March Spark Webinar

Connecting Spark and Essential Fellowship

Rebecca Brown

brownrr@wou.edu

Welcome!

Agenda

- How do Spark and Essential Fellowship fit together?
- Applying Essential Fellowship Practices to LD1
- What's Next?
- Help Desk

Poll: How familiar are you with Essential Fellowship?

- I was involved with Essential Fellowship back when it was still called Lead, Learn, Excel.
- I am a trained trainer of the Essential Fellowship.
- I am/have been in an Essential Fellowship cohort this spring.
- I am not currently in an Essential Fellowship cohort, but plan to join one at the next opportunity.
- I am not in an Essential Fellowship cohort and am not planning to join one.
- I am not sure what we are talking about.

Poll: How familiar are you with Spark?

- I have been supporting Early Educators with their Spark portfolios for years.
- I am in the middle of supporting Early Educators with Spark portfolios for the first time.
- I am familiar with Spark but have not supported Early Educators with portfolios before.
- I am very new to Spark.

Knowledge Development

Declarative	• **"Knowing that or what"** is to have factual knowledge about something.
Procedural	• **"Knowing how"** is to do something step by step. The understanding is still more perfunctory and focuses on following a procedure.
Schematic	• **"Knowing why"** is to have a mental model that builds on and connects declarative and procedural knowledge to the "why." That means a learner can reason about, predict, and explain.
Strategic	• **"Knowing when and where"** to apply knowledge and how to check if the application or innovation is working reasonably.

Last Poll:
What level of understanding do you have of how Spark and Essential Fellowship connect?

- Come on, Rebecca, what are you talking about?
- Declarative
- Procedural
- Schematic
- Strategic

Spark

Spark is Oregon's Quality Recognition and Improvement System(QRIS). It is a voluntary program designed to support and recognize *high quality* early childhood care and education programs. In early learning and educational settings, *high quality* includes some of the following features and benefits:

- Attached, supportive relationships with a qualified caregiver/teacher
- Environments which are stimulating and appropriate for each child
- Experiences and activities that support all aspects of a child's development
- Strong partnerships between families and early educators

Spark Rated Programs

Continuous Quality Improvement is the foundation of Spark. Programs have completed a rigorous process to ensure high quality early learning and education for children and families in Oregon.

Why Spark Matters

The first years of life are the most critical for the development of a child's brain. These early experiences create the foundation for healthy physical, emotional and cognitive development for the rest of a child's life.

Who Does Spark Support?

Children

- By understanding the importance of the early years on a child's growth
- By supporting and promoting high quality learning environments in early care and education settings

Families

- By helping families to recognize and find high quality early learning programs that meet their children's needs
- By understanding that high quality programs can be found in a variety of settings

Early Educators

- By providing a framework of quality practices that can be used to assess and improve program quality
- By offering resources, tools, and incentives for professional development

Spark Domains

- Children's Learning and Development
- Health and Safety
- Personnel Qualifications
- Family Partnerships
- Administration and Business Practices

