To Trust or Not To Trust? Understanding the Science of Developing and Nurturing Trust in Family-Professional Partnerships

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>> Hello, everybody. And, thank you for joining our webinar today. I'm Dr. Melanie Reese, the Director of CADRE. We couldn't be more excited to bring you today's topic, "To Trust or Not To Trust? Understanding the Science of Developing and Nurturing Trust in Family-Professional Partnerships," with Dr. Tracy Gershwin. Today's presentation is another in our continuing series of value CADRE webinars archived and available on our website. Next slide. A few technical notes, CADRE lines have been muted to minimize interruptions. At any point during the presentation, you can enter questions or comments into the chat box on your control panel. The presenter is reserving time at the end of the presentation to take questions, and I will go ahead and share those with her at the end. If you have something that's concerning though, please feel free to raise your hand and we will connect with you. The PowerPoint for the webinar is available in the handout section of the control panel, and will be posted to the CADRE website as well. Next slide. We are thrilled to bring you true friend and long-term collaborator of CADRE's, Dr Tracy Gershwin. Dr. Gershwin is a professor at the University of Northern Colorado, where she teaches undergraduate, masters, and doctorate level courses in special education. Tracy's specialization and research focuses in part on increasing family-professional partnership practices through collaboration and consultation, conflict prevention, and resolution in special education, educational law, applied behavioral analysis, and interventions for children and youth with challenging behaviors. I personally have followed Tracy's scholarship in the field for years, and I'm immensely honored to introduce you to everybody. So, thank you, Tracy, for joining us today.

>> Thank you so much, Melanie, for the amazing introduction, and I cannot say enough thank you to CADRE for this invitation. I was fortunate to do a webinar for CADRE years ago, I don't know how long ago it was, but it was a while ago, so it's great to be back and it's great to be able to talk about trust today. And, I was so happy to see the list of all of the people who have registered for today and are on today, and lots of familiar faces and of friends and colleagues, and so I just want to say thank you, all, for joining and thank you for caring and investing in family-professional partnerships. So, we're talking about trust today, and we're specifically talking about the science of trust. And, there's ... as a college professor, it's important that I always let everyone know ahead of time what the expectations for today are. So, there is a bit of a deconstruction of the concept of trust today in the sense that I am going to use research and talk about the definition of trust, in specifically referring to family-professional partnerships, I'll be talking about the importance of trust, identifying barriers to trust with ... specifically with family-professional partnerships, describing the relationship between trust and conflict and, finally, applying strategies used to develop and nurture trust. So, I want to emphasize, I don't take titles ... I take them very seriously. I don't haphazardly come up with titles when I do presentations. I actually really enjoy titles, it's one of my favorite things, because I think that the title has a lot of the intent. And so, one of the main intents in my title is developing and nurturing trust because one of the main things I want to emphasize today is that trust isn't something that just happens, and it needs to be both developed, as well as nurtured, and in some times it kind of waxes and wanes as a relationship or a partnership goes. So, today we will be talking about how to develop and nurture trust.   And, before I get started, a little bit about my background and how I got here. So, I think it's important to talk about who I am at UNC first. Melanie introduced me. My background is both as a behavior analyst and as a

special education teacher. So although most of us didn't grow up as babies thinking we wanted to study conflict and relationships and partnerships, that wasn't my thought, but I did want to be a teacher. And, I was very excited to be a teacher, to work with families, to work with students, and like most professionals, in the field. When I graduated from my college at Syracuse, where I learned a lot of best practices with respect to to inclusion, partnering, co-teaching ... a lot of great models that we see in our research ... the practice from research to practice gap was pretty wide. And so, it was very quickly that I learned the challenges that educators and families face when it comes to partnering with one another. And, the most important lesson I learned was the person who tends to lose the most when there isn't a strong partnership is the student, and that's what I'm here for and I believe that's what all of you are here for too. So, I'd like to introduce myself as both a behavior analyst and a educator because although I train teachers to be good behavior analysts to understand human behavior and how it applies ... So much of the work that I do, that has to do with human behavior, also directly applies, not just to student behavior, but to relationship behavior. And so, much of the work that I do as a behavior analyst, I've worked toward reconceptualizing and defining what behaviors look like in a trusting family-professional partnership. So, that's where you'll see some of the science that comes in with my need to define, and operationalize, and understand exactly what things look like. I also just want to say the family-professional partnership is the term that I will be using throughout this webinar, and I just want to acknowledge that one of the things that I'm really excited about with this webinar, as well as some of the work that my colleagues and I have been doing, which I will talk about throughout today, is that we're really working to find a general understanding of what that family-professional partnership looks like. Over the years, probably, in my own titles of work, I've used family-professional partnership, I've used parent-teacher relationship, I have used family-school collaboration, all of different sort of components. But, the definition I've landed on with one of my colleagues is family-professional partnership, and that is going to be talked about a little bit more on the next slide. But, I do want to emphasize that throughout, given, although, I will be talking about family-professional partnership, I want to emphasize families and parents are used interchangeably, so if you hear me say the word parent, I'm also talking about the family as a whole. And then, I believe that teacher, educator, and professional can be used interchangeably, so I will be doing that as well. And, I just want to acknowledge all of the various roles that we have in this partnership, so finding a term that fits everybody that works together is sometimes challenging. And, of course, I think the student should always be considered the first and most important member of this partnership. Although, I do like to point out that idea does list the student as the last member of the IEP team, I believe they are the first and most important member of that team. So, I just want to bring that to everyone's attention. So, let's talk about, what is trust? And, I talked to you just now about my role as a behavior analyst. This is where I like to really break down language and think about when we say the word trust, do we really know what it actually means? So, today that is basically the why of today. We use this term trust repeatedly, in research and practice. Journals that focus on family-professional partnership, yet we never really have taken the time to define it or describe it in actionable terms that can be replicated for families and professionals to use. So in other words, if we're saying trust is one of the most important foundations of a relationship, how can they expect people to trust if they don't know what actions they need to do to demonstrate that trust? And, it's one of those words, like collaboration and partnership, relationship, that needs to really be sometime broken down according to the context. So, as I said earlier, as a behavior analyst, I believe that we need to be able to really break down an expectation so that we can describe it in observable and measurable terms so that families and educators know what

