



Service Delivery Area 1 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Summary April 27, 2022

View the recording of this meeting here: <https://youtu.be/2lIIVOduHBI>

1. Call to Order and Meeting Overview:

- a. SDA 1 RAC Chair, Betsey Hostettler, made welcoming remarks orienting participants 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 meeting systems and procedures.

2. Introductions:

- a. Members introduced themselves by sharing their names and professional role.
- b. Members present included: Gail Jamora, Erika Watkins, Jackie Allison, Nina Burton, Terri Kosik, Pat Joyner, Betsey Hostettler, and Sherry Searles.

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.
- b. 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/>. In addition, you can find more information about these recommendations and updates on the [SDA 1 website](#) and in the meeting slide deck.

4. New Business

- a. OECOSL Provider Recognition Program:
 - i. To acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Indiana's early education teachers and out-of-school-time professionals, OECOSL released an opportunity for colleagues, families, and system staff to nominate those who showed exemplary skills and are making a difference in their community.
 - ii. In this initial round, over 200 nominations were received. As a result, we are pleased to recognize individuals throughout the state with the Outstanding Educator Award Certificate and funds to purchase additional materials for their classrooms.
 1. Congratulations to Marisol Mayorga and Kari Alford for your dedication to the children, families, and ECE community.
- b. Post Build Learn Grow Stabilization Grant Updates:
 - i. RAC Members discussed post-grant needs and best practices. The conversation has been mainly about the grants and application process. SDA 1 moved the conversation to discuss ongoing grant documentation, business ownership, and stewardship practices.
 - ii. RAC Members engaged in zoom polls and the following discussion questions:
 1. Q1) What challenges are you and your peers facing post-grant? Below is a summary of the RAC member discussion:
 - a. Parents still need help financially and require the assistance of providers to find support. Unfortunately, families cannot access funds and pay the total rate of child care. In addition, providers are very concerned about the BLG family scholarship program ending soon.
 - b. Staffing is still the primary issue and barrier for the majority of programs. The long-term sustainability, increased pay rates, and salaries for staff continue to be a struggle for providers to find the financial support needed to sustain the new pay.
 - c. RAC members continue to express their interest and need for an ECE group insurance option for providers to come together to provide benefits for staff. However, no insurance options continue to interrupt the hiring and retention of staff.



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2. Q2) What resources or tools are you wishing you had access to? Below is a summary of the RAC member discussion:
 - a. Members requested SPARK to create resources and support tools on what to keep and show to prove regarding wage enhancements for the grant.
 - b. Besty Hostettler shared an easy way to file and track all their receipts and items related to the grant in a 3-ring binder system.
 - c. SPARK shared the following support information BusinessSupport@indianaspark.com and Guidance of ARP dollars to OECOSL <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/policy-guidance/ccdf-acf-im-2021-02>.
 3. Q3) What is the best advice, support, or resources you have been given? Below is a summary of the RAC member discussion:
 - a. Members are very thankful for the resources and tools providers thus far regarding the BLG grant support.
 - b. The Chair, Besty Hostettler, reminded providers that the Monday Must Know shared toolkits and guidance for families restarting their co-pays.
 4. SPARK shared the following information:
 - a. Intensive business support is available in the My SPARK Learning lab, upcoming LIVE resources, and Business Cohorts.
 - b. Interested programs may contact BusinessSupport@indianaspark.com to get more information and enroll.
- c. I-SAT Revisions & Assessment Discussion
- i. SPARK is reviewing and updating the I-SAT assessment through the remainder of 2022. They seek feedback and discussion from the RAC as they go about this renewal. SPARK reviewed the timeline and project vision and asked for input from RAC.
 - ii. RAC members took an I-SAT revisions zoom poll and answered the following discussion questions to assist and advise SPARK.
 1. Q1) What assessment tools are you currently using?
 - a. RAC members listed: Eckhards, Creative Curriculum and Fidelity, Early Headstart, CLASS Certification, Stakeholder surveys, PQA, Family Connections ELCO assessment, PTQ, and NEAYC Standards.
 - b. Members noted the assessments are too long and too many. However, they each serve various functions and accreditations. And it is up to the provider to determine the assessment needed for the program and the families they serve.
 2. Q2) What do you like about your current assessment tools?
 - a. The assessments allow us to look at the program's real impact and provide direct feedback based on the tool used.
 - b. Assessment creates a feedback loop for key business operations.
 - c. Many of the assessments use technology or are paper tools, and there are pros and cons to both types of assessments.
 3. Q3) What do you dislike about your current assessment tools?
 - a. RAC members expressed an interest or desire for fewer assessments. There are just so many options. So many assessments are too long and take too much time to facilitate and use within a program.
 - b. The members discuss the desi for having collective standards and the ability for these tools to communicate and be streamlined.



