



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems in Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Program Annual Performance Reports

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In February 2013 the nine Phase 1 Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Program grantee States submitted the first [Annual Performance Reports](#) (APRs) for the grant program. The APRs document progress made during the 1st year of grant implementation (January 1 – December 31, 2012). Grantees wrote about lessons learned during the 1st grant year and the progress being made in each of the five RTT-ELC reform areas and on their corresponding performance measures.

Following is a summary of the 1st year of work that grantees completed in the RTT-ELC reform area of *High-Quality, Accountable Programs*. Some of this work cut across various reform areas and is therefore categorized by content area. This summary is by no means an exhaustive collection of all the work in the area of early childhood program quality improvement being done in a particular State, but it is a compilation of the work highlighted and documented by grantees as being supported by RTT-ELC funds and as meeting the stated RTT-ELC goals.

The work implemented during the 1st year of the grant period in the area of *High-Quality, Accountable Programs* is organized using select indicators aligned with the core benchmark elements (*Program Standards, Supports for Programs and Providers, Financial Incentives and Supports, Quality Assurance and Monitoring, and Consumer Education*) laid out in the [Office of Child Care's](#) (OCC) Benchmarks for Quality Improvement Project.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

Graduated Program Quality Standards Create a Pathway to Excellence

- The tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS) standards are based on national research and evaluation results from a 2-year field test piloted in regions throughout Washington. Early Achievers (Washington State's TQRIS) is a voluntary system with a hybrid framework in which programs demonstrate a mastery of all requirements at lower levels and earn points at higher levels based on a comprehensive rating process. The quality standards are designed so that all participating programs share the same basic foundational quality at Levels 1 and 2 and show flexibility in how they earn points to achieve rating Levels 3 to 5. Quality care and education can look different across settings to meet the unique needs of the families and children served. For this reason, the quality standards are not a checklist of a one-size-fits-all approach but a

flexible framework to encourage innovation, creativity, and comprehensive approaches to program-wide quality improvement, regardless of curriculum or philosophy **(Washington)**.

Graduated Program Quality Standards Are Aligned With Other Program Standards

- Delaware has standards alignment/reciprocity in place for its State preschool program, Head Start, and nationally accredited programs **(Delaware)**.
- The development team resolved the inclusion of public school prekindergarten (preK) programs by adjusting the standards to align with the Charlotte Danielson model, which has been adopted by 22 of the 24 local school systems **(Maryland)**.
- Based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the work completed so far, it is anticipated that the revised TQRIS will include an assessment of quality indicators related to the use of North Carolina's revised Early Learning and Development Standards (*Foundations*); the use of a curriculum and an ongoing formative assessment aligned with these standards; global environmental quality (Environmental Rating Scales [ERS]); teacher-child interaction (Classroom Assessment Scoring System [CLASS]); educator qualifications; health promotion practices; family engagement; and accreditation by nationally recognized organizations, such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Emphasis is being placed on selecting quality indicators that are measurable and reflective of high expectations and are aligned with national standards **(North Carolina)**.
- During the 1st year of the grant, Rhode Island initiated the process of revising and aligning the three sets of State program standards. This exercise in alignment has created a continuum of program standards for the State that include the Department of Children, Youth and Families Child Care Licensing standards for center-based and family child care (FCC) programs; BrightStars Quality Rating and Improvement System; and Rhode Island Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Program Approval standards **(Rhode Island)**.

State Program Quality Standards Support the Professional Preparation and Ongoing Development of Practitioners

- Low-cost training was made available statewide to all early care and education (ECE) providers for both the Minnesota Child Care Credential (which meets Parent Aware training requirements) and 54 hours of State-developed training in content areas required to achieve higher ratings in Parent Aware **(Minnesota)**.
- Ohio has revised Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) to include program standards that address the need for early childhood educators to share assessment results with families. This effort will ensure that families have a better understanding of how their child is developing and learning. Programs at higher levels of quality also are required to meet with the parent or family to develop educational goals that are based in part on assessment results. The professional development (PD) trainings offered to early childhood educators through the Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System also will provide supports and strategies for helping families understand the purpose, use, and results of the assessments. The system also will produce child reports that can

be shared with the family, summarizing where the child is developmentally and providing ideas on how to support the child's learning and development **(Ohio)**.

