

# Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template

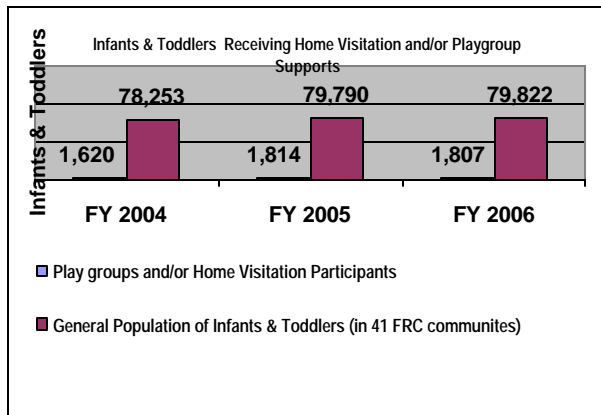
## Part II, Program Accountability Summary

**Program Purpose** To ensure that more children and families throughout the state have the benefit of high-quality preschool and family support services designed to promote the optimal growth and development of children beginning at birth.

**Program** Family Resource Center (FRC) Program/  
State Department of Education

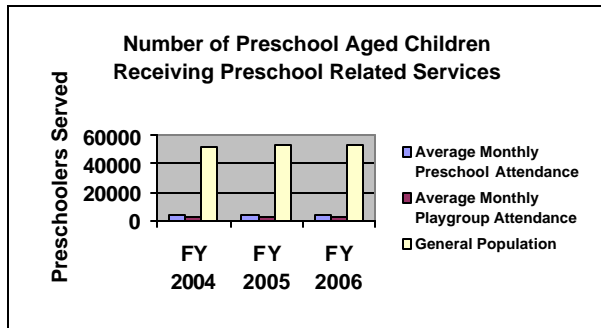
**Performance Measure 1:**

The monthly average of total infants and toddlers (under age 3) who received FRC administered home visitation services and/or participated in FRC playgroups. This number is compared to the total general population of infants and toddlers (under age 3) in communities with existing FRC programs.



**Performance Measure 2:**

The monthly average of preschool aged children (3 and 4 year olds) who participated in either a FRC playgroup or preschool program (school readiness, Head Start, or other community based programs) compared to the general population of preschool children (3 and 4 year olds) in the communities that house FRC programs.



Key Budget Information	
Total Current Program Year Funding	\$6.4M
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Population Result	
Program Funding As Percent of Total Agency Budget	
Funding Distribution	
Total Federal Funds	\$0
Total State Funds	\$6.4M
Capital Projects Subtotal	\$0
Other Funding	
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties	

**Story Behind the Baselines**

The Family Resource Center Program is a community school model that incorporates childcare and family support services into schools. Programs and services are aligned to ensure that children arrive at school ready to learn and receive the support they need to succeed academically. The target population for FRCs includes children, parents and families who reside in the public elementary school attendance area in which the FRC is located and include the full, heterogeneous, racial/ethnic and socio-economic mix of families who live in the school attendance area.

Past program requirements have required existing programs to provide monthly participation data on the activities of the FRC. The focus of performance measures 1 and 2 are primarily associated with the participation of children from birth to five years old. Currently SDE does not collect outcome data on children participating in the FRCs so until such a process is in place, these measures are presented as proxy measures.

**Turning The Curves: What do you propose to do over the next two years and why?**

1. Work on increasing the availability of services offered to families with young children through FRCs that strengthen child development outcomes.
2. Work on the development and implementation of performance indicators related to FRC activities that focus upon separate populations served; preschoolers (3 and 4 years olds) and infants and toddlers.
3. Continue to improve overall program alignment with CT Preschool Curriculum Framework and State early childhood goals.

## Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program Accountability

**Program Purpose** FRCs ensure that more children and families throughout the state have the benefit of high-quality preschool and family support services designed to promote the optimal growth and development of children beginning at birth.

**Program** Family Resource Center (FRC) / State Department of Education

### Contribution to Population Result

Recognizing parents' important role in their child's development before they ever come to school, FRC schools offer home visits, playgroups, and workshops to parents of young children to educate them about cognitive, social, linguistic, and motor development. FRC schools also make a special effort to reach out to and involve parents of school-age children, offering regular opportunities for parents to meet and discuss a wide range of parenting issues and to be involved in their child's school and education.

