



NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Excellence in North Dakota public education through local school board governance

360 Feedback in the Superintendent Growth Process

360 feedback is a research driven model that is intended for coaching and growth of leadership skills for an executive leader – for our purposes – the superintendent of a school district. It is essential that 360 feedback be developed by an outside source who can be neutral and utilize research driven questions to arrive at valuable data driven feedback. To develop a survey and send it out to glean feedback under the guise of attempting to learn more about a district can actually cause more harm than good if it is not done in an appropriate manner.

A true 360 feedback is developed by an outside source. The results are used to inform coaching. Information given by the respondents is assured of its anonymity. The timing of such a tool is very important. While it will most certainly help a board member learn more about their district leader and will help them during the growth process, the 360 is not meant to replace the formal evaluation process as required in NDCC. If the 360 feedback process is not conducted with care and is done haphazardly outside of the realm of research driven questions, the result could create a disaster requiring months and possibly years for the organization to recover even though intentions may have been innocent. It is always important to remember that these processes involve people's lives, emotions, and opinions, so to find our way to the best reasonable data for coaching is critical to this process.

The type of information that will be gleaned from such a process are questions which delineate whether your district leader:

- Takes reasonable risks in order to improve the school in the best interest of the kids;
- Looks at situations from multiple viewpoints in order to gain perspective;
- Offers employees challenging learning situations, specifically to build skills and produce bottom line results;
- Develops trust with employees;
- Communicates openly and honestly;
- Displays confidence when presenting ideas or expressing opinions to others;
- Listens carefully to others to understand their needs and concerns;
- Makes decisions that might be unpopular if it is in the best interest of the school;
- Thinks about school growth for student achievement and explores new ideas for organizational development;
- Looks for new ways to achieve growth in student performance;
- Demonstrates competence and credibility in his or her area of expertise;

- Attracts and retains top talent; and
- Leads with an authentic leadership style
- Is accountable for actions and decisions

In North Dakota, the NDLEAD has been charged with and has for many years partnered with NDSBA to conduct the 360 feedback process for ND School Districts. NDLEAD has certified 360 feedback evaluators on staff and can help a school district conduct a 360 feedback process for a superintendent, assistant superintendent, or principal or other district leader for a very nominal fee. (\$100 for the general 360 – and a modified amount if the survey must be customized)