Why Should I Be Present?

Promoting Accountability and Engagement: A Design Sprint

Even without virtual learning, **keeping an entire class full of teenagers attentive throughout a lesson has its challenges.** It is very likely that students will eventually get distracted. It is not always directly visible when students are focused on something else, such as when they are on their phone. It is possible that students may be doing other homework, playing games, having side conversations, or thinking about other responsibilities.

Problems like these already occur often in an in-person environment, but they may occur more frequently in a remote classroom setting where it is easier to get away with these actions. While students are always susceptible to the distractions listed above, regardless of the type of learning environment, there are more ways that students can disengage themselves from the lesson at home than when at school. For example, students can position their camera so that they can use their phone without being seen, or they can easily be on an app/website other than Zoom. Due to the ease at which students can get away with distracting themselves, many students may choose to intentionally remove their focus from their lessons.

Virtual learning poses another challenge very similar to distractions: the ability to mute audio and turn off video while in a call. In classes where participation is not required, nothing is stopping students from just muting themselves and turning off their video so they can do work on other things or even sleep. This can be worse than simply tilting the camera away since these features essentially allow students to skip their classes. Whether students decide to mute themselves, turn their camera off, or do both simultaneously, they can detach themselves from their class without the threat of any real repercussions.

Other issues that may affect student attendance may include unstable internet connections, loud home environments, lack of necessary materials, and at-home and family responsibilities. These can lead to many consequences that harm both students and teachers. Learning the right and appropriate content is crucial to being successful as a student at any school. The ability to disengage completely will result in lack of comprehension and poor performance on assignments. Both of these will ultimately affect students' overall performance in the given class, as well as cause them difficulties in future classes where the knowledge of that class/subject is crucial. If done consistently over a longer period of time,

this can form a habit of unfocused behavior which can affect them in both virtual and in-person classroom settings.

Given your knowledge of distance learning and the effects it has on education, create an effective course of action to combat the lack of student accountability to help them reach their full potential as they participate in their new classroom environments.