Essential Fellowship

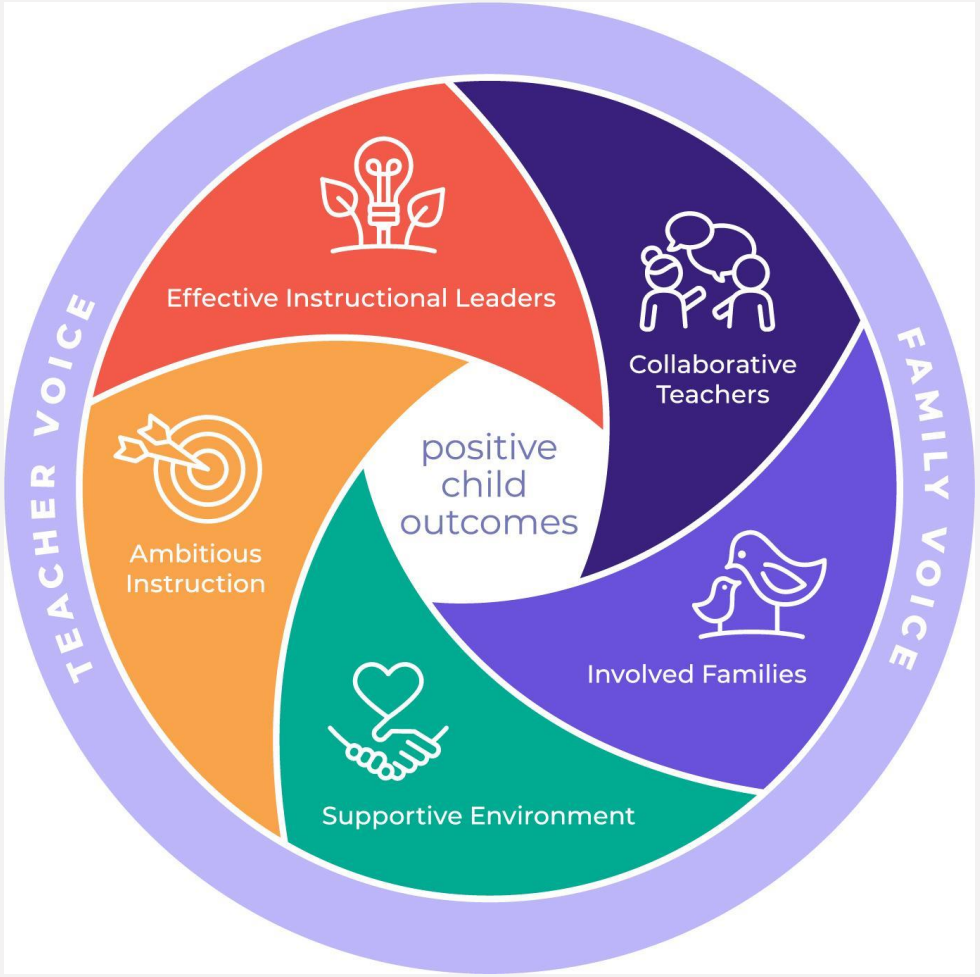
The Essential Fellowship trainings, tools, and concepts focus on organizational conditions for improvement and leadership.

The Essential Fellowship offers the opportunity to:

- Focus direction
- Cultivate collaborative cultures
- Deepen learning through inquiry and reflection
- Share responsibility for continuous quality improvement

The Start Early Essentials

The Essential Fellowship is based on the Start Early Essentials research framework which is integrated into the program.



Essential Fellowship Modules

- Foundations
- Data Dialogues
- Team Lesson Planning
- Collaborative Groups

The Essential Fellowship Leadership Standards and Competencies

- Standard 1: Visionary Leadership
- Standard 2: Improving Teaching and Learning
- Standard 3: Ambitious Instruction
- Standard 4: Family Engagement
- Standard 5: Supportive Learning Environment
- Standard 6: Effective Management
- Standard 7: Ethical Leadership

Application: Transfer to Practice

- If Spark is the “what,” Essential Fellowship could be the “how”
- Effective Instructional Leadership – Driver of Improvement
- Collaborative Teachers – Vehicle for Improvement
- If Spark is a system of quality improvement practices for Early Educators, then Essential Fellowship is a system of quality improvement practices for supporting, guiding, and leading Early Educators

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Multiple Contexts of Support are Required for Learning

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Emotional	Organizational	Instructional
Building trust	Planning ahead	Knowing your Early Educators' strengths
Promoting participation	Reviewing purpose of meeting	Drawing out expertise
Ensuring equity	Sharing a clear agenda	Using an inquiry approach
Encouraging taking risks	Using the appropriate format	Building on existing knowledge
Respect	Using norms, protocols, and icebreakers	Being transparent
Empowering	Allowing time for reflection	Making connections
Encouraging		Learning together

- **Trust**—Relationship- and strengths-based facilitation
- **Positive climate**—Trust each other in order to share practice
- **Collaboration and community**—De-isolate, support, and challenge
- **Value**—Collaboration and community
- **Structure**—Focus and productivity
- **Inquiry**—Educators need to understand the “whys” behind practice and planning



Spark Learning and Development
Standard 1

Standard LD1 The program is guided by a written statement of philosophy.

★★★

The program has a written philosophy that is available to staff, families, and visitors that states the program's values, beliefs, and program goals for:

- children
- families

Evidence:

☐ Copy of the program's philosophy, which demonstrates the criteria above.

☐ Average score of 3 or higher on question #10 on the Family Survey.

A statement of philosophy connects to fundamental questions of:

- Why this work matters
- How we do this work
- What we believe are quality practices
- What we believe about professional growth
- What we believe about children and how they grow, learn, and thrive
- What we believe about including all children in our programs
- What we believe and value about the role of families in our programs?
- What other beliefs and values guide our decisions?