behaviors they can and should exhibit to establish nurture trust, and also maybe behaviors or things they should avoid so that they don't increase the changes of distrust or mistrust or broken trust. And, all those things can happen and have likely happened to many of you who are on this webinar through your life, either personal or professional. So, we're really going to talk about that. So, there is this expectation, this sort of immediate expectation that educators, parents will trust each other. There's this an expectation that ... an assumption that trust naturally happens. But, what I really want to emphasize today with the development and nurturing of trust, is that it doesn't. It's deliberate actions and behaviors that we're going to talk about. So, as far as what trust looks like in the schools, students are expected to trust or need to trust their teachers. Families also need to trust their professionals, school professionals. Schools need to trust their students. Teachers trusting their leaders, as well as colleagues. Community trusting the school, and vice versa. There's a need, there's an expectation, there's an assumption. All of these different moving parts, we know, trust continues to come up in the research about conflict. In fact, I will say that the number one word I've heard throughout my research is in conflict and much of my research is on the prevention and resolution of conflict between educators and families, and repeatedly the words ... two words come up repeatedly. I'll let everyone guess what those are quickly. Write it down if you want. Trust and communication. So, trust and communication come up every single time in all of my research. And yet, we really don't necessarily really break down what that means. I feel like we do a much better job with communication in some of the literature that we've seen, but not as well with trust lately. But we're getting there. So, trust is a critical factor though when we consider school and influence. If we think about school reform, if we think about changing a expectation, teacher practices. We need to have trust in order to have that relationship or that partnership that will ultimately benefit the student. And then, I'd just like to emphasize that I'm talking about trust in schools today, but trust is everywhere in our life. Trust is, of course, in our schools, but it's in the foods that we eat, it's in the bridges and the traffic that we drive across, it's in our computers and technology that's going to work. I have a lot of trust and faith right now in my computer and my web Internet ... my Internet is going to be working today. We have trust in our little picture down in the bottom teenage drivers. Shout out to my teenage driver right now, that takes a lot of trust, right? And, we have trust and we need to have trust in our doctors. There's, right now, a lot of debate over trust in vaccines and lots of procedures. So, trust is everywhere and it's interesting that we don't necessarily take the time to really break it down of what that looks like. So on that note, when do we learn to develop and nurture trust as educators? And, I know that there are a lot of different members on this webinar. I looked at the registration list. There's a lot of educators, families, advocates, Department of Ed representatives. I don't want to any ... lots of different stakeholders in this group, and I do typically like to ask sort of a poll question, but there's such a mixture I didn't want to assume anything. So, what I would like you all to do though, is just, I want you to just contemplate on your own, when did you learn to develop and nurture trust? How did you learn to develop and nurture trust? Have you actually ever learned that or practiced it? So, do we really learn to work well with others to build relationships, to practice conflict prevention and resolution. These are often referred to as our soft skills that I've heard a lot when it comes to teacher preparation. I'm at University of Northern Colorado. We are a very large teaching institution. We ... our institution rests on the premise that we are the number one provider of teacher education to the state of Colorado, so we have a lot of pre-service programs. We have a lot of different trainings and practices going on. And, I can tell you that very few programs actually have courses that specifically teach these soft skills. Some of these skills on how to work well with others, how to problem solve, how to develop and nurture trust. In fact, in a study that my colleagues and I ... I

just have to give a shout out to my family-professional partnership cohort of peers, which I will talk about, who co-wrote a book with me, the recent edition of the "Turnbull Families and Professional Partnership" text. I've been very fortunate to be connected with a lot of leaders in our field of special education and education who researched family-professional partnership. And in our many conversations, we are the ones who study this. We are the ones who teach this. And, in our practices we commonly will have conversations about, "When do you teach this? Do you have a designated class to teach this when you prepare your teachers?" And the answer, overall, is no, we don't. Because, often one of the things, we found, is our preparation courses are linked directly, not often, but they are linked directly to standards. And often, standards don't include anything that are specific to working with families. It may be things like, standards like being able to share assessment results with families, things like that. But not specifically skills that we want to learn to exhibit with families. We don't necessarily practice communication for example. Those types of things. We don't even necessarily have IEP meetings ... students in IEP meetings until the real one exists. They learn about the IEP, but not the process. So, I think an emphasis here that most of us don't actually learn this, and this is the why of this conversation today, as well as hopefully continued conversations you'll have in your own work, after today, in the sense that let's stop and think about have we actually taught the people that we're expecting to trust, have we actually taught them how to develop and nurture trust, or are we just assuming that they have those skills. That they somehow learned them through watching and such in today's world, which is not always the case. So, one of the things, one of the studies that my colleagues and I did, Kathleen Kyzar, Grace Francis, and Shana Haines, we all did a survey study where we wanted to survey special education faculty who specifically prepared pres-service teachers about how and when they teach family-professional partnership skills. We surveyed about 113 faculty, 52 institutions were included, and what we found was not surprising. It was exactly what we already had thought. There was a disconnect in the value and the implementation of family-professional partnership related knowledge and skills at the program and individual faculty levels. And, there's also patterns of inconsistent family-professional partnership related content coverage across undergraduate and graduate programs, that includes specific family-professional partnership courses and non-specific. So simply put, this means we're not teaching educators and other people in our field how to get along, how to develop that trust, and how to work together. So unfortunately because of this concept, what we've heard is Baier philosopher said "we notice trust as we notice air, only when it becomes scarce or polluted." So I'd like everybody to just sit on that quote for a moment and think about that. Do we reinforce trust? Do we really notice trust when it happens? Do we challenge it? Do we expect it? Do we demand it? Do we question it? When we do have trust in a family-professional partnership, do we celebrate that and really acknowledge it and understand what that looks like? Or, do we wait until There's is some kind of fire or some kind of conflict, and then we realize "uh-oh, trust has been broken." So, as we learn about trust today I just want you to continue to keep in mind and notion that trust needs to be built, nurtured, and in many cases prepared through the life cycle of trust. I want to emphasize that there is a life cycle when it comes to that. And, one of the most important factors when it comes to trust, I'll talk about it a little bit, is vulnerability. Trust requires vulnerability and it requires effort. So, what do we know about trust? Of the research that has been done, because it's actually very recent that we've really started to look at what trust looks like, and some of this research started in the '50s and the '60s with philosophers. Looking at social movements, looking at interactions across countries, across humans in different environments and cultures. So, we know that there's a varying level of trust, of ... sorry, there's varying levels of trust and there's varying definitions of trust. Because it is dependent

