

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability Summary

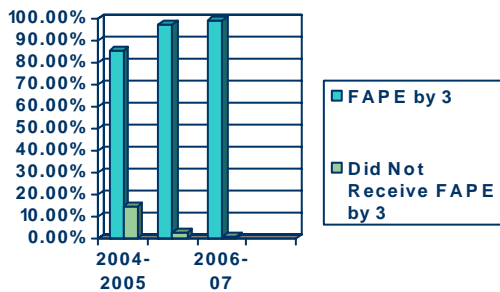
Program/Agency/System: Early childhood special education/State Department of Education

Quality of Life Result: Early childhood special education contributes to the population result of the Ready by Five, Five by Nine state investment plan. It allows for the provision of a free public education to children with significant developmental delays and disabilities beginning by a child's third birthday to address children's individual developmental and functional needs such that children make developmental and functional progress over time as a result of receiving services through an Individual Educational Program (IEP).

Program/Agency/System Purpose: To provide a free appropriate public education by delivering individually designed special education and related services to eligible children ages 3 through 5 with significant developmental delays and/or disabilities in accordance with state and federal law.

Performance Measure 1

Percent of children referred by the Connecticut Birth to Three System prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Special Education and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday.



Story Behind Measure 1

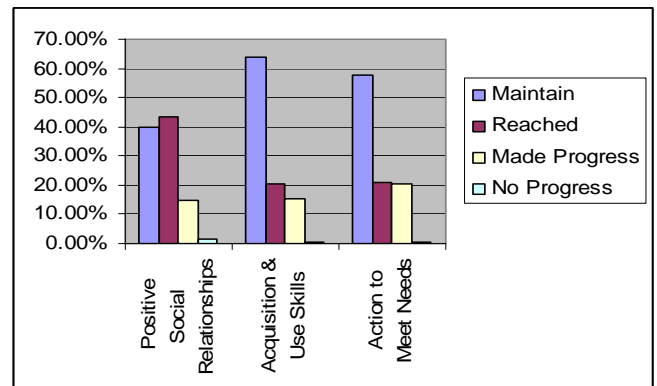
Performance Measure 1 is measuring children who exit the Connecticut Birth to Three System at age 3 and who begin receiving their special education and related services by their third birthday (not including the summer unless the child qualifies for extended school year services). The goal is to ensure that a free appropriate public education is provided by the third birthday of a child and that a child receives, to the

extent appropriate, uninterrupted services and supports designed to address their individual needs.

Performance Measure 2

The percent of preschool children with an IEP who demonstrate progress in:

1. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
2. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
3. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs



Story Behind Measure 2

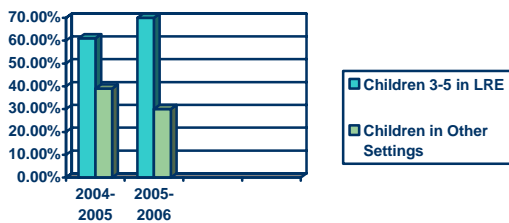
Performance Measure 2 is measuring the progress of children who receive special

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability Summary

education and related services. The Department requires that school districts utilize the Brigance IED-II, a criterion-referenced assessment instrument, to measure children’s skills and abilities at point 1, pre-test, and at point 2, post-test. The developmental and functional growth of children from the start to the end of services in the grade preschool is captured.

Performance Measure 3

The percent of preschool children with IEPs who receive special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers.



Story Behind Measure 3

Performance Measure 2 is measuring the amount of time a child receiving special education spends in a least restrictive environment (LRE) which would reflect the amount of time that a child with a disability is receiving their services with typically developing children of the same age.

Turning The Curve

What do you propose to do over the next two years and why?

1. Ensure statewide data collected has well defined data definitions and directions and provide technical assistance and support to ensure the reliability, validity, accuracy and timeliness of the data used for analysis and reporting.

