

2

*Resilient*

*Design*

for

**LEADING**

TALE Academy



MODULE 7 - SESSION 2



In this session, we will directly reference learning from Module 1, Sessions 1 and 2. We encourage you to review those sessions before you begin.

# RESILIENT DESIGN FOR LEADING

## *Resilience: A Silver Lining of Emergency Remote Teaching*



"I think if we come out of this experience and fall back on traditional ways of doing things, shame on us. We cannot unlearn what we are learning right now. If anything, the silver lining here is that... [it] is pretty exciting to think about what could be. I know our teachers and students, and families are living that alongside us. That is probably one of the highlights we have seen."

-Jeremy, a superintendent quoted in *Resilience, Reorientation, and Reinvention: School Leadership During the Early Months of the COVID-19 Pandemic*



"What has amazed me most about this experience is how everyone in the Genesee Valley community came together. I see students supporting each other – responding to questions, motivating each other. I see other teachers lifting each other up and learning from each other, and our support staff feeding and delivering items to students each and every day. The presence of our community members online, participating in conversations and sharing ideas, has been inspiring. If nothing else, this crisis has shown what can be done when a whole community works towards one goal. I hope that it continues long after things have returned to normal."

-Donna Slawson, social studies teacher, Genesee Valley Central School District, quoted in *"How one rural district became a case study in resilience"*

*In this session, we will explore how school leaders can adopt a resilient design for leading that can help teachers and students thrive across learning environments.*

Module 7 is designed for school leaders, including principals, assistant principals, instructional leaders, lead teachers, and others who support the development of effective learning environments. Each session in this module is an extension of the professional development provided in prior modules, all of which are designed for the general education classroom teacher. Therefore, we will begin the session with a review of prior learning from the teacher's perspective, then shift to the leader's perspective, and conclude by exploring how to connect those two perspectives for a holistic, schoolwide approach to resilient teaching across learning environments.

# THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE



In the last session, we asked you to consider making a mindset shift in leadership from “emergency school management” to “leading for teaching across learning environments.” Similarly, in Module 1, Session 1, we encouraged teachers to make a mindset shift from emergency remote teaching (ERT) to teaching across learning environments (TALE). Whereas ERT – also described as “pandemic pedagogy” – was responsive to crises, TALE is an intentional teaching approach in which teachers design instruction that is portable across learning environments (in-person, remote, hybrid), as well as integrative (drawing from best practices from different modalities, regardless of learning environment).

Teachers can implement TALE by adopting resilient design for learning (RDL), which Drs. Rebecca Quintana and James DeVaney (2020) define as “the ability to facilitate learning experiences that are designed to be adaptable to fluctuating conditions and disruptions.” The three components of RDL are described in the graphic below.

**Extensibility** focuses on first designing the most basic format of a learning experience to achieve the core learning objectives and then extending the lesson in various formats and with various tools to address additional learning objectives as well as the various learning styles and needs of students. Clum, Wicks, Ebersole, and Shea (2022) provide a useful analogy: **“Consider the metaphor of a vacuum designed to work with several different attachments. When using a vacuum with different attachment heads, the overall purpose of removing dust and dirt remains the same but using various attachments allows the vacuum to work differently and more effectively on varied surfaces.”**

Extensibility



Flexibility

**Flexibility** involves anticipating and responding to changes in a learning environment. This might include providing choice among learning activities. The analogy here? A suit with wiggle room: **“Consider the metaphor of a tailor constructing a suit. The tailor follows a pattern and makes cuts to construct a suit ahead of time but makes sure to include enough extra fabric and loose stitching in the initial construction to be able to adjust the suit to fit the individual needs of the person who will be wearing it in the future.”**



**Redundancy** involves creating backup plans. The final analogy is to a power failure: **“In this instance, a metaphor for redundancy might be the act of having a backup generator, a flashlight, and candles on hand in case the lights go out.”**

Redundancy





# THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE (CONT)

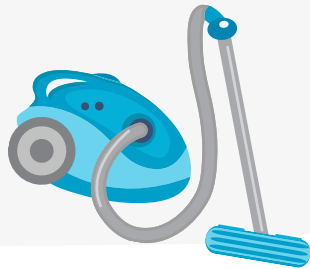
In [Module 1, Session 5](#), we mapped the three elements of RDL to specific teaching practices that teachers have long used in traditional classrooms but that can be “supercharged” to make TALE more effective.

## Resilient Design for Learning

## Research-Based Practices

### Extensibility

Start with the basic lesson and extend to address various learning styles and needs.



### Essential Questions

Identify the essence of a lesson with a single question that sparks student learning.



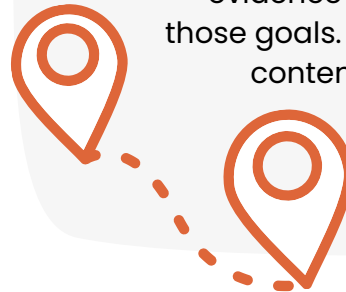
### Flexibility

Respond to changes in the learning environment and adapt to individual needs.