on a relationship, there are different forms of trust that we see in a relationship between a man and a wife or two partners, as well as a teacher and a parent, or a neighbor and a neighbor, or siblings, or any fill in the blank. A coworker or a boss and a coworker, or a supervisor and supervisee. All of these to say there are many different types of relationships that exist, which means naturally trust is going to look differently across whatever relationship that may be. So, that means it's complex. That means that it's also multifaceted, and I will talk about what those facets are. There's a little picture in the bottom, if you're wondering, "Why does she have a picture of a wheel?" And then there is a picture of people climbing a mountain. So, the relationship you might have with climbing a mountain with somebody is entirely different than someone that's going to be working with your child in a school or what have you, right? Different factors, different considerations, different players, everything is different. The picture on the bottom is a linchpin, and trust is often described as a linchpin, so it's that one ... that safety pin that holds it all together. And if it breaks, that means often the wheels will fall off of your wagon. And in many cases, if trust breaks, the relationship also deteriorates. And, that doesn't mean the wagon can't get fixed, that doesn't mean the relationship can't get fixed, it just means that trust is incredibly important to hold it all together. So, when people did start to define it in the '50s and '60s, this started with moral and ethical issues. Looking at philosophers perspectives of that. And then also from an economic standpoint, when we think about trust, there's also a cost benefit calculation. If I trust you with this and this happens, what will be the ultimate outcome? If I trust you to help me up a mountain and I fall off of it, that's a really big problem. Versus if I trust you to try a service that I might not necessarily think is best for my child, what is the cost benefit calculation with me trusting in you as a parent or trusting in you as an educator? So these are important factors when we think about trust. And then the most important thing I want to emphasize is you ... I do not believe, and I have not yet seen, any definition of trust that does not use the word vulnerability, so vulnerability is required for that trust to take place. There is a sense of vulnerability that we all have to have in order to trust another person, and that includes when we trust our supervisors, when we trust our colleagues, when we trust our families, et cetera.. So, just to remind everybody of what I had said early on, we do know in special education research, we really don't have much specific research on trust. It's come up repeatedly as a source of conflict, of breakdown, and something that needs to be had as a partnership, a trusting partnership, to be able to prevent conflict. So, we know that trust can both escalate and deescalate conflict. So, it goes both ways. We also know there is a cycle of trust and we also know that research in special education, family-professional partnership, and specifically in my own research with conflict prevention and resolution, trust comes up repeatedly. Trust is necessary for effective cooperation and communication. We know that those are the foundations of a cohesive and productive relationship for most organizations. So, I want everyone to close their eyes for 1 minute, very briefly, or write this down, whatever you need to do. And, if you're a parent ... now, that doesn't mean you have to necessarily have a child who is on an IEP or anything in that sense, just any parent. I'm a parent. If you're a parent close your eyes, and I want you to think of a time you have had a trusting relationship or partnership with an educator for your child. If you're an educator and you want to see that from that perspective and not from the parent perspective, I want you to close your eyes and think of a time you had a trusting relationship with a parent or one of your students. And if neither role speaks to you, I want you to just think of a trusting relationship that you have had in your life with another colleague, peer, or person in your life, and I want you to think about, and maybe write these thing down really quickly if you can. Just kind of a fun self check for yourself before I start revealing some of the specifics about what we know about trust. What characteristics and actions did that person exhibit and did you

exhibit that indicated that there was a level of trust between you two? And, what did that actually mean to trust? How did that feel? What does that mean when you have trust? And then, I want you to think about a time that trust broke down, when there wasn't trust. There was mistrust. There was something that came up and I want you to think about what took plan during that time as well. What were the factors? What were some of the behaviors? What were some of the actions that led to the mistrust or distrust? So, I'm excited to share this definition with all of you of what a trusting family-professional partnership looks like. I am going to do a little bit of a plug for our recent textbook because much of the conversations that I'm talking to you about today came from the conversations I had with my colleagues when we wrote, when we re-wrote, we were invited, by Ann and Rud Turnbull to be members of the Eighth Edition of the Families and Professional Partnerships. This is the book. This was my free book, so it looks a little different just the front cover picture is the same, but the white part is not. That's with Ann and Rud Turnbull, Grace Francis, Meghan Burke, Kathleen Kyzar, Shana Haines, and myself, Katie Shepherd, Natalie Holdren, and George Singer, my doctoral advisor, and who I learned so much from as well as the Turnbulls. So it was a great honor to be invited to revise this edition with them, and it was during these many conversations and a very fun retreat before the pandemic shut down and everything, where we all really talked and just did a brain dump, a brain conversation about, "What do we want this book to look like? What do we want to promote?" And, we've referenced and looked at a lot of the research. And again, going back to that trust, trust ultimately was what we identified as the foundation for this partnership. So, this definition of trust and, "Trusting family-professional partnerships is characterized by an alliance," ... I'll let you all read that ... "by an an alliance in which families and professionals confidently build in each other's word, judgement, and wise actions to increase educational benefits for students and themselves." And the definition of trusting family-professional partnership, this is sort of an overview definition, but throughout the book we break that down. We break that down into observable and measurable things that educators can do, as well as families, and this is not restricted to special education. I want to emphasize that. Conflict happens everywhere. It's not just in special education. We do focus a lot of it, a lot of our research and time, I do, on the conflict in special education because there are some very high stakes that are often involved when we have issues with conflict in special education. But this is trusting family-professional partnership for all students. And so, one of the things I want to emphasize when it comes to trust is that we have three major domains that are impacted when we think of trust, when we develop trust, when we nurture trust. And, that is the cognitive, the affective, and behavioral domains. And so, what that means is we use our cognitive, affective and behavioral ourselves. We use these three areas to build, restore, and address trust issues. So, when we see changes in all three, when trust is established, when it's built, we see cognitive, affective, and behavioral changes. Cognitive is simply put, thinking with your head. Affective is thinking with your heart. Behavioral is a combination of the two, and it's basically what your actions are as a results of your thinking and your heart. And so, when we think about all three of those, and what I really want to emphasize, and I continuously say when I teach family-professional partnership with educators, is it's not rocket science. It's really not rocket science. It's the intent that is the most important. So, when we talked about some of the qualities, it's really about what we can do to make these things happen. So, it's almost like if I were to do a presentation today on being healthy, I would talk about food you should eat, exercises you should do, all these things. We know these ingredients, but you have to do the work to get the results of being healthy. So, it's the same thing. We know that trust is important, I'm talking to you about trust factors and behaviors. But ultimately, our cognitive, affective and behavioral actions need to be presented and demonstrate trust

in some capacity. And so, as we go through these practices, I want you to think about how when we do build trust that changes our thinking because when we see somebody, a teacher we trust. When a family and a professional are able to establish a trusting family-professional partnership, and then when they see that teacher or they have a conversation with the teacher and maybe the teacher is recommending a certain intervention for the family, if there is trust then they're thinking, "This person knows what they're doing. This person has my child's best interest in heart." They're thinking affectively, "This person cares about my child. This person wants to help my child." And then behaviorally they're thinking and acting in ways that will support that trust between the family and the professional for that student's well being. So, let's talk about some of the actual specific indicators of trust or what we want to say facets. So, earlier I said that trust is multifaceted, and through the work of Shannon Moran and hoy, they were able to do some specific work, as I talked about earlier, I said the research that we've seen on trust has been ... much of it started with organization trust, as well as philosophers and other areas. Well, Shannon Moran and Hoy went specifically with trust and schools. Much of their research is heavily influenced on the ways in which leaders can develop trust in their schools. So, looking at administration, but also looking at teachers at leaders. So, I will be drawing from their research when I talked about these facets, as well as the behaviors that come along with it. So the five facets, the definition that Shannon and Hoy has for trust is a willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is the following characteristics: benevolent, reliable, competent, honest and open. I want to emphasize that these views of trust with Tschannen-Moran and Hoy work come from their own research, their own synthesis, looking at sociology, economics, organizational science and education. So they are the ... When we were starting to write about trust and really digging into it, when I started to get into it, this is the research that continuously came up, and I did provide a references page that will be available to you as participants through CADRE that lists some of the references that I've found to be helpful for me to start to put together understanding the science of trust. So this is an emphasis that trust is not a feeling. It's not a feeling of warmth and affection, but it's a conscious regulation of one's dependence on one another. So that means there are crucial thresholds across which trust can learn to distrust, and it also means that the different facets of trust may have different thresholds depending on the level of reliance in that area, and the consequences of one's expectation of not being met. So in other words, you may have ... For example, one researcher suggested that if a person's actions and intentions are perceived as benevolent, he or she may be trusted more, even if their credibility is less than perfect. So maybe their competency, their ability to demonstrate competency is less than perfect, but there's this benevolence with them. They're more likely to trust them. So, for example, you might have a first-year teacher who hasn't necessarily had a chance to establish their level of competency and trust in a family of a child who has a middle schooler or a high schooler or a child at all. I know I experienced it as a first-year teacher. But the act of being benevolent, reliable, open and honest can help address that lower level of that competency that hasn't maybe necessarily been met. So this doesn't mean that benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty and open are all the same level of weight when it comes to the facets. It just means that these all wax and wane with what we know to be the facets of trust. So let's talk about each one of them. Benevolence, that's actually one of my favorite words. I think benevolent is such a happy-sounding word because it is the kindness and goodwill on the interdependence within a relationship. So we know that the very act of benevolence conveys a message of care for another person and the expectation that protection and no harm will take place. So with benevolence, we're seeing goodwill demonstrated by another educator, another family, and that goodwill tells us that this person doesn't want to hurt us,

