



**Service Delivery Area 5  
Regional Advisory Council  
Meeting Summary, Aug 31, 2021**

View the recording of this meeting here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0ZAmBXjW6A>

**1. Call to Order and Meeting Overview**

- a. SDA 5 Chair, Ann Feldhaus, made welcoming remarks orienting attendees to the purpose of the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) meeting, called the meeting to order, provided an overview of the agenda items and meeting goals, and discussed the meeting systems and procedures.

**2. Introductions**

- a. Members introduced themselves by sharing their name and professional role.
- b. Members who were present included: Ann Feldhaus, Debbie Beeler, Maria Wynne, Terry Green, and Jamie Madigan.

**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.
  - i. Ann and SPARK Project Director, Mike Bachman, summarized the feedback/recommendations made by the Council in April related to safe sleep, networking, and learning. In addition, Mike shared updates related to the action plan identified for each recommendation.
  - ii. 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/>.
  - iii. While discussing old business, Mike shared the following information;
    1. The Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL) is onboarding a new Director of the Licensing Department. Mike and the incoming director are meeting monthly to continue building, learning, and expanding the partnership. SPARK is also meeting monthly with all the program staff and update all the licensing consultants with the new content development and tools they can use themselves out in the field.
    2. SPARK is continuing to explore the hybrid option for internal professional development. Based on the results of this pilot, SPARK can use the learning to add a new training option that includes hybrid delivery. The earliest SPARK can implement this new option would be Spring 2022. Mike also noted that the pilot program continues to be delayed based on the data and trends they are experiencing around the state. SPARK will keep the RACs abreast of the discovery and progress.



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**4. New Business**

a. RAC Membership Updates

- i. Ann and SPARK Project Director Mike Bachman acknowledged that several RAC members are completing their two year membership term this month. They thanked the members for their contribution to the RAC and SPARK Learning Lab.
- ii. SPARK Project Director, Mike Bachman, provided an update on the RAC membership application process.
  1. SPARK released an application in June for individuals interested in serving as RAC members.
  2. 72 applications were received from across the state.
  3. 11 applications were received in SDA 5.
  4. New RAC members will be notified in mid-August.
  5. SPARK will facilitate two virtual orientation sessions for new and returning members to be held in September:
    - a. Thursday, September 16th, 2021 at 2:00- 3:00 pm ET
    - b. Wednesday, September 22nd, 2021 at 2:00 -3:00 pm ET
  6. RACs will reconvene in November

b. RAC Attendance and Engagement

- i. SPARK Project Director Mike Bachman reviewed data and trends of RAC member Attendance SDA 5 and RAC members' attendance steadily declined throughout each year. Spark is looking to grow the attendance in both RAC members and public non-member attendance.
- ii. SPARK reviewed the SDA 5 Public/ Non-Member Attendance trends. There are three different groups, SPARK staff, Key Partners, other Programs. SPARK reviewed a chart showing the breakdown of the SDA 5 attendees by stakeholder type: RAC Members, Spark Staff, OECOSL/FSSA Staff, Public/ Partner. RAC members are dropping through the year. Key Partner attendees are steady and engaged. Public/ Non-member participates have decreased.
- iii. SPARK wants to increase engagement and attendance in RAC meetings across the state.
- iv. Attendees provided the following comments and feedback:
  1. Members are reviewing and questioning why there has been a decrease in attendance for RAC members. SPARK has wondered if the barrier of attendance in year two is because of the change in meeting time.
  2. Attendees also discussed the difference between attendance and engagement and how to increase participation. SPARK is interested in how to increase participation. RAC members are



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3. Darcy Marlett, SPARK Marketing and Communications Manager, is open to feedback to increase information about RAC. In addition, the members receive information emails, newsletters, social media, and the website host information about RAC updates.
  4. Members asked to increase the targeted communication with OESCOL and discuss RAC at the partner meetings throughout the state.
  5. RAC members did discuss how COVID19 has impacted in-person meetings. The group believes the industry has seen a perfect storm between changes in the system and the pandemic, which have affected the overall level of engagement.
  6. SPARK and RAC will continue to discuss and assess ways to engage and bring more programs and partners to the table in the future.
- c. Program Director Mike Bachman reviewed SPARK Annual Report  
Was Reviewed by Program Director Mike Bachman.
- i. Goal: Exceed expectations in supporting Indiana's identified early childhood education and care programs become safer and higher quality.
    1. Objective 1: Maintain PTQ Enrollment (% of eligible).
    2. Objective 2: Increase # of programs advancing in PTQ by 5%.
    3. Objective 3: Support 90% of non-compliant programs with a Quality Improvement Plan. (This data only represents programs contacted and accepted technical assistance support from SPARK included in this data. Approximately 63% of programs were unable to be reached or declined SPARK services.)
    4. Objective 4a: Refer 90% of those interested in increasing their education to IN AEYC.
    5. Objective 4b: Deploy 12 resources or events that support degrees, credentials, and certificates.
    6. Objective 5a: Support programs with prior safe sleep violations, ensuring that 80% do not have a recurrence.
    7. Objective 5b: Deploy 6 resources or events that support best practices in Safe Sleep (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#) English & Spanish).
  - ii. [SPARK Dashboard Review](#)
    1. Mike reviewed current goals and objectives with the members in relation to the dashboard.
    2. SPARK has seen a decrease in ministry program enrollment. The team will continue to investigate how to engage this group of programs moving forward.
    3. SPARK is currently meeting goals and objectives for every quarter during this challenging period in our industry. The system is working, and we are seeing quality improvements for programs and families.
    4. SPARK 2021- 2022 thematic goal is to continue to increase engagement within SPARK through the following objectives:
      - a. Increase ISAT completions.
      - b. Content to support all benchmarks in the ISAT.
      - c. Increase the training completion.
      - d. Increase the number of programs that accept SPARK TA.
      - e. Increase the number of new programs using SPARK's