2. Implement the activities and strategies in the State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) on the transition of children coming from the Connecticut Birth to Three System;
3. Provide training to administrators and early childhood/early childhood special education personnel on educating children with disabilities with typically developing children; *
4. Monitor school districts and provide targeted technical assistance in response to data regarding the education of children with disabilities with typically developing children and the provision of special education by age 3 for children coming from the Connecticut Birth to Three System;
5. Provide a range of professional development opportunities for the early childhood community relative to including children with diverse learning abilities and needs, including children with disabilities, in their early childhood programs;
6. Implement a long-term strategic plan to collect valid and reliable data for a child progress measure; and
7. implement the state assignment of a student identification number (SASID) to children receiving early intervention *

**Indicates, low-cost, no-cost action steps, includes reallocation of existing resources.*

Key Budget Information	
Total Current Program Year Funding	\$4,903,638
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Population Result	
Program Funding As Percent of Total Agency Budget	
Funding Distribution	
Total Federal Funds	\$4,903,638
Total State Funds	None
Capital Projects Subtotal	None
Other Funding	None
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties	15%

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

Program/Agency/System: Early childhood special education/: State Department of Education

Program/Agency/System Purpose

To provide a free appropriate public education by delivering individually designed special education and related services to eligible children ages 3 through 5 with significant developmental delays and/or disabilities in accordance with state and federal law.

Contribution to Population Result

Early childhood special education contributes to the population result of the Ready by Five, Five by Nine state investment plan on early childhood education, which includes children with disabilities. It allows for the provision of a free public education to children with significant developmental delays and disabilities beginning by a child's third birthday to address children's individual developmental and functional needs such that children make developmental and functional progress over time as a result of receiving services through an Individual Educational Program (IEP).

Key Budget Information (*Dollars reported in millions*)

Total Current Program Year Budget	\$4,903,638
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Quality of Life Result	
Program Funding as Percent of Total Agency Budget	
Budget Distribution:	
Federal	\$4,903,638
State	None
General Fund	None
Capitol Project Funds	None
Other State Funding	None
Other Funds (Not Federal or State)	None
Percent of Total Current Funding Spent on Direct Service	100%
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third parties	15%

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

Basic Program Facts

The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds are only available to school districts providing special education and related services. There are two IDEA special education grants to States. One IDEA grant to States is known as the Preschool Grant Program under the IDEA Section 619. The IDEA 619 federal grant provides federal financial assistance to school districts for the provision of special education and related services to children ages 3 through 5 with significant developmental delays and/or disabilities. Federal IDEA 619 funds are allocated based upon a funding formula outlined in the federal law.

The other IDEA grant is known as IDEA Section 611 which provides federal financial assistance for school districts for the provision of special education to students with disabilities ages 3 through 21. The Connecticut Birth to Three System also receives IDEA funds to provide early intervention through Part C, another part of this federal law.

Special education and related services are a child's free appropriate public education (FAPE). Those services could consist of a service provided once per week or less to a child or could consist of a part-day or full-day program developed specifically to address a child's developmental delays and disabilities.

Eligibility for special education and related services is based upon precise and distinct categories of disabilities identified by the IDEA and the determination that because of the child's disability the child requires the provision of special education and related services. The IDEA disability categories include: mental retardation, hearing impairments, including deafness, speech or language impairment, a visual impairment, including blindness, serious emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities. For children ages three through five in Connecticut, there is an additional IDEA disability category called 'developmental delay'. The disability category 'developmental delay' is used when an evaluation identifies that a child exhibits a significant developmental delay in one or more areas of development. The areas of development include: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development or adaptive development. The significant developmental delay of a child would be measured by appropriate instruments administered by a multidisciplinary team of qualified professionals.