that I don't need to protect myself and put up a lot of walls of sort of just not listening or any kind of behaviors that might not be helpful to our trusting relationship, but rather the benevolence opens the door to have some of that vulnerability. It also ties well into that golden rule of treat others as you would want to be treated. And oftentimes families do rely on the goodwill of our educators to be there for our students. When we drop off our students on the very first day, we are expecting that there's benevolence, that they will not do our child harm, that they will protect our child, that they will support our child. They will teach our child and support them. And because of the way that family relationships and professionals can vary in such degrees, it's really important to think of how professionals' and families' degree of benevolence and trust is going to be dependent on how well they're able to communicate with each other, be around each other and build that, an opportunity to be benevolent. If we don't have an opportunity to be benevolent, can we really be benevolent? So it's about creating those opportunities as well. One of the things I like to say when I teach my behavior classes to my undergraduates and graduates, it's kind of my saying in general when I train people is that, it's really important for educators to become like a chocolate chip cookie or a very positively reinforcing person to that student. Rita Pierson does an amazing TED Talk if you haven't heard it yet called "Every Child Needs A Champion." So it's basically that concept. I believe that every child and family needs a champion. So benevolence is a good way to demonstrate that form of championship, that you're there for them. The next one is reliable. So reliability is when a partner keeps their word and follows through with what they say they will do. And I added with benevolence because there can be someone who is reliably late, who's reliably mean, who's reliably negative. That doesn't mean they're trustworthy. So reliability along with benevolence is that sort of relationship that's important. Trust has to do with predictability, so that's where reliability comes in here. It is that consistency of behavior of knowing what you can expect from the other person, knowing that you can expect them to show up to teach their child, knowing that you can expect them to show up for the IEP meeting and be able to advocate for your child and talk about your child and be available to you to answer any questions or what have you. It's the predictability in trustworthy actions. It's the predictability of knowing they're going to be acting in ways that are beneficial to the family and the child and the group as a whole. But emphasis on benevolence needs to be accompanied with that reliability. Competence, competence comes up a lot in the research. Especially when ... And what I'd like you all to think about a little bit, we're going to talk about trust and conflict in a little bit, but when you hear the word competent, it should not be surprising that that actually is directly tied with the sources of dispute we see in special education. So what I mean by that is there is a common theme that when there's a lack of teacher training, when there's a lack of teacher knowledge, when there's a lack of teacher follow-through, then there is likely to be conflict between the family and the educator. That is competence. It's having the experience, the knowledge, the skills, the behavior, the performance to meet the goals. So it's important that families are assured that professionals are knowledgeable, skilled and able to perform the expected duties, and it's also important for the educators to be aware that the parent is competent to be able to show up to come to the IEP, to talk about their child, to provide strengths and information about their child. So the competency, I believe I always like to say that I'm an expert in behavior, but a parent is an expert in their child. So I have three daughters, and I am an expert in understanding each one of my girl's needs and strengths and challenges and every part of that, so I wouldn't want any educator to challenge me that they know my child more because they don't. I know my child in the home, school and community. So that's where my competency comes in. But I also lean on the fact that those who work with my children have their own trade and knowledge that practice that I'm not competent in. I'm not competent in

teaching English or some of those specific math skills or whatever, right? So that's that partnership and an understanding of competency across both. So there are times when good intentions are not enough, and competency is important. It's when a person is dependent upon some level of skill or knowledge to fulfill an expectation. So families are expecting educators to have a level of skill and knowledge, that they're going to be able to address their child's needs. And competence also refers to the expectations that families can be ensured that those professionals are knowledgeable, skilled in whatever area of need that child has. So having competence means that parents often will expect you to know the content and consequently develop and follow through with those expectations for that child. There's a level of expectation in education that when someone is ... Or life, in any profession, there's an expectation that the person who is doing that profession is competent to perform that job. And if a parent knows that an educator knows what they're doing and is skilled and has experience with doing that, then families are better able to trust that professional, and that's what we've seen in our research. There's also something I want to emphasize when it comes to competency, that there is sometimes for families because of an inherent value of a cultural disposition, there's sometimes an automatic level of competence in someone's profession. So what that means is, in some cultures, there's an automatic level of respect of competency for a teacher's knowledge and skills. So a parent might not necessarily feel comfortable or want to at all challenge something that a teacher says or does because there's this expectation of that competency. So it's important to keep in mind that competency goes beyond the job title. It's about families being assured that you've had the proper training, practice, and that you're competent in those skills that are needed to be provided to that child. Honesty, honesty is an incredibly important aspect of trust for very obvious reasons. One Goddard and colleagues in 2007 said, "One must be able to rely on the word and action of another in order to trust the other." So honesty is the word in action. It's the honest action. It's being the expectation that the person will be authentic, that they will share all of the information that is needed honestly. That there is no deception, that because we know that when dishonesty happens, it closes doors for open communication, and it closes the door for trust. And it ultimately puts a big wedge between that relationship. Any of you can probably nod along with me if you think about somebody in your life who has unfortunately been dishonest to you and what that did to you with your level of trust in your word the next time. There's a level of mistrust or distrust. Then likewise think about someone who's been incredibly honest with you, maybe more honest than you thought they ever would be. What did that do for you? That likely opened the door to maybe ask them more questions, maybe feel more vulnerable with them, maybe ask and do more things that would work toward that partnership. Parents and educators ultimately want to know that they're going to receive accurate and important and honest information, and that's very important because, for example, right now schools are really heavily weighing on the honesty of students who show up to school not showing signs of COVID. I mean that is a big factor right now, and so having the dishonesty can immediately break down that trust. Being open, vulnerable and sharing information rather than withholding goes right along those lines with honesty. Being open in a trusting relationship refers to being vulnerable and sharing information rather than withholding. That means ... I'm saying that again, because withholding information is also not open. And I think that's one area that we get confused, or we forget about the importance is, oftentimes when families find out or hear or it's discovered that something was withheld from them, that immediately leads to ... That looks like dishonesty, and therefore it looks like trust is being broken. So openness is also ... It's a valuable approach to use when problem-solving as an educational team. So that includes taking the time to listen to families and concerns. Listen to families share concerns about their child, about addressing student needs, and in some cases, families might