<b>Key Budget Information (<i>Dollars reported in millions</i>)</b>	
Total Current Program Year Budget	\$ 6.4M
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Quality of Life Result	
Program Funding as Percent of Total Agency Budget	
Budget Distribution:	
Federal	\$-0-
State	\$ 6.4M
General Fund	\$-0-
Capital Project Funds	\$-0-
Other State Funding	\$-0-
Other Funds (Not Federal or State)	\$-0-
Percent of Total Current Funding Spent on Direct Service	100%
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third parties	

### Basic Program Facts

#### **ABOUT THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (FRC) PROGRAM-**

Connecticut's FRCs are patterned on the Schools of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (21C) concept as developed by Dr. Edward Zigler at Yale University. This concept envisions comprehensive, integrated community-based systems of family support and child development services located in public school buildings. The 21C community school model incorporates early childhood programs, after school care, and other family support services designed to promote the optimal growth and development of children beginning at birth.

The goals of the Connecticut Family Resource Center Program are:

- To promote the growth and development of children and their families;
- To make available high quality, accessible and affordable child care in both preschool and before/after school services;
- To increase the competence of parents and their use of effective family management practices;

## SDE: Family Resource Center (FRC)

- To promote a highly trained and supportive network of Family Day Care Home providers with a special emphasis on infant/toddler care; and
- To establish a comprehensive, integrated, community-based system of family support and early childhood services.

Connecticut has embarked on an intense effort to improve children's readiness to begin school by age five. The Family Resource Centers are one mechanism to support this effort. Because the Family Resource Center is a school-based child care and family-support program, it is able to develop a strong bond between the family and the school from birth.

In 1993, the Connecticut State Department of Education received federal support for the activities of nine existing Family Resource Centers (FRC) and for funding new FRCs. The FRCs were based on the premise that many childhood and adolescent problems can be prevented by strengthening effective family management practices and establishing a continuum of child care and support services linked to public schools or located in public school buildings.

Currently, 62 FRC program sites throughout 42 Connecticut communities receive state funding of \$102,250 each to administer a service delivery model that supports the goals of the Connecticut Family Resource Center Program. Programs have been chosen through a competitive grant process administered by the Connecticut State Department of Education. These Family Resource Centers are not aligned under a national network.

The service delivery model for each FRC is patterned upon local needs reflected not only at the community level but also by the actual school attendance area in which the FRC operates. This model provides an opportunity for schools and FRCs to collaborate with other community programs to improve and support existing services rather than duplicate programs. For this reason, the core services (including early childhood programming) that are delivered by FRCs staff are not consistent among all 62 programs.

Program requirements mandates that all Family Resource Center (FRC) program sites report to the State Department of Education on a monthly basis all activities provided by the Family Resource Centers on a form to be provided by the Department. This "Monthly Activity Report" has recently (Fall 2006) undergone substantial revision that establishes and maintains consistent reporting across ALL program sites and quantifies accurate counts of adults and children participating in FRC components and activities. This revised format for sites to report data is a first step in developing a longer term evaluation plan to evaluate the effectiveness of FRC administered programs and the benefits to children, parents, and the school as a whole.

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This revised reporting system now distinguishes specific populations of enrolled participants (infants & toddlers, preschoolers, compulsory school aged children and adults) and administers a process to deliver an “unduplicated” count of participants engaged in activities that are:

- content specific with scientifically researched-based curriculum, goals, and measured outcomes;
- sequential units of learning;
- long-term (scheduled 8 weeks or longer); and,
- promote education, academic advancement, school promotion, and/or school readiness.

