GK	Hi Christina,
CLH	Hi Gina.
GK	In this final module of the TALE academy we are focusing on school leadership so this one is for anyone in a leadership position in schools or even teachers too, if you are sales inclined.
CLH	That's great, for sure administratively there's a lot to cover when we talk about supporting teaching across learning environments.
GK	We're going to use this first session to, as always, talk about that shift in mindset that gets us teaching across learning environments. We focused a lot on how the pandemic affected teachers and students but of course those effects were felt in school leadership positions as well.
CLH	Right , I mean being a school leader during the pandemic I think looked more like being the head of a fire station, or a community health center, food pantry, mental health provider and an ED tech start-up all at the same time. Don't forget that they also had to continue to provide instructional leadership, support staff and maintain family engagement. So school and district leaders had to form emergency response teams and transform education overnight.
GK	That's incredible and a tough ask for sure. Christina it didn't surprise me and I'm sure it didn't surprise you that one year into the pandemic principals were reporting extremely high levels of job related stress.
CLH	Yup.
GK	A report was issued by the RAM corporation that analyzed nationally representative data from the 2021 Learn Together surveys of secondary school principals and these found that 4 out of 5, so 80% experienced frequent job-related stress during the 2020-2021 school year. Did you like the math? I just did that.
CLH	I was just thinking that was impressive. Yea, that same report showed that secondary school principals of color, female principals, principals serving high poverty schools and principals serving schools with high enrollments of students of color were especially likely to experience constant job related stress. It also showed that secondary school principals whose schools provided fully remote instruction were more likely to experience constant job related stress than principals whose schools provided hybrid or in-person instruction.

	That basically tells us that **sources of job related stress vary by mode of instruction.**
GK	Yea. The top three stressors, the things that really kept our school leaders up at night, were reported as these things: The first, 1. Supporting teachers mental health and well-being Number two, and not surprisingly, 2. Supporting students social emotional learning Number three, 3. Changes in their schools instruction learning models Just the shift from remote to in-person. So we've got a great graph in the show notes that really breaks that down.
CLH	Yeah so I think we should really kick off this module with establishing some common language for distinguishing between the extraordinary work of leadership during the pandemic to what leadership is gonna look like as we integrate lessons learned into the future design of education.
GK	Just like we use the term emergency remote teaching for school leaders, we're going to use the term **emergency school management**. We want to use the term management to emphasize how much of the labor during emergency remote teaching was related to addressing and resolving short term issues. There was no time for strategic or collaborative planning and implementation of changes. It was purely management.
CLH	Right ? I mean, leaders were basically crisis managers. Right, I mean researchers in crisis management identify three elements that are common to most crises : **Threats to organization, the element of surprise and short decision making time.** So it sounds like the pandemic shutdowns really ticked all those boxes in a big way.
GK	Yes and coming out of emergency school management, we're recognizing what researchers describe as the fourth element of crisis management. So what makes a crisis distinct, is that if long term change is not required following the **crisis**, then the event is better described as an incident.
CLH	That's interesting.
GK	What's also interesting is this fourth aspect of crisis management, long term change that we focus on in this module.

	What happened during the crisis of emergency remote teaching transformed teaching and learning forever. So it qualifies as a crisis, what leaders do next will define the future of education.
CLH	Okay, so I'm going to shift gears like, sort of, and ask if you've ever heard of this term, get ready for it. Vuca.
GK	Vuca? Is it from science fiction?
CLH	No it does sound like that though right?
GK	Then I don't know.
CLH	So while we definitely don't need any more acronyms in our alphabet soup of educational vocabulary, **VUCA**, so V-U-C-A is a useful frame for thinking through this new normal of education. It stands for V, volatility, which is the speed of change in an industry market or the world in general. So the faster things change, the higher the volatility. U, is the uncertainty so the extent to which we can confidently predict the future, C, is complexity, the number of factors that we need to take into account, their variety and the relationships between them. And then its A, ambiguity, which is the lack of clarity about how to understand or interpret something. So that's **volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity.** The reason why we're talking about this, well let me give you a little bit of background. The acronym was coined in 1987 by academics, and then it was adopted by the military to describe the multilateral world following the Cold War. So it gained a lot of momentum in the early aughts, so the early 2000s, as the global economy became pervasive across sectors and in the past several years, VUCA has been adopted in the business community to describe the conditions for decision making and leadership.
GK	Okay, so well and good. So how does this term help us understand educational leadership in this post covid world?
CLH	Right, well in the world of education, VUCA hasn't been a particularly important concept until now. The pandemic brought home to all of us how deeply interconnected our individual communities are across the world, as well as how this interconnectedness can lead to volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. And also, as we discovered, VUCA can manifest in insecurity, trauma and a lack of equity.