State Program Quality Standards Support Children's Learning Through the Use of Curricula and Learning Activities That Are Based on the State Learning and Development Guidelines

- Delaware Stars is based on a set of comprehensive program standards and is grounded in the State's early learning standards, known as the Delaware Early Learning Foundations **(Delaware)**.
- The new and revised program standards reflect the following domains: Learning and Development, Administrative and Leadership Practice, Staff Qualifications and Professional Development, and Family and Community Partnerships. Embedded within the tiers are several new elements, including newly developed standards addressing Family Engagement, Health Promotion, a program's use of Ohio's new Early Learning and Development Standards for those from birth to kindergarten entry, and the new Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System. Program standards for both FCC and center-based programs were included in the revisions **(Ohio)**.
- Through SUTQ, Ohio's programs are required to select a research-based curriculum that is aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards, and programs must demonstrate their alignment through documentation and the implementation of activities that are appropriate to the age groups they serve. Ohio is redesigning its current tool being used with programs to support different implementation levels around curriculum and assessment. The redesigned tool will help programs in the lowest tiers select a curriculum that is aligned with the appropriate standards and assessments and will assist higher tiered programs integrate assessment tools and approaches into their curriculum. Through this alignment process, programs will better align and integrate assessments into their learning experiences for children **(Ohio)**.
- The Early Learning Guidelines have been updated and operationalized within the PD system and Washington's TQRIS, Early Achievers **(Washington)**.

Program Quality Standards Promote Family Engagement

- The revised TQRIS is recommended to include a more robust set of family engagement standards, based in part on the Head Start Performance Standards **(North Carolina)**.
- Ohio has refined and expanded SUTQ to include a domain addressing family and community engagement. Early learning and development programs that are publicly funded must address these standards with regard to how they engage families in their programs and in support of a child's development and learning **(Ohio)**.
- The Washington quality standards framework includes a standard area—Family Engagement and Partnership—focused specifically on meeting the unique priorities of Early Achievers participants and the specific needs of children and families in care. Early Achievers participants can earn 10 points for demonstrating effective engagement strategies and targeted partnership efforts with parents and families. The Family Engagement and Partnership standard comprises seven substandards that are targeted to inclusive, culturally appropriate, and linguistically appropriate practices, including

sharing information with families in the languages represented in the facility and partnering with parents to determine each child's unique needs and strengths. The cornerstone of the Family Engagement and Partnership standard is the Strengthening Families Framework (**Washington**).

Program Quality Standards Reflect the Unique Developmental Needs of Children in Each Age Group (Infant-Toddler, Preschool, and School-Age)

- Ohio has always required transition planning for district programs through the Ohio Early Learning Program Guidelines and for those Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) programs participating in the top levels of SUTQ. With the revision and expansion of SUTQ to include all publicly funded programs, the cross-agency SUTQ leadership team created new program standards that address transitions at all levels within SUTQ. This process will ensure that all children being served in publicly funded programs can access transition activities that promote communication and collaboration between an early learning setting and elementary school setting (**Ohio**).

SUPPORTS FOR PROGRAMS AND PROVIDERS

Programs Received Technical Assistance To Move Up the Pathway to Quality

- Delaware is working to create specialty technical assistance (TA) for Stars programs in nutrition and health to sustain gains and to help programs advance in quality ratings (**Delaware**).
- The Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) developed an online *fundamentals course on QRIS* in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Chinese, Khmer, and Portuguese) for providers. This course is designed to introduce early education and out-of-school-time educators to the Massachusetts QRIS so that they become familiar with and participate in QRIS. The first 2-hour course module introduces the QRIS and explores the current science of brain development. The next four modules introduce the five categories of the QRIS standards and the tools that measure process and structural quality indicators. The final module covers how to apply this knowledge to an early education or out-of-school-time program to identify areas for program improvement. More than 1,500 educators have accessed the course since its launch. In addition to the fundamentals course, DEEC has begun to develop *QRIS Technical Assistance Courses* (project #2.1). The modules will provide indepth knowledge in and strategies for QRIS content areas and standards, be easily accessible to professionals currently working in the field, and be translated into Spanish (**Massachusetts**).
- In 2012, DEEC began to develop a *Business Planning Course* (project #2.8) for early educators to help them implement sound business practices that will result in higher scores on the PAS, BAS, and APT and to achieve a higher QRIS level. This course can be taken on line and in a classroom format and will be available in multiple languages (Spanish, Portuguese, and English) (**Massachusetts**).
- All child care programs receive TA through the rating process, which lasts 6 months. Child care programs serving higher percentages of children with high needs have the option of participating in a yearlong coaching relationship focused on a strengths-based approach to building quality in areas reflecting Parent Aware standards and indicators.