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- services.
  - f. Have a percentage of those new programs come back and use more services.
  - g. Create eight unique promotional events or pieces of content are deployed in support of increasing education.
  - h. 80% of programs with previous Safe Sleep violations do not have another violation (2019-2021).
  - i. Create additional unique promotional events or pieces of content are deployed in support of best safe sleep practices.
5. SPARK will continue to track all of the data from the previous year to provide an accurate and consistent review of progress.
- iii. Attendees provided the following comments and feedback regarding the data presented:
- 1. Members asked SPARK to engage with the licensing consultants to provide insight and consistency across training and, best, in addition, the practices. SPARK is committed to building a partnership with all key stakeholders and meeting with the state licensing department monthly, as noted earlier.
  - 2. Members encouraged SPARK to review the hand-off process between the licensing department and SPARK technical assistance when reviewing critical violations. SPARK does receive a notification when the licensing department has documented a program for a violation.
  - 3. Members wanted to know more about how the violations are tracked. SPARK is tracking programs, and they can see if there are repeat violations. SPARK has access to see program history of violations before conducting any outreach or creating a support plan.
  - 4. Members asked SPARK to continue building additional goals and objectives for NAEYC accredited programs or level 4 PTQ. Members pointed out that programs need to be challenged at a different level.
  - 5. SPARK will continue to review the strategy around training engagement and professional development for the advanced program levels.
- d. Update on PTQ Incentives (OESCOL)
- i. Based on feedback from the RAC members, the following items will be added to the current PTQ incentives packages:
    - 1. The following five memberships will be approved: NAEYC, NAFCC, Indiana Afterschool Network (IAN), National Head Start Association (NHSA), Infancy Onward.
    - 2. The following materials and consumables, including SEL;
      - a. Lakeshore idea for PTQ Kits: [Materials 1](#)
      - b. Lakeshore SEL products: [Materials 2](#)
    - 3. RAC members were invited to send additional information or feedback to Kyrstal Robinson.



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4. RAC members provided the following feedback to PTQ Incentives.
  - a. Members recommended that North American Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA) be considered an additional option to be added to the approved membership list.
  - b. Members recommend adding more: diverse and inclusive materials, adaptive toys, sensory items, or kits to support special needs children.
  - c. SPARK noted that consumables are a part of the PTQ incentivizes.
- d. RAC Members Discussion on Offering Sick Child Care
  - i. RAC members discussed the history of sick child care programs and wondered if it would even meet regulatory guidelines today. Additionally, the staffing shortage that the industry faces today would not be able to accommodate the needs required to facilitate this type of care.
  - ii. This has not been a conversation in any of the other SDAs. However, 4C and the state licensing department can discuss this concept with programs interested in potentially offering this type of care.

**5. Public Comment**

- a. No public comments were provided.

**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. RAC Attendance and Engagement
    1. SPARK will review the SDA 5 meeting time from year 1 to year two and bring the information to the meeting for final recommendation.
    2. SPARK will review and assess all the communication and marketing strategies (email, texting, social media) concerning the attendance and engagement of RAC members.
    3. RAC Members will continue to assist in helping RAC with member engagement and attendance by inviting their peers and professional connections to these meetings.
  - ii. SPARK Annual Report
    1. SPARK will continue to review the handoff process for a critical referral to create a more supportive and engaging approach.
    2. RAC members requested that SPARK continue reviewing, adding goals and objectives around engaging and challenging programs at the more advanced levels for the coming year.



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- iii. PTQ Incentives (OECOSL)
  - 1. RAC members recommend that NAREA be added to the approval list.
  - 2. RAC members recommend that additional educational information and advance materials that can assist with supporting special needs, diversity, and inclusion.

**7. Future Meeting Schedule**

- a. To be determined
  - i. Next year's meeting schedule will be determined during the RAC orientation sessions in September.

**8. Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- a. Members and SPARK want to discuss the American Rescue Plan, which includes the child stabilization grants. SPARK is interested in providing additional business supports to assist programs as they make strategic plans with the additional funding. Also, SPARK would like to receive feedback on the business support training from earlier in the year and other activities that members would like to see, given the diversity of the field and what technical assistance is needed.
- b. Members and SPARK want to discuss mental health and wellness support for staff and families. In addition, SPARK is interested in receiving feedback and information about what members need to support them in this service area, such as assessment tools, screenings, referrals, materials, training.

**9. Adjournment**