SPARK RttT: Year One Fidelity and Implementation

October 2014

An evaluation presented to the Early Childhood Resource Center documenting fidelity and implementation related to the expansion of Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids (SPARK) under Ohio's Race to the Top (RttT) Early Learning Challenge

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DEFINITIONS

Ages and Stages (ASQ) (ASQ: SE) are assessments designed for developmental and social/emotional screenings to uncover developmental delays (http://agesandstages.com/).

Completion requires that 8 lessons be completed by the Parent Partner with the Learning Advocate and the child.

Group Sessions are lessons conducted at school with multiple children.

HOME The Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME) Inventory (Caldwell, & Bradley, 1984, 2003) is designed to measure the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to a child in the home environment. The focus is on the child in the environment, child as a recipient of inputs from objects, events, and transactions occurring in connection with the family surroundings. (Caldwell, B. M., & Bradley, R. H. (2003). Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment: Administration Manual. Tempe, AZ: Family & Human Dynamics Research Institute, Arizona State University.)

Learning Advocate is a family member who acts as the child's active and consistent learning supporter. (Sustain in the Early Grades Demonstration Project Proposal, SPARKOhio, October 2012)

Learning Plan is completed together by the Parent Partner and parent/learning advocate using the information gathered from the Intake Form and screenings, in addition to any concerns presented by the parent. The Parent Partners and parent periodically review the learning plan and update or create a new Learning Plan as needed (SPARK Parent Partner Handbook)

Let's Talk is a program conducted in a small group in the school setting for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children and their parents. It is designed to enhance verbal language skills as a foundation to success in learning to read. (SPARK 4-year Old Let's Talk Manual: p. 1)

Ready Schools, a partnership with SPARK Ohio, Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators, is a philosophy and a set of principles that guide schools in meeting the needs of the children and families they serve and a framework for organizing activities and data collection efforts regarding family and community engagement and learning supports. While not a core requirement for the SPARK program, Ready Schools is nonetheless considered a critical element of the SPARK Ohio approach by helping to insure that strong linkages between families and schools will continue to support the success of SPARK children. Ready Schools focuses on seven components ranging from leadership to home-school connections utilizing a nine-step implementation process. (Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton. *SPARK Community Presentation*. Power Point Presentation; 2-12-13)

Responsive Services Team (RST) is the early intervention component of the SPARK program and may include a child psychologist, early childhood educational specialist, a speech and language therapist, a mental health consultant, and school-based personnel. The team meets monthly to discuss screening

results and share concerns. While the ongoing developmental issues of some children are monitored, there is a focus on high need and high risk. The team refers others to the school district for assistance or to community organizations that provide services.

RttT Early Learning Challenge Grant is a federal Race to the Top grant that awarded Ohio $70 million for 2012-2015 to help close the kindergarten readiness gap for high needs children. The SPARK rural pilot sites described in this document were funded through this grant.

SPARK stands for Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids. It is a family-focused intervention that uses structured lesson plans and activities to help children get ready for school through building reading, language and social skills while seeking to create a seamless transition into school for children ages 3-6. The focus of the RttT SPARK pilot sites is on 4-year olds.

SPARK Evaluation and Data Protocol Manual was first published in 2008 and later revised in 2013. It provides guidance on evaluation for program sites. Research questions are included, but not research methodology.

The SPARK Management Information System (MIS) is a web-accessible FileMaker Pro data platform that all sites are required to use to enter (at a minimum) core participant/family and service delivery data.

