

Appropriations Committee RBA Pilot Project and Related Efforts in Connecticut
September 2005 through October 2009

I. Appropriations Committee Pilot Project

A. Phase I, 2005-2006

In the first year of its pilot project, the Appropriations Committee focused on two major areas, Long Island Sound and the early childhood result statement, *Ready by Five*. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) presented a program template for the clean water fund, and the Early Childhood Cabinet presented 3 templates that represented a small slice of the birth to 5 system.

Several critical components of the Appropriations Committee RBA model were developed through these first pilot projects:

- Formal RBA training was offered to all agency, OPM and legislative staff
- Official RBA templates were developed at the population and program level for use by all agencies and programs reporting to the legislature.
- Extensive technical assistance was given to participating agencies in drafting their templates.
- A review and revision process aided by Appropriations Committee consultants provided agencies an opportunity to revise the templates as needed. Particular attention was paid to program outcome measures.
- A process was developed for the Cabinet and DEP to present the population and system levels before the entire Appropriations Committee. Presentations at the program level were made to the relevant sub-committees.
- Questions were drafted for the Appropriations Committee and each of the relevant sub-committees. The agencies received the written questions prior to the hearings, and both legislators and agency personnel were briefed.
- Agencies were requested to answer written follow-up questions for their sub-committees.

B. Phase II, 2006-2007

In the second year, the Phase I pilot projects were expanded significantly. DEP added public recreation to Long Island Sound as a result area and submitted templates for state parks as well as the Clean Water Fund. The Early Childhood Cabinet presented an updated population template for *Ready by Five* and submitted program templates from 29 programs.

The Appropriations Committee created a formal RBA Sub-committee to guide its RBA work. Also during this year, several new components of the RBA model were put in place:

- An official Connecticut glossary of RBA terms was published. Both the glossary and the RBA templates were widely distributed to agencies and non-profit organizations that were not part of the pilot projects.
- Members of the RBA sub-committee were designated as liaisons to the agencies participating in the pilot projects. Delegations of legislators and staff led by the

liaisons visited with the commissioner of each agency at the commissioner's office to discuss the RBA project, respond to any questions or concerns, and learn more about the relevant agency programs.

- Using a process similar to the first year, agencies received written questions from their sub-committees after their presentation. Agencies were required to answer in writing before they appeared for their sub-committee work sessions.

In this year, the legislature adopted a new budget for the coming biennium. The Governor's budget had proposed a substantial increase in funding for early childhood, most of it for additional preschool slots. The legislature's budget appropriated approximated the same amount of new money for early childhood, but the money was allocated very differently. Based on the RBA presentations it had received, the Appropriations Committee reallocated significant dollars from funding designed mostly to increase the number of new slots for children and instead supported efforts associated with quality, infrastructure, and accountability. It also required the Early Childhood Cabinet to submit a number of reports to the legislature on its progress in building an early childhood system. In addition, the budget adopted by the legislature required new and expanded programs identified by OPM and OFA to develop RBA models and for agencies that were part of the pilot projects of the Appropriations Committee to continue reporting using RBA.

For its ground-breaking work on RBA, Connecticut received the Con Hogan award from NCSL at its annual meeting.

C. Phase III, 2007-2008

The third year of the pilot project continued to focus on the environment and early childhood. DEP presented updated templates on Long Island Sound and the Clean Water Fund, and the Early Childhood Cabinet presented a full accounting of its activities over the prior year under its new budget and new legislative authority. The Cabinet also presented a new result statement for *Fine by Nine* to complement its result, *Ready by Five*. The Cabinet presented 28 program templates for *Ready by Five* and two new program templates for *Fine by Nine*: Early Reading Success and Adult Education for the mothers of young children.

The RBA sub-committee conducted agency visits as it had in the prior year, and the sub-committee RBA hearings were conducted as they had been in the prior year. The Appropriations Committee also held a special forum on the Early Reading Success program. Funding for this program had been eliminated in the second year of the biennial budget because of legislative concern about a lack of effectiveness and accountability. At this forum, the State Department of Education made a presentation of a new accountability approach grounded in RBA and engaged in a frank discussion with the Appropriations Committee about what had gone wrong in the administration of this program. On the strength of the RBA presentation, the Appropriations Committee voted to restore and expand funding for ERS. Because there was no new state budget for SFY 09, however, the ERS funds were not in fact restored.

As a result of the Appropriations Committee's use of RBA in the budget process, governing Magazine raised the overall rating of the State of Connecticut on performance from C+ in 2005 to B- in 2008.

D. Phase IV, 2008-2009

In the fourth year of its pilot project, the Appropriations Committee focused on expanding and institutionalizing the use of RBA within the legislature. OFA hired three new analysts who have primary responsibility for supporting the RBA efforts of the Appropriations Committee. The OFA analysts worked in teams with the Appropriations Committee's RBA consultants in order to effect a skills transfer so that OFA will be able to support future RBA efforts in the legislature.

