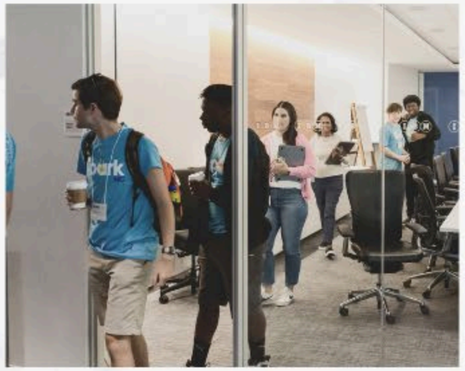
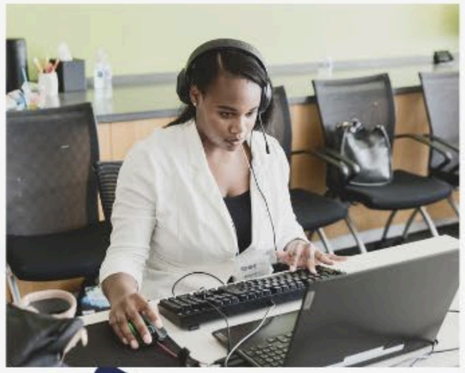
spark
NC
Igniting Futures
in Tech

spark NC





Imagine a future

Where every
North Carolina student
has the skills needed to thrive in a world
transformed by technology.

Our Why

Too few of our NC students know about high-tech jobs that will dominate the future job market in our state and local communities.

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Our Why

Even fewer
see pathways
for themselves in
these jobs.

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AND, OUR TRADITIONAL PRACTICES IN HIGH SCHOOLS DO NOT ENGAGE

ALL OF OUR LEARNERS.

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SparkNC is a Completely New Way to Do School

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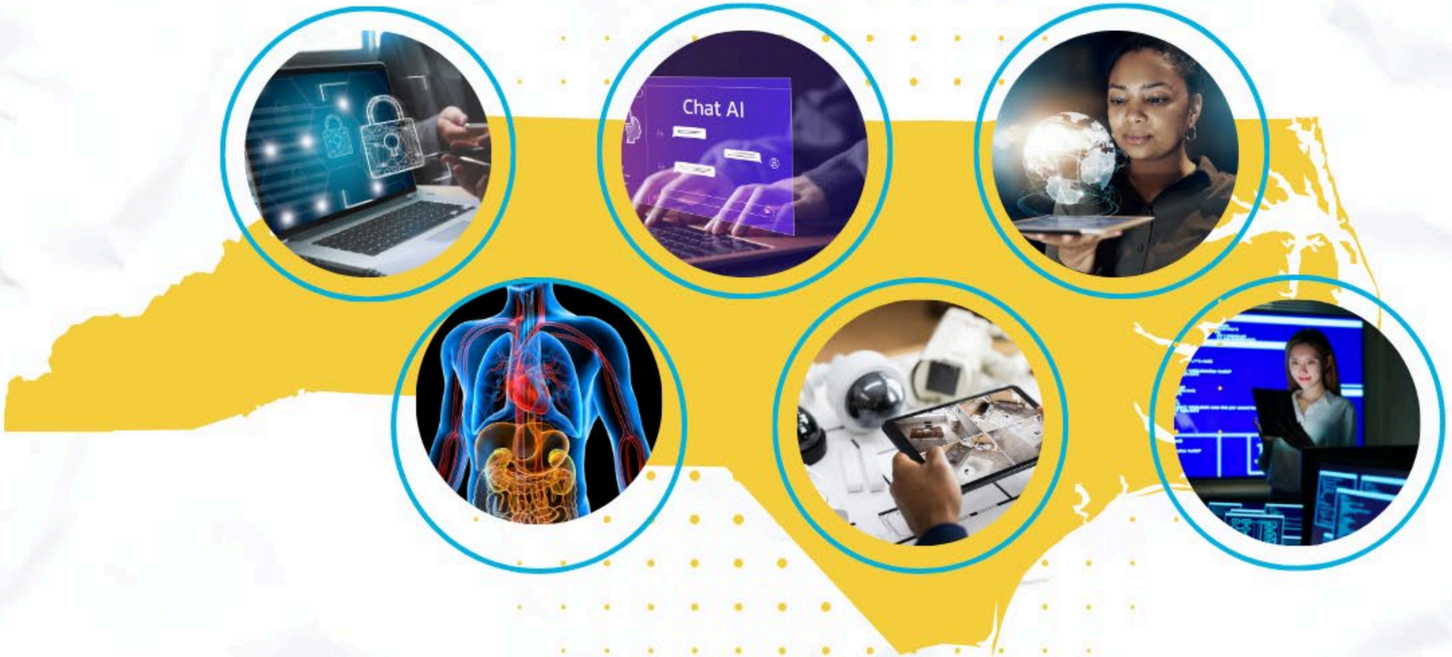
OUR NC TECH BUSINESSES STRUGGLE TO **FILL THE GROWING DEMANDS** FOR A SKILLED WORKFORCE.



