



PROMISING PRACTICES

FROM MINNESOTA PRINCIPALS AND EVALUATORS

Minnesota Department of
Education

360-Degree Evaluation Feedback for Principals

Overview of the practice

Near the end of the annual evaluation year, all principals in the district jointly attended the 360-Degree Evaluation Meeting in which each administrator shared his or her e-folio. The e-folios outlined their school and professional goals for the year, evidence of goal attainment, stakeholder input and individual reflections.

Each principal had approximately one hour to walk colleagues through his or her e-portfolio. During that time, colleagues asked questions and made comments related to the presentation. For example, administrators often spent considerable time talking through the results of their professional goals. Fellow administrators asked clarifying questions, such as, “Why was that important to you?” “What led you to narrow your focus to that area?” These questions allowed the presenting principal to demonstrate the depth of his or her knowledge and understanding.

The stakeholder survey results also received much time and attention. When reflecting on the year, principals around the table helped the presenting principal understand why stakeholders viewed certain areas as strong and others as places that needed improvement.

Goal or purpose of the practice

The primary goal of the practice was to foster collaboration and collegiality, and to provide administrators with opportunities to learn from one another. A secondary purpose was to provide principals with direction and clarity related to the expectations and performance levels of other administrators in the school district.

Process used to implement the practice

Principals were provided with a comprehensive introduction to the principal evaluation model, which included the 360-degree meeting protocol. Because the introductory meetings occurred in June—prior to the July 1 start date of the 360 degree feedback cycle—newcomers were included on the team so they could see the process in action and get a sense of what to expect and prepare for during their inaugural year.

Principals created their e-folios using Google Sites, a free service for creating, editing and sharing websites. Sites were shared with all members beforehand so participants could look through and familiarize themselves with the e-

folio format and elements. The format for the hour was one of “give-and-take,” with discussion and questioning as key parts. It was common for the time to pass quickly, because the presenters (and their colleagues) drilled deeply into the data and the evidence that was shared. The meetings typically lasted for half a day for all the administrators to receive feedback.

Supports or conditions needed

Trust and assurance of confidentiality among all school administrators are essential because sensitive items are shared during these sessions. This process can only be done successfully in a safe and growth-oriented environment.

Evidence of effectiveness

Participant feedback was positive. Principals and the superintendent regularly indicated that this half-day meeting was one of the most productive and insightful of the year. Affirmation, growth and camaraderie were all areas that were consistently reported.

Challenges other districts or schools might face in implementing this practice

As stated earlier, trust is key. In addition, newcomers to e-folios may need to start with realistic expectations on the types of evidence they should provide (files, video, charts, etc.) and what types of feedback they might receive.

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