



Parent Engagement

SESSION 7

A Framework for Formation



Formation Begins at Home and Christian Schools Walk Alongside the Home.

At the heart of Christian education is a deep theological truth:
Parents are the primary disciplers of their children.

Deuteronomy 6 tells us that it is parents who are called to “teach (these truths) diligently to your children... when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”



Parent Engagement is a two-fold process:

- A philosophy woven into the fabric of the school.
- Intentional programming that provides families opportunities to share in the life of the school and grow in relationship to other families and school personnel.





**Christian Education is
first and foremost
about formation –
training students to
use the fullness of
their unique giftings
to flourish in and
further Christ's
Kingdom.**

**It's not about results, but
about obedience.**



Your Christian school is more than just a school. It's a spiritual community where each person is seen, known, and loved.

It's a place where each family belongs.

It's a place where formation isn't just taught—it's *lived, together.*

And when we do this:

- We honor the primacy of parents - Parents are the primary, God-ordained educators and disciplers of their children. They have the first and most important responsibility for shaping their children's hearts, minds, and character.
- We commit to intentional partnership, and cultivate true belonging.
- We don't just educate. We disciple. We form. We prepare young people to live lives of Kingdom impact.



In Christian Education, this means:

- The family is the first classroom.
- The home is the first church.
- Parents are the first pastors of their children.

A Christian school never replaces this role. It honors it. Its job is to partner with parents.

What's the school's role then?

- Support parents in their God-given responsibility.
- Reinforce Biblical truths being taught at home.
- Partner in both academic and spiritual formation.
- Equip and encourage parents, especially when they feel unsure or discouraged.



“Many feel that the church is primarily intended to serve our individual spiritual needs or to group us together with like-minded people—a kind of holy fraternity. If we believe that church is merely a voluntary society of people with shared values, then it is entirely optional. If the church helps you with your personal relationship with God, great; if not, I know a great brunch place that’s open on Sunday.”

~ Tish Harrison Warren





What is the primary goal of your school?



What is the primary goal of your school?

Does everyone in your school know
what that goal is?

Do you have a plan for making sure
everyone knows it?



**“Your School is biblical
when the goal of the
Bible is the goal of your
school.”**

Jake Kounter



Christian Education is about the formation of souls.

“Christian education is not just about academic knowledge, but also about shaping a child’s character. Education should aim at developing both the mind and the heart. In his sermon “*The Value of Christian Training*”, Spurgeon emphasized that Christian education should mold students into virtuous and godly individuals, preparing them to live out their faith in every area of life.” C. H. Spurgeon

“

“We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God. God will be constantly crossing our paths and canceling our plans by sending us people with claims and petitions.”

~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

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What is the primary goal of your school?

5C
**Community
Alignment**

Common Vocabulary
Clarity
Cohesion
Comprehensiveness
Centripetal Patterns



What is the primary goal of your school?

Common Vocabulary

Clarity

Cohesion

Comprehensiveness

Centripetal Patterns

What does this look like at your school?

What are you doing now to address the primary goal of your school?

(15 second elevator speech)



What is your Only Comfort in Life and Death?

**That I am not my own,
but **belong** with body and soul, both in life and in
death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.**

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil.

He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12:28-31



First Things First

Belonging

The Gospel answers the human need for belonging by uniting us to Christ and His Church.

“To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God.” Tim Keller

We find belonging when we are rooted in Christ and live in the grace-based community of believers.

Belonging is the soil where formation takes root.

Spiritual and character formation doesn't happen in a vacuum. It happens in the context of relationships. From the beginning, God designed us for community (Genesis 2:18).

Without belonging, formation becomes performance. If someone doesn't feel safe, seen, or known, they're more likely to conform than be transformed—adopting external behaviors to fit in, rather than experiencing inward change.

Formation is relational, not just informational.

Christian formation isn't just about teaching truths—

it's about becoming..... more like Jesus.

That kind of deep transformation requires trust, vulnerability, and authenticity. None of that can happen if people feel like outsiders.

You can't disciple people you don't truly welcome them.

A parent, student, or teacher who doesn't feel like they belong may shut down, hide, or withdraw—which blocks the relational pathways God uses to shape hearts.



- Christian community is a divine gift where belonging is nurtured through life together.
- Belonging is forged not in ideal conditions, but in grace-filled, Christ-centered relationships. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)
- When Christian schools reflect the belonging we have in Christ, they become places where parents are not just welcomed—but woven into the fabric of community. Romans 12:5 – "So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."



Parents who feel they belong are more likely to trust teachers, support leadership, and stay long-term.

C.S. Lewis noted that our longing to belong is evidence we are made for a different kind of community—one marked by love, not competition. Schools that embody this become more than institutions; they become spiritual homes.



Everpresent Framework for Formation



**Head
Heart
Habits**



Everpresent Framework for Formation

**Head
Heart
Habits**

Grounded in Truth

**Transformed Through
Relationships**

**Solidified through
Experiences**



**Head
Heart
Habits**

**How could you build a
gospel-community of belonging by
inviting parents into partnerships
that are:**

**Grounded in
Truth**

**Transformed
through
Relationship**

**Solidified
through
Experience**



❤️ HEART

“Let all that you do be done in love.” – 1 Corinthians 16:14

We lead with HEART. This means we treat one another with kindness, compassion, and genuine care. Whether celebrating victories or walking through hard moments, we bring joy, warmth, and empathy into our conversations and classrooms.

- We listen well.
- We speak kindly.
- We assume the best.
- We seek connection over criticism.
- We bring fun, passion, and love into our shared lives.



🙏 HUMILITY

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition... but in humility consider others better than yourselves.” – Philippians 2:3

We lead with HUMILITY. No one in our community has “arrived.” We are all learning, growing, and leaning on God’s grace. Humility is the posture of a teachable heart—a willingness to listen, apologize, forgive, and serve.

- We admit when we’re wrong.
- We ask questions instead of making assumptions.
- We make space for others to shine.
- We value input, not just from those above us, but beside and below us.
- We follow Christ’s example: the Teacher who stooped to wash feet.



HONOR

“Outdo one another in showing honor.” – Romans 12:10

We lead with HONOR. Every person in our school—parent, student, teacher, staff member—is made in the image of God. That means we treat one another with deep respect, even when we disagree. Honor means speaking truthfully and graciously, setting high expectations and showing grace.

- We honor others in the way we speak about them and to them.
- We handle conflict with care and courage.
- We respect authority and steward the influence we’ve been given.
- We build others up and refuse to gossip, belittle, or divide.
- We believe excellence begins with integrity.



**“Nothing is more important in
your life than being one of
God’s tools to form a human
soul.”** Paul David Tripp



Thank you, guests

Please provide
your feedback!

