College, Region Ten CSB, SNL Financial, State Farm Insurance. *The Daily Progress*, Williams Mullen, United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area and Virginia National Bank.

Response percentages for each question are based on the total number of responses received for the survey.

1. If you have children 0-2 years, what type/s of child care do you use during work?

Family member	12%
Public preschool	1%
Child Care center or preschool	15%
Family day care/babysitter	9%
Babysitter in my home	1%
Answered question	37%

2. If you have children 3-5 years, what type/s of child care do you use during work?

Family member	3%
Public preschool	0%
Child Care center or preschool	9%
Family day care/babysitter	2%
Babysitter in my home	0%
Answered question	15%

3. How satisfied are you with the child care option(s) available?

Very Satisfied	17%
Somewhat Satisfied	57%
Very Dissatisfied	15%
Don't know	5%
Answered question	78%

4. How would you rate the ease or difficulty you had in finding child care?

Very easy	7%
Easy	16%
Somewhat difficult	36%
Very difficult	14%
Don't Know	4%
Answered question	65%

5. If you had problems finding child care, what are the most significant problems you encountered?

Cost	34%
No openings	18%
Limited hours	13%
Low quality of care	13%
Location	9%
Transportation	2%
Other	5%
No problem	14%

Respondents chose multiple answers.

772 responses received.

6. To what degree do child care-related issues affect your work?

No impact	15%
Small impact	32%
Significant impact	30%
Don't know	2%
Answered question	78%

7. Do child care-related issues affect your absenteeism at work?

Yes	41%
No	35%
Don't know	2%
Answered question	77%

8. How many days do you think you miss per year as a result of child care issues?

0	10%
1-5	52%
6-10	12%
11+	1%
Answered question	76%

51 additional comments addressed topic areas:

Difficulty with openings 3
 Affordability/cost 6
 Quality importance 6
 Lack of quality combined with affordable care 9
 Early years critical for future 3
 Need for nontraditional hours 5
 Healthy foods at child care 2
 Satisfied with care 2
 Impact on workforce issue 4
 Misc- other topics
 (Sick care needs, religious-based care needs, special needs care, on-site child care need parent responsibility, public education, other issues)

Appendix 2: Local Child Care Providers, Number of Children Served and Certifications (Figure 5)

The Virginia Department of Social Services child care provider regulation and licensing category descriptions.

Licensed—Licensing standards by the State Board of Social Services ensure that the activities, services, and facilities are conducive to the welfare of the children in care.

Voluntary registration—Regulation offered to family day homes that are not required to be licensed. These homes have fewer than 6 children in care.

Religious exempt—Child care centers operated by religious institutions may be exempt from licensure.

Certified preschool—Preschool programs operated by private schools that are accredited by a statewide accrediting organization. (<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/children.html>)

Appendix 3: 2007-2008 Charlottesville and Albemarle Kindergarten Students Types of Pre-K Experiences

Types of Pre-K Experiences	ACPS*		CCS**	
All: PRE-K Experience	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%
Public preschool programs	435	43%	197	54%
Private - child care, preschool, family home	393	38%	64	17%
TOTAL - Pre-K Experience	828	81%	261	71%
None - No Pre-K	146	14%	37	10%
Other, Unknown	47	5%	68	19%
TOTAL	1021	100%	366	100%
Disadvantaged***: PRE-K Experience	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%
Public preschool programs	171	59%	150	68%
Private - child care, preschool, family home	28	10%	14	6%
TOTAL - Pre-K Experience	199	68%	164	74%
None - No Pre-K	71	24%	23	10%
Other, Unknown	22	8%	35	16%
TOTAL	292	100%	222	100%

*ACPS = Albemarle County Public Schools

**CCS = Charlottesville City Schools

***Disadvantaged = Students that receive free or reduced school lunches funded by the National School Lunch Program. Families with incomes up to 185% of the poverty level qualify.

