

Pearson Calculated Success Podcast

Episode #0

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Calculated Success
A math podcast by Pearson

Introducing Calculated Success:
A conversation about the new podcast
with Host Jessica Bernards

Jessica Bernards

Instructing, innovating, succeeding. This is "Calculated Success," your go-to podcast for all things higher ed math and statistics. I'm Jessica Bernards, your host for this series. And I'm here to connect you with the latest trends and practical solutions to improve instruction and student success, brought to you by Pearson. Let's solve the equation for better teaching together.

Erin Kelly

Director of Marketing

Hi, everybody, my name is Erin Kelly. I work with Pearson Education on our math and statistics list for higher education. And I am super excited to introduce Jessica Bernards. She is an amazing math instructor, and contributor to the math and stats community. Currently a full-time instructor, teaching both at the University of Oregon, as well as Portland Community College.

Jessica Bernards

Math Professor, University of Oregon

Hey, everyone, I'm excited to be here. Really excited to bring a podcast for math educators to life. So I'll give a little bit of my background and then we'll dive into why we're doing this podcast. And then we'll talk a little bit more about my background too, so we can make sure we all align. So I began teaching in 2005, initially at the high school level. And then in 2010, I transitioned to the college level, and was very fortunate to work at both Portland Community College and the University of Oregon.

And I have also been very lucky to have received several awards for my work, including the AMATYC Teaching Excellence Award in Mathematics and the NISOD Excellence in Higher Education Award. Additionally, I'm a co-author on several math textbooks and a math study skills series and regularly speak at state, regional and national conferences.

Erin Kelly

Awesome, that is an incredibly impressive background. And I know that you just bring such a great level of enthusiasm and fun to conversations around math education. So we're super thrilled that you're hosting this podcast. We know that you're gonna be bringing us content that is great for both K through 12 and higher ed instructors

teaching math. So tell us a little bit about what we have to look forward to and why you wanted to go on this adventure of building a podcast series.

Jessica Bernards

Yeah, love this question. So here's the deal. I feel like in the education world, we are now getting so much more stuff added to our plate on top of just teaching, like administrative work. And on top of that, budgets are getting cut at colleges, which means less money for professional development. So it's kind of a twofold thing where we're so busy doing so many things that like reading a professional development textbook can sometimes feel overwhelming, and traveling to go to a conference also sometimes isn't feasible based on your college budget.

And so we thought, "How can we bring the professional development to you? How can we bring these nationally known, you know, education speakers and get them into the homes of any math educator that wants to learn?" And the best way to do that is through a podcast. Really quick, easy way, you can be folding your laundry, driving to work, going on a walk, and hopefully get 20 minutes in. And you're gonna be getting some really good practical, immediate, applicable strategies that you can bring into your classroom right away. With topics ranging from, for example, diving into integrating AI in your classroom, as both your teaching sidekick, but also teaching students how to use AI effectively in mathematics, implementing active learning strategies in math, applying equitable grading and teaching practices, and then exploring the pros and cons of the co-requisite model. And just so much more, all of those hot topics, and really bringing in experts from across the nation to help us learn and grow, and do it in a way that's feasible for the world that we're in now.

Erin Kelly

Awesome, that sounds super exciting. So you are such a fixture in this community and you've made amazing connections. Who are you gonna be talking to?

Jessica Bernards

Oh my gosh, you guys, I'm so excited. So we are going to have Dr. Brittany Mosby, who is a close friend of mine. She's amazing, she is the director of HBCU Success at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. She's also a math educator, so she knows exactly how the classroom works. She's gonna tell us all the ins and outs of how to bring equity into your math classroom.

We have Dr. Kathy Almy, who's the owner of Almy Education and a math reform expert. She currently supports over 40 colleges and universities and many states, including my state she just was working in, about reforming math through co-reqs. So she's gonna give us all the ins and the outs, the dos and the don'ts, the good and the bad of those.

And then we have AI aficionado Dr. Brianna Hitt, who's gonna talk about all the ins and outs of AI. She is an assistant professor at the United States Air Force Academy.

And then another person we've got lined up is Dr. Scott Adamson, who's an award-winning math instructor and really a leader in the field of active learning in math. And just so much more.

So we're super excited. If you have any topics that, you know, we haven't done a podcast over as these podcasts come out, that you're interested in knowing, definitely let us know about. Erin will have a like, subscribe and comment section to the podcast that people can kind of come in and give us some ideas that they wanna see.

But the biggest goal for this, in my opinion, and if anyone's seen me speak at conferences, you know, I don't like to talk about just the theory. That's great to know and the research behind things, but I always wanna leave professional development classes with, "Gimme the tangibles, what can I bring into my classroom right away and start using?" And so that's what I'm hoping that everyone can get out of this. Listen to a 20, 30-minute, you know, great interview. Hopefully it'll be great. And then you'll leave with inspiration. You'll leave with hands-on things that you can right away the next day bring into your classroom and start implementing.

