Using Video to Assess Student Attention in Virtual Class Meetings

**Don't Do This**
- Connect students' video use and eye contact time to participation points, grading, or school attendance.
- Remove students from the meeting if their videos are not on.
- Trick students into turning on their videos (e.g., for a class dance party).
- Give extra credit to students who have their video on.

**Do This!**
- **CHOICE.** Let students decide whether to turn on, or keep on, their video. Allow them to use virtual or blurred backgrounds and fun filters (e.g., be a banana or potato!). https://bit.ly/virtualmtgfilters
- **REAL-TIME CHECK-IN.** Ask questions often to assess student understanding. Allow students to respond via audio or virtual meeting tools (e.g., chat box, polls, nonverbal reactions - “thumbs up”).
- **USE DIGITAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS.** Collect different types of data to evaluate ongoing learning - Answer Garden, Gimkit, Kahoot, Google Forms, Poll Everywhere, Socratic, Crowdsignal, Formative, Classkick, Ted-Ed, Playposit, Ed Puzzle, Nearpod, etc.. https://bit.ly/formassesstech

**Why Does It Matter?**
- **PRIVACY.** Students might be uncomfortable displaying their living space to their peers.
- **SAFETY.** Students (and their family members) may not want their image captured, recorded, or shared. Students could be cyberbullied if a classmate takes a screenshot of their video.
- **EQUITY.** Students might have unreliable Internet access, low bandwidth, devices without video capabilities, or limited access to a device.
- **PERSONAL.** Students might feel shy or anxious to be on camera. https://bit.ly/zoomcams

**“But I Don’t Like Teaching to Blank Screens”**
Teach students to setup their Google Meet or Zoom profile picture as a bitmoji, school photo, or a favorite selfie. When the camera is off, the students' profile picture will show up, giving you a virtual audience to talk to.

**Ask Before Assume**
This is a challenging time for everyone. If students are struggling to show attentiveness, ask questions rather than make assumptions about their actions or punish them for lack of engagement.