GK	It looks like we're really going to dive into this in the next session.
CLH	Yes.
GK	We'll explore VUCA and how educational leaders can address it at the school level. For now, it's valuable to consider how the VUCA world requires new approaches to leadership. The Change Leadership, an organization that helps businesses become nimble in a VUCA world, suggests that while the traditional definition of change leadership is this : Here's the traditional definition of **change leadership**: The ability to influence and enthuse others through personal advocacy, vision and drive and to access resources to build a solid platform for change. So that would be like when everything's going great. The definition for change leadership in a VUCA world, is the ability to influence and inspire action in others and respond with vision and agility during periods of growth, disruption or uncertainty to bring about the needed change. I'm going to need a whole session on this to really integrate. That's a lot.
CLH	Yea so that distinction between those two definitions, the traditional definition of change leadership versus the definition of change leadership in a world that is, lets see, what is it, volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. That's a great distinction to make. In the book, Leaders Make the Future - Ten New Leadership Skills for an Uncertain World, the author uses the VUCA acronym to parallel four skills that are the hallmark of effective leadership in the contemporary world. So key shifts here include, turning volatility into vision, where leaders establish a compass for teams to navigate volatility.
GK	Hold up, this is gonna be cool. Right, because challenging VUCA, volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, it's going to become good VUCA?
CLH	Yea, bad VUCA becomes good VUCA.
GK	So you just said volatility becomes vision. I can't wait! What does uncertainty become?
CLH	Uncertainty Gina, turns into understanding, it's like Sesame Street. The U of uncertainty turns into the U of understanding, so where leaders understand interconnections and make them transparent.
GK	Nice.
CLH	The C, complexity, turns into community, where leaders build trust within their team. And then A, ambiguity, turns into agility, where leaders foster resilience and flexibility.

GK	Oh I like good VUCA, this is great. School leaders, that was a lot. Let's wrap it up by drawing some **key distinctions** between emergency remote teaching and what teachers are doing in the TALE academy. So whereas emergency remote teaching was exclusively remote, TALE includes multiple learning environments and formats. Whereas emergency remote teaching required rapid adaptation of in person instruction to remote formats, TALE is based on intentional learning designs that builds upon the opportunities that different learning environments and formats can provide. And whereas during emergency remote teaching, teachers responded to an emergency, in TALE, teachers are empowered to plan and design learning experiences with intention, choice and voice. So TALE invites educators to think beyond online education and our concepts of what online education is, to a broader perspective on teaching and learning, that encompasses teaching across multiple environments: in person, remote and hybrid. In the prior six modules, we focused on the shifts that teachers can make in their classrooms to achieve the vision of TALE. In this module, we will look at the same shifts from the school leaders' perspective. How can you, as a school leader, guide, support and advance, TALE. The sessions you're about to start will reference learning from the prior modules, so we suggest that you complete at least module 1, prior to engaging in the rest of this module.
CLH	Yup, good point. In the next sessions we're going to be looking at resilient design for learning, leading to support excellent teaching for everyone and then leading to support excellent teaching everywhere. Leading for student engagement, leading for family engagement, leading for schoolwide SEL Technology, all across learning environments, of course.
GK	That sounds great. Before we sign off, I just want to leave listeners with a question to keep in mind. What shifts in mindset and practices do I need to make in order to lead change? I think that will really set us up for what we're going to learn in this module. Thanks for listening everybody.
CLH	See you in the next session everyone!