

Elementary School Community Circle – Remote Learning

Community Circle and organized moments of reflection, student growth celebrations, and core values are essential in ensuring that student culture remains positive and students continue to learn and grow as young people. In the event of continued remote learning, it is essential that these cultural systems are built in to ensure that students still have the opportunity to develop their character and so we can come together as a community.

In order to ensure that all of our students across our schools are invested in key community moments, each leader should plan to run 2 circles per week and engage in 2-3 Additional Community Building options from the list below.

General Overview

- Community circle should occur two times a week—K-2 circle and 3-4 circle
- Circle will occur during student “in person” days to allow teachers to support and monitor in real time
- Circle will occur live via Zoom with an interactive Nearpod component. Leaders will lead circles live on Zoom and share the Nearpod link with students so that all can participate.
 - o During circle, Leader will lead as normal, but have interactive slides for TTs, gauging who to call on by reviewing responses.
 - o Students will be called on, asked to unmute, and share responses based on the responses that they shared in the Nearpod interactive slides.
- Deans of Students and Deans of Curriculum and Instruction will be tasked with supporting grade level circles, as well as all grade level teachers, to ensure students are engaged during the entirety of circle.
- Each circle should be accompanied by 2-3 reflection questions that students must complete (2-4, K-1 students will not have a required submission)
- Classroom teachers should read all reflection questions and answers and respond to students weekly.
- PA teachers/Fitness teachers can take the lead on planning other morning meeting/announcements for students. These will be pre-taped and sent out in daily updates or streamed in classrooms if not in a remote context.

Content of Circles

- Content of circle should be centered on:
 - o Core Values
 - o Academic Content
 - o Current Events
 - o Social Justice Figures and Movement
 - o Wellness
- Leaders in each region can share a bank of circle materials, so that messages can be shared across all schools.
- A Community Circle calendar should also be created so that it can serve as a resource for schools and regions.

Leader Responsibilities

In order for circle to take place, each leader must do the following each week:

- Create and lead two circles per week live on Zoom
- Create reflection templates for Grades 2-4 students
- Upload reflection sheets into each grade level Google classroom
- Follow up with teachers daily for highlights and key takeaways from student circle responses

Additional Options to Build Community

While circle serves as a perfect moment to build community, there are multiple other ways in which we can build positivity and community in the event of continued remote learning.

- **Students of the Month Newsletter:** On a monthly basis, each school should plan to send out a newsletter to students and families recognizing 15 students across the school for the great work they are doing.
- **Recognizing a Student of the Week:** Teachers send a student of the week blurb to a central location and then leaders send out a “Student of the Week” newsletter using the school wide list . These posts should include a picture of the student or the work submitted, and 3-4 sentences explaining why they were selected.

- **Work Completion All Stars:** Students who complete all work each month should be recognized as “All Stars” and be shouted out for their work completion percentages. These lists should be posted and students should be shouted out in the Community Class.
- **Optional “Culture Blocks”:** Each grade level will hold optional social hours on a bi-weekly basis. These social hours should be teacher led events—trivia, scavenger hunts, Kahoot games—and aim to ensure students have the opportunity to socialize with each other and teachers during the week.

Outstanding Questions:

- What are the non-negotiables for circle and where is there leader flexibility?
- Calendaring out parent involvement and parent participation in circles with cultural importance

Middle School Community Circle

Community Circle and organized moments of reflection, student growth celebrations, and core values are essential in ensuring that student culture remains positive and students continue to learn and grow as young people. In the event of continued remote learning, it is essential that these cultural systems are built in to ensure that students still have the opportunity to develop their character and so we can come together as a community.

In order to ensure that all of our students across our schools are invested in key community moments, each leader should plan to run 1 circle a week per grade span and engage in 2-3 Additional Community Building options from the list below.

