LEVERAGING SOCIAL CAPITAL FOR GENDER AND SEXUALITY ALLIANCES

By © Karina Esparza Sosa

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Abstract

In this study, I situate the work of Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) advisors within the context of the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* (SCSP) in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) and explore the ways in which GSA advisors leverage social capital in support of 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the province. Using a qualitative study design, I first reviewed the progression of the SCSP and its relationship with 2SLGBTQIA+ programming in NL public schools. I then explored GSA advisors' experiences in GSA by conducting semi-structured interviews with nine GSA advisors, employing egocentric network analysis to examine how they leveraged social capital within their social networks in support of their GSA work. I found that GSA advisors leverage social capital in a variety of ways with certain conditions influencing and facilitating this process: 1) the diversity of GSA advisors' networks matter for the GSA work and this composition facilitates bridging social capital, 2) trusting relationships are very important for GSA advisors' roles as they support bonding social capital; 3) school administrators and Safe and Caring Schools itinerants—policy actors who support the implementation of the policy—are key individuals for the GSA work as they facilitate GSA advisors' access to important resources, thereby supporting bonding and bridging social capital respectively; and 4) policy shapes behavior when and where the policy is understood. I conclude by arguing the importance of social capital and network theories in understanding the inequitable access to social capital by minoritized populations.

Keywords: social capital, gender and sexuality, GSA advisors, social networks, policy implementation

General Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to explore the different ways in which educators in NL schools support 2spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, questioning, queer, intersexual, asexual, non-heterosexual (2SLGBTQIA+)[1] students as their advisors in gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs) (i.e., also known as gay-straight alliances). GSAs are student-led clubs in which advisor(s) support students in developing a safe and caring space for everyone in school, but in particular, for everyone who identifies as 2SLGBTQIA+. This study explores the different ways in which GSA advisors engage with different people in their personal and professional networks and access important resources for the benefit of the GSA work. Under a specific policy environment, the findings of this study suggest that GSA advisors' relationships facilitate the GSA work, especially, by influencing their behaviours to access resources and supports from those relationships. GSA advisors' relationships are diverse and are embedded in an environment of trust. Furthermore, school principals and Safe and Caring Schools itinerants—personnel at the school district who offer direct supports to GSAs and schools—are very important people in the GSA work.

[1] For a comprehensive glossary of 2SLGBTQIA+ terms, please refer to Appendix A.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Across education systems in Canada and the United States, provincial and state governments are implementing reform strategies and policies aimed at providing safer learning environments for all students, including students who identify as LGBT[2](Rayside, 2008). Even with such policies in place, 2SLGBTQIA+ students still report feeling unsafe at school because of their gender and sexual identity (Peter et al., 2021). Racialized, Indigenous, and/or trans 2SLGBTQIA+ students experience greater marginalization due to their intersecting minoritized identities (Peter et al, 2021). For over two decades, some Canadian provinces (e.g., British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario) have incorporated safe and caring schools' initiatives to address these issues faced by 2SLGBTQIA+ students (e.g., bullying, intolerance, violence); for instance, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) created the *Safe and Caring Schools Project* in the late 1990s with programs addressing 2SLGBTQIA+ violence (Rayside, 2008).

Building on its original policy developed in 2006 in response to a Safe and Caring Schools Initiative (Department of Education, n.d.), the province of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) revised its *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* (SCSP) policy in 2013. The revised policy incorporated clearer direction for stakeholders in the school system (i.e., the Department of Education, school districts, school leaders, educators), greater resources (i.e., procedures, online resources), and more comprehensive guidelines for inclusive practices (i.e., guidelines to support 2SLGBTIA+ students). The updated policy encourages establishing Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs)—also referred to as Gay-Straight Alliances—which are student-led clubs

[2] Rayside (2008) uses the acronym LGBT, however, as an evolving term, 2SLGBTQIA+ is the acronym most commonly used across Canada. Throughout this thesis I have incorporated the acronym 2SLGBTQIA+ when referring to any person and/or community who falls under this umbrella of gender and sexual diversity. For a comprehensive glossary of 2SLGBTQIA+-related terminology, please refer to Appendix A.

formed by 2SLGBTQIA+ students and allies in junior and senior high schools. Since this time, many GSAs around the province have been created in NL schools. However, to date, little is known about how these GSAs function within this policy framework.

In this introductory chapter, I do the following: 1) I describe GSAs and their role in schools; and, 2) I present the purpose and research questions guiding this study and articulate the significance of this thesis in further developing our knowledge about how GSAs operate in NL schools.

Gender and Sexuality Alliances

What is a GSA?

Stonefish and Lafrenière (2015) argue that GSAs in schools represent "a growing movement in the fight against homophobia and 'institutionalized heteronormativity'" (p. 3), given that a large percentage of 2SLGBTQIA+ students report feeling unsafe in school because of their gender and sexual identity (Kosciw et al., 2015; Peter et al., 2021). According to EGALE Canada (2015), a GSA is a school club formed by queer and trans students and allies as a way of supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ youth's rights within the school; part of their existence aims for positive changes in school environments and beyond. Students in GSAs pursue actions for inclusiveness and safe spaces for all students, and for students who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ in particular. The students in these alliances engage in school and community-based activities to increase awareness around 2SLGBTQIA+ issues and increase acceptance of those who identify as such (Fetner et al., 2012).

A GSA may have one or two advisors, also called sponsors or facilitators, who are educators in the school community (typically teachers or other staff). GSA advisors provide emotional support to students; students feel comfortable in talking about personal issues with

them related to their sexuality (Egale, 2015). These facilitators provide guidance for activities, as well as support in advertising the group, facilitate collaboration with other GSAs, and advocate on behalf of 2SLGBTQIA+ students (Egale, 2015). Given the extensive role of advisors within the GSA context, a more comprehensive understanding of their work in GSAs is warranted, more literature that focuses on, or at least includes, GSA advisors is greatly needed (Cavins, 2017; Poteat et al., 2015).

Kitchen and Bellini (2013) have been doing extensive empirical work regarding GSAs in Ontario. In their study, "Making Schools Safe and Inclusive: Gay-Straight Alliances and School Climate in Ontario", they examined 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion in schools with the participation of forty-one GSA advisors from across the province. Kitchen and Bellini (2013) explored GSA advisors' perspectives on inclusion and safety, school climate, and bullying. They found positive outcomes on school climate related to better policies surrounding acceptance of GSAs in the schools and also identified the need for more professional development opportunities for GSA advisors (Kitchen & Bellini, 2013). While the role of GSA advisors was recognized as an important connector between administrators and school districts, most of the advisors felt that they did not have sufficient access to the necessary resources and training to prepare them for this work (Kitchen & Bellini, 2013). Cavins (2017) argues that supportive administrators, additional supports from colleagues, outside resources, and student leadership are important environmental facilitators in the role of GSA advisors.

GSA Activities and Outcomes

The activities GSAs organize cover a wide variety of objectives making every GSA different and unique (Poteat et al., 2015). GSAs pursue outcomes such as: 1) providing safety for students; 2) facilitating a sense of acceptance and community; 3) supporting personal growth and

well-being development for 2SLGBTQIA+ students; and 4) educating the community about 2SLGBTQIA+ matters (Cavins, 2017; Macgillivray, 2007). However, there might be a greater number of different outcomes that are yet to be identified (Poteat et al., 2015).

Providing Safety for Students. The 2015 *National School Climate Survey* (Kosciw et al., 2016)—a report generated by the American Gay, Lesbian & Straight Network, which examined the experiences of American 2SLGBTQIA+ students in schools—reported that 57.6 % of queer and trans students do not feel safe at their own school because of their sexual orientation, and 43.3 % because of their gender expression. Concern for 2SLGBTQIA+ students' safety is rising given that these numbers increased in the 2017 survey (from 57.6% to 59.5% and from 43.3% to 44.6% respectively). Similarly, in their second national report of school climate around homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canada, Peter and colleagues (2021) found that although homophobic and transphobic language is "somewhat in decline" (p. 11), this language is still frequent and widespread; furthermore, racialized, Indigenous, trans, and non-binary students are more likely to feel unsafe at school and are at greater risk of dropping out or skipping school (Peter et al., 2021).

A study conducted by Mayberry and colleagues (2011) about the experiences of GSA advisors, recounts the story of Mr. Guilford, a GSA advisor who talked about how his GSA pursued 2SLGBTQIA+ students' safety within their school. He reflected on the importance of providing safety to all students, not only physically, but also emotionally. As GSAs challenge heteronormative environments, the new perspective they bring to any school environment provides a different space—a safe space that offers new cultural perspectives and diverse sources of information for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and allies where they can explore their subculture in a safely manner (Stonefish & Lafrenière, 2015).

Facilitating a Sense of Acceptance and Community. Not all the GSAs prioritize their goals in the same way. For some GSAs, students building community and a sense of acceptance is a priority. GSA members who participated in the Mayberry et al. (2011) study reported a great focus on this area. Building a sense of community for these students meant to feel supported by others when belonging to a community that gave them the courage to speak up for themselves, when necessary, at their school. Bonding and socializing was a necessary first step for activism; students need to feel they belong to a supportive community that shares the same concerns, interests, and feelings before engaging in the complex work of advocacy (Mayberry et al., 2011).

Supporting Personal Growth and Well-being. Toomey et al. (2011) found a relationship between GSAs' success with a positive school climate when focusing on supporting students' personal growth and well-being development. Poteat and colleagues (2015) identified positive personal growth of queer and trans youth as a goal for GSA action—support for well-being and resiliency. Friedman-Nimz et al. (2006) argue that leadership activities taken within high schools support positive navigation through adolescence by "reducing risk, examining strengths, promoting a positive self-image, and supporting structures that foster a sense of belonging" (p. 264).

Educating the School and the Community. A number of GSAs have engaged in educational and visibility activities; for instance, Club Day and commemorating the Day of Silence represent spaces where GSAs engage with the school community by talking about 2SLGBTQIA+ matters and making them visible as forms of educating the larger community (Mayberry et al., 2011). In the absence of more progressive sexual education curriculum, GSAs also provide resources (sexual education resources) as a way of educating not only their peers

and 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, but also allies, administrators, and the community (Stonefish & Lafrenière, 2015).

GSAs take strategic actions that are intended to disrupt certain behaviors of heterosexism by breaking the silence and fighting against homophobic practices in the schools (Currie et al., 2012). For example, some GSAs form alliances with other clubs or agencies (Currie et al., 2012). These alliances become crucial since most of these clubs are also comprised of marginalized and oppressed populations. By joining efforts and working towards the same outcome, these partnerships resonate beyond the school. Cavins (2017) found that GSAs raise awareness to schools and communities. They develop Pride events (i.e., rainbow parades, Pride prom) that promote fairness and open a space to advocating against discrimination, victimization, and harassment, and they aim for changing existing dominant values and cultural norms.

Historical Background

Gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs)—also known as gay-straight alliances, queer-straight alliances, Pride alliance, and so on—first appeared during the late 1980s in the United States, starting as initiatives against anti-gay violence and towards school safety (Rayside, 2008). In Canada, GSAs where not seen until later, gaining more prevalence through the 2000s in provinces like British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, and Ontario. Since 1997, organizations like the Gay and Lesbian Educators (GALE) in British Columbia—an organization that works on equity issues around 2SLGBTQIA+ people—started encouraging the formation of GSAs in public schools in the province; they also advocated for more access to specific materials on sexual education (Rayside, 2008).

Teachers' unions (e.g., British Columbia Teachers Federation [BCTF], the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario [ETFO], the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation [STF], and the

Alberta Teachers' Association [ATA]) also advocated in their own jurisdictions in support of addressing 2SLGBTQIA+issues in schools. In 1996, the Alberta Government founded the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative* that invited the ATA to establish a Safe and Caring Schools project, which developed programs to address issues faced by sexually diverse students in schools; subsequently, this initiative was taken on by other provinces, including Newfoundland and Labrador. The creation of programs that addressed intolerance and school violence facilitated the creation of more GSAs in Alberta and across Canada (Rayside, 2008).

GSAs have been a growing area of focus in education research in the last few years, with studies centering on numerous issues such as school climate (Kitchen & Bellini, 2013; Porta et al., 2017), school engagement (Seelman et al., 2015), safe spaces (Fetner et al., 2012; Porta et al., 2017), advocacy (Watson et al., 2010), and social justice (Clarke, & MacDougall, 2012; Currie et al., 2012; Graybill et al, 2015.; Mayo, 2013;). Yet, within this important body of research, a focus on the role and work of GSA advisors—educators working closely with the GSA and who offer support and advisory in their activities (EGALE, 2015)—is very scarce.

Evidence shows that the mere fact of having a GSA in school supports the idea of feeling a sense of security and a perception of social justice in the school (Mayo, 2013). Having GSAs in school benefits 2SLGBTQIA+ students in supporting their mental health and their overall sense of empowerment, school engagement, school inclusion, cohesion, and affiliation (Curry et al., 2012). In the Canadian context, most of the research on GSAs comes from a subset of provinces (e.g., Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia). Further research is needed in more provinces to provide a nation-wide view on GSAs and their work.

GSA Advisors

Graybill et al. (2015) suggest that advisors play a key role in advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in order to improve their sense of safety in the school system. Using an ecological model, Graybill et al. (2015) have made some demographic discoveries about the GSA advisors' realities in the United States. The authors were able to map out the characteristics of active GSAs and their advisors on a personal, school, and socio-cultural level.

On a personal level, Graybill et al. (2015) found that the majority of GSA advisors were heterosexual, white, and mostly female, with a master's level education or above and a liberal political ideology. On a school level, they looked at student enrollment numbers and found that advisors working in GSAs worked at schools with a larger student population and greater economic advantage; however, they argue that greater examination on this finding is needed. Finally, on a socio-cultural level, Graybill et al. (2015) focused on geographic region and found that most GSAs were in schools in suburban communities.

The insights of Graybill and colleagues (2015) support the need for more research in other contexts and countries, including Canada. What is happening in the Canadian context? What do we know about GSA advisors in provinces like Newfoundland and Labrador?

Stonefish and Lafrenière (2015) acknowledge the steps taken by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador towards inclusiveness with the establishment of their first *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* in 2006 and the allocation of $90 000 towards teacher resources for the creation of GSAs (Department of Education, 2006, 2012). Although policy changes have enabled conditions that encourage GSAs to be formed in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador, queer and trans students and GSA members are still experiencing backlash and continue being targeted with bullying and hateful attacks (Coles, 2018, May 21).

The latter suggests other concerns regarding the education community and how the connections among advisors and other stakeholders (e.g., administrators, parents, other teachers, etc.) can be problematic as well. For instance, across Canada and the United States, resistance from some administrators, school boards, parents, students, and teachers to form these alliances or to support the existence of these alliances is a precedent suggesting struggles in the connections among these individuals with the GSA advisors (Fetner et al., 2012). Some advisors have been forced to resign or leave the school because of their advocacy practices for queer and trans students (Adams & Strauss Carson, 2002), and those who identify as queer and/or trans themselves received greater negative responses (Clarke & MacDougall, 2012; Fetner et al., 2012; Kitchen & Bellini, 2013).