Additionally, these programs can receive as much as \$1,500 in quality improvement dollars (**Minnesota**).

- Ohio has awarded contracts to child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies to fund TA that is targeted at early learning and development programs serving a high percentage of high-needs children. The goal is to help programs meet the program standards to become Star-rated. Incentives have been made available to child care programs receiving TA as they achieve benchmarks toward obtaining a rating (**Ohio**).
- TA is the backbone of Level 2 and provides a guided and individualized approach to readiness activities. The TA framework in Early Achievers incorporates a case management approach in which each program is assigned a Child Care Aware TA specialist who follows the program throughout Level 2. TA specialists assist programs to learn more about the quality standards, complete self-assessments, follow up on the application of training concepts in the Level 2 training series, and put together a plan for earning points and a file of supporting materials for rating. The TA specialists also complete a Rating Readiness Tool that helps them determine if a program is ready to move on to rating. The Rating Readiness Tool is unique to each program and reflects the action plan that the TA specialist and program work through to earn maximum points during the rating process. The tool allows programs to opt out of particular standards and/or focus on standards of strength for each program. This flexible approach results in multiple ways to earn ratings between Levels 3 and 5 (**Washington**).
- The Department of Early Learning (DEL) has created many resources to accompany the quality standards, including an Early Achievers Toolkit that is available on the DEL Web site. The toolkit contains information on the quality standards and a companion document that provides detail on the importance of each standard. TA specialists provide further consultation on the quality standards at the first onsite visit to programs and continuously support the exploration of how programs meet the quality standards through the self-assessment process and the preparation of a file of supporting materials for rating. Free TA is available for all providers upon enrollment and is designed to support providers through the completion of the Level 2 requirements and on to rating. Programs that rate at Levels 3 through 5 in Early Achievers will be provided with coaching through the Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA-WA). Coaching is intended to help programs continue to improve their quality over time (**Washington**).

State Offers Professional Development To Promote Movement Along a Career Pathway and To Improve Program Quality

- A 30-hour Minnesota Infant/Toddler Certificate curriculum is under development; it will meet the training requirements for Parent Aware and also will qualify participants to meet the Minnesota Association of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health professional endorsement at Level 1. The Minnesota Infant/Toddler Certificate program will offer another opportunity for ECE providers to achieve higher professional competencies (**Minnesota**).
- All providers participating in Parent Aware and providers that receive CCR&R grants are enrolling in the Minnesota Professional Development Registry. The registry helps practitioners at any level of experience and training track their PD activities and helps

guide them in taking approved training and helps establish a pathway to professional growth through a career lattice (**Minnesota**).

- Currently, Rhode Island is developing and building a PD and TA system and will finalize procedures for disseminating funds to programs that enroll in BrightStars. These PD and TA funding opportunities target programs serving low-income children, dual-language learners, and children with special needs (**Rhode Island**).
- CCA-WA administers a second early learning scholarship program, Washington Scholarships, that requires a child care center or family home owner to commit to pay a small percentage of tuition costs. In 2012 Washington Scholarships expanded and began to require scholarship recipients to be employed in Early Achievers programs. CCA-WA supports all steps on the career lattice, from pre-college-level course work to advanced degrees. The expansion of Washington Scholarships has resulted in support for increased numbers of bachelor's degrees in the early childhood education fields (**Washington**).

