Service Delivery Area 3
Regional Advisory Council
Meeting Summary November 10, 2020

View the recording of this meeting here: https://youtu.be/6tvxpDjTdFI

1. **Call to Order and Meeting Overview**
    a. SPARK Project Director, Mike Bachman, made welcoming remarks orienting participants to the purpose of the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) meeting.
    b. Margaret Smith, RAC Coordinator, provided a membership update. SPARK onboarded new RAC members over the last two months. A current member list for each SDA can be found on the SPARK website: http://indianaspark.com/regional-advisory-councils/
    c. All members (new and returning) participated in two orientation sessions this fall, during which they selected a Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year.
    d. Margaret introduced SDA 3's new Chair, Diane Pike, and Vice Chair, Alexandra Hall.
    e. Diane called the meeting to order, provided an overview of the agenda items and meeting goals, and discussed meeting procedures.

2. **Introductions**
    a. Members introduced themselves by sharing their name, professional role, whether they are a new or returning member, and why they wanted to join the RAC.
    b. Members who were present included: Diane Pike, Alexandra Hall, Jessie Pike, Katie Nienhaus, Lisa Cordle, Starla Haggard, Teresa Rice, Tikila Welch, and Yewande Aluko.

3. **Reviewed Old Business**
    a. At the beginning of each Regional Advisory Council (RAC) meeting, the Council reviews action items and recommendations from the previous meeting and discusses progress made.
        i. You can view past meeting minutes, recommendations and their related action plan for each Service Delivery Area (SDA) on the SPARK website: http://indianaspark.com/regional-advisory-councils/.
        ii. Diane summarized the feedback/recommendations made by the Council in September related to mandatory trainings, COVID-19, the Paths to QUALITY™ Rating Procedure, and the Indiana Self-Assessment Tool (I-SAT).
        iii. Questions/feedback from RAC members and the public:
            1. RAC members shared that the mandatory training section is not very user friendly and it can be hard to find specific trainings. Members suggested alphabetizing the trainings or ordering related modules in the order that they should be taken. Members also suggested having clusters or subgroups within the mandatory training section.
                a. Mike shared that there is a filter option that allows users to filter the trainings alphabetically. SPARK can explore how to better educate users on how to use the current filters and functions.
                b. RAC members also shared that some trainings they thought would be under mandatory (like Foundations) are not actually in that section.
                c. Members suggested tagging trainings as PTQ requirements, or tag trainings for new staff.
            2. Members suggested that SPARK or other partners provide training or resources for directors so they can train new staff on how to use I-LEAD. For example, members suggested a walk through video of I-LEAD.
                a. Mike shared that there are resources available through Early Learning Indiana's I-LEAD Solutions Center. SPARK will share this recommendation with them, so they can consider how to make the

resources more accessible or identify other resources that would be helpful.

3. A member shared that they had a call with a content coordinator after completing the I-SAT and didn't feel like they received enough direction or guidance on what their program should work on. The member suggested that the coach or content coordinator have recommendations about what the program should work on and be prepared to have a dialogue about goals and next steps, rather than only asking what the program wants to work on.
   a. Mike shared that SPARK's model is a program driven system and that their first question will always be "What do you want to work on?". This prepares them to design a package curated to the program needs. SPARK does have a process to prioritize and bring recommendations for what the program can work on and they will follow up on this concern further.
4. Mike shared that the RACs in other SDAs expressed in September that they would like to see Universal Precautions offered as an on-demand training. SPARK worked with the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning who received federal approval to offer the training on-demand. The on-demand training is currently in development, and SPARK hopes to make it available in the first quarter of 2021.
5. Mike shared that efforts are being made to offer the Serve Safe training more frequently through a live webinar format.
   a. A member shared that food handling training is also available through the National Restaurant Association.
   b. Nancy Ward from the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning shared that registered ministries are exempt by the state department of health from having the Serve Safe Food Manager Certification. That certification is required for licensed child care centers. Registered ministries do need to have some sort of food safety training, which can be achieved through Nancy's webinar Serve Safe training, and other agencies provide it at low cost.

4. **SPARK Project Spotlights**
   a. Each quarter, SPARK staff highlights SPARK features that have been implemented recently or will be launched in the upcoming quarter to gain insight, feedback, concerns, suggestions, and recommendations/agreements from the public and RAC members.
   b. Spotlight: My SPARK Learning Lab
      i. SPARK's Deputy Director of Operations & Strategic Integration, Kim Hodge, provided an overview and demo of My SPARK Learning Lab, which launched at the beginning of November.
      ii. My SPARK Learning Lab is SPARK's new online portal, which can be accessed via I-LEAD.
         1. It is the new pathway to complete the Indiana Self-Assessment Tool (I-SAT).
         2. My SPARK Learning Lab also provides users with access to SPARK's Knowledge Center, which includes tools, templates, job aids, resources, and more.
         3. It provides ways for programs to engage with the SPARK Learning Lab Support team via chat, Help Desk support ticket, phone, or email.
      iii. Kim provided an introduction to the I-SAT, which allows programs to assess their own needs for technical assistance support.