Woodcock-Johnson III is a co-normed set of tests for measuring general intellectual ability, specific cognitive abilities, oral language, and academic achievement. (http://www.riverpub. com/products/wjIIIComplete/)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During their first full year, the three rural SPARK pilot sites (Sandy Valley, Logan Elm, Mississinawa/Franklin Monroe) of the Race to the Top (RttT) Early Learning Challenge Grant have shown fidelity to the SPARK model by adopting the required core elements for replication programs:

- Evaluation
- Four-Year Old Program
- Parent Partners' Professional Development
- Education Continuity: Supporting Schools
- Oversight and Monitoring
- External Communications

Sites have focused on implementation by:

- Recruiting and providing services to 128 children and families.
- Conducting 1,289 home visitations; 213 group visitations and 141 participations in a Let's Talk session.
- Establishing Responsive Services Teams with supporting social services personnel.
- Demonstrating a high degree of program implementation by (7) Parent Partners through their activities and service delivery.

INTRODUCTION

Developed in 2003 by the <u>Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton</u> with a grant from the <u>Kellogg Foundation</u>, *Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids (SPARK Ohio)* is a family-centered kindergarten readiness program that works with families, schools and the community. From its initial sites in Stark County, *SPARK Ohio* expanded to Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Mahoning, Montgomery, Summit and Trumbull Counties. SPARK Ohio's well documented results and continued support from the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton have made the program a model for replication.

In 2013 funds from Ohio's *<u>Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant</u>* *(RttT-ELC)* enabled the expansion of the program in three high need rural communities, Logan Elm in Pickaway County, Mississinawa and Franklin Monroe districts in Darke County and Sandy Valley in Stark County. Overall management of the program was transferred to the Early Childhood Learning Center in Canton, Ohio.

Joseph Rochford, Ph.D., and Deric R. Kenne, Ph.D. were authorized to conduct evaluations of these new sites. Using the *SPARK Evaluation and Data Protocol Manual* (2013)[1] Dr. Rochford evaluated how well sites adhered to, and implemented, the SPARK model. Dr. Kenne reviewed program outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

This report mirrors methodology previously used by former SPARK evaluator Dr. Peter J. Leahy to evaluate replication sites.[2] In conducting those evaluations, Dr. Leahy wrote the *SPARK Evaluation and Data Protocol Manual* to identify relevant research questions. The numbered questions in this document are drawn from that manual. Dr. Leahy's team used these questions to develop survey instruments for SPARK program directors, supervisors, parent partners, and members of the Responsive Services Team. These same surveys are used in this evaluation. Dr. Leahy's team used the SPARK Management Information System (MIS). This report also draws on information from the SPARK MIS.

SEP's review of MIS data took place from May 20 to September 15, 2014. The surveys were administered between January and February 2014. Although the Mississinawa/Franklin Monroe site is treated as one site, it functioned as two specific programs. This report uses feedback on sites from the Early Childhood Resource Center's Early Learning Challenge Grant Quarterly Reports of January, April and July 2014. In August Dr. Adrienne O'Neill and Adele Gelb replicated Dr. Leahy's follow-up site visits to gather information.

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[1] Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton (2013). *SPARK Evaluation and Data Protocol Manual*. Canton: Author.
[2] Leahy, Peter J. (2012). *SPARK Ohio Replication Final Evaluation Report*. Akron: Institute of Bioscience and Social Research at the University of Akron.

LIMITATIONS

Data from the SPARK MIS were reviewed at the end of the SPARK year (May-September). Persons are in charge of MIS data collection and input at each of the sites and have varied responsibilities and different levels of familiarity with the software. Data entry at different sites proceeded at different rates. Survey data has inherent limitations: whether all questions were understood similarly by participants and whether answers represent true depictions of program elements.

CONTEXT

In late July and early August Dr. Adrienne O'Neill and Adele Gelb made personal visits to four principals and their schools at Logan Elm, Sandy Valley, and Mississinawa and Franklin/Monroe in Darke County, Ohio. The trips were essential to understanding the context of the rural school districts newly involved in SPARK for the
2013-14 school year.

> *Our school doesn't have sufficient electric service to upgrade computers even if we had the funds to do so!*

The program based at Logan Elm Elementary School serves a small population in a community with little industry and high poverty. They are enriched by a 4-Star rated Headstart on the grounds of the school and support from Jobs and Family Services.