### Backward Design

Set learning goals and identify evidence that students have met those goals. Then tailor instructional content to help students meet those goals.



### Redundancy

Have substitutes, reserves, and alternatives in case things don't work out the way we planned.



### Universal Design for Learning

Provide multiple means of engagement, representation, action, and expression.



# THE SCHOOL LEADER'S PERSPECTIVE

In the first session of this module, we borrowed a concept from the military and business sectors to frame our exploration of educational leadership in the post-COVID era: VUCA, which stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. During emergency school management, leaders had to focus on responding to crises caused by VUCA (specifically, the pandemic). Coming out of the crises, school leaders can leverage what they learned to plan for TALE (teaching across learning environments). TALE leadership is an intentional approach in which leaders design safe and supportive schools that are defined by shared mission, vision, and practices rather than learning modality.

This revised mindset and approach can help mitigate the negative impacts of VUCA, many of which affected our students and teachers during the pandemic. According to Mindtools.com, VUCA environments can do the following:

## What is VUCA?

*Volatility*

*Uncertainty*

*Complexity*

*Ambiguity*

- ✓ **Destabilize people and make them anxious**
- ✓ **Sap their motivation**
- ✓ **Thwart their career moves**
- ✓ **Make constant retraining and reshaping a necessity**
- ✓ **Take huge amounts of time and effort**
- ✓ **Increase the chances of people making bad decisions**
- ✓ **Paralyze decision-making processes**
- ✓ **Jeopardize long-term projects, developments, and innovations**
- ✓ **Overwhelm individuals and organizations**
- ✓ **Take its toll on internal culture**
- ✓ **“Bleed” inward and create VUCA environments within organizations**

*Sound Familiar?*

# RESILIENT DESIGN FOR LEADING

Bob Johansen, author of Leaders Make the Future, suggests a series of shifts that leaders can make in mindset and practice to mitigate the threats posed by VUCA. We have adapted his concepts – which are designed primarily for the business sector – to the world of school leadership. We are calling this adaptation **resilient design for leading** to reflect its alignment with the teaching practices related to resilient design for learning.

Mindset Shift

## Counter Volatility with Vision

Accept change as a constant, unpredictable feature of teaching and learning. Don't resist it; plan for it.

## Meet Uncertainty with Understanding

Learn by looking back *and* projecting forward.

## React to Complexity with Collaboration

Access the expertise and experiences of all to drive leadership.

## Address Ambiguity with Agility

Foster a culture of ideas in which team members think outside of their usual functional areas to increase knowledge, experience, and shared undertaking.



Specific Practices

Turn your school's vision into an educational framework that clearly establishes non-negotiables and identifies spaces for flexibility.

Use the PDSA (plan, do, study, act) cycle to look back with teams at prior responses to change. Help them identify what they did well, what came as a surprise, and what they could do differently next time. Use simulations and experiments to project forward. Simulate situations through game theory, scenario planning, and role playing, so that you can explore how they might play out and how you might react to them in the future.

Adopt a distributed leadership approach that includes practices such as professional learning communities.

Invite team members to share their ideas for innovation, including high-risk ideas, and collaborate to act on ideas that gain consensus. Provide time and opportunities for cross-training so that staff can become more agile within both their roles and teams.

# THE BIG PICTURE

At first glance, teaching across learning environments (TALE) seems to be a daunting, completely new way of teaching and learning. But when we break it down, we can see that TALE is simply an evolution of existing practices that require a series of shifts. While we discuss many more specific shifts to teaching and leading throughout the modules, let's look at the big picture first.

To move beyond surviving to thriving in the "new normal," students, teachers, and school leaders need resilience. Teachers can adapt existing practices to embrace resilient design for learning while school leaders can adapt existing practices to embrace resilient design for leading. Together, these practices can provide students with what they need to be resilient as well:

