

**M5-S7: Family learning partnerships across learning environments**

<p>CLH</p>	<p>Hello, Gina and hello, listeners! Welcome to Session 7 in Module 5 of your TALE learning experience, Family learning partnerships across learning environments.</p> <p>Gina, let's see if you remember this from 2020:</p> <p>In the aftermath of the school closures and while reopening was still looking uncertain, the phenomenon of the learning pod, or microschool, took off in communities across the country. Families with the time, the financial means, or both formed small, in-person learning groups. Some parents worked collaboratively to teach the pod, while others hired teachers, tutors, or other specialists to oversee student learning.</p>
<p>GK</p>	<p>I do recall that learning pods were trending for awhile. And that the practice, while understandable, immediately raised a red flag about educational equity.</p> <p>There was a Facebook group called Pandemic Pods and Microschools, and in it a parent named Alexis Kushner de la Pena made this observation after noticing that most of the other parents in the group were white professionals. She posted, "We should all think about how pods might further the gap between our students. Families of underserved communities might not be engaging on Facebook, might not speak English, might not have means to pay, to drive, etc."</p>
<p>CLH</p>	<p>She wasn't wrong. The learning pod approach that arose during COVID-19 meant that some parents could take control of their children's safety, social lives, and academic progress. It also exposed the structural inequities preventing many families from ensuring the same ideal for their children. Let's take a look at how we can support every child's "learning pod" through a different route, family partnerships.</p>
<p>GK</p>	<p>Let's start with the research. How do we recruit and support parents as our co-teachers?</p> <p>Learning Forward conducted a long-range study on the use and impact of digital tools in two low-resource school districts. As a result of the study, which is linked in the transcript, Learning Forward came up with what they are calling leverage points – the best places to apply a solution – for increasing equity and supporting parents as co-teachers across learning environments.</p> <p>These four leverage points come with a set of indicators that can help us track where we are on the path to family learning partnerships–what it would look like.</p>
<p>CLH</p>	<p>Leverage Point 1 is to structure policies, contracts, and budgets to provide transparency about resource allocations, and engage parents in decision-making. You accomplish this leverage point by ensuring the following:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The school budget reflects equity, that is to say meeting people where they are and getting them what they need, versus equality, which means everyone gets the same. This includes digital devices, internet access, instructional materials, and teachers' time.</li> <li>● Educators advocate for all students and families' basic needs to be met so they have the necessary foundations for learning.</li> <li>● The school community has discussed what it would take to collaborate with parents as teaching partners.</li> <li>● The school community has discussed the role of parents in deciding which digital platforms to use and contract with.</li> </ul>
GK	<p>Leverage Point 2 is to offer targeted and continuous learning opportunities to build the capacity of educators and families to work together in implementing digital learning effectively. You accomplish this leverage point by ensuring the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Specific supports for classroom teachers are in place to enable engagement with all families about digital learning. For example, instruction is provided on how to connect multilingual families with translation and interpretation services.</li> <li>● Families have access to training and support about using the digital tools and understanding instructional approaches common with virtual learning.</li> </ul>
CLH	<p>Leverage Point 3 is to prioritize student-centered and responsive instruction designed to facilitate authentic student work. You accomplish this leverage point by ensuring the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parents and students are seen as experts in their own cultural contexts and partners in designing curriculum and instruction that reflects and sustains those cultural contexts.</li> </ul>
GK	<p>Leverage Point 4 is to build capacity for research and evaluation. You accomplish this leverage point by ensuring the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parents and students review digital platforms. All families have access to and information about the platforms.</li> <li>● Parents and students have a role in collecting feedback from other parents about digital platforms - for example, by using a participatory evaluation approach.</li> </ul>
CLH	<p>That all seems really clear, now that we have lived through a shift to emergency remote and hybrid teaching. For the vast majority of students who remained in school, the shift to remote or hybrid learning required that families – parents,</p>