Performance Measures and Story Behind the Baselines

Summary of Story Behind the Baselines

The federal law governing special education is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Congress reauthorized the IDEA in 2004 with a focus on improving results and outcomes for students ages 3 through 21. The reauthorized law required the implementation of a new system called "Monitoring, Technical Assistance and Enforcement". This new system requires the federal government to monitor a State's activities through a State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR). The SPP/APR reflects 20 federally

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

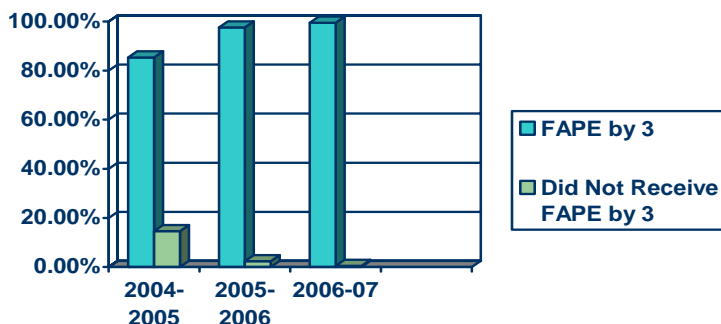
identified indicators that evaluate a state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of IDEA. The 20 measurement indicators represent the implementation of IDEA and accountability for the improvement of results for children ages 3 through 21 receiving special education and related services and their families. The SPP/APR describes how the State will improve their implementation of IDEA and improve results for children and youth with disabilities. IDEA also requires that states use the SPP/APR to monitor and enforce school districts in these same areas in order to focus on improved outcomes for all students. Performance measures 1, 2 and 3 are federally required accountability and results measures for young children ages 3 through 5 with disabilities receiving special education and related services. A full copy of the SPP/APR can be found at:

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&Q=320730#publications>

Performance measures 1, 2 and 3 are federally required accountability and result-based outcome measures for young children ages 3 through 5 with disabilities receiving special education and related services. It is anticipated that by 2008-09, the Department will have the ability to collect data on the environments where children receive their special education and related services; and by 2010-11, the Department will be fully implementing the collection of data to measure children's progress in three areas for those children receiving special education. The expectation is that current and future activities related to the newly implemented data collections will reflect valid, reliable and representative data.

Performance Measure 1

The percent of children referred by Part C, the Connecticut Birth to Three System, prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B (special education), and who have an individualized education program (IEP) developed and implemented by their third birthday.



Story Behind Measure 1

Performance Measure 1 is measuring children who exit the Connecticut Birth to Three System at age 3 and who begin receiving their special education and related services by their third birthday (not including the summer unless the child qualifies for special education and requires

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

extended school year services). The goal is to ensure that a free appropriate public education is provided in accordance with the IDEA requirements by the third birthday of a child and that a child receives, to the extent appropriate, uninterrupted services and supports designed to address their individual needs. In order to analyze the data for this indicator, the State Department of Education and the Connecticut Birth to Three System conduct data merge and individual follow-up with school districts for individual children, to yield the information for reporting.

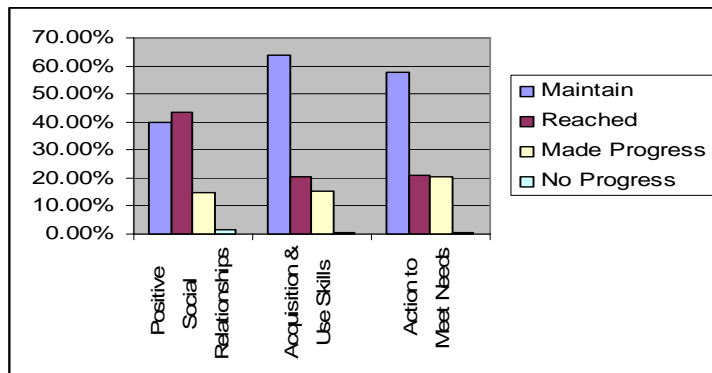
In the 2006-07 school year, 99.5% of children referred by the Connecticut Birth to Three System to their school district prior to age 3 were found eligible for Part B (special education) and had an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday. The Department's data indicates that 1648 children were served by the Connecticut Birth to Three System and were referred to special education before age 3. There were 964 children who were found eligible for special education and who were provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) by their third birthday. There were 234 children who did not receive a FAPE for a parent reason and there were 445 children who were found not eligible for special education and related services.