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS

Financial Incentives Reward and Sustain Program Quality Improvements

- Some consortia are offering monetary incentives to sites and individuals (e.g., to assist with the cost of textbooks, reimbursement for “lost wages” for their student teaching, and course stipends). Monetary incentives for sites are typically based on a tiered rating and support the site’s quality improvement plan (**California**).
- The Challenge includes a series of new, innovative strategies designed to support the growth and development of Stars program quality and early educators. The year 1 target to complete the Request for Proposal (RFP) development to implement the following three new programs to support the Stars program was met:
 - CORE (Compensation, Retention, and Education) Awards for early childhood educators
 - ELLI (Early Learning Leadership Initiative) to strengthen early learning directors, with a focus on those in Stars who serve children with high needs
 - An Infrastructure Fund to provide financial assistance for improving the physical plant, acquiring the technology needed to increase program quality and the Stars rating, and encouraging public schools and public charter schools to participate in Stars (**Delaware**).
- Program awards, bonuses, grants, funds, and supports to programs participating in Maryland EXCELS TQRIS have been published on line and include incentives for FCC homes, large FCC homes, and child care centers (**Maryland**).
- Massachusetts awarded 307 *QRIS Program Improvement grants* (project #2.2) to center-based and FCC programs (with a priority to those serving high-needs children) to assist them with QRIS participation. A total of 217 grants were funded by the Child Care and Development Fund program, and 90 grants were funded by RTT-ELC. Furthermore,

DEEC issued stipends for services, materials, and TA (valued from \$5,000 to \$10,000) to programs to achieve higher levels of quality in QRIS (**Massachusetts**).

- Rhode Island is pursuing a variety of approaches to incentivize participation in its TQRIS. The first strategy included one-time participation incentive payments to center-based and FCC providers that had enrolled in BrightStars by March 31, 2013. The incentive is designed to offset the cost of preparing and submitting the BrightStars TQRIS application and will be retroactively provided to those programs that have applied and enrolled in BrightStars since October 2011, when previous participation incentives available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding were discontinued (**Rhode Island**).
- A variety of supports and incentives are available to support programs that employ staff with a Child Development Associate Certificate or higher degree, which help them earn points toward the Early Achievers PD standard. Scholarships and Opportunity Grants are provided to support participants' ongoing PD goals once they reach Levels 3 through 5. Funding is evenly split between two results-based programs, Washington Scholarships, implemented by CCA-WA, and Opportunity Grants, implemented by the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (**Washington**).
- Washington encourages programs to increase their quality and to make a positive impact on child outcomes by investing in quality improvement grants for facilities that reach higher Early Achievers quality rating levels. Quality improvement grants are flexible, but coaches help programs prioritize areas of need, such as classroom educational materials, teacher training, wage supplements, release time, curriculum materials, or parent trainings/supports (**Washington**).

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MONITORING

State Uses a Validated Assessment To Conduct Program Assessment

- Consortia-wide, programs voluntarily agree to participate in the TQRIS and are evaluated by a team of independent and qualified assessors based on seven elements in three core areas: (1) child development and school readiness (child observations and the implementation of developmental and health screenings), (2) teachers and teaching (teacher qualifications professional development and teacher-child interactions), and (3) program and environment (ratios and group size, environmental structure, and director qualifications). Participating programs receive a ratings-based assessment and a corresponding quality improvement plan. The local consortia then provide training and TA along a quality improvement pathway to support the program in achieving higher quality. Ongoing interrater reliability in all consortia will be established using the guidelines set by the rating tools developers (ERS and CLASS) (**California**).
- An online checklist is in development by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE) that will enable the monitoring of TQRIS programs during site visits conducted by Licensing Specialists, Quality Assurance Specialists, Environment Rating Scales Assessors, and Maryland State Department of Education Accreditation Validators (**Maryland**).

