



## Intentional Nonverbal Communication Cues

### Recommended Usage:

Read the list below and check the box next to each gesture that you plan to prioritize moving forward. Strive to incorporate as many of the nonverbal strategies as possible to improve overall communication and connections with students by minimizing perceived physical distance.

### Hand Gestures

- Use your hands to celebrate individual student wins.** Try giving a student a "virtual high five" or "applause" in the camera the next time they exceed an academic or behavioral expectation.
- Use hand signals—such as thumbs up/down or a show of hands—to conduct a quick True/False poll or pacing survey.** This can help recapture disengaged students and adjust pacing according to students' progress.
- Chunk multi-step instructions with your hands.** When walking students through a multi-step process, use your hands to visually segment the instructions into easy-to-follow steps.

### Upper Body Positioning

- Mimic direct eye contact by placing the speaker's "box" as close to the computer's webcam as you possibly can.** Research has found the same psychological effects of direct eye contact (i.e., trustworthiness, warmth, compassion) in video calls as in live person-to-person interactions.
- Nod while making a key point.** When the speaker is nodding, their head movement directly impacts whether or not the listener believes the speaker is telling the truth.
- Turn your head and look sideways into the camera to show you're listening intently.** The human brain is wired to recognize the combination of tilting an ear toward the speaker and raising eyebrows as a signal of an active listener.

### Other Signals

- Use Zoom's digital gestures or GoogleMeet's "Nod" extension.** These digital tools allow users to send emojis in a variety of expressions while not taking away from the message of the speaker.
- Stand while teaching; use an easel, stand back from the camera, and move your body.** This helps instructors teach more authentically and make lessons more engaging.
- Ensure your in-home background is as free of distractions as possible.** If opting for a virtual background, here's [a customizable template](#) to make your own.