Students who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ need to feel the support from the people who serve in leadership roles—that is, adults that have influence in the school and adults who are involved in making decisions and enforcing policies—in order to feel safe and protected in their own school (Kosciw et al., 2015; Peter et al., 2021). Szalacha (2003) (as cited in Kitchen & Bellini, 2013) point out how administrators, teachers, and GSA advisors can make a difference. While the first two enforce tolerance and respect, advisors take on the role of advocates; therefore, looking at the relationships among these adults and how the advisors relate with other stakeholders in their network is of significant importance (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). This research study addresses this gap.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to explore how GSA advisors in NL schools leverage their social capital to support the GSA work, and therefore support the development of safe and inclusive learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. This study builds on the work of others such as Cavins (2017) who raises the concern that most research that considers the role of GSA advisors focuses on the students' perspectives and not the perspective of the GSA advisors themselves. I seek to develop a rich understanding of the GSA work happening in Newfoundland and Labrador; in particular, I focus on the different ways that GSA advisors engage with their personal and professional relationships to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in their schools. Using social capital theory as the leading perspective to this study, I address the current gaps in the literature about GSA advisors and advance social capital research in equity-seeking contexts.

This study provides an opportunity for GSA advisors, school district leadership, and provincial policymakers to reflect on current work within Newfoundland and Labrador to date, and it will provide insights for future planning as they continue to develop safer and more inclusive learning environments for all students. As such, the research questions guiding this project are:

1. How has the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* progressed in relation to programming that supports 2SLGBTQIA+ students in Newfoundland and Labrador?
2. What work is currently being undertaken in GSAs in K–12 NL schools that supports 2SLGBTQIA+ students?
3. In what ways are GSA advisors engaging their personal and professional relationships to support their GSA work?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a descriptive overview of the relevant literature for this study. I start with an examination of the literature about school systems as they implement policy and change efforts. I continue with a review of the literature around equity issues that explores the roles of key actors (i.e., school administrators, teachers) in supporting minoritized student populations. I follow with a comprehensive account of the theoretical framework guiding this study, which includes social capital and network theories. And finally, I end this chapter with the conceptual framework that informed the design of this study.

Change Efforts and Policy Implementation

Scholars across disciplines have studied school systems through a variety of theoretical frameworks, one being social capital Social capital refers to "the resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for actions" (Lin, 2001, pp. 24–25). Within a network of people there are a number of resources of all kinds (e.g., information, emotional support) that are collectively owned and leveraged for a variety of purposes. Social capital theory in the educational literature has been a useful framework in understanding how the interdependence of resources, relationships, and actions within educators' networks, explain the diffusion of innovations (e.g., Frank et al., 2004; Liou & Daly, 2016), student achievement (e.g., Leana & Pil, 2006, Pil & Leana, 2009), teacher efficacy (e.g., De Jong et al., 2016), and, most relevant for this study, policy implementation and change efforts (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008).

Studies employing a social capital framework have also considered the study of social networks, their structure, and their function towards the better understanding of social capital and its outcomes in educational spheres (i.e., Daly & Finnigan, 2011, 2012; Moolenaar et al., 2014). This approach has become relevant because it provides specific measurements that identify

patterns of interaction among people and looks at the function, quality, and structure of these interactions which build social capital (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998).

Across the empirical literature on social capital and network theories it is know that policy may influence teachers' networks (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008; Coburn et al., 2013; Daly et al., 2010). Coburn et al. (2013) found that a district mathematics policy initiative influenced teachers' networks by creating structures of frequent interaction among teachers, providing valuable resources that were accessed through formal and informal channels, building capacity in math coaches, and designing routines of interaction among coaches and teachers. Instructional coaches are a common instructional improvement strategy in school districts in the United States. The coaches provide support to teachers as experts in their subject matter of instruction (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Westheimer, 1998 in Coburn & Russell, 2008; Woulfin & Jones, 2018).

In this context, teachers' access to expertise and resources from coaches supports the policy implementation efforts and increases teachers' social capital (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Coburn et al., 2013). The level of expertise is dependent of how well the coaches are prepared and how that experience is perceived by teachers through their interactions (Coburn & Rusell, 2008; Penuel et al., 2009). The way reform coaching initiatives are designed—through the mentoring roles, professional development—influences the policy implementation by facilitating or constraining interactions among teachers and coaches (Coburn & Russell, 2008).

Researchers have also found that school leaders (e.g., school principals) and coaches mediate district policy (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Spillane et al., 2002). By communicating expectations on the curriculum implementation, principals influence teachers' engagement with each other and in their understandings of the curriculum's classroom implementation, even when

those expectations are not congruent with the actual curriculum design (Coburn & Russell, 2008). School systems with high turnover from school leaders and teachers generate instability in the organizations by debilitating shared norms, knowledge, and trust and therefore hindering policy and change efforts (Finnigan & Daly, 2017; Holme & Rangel, 2012).

Teachers' networks have different characteristics. Across the literature researchers have found that the structures in teachers' social networks are different across schools; subgroups within teacher networks are usually formed; formal hierarchical roles do not fully align with the patterns of relationships that develop in schools; individual and school characteristics shape teachers' networks; and the networks and relationships that are formed served multiple purposes (Coburn, 2005; Daly et al., 2010; Moolenaar, 2012; Penuel et al., 2010). Such differences have the potential to support or constrain reform implementation efforts since these networks are already embedded within the school systems and may increase or constrain the transfer of new ideas and knowledge (Coburn & Russel, 2008; Daly et al., 2010; Frank et al., 2004; Moolenaar et al., 2014).

Moolenaar (2012) argues that some of the factors influencing a school's capacity for improvement may relate to the extent in which educators are connected to the flow of resources within the school as well as to the degree in which those resources are valuable and beneficial for teachers. Furthermore, certain structures and qualities in teachers' social networks such as dense interactions may enact reform with greater depth (Daly et al., 2010). As well, trusting relationships among teachers and school actors support policy implementation since the social trust among them improves their routine day-to-day exchanges, risk-taking (Bryk & Schneider, 2003), and advice-seeking behaviours (Liou & Daly, 2014) which are key social capital resources for policy implementation (Bryk & Schneider, 2003).

Policy may shape teachers' networks through certain formalized mechanisms (i.e., policy design, allocation of resources, professional development, and creation of formal roles); however, policy does not shape these networks entirely. Policy is also interdependent on teachers' already existing networks, as well as, their patterns of interactions, relational trust, closeness, history, content of interaction, and depth of interaction (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Moolenaar, 2012). Penuel et al. (2009) argue that in order to facilitate collaboration among teachers to support reform implementation, school and district leaders need to foster their school's social capital by being aware of the available resources, expertise, and practices within school teachers' networks and leverage them to support such policy efforts.

Leveraging Social Capital for Marginalized Communities

Another stream of empirical literature has employed a social capital framework to illuminate social disparities in school systems (e.g., Chapman et al., 2016; Salloum et al., 2017). This body of work examines how key people in school systems (e.g., principals, teachers) leverage social capital to support minoritized student populations in schools (e.g., Allan & Catts, 2014; DeMatthews, 2018; Fields, 2017; Khalifa, 2010; Liou & Rojas, 2016). Despite growing interest in studying how to leverage social capital in minoritized settings, very few studies have focused on leveraging social capital for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and staff. This study employs a social capital framework in relation to this population (Bourdieu, 1986; Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1990; Lin, 2001; Putnam, 2000).

Social capital is not equitably distributed (Bourdieu, 1986). Portes (1997) claims that some social capital scholars tend to obscure such unequal distribution and focus on the positive outcomes of social capital; that is, the same aspects that provide benefits to some individuals (e.g., access to information) may, at the same time, pose some risks to others (e.g., restricted

access to information) (Portes, 1997). Arneil (2006) argues that such unequal distribution relates to normative values accumulated by dominant groups in society affecting, in particular, women and other minoritized populations such as the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

The concentration of power within certain dominant groups results in uneven access to social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Arneil, 2006; Bourdieu, 1986; Portes, 1997). As a result, several studies have incorporated this framework to shed light in ways of challenging and reducing inequitable access to social capital. These studies also provide insights on how schools are a key space for enhancing social capital opportunities (Salloum et al., 2017).

Although 2SLGBTQIA+ students have not been studied explicitly in the educational research literature using a social capital framework, other marginalized populations have been studied including children with disabilities (e.g., Allan & Catts, 2014), Native-American student populations (e.g., Cohen & Allen, 2013), African American and other racialized students (e.g., Khalifa, 2010; Liou & Rojas, 2016; Zambrana & Zoppi, 2002), low-income/high poverty communities (e.g., DeMatthews, 2018; Galindo et al., 2017), and other marginalized youth (e.g., Fields, 2017).

Trainor (2010) examined parents' advocacy practices for their children who were receiving special education services and noticed that as parents gain expertise—a process rooted in the accumulation of social capital—the more parents were able to advocate for their children to ensure their success in school. Although advocacy from parents helps students with disabilities succeed in school, there is still a clear divide between parents from diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds who had fewer social capital resources to leverage (Trainor, 2010).

Low-income, high poverty, racialized, and ethnic communities have less access to public resources and quality education (Arneil, 2006; Portes, 1998). DeMatthews (2018) examined

bridging and bonding social capital—bonding social capital refers to building reciprocity and solidarity and bridging social capital links to outside resources (Putnam, 2000)—in a *colonia* (neighborhood) in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico facing such conditions. DeMatthews' (2018) findings in this context shed light on the importance of key actors to leverage social capital. His findings show that the school leader engaged in bridging and bonding social capital to support the school and its community. Through bonding social capital, she built strong connections with parents and created opportunities for them in the school resulting in greater participation, engagement, and solidarity. Despite geographical limitations, she created partnerships with external resources such as the United States Consulate and volunteer providers, which introduced important networks for the development of the community and the school improving the quality of education.

Social capital is mobilized through our relationships with others (Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1990; Lin, 2010). Within the school environment, relationships between teachers and students can become an important source for social capital exchange that fosters academic achievement and expectations for students (Cherng, 2017). Cherng (2017) argues that teachers may engage differently with their students because of the role of implicit biases on establishing and maintaining relationships biases around racial and ethnic identities. Such implicit biases exist due to dominant social structures (Arneil, 2006).

People in leadership positions in schools have a significant influence in intervening in the ways social relationships unfold and therefore in the ways social capital is mobilized and exchanged. A way to do so is by valuing the cultural identities of ethnic and racialized students and leveraging their existing social capital (Khalifa, 2010; Galindo et al., 2017). For instance, involving parents in their children's academic life and with the school, facilitates spaces for

social relationships between them, the teachers, and the staff (Galindo et al., 2017; Khalifa, 2010). Khalifa (2010) found a very positive academic improvement in students attending a school serving mostly hyperghettoized Black American students. By hyperghettoized students he cites Wacquant and Wilson (1989) who define hyperghettoization as "a process by which the poor ghetto neighborhoods have lost nearly all of the social structure and organization that once existed" (in Khalifa, 2010, p. 622). These students have been marginalized in every aspect of their social life including their educational environment. The principal established strong connections with parents and the community they lived in. He also made purposive structural changes in school activities and modified traditional procedures. Through those changes, he facilitated the space for parents, students, teachers, and staff to build relationships. As a result, students improved their educational outcomes and their relationships within the school community (Khalifa, 2010).

Similarly, Zambrana and Zoppi (2002) acknowledge that every group of people possess cultural and social capital that dominant mechanisms do not recognize equally, such as the ones possessed by Latin American students. Zambrana and Zoppi (2002) argue that their cultural capital can be used to gain social capital, but it has not been properly recognized and mobilized in mainstream society. In like manner, Cohen and Allen (2013) argue that social capital is an important lens to supporting language revitalization efforts in reform for Native American students, for instance, by leveraging Indigenous social capital to better implement policy that aligns with their values of liberty, sovereignty, and equity (Cohen & Allen, 2013).

This review of current research shows how social capital theory supports the understanding of the unequal distribution of social resources across populations that have been marginalized as well as in ways to minimize those inequities. Bourdieu (1986) claims that social

capital maintains certain groups in power, but as social capital exists within a network of people, there are also certain actions that aid in distributing power and press against those inequities.

Social capital has been a powerful framework to understand ways in which collective actions from certain key actors (i.e., principals, parents, community leaders) leverage social capital resources to support positive outcomes and academic success in these marginalized populations. However, it is important to reiterate, that despite these successes, inequitable access to social capital is a major problem affecting women and other minoritized communities as it is "a broader problem of dominant norms and values, along with the deployment of an appeal to solidarity either to assimilate or to exclude particular groups" (Arneil, 2006, p. 204).

Several actions emerged in the literature as forms of leveraging social capital for minoritized populations. First, appreciating, respecting, and valuing the cultural and social capital of minoritized students builds stronger relationships and greater opportunities to access and leverage social capital. Second, connecting with external actors and resources builds partnerships and cooperation and supports access to greater opportunities for development (bridging social capital). Third, repairing community relationships by building and developing trusting relationships and collaboration (bonding social capital).

This becomes highly relevant for my research because it focuses on GSAs, which serve 2SLGBTQIA+ students and their allies, and who are regularly marginalized by mainstream society. This short empirical review provided rich insights into leveraging social capital for marginalized populations as well as in how educators' networks and policy development and implementation are interrelated mechanisms of school change; yet social capital studies have not been conducted within other policy contexts and/or with populations such as GSAs and/or their advisors. Ibarra (1993) stresses that the limitations faced by marginalized populations are

experienced differently within and across these groups. Therefore, exploring how GSA advisors working for and with 2SLGBTQIA+ students navigate their own networks to leverage social capital resources under a specific policy framework to support their GSA work is essential.

Theoretical Framework: A Deeper Understanding of Social Capital and Network Theories

Social Capital Theory

There are a significant number of theorists who have conceptualized social capital and who are regarded as seminal theorists in the field. In this section, I elaborate on social capital theory by providing its definitions, the diverse ways to access it, and its benefits and risks. First, I focus on theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, Ronald Burt, Robert Putnam, and Nan Lin to provide a comprehensive overview of social capital. Table 1 presents an overview of the key concepts of each theorist's definition of social capital.

Across the key theorists, social capital involves three different elements: 1) relationships, 2) resources, and 3) individual/collective purposive actions (Bourdieu, 1986; Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1990; Lin, 2001; Putnam, 2000). Therefore, social capital is the potential resource within a network of people who invest their own human capital—resources that are part of the individual such as their personality, knowledge, expertise, their interests and so on (Lin, 2001)—to access and share resources through purposive actions (Bourdieu, 1986; Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1990; Lin, 2001; Putnam, 2000). Purposive actions are simply those taken by the individuals in a network fueling the investment, mobilization, and exchange of resources (Lin, 2001).

Table 1

Definitions of Social Capital

Author	Definition
Bourdieu (1986)	"Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word" (p. 21).
Burt (1992)	"Social capital is at once the resources contacts hold and the structure of contacts in a network" (p. 12).
Coleman (1990)	"Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspects of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence" (p. 302).
Lin (2001)	"Social capital may be defined operationally as the resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for actions." (pp. 24-25)
Putnam (2000)	"Social capital refers to connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them." (p. 19)

Social capital is not tangible as it can be obtained in various ways. Coleman (1990) emphasizes, "It [social capital] inheres in the structure of relations, between persons and among persons. It is lodged neither in individuals nor in physical implements of production" (p. 302). That is, one does not have access to the social capital of people with whom one does not have a relationship. It is through our relationships with others that social capital resources (e.g., trust, expertise, knowledge, support) are accessed, mobilized, shared, and exchanged (Burt, 1992).

The characteristics of these patterns of interactions differentiate the outcomes of this resource exchange. The next section elaborates on ways to access social capital.

Accessing Social Capital

Lin (2001) suggests that the resources we access depend on the type of purposive actions we engage in, which take the form of expressive and/or instrumental actions. An expressive action is taken to gain sentiment or support; they are the ones we take to maintain valued resources—referred to as expressive resources. As we interact with other people from our network, we expect for them to share and influence our social-emotional space. Some examples of expressive resources are emotional support (e.g., venting, commiserating) and trust.

