

## **Bright Beginnings**

### **30 Classrooms at 4 sites**

- Clara Byrd Baker Elementary
- J. Blaine Blayton Elementary
- Norge Elementary
- Rawls Byrd Elementary

### **Current Enrollment**

- 327 students – expected to grow to 365 by April 2017

### **Services**

- Early childhood education program – both general and special education – for children ages 2 through Kindergarten
- All services, included related therapy services, available to children at all four locations
- Special education and therapy services also provided to children attending Head Start and other community preschool programs
- Instructional day is four hours
  - *Monthly home visits, screenings and developmental assessments during remaining portion of the day*

### **Eligibility Criteria**

- Presence of specific risk factors (Adverse Childhood Experiences) known to impact school readiness
- *Automatic eligibility* for children in foster care, Child Protective Services, homeless, incarcerated parent, English Language Learners
- Other significant risk factors – parent did not complete high school, poverty, substance abuse, mental illness, parent or sibling with special needs
- Presence of a developmental delay or disability

### **Universal Screening Process**

Every child receives a comprehensive developmental screening, including the following components:

- Ages & Stages Questionnaire (completed by parent)
- Developmental Screener
- Speech-Language Screener
- Health history, digital photo-refractive vision screening, Eroskan Hearing Screening
- Temperament and Behavior Scales Screener, Autism Screener, Sensory Screener for children with specific concerns
- Parent interview to identify risk factors (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Bright Beginnings staff members screen approximately 450 children each year.

## **Funding**

- Majority is local
- Some State (Virginia Preschool Initiative) and Federal (Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act – Special Education)
- Average cost per student is \$11,000 per year

## **Staffing**

- All WJCC early childhood teachers licensed by VDOE and endorsed in early childhood and/or early childhood special education
- Majority of Bright Beginnings teachers hold a master's degree.
- Several attained or actively working toward National Board Teacher Certification

## **Family Engagement**

- Home visits
- Family calendar provided to each family every month (in English and in Spanish) with suggestions for school and community activities that support learning and development
- Special consideration given to including evening and weekend activities to meet the needs of families with traditional work schedules
- Families encouraged to be involved in classroom activities on a regular basis.

## **Community Partnerships**

WJCC Public Schools works collaboratively with the James City County Head Start program, but the programs have separate administrative agencies. The Community Action Agency is the parent agency for Head Start. Head Start has classrooms co-located at Norge and James River Elementary Schools.

Bright Beginnings maintains strong collaborative relationships with:

- Child Development Resources
- Williamsburg Regional Library
- United Methodist Early Childhood Music School – Project Outreach,
- The College of William & Mary
- Kiwanis Club of Toano

WJCC is also represented as a community partner in Smart Beginnings Historic Triangle.