Concern for students and families was the underpinning of the joint grant application for Mississinawa and Franklin Monroe Elementary Schools in Darke County. Although the two neighborhoods are quite different – 20% of Franklin Monroe students qualify for free/or reduced lunch; 60% of Mississinawa Valley Elementary students qualify for free/or reduced lunch – leaders combined efforts to bring SPARK to families in their districts.

> *Our families do not have access to a library in Ohio and they must pay $60 for a library card to use the one in Indiana.*
>
> *Our travel line is over budget – the distances between families travelled by the parent partner are huge.*

Mississinawa's Responsive Services Team refers to the Anthony Wayne Center and mental health services out of Greenville. Franklin Monroe's principal was new to the district and the position last year – SPARK was one of many items on his list of priorities. He anticipates stronger recruitment and reports

positive feedback from all who were involved in last year's efforts. Social media will be one of the strategies he will explore to create interest in the program.

> *The kids living in the trailer park can be gone within a few months if their parent's fracking job is over. This can be especially challenging for students with special needs including ESL.*

Sandy Valley's principal and program coordinator had extensive experience with SPARK in previous positions and began the year with many advantages including: a deep understanding of the SPARK program and responsibilities; a funded partnership with the county library; a school viewed as the center of the community; a rich list of social services in the county; and a strong team of parent partners. The school district has few preschool opportunities outside of the school based program that can serve up to 40% of the community's needs, and high poverty (58%) and the rural district challenges of finding children to enroll in SPARK and the distance between families.

All the programs have achieved fidelity and implementation of the model. Each program is interested in using an individualized, short video presentation and handout for recruiting. Each praised the efforts and support of the Early Childhood Resource Center and Angela Parker.

While there are many challenges in each locale and the initial year proved to be a steep learning curve for those unfamiliar with the program, each of the principals/program directors is committed to a stronger implementation in 2014-15 and finding the support and funding to sustain the program beyond the life of the Race to the Top grant.

I. MODEL FIDELITY

Fidelity to the SPARK Model means that all required core components of the program will be present at each site. Additionally, sites may elect to implement highly desirable or optional characteristics. Table 1 outlines the components in each category.

Table 1 – SPARK Replication Program Components

Required Core	Highly Desirable	Optional
Evaluation	Three-Year Old Program	
Four-Year Old Program	Get Ready for School	Incentives, Rewards and Resources
Parent Partners' Professional Development	Let's Talk	Early Childhood Professional Development
Education Continuity: Supporting Schools	Program Quality Improvement	Resources and Materials
Oversight and Monitoring	Family Child Care Support	
External Communications	Library Backpacks	

THE REQUIRED CORE COMPONENTS

What follows is a discussion of how sites insured fidelity to each core component of the SPARK program as outlined in Table 1. Where appropriate, research questions derived from the SPARK Evaluation and Data Protocol Manual are included.

EVALUATION

All sites have complied with the evaluation requirement to maintain records on participant demographic and family characteristics as well as SPARK service delivery.

THE 4-YEAR OLD PROGRAM

1. *How many children were recruited, began SPARK and completed the definition of SPARK Treatment?*

Year one recruitment for the four-year old program at sites took place between May and August of 2013 with home visitations commencing in August (except for Franklin Monroe). The year one target was 50 students per site.

Table 2 – Children Recruited, Began, Completed SPARK

4-Year Olds	Sandy Valley	Logan Elm	Mississinawa/Franklin Monroe
Recruited/Began	52	25*	51 (25/26)
Withdrawn less 1 Year	5	3	6 (2/4)
Completed	42	20	49 (24/25)

* The original target was changed in April

2. *How many home and group visits were held?*

Home visitations remain the primary vehicle for delivery of SPARK services. Group meetings are also included.

