MARYLAND EXCELS

Program Improvement Plan Guidance

A Program Improvement Plan (PIP) provides programs with an individualized guide for continuous quality improvement. Programs create PIPs by looking at assessment data (their own and public), gathering input (perhaps from children, families, and/or staff), and taking into account other priorities. Programs participating in Maryland EXCELS submit a PIP, along with a statement describing their process for developing it, to meet the requirements of Accreditation and Rating Scales (ACR 3) at levels 3-5 or Accreditation/Validation and Rating Scale (AVR 3) at levels 4-5.

The Maryland EXCELS Program Improvement Plan form is designed to help programs track progress and achieve program improvement goals. On the form, programs identify goals, categories the goals address, strategies for achieving the goals, persons responsible, timelines, and resources needed. As a tool for continuous quality improvement, the PIP should be reviewed on a regular basis and updated annually.

Required Categories

Include at least one goal for each of the following categories:

- **Program Assessments:** The Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessments, Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®), and School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) are program assessment tools designed for evaluating teacher-child interactions and guiding program improvement.
- **School Readiness** (not required for School-Age Only programs): School readiness means that a child is demonstrating the behaviors, skills, and knowledge that enable him or her to fully participate and succeed in school in the domains of Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Social Foundations, and Physical Well-Being and Motor Development. Use the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Reports to see the readiness of children in your community.
- **Accreditation Standards** (levels 4 and 5 only): Programs that are seeking or have met state or national standards of program quality demonstrate additional commitment to continuous quality improvement to benefit children, families, and staff. Visit Recognized Accrediting Organizations for more information.

Required Categories	ACR 3.3	ACR 3.4/AVR 3.4	ACR 3.5/AVR 3.5
Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessments/CLASS®/SACERS Include at least one goal for each Area/Domain/Subscale with an average score at or below	**4.00**, based upon self-assessments uploaded to ACR 2	**4.50**, based upon assessments conducted by MSDE assessors uploaded to ACR 2 or AVR 2	**5.00**, based upon assessments conducted by MSDE assessors uploaded to ACR 2 or AVR 2
School Readiness Based upon:	School Readiness data from your county/city	School Readiness data from your county/city	School Readiness data from your county/city
Accreditation Standards Based upon:	No accreditation-related goal required	Accreditation self-study	Accreditation standards

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Optional Categories:

- **Maryland EXCELS Standards:** Choose areas your program wants to focus on within the Standards.
- **Additional Achievements:** Maryland EXCELS recognizes programs that provide services over and above those outlined in the Maryland EXCELS Standards. For more information, refer to the Maryland EXCELS Additional Achievements Information sheet.
- **Other Program Priorities:** Maryland EXCELS encourages programs to further individualize their PIPs by soliciting and considering input from program stakeholders – children, families, staff, members of the board, etc.

Sample Program Improvement Plan Goals:

Category	Goal	Goal Strategies	Person Responsible	Start & End Dates	Resources Needed	Progress / Checkpoints /Status Updates
Self-assessment Area: Language	The teachers will talk with each infant while changing a diaper.	Post examples of self-talk and open-ended questions by the diapering tables, to be updated monthly.	Teacher(s)	Aug. 15, 2021 through Dec. 31, 2021	Chart paper, marker, tape, sheet protectors	The director will review resources at the beginning of each month (Sept. 1, Oct. 1, Nov. 1, Dec. 1).
School Readiness: Language and Literacy	Read one book to a small group of children once a day.	During center time, make "Read with the Teacher" an optional area.	Teacher	Sept. 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022	Purchase 10-15 new books	Rotate some of the books in the reading area on a monthly basis.