Lin (2001) defines instrumental action as actions taken to obtain or mobilize additional resources; for instance, a person takes instrumental action to gain insight into a job opportunity, they will go to the people they know who can help them. Some examples of resources gained through these actions are professional advice, political influence, information, and so on. It is important to clarify that often times, these two are interconnected as one person could be a source for instrumental and expressive resources at the same time (Lin, 2001).

Some theorists operationalize social capital in terms of accessing these types of resources through our purposive actions. Putnam (2000) emphasizes two forms of social capital: bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital resorts in “inward looking”, reinforcing our identities and fostering solidarity values among a connected group, creating strong in-group relationships. Through bonding social capital, it is more common to access expressive resources such as mutual trust and support (Lin, 2001). On the other hand, bridging social capital takes an “outward look” in our relationships by linking to external and more

diverse resources. Similarly, Burt (1992) concedes bridging social capital as the one that reaches to non-redundant ties—ties that provide differential resources—through structural holes. Structural holes are the spaces that *bridge* to non-redundant ties and resources (i.e., resources that are not available within your current social network).

The ways we engage in purposive actions provides us with opportunities to obtain instrumental and expressive resources through our relationships; however, accessing social capital is a complex endeavor as social capital takes different forms. For instance, "a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless and even harmful for others" (Coleman, 1990, p. 302). Coleman (1990) insists on the structure of our relationships as a key component of social capital and thus operationalizes social capital in three different forms: 1) obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness of social structures; 2) information channels; and 3) norms and effective sanctions.

To describe the first, Coleman (1990) provides a formula: "if A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B" (p. 306). Putnam (2000) calls this reciprocity. This form of social capital depends on the trust generated, and in the obligations held among the individuals because of this interaction. However, high accumulation of obligations, expectations, and trust, may concentrate power within only a few in the social structure (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1990).

Information channels provide an opportunity to facilitate action and access information. Here, relationships are significant, by interacting with key people in our network, we can gain needed information without having to invest time in getting it ourselves; for example, asking a friend about the daily news (Coleman, 1990). Norms and effective sanctions (where they exist), can be "a powerful form of social capital." (Coleman, 1990, p. 310). Norms exist in different

contexts, and they exist mostly to maintain order and shared values. They can be formally constructed such as laws and policies; or they can be informally adopted by a group of people (Coleman, 1990).

Effective norms tend to be a great source for sharing resources and gaining social capital, for instance, people walking freely at night thanks to the norms that inhibit crime (Coleman, 1990). These norms reside solely in the culture and shared values of a group of people. Coleman (1988, 1990) shares the example of a family that moves to Jerusalem from Detroit; when left alone with her children, the wife felt safer in Jerusalem because of the shared norms and values with the community (which did not exist in Detroit). She trusted that this community was committed to protecting the children of the neighborhood.

As seen above, accessing social capital is not a straightforward process and it takes diverse forms. Similar to certain nuances seen in social capital definitions across theorists, authors consider different elements of social capital in order to provide an understanding of how to access it. Putnam (2000) speaks of bridging and bonding social capital and Coleman (1990) focuses on information, norms, and obligations. These diverse views focus on different sources or combination of resources and actions. Nahapiet and Goshal (1998) offer, what I consider, the most comprehensible way of operationalizing social capital and in better understanding the processes of access, combination, and exchange. The authors argue that social capital is parted in three distinctive dimensions: cognitive, relational, and structural social capital.

Cognitive Social Capital. Cognitive social capital relates to the sharing and exchanging of resources through meaningful communication which happens when some context is shared among the individuals. The parties also share common interpretations, understandings, and systems of meaning (Claridge, 2018; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). The major components of

cognitive social capital include shared languages and codes, shared narratives, and shared vision and culture.

Shared languages and codes refer to the common conceptual system that influences our perception and interpretation of the world and our relationships within; it provides the means for exchanging information (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). Communities rely on stories, metaphors, and myths to create rich sets of meanings (literal or imaginative)—or shared narratives. These stories enable the creation and transfer of new interpretations (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998; Orr, 1990 in Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). Lastly, collective goals and aspirations (vision) embedded within a common system of beliefs and understandings or a shared vision or culture (Claridge, 2018; Inkpen & Tsang, 2005; Tsai & Goshal, 1998).

Relational Social Capital. This form of social capital refers to the qualities and characteristics of relationships. This dimension influences access to others and the motivation for exchanging knowledge and other social resources. Claridge (2018) argues that a core facet of this dimension is the willingness to prioritize collective goals over our own (Lazarova & Taylor, 2009 in Claridge, 2018). Coleman's (1990) account of social capital draws on obligations and expectations, information channels and norms as driving sources for social capital access and exchange which cover the relational dimension of social capital. Nahapiet and Goshal (1998) consider four main aspects of this dimension: trust, norms, obligations and expectations, and identification.

Burt (1992) defines trust as the one thing that provides a matter of confidence of what information or resources are passed and how careful our relationships tend to our interests. High trusting relationships facilitate access and exchange of social resources as well as cooperation among the parties (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). Coleman (1998) claims that norms—formally and

informally constructed by a community—facilitate control of actions, thus, representing a consensus among individual in the social system (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). Obligations and expectations represent an agreement between parties of certain duties to undertake with certain commitment and expectation whereas identification refers to the process whereby individuals see themselves as one with another person or group of people (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). Barriers to accessing and sharing information or other social resources often exist when encountering with contradictory identities (Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1998; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998).

Structural Social Capital. This third, and final, dimension relates to different elements of the social system. It affects access to others for exchanging social resources and taking part in exchange activities of these resources. Structural social capital is the reason why a network approach often accompanies empirical studies that examine social capital (Claridge, 2018; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). Nahapiet and Goshal (1998) consider three aspects of the social system that enable a focus on social capital. First, through our *network ties*—or our relationships with people we know—we can access information and other valued resources (Coleman, 1990; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). These ties form a *network configuration*, which is comprised of specific network structures affect the development of human capital as well as opportunities to access and exchange social capital (Burt, 1998; Granovetter, 1973; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998; Perry et al., 2018).

Finally, *appropriable organizations* intended for certain purposes may, at the same time, support or hinder other purposes (Coleman, 1990; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). For example, people gathering for a book club where some member also use as a space to vent about their jobs is an appropriable (social) organization.

As described, the processes to access, exchange, and combine social capital resources exist within three different social capital dimensions: cognitive, relational, and structural. Table 2 presents and overview of these three dimensions as well as the particular elements involved in each one. The first (cognitive social capital), by engaging in meaningful communication; the second (relational social capital), through the quality of our relationships, and the third (structural social capital) in relation to their structure (or patterns of relationship). The processes in each dimension provide certain benefits to the people involved in such networks. However, social capital is not a benign construct. As research shows, social capital can yield both positive and negative outcomes (Portes, 1997).

Table 2

Dimensions of Social Capital

Dimension	**Elements**
Cognitive Social Capital	Shared languages and codes Shared narratives Shared vision and culture
Relational Social Capital	Trust Norms Obligations and expectations Identification
Structural Social Capital	Network ties Network configuration Appropriable Organization

The Benefits of Social Capital

Adler and Kwon (2000) provide a comprehensive overview of the benefits of social capital. They integrate the insights of key theorists and identify three main social capital benefits

that relate to the previously articulated domains of social capital (i.e., norms, shared vision, obligations, network configuration, etc.). These benefits are 1) information access, 2) power and influence, and 3) solidarity (Adler & Kwon, 2000).

Information Access. Social capital is identified through information channels, accessed by the people in a defined network. Its benefits are vast and typically depend on the network structure. Burt (1992) argues that having access to information relies on three conditions. The first condition, *access*, refers to getting to the information pieces through the ties that connect the people in the network; that is, receiving a valuable piece of information and knowing who can use it. The second condition, *timing*, relates to the value in how soon a person can access information. The third condition, *referral*, means getting your name mentioned at the right time in the right place so that opportunities are presented to you (Burt, 1992). In other words, the place one has in the network structure might influence being thought of for an opportunity. For example, a musician getting information of a performance opportunity will likely depend on how well connected they are to other people who know about performance opportunities.

Power and Influence. Coleman (1990) provides an example of a senator club where there is a concentration of obligations linked to the relationship among individuals in the same social—or in this example, political—circle; senators who belong to this club hold more power over others who do not belong to the club, making these members benefactors of influence.

Burt (1992) argues that people who bridge two or more different groups hold a particular power among the disconnected groups. An actor who is the bridge has control over the flow of information, the form of interactions that might connect the groups, and so forth. Adler and Kwon (2000) argue that "holding power facilitates the completion of tasks, enables people to lead others toward a common goal and facilitates collective action" (p. 105). For instance, if

there is enough power to influence others, there are leadership opportunities to carry out common goals that may help a community of people. Additionally, these opportunities to influence tend to relate to the hierarchical position held in the network; the higher in the hierarchy, the more influence and power in the decision-making process in a group of people (Lin, 2001).

Solidarity. Solidarity occurs with prominent levels of social capital in all three domains where there are elevated levels of trust, shared values, norms, understandings, and narratives among the people in the network (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). Adler and Kwon (2000) argue that when there are strong enough trust, norms, and beliefs, there will be compliance without the need for formal control or supervision in enforcing the law. Putnam (2000) claims that when there is solidarity, it results in greater civic engagement of the community.

Every person within a social space has benefitted in some way from social capital resources such as the ones mentioned above. Although this may be true, social capital is not equitably distributed given that its benefits are excessively accumulated by certain groups in mainstream society while, at the same time, marginalizing and limiting certain individuals and groups from accessing them (Arneil, 2006; Lin, 2001; Bourdieu, 1986; Portes, 1997).

The Risks of Social Capital Risks

There is a tendency to connect social capital with positive outcomes; however, some theorists (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Arneil, 2006; Bourdieu, 1986; Portes, 1997) alert of the possible negative consequences of social capital. Bourdieu (1986), for instance, reiterates on the unequal distribution of capital among social classes. Arneil (2006) rejects the universal story of

community and recommends incorporating the experiences of women and cultural minorities[3] in the past and present of social capital. Portes (1997) claims that the negative consequences are commonly obscured by the literature on social capital, and it is imperative to provide a balanced view of the concept because the same aspects that provide benefits to some individuals, at the same time restrict access to others (Portes, 1997). Portes (1997) identifies four main negative consequences: 1) exclusion of outsiders, 2) excess claims on group members, 3) restrictions on individual freedoms, and 4) downward leveling norms.

Exclusion of Outsiders. An abundance of strong ties (i.e., strong relationships) can have negative consequences. On the one hand, it provides a strong relationship among a group of people, while on the other hand, it excludes others from access. Adler and Kwon (2000) claim that "depending on its norms and beliefs, a group with strong internal ties but only a few external ties can become insular and xenophobic" (pp. 107-108). For example, groups like the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and other white supremacist groups in North America who reject, attack, and terrorize Black peoples and other minoritized groups like immigrants and people from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Arneil (2006) emphasizes and warns: "*Bad* social capital from the historical perspective is not simply a matter of a few associations [e.g., KKK] gone wrong, as it is often understood in the social capital literature, but a broader problem of dominant norms and values, along with the deployment of an appeal to solidarity either to assimilate or to exclude particular groups in American society" (p. 204, emphasis in the original). Arneil's (2006) claim is very important for

[3] Arneil (2006) defines cultural minorities as groups of people who have suffered discrimination and marginalization in mainstream society based on a particular cultural marker (i.e., ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, disability). She also recognizes that the term might not be entirely accurate.

the understanding of equity issues that are faced by certain populations such as women, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and racialized and minoritized communities (Arneil, 2006).

Excess Claims. A negative consequence of strong ties within the same group membership are what Porters (1998) calls 'a free-riding problem,' which means that certain members of a group (such as an extended family) demand compensation (among other things) from the most successful members because of their shared norms and solidarity. Adler and Kwon (2000) argue that excessive solidarity affects the broader community by generating collusion by focal individuals against the interests of the whole, for instance, as seen in corrupted governments around the world.

Restrictions on Individual Freedoms. Certain settings, such as small towns or villages where everyone knows each other and strong ties are created, generate demands for conformity resulting in a level of social control which restricts personal freedoms (Portes, 1998). Even though such settings might not be clearly delimited by geographical boundaries, they can be delimited by cultural and/or religious boundaries even outside of the geographical limits. For instance, we can consider the experiences of gay Iranian refugees who are newcomers to Canada and who do not feel safe to come out because of strong cultural norms within their diaspora communities (Karimi, 2020).

Downward Leveling Norms. These norms "operate to keep members of a downtrodden group in place and force the more ambitious to escape from it" (Portes, 1998). Group cohesion is built because of the lived adversity against the mainstream society, and as such, if someone tries to separate themselves from it, their actions are frowned upon and rejected by the group.

Bourdieu (1986) argues that social capital, which is unequal at its core, serves a purpose of maintaining the social structure where only some people benefit from it; for example, the

wealthy and important family names who have control over businesses and surrounding communities. Bourdieu (1986) articulates that power is maintained and concentrated through institutionalized mechanisms (e.g., family names)—which are forms of maintaining power within certain groups—through their connections with others and their exchanges of resources (i.e., social capital). These groups have the purpose of controlling the transmission of privileges. Thus, the reproduction of the social structure is unequal in the distribution of power by concentrating on a few people.

Social capital is a sociological theory that provides an understanding of the ways that our actions, relationships, and resources interact in the social world. The members engaging in that space benefit from a collectively owned capital while, at the same time, others are affected because of its unequal distribution (Bourdieu, 1986). Cognitive, relational, and structural domains of social capital provide a clear understanding of social capital access in terms of the content of interaction, quality, and structure of the relationships. To better understand these three domains, particularly, structural social capital, many theorists also incorporate network theory when studying social capital. The next section of this review talks about Network Theory.

Network Theory: A Companion to Social Capital

Relationships are key components in understanding social capital access. There is a widely accepted understanding that relationships matter, but how? Or in what ways? "Networks as theory are based on the fundamental premise that interconnectedness represents the mechanisms of action" (Perry et al., 2018, p. 5) which means that our behaviors are motivated by our social interactions (Perry et al., 2018).

Taking a social network perspective and employing Social Network Analysis (SNA) methods support social capital studies by providing powerful tools for visualizing networks as

well as measuring aspects of social capital (Carolan, 2013; Ferrare & Apple, 2010; Perry et al., 2018). Lin (2001) claims that among direct and indirect links, there are resources that may be turned into social capital by the way a person activates certain relationships for a purposive action.

Network Principles

Perry and colleagues (2018) provide a comprehensive overview of the guiding principles to consider when taking a network perspective. The first principle speaks of the importance of connections as the mechanisms for social action. Actors and the social structure are interdependent, and this interdependency shapes the environment and influences actions in the social space (Perry et al., 2018; Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Second, "human networks are fundamental building blocks of non-human entities" (Perry et al., p. 8). Lin (2001) elaborates on these non-human entities as "institutions", either formal or informal, which dictate the rules of the game. Institutions become the cultural domain which influence actions, behaviours, and understandings (Lin, 2001; Perry et al., 2018).

Third, social networks embody four dimensions: (a) structure, the architectural aspect; (b) function, how the networks serve a purpose (e.g., emotional support); (c) strength, intensity, and duration of ties; and (d) content, what flows among agents (e.g., knowledge, ideas) (Borgatti & Ofem, 2010; Carolan, 2013).

Fourth, these four dimensions provide meaningful information of network effects. Perry et al. (2018) argue that structure and strength provide insights around influence. Content and function provide insights on the direction of that influence. To illustrate, intimate relationships (e.g., family members) which are high in strength, and in some cases small in size, have the

potential to exert influence in the people in the network. The direction of that influence is interdependent on the content (e.g., opinions) and functions of those relationships (Perry et al., 2018).