Table 3 – Visitations

Visits	Sandy Valley	Logan Elm	Mississinawa/Franklin Monroe
Home Visits	516	223	550
Student Attendance at Sessions	118	43	52

3. *How many screenings of each type were conducted?*

A review of the SPARK MIS indicates that Parent Partners at all sites administered the three primary program screening instruments (ASQ, WJIII, and HOME) to all students. Trauma, Health and Speech screenings varied by site and are administered by qualified RST professionals.

Table 4 – Screenings

Screening	Sandy Valley	Logan Elm	Mississinawa/ Franklin Monroe
Ages and Stages	51	22	45
Woodcock-Johnson III	49	21	46
Home Observation Measurement Of the Environment	49	23	49
Trauma Screening	36	0	46
Health Screening	40	0	46
Speech Screening	13	1	20

4. *What percentage of the children received such screenings?*

51% of active SPARK children were administered the entire screening panel (ASQ, WJ III, and HOME) by Parent Partners.

5. *Was a Learning Plan Developed for each Child?*

Table 5: Learning Plans

Site	Percent of Children with Learning Plans	Percent of Learning Plans Updated at Least Once
Logan Elm	96%	80%
Mississinawa/Franklin Monroe	54%	32%
Sandy Valley	96%	92%

6. *What was the amount and nature of individual therapies received by children?*

A scan of the SPARK MIS shows that speech therapy is the most widely received service with 15 children treated.

PARENT PARTNERS

1. *What pre-service training activities occurred?*

By the October Early Learning Challenge Quarterly Report, all parent partners, plus site directors, and data entry personnel across all sites had undergone initial training.

2. *What in-service activities occurred? When? For whom?*

Six of the seven Parent Partners responding to the Parent Partner survey indicated that they had participated in in-service or professional development meetings since the program began in their district. In addition to SPARK-related professional development sponsored by the Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC), training also centered on understanding poverty, safety and crisis issues.

EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY: SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

A comprehensive summary of activities and progress among SPARK RttT sites in implementing their Ready Schools plans can be found in *Sustain in the Early Grades Project Progress Update - Ready Schools Component Reports*, submitted to the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton in January, 2014 by Jan Webler.

OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING

1. *What oversight and monitoring efforts were put in place?*

SPARK directors report that they meet with supervisors on at least a weekly basis.

2. *What efforts were made to insure project sustainability?*

The Logan Elm principal/director is determined to see SPARK enrich the lives of the preschool children and families she serves. She has begun to build support in the small retail community and to explore with the school board the use of Title I funds to sustain the program beyond the grant. She has relied on Ohio Christian College for support but is considering approaching OU Chillocothe for preservice teachers to fill volunteer roles.

Mississinawa is looking to the superintendent to expand collaboration with Indiana University East beyond placing student teachers to placing social work and speech pathology interns. Plans are in formation for sustaining the program.

Franklin Monroe is considering building a link with Wright State for support in the areas of research, interns and preschool teachers.

Sandy Valley continues to value highly the relationship and support of the Stark County District Library and the CARE Team. They will explore the use of speech pathology interns from local college programs.

PRESENCE OF HIGHLY DESIRABLE OR OPTIONAL COMPONENTS

No RttT site offers a three year old program and only one, Sandy Valley, offered the *Let's Talk* component throughout the year for 111 attendees. Mississinawa began "Let's Talk" in April and 30 attendees participated.

II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The following research questions from the SPARK Evaluation and Data Protocol Manual guide the evaluation of how programs were implemented.

1. *To what extent did program processes and systems operate as planned? What are the reasons for the deviations?*

    Data indicating processes and systems operations are derived from directors and Parent Partners responses to their respective surveys. All sites offer the requisite 4-year program. Two offer a "Get Ready for School" program component and two offer "Let's Talk."

    First year recruitment began between May and August with Responsive Services Teams locking into place between August and November. Recruitment proceeded at varying speeds. Sandy Valley was the only site by October to have recruited a full 50 students.[3] Mississinawa/Franklin Monroe had met its target with 49 students. Logan Elm had met approximately half its targeted recruitment at 24. The site noted that it had "faced challenges with recruitment, parent commitment, and parent involvement." Home visitations began in August at three sites with Franklin Monroe starting in January.