Planning

729 Peer Learning Community Planning Guidance

733 Reflection, Documentation and Planning

730 School Reform Initiative – Pre-Conference Guide

1019 Facilitation Tips for Learning

731 Icebreakers and Opening Protocols

732 Pocket Guide to Probing Questions

The Four Essential Fellowship Formats

- Data Analysis and Use
- Study Group
- Exploring Student Learning Samples
- Critical Friends

Data Analysis and Use

- **Sets** clear learning and improvement goals
- **Focuses** discussion on using data for improvement
- **Tracks** progress of group toward meeting its goals

Study group format is used to:

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- **Collaborate** toward new goals and shared understandings
- **Fill** gaps in knowledge and understandings
- **Build** a sense of the importance for change and professional growth
- **Examine** current beliefs, values, and practices as they align to professional standards



Exploring student learning samples format is used to:

- **Enhance** knowledge of children's development, learning, and expression
- **Analyze** children's thinking and learning
- **Motivate** educators to improve intentional teaching practices
- **Help** educators plan high-level instructional supports to meet children's needs

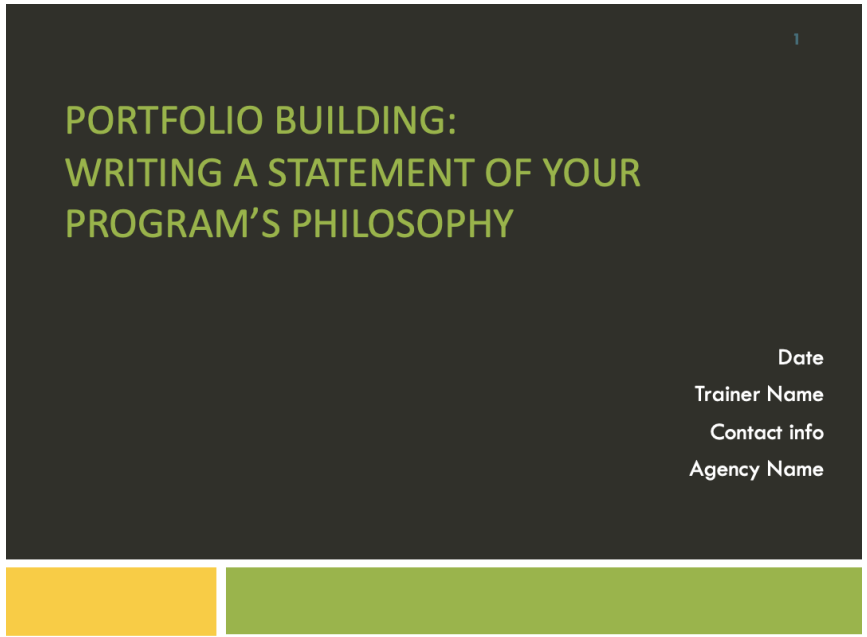
Critical friends format is used to:

- **Promote** reflection on practices
- **Work** through challenges of practice
- **Examine** effectiveness of instruction to identify strengths and make targeted improvements

Spark Training Resources

Oregonspark.org

- *Spark Related Trainings*
  - *Portfolio Building Standards*
    - *Writing a Statement*
      - *Portfolio Building Philosophy Statement (powerpoint)*
      - *Materials*



Spark Newsletter Resources



Start from the Heart: Writing Your Program Philosophy is Easier Than you Think

By Rebecca Brown

Receiving a Welcome Kit and opening up a brand new, bright shiny Spark Portfolio brings out a mix of emotions for most early learning educators, including curiosity, excitement, and....a feeling of being overwhelmed. Some of the Spark standards are easier to meet than others, but don't let the first one, *"The program is guided by a written statement of philosophy,"* intimidate you. The



A Family Survey Legacy

When distributing the Spark Family Survey to the families of children in your program, it can be nerve-wracking to wait for results! Part of providing quality responsive care includes seeking input from parents and caregivers to be sure that you are meeting their needs. We all want reassurance from families that we are doing everything right, that everything is wonderful, and that we have not failed in any way. We hope for perfect scores and for the comments to include only statements about how charming our program is!

Demystifying Data: How Spark Can Help You Collect and Use Information for Program Improvement

Data feels a bit like a fancy technical word, but really it just means information. Collecting information can help you understand and improve your program and business strategies, make better use of your money and time, and focus on responsive, effective practices that support the children and families you work with. Best of all, digging into data can help you to see your strengths and celebrate your successes!

Participating in Spark offers a number of opportunities to gather and use data in your program.