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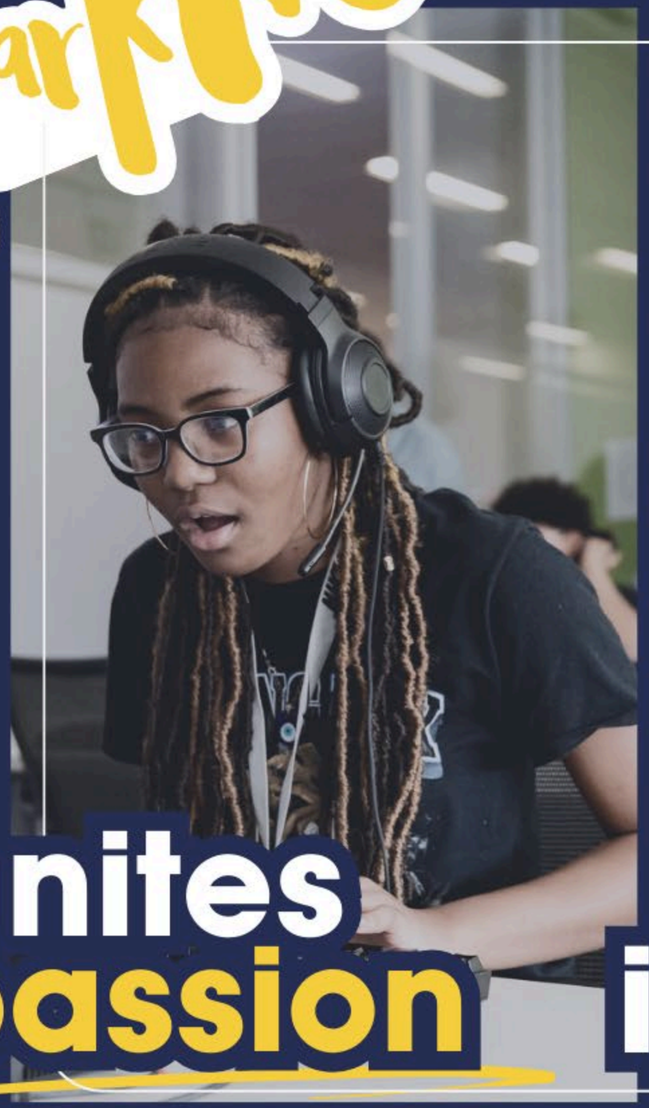
SPARKNC EMPOWERS STUDENTS TO EXPLORE HIGH-TECH FIELDS

SparkNC



Ignites passion in students to learn more

AND

provide employers with a dynamic

homegrown talent pipeline

spark NC

NHCS

SOUTHEAST AREA TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL
EST. 2017

Principal

Edith Skipper

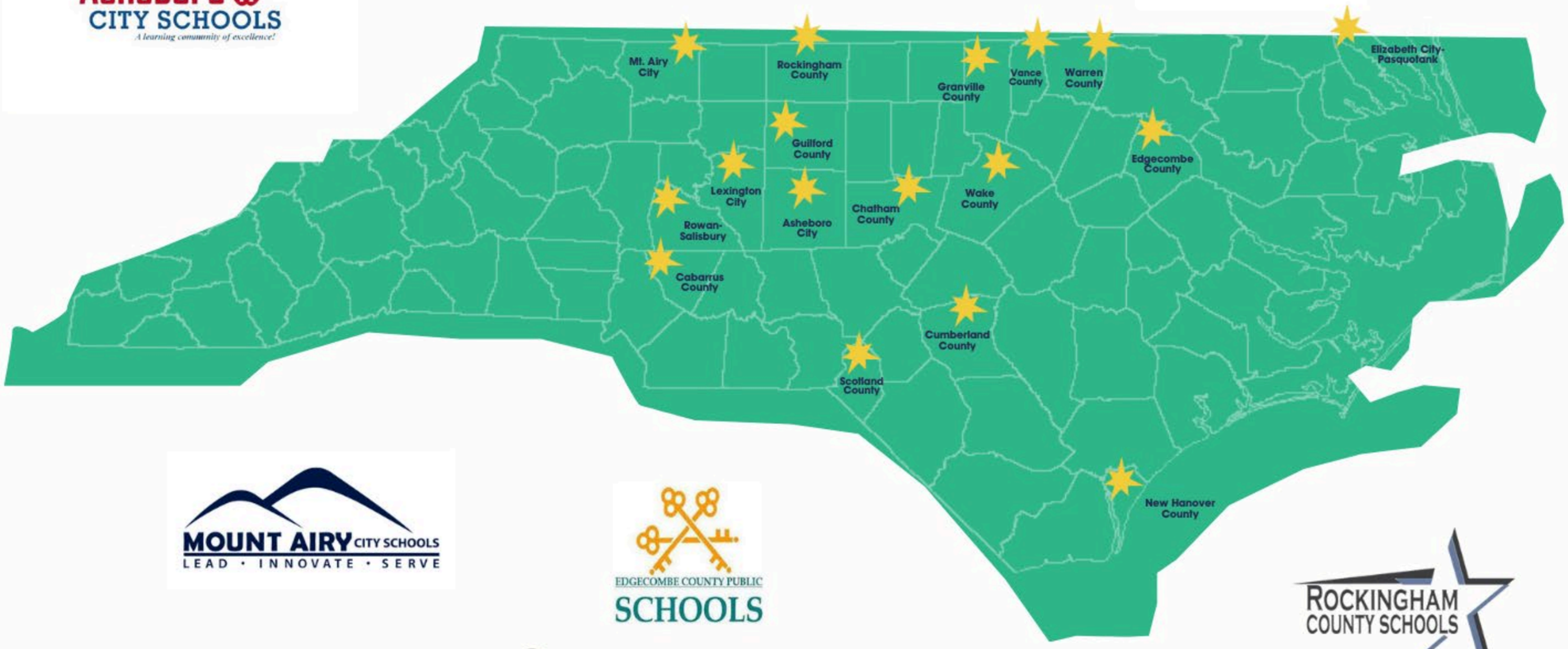
Cabarrus County Schools
Engaging minds. Shaping futures.

LEXINGTON CITY SCHOOLS

CUMBERLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS

CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

Asheboro CITY SCHOOLS
A learning community of excellence!



Guilford County Schools

Granville County PUBLIC SCHOOLS
"Committed to Excellence and Achievement for All"

MOUNT AIRY CITY SCHOOLS
LEAD • INNOVATE • SERVE

EDGECOMBE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NHCS

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

Rowan-Salisbury SCHOOL SYSTEM
Extraordinary Education Every Day
Be an original.