Several of the Appropriations Committee sub-committees used RBA on a pilot basis to explore various aspects of the budget in which they were interested. In addition, the five legislative commissions – aging, children, women, African-American, and Hispanic/Puerto Rican – developed comprehensive RBA frameworks.

In Phase IV, the Early Childhood Cabinet did not submit formal program templates. Instead, it piloted the use of RBA report cards at the population, system, and program levels that can be used as a model for other results statements in future years. The EC Cabinet was also given a legislative forum at which it presented the reports on quality, accountability, workforce, and facilities that the legislature mandated it to submit this year. At this forum, the Cabinet also presented its legislative and budget priorities for the coming biennium.

The major initiative for this legislative session was the use of RBA questions by all Appropriations sub-committees during their budget hearings. A set of common RBA questions was provided to each state agency, and agencies were informed that they should be ready to answer these questions with regard to six specified programs. RBA training and technical assistance were offered to all agencies, and most accepted the offer. In addition, each sub-committee identified one of the programs that it was particularly interested in, and the consultants and OFA developed detailed RBA-based questions related to those programs. The detailed questions were provided to the agencies before their budget hearings. Secretary Genuario of OPM also wrote to all state agencies expressing his support for the use of RBA during the budget hearings and offering to provide assistance to the agencies in preparing for the hearings.

The first 30-60 minutes of each sub-committee's hearing was devoted to the RBA questioning. Nearly all agencies had prepared responses to the RBA questions and, for the most part, both agencies and legislators reported that the hearings had been a success. Agencies subsequently completed an online evaluation of the hearings and nearly all agencies attended one of two debriefing sessions that the RBA sub-committee held in the summer and early fall of 2009. Feedback from the agencies was used to shape the RBA hearing process for Phase V of the RBA project.

E. Phase V, 2009-2010

Phase V has been designed as the final step in the implementation of RBA into the budget process. Based on feedback from the agencies that participated in the RBA questioning during Phase IV, the Appropriations Committee has developed a new process for the 2010 budget hearings:

- Each state agency have been requested to identify the three programs in its agency that have the biggest impact on the state budget and to prepare RBA report cards for those programs. In addition, each agency may submit report cards for up to three additional programs that it wishes to bring to the attention of the Appropriations Committee.
- The RBA sub-committee will review the report cards with the relevant subject-matter sub-committees and will select one of the major programs for each agency to participate in a sub-committee hearing in January, before the start of the regular session. Each agency may also select one of the additional programs to participate in the January hearing.
- During the regular sub-committee budget hearings in February, agencies may be asked RBA follow-up questions about any of their selected programs that are being discussed at the budget hearing; however, there will not be a separate RBA portion of the hearing.
- Agencies have been informed that, starting with the 2010-2011 session, the RBA questions will be incorporated into the regular budget hearings. No extra time will be set aside for RBA, but agencies will be expected to respond as appropriate to RBA questions about any program that is discussed at the budget hearings.

The other major development in Phase V is that the Program Review and Investigations Committee (PRI) has begun a pilot project to apply RBA to the study and evaluation of social service programs. The first report will be formally presented in January 2010, at which time PRI will offer its recommendations about whether and how to continue the pilot project.

The RBA Sub-committee is also considering how the PRI pilot can be connected with the RBA budget process. One option under discussion is for PRI to identify one or two result statements for cross-program, system-wide review and presentation each year. All relevant agencies would be informed of the system selected at least one year before the system would be presented. The RBA sub-committee, PRI, OFA, and the agencies would then work together to design and present a complete RBA framework for the selected system to the Appropriations Committee, PRI, and the committees of cognizance.

II. Other RBA Efforts in Connecticut Prompted by the Appropriations Committee's RBA Pilot Project

1. Early Childhood Cabinet. The EC Cabinet was the focus of the Appropriations Committee's pilot projects in the first three years. The Cabinet has embraced RBA for all of its work and has developed comprehensive plans for infants and toddlers and for children in kindergarten through grade 3 using an RBA framework. The Cabinet is actively pursuing accountability and data issues raised in its RBA presentations to the legislature and is using RBA to guide its system planning and budget processes. It has also submitted to the legislature its first annual Accountability Plan, which is firmly grounded in RBA. The Cabinet's pioneering work in RBA

has been recognized by many prominent organizations, including the National Governors Association.

2. Child Poverty and Prevention Council (CPPC). During 2008, the CPPC developed a complete RBA framework to guide its work. A work group met over 5 months to develop a comprehensive framework, which was presented to the full Council in May. As required by law, OPM is incorporating RBA elements into a protocol for state agency contracts dealing with prevention services.

3. Juvenile Justice Planning and Oversight Coordinating Council (JJPOCC). Over the past 18 months, the JJPOCC has developed a comprehensive RBA framework to guide the provision of services to older youth who will be brought into the juvenile justice system as result of the Raise the Age legislation. This framework informed the creation of a service delivery design and the identification of service enhancements necessary for an effective transition.

4. Other State RBA Initiatives. Several state agencies have embraced RBA for purposes unrelated to the Appropriations Committees RBA pilot project.

