CLH	Hello Gina and hello listeners! Welcome to Session 6 in Module 7 of the TALE Academy, Leading for Family Engagement. In a conversation during emergency remote teaching, teachers in the Yonkers School District discussed the challenges, opportunities, and surprises that they experienced with their students and families. First-grade teacher Kiyoi Tolliver-VanWright shared an inspiring story– I'm sending it over to you, Gina.
GK	Thanks! She says: I have 6-year-olds. So coming into the pandemic classroom, I said to myself, "Wait a minute! These babies have to know how to unmute themselves. They have to know, "If I have an assignment, how do I send it to Ms. VanWright?" So a lot of these things weren't just a learning experience for me and the kids, but their parents as well. I have grandparents who are jumping in to help out! I have a grandmother who never used an iPad in her life who said, "Mrs. VanWright, how do I send you the work?" And I had to walk her through it, but now my 6-year-olds are unmuting themselves, they're sending me pictures, they're telling me, "Ms. VanWright, you're on mute!"
CLH	Awww. Ms. VanWright's experience is one of millions of moments during emergency remote teaching when teachers and families connected to make learning possible for our students. This session is focused on helping school leaders build on those experiences.
GK	Just as with student engagement, traditional ways of understanding and measuring family engagement eclipse the realities and complexities of family's lives. They can even exacerbate social and cultural gaps between home and school. Such social and cultural gaps turned into an abyss during emergency remote teaching and made apparent to everyone the specific challenges that both families and teachers face when they work to bridge this gap.
CLH	On the brighter side, ERT brought teachers into the living rooms of our students, giving families and caregivers greater knowledge of the language, expectations, curriculum, and activities of teaching. Teachers developed more awareness of the cultural assets, language, and social dynamics of their families as they taught students in their homes. In the process, both families and teachers learned a lot about each other, but we still have a long way to go if we want to be true partners in education with families.
GK	In Module 1, Session 2, we described the "4 Constants" that promote resilience for our students across all learning environments: predictability, flexibility, connection, and empowerment. These four constants strengthen and support the capacity of students to respond to change or uncertainty. In Session 8 of Module 1, we looked at

	the same four constants from the perspective of teacher-family relationships and introduced teachers to a general framework that they can use to consider what families need in order to partner with teachers across learning environments. Let's review these four constants.
CLH	First, teachers can prioritize predictability by: ● Creating consistent routines for engaging with families. ● Including pathways for more informal connections with families. ● Using translation apps depending on each family's preferences.
GK	Second, teachers can prioritize flexibility by: ● Actively amplifying family voices. ● Diversifying the ways in which families can engage and contribute. ● Focusing first on building relationships before focusing on academics.
CLH	Third, teachers can prioritize connection by: ● Making an explicit commitment to students' social, emotional, and physical well-being. ● Replicating that commitment when it comes to families' well-being.
GK	Fourth, teachers can prioritize empowerment by: ● Prioritizing trust and mutual respect when developing partnerships with families. ● Co-creating a Parent's Bill of Rights and clarifying norms for a healthy and engaged social dialogue.
CLH	In Module 5, we dug deep into family engagement and TALE. Here are some of the topics covered in Module 5 that you can return to and explore in more detail: ● Re-thinking family engagement by building trust, transparency, and capacity for partnering with families ● Using TALE to bridge the digital divide that often separates school and home ● Generating timely and efficient two-way communication with families to elevate family voice

	- Building and using funds of knowledge – the knowledge and skills that students acquire in their families and communities and which can thus support academic learning - Developing cultural competence and cultural humility related to students' families and communities - Practicing cultural reciprocity, or the exchange of knowledge, values, and perspectives between teachers, families, and students Before we focus on family engagement, it is helpful to think through your school's priorities for community relationships – both internal and external. One place to start is to consider whether your school practices outreach or engagement or something in between.
GK	So how would you describe the difference between outreach and engagement?
CLH	Outreach is usually a one-way street where schools send out communications to families, school leaders issue memos to staff, and teachers issue directions and the occasional newsletter to students and families. Engagement is a two-way street where school leaders, teachers, students, and families engage in conversations, take part in shared governance/decision-making, and strive for interaction rather than action-reaction.
GK	Got it! While you will have an opportunity to assess the level of your school's community engagement in Activity 2 of this session, let's take a moment now to reflect on the key differences between outreach and engagement as outlined by the [Nexus Community Engagement Institute](#). Just sit back and listen, perhaps with your eyes closed. This is a soul-searching moment. Consider where your school falls to reflect on how your organizational policies and structures support engagement.
CLH	You may be doing *outreach* if the organizational culture is primarily focused on obtaining specific outcomes…vs., the engagement approach, in which the organizational culture is focused on learning and it values emergent and long-term outcomes.
GK	Another indicator of outreach vs. engagement is staff may not represent the community…vs. staff that reflects the community.
CLH	You may be doing *outreach* if the school adheres to ways of operating that reflect the dominant culture, such as using Robert's Rules for meetings. In community *engagement*, your organization creates space for different cultural ways, such as offering cultural foods and social spaces/times, giving elders a special role, etc.