Essential Fellowship Foundations Resources:

Standard 1. Visionary Leadership

An educational leader promotes the success and well-being of all young children by facilitating the development, articulation, and stewardship of a vision of ambitious, developmentally appropriate early education that is realized by the entire school/center community.

Standard 6. Effective Management

An educational leader promotes the success and well-being of all young children by effectively and efficiently managing school/center operations and resources while maximizing time for instructional leadership to ensure a safe, supportive, and effective educational environment.

Standard 7. Ethical Leadership

An educational leader promotes the success of all young children by acting with integrity and fairness and in an ethical manner, confronting inequality and bias, ensuring equity, and valuing diversity.

The Purposes of Protocols

Structure interactions
Encourage collaborations
Promote focus and depth
Ensure productive conversations
Explore topics in depth
Promote trust, safety, and equity
Promote learning and improvement
Address difficult questions constructively
Minimize excuses and complaints
Facilitate learning and improvement
Focus on goals, innovations, solutions, and results
Build skills for effective collaborations
Nurture a culture of collegiality
Ensure full participation
Encourage active, respectful learning
Provide a safe space to share work
Energize organizational goals
Can be fun!

Where do I find protocols?

Schoolreforminitiative.org

You can search through the alphabetical list, search through the Spanish protocols, or go to the “Protocols by tag” tab to find common topics. The “Choosing a Protocol” link has many helpful resources for making decisions about protocols.

- Affinity Mapping
- Coffee Talk Protocol
- Four A’s Text Protocol
- What, so what, now what?

Quick Process Review

1. Build Relationships!!!
2. Plan your facilitation including reflecting on your prior interactions with this/these Early Educator(s) and how that will impact your plans for this interaction.
    - Consider the goal an Early Educator or group of early educators has identified.
    - Consider and select a format.
    - Consider and select a protocol.
    - Consider time, location, and norms.

“We want educators to be reflective and intentional about facilitating children’s learning and development. When children are supported and engaged, they become excited about learning. In the same way, when instructional leaders are reflective and intentional about about facilitating educator’s learning and professional development, educators also become engaged and excited about their jobs.”

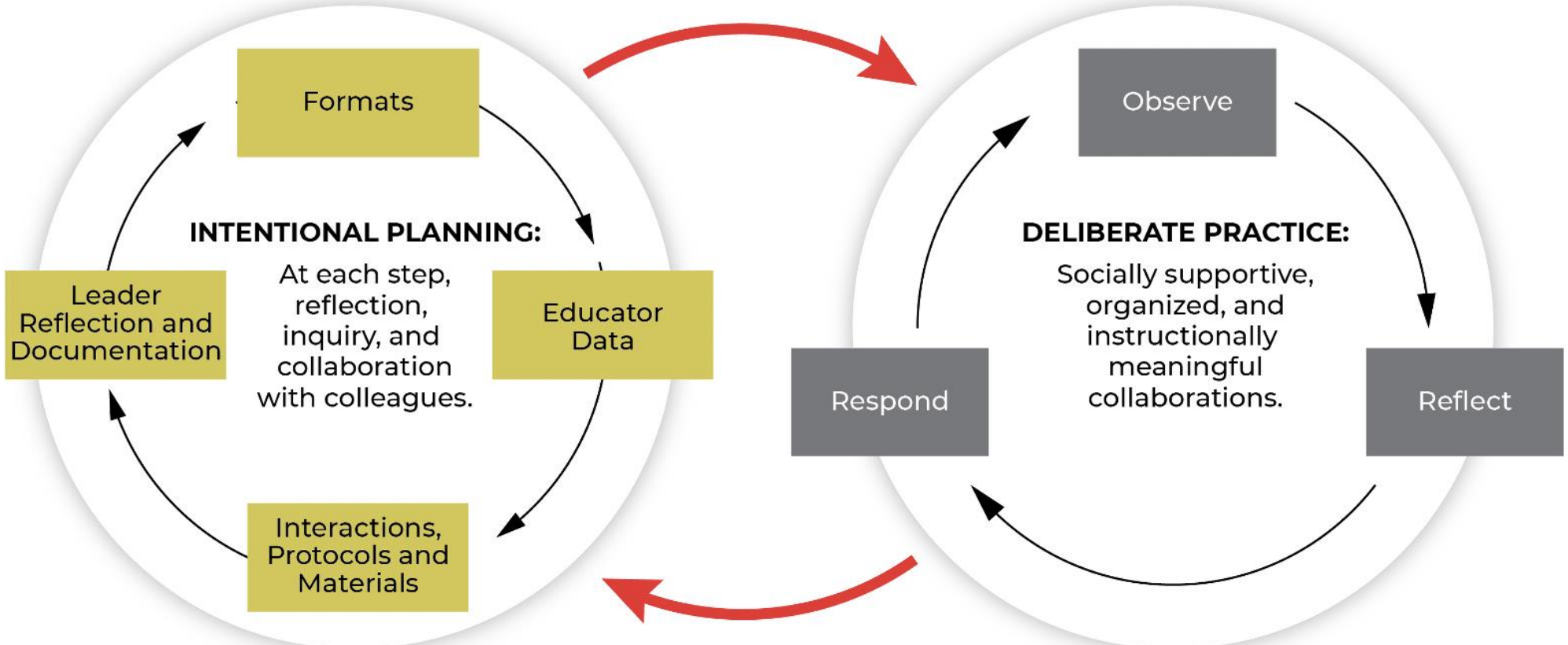
- Essential Fellowship, Collaborative Groups