need to share information that might be hard for the educators to hear, and likewise in some cases, educators might need to share information that's hard for the family to hear. And there are different things that can be accompanied with that openness, but I just want to emphasize that being open is a form of conflict resolution, is being very open and honest about options and different situations of where we stand. So those were the five facets of trust, and we're going to talk about some strategies that embed those facets that promote family professional partnerships in a moment, but before we do, I do want to talk about the disposition of trust because there are some people who have a naturally trustworthy disposition. Some people tend to be more trustworthy than others, and that is based on many different factors. That can be based on previous experiences. It can be based on related experiences with the person that they're trusting or the institution, and likewise there's also a disposition of mistrust. And we'll talk about some of those barriers later. But I want to emphasize that in '86, a researcher Zucker referred to something called character-based trust, which means that sometimes trust judgments can be made based on a similarity or group membership, and that is something that can actually be a very beneficial thing. So for example, characteristic-based trust, we see, and we'll talk about in a little bit a lot of the research shows that families connecting with other families is incredibly meaningful to their own stress levels, information gathering, all sorts of components of being a parent of a child with special needs. And so having another parent that is similar to you sometimes inherits a natural disposition of trust with that person. And likewise, if you've established a trust maybe with principals in the past, you've had a lot of good relationships with behavior analysts, when you meet a new behavior analyst, you might naturally have a level of trust that you have with them. But it goes both ways. You might also have that disposition of mistrust. So very simply, let's say you have a bad experience with a dentist. The next time you go to the dentist, you are probably going to have a challenging time trusting the new dentist or fixing that other dentist, trust with them. So it goes both ways, and what I do want to emphasize though is with this disposition of trust, it doesn't mean that people are more gullible. It just means that they might exhibit what Deutsch referred to as pathological trust. It's just something that's innately within them, and it's interesting that moods and emotions are involved with that level of trust, and people with high trusting dispositions are less likely to lie, steal or cheat. Also, high trusters seem to be happier and have stronger friendships. So even though we want to think about ... It's not necessarily something you can promote, but it is about your own experiences. And although several studies have shown a correlation between trust and liking another person, it still shows that if benevolence is not included there's less likely an opportunity ... There's less of an opportunity for trust to built. So let's talk about what happens when trust is broken. Now that we know what the five facets are, just as trust breeds trust, trust also breeds distrust if distrust breeds distrust, so it goes both ways. What happens when we experience a shift in our own expectations? Think about that. What happens when we don't feel that someone's being benevolent or open? This is also often when we might see a lot of behavioral changes in the partners that are involved in educators and families. People might go to levels of extreme. We might see ... When trust does get broken, we might see an increase ... I always like to say whatever any kind of behaviors extinguish, we see an increase in the likelihood of other behaviors happening. We see behaviors happening longer, and it's a longer duration and a variety of behaviors that we probably never have seen. So for example, you may normally have a very small conversation with families when they come into your classroom if you're a teacher. But if a trust is broken or there's some kind of conflict, the conversation that usually is a 5 minute drop-off might turn into a 20-minute conversation or more, and there might be a lot of other behaviors that happen because when trust is broken, we are humans. We ... What do we do? We

protect. It's almost like a turtle. We go right into our shells and we protect, and much of that protection leads to unhealthy partnership behavior. So that might mean families not being willing to take risks, or educators not wanting to take risks. Not not being willing, but not wanting to take risks. It might mean that we want to self preserve, we want to protect, we don't want to try different things. We might shut down, we might freeze, we might fight, we might flee. All different kind of reactions will happen when trust is broken. So what are the barriers to developing and nurturing that trust? Because we don't want trust to be broken, we want to develop it, we want to nurture it. So there's fear. We know that there's, often times with families and educators, and I'm going to be speaking more about what we know about family's barriers to building trust with educators, because we have more research on the family's lack of trust with educators than educator's lack of trust with families. We do a lot more research on the family's experiences with special education system. But I do believe we also need to look very carefully at what conflict does to educators and administrators as well. So we know that there's often a fear of educators in the system. We know that there might be a history of betrayal that might have happened, or a feeling of betrayal when it's broken. Much of this comes from past experiences and backgrounds. So it could be past experiences as a student, when somebody was a child, or it could be their own past experiences with other educators. We know that there's ... This has been documented throughout our special education conflicts literature is that there's power imbalances and oftentimes inequity that's at play. There's inaccurate or false information that might lead to that barrier of trust, significant differences in values and attitudes or incompatible goals or expectations. One of my go-to definitions by Folger and colleagues is that ... of conflict is that it is the divide of incompatible goals and expectations between families and educators or between two people together, or we have systematic, procedural obstacles. Let's just think about the IEP. Much of my research is about the IEP because ... the IEP meeting and process, I should say, because the impetus for much conflict that happens between educators and family members is during the IEP meeting because that is one specific process, procedure that is set up in many ways to have a very difficult conversation. There's paperwork. There's jargon. I could go on and on. That could be an entirely different topic today, but we know that this system itself sets up some of those boundaries to establish that trust. Then of course there might environmental barriers. So I want to emphasize that all of these components are barriers to trust, and they can also be flipped to build trust. So if we know that there's fear, how can we talk about that fear? How can we address that fear? If we know that there's been previous backgrounds and experiences or if we know there's a power imbalance or inequity, what can we do to change that? Because when it comes to trust and conflict, what I want to emphasize that I talked about when trust is broken is, in the absence of trust, people are increasingly unwilling to take risks, demand greater protections against the possibility of betrayal and increasingly insist on costly sanctioning mechanisms to defend their interests. If there would be one quote that I would use to sort of just capture what I feel happens when conflict gets to this level of going to fight or flight between family and educators. This is when due process hearings are requested, and I do want to say there is a time and a place for due process, and there's a very good reason why we have that procedural mechanism. That being said, there's an overreliance on it in our field that's been well documented. And so although it's there for a reason, it's not always necessarily a needed solution. We've got resolution sessions, meetings, we've got mediation, we've got facilitated IEPs. There's other practices that we're starting to realize we really need to offer ahead of time because of this absence of trust because this right here encompasses what happens when we end up going to that due process. Another quote, distrust is the confident expectation that another's motives, intentions, and behaviors are sinister and harmful to one's own interests. In interdependent