GK	An indicator of outreach is if racism and power may not be discussed or may be dealt with superficially. In community *engagement*, the organizational culture supports discussion to understand and dismantle structural racism to help heal historical trauma and claim individual and community power.
CLH	Finally, consider if your organization adheres to organization-driven policies and structures…or if the organization demonstrates a willingness to revisit organizational policies and structures to respond to community needs and ideas, which would demonstrate an *engagement* approach.
GK	School leaders are the linchpins in successful family engagement, as it is school policy, practices, professional development, programming, and support that truly shape the possibilities for successful family-school partnerships. The [Dual Capacity-Building Framework](#) provides the clearest and most compelling road map for school leaders to fulfill their role in engaging families and measuring the quality of the school's efforts. The framework helps schools build capacity among educators and families to partner around student success. The framework includes four components:
CLH	Doesn't everything?
GK	Nah, usually things have three elements. Four is a nice change.
CLH	1. The Challenge, which is a description of the capacity challenges that must be addressed to support the cultivation of effective home–school partnerships. 2. Opportunity Conditions, which are an articulation of the conditions integral to the success of family-school partnership initiatives and interventions. 3. Policy and Program Goals, which identify the desired intermediate capacity goals that should be the focus of family engagement policies and programs. 4. And, capacity outcomes, which are descriptions of the capacity-building outcomes for school staff, as well as for families, that will result from the initiatives and interventions.
GK	Now let's take a look at our adaptation of the full dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships, where we highlight the key points on intervention for school leaders in the framework. The challenge is ineffective family–school partnerships, including a: ● Lack of opportunities for School/Program Staff to build the capacity for partnerships and

	● A lack of opportunities for Families to build the capacity for partnerships
CLH	There are two categories of opportunity conditions. Process Conditions are: ● Linked to learning ● Relational ● Development vs. service orientation ● Collaborative and ● Interactive Organizational Conditions are: ● Systemic, meaning across the organization ● Integrated, meaning embedded in all programs and ● Sustained with resources and infrastructure. This is one of two areas of intervention for you, the school leader, where you can make the most impact.
GK	Next are the policy and program goals to build and enhance the capacity of staff/families in the "4 C" areas: ● Capabilities, which refers to skills and knowledge, ● Connections, which refers to networks, ● Cognition, which refers to beliefs and values, and ● Confidence, which refers to self-efficacy These policy and program goals are the second area of intervention for school leaders.
CLH	Finally, the family and staff capacity outcomes, which are effective family–school partnerships that support student achievement and school improvement. This includes School and program staff who can: ● Honor and recognize families' funds of knowledge ● Connect family engagement to student learning and

	● Create welcoming, inviting cultures
GK	And families who can negotiate multiple roles, including ● Supporters ● Encouragers ● Monitors ● Advocates ● Decision Makers and ● Collaborators
CLH	If family engagement was "nice" before the pandemic, it is now clearly "necessary." In fact, researchers at Columbia University's Center for Public Research and Leadership are proposing that we expand what we consider the instructional core for teaching and learning to include families. Why is this important for school leaders? Richard Elmore of the Harvard Graduate School of Education has a way of explaining it that I'm sending over to you:
GK	Okay, he says: "What the instructional core does is it helps us identify where we are trying to improve. If you change one [element], you have to change them all." He uses the example of increasing the skill and knowledge of the teacher but maintaining a low-level curriculum. The result: "You've got tensions between what teachers can do and what the content is capable of doing."
CLH	Columbia University researchers conducted 300 interviews with students, families, and educators from nine school districts and charter school organizations about their experiences during emergency remote teaching. In July 2021, they released their findings and made four specific recommendations:
GK	1. Expand the required dimensions of high-quality instructional materials to be educative for families, tech-enabled, and culturally responsive. 2. Leverage high-quality instructional materials to coordinate academic co-production among the four anchors of the expanded core (instructional materials, teachers, students, and families). 3. Sustain curriculum-based professional learning focused on the expanded core, with an explicit focus on implementing high-quality instructional materials in ways that respond to student, family, and community needs.

	4. Create systems and structures for families, teachers, and students to design, monitor, and improve upon learning experiences.
CLH	One of the key "linkages" between the four anchors of the expanded instructional core for TALE is technology. While we will explore technology leadership for TALE in greater detail in Session 8, let's look at some of the key considerations for using family engagement technology in ways that support the goals outlined in the Dual Capacity-Building Framework and address the need to integrate families into the instructional core. Start Early identifies 10 critical elements and questions school leaders should consider when selecting family engagement tools.
GK	The first element is research-based.
CLH	The second element is evaluation strategy.The second element is evaluation strategy.
GK	The third element is co-designed.
CLH	The fourth element is accessible.
GK	The fifth element is data in the hands of the user.
CLH	The sixth element is builds community.
GK	The seventh element is accommodates Two-Way and Peer-to-Peer Communication.
CLH	The eighth element incorporates rapid feedback cycles.
GK	The ninth element builds user self-efficacy.
CLH	And the tenth element is embedded in existing systems.
GK	Now it's your turn! In one of the activities for this session, you will self-assess your school's efforts and see where your collective approach to partnering with families falls. Is your school doing family and community outreach or engagement? The goal of the TALE Academy is to help teachers rethink education so that everyone–students, families, educators, school leaders, and communities–all have the opportunity to succeed. You've just added another tool to your toolbox when you foster family engagement across learning environments. Thanks for listening!