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Tech Tips for Virtual Open Circle Meetings

The routine of holding an Open Circle Meeting may be especially important for your students during this uncertain time. It will be equally important to acknowledge that this is a very different way to meet than they may be used to and to take the time to review some norms and practices for this virtual meeting space. Below are some tips to remind you to use the same facilitation skills you would use if you were meeting with your students in person - wait-time/think-time, whole-group responses, empathic listening, non-judgmental responses, open-ended questions, managing your pacing, body language and tone of voice.

- Use video, if you can
  NOTE: If recording, be sure to follow FERPA guidelines
- Give everyone a little extra time to join the call and get settled
- As everyone is getting settled, ensure that everyone can hear you
- Review technical logistics:
  - Gallery view vs. speaker view
  - Ensure computer volume is up
- Be mindful of those who may be participating by phone so that everyone will have a chance to speak
- Create/Review and practice norms for each meeting:
  - Mute computer or phone when not speaking
  - Practice wait time, think time (count to 3) between each speaker
  - If using video, have students physically raise their hand or use some other type of non-verbal signal for wanting to speak
  - Or, use "Raise Hand" feature if the on-line platform has one
  - Explain how and when to use the "Chat" feature if the on-line platform has one
  - Know that there may be glitches using the "Chat" feature to respond when appropriate. Check that you have the settings on (private) or (everyone) depending on who you want to see your message
  - Explain how to use participant reactions feature, e.g. thumbs up, hand clap, if the on-line platform has one
  - Use whole-group responses, e.g. "me, too" signal, thumbs up, silent applause, etc.
- Remember to use skill mini-posters as a visual, if possible
- Do a go around to get everyone's voice in the meeting time at some point (i.e. a one word appreciation go around at the end)

Feelings

happy / scared / sad / angry / surprised / embarrassed

Nonverbal Signal
A way of communicating without words

Call on me. / Good effort. / Say it louder. / Be quiet.

School Listening Look

- Keep your body calm.
- Look at the speaker.
- Ask questions and make respectful comments.