    SPARK sites held staff planning meetings on different schedules: two sites met quarterly, one monthly, and a fourth weekly. While parent partners and supervisors participated at all sites, Responsive Services members were involved at two sites and parents at one. Kindergarten transition, recruitment and parent involvement and engagement were the most widely discussed topics at these meetings, taking place at all sites. Only one site had an ongoing planning committee. Three out of four sites provided some supplemental materials – most often art supplies or on parent education. One site used parent incentives in the form of gas cards, art supplies and food.

    When asked if the SPARK MIS was useful, two sites said "not at all" while the other two sites were neutral. Asked if MIS reports were useful, two sites disagreed, one strongly disagreed, and the remaining site was neutral. Responses further indicate that MIS reporting mechanisms are not being used and all sites agreed or strongly agreed that they only enter the required data into the system.[4]

2. *To what extent did program processes and systems operate as planned: A Parent Partner View*

    All seven Parent Partners employed by the sites responded to a series of statements in their survey instrument (Questionnaire) regarding their implementation of the SPARK Program. Their perspectives and the number of times they responded as "always" when incorporating the following 40 program elements into their home visitations validate the quality of program implementation at the primary level of service delivery.

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[3] Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton (2013). The RttT Early Learning Challenge Quarterly Report.
[4] This was also confirmed by the SPARK Supervisors Survey.

To what extent do the following statements reflect your implementation of SPARK?

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.	The concerns of families on the Individual Learning Plan (ILP)	6		1		
2.	The outcomes specified for the child on the ILP	7				
3.	I review previous visit summary notes	7				
4.	The child's developmental issues not included on the ILP	7				
5.	Family needs/concerns not directly related to the child	5		2		
6.	The health needs of the child	6		1		
7.	The SPARK curriculum and lesson sequence	7				
8.	Planning for the next goal; setting the stage for development	7				
9.	I add enrichment materials to SPARK activity plans	6		1		
10.	I contact families to confirm the scheduled visit	6	1			
11.	I often discuss planned home visits with my supervisor/colleagues	1		5	1	
12.	I feel at ease/comfortable in my families homes	6		1		
13.	I provide education and/or information for the learning advocate	7				
14.	I follow a predictable routine with each family	7				
15.	I review the previous visit and homework activities	6	1			
16.	I articulate the sessions learning goal to the child and advocate	7				
17.	I read a book to the child during the activity	6		1		
18.	I use materials present in the home	2		1		4
19.	I encourage the child and learning advocate's lead in the activities	6				1
20.	I interact with the child while talking to the caregiver[5]	6	1			
21.	The learning advocate is actively involved in all activities	3	4			
22.	I include other non-SPARK children in planned activities	3		3		
23.	The learning advocate is often not involved with the visit			2	1	4
24.	I assist in goal setting with the learning advocate	7				

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[5] About what I am doing and how he/she can do the same thing.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
25. I problem solve with the learning advocate	7				
26. I provide emotional support to the learning advocate	6		1		
27. I observe caregiver/child interactions	7				
28. I model or demonstrate interaction with child for advocate	7				
29. I evaluate/provide feedback on caregiver/child interactions	5		2		
30. I address family concerns related to the child	6		1		
31. I provide crisis intervention	5				1
32. I remind families about next visit	7				
33. I positively affirm the learning advocate's actions	7				
34. I contact family between visits	6				1
35. I make connections/referrals to community services	5		1		
36. I stop the visit if the parent/learning advocate is uninvolved	3		1		2
37. I articulate expectations for homework	7				
38. I contact the Responsive Services Team	5		1		1
39. I contact school/preschool for follow-up	3		2		2
40. I contact community services for follow-up	4				2

3. Did the program substitute any goals, concepts or designs? If so, what and why?

A review of the SPARK Directors Survey responses indicate that all programs followed the curriculum/lesson plan as sequenced in the SPARK manual in chronological order and that all Parent Partners at their sites used the same materials.[6]

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[6] In 2014 the Early Childhood Resource Center, management and operations leader for SPARK, undertook an assessment and revision of SPARK lesson plans for developmental appropriateness. Both the content and the order of the lessons were assessed by early childhood professionals. New lessons were presented to parent partners at a workshop in June 2014 in preparation for the 2014-2015 school year.