ECPPS

SCOTLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS
AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

VANCE COUNTY SCHOOLS

WC
WARREN COUNTY SCHOOLS
One Team, One Goal, High Levels of Learning for All

spark NC

Learner-Centered

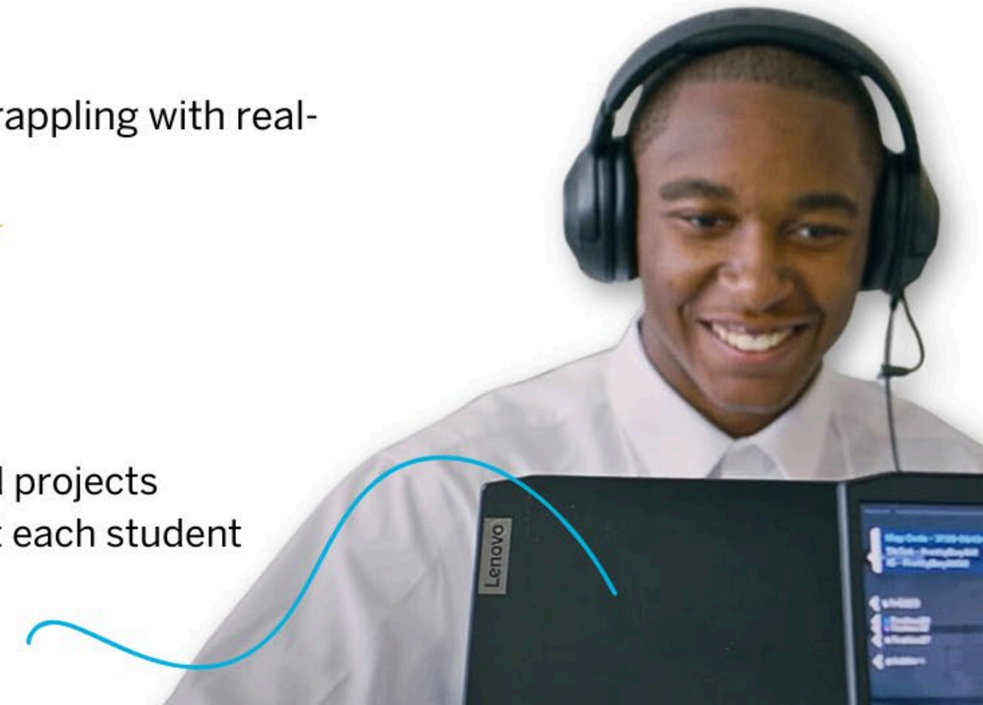
- Learning experiences that ignite their passions
- Choose what, where, and how they learn
- Complete stackable units instead of semester- or year-long courses
- Move at their own pace

Industry-Relevant

- Students grow their professional networks
- build the durable skills employers value
- Engage in problem-based learning
- Create strong portfolios of relevant work
- Developing relationships with employers and grappling with real-world challenges

Competency-Based

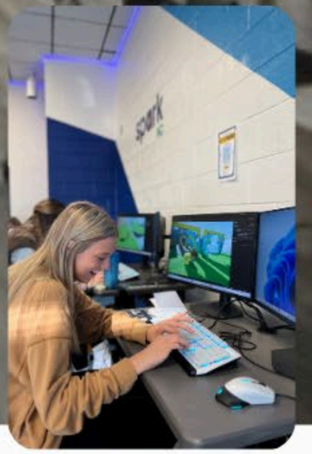
- Demonstrate mastery of unit content
- Receive credit by completing practical, real-world projects
- Empower expert educators to advise and support each student
- Personalized path to success