Erin Kelly

Awesome, yes. And hopefully listeners can already tell from your enthusiasm and your energy that you're passionate about this. You're passionate about this topic, you're passionate about teaching. What inspired you to pursue teaching mathematics specifically?

Jessica Bernards

Oh man. Okay, so true story about me, I actually started out wanting to be an elementary education teacher. My mom was one, so I thought I was gonna be a fifth-grade teacher like her. And then my passion for teaching math really got ignited my first year in college when I had to take the math class you have to take, you know, for your degree. And I had this professor who really transformed my perspective on the subject by making it relevant and engaging. I'd always thought it was like, I was good at it, but I was kind of bored. And he just really had this incredible ability to find real-world applications for every concept that we learned about, which ended up sparking my curiosity and just made me dive deeper into the subject.

So through that experience, it really showed me that profound impact a teacher can have on a student's relationship with math, and that math doesn't have to be this dry, abstract subject, but you can actually make it fun and exciting and directly applicable to our lives and our students' lives. And so that's what made me decide to go into it and really recreate that sense of excitement and discovery in my own students, and show them that math isn't just about solving equations, but really understanding the world around us in a more meaningful way, which I know sounds super cheesy, but it's true.

Erin Kelly

It's true, it definitely is true. I think we use math more every day than we realize we do. And so I know it's incredibly important and I know it's a barrier for graduation. So in

your own words, why do you think math is such an important subject for students to master?

Jessica Bernards

So I'll talk about kinda my teaching philosophy. So my philosophy's really rooted in that belief that everyone has the potential to excel in mathematics. In fact, my website is anyonecanbeamathperson.com. (Erin laughing) So if that tells you anything. But I'm just so passionate about creating an inclusive, welcoming and engaging learning environment that helps students develop a deep understanding of the math concepts. Because again, to me, there's no such thing as a math person, it's all about having that right approach, the support for students that you're giving them, and really helping them learn that they can persevere, not only persevere, I guess I should say, but really thrive and do well.

Erin Kelly

Definitely, and I think hearing some of the topics that you're gonna be talking about, I think you're gonna help so many other instructors be that teacher that inspires their students and helps their students overcome that challenge. Because I can't imagine what it's like to have to turn somebody around from, "I'm not a math person and I'm not gonna be good at this," to really thriving in the classroom. That's super exciting. What do you find most rewarding about teaching math?

Jessica Bernards

So one of the most rewarding aspects, I'm sure that most all of us would say this, is really witnessing that transformation of students throughout the term. So seeing that student who starts the class feeling anxious and intimidated with math really gradually build that confidence and that pride in their abilities, and by the end of the term, realize that they can indeed be successful in the subject and really understand it. And so that impact, in my opinion, goes so far beyond that math classroom in general.

So my goal is to really equip those students with skills that can transcend mathematics. So when they overcome their fear of math and succeed, they learn that really valuable life lesson that they can persevere through challenges in any area of their lives. And I've just found this newfound confidence and resilience can really help them face future obstacles, whether it's academic or personal, with a positive mindset and the belief that they can overcome anything.

I've been really lucky to actually witness this in my own son, which has been just, that transformation has been just amazing to see that he will take on anything that, even if it's scary, and be like, "You know what, Mom, I'm gonna try, 'cause I think I can do it. And it's okay if I fail, I'm gonna keep on trying. I'm not gonna give up." So really instilling that growth mindset in students, and just being there to support them and guide them through so that they know they're not alone.

Erin Kelly

That's awesome. It's about so much more than the math. I love that. So, awesome. Well, Jess, I'm super excited. I can't wait to hear the upcoming episodes, and Pearson is super proud to be sponsoring a series like this, because the math community is so important. And we're right alongside you in believing how important this topic is to get right and to inspire students to get through successfully, so.

Jessica Bernards

Yeah, I'm so excited. I hope you guys all love it, and hopefully you can laugh along with us. I intend to not have this be dry and boring as well. (Erin laughing) There'll be lots of laughs and lots of math fights probably with back and forths with the interviews, so I'm excited.

Erin Kelly

Love that, yes. There's not a world in which you could be dry or boring, Jess. (Erin laughing) I don't know. You ask my kids, they can tell you. (both laughing)

Erin Kelly

Awesome, cool. Well, thank you. And for those of you listening, Pearson looks forward to getting this out to you in the next couple months and learning alongside. So look out for information about this coming your way.

Jessica Bernards

All right, thanks, everyone.

Erin Kelly

Thanks.

Jessica Bernards

Thanks for tuning in to "Calculated Success," the podcast that adds up to stronger student outcomes, brought to you by Pearson. Subscribe to catch future episodes, then follow Pearson on Facebook and LinkedIn for even more insights in higher ed. I'm your host, Jessica Bernards, and we look forward to having you join us next time as we continue solving for teaching excellence.

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