Parallel Process

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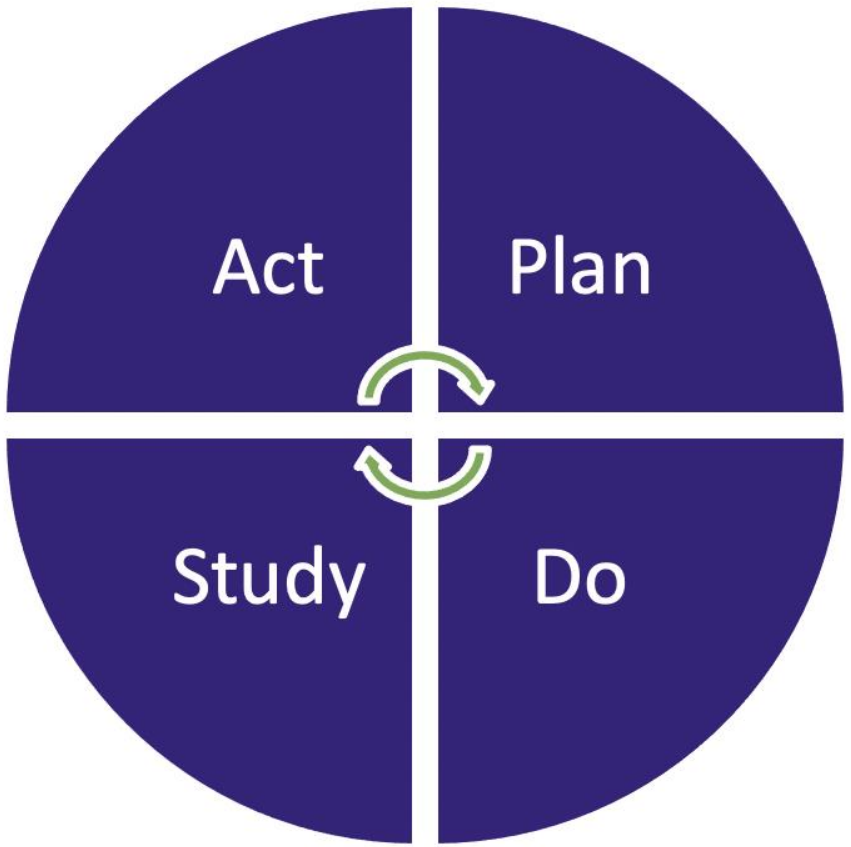
OUT-OF-THE-ACTION PEER LEARNING COMMUNITY PLANNING

IN-THE-ACTION COLLABORATION



Plan-Do-Study-Act Improvement Cycle

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- Improvement= ★ Celebrate!
- New improvement=Plan-Do-Study-Act or, Peer Learning Community
- No improvement=Root cause analysis

Spark Essential Fellowship Successes?

Have you tried some Essential Fellowship practices in your work supporting Early Educators?

How did you approach it?

What resources did you use?

What resources do you wish you had available?

Elicit-Provide-Elicit Sandwich

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Facilitator asks questions, elicits information and asks group if they would like to hear idea or suggestion.

If yes, facilitator provides information.

Facilitator elicits perspectives on the information.

Next Steps

- What tiny step can take before the next Spark webinar to try out any of this when supporting Early Educators with Spark?
- Where to find Spark/Essential Fellowship aligned materials:
  - Spark website – QIS portal – Early Educator materials – Spark & Essential Fellowship
- Where to go with the April Spark Webinar
- Evaluation
- Thank you!

Help Desk