Lap Leaders

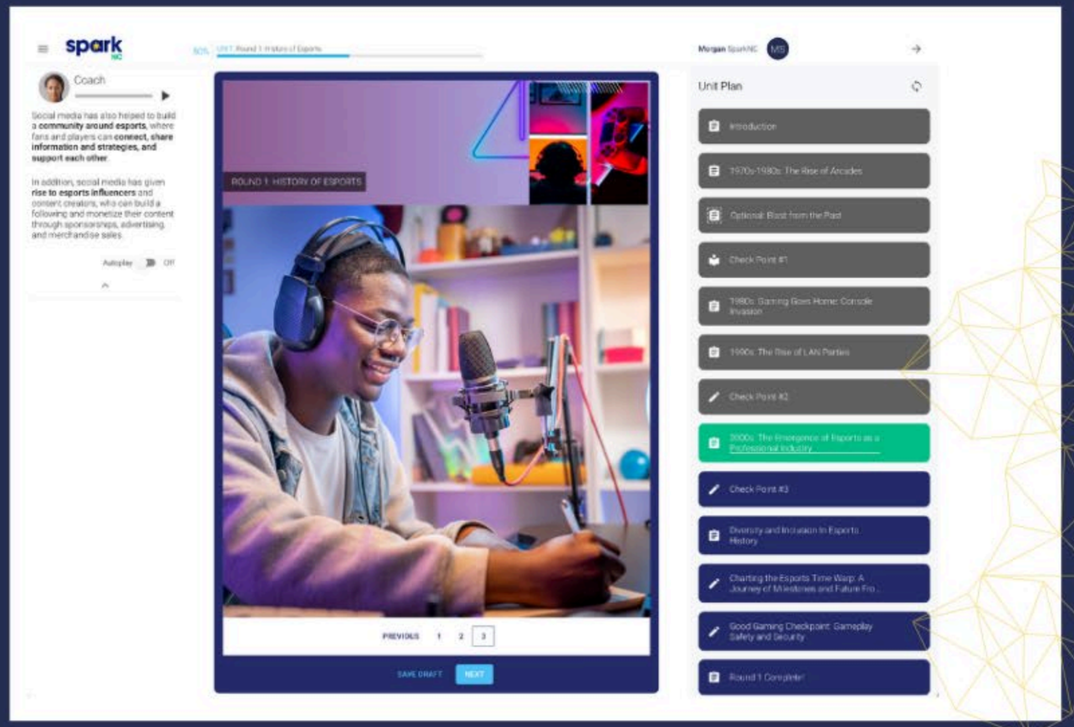
spark NC

Our SparkLabs



Platform

Personalized Digital Portfolio of Work



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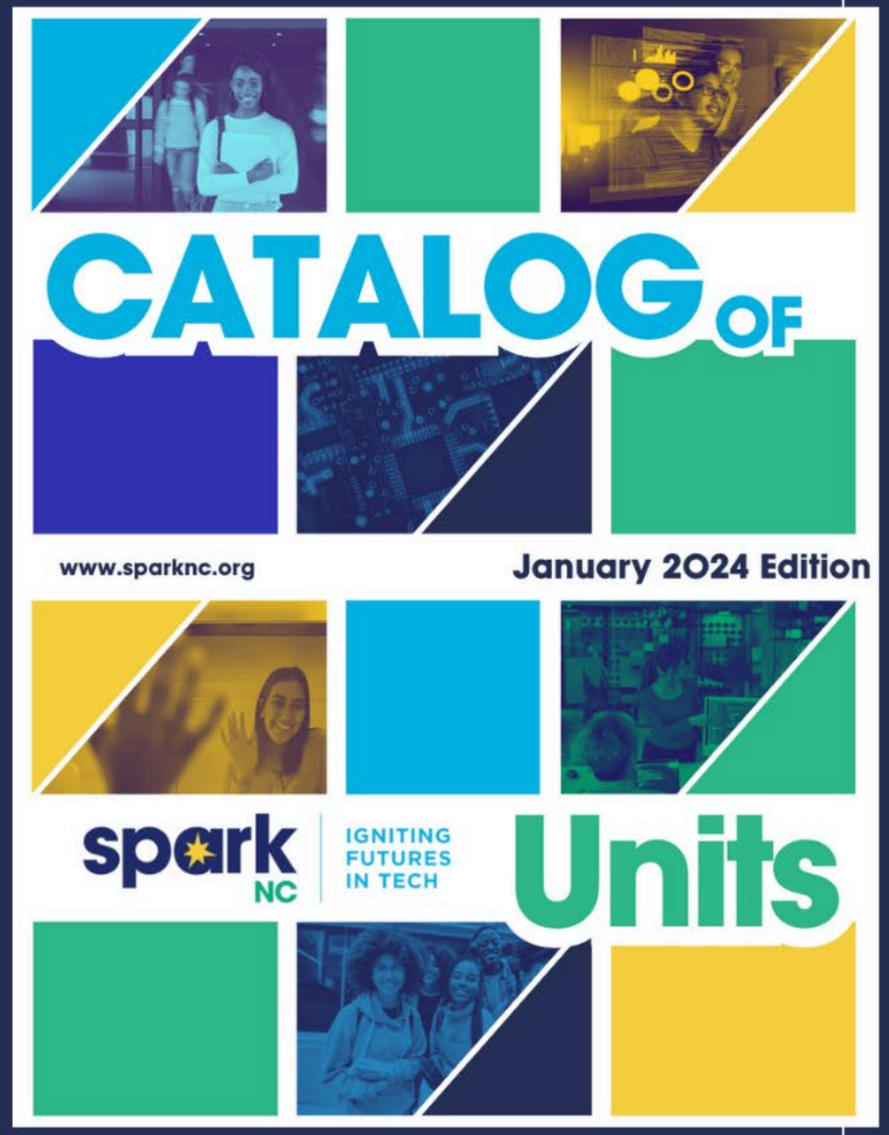

Artificial Intelligence

Computer Systems Engineering

Game Development & Design

Design UX/UI

Exploring Tech Fields

Software Development

Cybersecurity

Data Analytics

Categories of Units

Live
Interdistrict Units

Experiential
Units

On-Demand
Units

- Intro to SparkNC
- Real Talk: AI and Mental Health
- Harvesting the Power of Tech in Agriculture.
- Hooked on Design: The Case of the Cyber Cafe
- Intro to Artificial Intelligence
- Digital Makerspace Exploration
- District C Teamship in AI
- Cracking the Code: Cryptography
- Betabox | Robotic Arm: Adventures in Human Computer Interaction
- SparkNC Capstone

modular, stackable units

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Categories of Units

Live
Interdistrict Units

Who Wants to Be A Millionaire

Experiential
Units

Teamship Prep

On-Demand
Units

Intro to Cybersecurity

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DEMO Day

Please Join Us For

spark NC

DEMO Day

2024

Showcasing Student Innovation

JOIN US AS WE HIGHLIGHT THE INNOVATIVE LEARNING AND WORK PRODUCTS OF STUDENTS IN SPARKNC

Edgecombe
SouthWest High SparkLab
5912 N. C. 43 North, Pinetops, NC
THURSDAY, MAR 14TH
1PM-2PM

Mt. Airy City
Mt. Airy High SparkLab
1011 N. South Street, Mount Airy, NC
TUESDAY, MAR 19TH
4:30PM-5:30PM

Lexington City
Lexington Senior High SparkLab
26 Penry St, Lexington, NC
THURSDAY, MAR 21ST
5PM-6PM

Rowan-Salisbury
South Rowan SparkLab
1655 Patterson Street, China Grove, NC
WEDNESDAY, MAR 27TH
9:15AM-10:15AM

