
POSITION PAPER

Home as a Learning Institution: A Community-Based Learning Model for Atlanta, GA

A framework for equipping households as stable learning environments
through routines, tools, and community partnership.

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Home as a Learning Institution

A Community-Based Learning Model for Atlanta, GA

Executive Summary

Atlanta can meaningfully improve student outcomes and long-term opportunity by investing in households as stable learning environments. "Home as a Learning Institution" is a model that equips families with simple learning routines, practical tools, and consistent community support. This paper outlines the rationale, framework, implementation approach, partnership roles, and measurable outcomes for a pilot that can scale across neighborhood clusters.

Problem Statement

Educational outcomes are influenced by factors beyond school walls: time, consistency, caregiver confidence, access to resources, and neighborhood opportunity. When learning is framed as school-only, households are positioned as secondary, and caregivers often feel blamed rather than supported. This dynamic undermines engagement and limits the effectiveness of school-based interventions.

Core Thesis

The household is the most consistent learning environment a child experiences. If Atlanta strengthens the learning capacity of households through routines, tools, and community partnership, the city can improve student achievement, reduce opportunity gaps, and build a stronger pipeline into higher education and workforce readiness.

Framework: The Atlanta Learning House

Pillar 1: Rituals — Household learning routines designed to fit real schedules (15-5-1 model).

Pillar 2: Relationships — Structured connections between caregivers, students, mentors, and schools that reduce isolation and increase accountability.

Pillar 3: Resources — Home learning kits, neighborhood learning maps, and accessible content that translates school goals into household-friendly practice.

Pillar 4: Results — Measuring progress through behavior and growth indicators, including caregiver confidence, student engagement, and skill practice frequency.

Implementation: Learning House Zones

Pilot Design:

- Select 1-2 neighborhood clusters as Learning House Zones
- Partner with 3-5 schools per zone
- Recruit community anchors (churches, libraries, rec centers, barbershops/salons, nonprofits)
- Train Learning House Coaches (trusted community members)
- Deliver monthly or quarterly Learning House Activations

Core Program Components:

- Family onboarding workshop ("Build Your Learning House")
- Monthly activation event (hands-on learning + tools + mentorship)
- Home learning kit distribution + routine tracker
- Neighborhood learning map + calendar
- Feedback loop and micro-coaching support

Partnership Roles

Schools: provide plain-language skill targets and consistent communication.

Community anchors: host activations and provide trusted access points.

Higher education partners: offer volunteers, tutors, research support, and pipeline pathways.

Business partners: sponsor kits and support workforce-aligned skill development.

City agencies/nonprofits: coordinate access, reduce duplication, and assist with transportation/resource distribution.

Measurement and Outcomes

Short-term indicators (30-90 days):

- Routine adoption rate
- Minutes spent on learning routines
- Caregiver confidence improvement (survey)
- Activation attendance and repeat participation

Mid-term indicators (3-9 months):

- Attendance improvements
- Teacher-reported engagement increases
- Reading frequency and comprehension markers
- Math confidence markers

Long-term indicators (9-24 months):

- Academic growth metrics (as available)
- Reduced chronic absenteeism
- Increased participation in enrichment and pipeline programs
- Improved postsecondary readiness indicators

Risk Management and Equity Considerations

- Avoid deficit framing; operate strengths-based
- Offer multiple scheduling options (evenings/weekends)
- Ensure materials are accessible and culturally relevant
- Provide language support where needed
- Treat household structure with respect (grandparents, guardians, multi-family homes)

Conclusion

Atlanta can lead a national model by investing in the place learning already happens daily: the home. This approach is not a replacement for schools; it is a reinforcement that makes schools more effective. By building Learning House Zones and delivering consistent activations, Atlanta can create a learning culture that is visible, practical, and durable.

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