



Essential School Leadership with Keith Nix

Lesson 1: An Overview of Essential School Leadership

Outline:

Six essentials for classical school leadership (and their characteristics)

Vision

- The head of school has to be able to articulate the story of classical Christian education.
- It is imperative that the vision is an embodied vision.
- A head of school is persuading faculty to come join your team, students to come join your school, and parents.
- In being the chief vision caster, practice. Learn to develop a language to use with students and parents that is persuasive and winsome, but not through negativity.

Strategy

- Ideally, the board and the head are working from a mutually developed strategic plan.
- You have to be clear on the priorities for a particular year.
- Every year the board and head develop a strategic agenda and the team needs to be organized around the plan.

Talent (People)

- Be humble enough to go after talent better than yourself in each area of operation.
- Develop your key people.
- Recruit and retain your talent. This requires emotional intelligence and humility.
- There is a need for organizational clarity and trust on your team.

Culture

- Culture eats strategy for lunch.
- Hire and develop culture makers.
- Culture takes watching. Your organization's culture is the sum of every conversation that happens in or about your organization. People talk about what they love.
- As a head of school, your job is to think about how you promote the right loves, interactions, and conversations.
- Part of culture making is speaking and listening to the things that you are committed to, so that when it is not there it gets exposed.



Have a good relationship with the board.

- This involves structure.
- This involves the way you do your job in terms of reporting and communicating.
- It involves learning about good boards (leading up).
- Think of creative ways to get more of the riches and depth of understanding to the board.

Commit to learning how a school runs financially.

- The people who understand the numbers the most make the decisions about what a school invests in.
- A good head of school should have a good idea about what tuition will be 5 years from now.