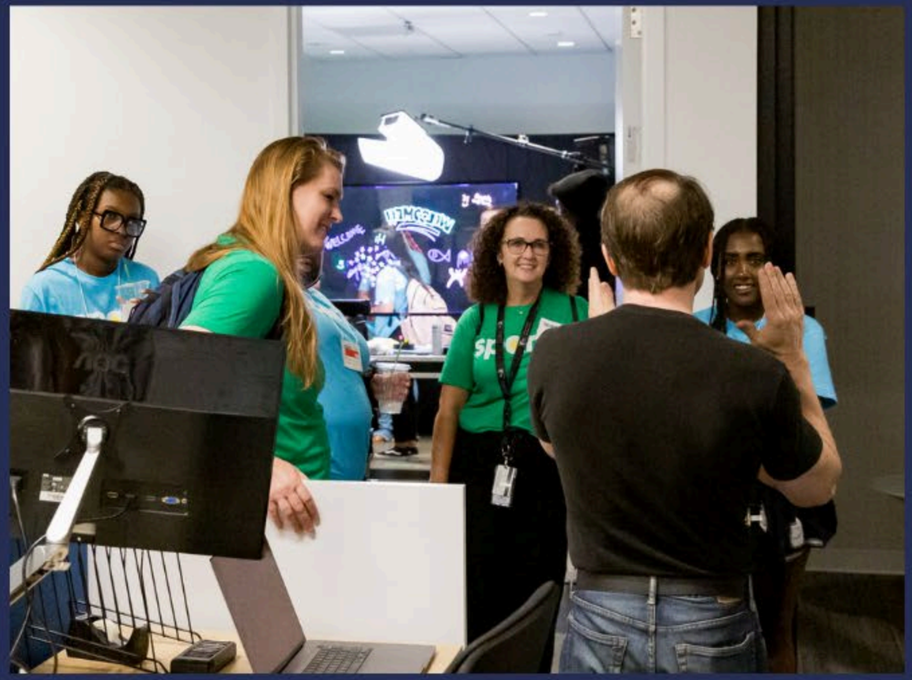
www.sparknc.org

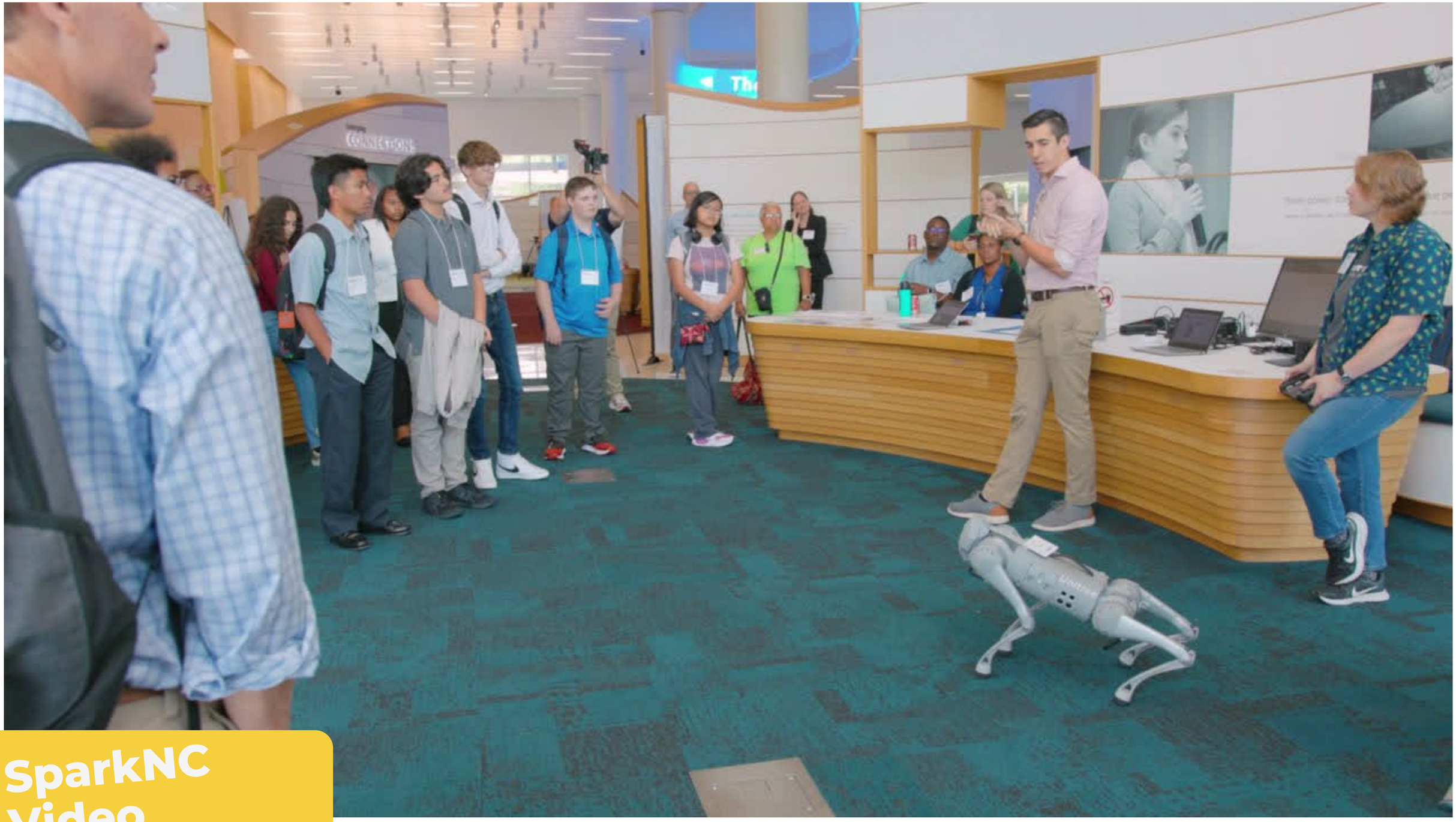
@wearesparknc

Capstone

Embedded with reflections on durable skills

Experiences





SparkNC Video

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ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

Shawn Stover

Superintendent

Student Voices

MOUNT AIRY CITY SCHOOLS
LEAD • INNOVATE • SERVE

Brittany Branch
Spark Lab Leader
Mount Airy City Schools

KAYLA- 9th Grade
NEW HANOVER COUNTY SCHOOLS

"Spark is a great support system for creativity and independence."

Business Advisory Council

Allen Mask
Managing Partner
CoLab

Jennifer Bell
Director of Educational Partnerships
SAS

Dexter Robinson
Leader, Early-in-Career Talent
Cisco

Adam Garry
Artificial Intelligence Consultant
ALP

Sujatha (Suj) Perepa
Distinguished Engineer
IBM

Jena Collins
Manager, Strategic Initiatives

Kate Groat
Director of Corporate Philanthropy
LiveOak Bank

Steve Isaacs
Education Program Manager
Epic Games

Spark Teamship

DISTRICT C

spark NC

"I have had an amazing experience with SparkNC! I have learned and grown so much in my leadership skills and can't wait to continue my journey with them and the people I've met along the way!"

