Staying Connected through the School Year Ending

As you plan for the last several weeks, consider bringing the following suggestions into your virtual classroom and interactions. Recommended questions can be used for class discussion, small groups, or personal reflection activities. Remember, your job is to listen and help students articulate their thoughts, not to “fix” or solve what is expressed. Responding with empathy and kindness comes naturally to teachers, so share your heart as you hear what they have to say.

**Reflection: Review and Celebrate**  Think about times when your students showed initiative or how they have changed over the school year. Your reflection and detailed description will help your students also feel like you cared enough about them to remember the small stuff.

- How does it feel to be ending the school year?
- Where did we, as a class, begin and how far have we come, in terms of academics, problem solving, and personal and classroom growth?
- What will they miss about this year?
- What will they never forget about this year? / What is one nice memory that they have from this year?

**Integration: Growth and Change**  Help your students think about how their new skills and growth affect who they are now and what they are capable of doing.

- What did they learn about themselves this year?
- What have they discovered are their strengths?
- In what ways did they surprise themselves with what they accomplished?
- What is one think they feel proud about
- One obstacle or barrier that they were able to remove?

**Looking Forward: New Challenges and Opportunities**  Help your students become excited about what comes next. Empower them to feel they have some choice and control over what they want to have happen, based on what they have learned this year.

- What do they want to learn next year?
- What friendships will they take with them?
- What do they wish for each other in the future?

This is an important time of the year for most of your students, this year especially. Take the time to stay engaged and reflect, integrate, and look forward with your class so they leave on a positive and inspiring note. The more you can help them understand how they are currently applying what they have learned, the more they can believe in that change and growth themselves.

**Your school’s Resilience Consultant is here to support you as you create healthy closure for you and your students at the end of this year.**

**Resources**
American Psychological Association, *Grief and COVID-19: Mourning our bygone lives*
Tes for Schools (international student counseling organization), *Five ways to help children heal after the pandemic*

www.AcknowledgeAlliance.org