relationships, which by the way, trust cannot be at play if there isn't an interdependent relationship. This often entails a sense of fear and anticipation of discomfort or danger. Distrust naturally prompts us to take steps that reduce our vulnerability in an attempt to protect our interests. So accordingly our distrust of others is likely to evoke a competitive as opposed to a cooperative orientation that stimulates and exacerbates conflict. So once again, I want to emphasize that when we're at a moment of distrust there's a break down, and there's a huge part that goes back in that reptilian part of our brain, that we immediately go to sometimes when we get really upset or overwhelmed. That reptilian brain is about protection. It's that turtle going into the shell. It's something dangerous is near me. I need to protect myself and my child. That is often what happens when we have mistrust at play. So let's talk about the pandemic because I don't think we can without ... talk about 2021 or have a conversation in any day without addressing it because we know the pandemic has definitely had an influence on trust in our schools. So much in the same way that we ... Much in the same way that trust needs to be ... As I'm talking about trust needs to be developed, it needs to be nurtured. And one thing I know unfortunately that has happened during this pandemic is we've lost our ability to nurture a lot of that trust with families and professionals, between families and professionals because of the social proximity, because of the communication barriers. So we know that in addition to services and all forms of education for students being delayed and abruptly altered, ceased, many changes have happened. For instance, as a result of the ... In response to the pandemic, I was recently awarded a grant with our neighborhood school district, Weld County District Six, to specifically address how all of the preschoolers in our local school district were impacted by the pandemic, and it was huge. It was pretty huge, and it's huge for everybody. I think we all know that. We know that everyone's personal life and work life was changed. Do we work from home now, or do we live at work? I still don't know the distinction in some ways. Communication challenges happened. I was recently at an orientation for preschool teachers, and one of them was sharing one of their greatest fears for the upcoming year was isolation again and quarantining and all of that because one of the things they said that affected their job the most was that parent drop-off was different. It wasn't there anymore. They weren't able to interact with the families. And I can't tell you how many educators in that room said as an early educator that drop-off is when I get so much information. And that is when we do build trust. There is that sense of benevolence, reliability, honesty, openness, competency, all of those things and then of inequity. Inequity was really huge. We found that out with families who did not have access to the Internet, with families who work as emergency workers or any required major workers that weren't able to take time off, having kids at home, et cetera. Trust in our entire society has changed as a result of this pandemic. So I think today's topic is more relevant now than ever. So what are some strategies to develop and nurture trust, and we're coming close to the end, so I'm going to get through these, but I will emphasize that the resources and the references that I've provided do a great job of really doing a deep dive into these, as well as the book. Not to do a shameless plug, but the thing about writing books is, as professors, we don't get a lot. We certainly don't get money, and it's not like any bestsellers that other people have. It's not like that. When we write books it's because we want to impact our field. And so I'm really excited about the potential to impact our schools and families to have a trusting relationship. So what can we do to develop that? Let's look at this. This is a sunshine model that comes out of our recent textbook, and it's the model trust family-professional partnerships. You'll notice trust is at the center, and what we've got is around we've got respect, equity, communication, advocacy and commitment. I will talk about each of those in a moment. Those are the specific behaviors that can encompass those facets of trust. So while being respectful, practicing equity, communication, advocacy and commitment, we want to make sure

we're being benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, open, and of course we're being vulnerable during that. And the stem of the rays are those opportunities that I find that we believe are really pivotal moments when educators and families have the opportunity to build that partnership. During social-emotional learning opportunities, behavior, assessments, special meetings, that includes IEPs, 504s, that includes parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, school capacity enhancement and academic learning. So keeping in mind that trust is a willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on those areas, we need to be acting on respect, et cetera. So respect is akin to ... Tschannen-Moran actually described respect as akin to benevolence, or I should say benevolence is akin to respect. And in some of the work that Meghan Burke and colleagues completed, they found that when professionals respected families, families were able to report less stress and better well-being. So what that means is, what that looks like in observable behaviors, because I'm a behavior analyst, is being present and prepared to meet with families, attending meetings on time, developing relationships with families, communicating on an ongoing basis, treating with esteem, treating families with esteem. Other considerations that are really important when it comes to respect are adhering to boundaries. If a family member says that they don't like having calls at 6 at night, then let's respect that boundary for them or balancing that power dynamic that we know exists. And we need to make sure we pay attention to families, that we really listen and understand, and that we're empathetic. We honor their culture, and that's not just their ethnicity or their background or languages they speak, but I also like to talk about a family culture. And so you can imagine the culture that my family has with me and three teenage girls. One of our cultures is, everyone talks all the time and never stops talking, and so if someone were to respect some of those considerations of my family culture, then they would maybe have some of that kind of dialogue with my kids when we're having that understanding that that's how my family is, and that's how all families are different. So we seek to understand values and perspectives, and I always like to say that everyone has invisible glasses sort of that we wear, value glasses, if you will, and those glasses determine how we see things, and those glasses are shaped on our previous experiences, on our successes and challenges and on failures and on things when we try something, and it doesn't work as we thought, how we were raised, how we might perceive something, so that means my value glasses might look differently than a family member's, and so I need to make sure that I understand their value glasses and that I show respect for them, and it doesn't mean you have to agree with everything that someone says. It just means that you are considering it, you're communicating, and you're treating them with esteem. So equity is another very important one that we just ... that I mentioned in the sunshine model. That is enhancing fairness, equality of opportunity and dignity, and there are six major types of capital that we know about. There's social, and that's connecting families with each other. There's navigation, learning your way through the system. There's familial, having family-relative support systems. There linguistic. That could be another language as well as understanding sort of the nuances of special-education language. There's resistance capital. We see that a lot with parent ... with activism or any kind of idea came out of resistance capital from families. And there's aspirational, and aspirational capital we see a lot with ... We see aspirational capital lead to conflict when there's a difference in expectations, so I hear a lot of times educators say things like, "Well, the family doesn't have a, quote, realistic expectation for their child," and I would ask you, let's not judge whether it's realistic or unrealistic. Unless you have a crystal ball, we really can't do that, but let's maybe see that as aspirational capital that they might have, that they're expecting some type of behavior or performance of their child that you may not think is likely, but it may be, and that's part of that aspirational capital. So these forms of capital can both lead to inequity as well as build equity, and so it's really important that when it comes to looking at the