- Spark Teamship Student
Cumberland County Schools

Callie Edwards

Director of Program Evaluation and Education Research

NC STATE

Friday Institute
for Educational Innovation

SparkNC Evaluation

Evaluation Design

Preliminary Findings

Current Data Efforts

Future Reports

Data Sources

SparkNC	Reports, program documentation, learning materials, attendance records & completion records
Partners	Program documentation, attendance records & artifacts from activities/events
NC Administrative	Student records & staff records
PSU	Records, documentation, funding, artifacts & student surveys and assessments
Evaluator supplemental	Interviews, focus groups, surveys & observations

Evaluation Design

Implementation

1. Progress of SparkNC programs and partnerships
2. Factors that support vs impede successful implementation
3. Potential modifications to ensure program impact

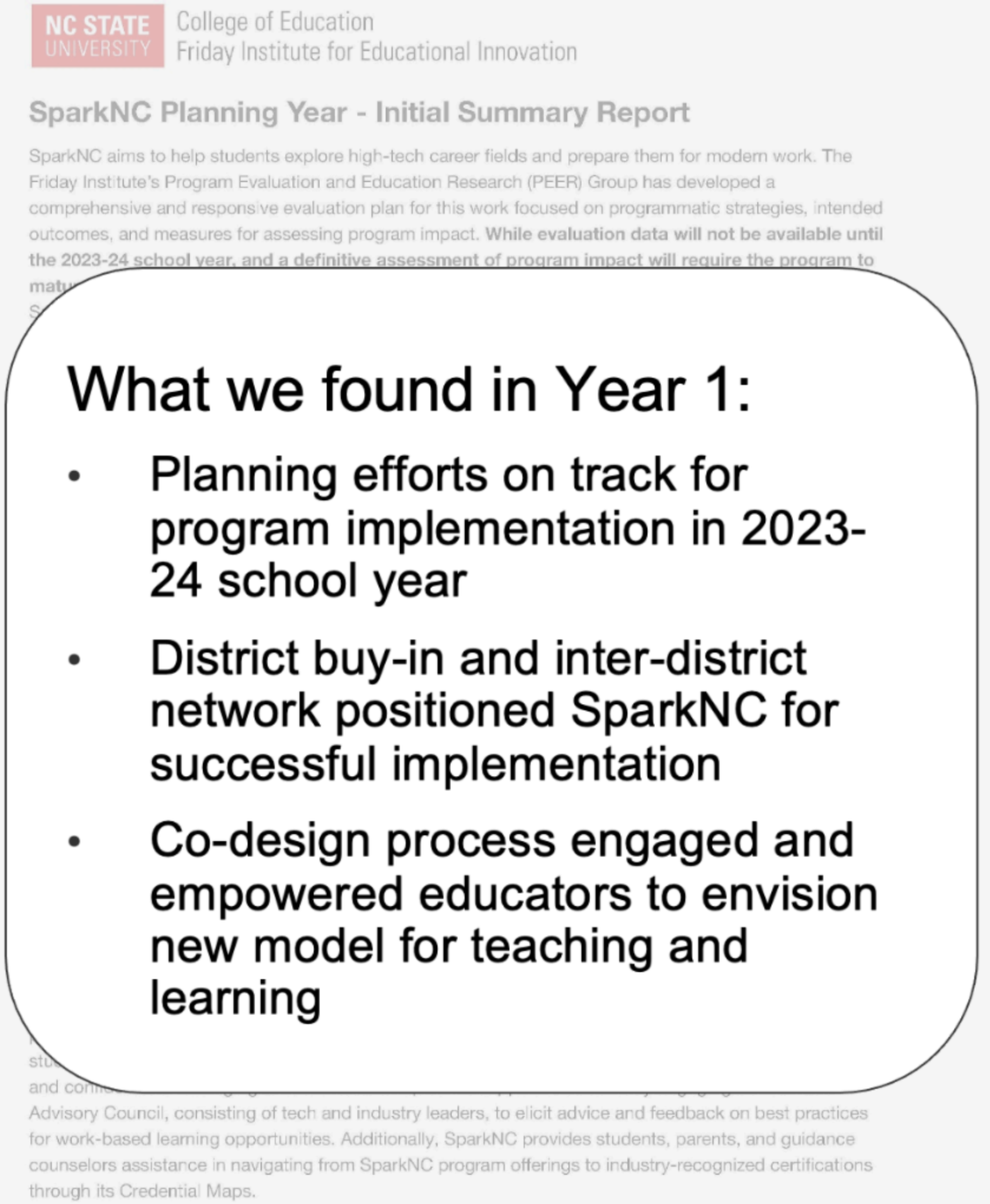
Impact

1. Engagement of **district leaders** with student pathways for high-tech careers
2. Capacity growth of **educators** to support preparation for high-tech careers
3. Improved **student** agency over learning and entry in high-tech careers

Preliminary Findings

"... it may indeed prove to be an educational model for the next generation of schools.

- Dr. Stan Winborne, Superintendent Granville County Schools


NC STATE UNIVERSITY College of Education
Friday Institute for Educational Innovation

SparkNC Planning Year - Initial Summary Report

SparkNC aims to help students explore high-tech career fields and prepare them for modern work. The Friday Institute's Program Evaluation and Education Research (PEER) Group has developed a comprehensive and responsive evaluation plan for this work focused on programmatic strategies, intended outcomes, and measures for assessing program impact. **While evaluation data will not be available until the 2023-24 school year, and a definitive assessment of program impact will require the program to matu**

Advisory Council, consisting of tech and industry leaders, to elicit advice and feedback on best practices for work-based learning opportunities. Additionally, SparkNC provides students, parents, and guidance counselors assistance in navigating from SparkNC program offerings to industry-recognized certifications through its Credential Maps.