### Performance Measures and Story Behind the Baselines

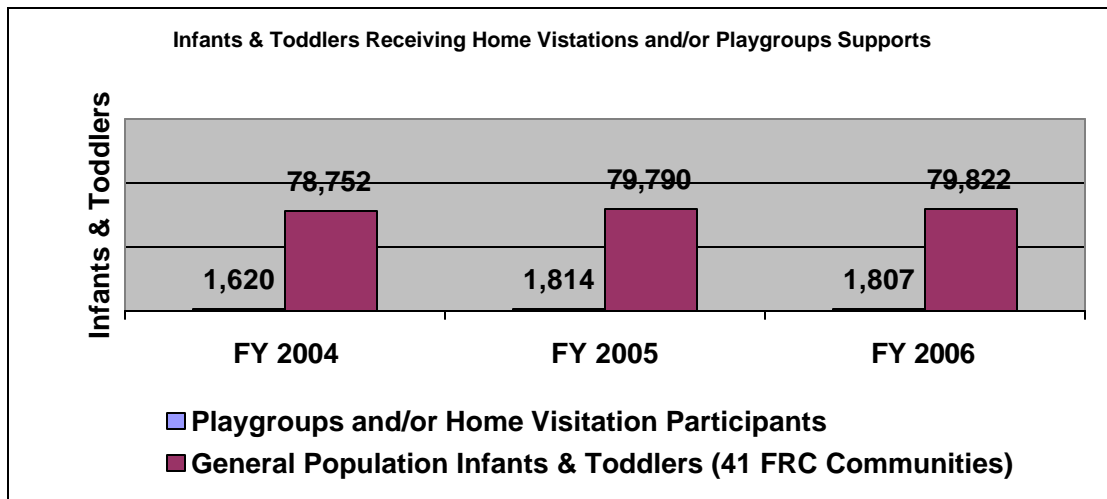
#### Summary of Story Behind the Baselines:

Past program data quantifies the participation of children who have been engaged in services administered through individual FRCs. The reporting system that was being utilized prior to school year 2006-2007 proved incompatible and unreliable. This resulted in the development of a new and improved method for collecting monthly participation data from FRCs statewide.

Quality measures that will be reflective of this revised and improved method of data collection are not contained in this report. The “baseline” statistics associated with this improved method of reporting will be available with data related to the 2006-2007 school year (July 2007).

Currently, SDE does not collect outcome data on children participating in the programs and activities of the Family Resource Centers. Until such a process is in place, the following measures are presented as proxy measures.

**Performance Measure 1. The monthly average of total children (under age 3) who participated in playgroups and/or home visits administered by FRCs, compared to the total general population of children (under age 3) in the communities that house FRC programs.**



#### Story Behind Measure 1:

The total population of children under age 3 in the 41 Connecticut school districts with existing FRCs was approximately 78,752 in FY 2004, 79,790 in FY 2005 and 79,822. On average, 2% of attendance area infants and toddlers receive monthly services that are designed to support social and language skills development. Concurrently, it should be noted that FRC serve families in approximately 18% (62) of the total elementary schools (350) throughout the 41 communities hosting FRCs. The comparison rate illustrated in this performance measure provides a community-wide service penetration among the total town/city wide population. However, the target populations for FRC

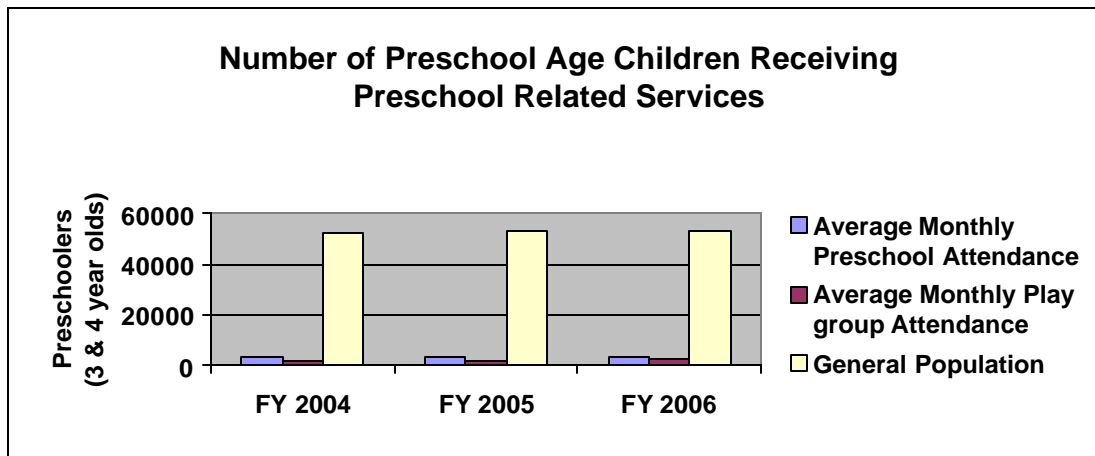
## SDE: Family Resource Center (FRC)

services include children, parents and families who reside in the public elementary school attendance area in which the FRC is actually located.