Fifth, similar to social capital, networks may be beneficial, yet also harmful (Perry et al., 2018). Networks may protect and encourage healthy practices and, at the same time, harm people's health, such as with the COVID-19 pandemic spread, for example.

Sixth, when it comes to social relationships, quantity is not necessarily the same as quality (Perry et al., 2018). Burt's (1992) definition of structural holes speak to this principle since loosely connected relationships (i.e., weak ties) may provide opportunities to bridge to differentiated resources.

Seventh, networks are dynamic and constantly changing, calling for researchers to focus on exploring social networks over time (Perry et al., 2018).

Finally, taking a network perspective opens the door to a diverse utilization of methods, which considers relevant the use of quantitative and qualitative methods (Perry et al., 2018).

Perry et al. (2018) reflect that doing network research requires a certain flexibility that considers such principles described above; embraces non-linearity; and explores multi-level issues. Equally important, Wasserman and Faust (1994) consider of critical importance the unit of analysis when developing network methods as they may focus on pairs of actors (dyads), ties among three actors (triads), or entire networks or subgroups (full systems). As such, two of the most important research designs for understanding social networks are the whole network analysis, also called sociometric approaches, and the egocentric network approach, which focuses on the networks of individual actors (Borgatti & Ofem, 2010; Carolan, 2013; Perry et al., 2018). Whole network analysis tends to use a group of actors as the population of participants in

a study who usually, through a survey, provide information about one another to have a full picture about their network (e.g., students of a Math class). Egocentric network analysis uses an individual actor as the main respondent of the study who will provide information about their alters; that is, the ego or egos involved in a research study become the population of participants in the study (Perry et al., 2018). This thesis study utilizes egocentric network analysis, which is described more fully in the methods chapter (i.e., chapter 3).

Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which GSA advisors define their work and how they leverage social capital to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in NLESD schools. I pay specific attention to how GSA advisors leverage social capital by looking into their personal and professional interactions with other actors in the school system and beyond. For that reason, this study's conceptual framework takes several components from social capital and network theories in order to answer the research questions of the study.

First, GSA advisors are embedded within a network of relationships where resources of all kinds exist and where GSA advisors take purposive actions to better support 2SLGBTQIA+ students. To examine how GSA advisors leverage social capital, I explored their social networks and considered four frequently studied relational connections to understand GSA advisors' access to social capital resources (i.e., advice, information, help, discussion, expertise, emotional support, trust) as they engage with the people in their networks (Perry et al., 2018).

In this study, to examine cognitive social capital, I explored the content of communication patterns within GSA advisors' networks through discussion and go-to relationships. I explored the relational dimension of social capital by using the emotional support and close professional friend connections as proxy measures of trust. Finally, I examined

structural social capital by measuring the network structure and composition of GSA advisors' networks. Figure 1 presents a visual model of how I used social capital and social network theory to inform this study.

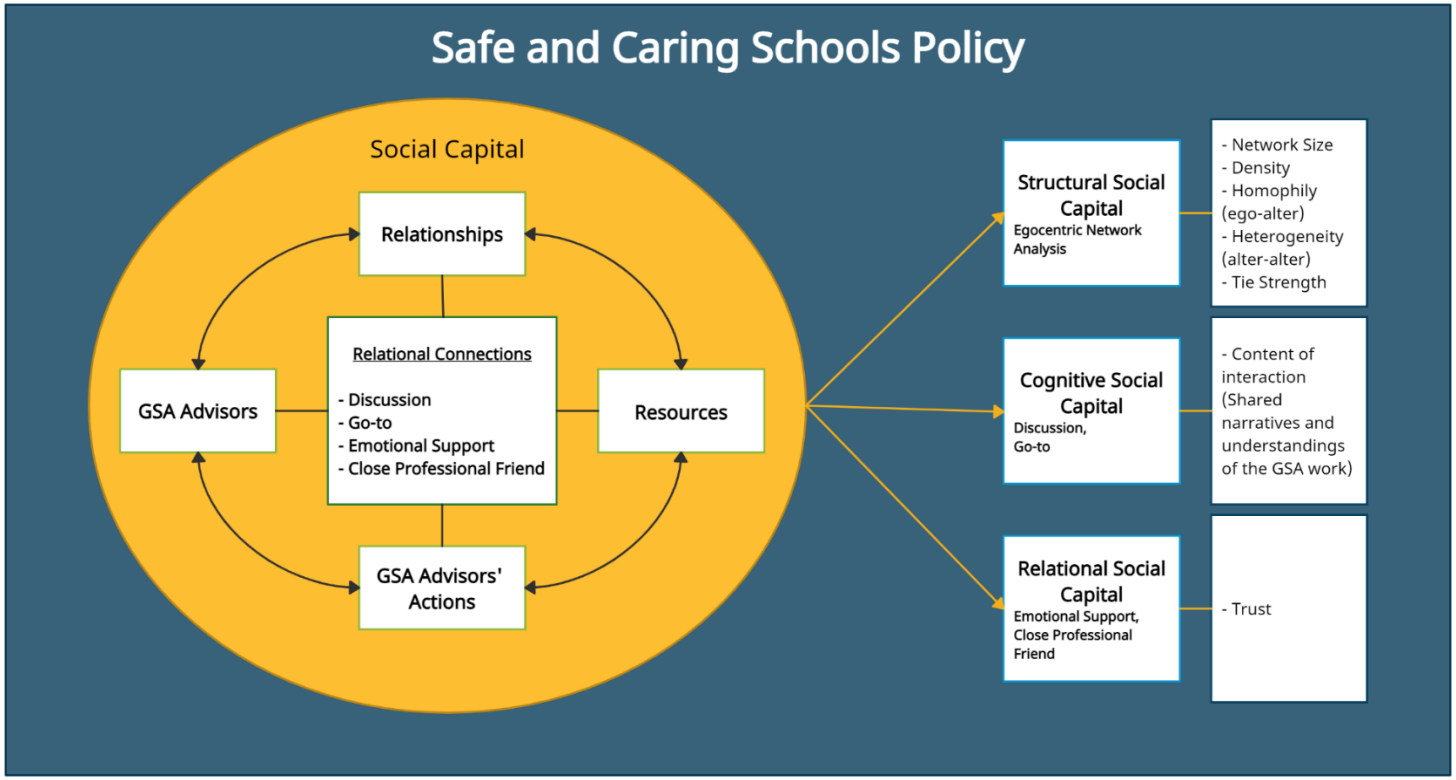

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology of the study. It fully describes the study design and sample selection, as well as data collection and analysis procedures. The chapter closes with the ethical considerations that were taken to conduct this work.

Research Design

Qualitative research is suited for exploratory inquiry (Cresswell & Gutterman, 2019). Thus, given the exploratory nature of my research, a qualitative approach was taken. In qualitative research the focus is on understanding how people make meaning of their own world (Cohen et al., 2005; Flick, 2011). This study was developed in two phases. Phase I had the purpose of responding to Research Question 1 and involved a document analysis (Bowen, 2009) to examine the progression of the SCSP in Newfoundland and Labrador. Phase II was designed to respond to Research Questions 2 and 3. For this phase, I used a holistic multiple case study design (Yin, 2014), where each GSA advisor's experience counted as an individual case. The following sections outline the methods taken in Phases I and II of the study design.

Phase I: Developing a Policy Timeline

This phase of the study aimed to understand the policy context surrounding GSAs in NL. It is important to clarify that this phase of the design is not a formal policy analysis. In keeping with research that policy landscapes influence relational patterns within school systems (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008), this phase of the study is intended to provide context of how the policy came to be and the availability of resources intended to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students and GSAs. Document analysis (Bowen, 2009) strategy was used to "provide data on the context within which research participants operate" (Bowen, 2009, p. 29); that is, to gain insights into the

history of policy foundations and modifications, funding, resources, and programming in which GSA advisors' work falls under.

Data Collection

I examined a collation of documents that included Annual Reports from the Department of Education (Department of Education, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019); other relevant government documents such as the *Violence Prevention Initiative* website (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.) and the *Safe and Caring Schools Provincial Action Plan* (Department of Education, n.d.); and finally, the evaluation report of the 2006 *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* (SCSP) (Goss Gilroy Inc., 2012) and the two different versions of the SCSP (Department of Education, 2006, 2013).

Informal conversations (i.e., casual communication via email, not formal interviews) with Department of Education employees also took place during the process of data collection to clarify missing or incomplete data. The 2006 SCSP document was publicly unavailable; therefore, an email communication with a Department of Education employee (B. Ottenheimer, personal communication, June 29, 2020) took place to request the document. Another short conversation took place with a different employee (J. Webb, personal communication, February 1, 2021) to request clarification about the total number of GSAs in NL.

Data Analysis

To provide an understanding of the progression of the policy, I first examined the *Violence Prevention Initiative* website and the *Safe and Caring Schools Provincial Action Plan* to highlight key elements and references to the development of the 2006 SCSP. Then, I took a

closer examination of the 2006 SCSP to summarize its main components (i.e., purpose, guiding principles, code of conduct, policy statements, and appendices). Third, I analyzed the Annual Reports by searching key words and phrases such as: "safe and caring schools", "*Safe and Caring Schools Policy*", "bullying", "LGBT", "GSA", and "Violence Prevention Initiative" to narrow down specific references to the SCSP. Fourth, I reviewed the Evaluation Report to understand the most prominent findings and recommendations around the policy; in particular, I was interested in the recommendations around GSAs, inclusive practices, bullying, funding, and programming specific for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. Finally, I examined the components and procedures of the 2013 SCSP to summarize its main revisions, additions, and changes, as well as its references to GSAs. I then placed all of these components together in a timeline highlighting the key historical milestones of the creation and development of the policy in relation to GSA and 2SLGBTQIA+ resources.

Phase II: Understanding GSA Advisors' Work

This phase of the study aimed to conduct semi-structured interviews with GSA advisors in NL schools to better understand their GSA work, their roles, the policy implementation, and the relationship that support their work.

Sample Selection

This research involved the participation of GSA advisors working, or who have recently worked (i.e., in the previous academic year), in NL schools. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted NL and its school communities greatly. At the moment this study took place, NL schools were just reopening, and principals and educators were experiencing a higher work demand to ensure

public health safety in their schools. Despite these extenuating circumstances, nine educators participated in this study (N=9).

As of June 2020, there were 153 junior and/or senior high schools in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador (NLESD, 2020). To date, the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) maintains no formal record of the number of schools with active GSAs; thus, it is unknown to what extent this sample is representative of GSAs within the province. The nine schools represented here represent about 6% of the schools with junior and/or senior high school grade levels, grades where GSAs are encouraged by the SCSP.

Participant Recruitment. For the recruitment process, I followed two complementary procedures. First, I identified knowledgeable informants in the community who collaborate with GSA advisors in community activities. The knowledgeable informants encompassed community leaders working in organizations such as Planned Parenthood, Fogo Island Pride, PFLAG Grand Falls-Windsor, and Quadrangle NL. Second, following the NLESD policy about conducting research in the district[4], I contacted school principals from across the province. Both community leaders and school principals were asked to distribute the recruitment information to GSA advisors. A recruitment email (see Appendix B) was distributed to both community leaders and school principals that included an invitation letter for GSA advisors (see Appendix C) and an overview of the research project (see Appendix D). Additionally, I created a digital recruitment poster (see Appendix E) that I circulated through my personal social media platforms (i.e., Instagram, Twitter). I also provided a copy of the digital poster to community leaders who also

[4] For a detailed outline of the policy, visit https://www.nlesd.ca/about/researchrequests.jsp

were asked to share this information on their social media platforms as well. In total, nine GSA advisors volunteered to participate in the study.

Upon contact from participants, I distributed the consent form (see Appendix F) via email for them to review prior to the interview; this afforded the participants with the opportunity to ask any questions about the project and their participation before our conversation.

Participant Demographics. Among participants, the average age was of 45 years old, ranging between 30 and 58 years of age, with the majority (4) of participants being between 41 and 50 years of age. Eight of them identified as cisgender (man or woman), and one identified as 'uncertain'; six of the participants identified as non-heterosexual. All of the participants identified as white.

GSA advisors worked with students from grades 5–12, mostly at junior high (i.e., grades 7–9) and senior high levels (i.e., grades 10–12). Six of the advisors were classroom teachers while the remaining three were guidance counselors in their schools. Most participants (n=7) had been working as educators in Newfoundland and Labrador for 11 years or more. Five participants have two years or less of GSA experience and four of them started as GSA advisors this school year (2020–2021) and the other two are in their second school year; one being in a different school from their previous year as GSA advisor. The remaining four, have been GSA advisors for more than two years. Among all the participants, three had been GSA advisors in different schools before their current GSA role in the school they are presently at. Table 3 summarizes the participants' demographics.

Table 3

Participant Demographics

Variable	Range	Frequency
Age (years)	30–40	2
	41–50	4
	51–60	3
Gender	Cisgender Man	2
	Cisgender Woman	6
	Uncertain	1
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	3
	Non-heterosexual	6
Time as an educator in NL	1–10	2
	11–20	4
	21–30	3
Time working at current school	0–5	4
	6–15	4
	16–25	1
Time as GSA advisors in current school	0–2	5
	3–5	1
	6–8	3

Data Collection

Two strategies were used to collect data for this study: first, participants completed an online Professional Profile Questionnaire after which they participated in a virtual one-on-one semi-structured interview. Further details on each of these strategies are detailed below.

Professional Profile Questionnaire. Upon consent and prior to the interview, participants received an email with the link to the questionnaire for the purpose of constructing a profile of each individual (see Appendix G). Five participants reviewed the consent form at our virtual meeting prior to starting the interview; in those cases, participants received the email with the link to the Professional Profile Questionnaire after the interview for completion.

Questionnaires were administered using Qualtrics (Memorial University's institutionally approved survey software), and each participant was sent a confidentiality statement and a unique link to the survey. Participants completed the questionnaire voluntarily and they could choose not to answer questions that made them feel uncomfortable.

The questionnaire collected professional and demographic information. According to Taylor and colleagues (2015), educators' experiences, specifically in relation to 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusive education, vary depending on their personal identities. For instance, 2SLGBTQIA+ educators were more likely to identify their school as unsafe for 2SLGBTQIA+ students than their white, cisgender, heterosexual colleagues. Thus, the questionnaire collected general professional and demographic information, such as sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, years working at their school, position, and type of appointment that was used in the analysis of the collected data.

Semi-Structured Interviews. Before the administration of the interview, the interview protocol was piloted with two educators. One of the educators is a GSA advisor in a different province and the other is a teacher in Newfoundland and Labrador. The pilot interviews were employed for three main purposes: (a) to evaluate the content and intent of the interview protocol, (b) to establish the approximate length of time it takes to conduct the interviews, and (c) to test Memorial University's online conferencing platform, WebEx Meetings (Cisco, 2017), in this context. The pilot interviews took 60 and 75 minutes respectively, which fit into the time frame intended for the interviews with participants. They also provided the necessary information to adjust the protocol content to improve clarity and flow. The conferencing tool worked as expected and was deemed appropriate to support the interview process.

Participant interviews lasted 55 minutes on average, ranging between 30 and 80 minutes. Data from the interviews were audio-recorded (with participants' consent) and fully transcribed for the purpose of analysis. Upon completion of the interview, I sent a full transcript and network map to participants for member-checking purposes (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019), allowing them to add, modify, or delete any information in the transcripts and maps. Member checking provides an opportunity for participants to verify the accuracy of the data, and in this case, I employed it to verify the accuracy of the transcript as well as a means to reflect on the process and provide participants with an opportunity to recall any additional information that may enrich the data (Perry et al., 2018).