What we found in Year 1:

- Planning efforts on track for program implementation in 2023-24 school year
- District buy-in and inter-district network positioned SparkNC for successful implementation
- Co-design process engaged and empowered educators to envision new model for teaching and learning

Current Data Efforts

School district data management

- Data sharing website (Jan 2024)
- District communications to initiate data requests (Jan – Feb 2024)

Survey data

- District Leads (Nov 2023- Jan 2024)
- SparkLab Leaders (Feb 2024)

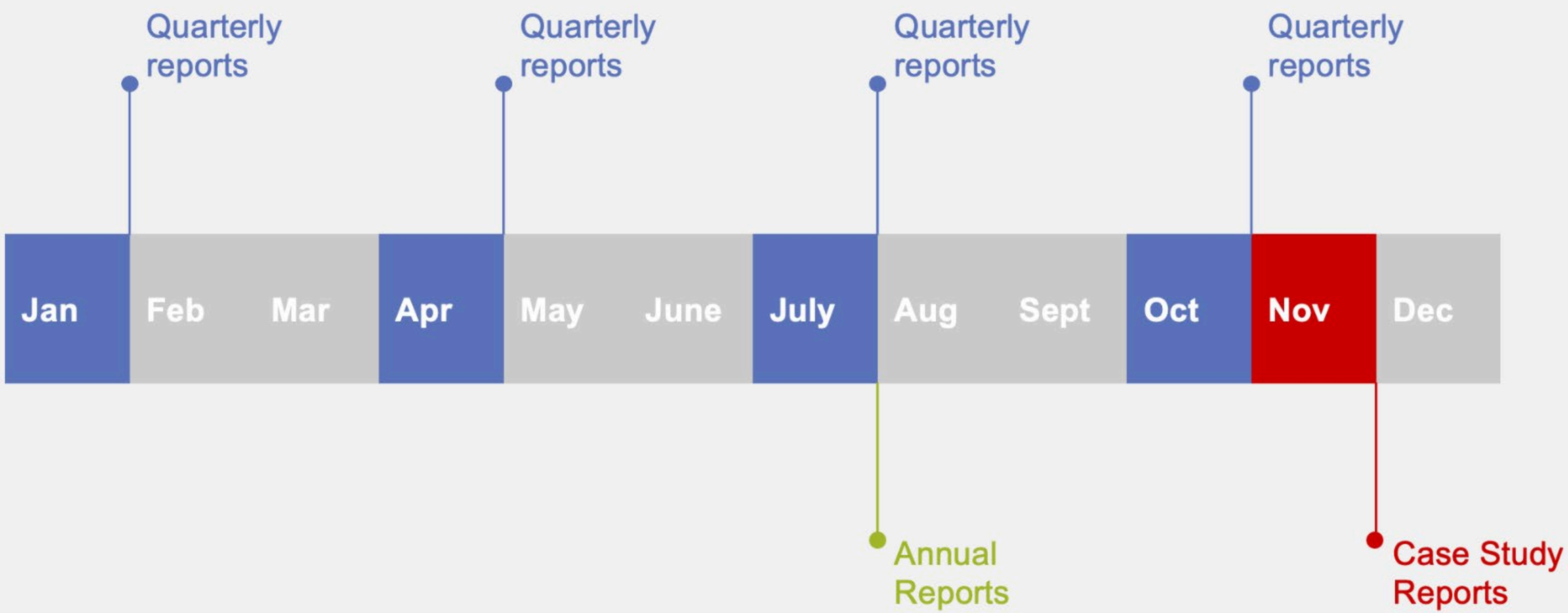
SparkLab site visits

- Rowan/Salisbury & Mt Airy interviews and observations (Feb – Mar 2024)
- Additional labs currently being planned (Mar – May 2024)

Ethnography data collection

- SparkNC Senior Director interview (Feb 2024)
- Additional interviews being planned with SparkNC staff (Mar – May 2024)

Future Reporting



2024
EDUCATION
INNOVATION
SHOWCASE
Announcing the
TOP 10 FINALISTS
for the Education
Innovation Showcase
Powered by
ASU +GSV SUMMIT
Digital Promise
LEAPinnovations
Transcend
EDUCATING ALL LEARNERS

2024
EDUCATION
INNOVATION
SHOWCASE
TAPESTRY
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
rootedschool
spark
NC
UXBRIDGE
Public Schools
IVSA
Illinois Virtual
Schools & Academy
ARCADIA
Unified School District
INNOVATE
ACADEMY & PREPARATORY SCHOOL
MAKING WAVES
Education Foundation
LAUNCH
A NYC Outward Bound School
TalenTogether

NC STATE

College of Education
Friday Institute
for Educational Innovation

fi.ncsu.edu

“I wish we had this when I was in school."

spark NC

Our Sustainability and Growth Plan

Our Goal

To **SCALE** our efforts so that **every** student in NC has access to SparkNC.

To meet the request for communities who are **asking** to bring SparkNC to their students.

.

State Funding

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supports SparkNC's **core operations** and **start-up costs** for launch