Appendix 4: 2007-2008 Charlottesville and Albemarle Kindergarten Students PALS Benchmark Scores Compared with Pre-K Experiences, Ethnicity and ESL Categories

Experience Analysis - No prior to kindergarten experience versus Some prior to kindergarten experience

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
<i>Pre-K Experience</i>					
None	167	120	72%	141	84%
Some	954	886	93%	910	95%
Total (excludes Unknov	1121	1006	90%	1051	94%

Disadvantaged v. Non-Disadvantaged Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
Disadvantaged	403	305	76%	350	87%
Non-Disadvantaged	776	741	95%	751	97%
Total	1179	1046	89%	1101	93%

Disadvantaged + Pre-K Experience Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
<i>Pre-K Experience</i>					
None	84	50	60%	67	80%
Some	293	242	83%	264	90%

Non-Disadvantaged + Pre-K Experience Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
<i>Pre-K Experience</i>					
None	82	68	83%	71	87%
Some	661	644	97%	646	98%

Ethnicity Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
Caucasian	753	689	92%	720	96%
Non-Disadvantaged	620	592	95%	603	97%
Disadvantaged	133	97	73%	117	88%
African-American	232	195	84%	207	89%
Non-Disadvantaged	55	53	96%	53	96%
Disadvantaged	177	142	80%	154	87%
Hispanic/Latino	68	47	69%	57	84%
Non-Disadvantaged	19	15	79%	15	79%
Disadvantaged	49	32	65%	42	86%
Asian	45	43	96%	42	93%
Non-Disadvantaged	--	--	100%	--	97%
Disadvantaged	<i>less than 10</i>	<i>less than 10</i>	67%	<i>less than 10</i>	67%
Other Ethnicity	79	70	89%	73	92%
Non-Disadvantaged	43	42	98%	42	98%
Disadvantaged	36	28	78%	31	86%
TOTAL Non-Disadvantaged	776	741	95%	751	97%
TOTAL Disadvantaged	401	303	76%	348	87%

ESL Analysis ESL=English as a second language, English as first language (Native English speakers)

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
English - ESL	119	91	76%	103	87%
English - Native speaker	1060	955	90%	998	94%

Albemarle County Public Schools—Pre-K Analysis for PALS Benchmark

Experience Analysis - No prior to kindergarten experience versus Some prior to kindergarten experience

<i>Pre-K Experience</i>	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
None	138	102	74%	117	85%
Some	727	690	96%	697	97%
Total (excludes Unknov	865	792	92%	814	94%

Disadvantaged v. Non-Disadvantaged Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
Disadvantaged	227	178	78%	197	87%
Non-Disadvantaged	639	615	96%	618	97%
Total	866	793	92%	815	94%

Disadvantaged + Pre-K Experience Analysis

<i>Pre-K Experience</i>	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
None	67	40	60%	54	81%
Some	159	137	86%	142	89%

Non-Disadvantaged + Pre-K Experience Analysis

<i>Pre-K Experience</i>	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
None	70	61	87%	62	89%
Some	568	553	97%	555	98%

Ethnicity Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
Caucasian	635	587	92%	605	95%
Non-Disadvantaged	530	509	96%	515	97%
Disadvantaged	105	78	74%	90	86%
African-American	98	89	91%	90	92%
Non-Disadvantaged	31	30	97%	30	97%
Disadvantaged	67	59	88%	60	90%
Hispanic/Latino	45	33	73%	37	82%
Non-Disadvantaged	14	12	86%	11	79%
Disadvantaged	31	21	68%	26	84%
Asian	36	36	100%	35	97%
Non-Disadvantaged	36	36	100%	35	97%
Disadvantaged	0	0	0	0	0
Other Ethnicity	50	46	92%	46	92%
Non-Disadvantaged	28	28	100%	27	96%
Disadvantaged	22	18	82%	19	86%
TOTAL Non-Disadvantaged	864	791	92%	813	94%
TOTAL Disadvantaged	639	615	96%	618	97%

ESL Analysis ESL=English as a second language, English as first language (Native English speakers)