1. The I-SAT was launched in April 2020, through a small pilot. The I-SAT went statewide in July.
2. The I-SAT content has not changed, but My SPARK Learning Lab is the new online portal for program leaders to complete the I-SAT.
3. This program-level assessment comprises seven standards, with a total of 50 quality items, utilizing a rubric-based developmental continuum that offers a roadmap for advancing program quality from "Beginning" to "Excelling".
4. The I-SAT quality continuum includes specific behaviors, benchmarks, and ultimately a scope and sequence programs can utilize to create a plan to improve quality.
5. There are four versions of the I-SAT, one for each program type, with questions tailored for each: Center-Based, Family Child Care Homes, Ministries, and School-Based.
6. Printable I-SATs by program type are available in the Knowledge Center of My SPARK Learning Lab.
7. The I-SAT is designed to support programs along their quality improvement journey, including participation in Paths to QUALITY™ (PTQ).
   a. The I-SAT is NOT intended to replace the PTQ standards.
   b. The I-SAT standards and quality items have been aligned to PTQ standards, as well as accreditation standards. The I-SAT is meant to work alongside these systems.
8. The I-SAT standards are also directly aligned to Indiana's Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKCs) for Early Childhood, School-Age, and Youth Professionals.
   a. The seven CKCs make up the seven program quality standards in the I-SAT.
   b. Each quality standard includes at least one to several quality items.
   c. Each quality item includes a continuum of five benchmarks that stack upon each other, unless otherwise noted.
   d. Each quality item has a continuum of benchmarks grouped into five categories: Beginning, Developing, Emerging, Mastering, or Excelling.

iv. Kim provided an overview of the My SPARK Learning Lab platform.
1. It is available via I-LEAD. There is a button for My SPARK Learning Lab at the top of the page, next to the button for Indiana Learning Paths.
2. Users are taken to the homepage when they enter My SPARK Learning Lab. The homepage provides users options to:
   a. Get started with the I-SAT.
   b. Browse the Knowledge Center's featured topics or search the Knowledge Center.
   c. Connect with SPARK on Social Media.
   d. Sign up for the SPARK Connect newsletter.
   e. View trending articles.
   f. Engage with the SPARK Support Team.
   g. Access links to other SPARK supports.
3. My SPARK Learning Lab is mobile-friendly.
4. Users can access the I-SAT from the Homepage or the My Profile page.
   a. The My Profile page collects details about the users' program and program type.

b. An introduction to the I-SAT is available to provide key details before getting started.
c. Before starting the I-SAT, users are provided with links to the Knowledge Center, where they can access the full I-SAT Guide and printable I-SATs by program type.
d. The I-SAT Guide provides program leaders with a step-by-step process in preparation for, completion of, and submission of their program's I-SAT.
e. SPARK has made revisions to the I-SAT Guide to make it more user friendly and helpful to users.
f. The I-SAT Guide includes a Glossary of Terms and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

5. When users begin to complete the I-SAT, they can choose which sections and quality items they would like to complete. Users are not required to complete all sections.
   a. My SPARK Learning Lab presents each of the seven sections to the user and outlines the relevant quality items. Users are then asked if they want to complete that section. If users indicate "no", they are moved on to the next section.
6. Currently, the I-SAT is intended to be completed in one sitting.
7. Selecting "Submit Self-Assessment" sends responses to SPARK.
8. Once their Self-Assessment is submitted, programs are taken to the "Next Steps" page. There, they can view their Response Summary and Recommended Resources.
   a. The Response Summary is a listing of all their responses and the items they completed.
   b. The Recommended Resources are connected to the quality items they completed.
9. SPARK contacts users within five days of when they submit their I-SAT to discuss the program's goals and customize a support plan.

v. Kim provided an overview of the Knowledge Center within My SPARK Learning Lab.
1. The Knowledge Center contains resources and training SPARK has developed or identified to support leaders and their program staff in their quality improvement journey.
2. The Knowledge Center content is mapped to the I-SAT, providing connection with key areas of focus.
3. The Knowledge Center includes three tabs:
   a. All Content: Includes articles organized by CKCs & I-SAT quality items.
   b. Featured Topics: Includes articles on "hot topics", such as COVID-19.
   c. Spanish Available Content: Includes articles that are either in Spanish or have some type of Spanish translated support.
4. The Knowledge Center includes over 400 articles to date. The creation of the Knowledge Center has allowed for all of these materials to be housed in one place. The Knowledge Center includes resources, training, support articles, and learning forums.
5. When users click on a knowledge article, they can view the item & content type, the item location (how the item can be accessed) and source, related CKCs & quality indicators, and related articles.
6. Users can favorite articles, which saves them for easy access from the My Profile page.

    vi. Kim provided an overview of the My Profile page, which includes three tabs:
1. My Profile: Includes key details about the user and program.
2. My Program Assessment: Includes any I-SATs completed in My SPARK Learning Lab.
3. Favorite Articles: Includes articles favorited by the user.

