

Student Well-being: A Collective Responsibility

John Almarode

Who is John Almarode

JOHN ALMARODE: Much of the work I do today, much of what drives my passion in teaching and learning comes from my experiences in the public schools. I taught Algebra I to a group of students that really had no interest in Algebra I. They were great students, but they had no interest in solving quadratic equations, finding the slope of a line, or identifying solutions to simultaneous equations. On top of that, they were often students that struggled in school. And so here they were in my Algebra I classroom, and my job was to get them to pass the end of course test. And as a teacher, I began to ask questions about student learning and my teaching, and its influence on their growth and development, and their growth and achievement. And so, that has led me down the path of research and a focus on what works best in classrooms. But not just from a researcher's angle. Research is fine. Study in classrooms is great, and research is a major part of what I do. But if we don't take research and translate it into something that teachers can use on Monday morning, then the research really is nothing but a mental exercise and something that's going to collect dust on the shelf. So, what brings me here today is the goal, or the ambition of trying to answer the question, what works best, and how do we help classrooms put it into practice? Because at the end of the day, every research study, every scientific grant, every question that someone at a university or a medical school asks has a seven or eight-year-old on the other end of it. And because it matters to that seven or eight-year-old, it should matter to us. And that's the passion that brings me here today.