4. *Did the responsible organization(s) have the resources and capacity in place to implement the program?*

The question of resources and capacity can be assessed from several different perspectives. Aside from administration and funding, Parent Partners are at the epicenter of program implementation and service delivery. As noted above, seven persons responded to the SPARK Parent Partner Survey. How they viewed organizational culture is also a critical indicator of program capacity. Their responses are as follows:

		Strongly Agreed	*Agreed*	*Uncertain*	*Disagreed*	*Strongly Disagreed*
1.	Are there necessary materials available to the staff?	3	4			
2.	I have to follow rules in this program that conflict with my best professional judgment.			1		5
3.	My administrators are receptive to change and experimentation.	6			1	
4.	Staff frequently share ideas with one another.	7				
5.	Staff and program administrators work collaboratively to identify needs for improvement of the program.	7				
6.	My SPARK families appreciate my service to them.	7				

Another aspect of organizational capacity is reflected by the form and nature of Responsive Services Teams RST). While not part of the required core, the team fulfills the critical function of securing assistance for children who have developmental disabilities. The following chart outlines how directors described these teams at their individual sites.

Table 7 – Composition of Responsive Services Teams

	Psychologist	Early Childhood Specialist	MH Specialist	OT/PT	Parent Partner (PP) Supervisor	Speech/ Language Pathologist	PP
Mississinawa	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Logan Elm	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sandy Valley	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Franklin Monroe	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Current RST budgets run from $6,800 to $33,000 and are supported by in-kind and other services by other organizations. In one case, contributions amount to 25% of the budget; in another, in-kind is valued at $100/hr. for counseling services.

5. *Did recruitment meet targets? If not, why?*

Chronologically, SPARK matches the school year in progression and children should be recruited in a timely fashion to receive a full year of structured services. However, both Logan Elm and Franklin/Monroe faced recruitment difficulties related to this timeline. For both sites, lessons learned were of value.

Logan Elm has reported – *"While we have faced challenges with recruitment, parent commitment, and parent involvement, we have seen much growth in the children, more connection to the school environment, better transitions, and more collaboration between families, community resources, and school. To help improve the transition in next year's program, we will change our recruitment strategies, and increase the focus on and expectations for family involvement during visits and lessons."*

Franklin/Monroe stated – *"The biggest lesson that we have learned is to start recruitment and data collection early. We now know that we need to be implementing the program in August and not wait until we have our full enrollment. We have already started to recruit at events such as our school carnival and have received names of potential students and parents for next year's program. Next year we would like to be able to follow the timeline provided by SPARK and host events at school specifically for the SPARK and preschool-age students in our community. Our school district has a lot of students who are open enrolled and therefore it is difficult to wait with recruiting."*[7]

6. *What is the relationship between the program and the environment in which it operates?*

The RttT SPARK sites are rural districts ranked from average to high student poverty, with low student populations.[8]

A scan of records in the SPARK MIS shows that 70 of the 123 children[9] are enrolled in preschool. Family income is difficult to determine due to the large number who chose not to report this data. Despite this limitation, 23 families did report incomes of $25,000 or less. The HHS 2014 poverty guideline for a family of four is: $23,850.[10]