sources of conflict that we look at, how can we use equity to balance that, level the playing field? We hear all the time that it's an unlevel playing field. I talked earlier about power imbalances. So how can we address that? How can we eliminate jargon, eliminate language that might be exclusionary or challenging to understand? Let's maybe rearrange the meeting so that, because we know that there's a power imbalance naturally in an IEP meeting with X amount of professionals to two parents if that or more, but it's pretty a large ratio of you might have five educators and one parent or more ... I once was at a meeting where there were 20 educators, and then there was the parent and the lawyer. That's a really big power imbalance, so how can we balance the power more? Can we do it in a way that we sit differently? Can we do it in a way that we approach the meeting differently, that we have roles during the meeting? What can we do to make it more equitable? Also access, not all families, especially during this pandemic ... We've learned about access, technology, right? So can we have families ... Can we afford them opportunities to be able to participate in IEP meetings in different ways, maybe through Zoom, maybe outside? Maybe sometimes we need to come to their home because they're not able to. These are different ways where we may need to add or increase different ways of families who need that extra access to have that access. Communication we talked about. Earlier, I mentioned that communication and trust are the two most overly used, under most used and related topics to conflict prevention and resolution, so when a high degree of trust allows for open exchange of communication, problems can be disclosed, diagnosed and corrected oftentimes before they become compounded. Another thing we know is in some of the leadership research that Tschannen-Moran has done looks at how leaders, principals in schools can foster the flow of trust with colleagues and families by being more open and honest with their communication. So what we know about communication is, it needs to be two-way. It needs to be bidirectional, so we need to hear from the families as much as we need to hear from the educators and vice versa. It needs to be frequently and regular. It should be culturally responsive, which means we want to ask the family, ""What's the best way for us to communicate with you? Do I need an interpreter? Do I need a translator? And would you prefer to talk on the phone, in person, notebooks back and forth? What would you like or prefer?" So we're being culturally responsive to that specific family. Empathetic with our communication, understanding empathy also leads to benevolence and understanding of no harm will be done. And nonverbal listening behaviors are important to be aware of as well as verbal listening behaviors, so that might mean that nonverbally we're aware of our eye contact and our stance and our posture, et cetera, and then verbally are we asking open-ended questions? Are we paraphrasing? Are we using encouraging statements, reflecting feelings, checking assumptions? That's a big one. Let's check an assumption before it gets into the mistrust category. Can we check that assumption? Can we connect with the families and demonstrate understanding and express through those cues? And those are those nonverbal and verbal strategies. And then advocacy, that's ... What I like to say is, we can build trust through advocacy, so there is such a thing as proactive and reactive advocacy, so proactive might be advocating for a service or an intervention, and reactive might be advocating for something that might have gone wrong that we want to change, and this is a skill that lots of teachers exhibit daily. One of the reasons why I ended up getting my PhD was reactive advocacy. I was teaching in a school, and I was ... I had a special day class, and it was far from the rest of the school on a playground with old desks and chairs, and my students had no textbooks, and I really wanted to advocate for my students to be able to partner with their ... I wanted to partner with all of the grade levels' teachers so that my students could be fully included or included as much as possible, but they needed those textbooks. They needed access. So that was my first form of reactive advocacy, and one of the things I learned very quickly is parents can be amazing advocates, so

although I had complained to the textbook person and the principal and the leaders and all of the important people that I was told to first go to, supervisors, et cetera, I also reached out to a parent and my families, and I shared with them how successful their students were doing and how even more successful they would be if they had textbooks, and so we partnered together. So I did a study on, are you an adversary or an ally advocate, that outlined some of the specific strategies that make advocacy more helpful versus harmful. I know that the word advocate has unfortunately gotten a bad name or rap in some instances where I've heard educators go, "Ugh, an advocate is coming." I want to flip that switch and change that narrative and look at advocacy as providing some of that benevolence and that help and that open honesty as well as that advocate is ultimately there for the student. So when it comes to advocacy, we want to make data-based decisions. We want to document, and we want to use peer-reviewed research, and there are several different strategies we can use, and my colleague, Meghan Burke, has done an amazing job exploring advocacy if you want to know more about that. And then the last thing I want to talk about is commitment, so commitment is remaining active, willing and interesting. So we educators and families want to see a commitment. We want to see a commitment to the child. We want to see a commitment that shows that we're being flexible and accessible. We're treating families and students as more than just a case. We're going above and beyond to resolve our issues and showing a level of commitment to the student. So there is something that we refer to that comes up a lot in the trust literature that's referred to as organizational citizenship, which describes basically when a worker person goes beyond formally prescribed job requirements and engages in nonmandatory behaviors without expectation of receiving explicit recognition or compensation. I think a lot of you might be nodding along in realizing that you have organizational citizenship and that you demonstrate that pretty regularly. I would say that by you attending this webinar. So knowledge-based trust emerges on the basis of the quality of the social exchanges we have, and there's also knowledge-based trust and intuition-based trust and institution-based trust, I mean, and so that comes with that level of commitment that also families want to see that you are indeed committed to their child. So I want to end on this note. Tschannen-Moran shared that, although relationships necessarily involve two parties, it takes only one of these parties to change the quality of the relationship, so in closing, trust takes work. Trust requires work. This isn't rocket science, but we need to benevolent, reliable, honest, open, competent, and we can do that through respectful behavior, equitable, communicative advocacy and a level of commitment between families and educators. And I greatly appreciate your time and attention. I hope this was valuable. I know I went over a little bit, Melanie, but I'm happy to stay after if there are any questions and things that came up during the chat.

>> There were a few questions, but first, Tracy, thank you so much for being so generous in sharing your work on this critically important topic, fantastic, and thank you, everybody, for joining us today. Before we get into some questions, I know some folks might have to sign off, but your feedback is really important to us, so I put the link to the SurveyMonkey evaluation in the chat box for you to access quickly, so if you would, we would very much appreciate your feedback. And so I'll go ahead and ask a few of the questions that have come out. So the first one, when you had parents help to get textbooks, how did the building administrator respond to you? Because that can lead to some mistrust?

>> Absolutely, absolutely, and great question, and that incident was actually quite the impetus that really got my work going with working with families. Actually, the building administrator, I was open and honest with them, so I was attempting to build trust in my own right. Prior to me talking with the family,

I shared with the administration that I was planning to talk with the families, and I did it in a very professional way. It was during back-to-school night. I was talking about textbooks and that I was trying to find some, and I was having a hard time ordering them, and the textbook, ultimately what it was was the textbook person who ordered them in our school unfortunately was quite a gatekeeper, and she used a very derogative term to describe the students I worked with when I asked her why I didn't have textbooks, and a brand-new fifth grade that was opened in the middle of the year got textbooks right away or third grade. So I did meet with the principal ahead of time. I was very open and honest and vulnerable, and I shared my confusion, some of my challenges, and I was fortunate that I had a very trustworthy administrator at the time who, although I wanted that person to advocate more for the textbooks, I don't think that administrator knew the extent that I was dealing with until I openly shared it, and at that point, they thought it was a good idea to share with the families how things were going.

>> Great. And there's a lot of interest generated in the book. Can you tell folks how they can order it perhaps through the publisher?