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
English - ESL	79	66	84%	69	87%
English - Native speaker	787	727	92%	746	95%

Charlottesville City Schools—Pre-K Analysis for PALS Benchmark

Experience Analysis - No prior to kindergarten experience versus Some prior to kindergarten experience

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
<i>Pre-K Experience</i>					
None	29	18	62%	24	83%
Some	227	196	86%	213	94%
Total (excludes Unknov)	256	214	84%	237	93%

Disadvantaged v. Non-Disadvantaged Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
Disadvantaged	176	127	72%	153	87%
Non-Disadvantaged	137	126	92%	133	97%
Total	313	253	81%	286	91%

Disadvantaged + Pre-K Experience Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
<i>Pre-K Experience</i>					
None	17	10	59%	13	76%
Some	134	105	78%	122	91%

Non-Disadvantaged + Pre-K Experience Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
<i>Pre-K Experience</i>					
None	12	7	58%	9	75%
Some	93	91	98%	91	98%

Ethnicity Analysis

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
Caucasian	118	102	86%	115	97%
Non-Disadvantaged	90	83	92%	88	98%
Disadvantaged	28	19	68%	27	96%
African-American	134	106	79%	117	87%
Non-Disadvantaged	24	23	96%	23	96%
Disadvantaged	110	83	75%	94	85%
Hispanic/Latino	23	14	61%	20	87%
Non-Disadvantaged	<i>less than 10</i>	<i>less than 10</i>	60%	<i>less than 10</i>	80%
Disadvantaged	--	--	61%	--	89%
Asian	<i>less than 10</i>	<i>less than 10</i>	78%	<i>less than 10</i>	78%
Non-Disadvantaged	<i>less than 10</i>	<i>less than 10</i>	100%	<i>less than 10</i>	100%
Disadvantaged	<i>less than 10</i>	<i>less than 10</i>	67%	<i>less than 10</i>	67%
Other Ethnicity	29	24	83%	27	93%
Non-Disadvantaged	15	14	93%	15	100%
Disadvantaged	14	10	71%	12	86%
TOTAL Non-Disadvantaged	137	126	92%	133	97%
TOTAL Disadvantaged	176	127	72%	153	87%

ESL Analysis ESL=English as a second language, English as first language (Native English speakers)

	Total PALS Testers (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (#)	Passed Fall Benchmark (%)	Passed Spring Benchmark (#)	Passed Spring Benchmark (%)
English - ESL	40	25	63%	34	85%
English - Native speaker	273	228	84%	252	92%

Appendix 5: Glossary of Terms

(With thanks to Smart Beginnings Richmond)

Accessible Services: Services that are readily available/receivable – transportation is not an issue, enrollment is easy, space is available.

Accreditation: Process of meeting voluntary national standards for quality in early care settings, including safety standards and class size ratios. Once program is certified as meeting the standards outlined by the accreditation agency they receive accreditation and must continue to meet accreditation standards through an on-going process.

Age Appropriate Activities: Program services and activities that take into account a child’s developmental stage, age, and abilities. Also called “developmentally appropriate practices.”

Agency Budget Review Team (ABRT): ABRT is a work group of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families. It reviews community agency funding applications to the City and County and makes funding recommendations to the City Manager and County Executive.

Alignment of Curricula: Children learn best when their learning activities progress in a developmentally appropriate sequence. The alignment of curricula between early care programs and kindergarten allows children to transition easily between the two learning environments.

Assessment: Observing a child and/or administering one or more standardized tests to determine their developmental strengths and weaknesses. Observations and measurements collected by knowledgeable early care providers, which take place over a period of time, are believed to be more accurate than formal testing in young children.

At-Risk: Children and families facing multiple hardships such as low-income, unemployment, lack of educational resources and lack of social networks. In terms of program eligibility “at-risk” children and families are generally considered as those living below the poverty level or a certain percentage of the poverty level.

Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families: The Commission, a 28-member planning and advisory body to the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle, works to improve outcomes for children and their families. It is composed of 11 work groups, including the Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children.

Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children: The Partnership for Children (PFC), begun in 1999, is a work group of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families and composed of 15 partner agencies, including the public school systems. PFC’s mission is to build a supportive community where children age 0-6 are nurtured in healthy families and arrive at school ready to learn.

Child Care: Providing care and/or supervision for children and their daily needs, in a home or center setting. See also day care, preschool, pre-k, nursery school, early care, etc.

Child Care Scholarships: Federal, state, local, and private funds that subsidize child care costs for eligible, low-income working families. Also referred to as subsidies or assistance.

Child Care Center: A facility that provides regularly scheduled care for a group of children for periods of less than twenty-four hours. See also Preschool.

Child Development: The biological and physical process by which a child acquires skills through the interaction of his/her maturation and experiences with others and the environment.

CHIP of Virginia: A statewide home visiting program focused on promoting wellness and health of young children through in-home visits with parents and their young children. The goals of CHIP of Virginia are to promote a medical home, provide health supervision and address the complex social needs through partnering with families and other community programs.

Community Based Services: Services provided to families by non-governmental institutions such as non-profit organizations and faith-based groups.

Cognitive Skills: Those skills related to thinking, reasoning, and problem solving. Cognitive development continues from birth through adulthood.

Comprehensive Plan for Smart Beginnings: A public-private strategic plan for early childhood initiatives in Virginia focused on building and sustaining a system to support parents and families as they prepare their children to arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. Co-led by the Governor’s Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives and the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, the plan focuses on five over-arching goals in these areas: Governance and Finance, Family Support and Education, Early Care and Education, Health, and Public Engagement.

Day Care: Early care services outside of the child’s own home. See also child care, preschool, pre-k, nursery school, early care and education, etc. Individuals often use these terms interchangeably.

Disadvantaged: Public school students that receive free or reduced school lunches funded by the National School Lunch Program. Families with incomes up to 185% of the poverty level qualify.

Early Care: Services that are provided to a child between the ages of birth to five. Early care programs include non-profit and for profit child care centers, Family/Friend/Neighbor care, regulated and unregulated family child care, religiously exempt child care, preschool programs and other care settings out of the child’s home. See also day care, child care, preschool, pre-k, nursery school, early care and education, etc.

Early Childhood: The period from birth to entry in kindergarten at age five.

Early Childhood Development: A child's physical growth and cognitive development during the period of birth to kindergarten entry at age five.

Early Literacy: The beginning stages of learning to read and write. In early childhood, early literacy involves exposure to print materials, to books, to oral language, and to experiences that children will encounter in stories. Early literacy begins at birth and continues until the child is able to read independently.

Family Home Child Care Provider: Regulated early care for six to 12 children in the residence of the provider or the residence of any of the children in care. The six to 12 children excludes the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home. Family child care is provided for a group of no more than 12 children of various ages, sometimes called Family Day Home.

Family/Friend/Neighbor Child Care: Unregulated early care provided by relatives, friends, and neighbors either in the child's home or the provider's home. Also sometimes called "informal child care" or "kith and kin child care."

Family Friendly Workplaces: Employers provide supports and flexibility to their employees so that parents are able to provide their young children with appropriate attention and care.

Family Support Worker: A trained professional or para-professional that works with families in the home, school or community to provide support, education, training, skills and access to community resources related to parenting, health, safety and education issues.

Federal Poverty Level: The level determined by the US Department of Health and Human Services below which families of a certain size and annual income would be eligible to qualify for designated programs.

Head Start: A federally funded and to locally administered (local match is required) early care program for three and four year old children living with families below the poverty level. Localities can operate Head Start programs independently or can combine with other school-based preschool programs.

Healthy Families Virginia: A community-based prevention program that seeks to improve the health and well-being of children at risk for abuse and neglect by providing intensive home visitation services. Target families are stressed and overburdened first time parents and pregnant women who need advice and guidance about parenting and community resources. The program is based on a national model supported by Prevent Child Abuse America and operates nationwide.