The interview protocol was divided in two parts as described below (see Appendix H for the interview protocol).

Part 1. Gender-Sexuality Alliances. I asked participants about their experiences as GSA advisors, prompting participants to describe their role in supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ students and describe their work in NLESD schools. The questions were open-ended to encourage a discussion and prompt more questions that resulted from participants' responses (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). During this part of the interview participants reflected on their current practice, their role, the policy context shaping their work, and the perceived resources needed to engage in the work of the GSA (see Appendix I for the full interview protocol).

Part 2. Social Capital and Social Networks. This section of the interview aimed to elicit GSA advisors' social networks by focusing in four distinctive relational dimensions that comprise both cognitive social capital (i.e., discussion, go to people for resources) and relational social capital (i.e., emotional support, close professional friends). These relational dimensions are common and widely used in social network studies (e.g., Daly, 2010; Perry et al., 2017). For

example, I asked participants, “Who are the colleagues with whom you discuss important matters about your GSA? By discuss important matters I mean, someone with whom you talk about important issues, and/or someone who gives you advice, information, and so on”. Participants could name—in order to maintain confidentiality, participants could choose not to use full names when referring to the people—as many people as they wanted. Additionally, they were asked to identify the professional role of each person they named in their network (e.g., educator, community member, school administrator). They were also asked to identify the people in their network who know each other as doing so enables the researcher to gain a better sense of what is happening in the participants’ network neighborhood by identifying ties among people (See Perry et al., 2018).

During part 2 of the interview, I provided participants with a visual aid (see figure 2) for them to think about people working in six different relationship domains: GSA advisors’ schools, other schools, school district, government, local community, and friends and family. I employed this strategy in order to support participants in recalling more people as well as to name people in all areas of the school social system.

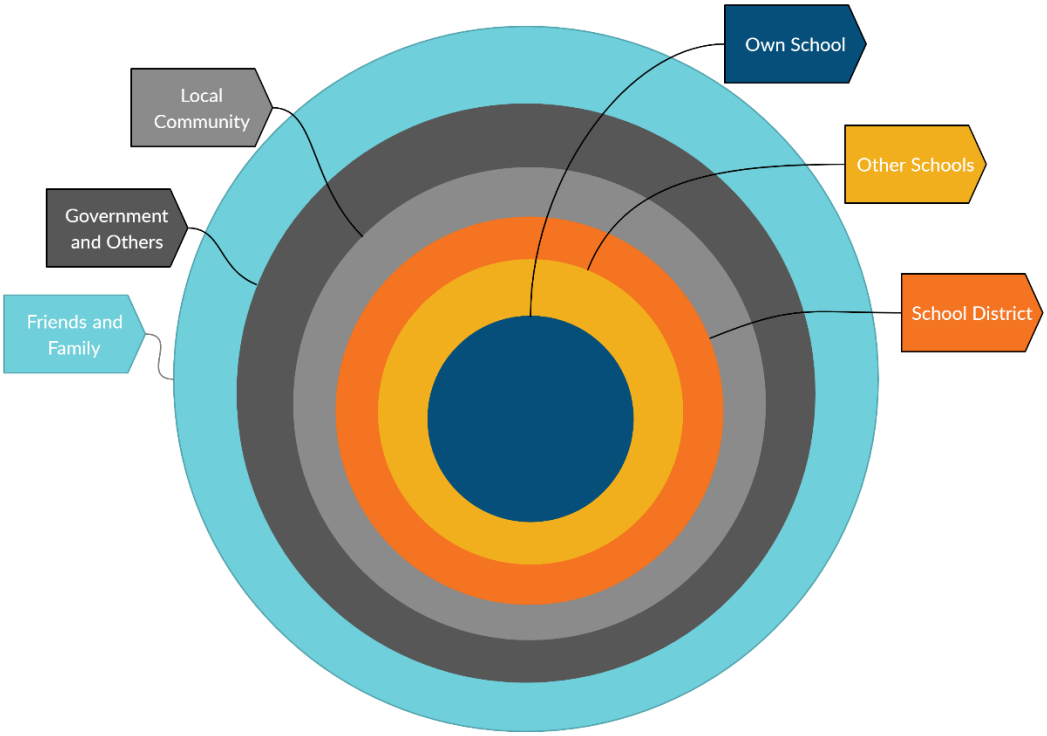

Figure 2. Relationship Domains

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using a constant comparative method (Boeije, 2002); each case was analyzed individually as well as in relation to the others. The complete approach is described in Table 3. For this process, I identified two groups based on the participants' demographic profiles, one formed by experienced GSA advisors (4 or more years in the role), and the other of novice advisors (2 years or less). Novice GSA advisors (n=5) were just starting in the role or they were in their second school year. Advisors in their second year were considered as novice advisors since their first school year was affected by COVID-19 closures, giving them little opportunities to build experience in the GSA role. I followed the constant comparative method approach at three levels: 1) within a single interview of each one of the participants in a group; 2) between interviews of a same group (e.g., novice advisors); and 3) between interviews of

different groups (i.e., between novice and experienced advisors). I used three distinct strategies to understand the data: 1) descriptive statistics to understand the participant sample; 2) egocentric network analysis to understand each educator's social network; and 3) thematic analyses to identify key learnings from the participant interviews. Each of these strategies are detailed in subsequent sections below.

Table 4

Steps for the Constant Comparative Analysis Procedure

Types of Comparison	Analysis Activities	Aim	Questions	Results
1. Comparison within a single interview	Open coding; summarizing core of the interview; finding consensus on interpretation of fragments	Develop categories understanding taking into consideration the conceptual framework	What is the core message of the interview? How are different fragments related? Is the interview consistent? Are there contradictions? What do fragments with the same code have in common?	Summary of the interview; provisional codes (code tree); conceptual profiles; extended memorandums
2. Comparison between interviews within the same group (Experienced GSA advisors and novice GSA advisors)	Axial coding; formulating criteria for comparing interviews; hypothesizing about patterns and types.	Conceptualization of the subject produce a typology	Is A talking about the same as B? What do both interviews reveal about the category? What combination of concepts occur? What interpretations exist for this? What are similarities and differences between interviews A, B, C...? What criteria underlie this comparison?	Expansion of code words until all relevant themes are covered; descriptions of concepts; criteria for comparing interviews; clusters of interviews (typology)
3. Comparison between interviews between groups (Experienced vs. Novice GSA Advisors)	Triangulating data sources	Complete the picture; enrich the information	What does group 1 say about certain themes and what does group 2 have to say about the same themes? What themes appear in group 1 but not in group 2 and vice versa? Why do they see things differently? What nuances, details or new information does group 2 supply about group 1?	Verification of provisional knowledge from group 1; additional information; memorandums.

Adapted from Boeije, 2002

Descriptive Statistics

Data from the questionnaires were compiled to develop a profile of each participant. Descriptive statistics (e.g., median, range, frequency) were used to provide a demographic description of the participant group as a whole as presented in table 3.

Egocentric Network Analysis

I used Egocentric Network Analysis (ENA) to map the social network of each GSA advisor and to highlight the patterns of resource exchange that support their work. According to Perry et al. (2018), ENA "is focused on individuals and their immediate social environment" (p. 25); that is, a person's social network is explored from that individual's perspective. An egocentric network analysis focuses specifically on the relationships between the ego (i.e., the person of focus) and all of the other people to whom ego is connected through the exchange of social capital.

Egocentric network analysis has a variety of advantages; first, it predicts outcomes from a set of variables in an ego network, for example, by describing how ego is connected to alters and exploring alters' characteristics we can predict characteristics about ego such as political opinions or religious affiliation (Perry et al., 2018). Second, egocentric network analysis can be tailored to elicit alters of certain traits that are relevant for a research design (Borgatti & Ofem, 2010), for example, I can elicit responses that prompt ego to name alters who are involved in formal or informal leadership positions to study the levels of collaboration among leaders for the implementation of change initiatives. Finally, egocentric network analysis provides opportunities for generating generalizations from the results.

Egocentric network analysis is a more practical approach as it requires fewer resources to be conducted. It also ensures high anonymity for egos and alters as egos can provide pseudonyms for alters so that names or identifiable characteristics can be protected (Perry et al., 2018). The most common strategy to collect egocentric network data is through a name generator approach which involves a question or series of questions that elicit alter names and their individual characteristics (i.e., gender, age, profession, etc.) pertinent to a research study; this strategy is employed in this research design.

During the interviews, participants were prompted to think of the people who they interact with in support of their GSA work. They named people with whom they interacted along the following relational dimensions: discussion (i.e., with whom they discuss matters related to the GSA), go to person (i.e., individuals identified as being essential sources of information in support of the GSA), emotional support, and close professional friends (Perry et al., 2017; McPherson et al., 2006 in Perry et al., 2018). I created an adjacency matrix (See Figure 3) for each ‘ego’ (i.e., participant). Separate matrices were constructed for each of the relational dimensions (Carolan, 2013); thus, four matrices were created for each participant.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
A	0	1	0	0	1	1
B	1	0	1	0	0	1
C	0	1	0	1	1	0
D	0	0	1	0	0	1
E	1	0	1	0	0	0
F	1	1	0	1	0	0

Figure 3. Adjacency Matrix

The matrices were imported to NetDraw (Borgatti, 2002) using UCINet 6 (Borgatti et al., 2002) to generate a visualization of advisors' networks. I calculated five egocentric network measures to understand the ways in which resources flow in these networks and to measure specific aspects of structural social capital (e.g., network configuration and composition): network size, density, homophily, heterogeneity, and tie strength (i.e., also known as multiplexity). These measures, in addition to the network visualizations, provide a robust profile of each GSA advisor's access to various forms of social capital within their social network. Table 5 offers a summary table of these five measures.

Network Size. Carolan (2013) states that network size is the most straightforward measure as it just requires a count of the number of alters ego has and is drawn from the name generator questions. Alternatively, Perry et al (2018) argue that network size can be an indicator of social capital and different sizes may be compared within studies. For instance, large networks

may provide positive effects on mental health, social mobility, and life satisfaction. However, larger networks may also be costly to maintain (Perry et al, 2018).

Tie Strength. "The strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie" (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1361). That is, it related to the intensity of the tie between ego and alter. Multiplexity can be used as an indicator of tie strength, although, additional indicators such as frequency of contact, length of time in the relationship are also used to measure tie strength (Perry et al., 2018). Granovetter (1973) argues that weak ties, for example, are particularly helpful in the diffusion of new ideas as more people are reached through them.

Multiplexity. Multiplexity might be used as a measure of tie strength by "a simple count of the number of ways that ego and alter are related" (Perry et al, 2018, p.162); for example, people who are co-workers and also friends. Another way could be in terms of their function, for instance, an alter might be a great emotional support, but also provides advice, and lends ego money when needed (Perry et al, 2018). According to Perry and colleagues (2018) multiplex ties are more durable and supportive than unidimensional ties and they also provide ego with greater network satisfaction and self-esteem.

Homophily. Homophily refers to the tendency of ego to prefer or interact with people similar to themselves on certain variables (Perry et al, 2018). Homophily can also be an indicator of inequality distribution as it increases benefits for dominant groups (DiMaggio & Garipm 2012 in Perry et al, 2018). Perry et al (2018) also argue that homophilous networks facilitate communication, a sense of belonging, and identity affirmation. However, they may also "insulate

egos from outside influences and ideas, reinforcing in-group behaviours and biases" (Perry et al, 2018, p. 167).

Heterogeneity. Heterogeneity is a measure that identifies the degree of diversity of alters' attributes; that is, how different they are among each other (Carolan, 2013; Perry et al, 2018). As such, measures of heterogeneity may provide characteristics that support or affect social integration and equality (Perry et al, 2018).

Density. Carolan (2013) argues that density is related to network size as smaller networks often have higher density. Density refers to the number of ties that exist from the total possible number of ties (Perry et al., 2018). A 100% density means that all possible ties are present (Carolan, 2013). Perry et al. (2018) argue that higher density relates to bonding social capital as well as social support, although, it may also be an indicator of normative pressure to conform. Additionally, low density scores are associated with bridging social capital, resiliency, and access to non-redundant information (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1973; Perry et al, 2018; Putnam, 2001).

Table 5

Egocentric Network Measures

Concept	Definition	Formula
Network Size	Total number of ties (x) from ego to alters.	N = x
Multiplexity (tie strength)	The multiple ways in which ego interacts with an alter. Multiplexity is often a measure of tie strength. Multiplex ties are usually more durable than unidimensional ties. *In this study, it ranged from 1—4* because there were 4 distinct relational dimensions.	n/a
Homophily	Tendency for ego to prefer interactions with people who are similar to them. E-I index measures number of alters different from ego (E) minus the number of alters the same as ego (I) divided by the number of alters. *Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the homophily. That is, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*	E-I Index $\frac{E—I}{E + I}$
Heterogeneity/ Diversity	Refers to the extent of diverse ties in ego networks. Blau's index measures the proportion of alters that fall in certain category and the proportion of group members in each category. In short, whereas homophily measures the degree of similarity between ego and alter, heterogeneity measures the degree of difference between alters. *Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the greater the heterogeneity. That is, the least similarity exists among alters in ego's network.*	Blau's Index $1-\sum_{i=1}^{k} p_i^2$
Density	Refers to the degree of conectedness among alters. *E* is the number of ties present and *V* is the network size. Density measures in egocentric network analysis are approximate as they are based on ego's perception of their network and it is closely related to network size. *Measures range from 0 to 1. A score of 1 or 100% means that all possible ties among actors exist. That is, everyone is connected to each other.*	Density $D= \frac{2\|E\|}{\|V\|(\|V\|-1)}$

Note: Definitions were reproduced from Perry et al. (2018) and Carolan (2013)

Thematic Analysis

All interviews were analyzed individually. I used a hybrid deductive-inductive coding approach, which refers to a process of thematic coding which starts with a deductive approach and continues with an inductive approach to coding (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). During deductive coding, I based the coding on the conceptual framework pieces such as cognitive, relational, and structural social capital in addition to the research questions. I then identified any additional emerging patterns and themes from the responses as part of the inductive coding process.

Next, I created an individual memorandum for each participant as part of the constant comparative method outlined in table 4. Each of these memoranda contained themes that were relevant to each case and were used as the initial step of the constant comparative method; each memorandum also contained network maps and relevant network patterns and characteristics that emerged in each case. For each stage of the method, additional memos were written resulting from the comparisons at the three distinct levels of analysis: within a single interview, between interviews of a same group, and between interviews of different groups.

Validity of the Data

As Creswell and Poth (2018) in Creswell and Guetterman (2019) argue, relying on validity strategies is an essential way to support the trustworthiness of the study. Credibility refers to different ways in checking the accuracy of the findings or the data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). In order to ensure credibility in my findings, I relied on two validity strategies: member–checking and triangulation. As mentioned above, member–checking with participants was applied by sending them the interview transcripts and network maps to give

them the opportunity to review its accuracy; furthermore, member-checking was useful to enrich the data by adding information that could have been recalled after the interview was over. As well, triangulation supports the quality of the research by producing knowledge at different levels (Flick, 2018), this strategy took place by analyzing GSA advisors' experiences using diverse data collection strategies that collected demographic data, narrative experiences, and network data.

Ethical Considerations

This project was approved by Memorial University's Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) and the NLESD's internal Ethics Review committee as required in their policy for conducting research. The main purpose of applying for ethics approval is to ensure that participants' rights and welfare are protected (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, 2018). To get ethics approval, I completed the online tutorial provided by the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans CORE (TCPS2)*. Then, I submitted an electronic application to ICEHR through the Memorial University Research Portal, providing a detailed overview of the research project, and most importantly, the procedures for ensuring the protection of participants' rights and welfare.