Existing program data quantifies the participation of children who participated in FRC activities administered under the FRC component Families-in-Training. These services are delivered by administering an appropriate home visitation model and through offering a variety of playgroups and family education workshops. Services include, but are not limited to providing information and advice to parents on their child's language, cognitive, social and motor development. (Note: while the primary audience for this component is families of children under the age of three, programs are encouraged to extend services to families of four and five year old children.) Research shows that effective parental engagement in children's education results in improved outcomes for children.

Prior to school year 2006-2007, FRCs were not required to report an unduplicated count of children served to the State agency. Therefore, the numbers represented are monthly averages of children that were reported served by FRCs. As a result, the numbers reflected demonstrate a relatively low penetration rate of children participating compared to the general population of children living in the communities over the course of a year.

**Performance Measure 2. The monthly average of preschool aged children (3 and 4 year olds) who participated in either a preschool program or playgroups aligned under an Family Resource Center (FRC) program, compared to the total general population of preschool children (3 and 4 year olds) in the communities that house FRC programs.**



### Story Behind Measure 2:

The total population of preschoolers (3 and 4 year olds) in the 41 Connecticut school districts with existing FRCs was approximately 52,501 in FY 2004, 53,193 in FY 2005 and 53,214 in FY 2006. FRCs report that approximately 10% of preschoolers in the general population were participating monthly in some form of preschool program (School Readiness, Head Start, or other community program) or participated in age-appropriate playgroups administered by the FRC and aligned to support Connecticut early childhood goals.

This measure demonstrates FRCs' ability to engage families in either quality preschool programming or other less formal preschool services i.e. play groups. As noted under Measure 1, prior to school year 2006-2007, FRCs did not report unduplicated counts of children served. Therefore, these numbers also reflect monthly averages of children reported served by FRCs.

## SDE: Family Resource Center (FRC)

FRCs support a variety of preschool experiences through school readiness, Head Start and other locally administered programs. Program data quantifies the participation of children who attended a preschool program that is either directly administered under the supervision of the FRC or by collaborative approach through working with other community based service providers to ensure access to FRC school attendance area children. Research supports that experiences in quality child care improves developmental expectations in children.

## Partners and Their Roles

1. Local Schools, Districts and School Readiness Councils - developing local strategies to involve all families in the education of their children.
2. Families - making contributions to student achievement by providing a home environment conducive to learning.
3. Communities - service organizations and agencies, religious groups, businesses and individuals; developing networks for communicating with schools and families about information, resources and services that support family involvement in education.

## What do you propose to do to improve performance in the next 3-5 years and why?

### Low cost action steps:

1. Work with FRCs to ensure that the principles of the state early childhood initiatives, such as the Connecticut Preschool Framework, are embedded into all FRC services for young children.
2. Advance state early childhood initiatives by improving FRC referrals for early childhood education and care programs to programs that meet school readiness standards.

### Given the appropriate funding and staffing levels, the SDE proposes to do the following:

3. Develop a process to monitor and evaluate performance indicators that align with state initiatives in early childhood education.
4. Develop and pilot a data collection system that is user friendly and compatible with current systems at FRCs to improve accuracy of current data collection.
5. Train all FRC staff and directors on the performance indicators and data collection system.
6. Continue to revise and improve the data collection process aligned as monthly reporting.

## Appendix A, Data Development Agenda

Given the appropriate funding and staffing levels, SDE proposes to implement the following data development:

- Develop a process that determines outcomes for children under age 3 that reflects the impact that FRC related services have on language and social skills, as well as problem solving and other intellectual tasks.
- Develop 1-2 early childhood performance indicators central to FRC legislative mandates for use with infants and toddlers that are aligned with state early childhood goals.
- Develop a process to measure the effectiveness that FRC programs have on developing parenting skills with families who participate in Families-in Training programming.

## Appendix B, Link to Budget

## Appendix C, Information and Research Agenda

## SDE: Family Resource Center (FRC)

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) legislation C.G.S. 10-4o(c) requires the Department of Education, within available appropriations, to provide for a longitudinal study of FRCs every three years. To date, this study has not been done due to lack of resources. The FRC program has become increasingly more expensive to deliver effective administrative oversight. Currently, grant activities exist in 62 program sites throughout 42 communities, with no state level funding to support it.