

North Star Educators: Assess Your Planning Progress

To the extent that you align your wishes, your beliefs and your patterns of thought and planning, your North Star will remain clearly visible. Planning is the most flexible point of the star.

Consider following questions, to begin refining your planning steps.

1. Did your wish fall into more than one category on the wheel? Do you feel passionate about more than just teaching academics? Have you begun planning an integrated, scaffolded unit plan and maybe even a long-term pacing guide?
2. What do you or will you teach, a single subject or multiple subjects? Based on your response, what locally relevant altruistic challenges might your students help mitigate, once inspired by the skills you foster?
3. Have you seen articles online about people whose daily lives, jobs, research or acts of kindness have made a difference in their fields of study? Based on the examples below, *Pre-Setting North Stars for Learners*, research an article related to a subject you teach. Imagine turning the article into a North Star project for students with an opportunity for immediate service. If you are taking an instructor-advised course, attach the link or describe the sample article and assignment in a post to your instructor.

Pre-Setting North Stars for Learners

Mathematics: Many students wonder how their skills will be useful later. Fallen bridges in several cities left commuters stranded for years, until engineers could design new and safer replacement bridges. An article about such a bridge could inspire math students to visualize the use of math to solve engineering problems that make a critical difference for a whole city. Students design dioramas out of local materials and invite an engineer to come and grade their designs for safety. They honor the engineer for altruism. They have a chance to write about their own potential for saving lives through safe building practices.

Science: Students of science learn to create hypotheses and objectively collect data. The questions explored, however, make all the difference. Find an article that shows how a scientist asked a question that influenced life in a positive way. Students submit their own questions to a national institute of health for exploration.

Geography: Students may wonder about the significance of this field of study. To show its value in the future, find an article showing how climate affects various regions and is predicted to influence migration as people search for water to irrigate crops. Students then map a region that will likely absorb immigrants and write a recommended policy for

caring for the newcomers and opening new industries and growing options, such as waterless growing techniques. They send their plans to an interdisciplinary team of real-world planners, including geographers.

Literacy: Find a book review about an author of a work of nonfiction, fiction or poetry that inspired change in a field such as environmental protection, food security, public health or peace. How does the review help students feel the value of not only researching new information but sharing it in a way that promotes changes in action or attitude? Students create their own book for the school library with poems, stories or articles designed to celebrate or improve life in the community.