The 2006-07 school year indicates that 99.5% of children who were timely referred from the Connecticut Birth to Three System received services by their third birthday. The 2006-07 data indicates progress from the last reporting year, 97.4%, but still falls short of the compliance expectation of 100%. Three years of trend data indicate continued progress toward full compliance from the 2005-06 baseline of 85.4% and the 2006-07 progress of 97.4%

Performance Measure 2

The percent of preschool children with an individual educational program (IEP) who demonstrate improved:

- **Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);**
- **Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and**
- **Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs**



Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

Story Behind Measure 2

Performance Measure 2 is measuring the progress of children who receive special education and related services. The Department requires that school districts utilize the Brigance IED-II, a criterion-referenced assessment instrument to measure children's skills and abilities at point 1, pre-test, and at point 2, post-test. Children are assessed shortly after they began receiving their special education and related services and then again in the same areas when they exit preschool special education. Progress measures include: children maintained age appropriate skills and behaviors in a certain area; children achieved age appropriate skills in a certain area; children made general progress in a certain area but not sufficient to reach age-appropriate and children made no progress. Children's progress measure is captured in three areas: positive social emotional skills and relationships; acquisition and use of knowledge; and skills and taking appropriate actions to meet their needs.

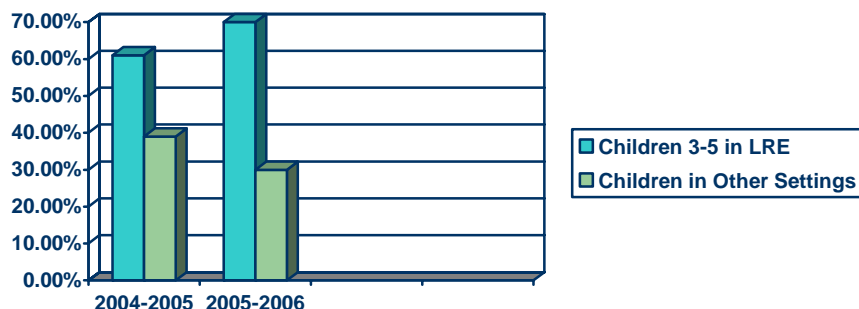
There were 262 children for whom 2 points of data were available in order to analyze the progress made by children who were receiving special education and related services. Children were assessed across 3 areas and their progress was measured in comparison to the skills and behaviors expected of children at a certain age. In the area of positive social-emotional skills and relationships: 40.8% of children maintained age-appropriate skills, 43.51% achieved age appropriate skills, 14.88% made progress but not sufficient to reach an age appropriate skill level and 1.53% of children made no progress. In the area of acquisition and use of knowledge and skills: 63.74% of children maintained age-appropriate skills, 20.23% achieved age appropriate skills, 15.27% made progress but not sufficient to reach an age appropriate skill level and 0.76% of children made no progress. In the area of taking actions to meet their needs: 57.63% of children maintained age-appropriate skills, 20.99% achieved age appropriate skills, 20.62% made progress but not sufficient to reach an age appropriate skill level and 0.76% of children made no progress.

It should be noted that the current data reflects the first year of data collected on a small population of children and is not representative of the population of preschool-age children who are receiving special education and related services. This first year of data will be used internally to assist the Department in refining the implementation of this data collection to ensure accuracy, reliability and validity. Due to the first year of available data, in some cases, the Department was able to identify some areas which need targeted technical assistance. In other cases, the first data collection was able to identify that data was not available for a sub-set of the population because they either moved and/or had less than 6 months of special education and related services. The Department does not intend to use first year data for public reporting. Instead the Department will use the next 2 school years to refine the data collection and analysis and provide target training and technical assistance to school personnel on the collection and reporting requirements for this data collection. See the Data Development Agenda.

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

Performance Measure 3

The percent of preschool children with IEPs who receive special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers.



Story Behind Measure 3

Performance Measure 3 is measuring the amount of time a child receiving special education spends in a least restrictive environment (LRE) which would reflect the amount of time that a child with a disability is receiving their services with typically developing children of the same age. For the school-age child, 5 years of age and older, LRE is based upon the amount of time the child spends in regular education with non-disabled peers. For children with an IEP who are 3- and 4-years of age, LRE is based upon the amount of time a child spends in an early childhood environment with non-disabled peers.

