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Partnership given clean audit report

The Richmond County Partnership for Children has a "clean bill" of financial health, according to the Office of State Auditor. An audit of 2006-2007 Smart Start activities found no instances of non-compliance or weaknesses in internal controls. This is the second clean audit in a row for the Smart Start agency which administers funds for Richmond County.

The audit looks for compliance in three core areas: accuracy of financial statements, how the partnership processes and authorizes transactions such as grants, accounts payable, payroll and cash receipts, and contract compliance.

"We are very pleased with our results," said Wiley Mabe, board chairman for the Richmond County Partnership for Children. "We have worked hard to use every tax dollar wisely to help our county's children, and this audit shows we have done just that."

Smart Start is an early childhood leadership network that leverages private and public dollars to address issues critical to North Carolina's young children. Created in 1993 by Gov. Jim Hunt, Smart Start is funded in all 100 North Carolina counties and is administered by 79 local

Smart Start partnerships that create community-based programs. Smart Start financially supports programs that increase the number of quality child care centers, provides education credits to child care workers, supports parent education programs and connects families with medical services.

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) leads the state Smart Start initiative. NCPC places great emphasis on local control, coupled with strict accountability, oversight and measures to ensure financial integrity.

NCPC undergoes annual audits and the Smart Start partnerships undergo either annual or biennial financial and compliance audits by the state auditor.

"NCPC and the state auditor require extensive accountability to receive a clean audit. I am proud that we can report this to Richmond County, and that this is the second clean audit in a row," stated Executive Director Martha Vance Brown. "Using these tax dollars effectively to improve child care quality is the best way we can help to create a positive environment for our county's youngest citizens."

Partnership honors child care providers



Leah Jackson of Kidz Konstruction receives the Bernice Ratliff Outstanding Teacher award from Mabe.



Lisa Marshall of Little Kingdom receives the Kathy Alexander Positive Attitude Award from Mabe.