Home Visitor Programs: Voluntary programs in which trained professionals or para-professionals make visits to the homes of eligible children and families and provide child development/education resources to parents. Local home visitor programs include Healthy Families, CHIP of Richmond, Resource Mothers, etc.

Licensed Child Care: Early care programs operated in homes or in facilities that are required to meet state minimum standards to legally operate an early care program. The Department of Social Services licenses child care in Virginia.

Licensing Standards: The goal of child care licensing standards is to reduce the risks, including the spread of disease and of injury, that come with caring for a group of children. Short term recreation, instruction or temporary care services do not have to be licensed. Religious exempt programs or certified preschools may be excused from licensure if they file certain information with the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS). The VDSS Division of Licensing Programs will determine what is required for the type of early care center planned. Licensing does not cover curriculum or program development.

Limited English Proficient (LEP): Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or "LEP."

Milestones of Child Development: A continuum of child indicators and strategies for adults designed to support the growth and development of young children from birth to kindergarten entry.

NAEYC: The National Association for the Education of Young Children, a professional association for early care and education providers that promotes high quality standards in early care and education settings and elementary schools.

PALS: A Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening instrument that assesses young children's knowledge of several literacy fundamentals which are predictive of early reading success. PALS can be instrumented to gauge children's literacy skills in preschool classrooms through the third grade.

Preschool: Also known as child development center, nursery school, and pre-kindergarten. Preschools are both publicly and privately funded. It is sometimes interchangeable with child care centers. It provides education before the commencement of statutory education. Preschool is generally considered appropriate for children three to five years of age, between the toddler and school stages.

Quality Child Care (see QRIS or Seal of Quality Child Care): Early care programs and providers that offer engaging, appropriate activities in settings that facilitate healthy growth and development, and prepare children for or promote their success in school. Quality in early care settings can be assessed using observations through a Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Quality Improvement: Initiatives that are designed to increase the quality or availability of early care programs or to provide parents with information and support to enhance their ability to select early care arrangements most suited to their family and child’s needs.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) (see Quality Child Care or Seal of Quality Child Care): Virginia’s Star Quality program that offers a market-based solution to facilitate quality consistency among early care programs, support continuous quality improvement in partnership with public and private early care providers, and encourage a continuum of early care among various provider settings.

Religious Exempt Child Care: Early care programs operated by faith communities that apply to be exempt from licensing requirements in Virginia due to their faith-based status.

Regulated Child Care: Early care facilities and homes that comply with either the state’s regulatory system or another system of regulation. Regulated care is monitored by the Virginia Department of Social Services Division of Licensing Programs. Regulations of home settings include: voluntarily registered, licensed, locally approved and family day home systems. Regulations of center based settings include: licensed programs or religiously-exempt.

School Readiness: The state of early development that enables a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences. Five areas of child development that make up readiness are 1) health and physical development; 2) social and emotional development; 3) approaches toward learning; 4) language development and communication; and 5) cognition and general knowledge. Everything that a child experiences in his/her years prior to school contributes to readiness.

School Readiness Task Force: This state-level task force has convened to focus on developing an effective system for assessing and evaluating the school readiness of Virginia’s children.

School Readiness: Virginia School Readiness task force definition states that “School readiness” describes the capabilities of children, their families, schools, and communities that will best promote student success in kindergarten and beyond. Each component – children, families, schools and communities – plays an essential role in the development of school readiness. No one component can stand on its own.

Seal of Quality Child Care: Partnership for Children’s local (QRIS) quality rating and improvement system for child care center and family home child care providers.

Social/Emotional Development: The progression of self awareness and regulation in which a child learns to interact appropriately with other people.

Unregulated Child Care: Early care programs that are not monitored by the state regulating agency, the Virginia Department of Social Services Licensing Division.