- The State Department of Education (SDE) initially became involved in RBA through the Early Childhood Cabinet. In 2007, the new commissioner decided to provide extensive RBA training to all senior managers and to make an assistant commissioner the point person for SDE's RBA efforts. Last year, SDE developed its own method for tracking progress on the 7 programs that presented RBA templates to the legislature, and the commissioner has used RBA to guide the other major initiatives of the department in addition to early childhood. In the current year, SDE is continuing to apply RBA to additional programs (including Family Resource Centers, magnet schools, Youth Service Bureaus, and service learning grants) and is developing a comprehensive RBA model for the entire Department.
- The Office for Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) has been using RBA for the past three years. Recently, OWC integrated RBA into its planning. Results statements, indicators, and strategies have been developed that will have an impact on planning, as well as contracting for services associated with particular strategies.
- The Connecticut Employment and Training Commission's (CETC) Youth and Performance Committees also developed RBA frameworks that they later integrated into a single framework. CETC's RBA framework will be used to inform program and policy development. It will also shape the CETC's state and federal reports, including the annual report to the legislature on the employment outcomes for employment, training and educational programs and institutions.
- The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judiciary have used RBA to restructure their juvenile justice joint strategic plan. The RBA framework focused and strengthened the accountability components of the original plan.
- The Department of Correction (DOC) is leading a multi-agency effort to develop a plan for prisoner reentry to the community under the auspices of OPM's criminal justice planning. DOC provided RBA training for the members of its

work group and developed an RBA model, including result statement, population indicators, strategies, and program measures.

- The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) has fully embraced RBA and has created a comprehensive framework with results, indicators, strategies, and system measures that has served as a model for the other commissions in their RBA development work. PCSW has also conducted turn the curve sessions at the system level to identify how PCSW can contribute to system development efforts in the area of gender equity.
- The working group for parents with cognitive limitations has recently embarked on developing an RBA framework. RBA provides a way of structuring the planning of this cross-agency working group work and incorporating accountability into its efforts at promoting change across the social services system. The working group is also integrating its focus on these parents with broader RBA efforts like those already established by the Early Childhood Cabinet.
- The Mental Health Transformation Grant, administered by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), is in its fifth and final year of federal funding. DMHAS is providing RBA training and support to enable the three major initiatives under the grant to frame their work using RBA with the aim of supporting the initiatives' sustainability efforts.

5. Community plans for local comprehensive birth-eight systems. Funded jointly by the Early Childhood Cabinet and the Graustein Memorial Fund, 23 communities (all of which are priority or competitive school districts) have developed comprehensive local birth through eight plans that include a full RBA framework to ensure accountability and alignment with state RBA efforts. These plans are based on bringing all of the key stakeholders to the table and obtaining broad community input. Additional communities will be developing comprehensive RBA plans in 2010.

6. Capital Workforce Partner (CWP), the Hartford area workforce investment board. For the past three years, CWP has used RBA to develop a report card of workforce development indicators that has been published by the Hartford Courant. CWP has also developed an RBA framework that it has used to anchor its strategic planning and performance measurement efforts.

7. City of Hartford. Hartford began using RBA three years ago to reorganize its services for youth 9-21 as part of establishing a new Hartford Office of Youth Services. In the last year, the city's Office for Young Children has adopted RBA to revise its plan for services to children birth to nine and has provided in-depth RBA training to all of its early childhood and family support providers. Hartford is actively exploring the use of RBA for all other city departments. It has embarked on the use of a data collection system that incorporates RBA principles in its structure and design.

8. RBA Initiatives by Other Non-profit Organizations. Several charitable foundations and non-profit organizations have adopted RBA for planning and accountability.

- Graustein Memorial Fund (GMF). As described in #5 above, GMF has been supported the use of RBA in 23 communities that developed comprehensive local

plans for all children birth through age eight. In 2009, GMF has broadening its support for RBA work by offering RBA training and technical assistance to all 54 Discovery communities. GMF has also employed RBA to drive its own strategic plan for 2010-2014.

- Annie E. Casey Foundation (AEC). Long a supporter and advocate of RBA, AEC has been actively promoting the use of RBA among foundations and community-based non-profit organizations in Connecticut. AEC has provided training and financial support for the use of RBA to the Graustein Memorial Fund and the United Healthcare Foundation of Connecticut. It has also provided training to over 100 individuals in 30 non-profit organizations and is currently working with several non-profits in the New Haven area to create a network of RBA coaches.

In September 2009, AEC and The Charter Oak Group sponsored the first statewide conference of RBA practitioners. Over 100 active RBA users convened for a day of workshops and plenary sessions, including a keynote address by Mark Friedman and a panel presentation by Connecticut legislative leaders.

- United Way of Connecticut. The United Way of America has promoted the use of logic modeling for some time, and all of the United Ways in Connecticut have been using it. However, four large United Ways in Connecticut are currently using RBA in initiatives with their partners (largely for early childhood, youth, and homeless activities). Two of these large United Ways and one small United Way are considering migrating from the logic model to RBA for all of their work, and one small United Way has already made the migration.