    vii. Kim provided an overview of the Support page.
1. The Support page provides users the option to submit a support request, or view the status of a pending request.
2. Users can also upload files and request their PTQ rating using the Support page.
3. The online chat feature is available during Help Desk hours (Monday-Friday 6:00am-7:00pm EST; Saturday 10:00am-2:00pm EST).

    viii. Kim provided a brief demo of the My SPARK Learning Lab platform and walked through each of the pages.

    ix. Questions/feedback from RAC members and the public:
1. Question: On the printable I-SAT, what goes in the checkboxes at the bottom?
   a. Answer from Kim: Users would check whichever benchmark aligns with their program.
   b. Members suggested that it would be helpful to add more detailed instructions to the printable version.
2. Question: How can SPARK tailor messaging and better promote the I-SAT to programs like Head Starts that are already completing other assessments and tracking progress to various standards?
   a. Answer from Kim: That is a great question. Something that SPARK is focused on is how we can talk about the I-SAT, convey the purpose, and explain how it can help you no matter what your program type is. The I-SAT is the gateway to help programs get coaching and other support from SPARK. The I-SAT is not specifically aligned with Head Start standards, but it can still help Head Start programs focus on quality items that are relevant to their current priorities and needs. The I-SAT would allow programs to engage with SPARK to get support on those various items.
   b. Mike shared that SPARK is working with Head Start programs who were early adopters of the I-SAT. SPARK has heard from them is that the approach to family engagement included in the I-SAT is very relevant and helpful. They've also found the items related to curriculum helpful.
   c. Members suggested that SPARK think about how to promote the I-SAT and message the benefits. Members suggested lifting up how programs are using it and the benefits they are seeing.

5. **Public Comment**
   a. No additional public comments.

6. **Agreements and Action Items**
   a. Based on what was presented, RAC discussion, and public comment, the RAC brought forth the following recommendations/agreements for SPARK Learning Lab and/or partners to consider:
      i. Old Business
         1. RAC members suggested that SPARK and partners explore organizing trainings and related modules in Indiana Learning Paths to make them easier

to find and access. Specifically, they suggested alphabetizing them or sorting modules in accordance to the order they should be taken. RAC members also asked SPARK and partners to consider how to educate users on the filter functions that are currently available.

2. RAC members expressed that the mandatory training section of Indiana Learning Paths is cluttered and it is hard to find trainings. RAC members suggested that SPARK explore how to better sort/label trainings so users can find what is required for their program (adding subgroups under mandatory trainings, such as Mandatory for PTQ and Mandatory for Licensing).

3. RAC members suggested that SPARK or partners provide training or a resource for directors so they can train new staff on how to use I-LEAD. For example, RAC members suggested a walk through video of I-LEAD. Some resources are available through Early Learning Indiana's I-LEAD Solutions Center, but SPARK will share this recommendation with them, so they can consider how to make these resources more accessible or identify other resources that would be helpful.

4. RAC members suggested that when SPARK contacts a program who has completed the I-SAT, they should have recommendations about what the program should work on and then have a dialogue about goals and next steps, instead of only asking the program what they want to work on.

ii. My SPARK Learning Lab
   1. RAC members suggested that SPARK provide more guidance and detailed instructions on the printable I-SATs.
   2. RAC members recommended that SPARK provide more messaging around how the I-SAT can help programs. Specifically, SPARK should consider how to promote the I-SAT to Head Starts and other programs who already complete other assessments. SPARK needs to explain why the I-SAT is beneficial and draw people into using SPARK services.

7. **Future Meeting Schedule**
   a. February 9, 5:30-7:30pm EST
   b. April 13, 5:30-7:30pm EST
   c. August 10, 5:30-7:30pm EST

8. **Agenda Items for February**
   a. The RAC would like to discuss if any type of coaching can be counted as training hours.
      i. Mike shared that at this time, individual coaching meetings are not considered valid training hours for PTQ. If the coach provides actual training for staff, those hours could be counted.
      ii. Members would like to discuss further if any other coaching can be counted. For example, if a program has a curriculum coach built into their program.
   b. RAC members would like to discuss concerns related to Maximus (CCDF Intake Agent).
      i. Mike shared that SPARK is willing to hear the concerns, but the scope of the conversation will need to be focused on the technical assistance support SPARK can provide to programs to help them navigate any difficulties they are experiencing. SPARK can pass on concerns beyond that scope to the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning.
   c. RAC members would like to discuss how SPARK can best work and collaborate with other system partners and the local CCR&Rs.

d. RAC members shared a couple of I-LEAD concerns that they would like SPARK to look into and bring back to the Council to discuss in February. These issues included:
    i. The consent form in I-LEAD currently sends out a 90-day notice before it is set to expire, but the system does not let users update the form at that time.
    ii. It is difficult when programs bring on new staff who worked at other centers previously to get their account transferred over to their new program in I-LEAD.

9. **Adjournment**
    a. Mike shared that the 2019-2020 SPARK Annual Report was released in early November and can be found at http://indianaspark.com/spark-annual-report/. RAC members are encouraged to review it, as the report identifies priorities for the coming year that may inform the RAC's discussions for the coming year.