State Policy Flexibility

for these promising practices

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Local Funding

sustains key aspects of the SparkNC initiative over time

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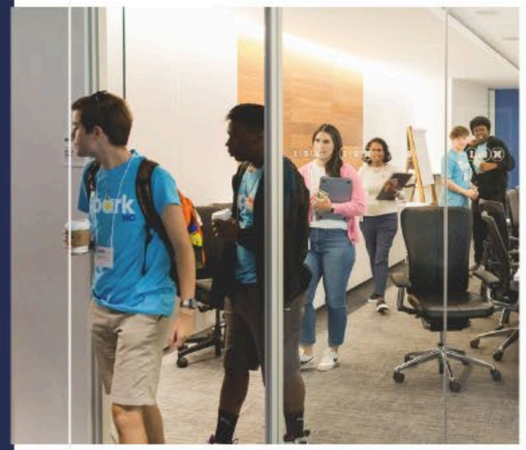
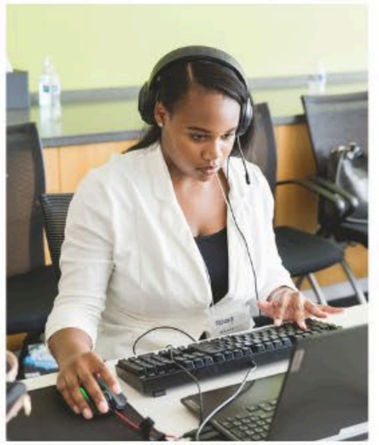
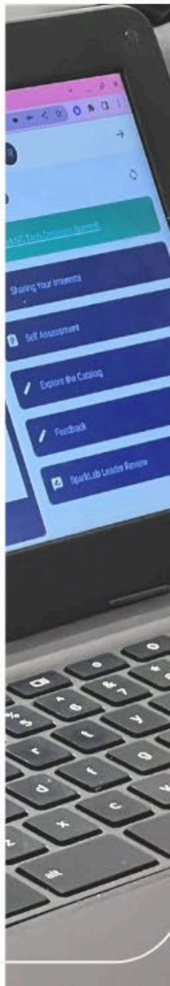






Partner Funding

from philanthropy and corporations supports new designs and experiences for students

spark NC

Potential Funding

spark NC

THE LEON LEVINE FOUNDATION

dogwood health trust

Golden LEAF FOUNDATION
Increasing Economic Opportunity in North Carolina Since 1999

DIGITAL CHAMPION GRANT
NCDIT

American Student Assistance®

THE YASS PRIZE

Learning Landscapes CHALLENGE

NSF U.S. National Science Foundation

Our Commitment

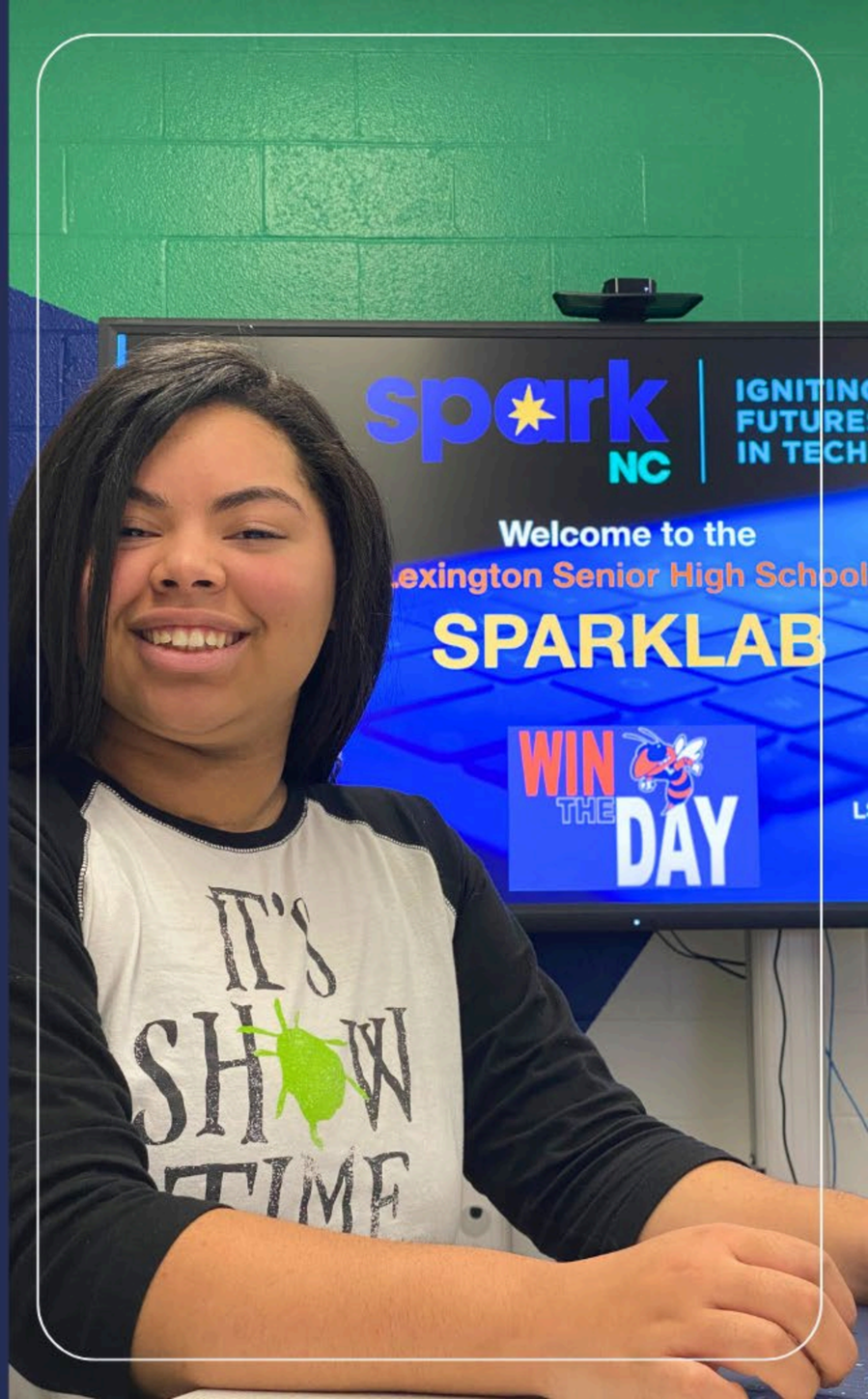
to NC employers

We will provide
a homegrown talent pipeline
with students
who have the skills to thrive in
technology-infused careers.

Our Commitment

to NC students

We will provide engaging learning opportunites that are **industry-relevant,** connected to **high-tech professional networks,** and edifies **durable skills.**



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IGNITING FUTURES IN TECH

questions?