The gender of the four-year old participants is nearly evenly split at 50% male and 50% female. They are predominantly in traditional family situations with a learning advocate who is married and living with another adult. There are 18 single advocates and 8 divorced among the 136 records. The racial composition is white with only six listing minority heritage with four not reporting.
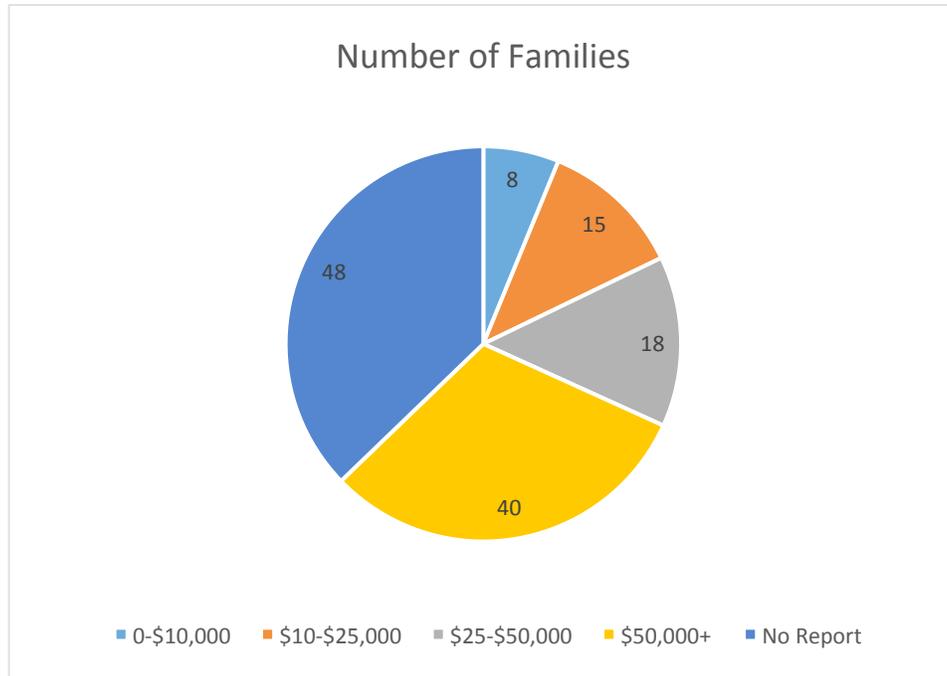
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[7] Both are from the cited RttT April 15, 2014 Report
[8] Ohio Department of Education, Typology of Ohio School Districts at: http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data/Accountability-Resources/Ohio-Report-Cards/Typology-of-Ohio-School-Districts
[9] Approximately 70 children
[10] See: http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/14poverty.cfm

Figure 2 – Income Levels of RttT SPARK Families

Number of Families

- 0-$10,000
- $10-$25,000
- $25-$50,000
- $50,000+
- No Report

(Values: 8, 15, 18, 40, 48)

7. ***What is the relationship of the program to the stakeholders in early childhood education?|***

This question is best answered by the presence of a Community Advisory Committee that widely involves other stakeholders. Mississinawa is the only site to have formed such a committee. Its composition includes early childhood providers, Head Start, social services, the public and Job and Family Services. Sandy Valley has ongoing informal relationships with all the early childhood providers in the area.

CONCLUSION:

This was the initial programming year for all three rural programs (four sites) and despite challenges faced in recruiting at Logan Elm and Franklin Monroe, all have put into place the required core components of the SPARK model and have evidenced a high degree of service delivery and program implementation.

Data supporting this conclusion comes from entries in the SPARK MIS and responses to survey instruments by SPARK program directors, supervisors, parent partners, and members of the Responsive Services Team. Of particular interest were the number of times all Parent Partners insisted in their survey that they "always" did certain things, such as follow the SPARK curriculum and lesson sequence or read a book to a child, during home visitations.

This is significant as the home visitation is the primary way SPARK services are delivered and Parent Partners lie at the heart of this delivery system. More than any other factor, these Parent Partners insure program success.