- The CLASS observation tool is used with licensed (nonaccredited) child care center programs that select a three- or four-Star rating in the Parent Aware full-rating process. CLASS observers maintain a process for interrater reliability **(Minnesota)**.
- An RFP is currently under development that will award a contract to a vendor to train ODJFS, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), and TA staff on the CLASS and ERS. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in spring 2013. The CLASS and ERS will be used as part of the evaluation and validation process to gain information on structural quality and teacher/child interactions at each rating tier. Additionally, they will be used in the TA process for quality improvement planning **(Ohio)**.
- The current BrightStars monitoring system is twofold. First, the application and information collected through onsite monitoring uses a variety of instruments, including the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale–Revised (ECERS-R), Infant-Toddler Environmental Rating Scale–Revised (ITERS-R), Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale–Revised (FCCERS-R), and CLASS at the upper tiers. Second, BrightStars Program Assessment staff members are trained to national reliability standards by the ERS authors. Ongoing interrater reliability for the ERS tools is maintained through a system of regular reliability checks requiring 85 percent reliability across three-paired checks **(Rhode Island)**.
- Raters from the University of Washington visit each program unannounced, conduct live assessments of the ERS and CLASS, review the file of supporting materials, and conduct interviews with key staff to assess the quality standards. Raters are trained and reliable on all assessments, including preschool, infant/toddler, and FCC home versions of both standardized assessments **(Washington)**.
- Washington has made progress in developing and enhancing a system for rating and monitoring the quality of early learning programs that participate in Early Achievers. We have included two key standardized measures to inform the quality of early learning programs and have developed rigorous procedures to keep data collectors objective and highly reliable and to collect information across all Early Achiever quality standards. The two key standardized measures used are (1) the Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, and FCCERS-R) and (2) CLASS (CLASS preK, Toddler CLASS, and a combined measure for FCC home facilities) **(Washington)**.

Data Are Used To Inform Decisionmaking and To Promote Access to High-Quality Care

- As of December 2012, Ohio had captured the requirements for developing a data system for SUTQ and program licensing information that will contain program quality and licensing data for ODE- and ODJFS-funded and licensed programs across the two agencies. These data are based on Ohio’s SUTQ program standards, which will allow for a common way of evaluating the quality of early childhood programs and of ensuring compliance with basic health and safety standards addressed through licensing. Programs will have access to this new SUTQ data system to monitor their continuous improvement efforts through SUTQ and to track the compliance history of health and safety standards through reports that are generated after a licensing or SUTQ visit **(Ohio)**.

State Ensures the Ongoing Validity and Appropriateness of Program Quality Standards

- Delaware's Challenge includes a plan to evaluate the Stars/QRIS. In year 1, early learning providers, community partners, Stars managers, elected and appointed officials, business leaders, and advocates provided input to inform the refinement of the evaluation questions, which will result in an RFP for the Stars external evaluation for release early in 2013 (**Delaware**).
- The EXCELS validation study is based on the framework outlined in *Validation of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems for Early Care and Education and School-Age Care*, a brief published by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Zellman and Fiene, 2012) (**Maryland**).
- Building on the *Review of Research on Child Care Quality*, DEEC initiated the *QRIS Validation Study* (project #6.1) to ensure that programs are properly rated and that higher tiers are linked to child outcomes. The research design for the validation study will occur in four major phases:
 1. Methods planning and a pilot study
 2. At-scale validation of key quality components and associated provisional standards and the assessment of differences in quality across levels
 3. At-scale validation of the link between quality levels and children's development and growth trajectories
 4. Final data analysis and reporting.
 - Phase One of the study is under way, as the research plan has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, and the pilot study has begun. Analysis of the QRIS standards has produced the QRIS Validation Study Measurement Map, which presents a tool for independently measuring the key quality standards and for understanding the ways that the standards are related to quality and, ultimately, to improved child outcomes (**Massachusetts**).
- Minnesota's plan to validate the effectiveness of the TQRIS focuses on four goals:
 - Goal 1: The evaluation will examine the effectiveness of indicators by assessing the methods used to determine when a quality indicator has been met, the patterns of indicators met by programs, and programs' experiences in meeting those indicators.
 - Goal 2: The evaluation will examine how well the hybrid rating structure is differentiating quality by comparing Star ratings to quality, as determined by both the CLASS and ERS, and by examining which indicators at each level are most challenging for providers.
 - Goal 3: The evaluation will examine the linkages between Star ratings and children's progress toward school readiness by analyzing the relationship between a child's gains over the course of a school year and the quality rating of the child's program.