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4. Q4) What are your expectations of an assessment tool?
 - a. The RAC members wanted short, sweet, and to-the-point assessment tools. In addition, the group wants the option for a more comprehensive view and the ability to be content-specific. The members also wanted more support for family assessment and guidance.
- d. The State of **Paths to Quality**
 - i. Background Information
 1. There are an estimated 400 programs that have an expired PTQ rating statewide. SDA 1 Data has 85 programs with expired PTQ ratings (13 Licensed Center, 58 Licensed Home, 9 Ministry, 1 Center Exempt, and 4 Local Education Agency).
 2. The loss of PTQ ratings affects programs in various ways, such as a reduction in funding and recognition of quality programming throughout the state.
 - ii. SPARK clarified the current PTQ Rating Process
 1. **First**, know your expiration date.
 2. **Second**, self assess your program using the Readiness Checklist found on I-LEAD in "My SPARK Learning Lab."
 3. **Third**, complete a Confirmation Checklist, which can also be found on "My SPARK Learning Lab."
 4. **Fourth**, send the completed Confirmation Checklist to PTQ@indianaspark.com
 5. **Finally**, a SPARK coach will review the checklist and respond when the rating has been requested or with any questions or additional information that may be needed.
 - iii. PTQ Expiration Communication Process
 1. PTQ Rating Expiration Communication
 - a. Programs scheduled to expire in 6 months, three months, and 60 days receive an email and text message from OECOSL.
 - b. Programs that have expired will receive a letter informing them and providing options, including support with making their rating request.
 - c. If the expired program does not respond after receiving the letter, a SPARK Coach will attempt to contact them by phone and email.
 - d. If the program does not respond, the program is automatically decreased to Level 1.
 - iv. Paths to Quality Discussion
 1. The RAC members have presented the following questions: Q1) What challenges are you and/or your peers facing? Q2) How do you currently prepare and support your program throughout the PTQ process? Q3) How would you like SPARK to contact you regarding your expiration date if this was your program?
 - a. The RAC members recommended that the PTQ rating become a standard month versus the rolling date, which is hard to track. Additionally, RAC asked about potentially using the ILEAD or a database system to help alert programs using current technology.



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- b. SPARK heard the recommendations and will continue to share the information within the ECE community on behalf of providers.
- v. SPARK resources for PTQ
 - 1. SPARK Business Resources & Programming: PTQ Training Calendar, My Spark Learning Lab PTQ Resources, or Join a PTQ Cohort.
 - 2. SPARK Support:
 - a. Paths to QUALITY: <https://indianaspark.com/ptq-supports/>
 - b. Contact out Path to Quality Support team at PTQ@indianaspark.com
 - c. Call SPARK Help Desk
- e. Mental Health Program Updates
 - i. Provider Support Groups
 - 1. 12 weeks of group consultation with an LCSW
 - 2. Up to 30 professionals per group
 - 3. The third round to begin on April 25, 2022
 - 4. Tuesdays at 2 PM & 4 PM EST, Wednesdays at 2 PM EST, and Fridays at 2 PM EST
 - 5. How to sign up? <https://indianaspark.com/wellness-and-mental-health-support/>
 - ii. Employee Assistance Program
 - 1. Will be available for Indiana's entire ECE & OST workforce
 - 2. The launch is targeted for the beginning of May 2022
 - 3. Where to find information:
<https://brighterfuturesindiana.org/build-learn-grow/building-wellness>
- d.

7. Public Comment

- a. Invite public comments and questions that an agenda item has not covered. Attendees are encouraged to enter comments/questions into the Zoom chat if they are more comfortable.
 - i. No additional public comments

8. 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 members requested additional resources and tools from SPARK on how to document wages and salary changes for the Build Learn Grow grant.
 - ii. The Director of SPARK, Mike, will continue to connect with ECE leadership through the state and specifically the PTQ policy committee on extending the rating period and having a standard PTQ rating month.
 - iii. RAC requested SPARK and or OECOSL add a PTQ rating notification or an alert process within current software systems such as My SPARK Learning Lab or I-LEAD to help communicate with providers about their PTQ expiration date.

9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- a. SDA 1 RAC Meeting will be on September 7th, 2022, at 7:00 EST.
 - i. A hybrid meeting option will be available. The meeting location will be established and posted online.
 - ii. SDA 1 asked all members to bring a new friend to the next meeting.
- b. The RAC members had no additional comments or agenda items for the next meeting.
- c. Stay Connected with SPARK
 - i. Sign up for the SPARK newsletter: <http://indianaspark.com/>
 - ii. SPARK Group Features
 - iii. Follow SPARK on social media!
 - 1. [Facebook](#)
 - 2. [Twitter](#)
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- iv. Email RAC@indianaspark.com with questions

10. Adjournment