*Predictability*

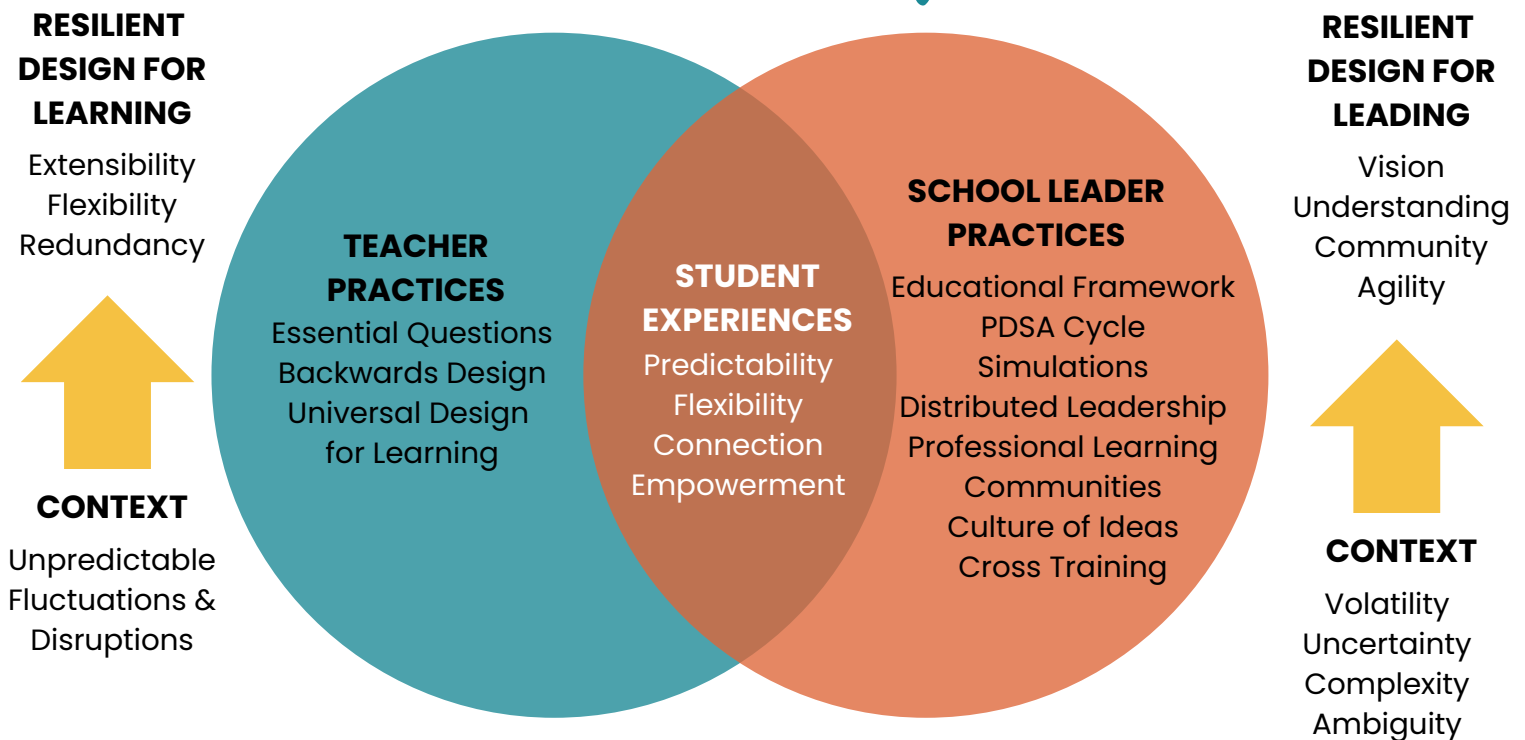
*Flexibility*

*Connection*

*Empowerment*

We call these the "four constants across learning environments," meaning that regardless of modality (in-person, remote, hybrid), these four conditions need to remain constant in order to support resiliency among learners (adapted from [Alex Shevrin Venet's four priorities](#) for trauma-informed education). Just like us, our students are living in a VUCA world that, along with the list of impacts we described earlier, can cause dramatic and sometimes sudden disparities related to access and equity. It can most certainly cause trauma. The four constants are built upon research-based approaches for establishing equity-centered, trauma-informed learning environments. By building TALE around those four constants, we are helping our students become resilient across all learning environments.

## 4 Constants Across Learning Environments



# Your Turn!



## *Exploring Resilient Design for Leading*

In future sessions, we will dig into a number of the teacher and school leader practices outlined here, as well as other related practices. But now, it's your turn to explore resilient design for leading!



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# About Us

## **The TALE Academy**

The TALE Academy is a series of virtual learning experiences available to all New York State educators and offers a rich array of resources on topics related to teaching across learning environments (TALE). The TALE Academy is built upon the work New York State educators carried out during emergency remote teaching (ERT) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and extends it toward the future. TALE invites educators to think beyond online learning to consider a broader perspective on teaching and learning that encompasses teaching across multiple environments (in-person, remote, and hybrid).

## **The Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE) Project**

The TALE Academy is part of a broader New York State Education Department (NYSED) initiative known as Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE). In July 2020, NYSED was awarded funding through the United States Department of Education's Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models Grant to implement TRLE – a three-year project to build the capacity of teachers and educational leaders to effectively implement remote/hybrid learning for all students. Launched in the depths of the pandemic, the first phase of the TRLE project focused on getting resources to the field through partnerships with Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and school districts across the state. The second phase, which began in February 2022, focused on aggregating lessons learned and emerging teaching and learning strategies to address a broader field of practice: teaching across learning environments.

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