

## 2016 NDSBA Negotiations Seminar Report

On February 11 there was a very interesting presentation about the new Superintendent Evaluation that has been developed. This evaluation is available online through a software company and makes the process more objective by providing very specific behaviors to look for when determining how well a superintendent is performing his job. I found many of the new features to be very appealing and the board will certainly need to have discussions about what we want the superintendent evaluation process to look like in the future.

The software company also provides board self-evaluations. It is my understanding that the board has discussed doing this in the past. A self-evaluation process may be more feasible with available apps that keep track of data for you.

On February 12 I attended the negotiations seminar proper. There were a variety of speakers including our own Kris Fehr. She did a wonderful job.

As someone new to negotiations the discussion about basic strategies, clear ground rules and legal considerations were all very helpful. An interesting take away was that some school districts have moved to having a board appointed negotiator instead of board members negotiating. Suggestions for possible person to negotiate on behalf of the board included attorneys, vice superintendents, business managers and HR directors. This was an option I had never heard of before and certainly provided some food for thought.

A panel of experienced negotiators gave advice and answered questions at the end. One of them said that it was important to build trust over time with those that we negotiate with. I thought that was great advice and something we are working towards in our district.