Perry et al. (2018) argue that network research requires voluntary and informed consent; taking an egocentric network approach has an advantage by only requiring the informed consent of ego (i.e., GSA advisors) and not of their alters (i.e, the people the focal actors names as having relationships with); thus, there is minimal risk to alters in egocentric network studies. Although

they might be human subjects under the *common rule*, their identity, and personal identifiable information are easily avoided by the use of pseudonyms. In fact, attempting to seek consent from alters could potentially pose a risk to the confidentiality of the study (Perry et al., 2018). A practical advantage of using ENA is "that both respondents and their alters can be anonymous, eliminating privacy issues and encouraging honest reporting" (Perry et al., 2018, p. 29).

I distributed the consent form to all nine GSA advisors that volunteered to participate in this study. Participants reviewed the consent form with me where they could ask any questions that they might have about their participation in the study. The consent form stated that all data would be anonymized to protect participants' and alters' information and that all personally identifiable information would be removed from the transcripts prior to data analysis.

During the consent process, I also: informed participants about the possible benefits and risks of participating in the study, detailed the approximate time of the interview and questionnaire, explained any possible factor(s) that could limit their anonymity, and shared the ways in which the data of the study would be safeguarded (see Appendix F). Participants could withdraw from the study until up to two weeks after receiving their final transcript and network map. In addition, as a way of increasing confidentiality in the reporting of the data in the next chapter, not all quotes specify which GSA advisors made the statement. I have also used gender-neutral pronouns (*they/them*) when referring to the participants and the people they mentioned during their interviews.

In this chapter, I reviewed the data collection and analysis procedures for the two phases of this study. In the following chapter, I review the findings of this research. I start with a description of the provincial policy landscape that influences the work of GSAs, focusing on the

constructed timeline of the SCSP. From there, I articulate the specific activities that comprise the work of GSAs under the leadership of their advisors. Lastly, I examine how GSA advisors leverage their social capital to facilitate their GSA work in support of developing and sustaining safer learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter, I continue here with the findings of this study. I begin with the examination of the progression of the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* (SCSP) conducted during phase I of the study. The examination included relevant policy documents and Department of Education (DOE) reports to understand the progression of the policy context guiding and supporting the work of GSAs in Newfoundland and Labrador. From there, I move on to phase II of the study, which focused on the experiences of NLESD advisors who are currently engaged in work supporting GSAs in NL schools. I describe the current work being undertaken in these GSAs and the experiences of GSA advisors who have been facilitating this work. The final section of this chapter offers an examination of GSA advisors' social networks through the lenses of structural, relational, and cognitive social capital, providing an in-depth understanding of how GSA advisors are leveraging their social capital to support their work.

Phase I: Understanding the Policy Landscape

In phase one of this study, I aimed to answer the research question, *What is the progression of the SCSP in relation to programming to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in Newfoundland and Labrador?* The SCSP in NL has been an ongoing framework since 2006 to address school violence and ensure safer and more caring learning environments (Department of Education, 2013). However, it is important to highlight that since 2001 the Department of Education (DOE) had started working towards addressing issues of violence in schools through a number of initiatives that impacted the creation and evolution of the SCSP (Department of Education, n.d.).

After reviewing a collation of annual reports (See Department of Education 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019), the two different versions of the SCSP (Department of Education, 2006, 2013), and the evaluation report of the 2006 SCSP (Goss Gilroy Inc., 2012), I provide a chronological account of the progression of the policy by describing each of the five major milestones that have influenced the availability of programming and resources specific for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in NL schools in the timeline presented in figure 4 below.

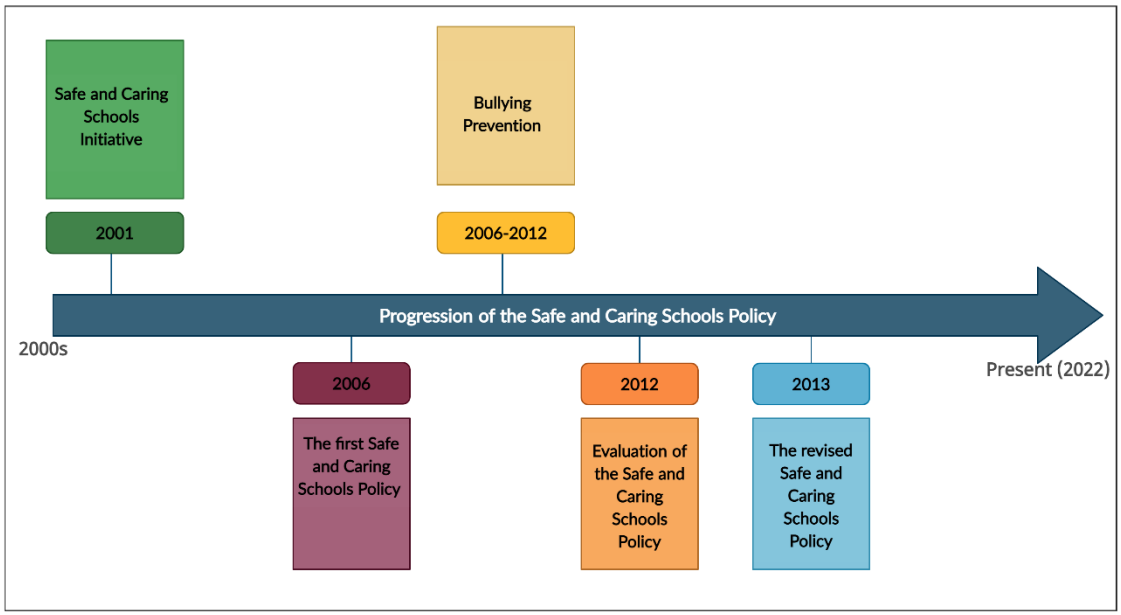

Figure 4. Progression of the Safe and Caring Schools Policy

2001: The Safe and Caring Schools Initiative

The *Safe and Caring Schools Project*, a project focused on programming addressing school violence, was an initiative proposed by the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) in the 1990s, which was adopted and proposed in different provinces in Canada soon after (Rayside, 2008). For instance, the NL Department of Education (DOE) in partnership with the *Violence*

Prevention Initiative[5] (VPI) committed to the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative* in the Fall of 2001 (Department of Education, n.d.). The Department of Education and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA) collaborated on the initiative, and through their work, 15 educators received training in New Brunswick in 2001–2002 (Department of Education, 2002). Additional resources were available that included a *Safe Schools* website and an advisory committee on Safe and Caring Schools (Department of Education, 2002).

The Safe and Caring Schools initiative developed events and initiated collaborative work focused against bullying, harassment, and intimidation. A forum on bullying called *Creating Peaceful Schools—A Forum on School Bullying* took place in St. John's in May 2002. Soon after, collaborative work was undertaken in Corner Brook and St. John's to design a *Safe & Caring Schools Provincial Action Plan*[6] (Department of Education, 2003, n.d.; Turpin, 2003). In particular, the action plan addressed future steps for policy development, public awareness, resource provision, professional development, funding, youth involvement, and parental and community partnerships. One of the items in policy development from the Action Plan included examining Safe and Caring Schools policies from other provinces with the expectation of developing a formal provincial policy on Safe and Caring Schools in NL by the spring of 2003 (Department of Education, n.d.). The Action Plan also aimed for the provision of "a

[5] The Violence Prevention Initiative is a government initiative involving partnerships from different provincial government departments (i.e., Department of Education), community stakeholders (i.e., Planned Parenthood), Indigenous governments (i.e., Nunatsiavut Government), transition houses, women's centres, and violence prevention NL organizations with the purpose of addressing violence issues in NL (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.). More information about this initiative can be found at https://www.gov.nl.ca/vpi/about/

[6] See in full at https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/files/publications_k12_safecaringschoolsactionplan.pdf

comprehensive bullying prevention program to every school" (Department of Education, n.d., p. 2).

In short, the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative* in 2001 propelled multiple initiatives, ultimately resulting in the elaboration of a *Safe and Caring Schools Action Plan* that offered further actions to build safe and caring learning environments and develop a provincial *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* by the spring of 2003.

2006: The First Safe and Caring Schools Policy

Before the SCSP came to place, Safe and Caring Schools teams were already working on initiatives to support disruptive behaviours: six behaviour specialists were hired to carry out this work and to support schools in the different school districts by assisting Safe and Caring Schools teams (Department of Education, 2005). The role of the behaviour specialists was to offer supports to school administrators and educators in addressing disruptive behaviours in their classrooms (Department of Education, 2005).

Building on this work, The *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* was first launched in September 2006 "to provide a framework for the development and implementation of provincial, district and school level policies and action plans to ensure that learning and teaching can take place in a safe and caring environment" (Department of Education, 2006, p. 4). Bullying and harassment were deemed "uncaring, unsafe, and unacceptable" (Department of Education, 2006, p. 9) and these two were at the forefront of the policy's framework to address.

The SCSP stated that fair and consistent policy implementation, school community collaboration, proactive disciplinary practices, a respectful and positive learning environment, and an inclusive curriculum that teaches positive social behaviours and values were the guiding

principles that build safe and caring learning environments (Department of Education, 2006). The policy adopted strategies in schools for managing unacceptable behaviours; for instance, the use of the Code of Conduct was promoted and there were also resources designed to provide information towards respect for diversity, health, and well-being (Department of Education, 2006). The code of conduct strived to ensure the right for members of the school community to feel safe while on school property or attending other school related events, including any physical or virtual communication platforms (Department of Education, 2006). The code of conduct's expectations included the support for non-violent resolution and embracing diversity regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, economic status, national or ethnic origin, language group, or age (Department of Education, 2006).

In other words, the introduction of the SCSP in 2006 offered a framework to foster safer and more caring learning environments for students and their school communities. The SCSP included guiding principles to support building safer learning environments and introduced ways to managing school violence and unacceptable behaviours through its Code of Conduct. Although the policy did not address actions specific to support 2SLGBTQIA+ persons, the code of conduct offered directives and expectations for schools to promote safe, caring, and inclusive practices in schools by promoting environments free from aggression and by embracing the diversity of all peoples, including sexual and gender diversity (Department of Education, 2006).

2006–2012: Focus on Bullying Prevention

During this period, significant funding became available to support actions undertaking safe and caring projects. However, none of the funding supported specific actions towards 2SLGBTQIA+ issues in NL schools. Meanwhile, 2SLGBTQIA+ programming was beginning to

become part of the Safe and Caring Schools agenda in other Canadian provinces. Ontario was the first province to address and incorporate harassment based on sexual and gender difference in its policy actions (Rayside, 2014). Rayside (2014) reports on the 2009 *Keeping our Kids Safe at School Act* in Ontario, which specifically required schools and their staff to report bullying and harassment incidents targeted at 2SLGBTQIA+ students; additionally, there was also a clear mandate to incorporate comprehensive policy by paying particular attention to 2SLGBTQIA+ identities and by implementing professional development to educators to respond to homophobic bullying .

During this time, the NL DOE granted $15,000 in awards to schools for successful projects in Safe and Caring Schools and 30 schools benefited from the funding receiving $500 each in the 2008–2009 school year (Department of Education, 2009). Concurrently, senior high school students could apply for $500 tuition vouchers for post-secondary studies by demonstrating actions that supported safe and caring schools (Department of Education, 2008, 2009). Both awards were part of the *Safe and Caring Schools Special Project Fund*, which commenced in 2006 and has continued each school year ever since (Department of Education, 2009).

These years were very active for the DOE and the Women's Policy Office—the NL government office leading the Violence Prevention Initiative—where a notable increase in supporting resources and actions for NL schools took place through their collaboration. For instance, new resources about violence and harassment were available for teachers in schools as well as professional development on violence and harassment in schools (Department of Education, 2008, 2011). Additionally, as part of the work to address bullying, students from

grades six, nine, and level III, participated in a bullying survey to find solutions to this ongoing issue (Department of Education, 2009).

Informational resources were also elaborated such as the *Safe and Caring Schools Handbook*[7] (Department of Education, 2009) which was created as an online resource for the school community (i.e., students, parents, teachers) and contained information about the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative*, including the programs available and community organizations that supported the initiative (Department of Education, 2009).

This period of time encompassed an implementation of the SCSP that involved greater funding (i.e., *Safe and Caring Schools Special Project Fund*), resources (i.e., *Safe and Caring Schools Handbook*), professional development and training, and actions to address bullying (e.g., bullying survey). Although the SCSP offered directives for fostering safe and caring learning environments, the DOE called for an evaluation of the policy in 2011 to strengthen its commitments to safer and more caring learning environments (Department of Education, 2011).

2012: Evaluation of the Safe and Caring Schools Policy

At this time, important changes happened within departments of education in several Canadian provinces, including Newfoundland and Labrador. These changes benefitted the 2SLGBTQIA+ community because education departments were addressing 2SLGBTQIA+ issues more actively (Rayside, 2014). In 2011, the NL DOE requested the submission of proposals to evaluate the SCSP, and in October 2011, Goss Gilroy Inc. was granted a contract to carry out the evaluation of the policy (Department of Education, 2012).

[7] The handbook is in fact the official website of the Safe and Caring Schools Policy where resources and information around the policy are available for students, teachers, and parents, and currently, it is available at https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/k12/safeandcaring/.

Goss Gilroy Inc. (2012) established that the main objectives of the evaluation were to identify:

- strengths and weaknesses of the SCSP;
- the effectiveness of the policy's implementation;
- how well the policies were integrated into the school development processes;
- the extent in which the policy is achieving its outcomes;
- and the extent to which schools were fostering safe and caring school environments.

A key finding from the evaluation was that the policy was increasing the level of awareness of the school community about the policy and the importance of safety in schools; as well, students were also more aware of global issues affecting individuals and communities (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012). Thanks to the DOE's local and provincial partnerships, as well as collaborative work and there was a decrease in high-risk behaviours (i.e., less reported incidents) and certain forms of bullying (i.e., bathroom graffiti) (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012).

Alongside a report of the findings, the evaluation also included a number of considerations moving forward. These suggestions included: (a) the need to incorporate specific definitions of relevant terms (i.e., bullying, inclusion, sexual orientation, and types of violence); (b) the need for sufficient infrastructure to implement the policy such as integrative training for schools so that "the concept of safe and caring schools is not seen as an add-on, but rather integral to each initiative" (p. 38); (c) improving website materials to a more user-friendly interface; (d) integral incorporation of the policy within the DOE and school districts in all aspects of the educational infrastructure (i.e., curriculum development, programs, initiatives, services); (e) instituting Safe and Caring Schools itinerants (from now on referred to as SCS

itinerants) as districts' staff members whose main role involved implementing the SCSP and facilitating Positive Behavior Supports[8] in schools; (f) a focus on mandatory Positive Behavior Supports training for schools; and (f) the implementation of a data-collection and reporting system that will help measure the progress of the policy (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012).

Another consideration raised in the evaluation was in relation to community partners: Goss Gilroy Inc. (2012) urged that there should be greater representation of community partners whose "mandate and focus could support SCS Policy implementation and outcomes." (p. 20); that is, organizations supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, persons with disabilities, and multicultural groups (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012). In early 2012, there had been initial conversations between the NL DOE and Egale Canada—a 2SLGBTQIA+ human rights organization. These conversations started as a result of Egale's Safe Schools Campaign, informed by the results of their 2011 report on 2SLGBTQIA+ bullying and harassment called *Every Class in Every School* (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012; Taylor et al, 2011). The NL DOE decided to partner with Egale, and in early 2012, the DOE elaborated and action plan to address 2SLGBTQIA+ concerns and funded the *MyGSA*[9] resource with an initial investment of $90 000 making NL the first province in Canada to make the *MyGSA* resource available for all junior and senior high schools (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012). As part of this partnership, more than 170 school system leaders had a professional development session focused on 2SLGBTQIA+ issues as an initial step of implementing professional development of 2SLGBTQIA+ issues (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012).

