MARYLAND EXCELS
PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

A Program Improvement Plan (PIP) supports a process for continuous quality improvement through the identification of a program's strengths and areas for improvement. Programs participating in Maryland EXCELS submit a PIP to meet criteria ACR 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5. The PIP is informed by ERS and/or CLASS assessment(s), school readiness goals, and program priorities. The Maryland EXCELS Program Improvement Plan form is designed to identify, support, and evaluate progress areas, program goals, program strategies, responsible parties, timelines, and needed resources. As a process for continuous quality improvement, the PIP should be reviewed on a regular basis, updated annually, and uploaded to the Maryland EXCELS system to meet the requirements of the Accreditation and Rating Scales Standards.

Instructions for completing the Maryland EXCELS Program Improvement Plan (PIP):

- Save the PIP form to your computer.

- Enter your program information in the fields provided. If your program has not been published in Maryland EXCELS, select "Not Yet Published" in the drop down menu.

- See Strategies for Writing SMART Goals and Quality Measures (below).

- Review the Sample Program Improvement Plan to assist with the development of your PIP.

- Once completed, upload the document to the appropriate criteria in the Accreditation and Rating Scale Standard.

Strategies for Writing SMART Goals:

The process of completing your Program Improvement plan should be one of developing SMART goals. SMART goals are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction-oriented, **R**ealistic and relevant, and **T**ime-limited. SMART goals provide clear benchmarks and represent a way to accurately measure progress that will lead to the ultimate goal of continuous program improvement. For more information on SMART goals, visit olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/data/ck/sites/121/files/SMARTGoals.pdf.

Quality Measures:

- *Maryland EXCELS Standards* - These are areas within the standards in which you might improve. For more information on the Maryland EXCELS Standards, please refer to the Maryland EXCELS Program Guidebook on the Maryland EXCELS web site.

- *Additional Achievements -* Maryland EXCELS recognizes child care and early education programs that provide services over and above those outlined in the Standards. These include: **Asthma Friendly**, **Program Administration Scale (PAS) and the Business Administration Scale** (**BAS), Health and Wellness,** and **Cultural and Linguistic Competency**. For more information, see the Maryland EXCELS Additional Achievements information sheet on the Maryland EXCELS web site.

- *ERS/CLASS -* The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) are program assessment tools designed for evaluating program performance and guiding program improvement. For more information about the ERS, visit http://www.ersi.info. For more information about CLASS, please visit TeachStone.org.

- *School Readiness* - School readiness goals and objectives are the results a program expects to achieve from quality teaching and learning. These goals articulate the knowledge and skills for preschool children in social and emotional development, cognitive and general knowledge, language and literacy, approaches to learning, and physical development and health as they enter kindergarten. Child, family, and program goals can and should change based on needs and ongoing data collection (National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning, 2011). For more information on school readiness and to find data about the readiness of preschool children in your community, visit MSDE School Readiness online.