General Overview

- If students are in school, community circle should occur twice a week on Monday—one session for 5th and 6th Grade and one for 7th and 8th Grade.
- Circle will occur in one of the following ways (1) via Zoom with students having their Chromebooks in front of them and headphones on or (2) with the teacher streaming a live Circle ran by a leader in classrooms.
 - o Leaders will run circles live on Zoom and share the Nearpod link with students so that all can participate.
 - o During a circle, the leader will lead as normal, but have interactive slides for TTs, gauging who to call on by reviewing responses.
 - o Students will be called on, asked to unmute, and share responses based on the responses that they shared in the Nearpod interactive slides.
 - o Deans of Students and Deans of Curriculum and Instruction will be tasked with supporting grade level circles, as well as all grade level teachers, to ensure that students remain engaged during the entirety of circle.
- Circle is an important part of our school culture and student growth, so ensuring students attend and participate in circle is key. To do this, the goal is to hold circle on days when students are at school - versus remote. This ensures that we are building positive touch points with all students.
 - o Each week, leader will plan a circle that can be streamed by students independently on their chromebooks while in school or streamed by teachers in class.
 - o In the event that Circle cannot be scheduled for days that students are in school, it should still be scheduled as a mandatory class that students need to opt into or watch the recorded Zoom session.
 - o To do so, students will be invited to a Zoom class with the Principal, and will navigate Zoom and Nearpod to have an interactive circle.
 - o While the goal is to have these occur on in person days, we know that this is a key point in building culture so want to ensure that they are occurring on a weekly basis. Based on the school calendar and how students are batched, campuses may need to shift the days that circle occurs, run more than 2 circles, or hold circles remotely. However, it is mandatory that circle runs once a week.
- In the event that we are not at school, we should consider either opt-in circles, forums, and/or videos for student celebrations and achievement.

Content of Circles

- Content of circle should be centered on:
 - o Current Events
 - o Social Justice Figures and Movement
 - o Core Values
- Leaders in each region can share a bank of circle materials, so that messages can be shared across all schools.
- A Community Circle calendar should also be created so that it can serve as a resource for all schools and regions.

Leader Responsibilities

In order for circle to take place, each leader must do the following each week:

- Create, lead, and tape two circles per week.
- Upload taped circles and reflection sheets for absent students to participate in circle.
- Follow up with teachers daily for highlights and key takeaways from student circle responses

Optional Forum

Leaders or teachers should also hold a weekly forum that is optional for 7th and 8th grade students. These forums should be live Zoom lessons that are geared towards upper middle school so that students have the opportunity to share their thoughts with each other. These can take the form of readings with student responses and reflections, an empowerment course, or social justice discussions.

Additional Options to Build Community

While circle serves as a perfect moment to build community, there are multiple other ways in which we can build positivity and community in the event of continued remote learning.

- **Students of the Month Newsletter:** On a monthly basis, each school should plan to send out a Newsletter to students and families recognizing 12 students across the school for the great work they are doing. Each grade level can also create and submit a video monthly shouting out these students.
- **Recognizing a Student of the Week:** Teachers can each post a student of the week who has shown exemplary work, effort, and persistence in online learning. These posts should include a picture of the student or the work submitted, and 3-4 sentences explaining why they were selected.
- **Work Completion All Stars:** Students who complete all work each month should be recognized as “All Stars” and be shouted out for their work completion percentages. These lists should be posted and students should be shouted out in the Community Class.
- **Honor Roll Video Celebration:** In place of Honor Roll Breakfast and Circle, a video should be put together that recognizes students for achieving Honor Roll or High Honor Roll. This can then be emailed to the families of the students who are recognized, as well as posted in the school’s Google Classroom.
- **Student Book Clubs:** As a way to connect with students and ensure that they are reading, optional book clubs can be created. The book clubs can meet weekly for a discussion of a group of chapters. Books can be purchased and sent via PDF and book clubs can be led by the school leader or any interested teacher.
- **Brother to Brother and Sister to Sister:** Teacher led clubs can still take place via Zoom. Launching a Brother to Brother or Sister to Sister group with the 6th-8th graders can support student development, build connections, and help students feel invested in the community.
- **Optional “Social Hours”:** Each grade level can hold optional social hours on a bi-weekly basis. These social hours should be teacher led events—trivia, scavenger hunts, Kahoot games—and aim to ensure students have the opportunity to socialize with each other and teachers during the week.

Next Steps

- Build Google Drive with circles
- Build Monthly Community Calendar with all Circles and Additional Events