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	<p>grandparents, siblings, caregivers – take on an important new role in teaching. Through using these digital tools, families were exposed to the language, tools, goals, and methods of instruction—like, our jobs! And at the same time, we had more exposure to the home lives and family dynamics of our students.</p>
GK	<p>As we explored in Session 3, schools and families encountered the reality of the digital divide together. Though challenging at the time, this experience granted schools and families an opportunity that is ripe for expansion. Unlike the family-by-family strategies that were developed during the shift to emergency remote teaching, we can take this moment to consider systemic actions to prevent the widening of the opportunity gap between students with more access and those with less access to resources. In this session, we will build our capacity as individual teachers to equitably support families as co-teachers.</p>
CLH	<p>At this point in the TALE Academy, we know that the best practices are those that travel well — digital tools that expand the potential of our in-person teaching as well as support online learning. The workbook resource from eTeachNY, called <a href="#">Families as Partners</a>, details three focus areas that can build our capacity for engaging effectively with teaching partners at home— we linked it for you in the transcript. These focus areas – relationships, routines, and resources – are familiar teacher moves for working with our students; here they are actually expanded to include the family as learning partners.</p>
GK	<p>Don't tell me, let me guess: we're going to call these focus areas "The 3 Rs".</p>
CLH	<p>You are correct. The <b>relationships</b> focus area refers to the positive connections that foster interaction and establish a nurturing environment of trust and support. We explored the importance of developing trust and support with families in Session 2 and effective communication in Session 4.</p> <p>The <b>routines</b> focus area refers to rehearsed and predictable practices that provide structure to support efficient and effective learning.</p> <p>The <b>resources</b> focus area refers to the materials, tools, and supplies that support active learning and skill development across learning environments. This category includes educating families on workspaces, instructional materials, and technology tools.</p>
GK	<p>Okay, Relationships, Routines and Resources. Let's break that down.</p> <p>The 3 R's framework builds upon RELATIONSHIPS by including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seeking feedback from families about preferred methods of communication and ease of accessing needed information</li> <li>● Clarifying roles and responsibilities by sharing learning goals and defining consistent expectations for both home and school learning</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing well-being structures for students by building awareness of student well-being, establishing a healthy balance between work and relaxation as a priority, and by connecting families with resources to support their children.</li> </ul>
CLH	<p>ROUTINES that support in-person, remote, and hybrid learning may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing weekly learning routines and goal-setting (for homework, flipped classrooms, or virtual learning)</li> <li>Leveraging age-appropriate digital tools for organizational development, such as note-taking templates</li> <li>Developing consistent support routines, such as family office hours, to provide assistance or to answer questions about learning tasks</li> </ul>
GK	<p>Best practices for implementing RESOURCES may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing shared expectations for dedicated personal workspaces</li> <li>Providing explicit instruction regarding instructional materials and standardizing technology tools to minimize the learning curve for families</li> <li>Having support structures for troubleshooting technology issues and providing alternative means to access learning materials</li> </ul>
CLH	<p>Here are some digital resources to share with family learning partners that may support a co-teaching approach:</p> <p><a href="#">Khan Academy</a> offers educational videos for math, science, reading, social studies, and even SAT prep. Videos are available for pre-K to college level.</p> <p><a href="#">PBS for Parents</a> provides resources to help promote learning for children ages 2-8.</p> <p><a href="#">Education.com</a> shares activities and worksheets for pre-K to 5th grade.</p> <p><a href="#">BrainPop</a> provides short animated videos to help further explain complex topics in science, math, English, social studies, art, music, health, and technology ( that's for grades 3 on up).</p>
GK	<p>I'll bet a lot of listeners found those resources during school closure. You'll find them in the session transcript.</p> <p>The good news is family engagement increased during the shift to emergency remote teaching. Find out more about families as co-teachers, school-family partnerships, and building on the increase in family engagement as you work through the rest of this session.</p>

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	<p>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 support family learning partnerships across learning environments.</p>
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Thanks for listening.