[8] "School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports (SW-PBS) is an effective, efficient and consistent practice for implementing a school's code of conduct. As well, it provides consistent schoolwide and school-based guidelines for responding to student behaviour." (Goss Gilroy Inc, 2012)
[9] Found at https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/k12/safeandcaring/gsa/

Professional development sessions were held with school principals and staff in the following months (Goss Gilroy Inc., 2012).

After the evaluation report was released on August 31, 2012, the NL DOE committed to set up a team to revise the policy and actively engage in actions based on the recommendations of the evaluation. The NL DOE followed by offering professional development on 2SLGBTQIA+ awareness training for principals, vice-principals, and guidance counselors as stipulated in the action plan. The department developed a code of conduct template for schools and a definition of bullying; trained suicide intervention professionals; and, continued offering awards such as the *Safe and Caring Schools Awards*. The awards included $500 post-secondary tuition vouchers and *Safe and Caring Schools Special Project Awards*, which granted funding to 39 schools for establishing outstanding safe and caring learning environments in the 2012-2013 school year (Department of Education, 2013).

Notably, the evaluation of the SCSP shed light on the important impacts the policy had to school communities, such as the increased awareness of the importance of safety in schools. However, the evaluation also illuminated the various aspects of the policy that required further attention to improve the framework. In particular, the evaluation recognized the need for incorporating 2SLGBTQIA+-specific programming and policy directives. However, at the time the evaluation was being conducted, a partnership between the DOE and Egale to support this particular population was in its early stages. Both the evaluation and the partnership with Egale influenced the revision of the SCSP in the following months.

2013: The Revised Safe and Caring Schools Policy

After taking in consideration the suggestions of the SCSP evaluation, the newly revised SCSP was released on December 2, 2013. With the launch came other changes and increased investments in different programing in the NLESD that included further development of ongoing professional development and hiring additional staff (i.e., SCS itinerants) whose purpose was to directly support schools with the SCSP implementation (Department of Education, 2014). At the same time, revisions were also made to the *School Act, 1997* that included requiring a code of conduct from schools, which pushed the design of a template and more comprehensive guidelines for schools to develop their own code of conduct (Department of Education, 2014).

The SCSP had three revised objectives:

- Establish clear expectations and set direction to all members of the school community;
- Encourage appropriate action; and
- Encourage proactive and preventive endeavors as well as remedial and restorative approaches when problems do occur (Department of Education, 2013, p. 3).

A clear example of actions towards reaching those goals are the seven procedures that provide direction in the implementation of the policy: 1) *Positive Behavior Supports* (guidelines for responding to school behavior); 2) *Code of Conduct Guidelines* (to support schools to create one) ; 3) *Bullying Intervention Protocol* (protocol for reporting and responding to bullying behavior) ; 4) *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Guidelines* (management of disruptive behaviours); 5) *Teaching Digital Citizenship* (norms of safe, respectful and responsible behavior online); 6) *Implementation Progress* (progress report which is currently under development); and 7)

Guidelines for LGBTQ Inclusive Practices (making sure all students, including those of diverse sexual orientation or gender identity, are in a safe, caring and inclusive environment) (Department of Education, 2016).

The Inclusive Education Practices (section 4.6 of the SCSP) outlines beliefs and school practices for inclusive education for all students regardless of sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, economic status, national or ethnic origin, religion, culture, body image, age, or ability. Section 4.6.4 addresses the incorporation of specific inclusive classroom and school-based practices such as having gender-neutral washrooms as well as a curriculum that reflects the many representations of diversity. With respect to GSAs, section 4.6.5 of the SCSP clearly states:

> Schools with junior and/or senior high students will encourage the development of a student-led club, such as Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), with the goal of making their school community a safe and welcoming environment for all students regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. The Department of Education's resource, MyGSA.ca Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Newfoundland and Labrador, Grades 7–12 (2013) is available to support schools. It has been provided to all junior and senior high schools and is available online (Department of Education, 2013, p.13).

Under this line of programming for safer spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in schools, the NL DOE invested an additional $100,000 for professional learning; $27,500 for the Safe and Caring Schools Special Project Awards and Graduating Student Awards; and an online parent brochure providing information about the SCSP (Department of Education, 2014). An additional three SCS itinerants were added to the NLESD staff (Department of Education, 2015) bringing the total number to six by the end of this time period.

The increased funding provided the financial resources needed to maintain continuous work, especially as it related to 2SLGBTQIA+ practices such as programming, online resources, professional development, school initiatives, awards, curriculum lesson plans, gender neutral

washrooms, and GSA conferences (Department of Education, 2015; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2016).

Currently, school continue to implement the SCSP. The partnership with Egale has strengthened, training sessions for educators continue, and the DOE has developed lesson plans incorporating 2SLGBTQIA+ issues, focusing its design towards diversity, acceptance, and raising awareness of 2SLGBTQIA+ issues (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2017). Although funding has been on the decline, Safe and Caring Schools Awards continue to be awarded each year granting $13 000 among 32 schools at the end of the 2017–2018 fiscal year (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2018), and $12,600 among 30 schools at the end of the 2018–2019 year (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2019).

The NLESD, implemented 2SLGBTQIA+-specific initiatives in the 2019–2020 school year:

> A four-year rollout of PL sessions for schools to promote LGBTQ awareness; *Free to Be Me* forums held across the province (in person and virtual); support for the establishment of Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) groups; GSA conferences; lesson plan development for teachers on integrating LGBTQ resources across all curriculum areas; *Pride Week* celebrations; changes in *PowerSchool* to accommodate preferred name and gender; and support to schools to establish gender inclusive washrooms. (NLESD, 2020, p. 36)

As seen through the progression of the policy, it was not until 2012–2013 that specific policies, programming, and supports toward 2SLGBTQIA+ students were implemented in NL schools. The 2013 revised version of the policy provided specific strategies such as Procedure 7 and clear policy statements for Inclusive Education Practices to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students. Additionally, the NLESD implemented actions such as the hiring of three additional SCS itinerants (bringing the total number of SCS itinerants to nine), and the allocation of funds

towards resources to support the policy implementation (e.g., professional learning, online resources). At the time of this research, the current *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* (Department of Education, 2013) was under review (B. Ottenheimer, personal communication, June 29, 2020; J. Webb, personal communication, February 1, 2021).

Since the introduction of the revised SCSP in 2013, GSAs are becoming a regular part of the school infrastructure across many schools in Newfoundland and Labrador, although there is no formal record of the number of active GSAs in NL (J. Webb, personal communication, February 1, 2021). Thus far, little is known about the work currently happening in GSAs in light of this existing policy framework which is guiding schools towards safer learning environments. In the following section, I provide an examination of the experiences of nine GSA advisors who are facilitating safer spaces in schools for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and allies to date. I begin with an overview of how these GSA advisors described their experiences engaging with this policy in their respective schools.

Phase II: Understanding the GSA work in NL Schools

This section provides an in-depth examination of Phase II of this study, focusing on the interviews with GSA advisors and their work. The interviews were divided in two parts. Part 1 centered on the GSA advisors' experiences in carrying out this work in schools responding to the second research question: *What work is currently being undertaken in GSAs in K–12 schools that supports 2SLGBTQIA+ students?* The second half of the interview queried the social relationships GSA advisors engage to support their GSA work focusing on the third research question: *In what ways are GSA advisors engaging their personal and professional relationships to support their GSA work?* The findings from this phase of the study are presented here.

GSA Advisors' Experience in NLESD Schools

GSA advisors in this study shared very strong advocacy for their students. Since beginning in their GSA role, they have focused their own learning on GSAs and 2SLGBTQIA+ related information. They all have focused their work on providing safer spaces for all students, recruiting students as new members of the GSA, educating the school and the community on 2SLGBTQIA+-related topics, building students' leadership, and giving students' a platform for their voices to be heard. Moreover, participants mentioned the SCSP as a guide for providing safer spaces for all students, including those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, within the school community. Although the COVID-19 pandemic posed some barriers and restrictions for the GSA work (e.g., school closures, limited activities, events, and gatherings), GSA advisors shared the joy in doing the work thus far and expressed a desire to expand the scope of their work within their schools and communities more broadly. Overall, GSA advisors have engaged alongside their GSA students in a variety of activities that are summarized in table 6.

Table 6

GSA Activities in NL Schools

Reach Level	Activities
GSA	- Weekly meetings - Talking circles - Sharing pronouns - Tie-dye T-shirts - Watch videos and movies - Learning about 2SLGBTQIA+ topics and concerns - Organizing school-related events - Conversations around social issues - Hang-out among themselves at lunch - Agree upon safe space guidelines
School	- Fundraising (e.g., bake sales) - Art displays - Rainbow flags - Rainbow crosswalks - Murals - Bulletin Boards - Educating the school about 2SLGBTQIA+ topics and concerns - Pride Week - Pride marches - Commemorate Pink Shirt Day - Advocate for gender-neutral washrooms - Challenge Prom Night traditions
Outside of School	- Provincial GSA Conferences - Attend Virtual GSAs (hosted by NLESD) - Education in the community - Fundraising outside of school - Social media presence

These GSA activities, supported by the SCSP, have helped students, educators, schools, and communities in multiple ways. GSA advisors mentioned that in-group activities (e.g., their weekly meetings where students have conversations, share their pronouns, experiences, and organize activities) have supported 2SLGBTQIA+ students in building a trusting space where they belong.

School-level activities have provided GSA advisors and their GSA students with opportunities to shape the school atmosphere in two distinct ways: 1) by creating visibility on 2SLGBTQIA+ issues through their art displays, events, public conversations, rainbow flags, and educational activities; and 2) by challenging heterosexist school practices, for instance, when voicing their concerns and advocating for change (e.g., gender-neutral washroom, changes to prom night). Finally, outside-of-school activities have given GSA advisors and their GSA students an opportunity to connect with other schools and GSAs; foster relationships with them; share best practices to strengthen their own GSA work; and build their leadership skills to bring about change to their surrounding communities.

GSA advisors' experiences in this role entail a variety of in-group, school, and community activities that have the purpose to foster safer spaces—through trust-building among students, creating visibility around 2SLGBTQIA+ issues, challenging school practices, and offering educational opportunities to staff—for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. I identified five dominant themes around the GSA advisors' work in NL schools: perceptions of the SCSP, leadership in the GSA work, support from the school administration, resources and collaboration, and changes in the school environment.

Theme 1: Perceptions of the Safe and Caring Schools Policy

The findings of this study suggest that, to date, the SCSP has mostly enabled the GSA work. All of the participants reported positive experiences with the implementation of the policy, and they all felt the policy was supporting the GSA work. One of the participants shared their excitement for the support they have had and the resources available for them since the beginning of the GSA: "The *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* is the great thing. I mean, when I

started the GSA, I had this wonderful educational tool called *My GSA* that kind of walked me through the process, and it was wonderful." (Advisor C).

Another GSA advisor shared how the policy supported the creation of the GSA in their school in rural Newfoundland during the COVID-19 pandemic despite experiencing resistance from some staff members:

> I think the policy supports the work of GSA, particularly as someone who's at a school in rural Newfoundland. And I think that having a policy that states that there has to be a GSA if students express desire for one is important. Because there was like, I had some resistance to […] the idea of a GSA when I first started floating it amongst folks at the school. And I think, like being able to cite the policy and talk about the importance of the GSA was important, particularly during a pandemic here, when there are constraints on extracurriculars and what students can do outside of their own classroom.

Advisors shared that they feel safe doing this work and most of them (n=8) spoke positively about the SCS itinerants. SCS itinerants have been key for the successes in the GSAs by providing support, resources, information, workshops to students, and professional development opportunities for educators. Advisor I said: "We had the safe and caring, safe and inclusive schools' itinerants come in and do workshops with all sixths, and sevenths and eighths before starting the GSA." Most of the facilitators (n=8) have benefited from an online email group and provincial GSA meetings—a bi-weekly meeting, created by the SCS itinerants to support GSAs, where GSAs from across the province get together virtually. Importantly, one of the GSA advisors in this study did not report any connection, supports, or benefits from the SCS itinerant assigned to work with their school. This may be due to the early stages of their GSA, but also due to the fact that their SCS itinerant had not fostered a relationship with the school at the time of the interview.

Five of the advisors also mentioned that the school district has made clear that GSAs are essential supports for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and, therefore, must continue throughout the school year. Some GSA advisors (n=3) spoke to the need of not only having GSAs for junior and senior high school students, but to also engage younger grades. One advisor shared:

> I mean, if I was at a K–12 school, my god! You wouldn't believe what I would have. Because I'd have them in as early as they want to be […] I'd probably have two groups actually, like a lower group and an upper group. And by the time they got to grade seven, they'd be on point.

Most GSA advisors (n=7) commented on the need for more trans-related resources and community partnerships to access these specialized supports because SCSP resources were not enough. Similarly, two GSA advisors believed that some school communities (and even GSA advisors across the province) are not necessarily well acquainted with certain components of the SCSP. They believe that some educators are not well aware of Procedure 7 of the Policy, which offers Guidelines for LGBTQ Inclusive Practices[10]. One of them shared:

> I'm not sure how aware of it [Procedure 7] most teachers are. I have a guidance counselor whom I know quite well, and I had assumed would know this, but they had a student who wanted to be with a different name and pronouns at school. And suddenly parents were emailing like hey, is my child blah, blah, blah? And they were like "Oh, my God! What do I do?" That was very clearly in that policy.

It seems by one of the participant's responses that school administration and staff turnover affects the consolidation and understanding of policy components which in turn impact the GSA work, as one advisor shared:

> You know, in our school development plan, I think it's there, I just don't know. It's almost like it's in bits and pieces. I'm not sure if I see all the connections being made. And that that may just because I'm new on the staff. We've had changes in in our

[10] For example, in keeping privacy and confidentiality for 2SLGBTQIA+ students, minimizing gender-segregated activities, respecting an individual's right to self-identification, etc. (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2016).

> administration; our entire administration team is new this year, a little different from last year. So, you know, at this point, it's very much a moving target. I don't think of it being something that's really solid at this point.

The SCSP has provided a framework that facilitates and supports the GSA work, and the SCS itinerant provide direct supports and resources (i.e., information, online GSA meetings, and workshops) to GSA advisors and their schools. There seems to be a lack of trans-related resources and supports from the DOE and school districts. Four participants identified a lack of knowledge about the SCSP and procedures from some educators across the province. Staff and administration turnover seem to affect the implementation and understanding of the SCSP in general. While for one novice advisor in rural NL the SCS itinerant provided them with a variety of resources to start the GSA, for another advisor in rural NL, the SCS itinerant was not identified as a support at all.

Theme 2: Leadership in the GSA Work

Through their GSA work, participants enacted a clear leadership role within their schools, but also within their communities. Participants identify themselves as advocates, and as such, they have taken on a leadership role by having conversations with staff and the administration at their schools about the importance of creating safer spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and staff. Some of them (n=3) have had additional opportunities to collaborate with the staff and lead them through resources and professional development on 2SLGBTQIA+ related topics. One of them leveraged a professional development session with staff to address some of the concerns brought up by their GSA students; they said:

> Yesterday, for example, we had a professional development at my school. So, the kids asked if I might be able to address the staff, so I had a presentation on social emotional learning, and its importance, then, I kind of parlayed that into important social emotional

> relationships with LGBTQ community in a school, because some of these kids need those relationships with others.

