We're going to talk now about three planning tools that can help you in your process of preparing for an effective teaching day and effective teaching unit and effective teaching year.

I'm going to share my screen for just a minute, as we talk about matching community needs and resources. When you begin to think about yours, see if I can find it here. Here we go. Again, think about your community and the things that you have going on. Ask yourself, if I had to align the challenges going on in my community with the skills that my students are learning and the habits-of-heart and character traits I want them to develop, how do they line up?

Perhaps one thing that you've noticed is that challenges are often short-term issues. Picking up trash at a park, well, maybe it just keeps collecting there. Maybe you want your students to learn something like dedication, you want them to understand the history of your community, and how it was the long-term dedication of the community founders that really turned the corner and helped the city founders develop and establish programs that help the community thrive. Maybe they built the farms that were able to feed the initial community members and get the count off to a good start.

Maybe you want them to, as they're studying history, to be practicing the habit of dedication. Maybe you decide, oh, well, we will do a mural project about dedication. At the same time, we'll be growing a community garden, just to see what kind of dedication it really takes to grow food, and to see who we can serve to deal with our current food insecurity issues. You look at the community needs. Who is it in your community that's hungry today? Is there a challenge with homeless people with a vulnerable group with orphans? Who is it that would need to eat the food that you serve? What community members would you want to honor for their dedication to addressing those issues? Would you want to represent history, as in, here are people who have shown dedication in the past? You pull up a sheet like this, matching community needs and resources. You write your theme, dedication, the knowledge, the relevant applications presented, you want them to learn about history, maybe agronomy, maybe some biology.

How do you want them to apply those capacities? You list all of the things you want them to learn. Who are the natural guest presenters that might come talk about some of those themes? Well, the people that you would want to honor would be on that list. You would think about the dilemma that you're wanting them to solve today. Maybe there's a drought going on, so maybe it has to be drought resistant farming. Maybe there's a potential service-learning field trip to the to a historical site in the area. Maybe it's to the first farm with some original farming equipment to see how difficult it was initially to go fruit on the land. Maybe that's where the mural will be that you're going to be erecting to honor people. Maybe another guest presenter will be a mural artist who will help them learn how to use math to turn small segments of that mural that they create in the classroom into large projected squares, so that they will be working collaborating as a group.

To do this project, you'll begin to do your planning on a worksheet like this. And if you have several of these worksheets throughout the year, one for each major project, it becomes easier to catalog the information you need to collect the contact information for guest presenters and to change it as needed. You have a place to put that information down.

Now, as you begin to do your project, you may have some wonderful experiences. You'll want your students to know that you value what's on this list, not just academic scores, that you value the collaboration process, you value their habit of dedication, their social cohesion, everything that they're learning. What are you going to do now? Well, maybe you are going to go to another form.

You are wanting to find out how we can track their progress. You want to know what it is they should be trying to master. You want them to know how to integrate academic learning, and artistic skills, and understanding of history, understanding of botany, all these other processes with the habit apart, which in this case, is dedication. So instead of just presenting them with a letter grade or a numerical grade, you are going to give them a rubric to look at.

This is a simple word document. It has the category that you're assessing over here has the different levels of mastery. Are they a master? Are they an apprentice? Are they just beginning to learn? Are they a novice? Here they understand it doesn't say success or failure. It just tells them where they are in the process of learning. They know what they have to work on what they need to work on. The rubric measures their dedication and their collaboration equally with their understanding of art, social sciences and science.

If the goal is to create this mural, and then to go and present it at an event, or field trip, what led up to that was a lot of work on the mural, what preceded that was an understanding of history and understanding of the various processes, understanding of the ecosystem in which history existed. They have depicted a desert or fertile farmland or whatever was behind the figures in that historical mural. They needed accuracy in their art and their social science. They needed to collaborate with their muralists. They needed to create the installation. They needed to rehearse for their speeches and their letters, whatever was presented on site. And here, they needed dedication, every step of the way. This mural defines what the outcome should be that they're trying to achieve. And then at the end of the process, what did they actually achieve? Isn't this a little bit more meaningful than just handing them a letter score or numerical score?

This is a planning tool that you can adapt. You're not going to use something this detailed every day. But if you have one major project, per term, or per semester per unit, it's worth your time to create something like this that the students can use to plan to set their goals and their understanding of what they should be trying to achieve. Then just fill it in at the end.

There's one more planning tool I'd like to present. That’s the teacher's evaluation—self-evaluation. You're not going to necessarily need to share this with anyone. But how do you set your own goals? What do you want to be the outcome of your year as a teacher? You can take a look at this at the beginning of the year. Fill it out in the middle of the year and then at the end of the year. How did I do if my number one indicator of success and achievement was helping my students transform the broader community? Wow, that really helps me understand why they were learning.

To do that, here's what I have to do. Well, I have to have a planning process in place. That's why these tools are helpful to me. I needed to have an assessment that was meaningful for each habit-of-heart. I was really a much better teacher if I had a global wisdom exchange that enhanced what I was doing in the local community. For my students, I had positive classroom management techniques, and strategies that reinforced my curriculum. I planned that in the summer, and then I carried it through to the end of the school year, I had all of the spokes of the wheel moving together.

When I planned my units, I had a pacing guide for the whole year. My art, my music, reinforced it. There were collaboration skills going on with my teaching team. We all work together to reinforce one another. And there was achievement that was evident as a result of that, not independently.

Now, you might say, how did we get there? Well, the unit plan that you learned how to create in another program, in a summer, you probably sat down and got that work done in advance. You created a unit plan, maybe three chunks of three, so that you had one for the autumn months, one for the winter months, one for the spring months. That would be your pacing guide.

You had already developed these community resource sheets, you've already looked in advance and said, “Oh, in the wintertime, I'm going to be studying biology. That would be an ideal time for my students to have a healthcare worker come in, and maybe talk about disease and do a project related to that. In the springtime, oh, that would be a great time to do my farming project.” You've already pre-thought your year, creating a pacing guide that aligns your school year with your desired broader community outcomes. You've got a head start. By thinking ahead, matching these community resource sheets with your unit plans, keeping a file of that, chunking them by calendar month and by semester.

Then at the end of the year, when you self-assess as a teacher, you're going to be able to fill out this final planning tool and say, “Wow, that was that was easy. wasn't as hard as I thought it would be.” Does it require planning? Yes. Is it well worth it? Yes.

This isn't something that you do at the last minute. It's both an art and a science. But once you get the hang of it, you won't want to do it any other way. Thank you very much. This was your your session on three helpful planning tools. Thank you.