- Goal 4: The evaluation will examine the effectiveness of quality improvement supports and the extent to which the TQRIS rating scale can detect changes in quality over time.
 - The evaluation is also examining the effectiveness of the TQRIS implementation by documenting implementation practices and periodically interviewing and/or surveying a wide variety of stakeholders (e.g., community leaders, State agency staff members, quality coaches, Early Learning and Development Program staff members) about their experiences with the TQRIS (**Minnesota**).
- North Carolina's TQRIS Validation Study is being designed to validate the effectiveness of the *revised* TQRIS, which is under development. This validation process is integral to the development and implementation of the revised TQRIS. Phase I of the validation study is under way and involves data collection to inform the TQRIS revisions. North Carolina will determine whether its *revised* TQRIS tiers accurately reflect differential levels of program quality and whether the quality ratings in its *revised* TQRIS are related to progress in children's learning and development as part of Phase II of its TQRIS Validation Study (**North Carolina**).
- Ohio worked with a national expert on TQRIS and reviewed other States' standards and national research to inform the development of the benchmarks within each level or tier. In addition, Ohio reviewed the evaluation studies conducted previously on its three-tiered model. Leadership team members from ODE and ODJFS have begun working on the RFP for the research study that will be used to determine whether the revised SUTQ tiers reflect differential levels of program quality (**Ohio**).
- During the past year Rhode Island has been revising and aligning all program standards, including the BrightStars TQRIS. The State has taken significant steps to ensure that the newly revised standards are research- and evidence-based. Rhode Island will identify an independent evaluator to design and conduct a revalidation study of the newly revised TQRIS. Activities to address this area are not scheduled to begin until September 2014 (**Rhode Island**).
- Our partners at the University of Washington Childcare Quality and Early Learning (CQEL) Center for Research and Training are validating the effectiveness in two main ways. First, CQEL has researched and annotated all the peer-reviewed evidence to support Washington's TQRIS standards related to improving child outcomes. (The Annotated Bibliography of Research Supporting Standards can be made available on request.) This validation step reassures us that we are on the right track with our selected standards. The University of Washington is conducting a prestudy and poststudy and is documenting the level of quality in 41 preschool classrooms and the prestudy and poststudy gains in children's learning, development, and school readiness. This pilot study will inform our larger scale effort to assess the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to children's learning across five essential learning domains (social-emotional, cognition and general knowledge, language and literacy, physical health and development, and approaches to learning) (**Washington**).

CONSUMER EDUCATION

State Raises Public Awareness About Child Care Quality Standards to Parents, Programs, and the General Public

- Consortia are using a variety of strategies to communicate with parents. Multiple consortia are creating certificates to be posted on site for parent information. Materials such as letters, PowerPoint templates, and factsheets are available for participating providers to use with families; they describe the local TQRIS and the benefits of participation for staff members and children. One consortium is using parents to help develop parent-friendly materials to be distributed at rated sites **(California)**.
- Since the award, Delaware has significantly increased its public placement of Stars/TQRIS program rating information and licensing status information, including using two Web sites with up-to-date information that are sponsored by the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families' Office of Child Care Licensing and Delaware Stars. Parent and community engagement materials promote these Web sites as excellent information resources for families and the public **(Delaware)**.
- An information and marketing campaign with promotional materials, a Web site with online resources, and a mobile app for families searching for high-quality child care will identify and publicize programs participating in Maryland EXCELS. The Maryland EXCELS Web site at www.marylandexcels.org was developed with our partners at JHU/CTE **(Maryland)**.
- Publicity, news, and updates regarding the progress of Maryland EXCELS and the availability of quality assurance specialists to provide information and support is featured in the statewide newsletter *Partners*, which is mailed to every licensed program and provider in the State, posted on line quarterly at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/licensing_branch/news.htm, and disseminated via the Division of Early Childhood Listserv **(Maryland)**.
- Parent Aware is marketed to eligible Early Learning and Development programs and to parents through various strategies, including the updated parentawareratings.org Web site; a social media campaign for parents; press releases, which have resulted in local newspaper articles; language-specific videos (Hmong, Somali, and Spanish); direct, in-person outreach to programs; letters to all accredited child care programs; postcards to all eligible providers in the expansion areas that feature the benefits of Parent Aware; and the integration of Parent Aware messaging to CCR&R staff. Our key messages have been tested via focus groups and surveys for effectiveness **(Minnesota)**.