

Student Well-being: A Collective Responsibility

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Implementation: Putting ideas into practice

ANNIE KIDDER: If we just look at well-being and figure out how we can measure well-being in isolation from curriculum, for instance, we continue the siloes. If we think about equity separately from curriculum and well-being, we also do that. So, I do think that we have not solved the interconnecton. I really have a problem with dividing cognitive from non-cognitive. I think the science is very, very strong now that it's a very old definition that's not true. Stuart Shanker talks about that a lot. You know, it's one brain and it's all in there, and that if we keep dividing it that way -- especially to the public -- they think -- or they may think -- all this kind of well-being off skill stuff's kind of--that's really, really nice, but, yeah. Do it on Friday afternoons, but get to the hard stuff. And I think the evidence in neuroscience and everywhere is of those interconnections. Even when you ask employers now what kind of employees do they need, they want employees that can collaborate, that can take criticism, that have initiative, that can persist, that are resilient, that are critical thinkers. So, I think we have quite a way to go in Ontario in terms of how we're looking at those in an interconnected way, and I think right now they are a little bit siloed. We've had big announcements about how we're going to, you know, refresh the curriculum. And probably that's the first thing to look at. To look at the curriculum, understand where all the global competencies fit within that curriculum, and then understand how that supports well-being. And from the work that we've been doing, we are sure that educators need more time to be able to collaborate, that working together really helps what you're doing in your own classroom, and as a whole school that sometimes, you know, we have to think of it, again, not as an add-on but as a core part of the work of teaching and learning. And if we want that to be the core part of the work, we have to make sure that it's built into the system. And I think I would add to that that the reason why it's important to define things in a concrete way and why we're finding that that common lexicon helps is that it provides the kind of tool for that collaboration. You know, we've got kindergarten teachers talking to grade 10 math teachers about competencies within creativity because they're talking about the same competency. So, if you just have big kind of nebulous overall kind of rhetoric about what's important, it doesn't support those incredibly important conversations that educators need to be having.