The last year for which the Department can report data on this Performance Measure is the 2006-07 school year. At that time, Department data indicated that 70.0% of preschool children with IEPs received their special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers. There was no data available for reporting in the 2006-07 school year.

The data collection for this data performance measure changed in the 2006-07 school year with the implementation of a new data system for the Department called SEDAC, the Special Education Data Application and Collection. The Department could not aggregate nor disaggregate the data to identify whether children who were receiving special education and related services were receiving such services in programs with non-disabled peers. The inability to provide 2006-07 data places this Performance Measure in the Data Development agenda to ensure that accurate, reliable and valid data is available to measure and track settings, environments, and participating children.

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

Partners and Their Roles

1. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the Connecticut Birth to Three System relative to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) by 3 for those children receiving early intervention services.
2. The Department's Bureaus of Information Technology; Special Education; and Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment to collaborate and address the Data Development agenda.
3. The Department's Bureaus of Information Technology; Special Education; and Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment to complete the submission of the State Performance Plan (SPP) and the submission of the Annual Performance Reports (APRs) of state progress, results and outcomes to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).
4. The Department's Bureaus of Information Technology and Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment to collaborate and coordinate the collection of data and the data analysis for these Performance Measures including addressing the revision of the state's data collection system, SEDAC.
5. Connecticut school districts providing special education and related services to the population of children ages 3 through 5 with developmental delays and disabilities.
6. The early childhood community relative to disability issues, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act Section 504 and the inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood programs.

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

Low-Cost Action Steps:

- Fully implement the assignment of a state assigned student identification number (SASID) that will allow the Connecticut Birth to Three System and Department of Education to track the progress of children who received early intervention through their school career. This work will be completed in partnership with the Connecticut Birth to Three System and the Department of Education's Bureaus of Information Technology; Special Education; and Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment.
- Provide a statewide training and technical assistance system to support school districts in the collection and reporting of the early childhood progress measure.

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

Within its available resources, the Department will support the following priorities:

1. Address the activities and strategies that focus on training and technical assistance in the State Performance Plan (SPP) regarding the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and a free appropriate public education (FAPE) by age 3. This work will be completed in partnership with the Department's Bureaus of Special Education and Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment and the Connecticut Birth to Three System.
2. Train administrators and early childhood special education personnel on ensuring that a child receives their special education and related services with typically developing children and that children coming from the Connecticut Birth to Three System begin receiving their special education and related services by age 3.

With additional resources and staffing:

3. Monitor school districts and provide targeted technical assistance to low performing school districts relative to the 2 measurement indicators: LRE and FAPE by age 3.
4. Provide training and professional development opportunities for the broad early childhood community relative to including children with disabilities in early childhood programs in collaboration with the Department's Bureau of Special Education and the State Education Resource Center (SERC).
5. Train early childhood education personnel working in community-based early childhood programs on topics related to the least restrictive environment and inclusion – for example, accommodating a child with physical disabilities in an early childhood program.

Appendix A, Data Development Agenda

Data Development Agenda

- Continue data development on the implementation of a child progress indicator identified as the "early childhood outcome" (ECO) measurement. This work will be completed in partnership with the Department's Bureaus of Information Technology; Special Education; and Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment. The child progress measure requires that states report on the:

Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- 1) Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- 2) Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
- 3) Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template
Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability

- Fully implement the assignment of a state assigned student identification number (SASID) that will allow the Connecticut Birth to Three System and the Department of Education to track the progress of children who received early intervention. This work will be completed in partnership with the Department's Bureaus of Information Technology; Special Education; and Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment and the Connecticut Birth to Three System. This will allow for accurate, reliable and valid data that will reflect all children allowing for better program measures.

- Revise the state data collection system to ensure the capability and capacity to capture information on the LRE for children ages 3 through 5.

Appendix B, Funding Details N/A

Appendix C, Information and Research Agenda

- Develop an internal data team through the Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment to analyze at least 3 years of trend data using the birth cohort data from the Department of Public Health birth statistics to determine if there is an over- or under-representation of children in special education based upon race, ethnicity, language or other factors resulting from the expansion of early childhood program opportunities in order to inform the Department and future activities.