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF): A public-private partnership, founded in 2005 to provide grants, training and technical assistance to local and regional Smart Beginnings initiatives. It also collaborates with state government, the business community, parents and early childhood leaders to implement long-term strategies for improving school-readiness for all young children, ages birth to five.

Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI): Statewide preschool program serving at-risk 4 year olds administered by the Department of Education. Programs must provide services for the entire school year and must operate on a half-day or full-day schedule.

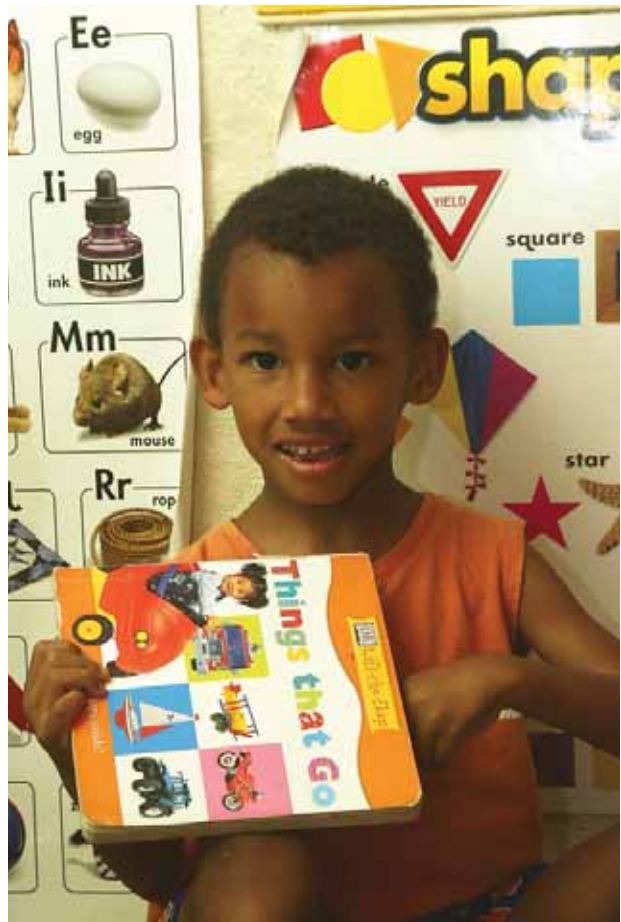
Appendix 6: Smart Beginnings Leadership Council and Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children

Smart Beginnings Leadership Council

Bob Pianta, Chair	University of Virginia
Dan Alexander	Congregation Beth Israel
Rosa Atkins	Charlottesville City Schools
John Casteen	University of Virginia
Mike Chinn	SNL Financial
Peggy Echols	State Farm Insurance Companies
Bryan Elliott	County of Albemarle
Gretchen Ellis	Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families
Frank Friedman	Piedmont Virginia Community College
Mark Giles	Virginia National Bank
Jim Haden	Martha Jefferson Hospital
Ed Howell	University of Virginia Medical Center
Tim Hulbert	Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce
Eric Johnson	Bank of America
Robert Johnson	Region Ten Community Services Board
Maurice Jones	City of Charlottesville
Steve Krohn	Virginia National Bank
Valerie Long	Williams Mullen
Liz Mason	LexisNexis
Lawrence McConnell	<i>The Daily Progress</i>
Pam Moran	Albemarle County Public Schools
Suzanne Morse	Pew Partnership for Civic Change
Kathy Ralston	Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children
John Redick	Charlottesville Area Community Foundation
Mary Reese	Retired educator
Meg Sewell	Central Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children
Cathy Train	United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area

Charlottesville/Albemarle Partnership for Children

Albemarle County Department of Social Services
Albemarle County Public Schools
Arc of the Piedmont
Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families
Charlottesville Department of Social Services
Charlottesville City Public Schools
Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority
Children, Youth & Family Services, Inc.
FOCUS Women's Resource Center
Jefferson Area CHIP
Monticello Area Community Action Agency
Region Ten Community Services Board
Thomas Jefferson Health Department
United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area
Virginia Cooperative Extension Service




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