>> Yes, Pearson is the publisher, and what I want to emphasize about the book that I love is that we created a compendium at the end, which means basically there's a lot of extra information that's very supportive throughout it. One thing, for example, there's an example IEP, behavior plan, things that I put together as well as my colleagues. There's also several ... We have different components in each chapter. We had advocacy in action. I know I did a conflict prevention and resolution think about in each one, so what I want to say about this is, it was very much developed for people who train educators. I think it could be used in service as well as preservice, and then my colleague and I, Kathleen Kyzar, created the entire MyLab information that is offered through Pearson that includes PowerPoints, quizzes, exams, et cetera, again, emphasis that if you're not a teacher-preparation person, I still think you could easily adapt it to fit a day-long training or ongoing trainings or things like that, so Pearson is the publisher.

>> Very good. Thank you. Can you talk a little bit about how social media is affecting trust and what we can do about it?

>> That is a great question, and it comes up regularly. Unfortunately, I think one of the slides that I talked about that I want to emphasize, when trust is broken, there's an increase in behavior, so from a behavioral standpoint ... This is the behavior scientist in me ... it's extinction, right? So something that was previously reinforced has been stopped being reinforced, which means that if the family in the past felt that they had a good connection with the school or felt that things were working well or something was going well that when it breaks, they tend to increase their behavior in variety and duration, so that means they may be around you longer or different ways, and oftentimes, unfortunately that goes into social media, which I've seen a lot, and I've heard a lot recently of family members maybe calling our specific administrators or educators on social media, and I've also seen teachers venting about stress with parents, et cetera, and I think when it comes to social media ... I'm a mom of three teenage girls, so I'm going to say that I think it's gotten out of control regardless, but I also think it's not going away. So as much as we would love it to or I would love to see TikTok go or Instagram or whatever go, I think what we need to do is flip the script and instead as much as we can saturate our own social media with the positive exchanges, things that we see. So just like media in general when we turn on the news, right,

we're more likely to see catastrophes, accidents, challenges, someone who broke a law, someone who didn't do something they should've done. We don't see the teacher of the year. We don't see the teachers that did a great job. We very rarely acknowledge those educators and families. So I would encourage schools and administrators and families to flip the switch and change it and as much as you can put the positives in social media so it's not so heavily weighted. We can't stop people from venting. That's their right, but what we can do is preface it and hopefully develop those relationships ahead of time, talk to families, talk to educators and talk about what we would like to see on social media and then encourage it, so when we're at back-to-school night, do a hashtag event. Encourage parents to take pictures of them with their teachers or whatever and #trustworks or what have you. Find a way to come up with some kind of movement to utilize that as a way to platform social media in a positive light and so that it doesn't always go to that reactive side of it. Hopefully that answers your questions.

>> Thank you. How would you suggest addressing someone who experiences vicarious trauma that tends to skew their perceptions?

>> So this being anyone who's experiencing trauma, that is something that we're really starting to consider more and more, especially in the field of behavior, and that goes back to when I talked about the reptilian part of our brain. That's when trauma comes up, so oftentimes we do have trauma. We have families who've experienced trauma with teachers when they were younger, parents who've had trauma with principals or what have you. And so much like flipping the script with social media, I would flip it as well and get to know families, get to know educators, get to know what their triggers are. What are challenging? We know that trust breaks down very commonly in conflict between families and educators when there's already been a previously challenging relationship issue, but we also know that many families ... And this came up in my advocacy study. Many families come with their own background, their own experience, which can be traumatic. It could be traumatic from a time that a teacher didn't do something or a child was lost or something happened. Things happen to families, so I think one of the most important things is develop that relationship, develop that trust. Be open. Be honest. And ask them about some of their background. Ask them about any potential baggage they might have so that when they start that relationship, they know what they're working with. I think a lot of times when it comes to family-professional partnerships, we're scared to ask questions. We're scared to get to know them on a human level, but that is what being open and honest is, so I would say get to know a person. Get to know what it is that's challenging for them and be aware of that, and sometimes when and if you are in a situation and you feel like someone might have been triggered by some type of previous trauma, that's when it's perfectly fine to say, "I think we should pause right now. I think maybe we can walk and talk. I think maybe we can take a deep breath. I think maybe we can just remove ourselves from the situation, and let's revisit this," or just to say, "You know what? I think right now it looks like it might not be a good time to talk about this. I really do want to talk about this when you're in a good place and when I can better support you," and providing that benevolence about that really makes a difference.

>> Great advice, great advice. There was a comment about leadership and the importance of leadership being critical to building trust overall. So the point was, it's leadership's responsibility to mobilize others to align with a vision of building a culture of trust. Can you speak to building a culture of trust as a leader?

>> Absolutely. Actually, ironically, that came out of my dissertation at the very beginning of my career with studying conflict. I studied two school districts that were high in conflict and dramatically reduced the conflict, and by high, I mean they had multiple due-process-hearing rates that just spiked high in this very small, small community, so something went wrong in these districts, and I wanted to study what happened, what happened before, and they were able to go down to zero hearing requests and, more importantly, happy, satisfied families who were sharing that they had trusting family-professional partnerships. So during that study, one of the number one findings that came out of it was the administrators made the difference. These two, during the times, there was a change in leadership that from the previous administration to the new administration, so from a lack-of-trust standpoint, the previous administration wasn't listening to families, wasn't very collaborative or communicative with the professionals that they worked with and wasn't very supportive of the school community, and the new administrators that came in that did build trust, that established ... Basically, they started with a very distrusting and very unhealthy relationship that was going on between educators and families in those school districts, and they did a complete turnaround, and many of their behaviors were a direct result, and that was being available to the families as well as the other educators. It was providing frequent encouragement and praise, which I find incredibly easy but very often neglected and forgotten about, simple things like ... I can't tell you how many times professionals and families talked about the times that an administrator wrote them a note, thanked them for attending the meeting, thanked them for sharing something and made them feel special, and that's something we don't tend to do much is, like I said, we're very reactive, so the educators, the administrators were available. They were honest. They were open, and they partnered with the families. They asked the families. They actually reached out to the most litigious, most challenging families in the district at the time. There was a very large parent group that was doing some very intense resistance advocacy, and that administrator reached out and said, "I want to work with you. I want to develop trust. I want to see what we can do," so that's what some of those behaviors were. I'd also encourage anyone who asked that question who was interested in it to check out Tschannen-Moran's "Trust Leadership: Leading in Schools," "Leading Trust in Schools." I might have messed it up, but it's in the references, and that's all very much geared toward what administrators can do.

>> Great. That pretty much wraps up the questions that we had. Again, we hope that everybody finds this information shared today valuable and meaningful and the important work that you do. Tracy, we are just so blessed to have you share your knowledge and your expertise with us and for our continued friendship with you. You help make CADRE better, and we thank you very much for that. One of my favorite comments in the chat, which have all been very glowing about you, is that you're a breath of fresh air in these most trying times, so we'll end on that note. And again, I'm going to post the chance for you to give some feedback to us in our survey in the chat. Please do so. We value it very much. And for those of us at CADRE, we wish you a fantastic start to a new school year and have a wonderful autumn, so thank you, everybody, and thank you, Tracy.

>> Thank you. Take care, everyone.

>> Bye-bye.

>> Bye.