



## Essential School Leadership with Keith Nix and Robyn Burlew

### Lesson 6: School Culture (Part 2)

#### Outline:

Why are middle school boys a critical part of making a vibrant culture?

- To achieve what is wanted in the high school years, we have to keep students engaged during middle school years.
- Middle schools boys are awkward and uncomfortable, and they are being told to appreciate beauty. A lot of the culture would give them a pass on a lot of these things (even behaviorally).
- Appealing and persuading and helping them understand what you hope for them is worth it.
- It is the adult's responsibility to engage middle school boys.
- Male leadership is important as well as female leadership.
- To have the high school students' relationships flower, they have to blossom in middle school.

Why do you separate boys and girls in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade?

- Gender separation allows teachers to deal with boys as boys and girls as girls.
- Men relate in different ways, and boys rise up and grow into that when they are by themselves.
- Boys like to perform for the girls, which changes the dynamic.
- Girls are quieter when boys are in the room, so there is an academic advantage for them.
- Girls and boys both had more freedom to speak.
- This keeps class sizes smaller and gives extra attention during this critical time.
- This also puts more resources into this time (more teachers).

What do you do to develop teachers to be cultivators during this budding phase?

- The teacher needs resilience. The middle school teacher should not be enduring this stage.
- Coaches and leading culture making parents are important at this stage.
- In community, ask, "What are we doing intentionally with our boys at this age (technology, dating)."
- Coaches, parents, administrators, and teachers do intentional attentive shepherding.



How do administrators of smaller schools need to connect with parents and students?

- You are building relationships with students and parents that will necessarily determine what your school will look like because you are filling the school for the first time.
- Early on administrators need to model and talk with faculty in order to share about and pray for students.
- A Head of School must understand the middle school dynamic and need for shepherding.