Similarly, another GSA advisor leads the *Safe and Caring Schools Committee* at their school; this committee, formed by different educators in the school, has been "a help, a good mobile, to get things to go forth" (Advisor G) for the GSA and other safe and inclusive initiatives.

A number of participants (n=4) have spanned their leadership beyond school walls by hosting provincial conferences, bringing GSAs (i.e., students and their GSA advisors) from across Newfoundland and Labrador together. Another GSA advisor has also shared their experiences in the GSA work in a variety of settings including at Memorial University.

Some advisors (n=5) shared that they have been of great support to other educators who are starting GSAs in their schools. One advisor shared this sentiment: "My role now tends to be more supportive for them [educators starting GSAs in their schools] and pointing them in the right direction" (Advisor A). Another GSA advisor has collaborated with a SCS itinerant on some occasions to bring GSA/2SLGBTQIA+-specific professional development to other schools. Some of the participants shared that they have received some sort of awards and/or public recognition due to their leadership and GSA work in their schools and have done some advocacy work across different levels in the school system[11].

To summarize, GSA advisors' leadership has stood out in a variety of ways. Within-school leadership was seen through their advocacy and, in a few cases (n=3), by incorporating action plans and professional development opportunities for staff. Province-wide leadership took

[11] Further details have been withheld as they might breach participants' anonymity.

the form of supports to other GSA advisors, who are starting in the role, as well as by organizing GSA conferences, receiving public recognition, and by engaging in public advocacy for better supports for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and staff in schools.

Theme 3: Support from the School Administration

Across participants' experiences, their school principals and vice-principals have been supportive of the GSA work by taking part in activities, providing funding, and even dealing with backlash from parents, staff, and/or people in town. In many of the advisors' schools (n=5), the principal reached out to educators in the school to start the GSA. An advisor shared how involved and supportive their school principal and the staff are. Principal support is exceptionally meaningful, especially from the students' point of view. Another participant reflected on how important it is to have the administration's support and, in their situation, the same principal has been at the school since the start of the group and has been encouraging it since, "My principal has always backed me and been on board" (Advisor A).

A similar sentiment was shared by another advisor who has had a lot of support from the administration since the start of their GSA work as well. Their principal has even shielded backlash from the community; for instance, on one occasion there was a negative complaint targeted to the GSA and the principal handled the situation:

> At one point, my principal received an email of complaint from a parent saying, "It's come to my attention that this teacher is going around in the pride flag and I really don't think that that is appropriate in the school environment and I would like for you to speak to that teacher […]" But the reason I'm telling you the story, is because my principal stood by [the decision to fly the Pride flag] without any hesitation.

A different participant reflected on the importance of the administrators' support, but also acknowledged that the GSA work should happen with or without the support of administrators

by saying: “I mean, ideally, you really do need the support of your administrator. If they're not supportive, I'm sure it would be unpleasant, but it's kind of irrelevant, because, you know, they're not the determinant of whether a GSA happens or not.” This comment was also shared by another GSA advisor in the study. This sentiment speaks to the activist approach that GSA advisors take on advocating for GSAs in schools.

One of the GSA advisors acknowledged that their positive experience with the school administration is not necessarily the experience of other GSA advisors in the province—a sentiment shared by other GSA advisors in this study as well (n=3). Similarly, one other advisor also recognized their privileged position in this space where they have had a lot of support from their school administration and the district; they shared: “So that's an important one. I hear from colleagues in other schools, that the amount of support and privilege that I have within my community is not necessarily what others experience everywhere” (Advisor B).

In sum, the role of the administration is important for the GSA work; across participants’ experiences, the administration has engaged with the groups’ activities; and offered funding, support, and protection from backlash towards the GSA which has facilitated the GSA work. However, a few advisors (n=4) acknowledged that their positive experiences with their administration, is not necessarily the experiences in other schools; yet, some advisors (n=2) argue that even without the administration’s support, GSAs should exist. The fact that participants shared that not all GSAs in NL have the same positive experiences with their administration team further suggests the need for more GSAs in schools, which from these advisors’ experiences, the GSA work has been transforming their school communities and their school environments.

Theme 4: Resources and Collaboration

All GSA advisors have fostered collaborations with people within school walls and also outside of them. While all GSA advisors fostered collaborations mostly from within the school district (i.e., teachers, guidance counsellors, principals, SCS itinerants, feeder schools, and other GSA advisors), it seems that some of them (n=5) had collaborations with community leaders and organizations. These five advisors were mostly experienced GSA advisors (n=4), and they believe that the variety of collaborations outside of the school district are very important for their roles in GSA since they access resources, information, funding, and expertise—resources not available in the school districts—to better support their GSA as well as their 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

Advisors (n=5) mentioned a number of organizations they have collaborated with that have been helpful and supportive to their GSA role, including Planned Parenthood, Radhoc, Egale, St. John's Pride, Community Youth Network, YMCA, and First Light. One of these advisors shared that the collaborations with specific community leaders and activists have helped in educating them and understanding specific issues faced by trans and 2Spirit students which has helped advisors to better support these particular subsets of students.

Another participant has fostered a close relationship with a community leader and activist with lived experience and expertise in trans-related issues:

> So, we're keeping it confidential for them [trans student], and they're trying to build their confidence and prepare themself for the transition, right? They've already changed their name. We're just helping. I have no expertise in this, I know a fair bit, but I'm not trying to tell a child how to transition. I don't stick my foot in where it doesn't belong. And I really always get experts involved [to provide specialized support].

Three GSA advisors identified their personal involvement and activism within the wider 2SLGBTQIA+ community in the province provided them with the collaborations and the knowledge to better support 2SLGBTQIA+ students and to better engage in the GSA role. One of these three participants leveraged their collaborations with 2SLGBTQIA+ activists and community leaders to support the organization of the GSA conference that they hosted. These community leaders offered their expertise and participated as guest speakers and activity facilitators in the conference.

As seen here, GSA advisors have fostered meaningful relationships with a number of system actors starting with school district people (i.e., teachers, principals, SCS itinerants) as well as beyond the school district (i.e., community leaders and organizations). These different relationships have provided GSA advisors with tools, supports and resources to carry out the GSA work and better support their 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

Theme 5: Changes in the School Environment

GSA advisors have been noticing positive changes in the school culture, students, staff, and in the local community over the course of the GSA work. However, there was a clear difference between the experienced and novice advisors' schools. While for experienced GSA advisors the school culture has been positively transformed throughout the years, novice GSA advisors identified greater barriers.

For experienced GSA advisors, as the GSA work progressed over the years, the participants have noticed more people in the school community getting involved in activities. One advisor shared the experience of these changes in the school culture and in the community as a whole:

> Seeing the principal and your guidance counselor and your department heads out there painting the crosswalk before school starts as people are driving back and forth. I think some very, like some very good messages being sent there. Right? […] And I think it's more people are feeling safe enough to come out. That people are realizing, "hey, we've got to be supportive, and we've got to get… we have to be further ahead."

Another advisor also shared that they see these changes happening in other teachers, especially from the ones who they thought to be less engaged with 2SLGBTQIA-related issues. They had a situation arising at school that required supporting one of the students. They shared what happened when having a conversation with one of the student's teachers:

> I raised the point that the child was telling me how their NLESD email address is based on their legal name and was, you know, set up before they changed their name. So basically, their email address is dead naming them every single time. So, I mentioned that that needs to be fixed. And a teacher that I know to be, you know, a very decent, nice guy, but a little bit on the conservative side said, "that would be really hard on the kid; that could be part of why this kid is being difficult because they're not feeling seen and recognized for who they really are." It's not a teacher who's been having, you know, who's going around in queer circles outside of school. They're getting it!

Another advisor shared that the school culture has changed over the years to the point where school staff and students have opened up and have safely come out. Negative slurs targeting members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community have dramatically decreased; they feel bullying is something of the past. They are very proud of their kids over the years, and they also mentioned that the kids feel comfortable enough in the school that the GSA has dissolved; when they asked the kids about the GSA dissolving, their students simply said, "we feel safe". Their ongoing advocacy has also had an impact in the teaching content in the school: some teachers are regularly incorporating LGBTQ literature in the classrooms.

Novice GSA advisors shared different experiences. They are all trying to shape the atmosphere through their GSA work and with the support from their school administration and some staff. All of them have already impacted their schools and communities by providing

resources and awareness to staff and students. Two of them have supported their students in advocating for gender-neutral washrooms in their schools and have gotten a positive resolution.

Nonetheless, different from their experienced counterparts, these advisors are still experiencing negative attitudes and behaviors from their school staff and the community towards 2SLGBTQIA+ students and the GSA. There have been some negative behaviors towards the GSA from students, staff, parents and caregivers, and the community more broadly. One of the advisors mentioned that they feel that students at school show an *us versus them* mentality:

> It's nothing overt, but there is definitely an us versus them mentality, right? Like, "They're not part of us"; "they're weird and different". You know, that's definitely there. But it's not like nobody, maybe it's sad and the teachers just don't hear, but you'd never hear like, *fag* or *queer* or *dyke*. You know, nothing like that is ever said, but it's just like, that sort of under your breath, snarky. (Advisor D)

The same advisor also pointed out the struggles of the work within their conservative, rural, and religious community. There has been some pushback from the parents and community, for example, when there were plans to paint a rainbow crosswalk between the elementary and junior high schools. Another participant mentioned that the GSA students have talked about the school culture being homophobic. In this school, combatting homophobia has become one of their priorities to tackle throughout the 2020–21 school year. This same advisor has also identified a lack of collaboration with other clubs in the school. A third advisor, for instance, also had some resistance from staff in starting the GSA and a fourth participant described the culture at their school as a *tolerance versus acceptance* type of culture.

Overall, these findings suggest that the GSA work across participants' schools has had a positive impact on the school environment which consolidates over time as seen in experienced advisors' schools. Even though novice facilitators do not share as positive school environments

as their experienced advisors, their work has already generated some meaningful changes for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and within the school community. All of them have the support of their school principals. Under stable conditions (e.g., same administrative staff), the school culture towards building safer learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students develops, and it also improves 2SLGBTQIA+ students' (and staff's) experiences at school as it did for experienced GSA advisors schools.

In summary, these five themes suggest diverse ways in which GSA advisors mobilize and leverage social capital in support of 2SLGBTQIA+ students through the GSA work. Social capital encompass three main elements: resources, relationships, and actions. GSA advisors have been carrying out the GSA work by engaging with diverse resources such as SCSP informational resources, SCSP supports, expertise outside of the school district, and funding. They have fostered relationships, partnerships, and collaborations with different school system actors (i.e., teachers, principals, SCS itinerants) as well as community organizations. GSA advisors have taken purposive actions in creating safer learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students by becoming leaders in the GSA work, creating opportunities for professional learning, supporting other GSAs with their expertise, and advocating for safer learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in their schools. Most importantly, their work has been supported by the SCSP and their school administrators and staff.

As a result, GSA advisors have noticed positive changes in their school environments with experienced GSA advisors noticing greater staff involvement, reduced bullying and negative slurs, and greater perceptions of safety by 2SLGBTQIA+ students. Novice GSA

advisors reported greater challenges with their school communities; however, positive changes have occurred since they started the GSA (e.g., available gender-neutral washrooms).

Some advisors (n=5) believe there is a pressing need at the Department of Education and school district levels to incorporate more comprehensive trans-related resources such as specialized supports, informational resources, and partnerships with community organizations that specialize in trans issues. Some of the experienced advisors also have identified the need for engaging younger grades in GSA-related clubs since they believe it would greatly benefit their school communities. The following section takes a closer look at the ways GSA advisors leverage social capital resources by examining GSA advisors' relationships with other people in the social system. In particular, by examining the content of interaction (i.e., cognitive social capital), quality (i.e., relational social capital), and structure (i.e., structural social capital) of the network of relationships in which GSA advisors are embedded.

Leveraging Social Capital: Examining GSA Advisors' Social Networks

I examined the content, quality, and structure of GSA advisors' networks by exploring four distinct relational connections frequently used to understand social relationships and social capital (Perry et al, 2018): 1) *discussion*: the people with whom GSA advisors talk to about important issues, and get advice and information from; 2) *go-to*: people who advisors consider as essential sources of information for the GSA and who they can count on for help; 3) *emotional support*: which refers to the people who GSA advisors trust, who they can vent to, and who are there when times are difficult; and, 4) *close professional friends*: the people who GSA advisors have a closer relationship with in their professional environment.

Discussion and go-to connections had the purpose to explore cognitive social capital; that is, the common understandings in the content of communication among GSA advisors and their relationships, in particular, through shared information, advice, help, and conversations around the GSA work. Emotional support and close professional friends were examined to explore relational social capital; in other words, these relationships were considered as proxies of trust to understand the quality and strength of the relationships. I also examined the ties and structural configuration of these four relational patterns, thereby focusing on the structural social capital as well. I employed an egocentric network analysis lens to understand the ways in which each ego (i.e., GSA advisor) engages with alters (i.e., people in their network) to leverage social capital in support of their GSA work. I first start by examining cognitive social capital.

Cognitive Social Capital: Understanding Flows of Resources in GSA Advisors' Networks.

Cognitive social capital represents the foundation of meaningful communication (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998; Claridge, 2018). In this study, cognitive social capital refers to the shared information, advice, expertise, help, support, and conversations around the GSA work (i.e., discussion and go-to connections). As described in conversation about their GSA work, advisors consider themselves advocates for their students and consider of greater importance to build safer learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. As such, they have intentionally fostered relationships with people who support this vision.

In order to provide a more in depth understanding of the ways in which GSA advisors leverage cognitive and relational social capital, it is best to examine each of them in tandem with structural social capital. Therefore, I have incorporated, the results from the egocentric network analyses (i.e., structural social capital) in relation to cognitive and relational social capital

network connections respectively. Table 7 presents the results of all egocentric networks measures in relation to discussion and go-to connections. Network size was calculated by the number of alters named by ego across discussion and go-to connections. Density[12] was calculated by the ratio of present ties (excluding ego). Homophily measured the degree of similarity between ego and alter and was calculated by comparing the number of alters who were similar to ego versus the ones different from ego in two ways: by comparing their professional roles and by comparing the relational domain they belong to. Finally, heterogeneity measured the diversity of alters in ego's network (ego excluded) calculated in two ways (i.e., professional role and relationship domain). See appendices J through R to review the social network profiles of each individual GSA advisor.

[12] Density was calculated on the basis of the people who knew each other from GSA advisors' networks. If two people knew each other, a connection between them was present.

Table 7

Egocentric Network Measures: Cognitive Social Capital

GSA Advisor	Network Size [a]	Density [b]	Homophily [c]		Heterogeneity [d]	
	N=x (%)	%	Professional Role	Relationship Domain	Professional Role	Relationship Domain
A	33 (100%)	20.27%	0.758	0.455	0.863	0.810
B	12 (75%)	46.97%	1	0	0.792	0.625
C	17 (81%)	30.15%	0.530	0.180	0.775	0.706
D	8 (89%)	100%	0.750	-0.750	0.750	0.219
E	18 (86%)	22.88%	1	0.670	0.802	0.716
F	18 (86%)	23.53%	0.780	0.220	0.840	0.741
G	12 (92%)	51.52%	1	-0.170	0.681	0.542
H	19 (100%)	20.47%	0.160	0.580	0.737	0.499
I	12 (70%)	30.30%	0.500	0	0.778	0.417

[a] *Percentage of total network.*
[b] *Measures range from 0 to 100%. A score of 100% means that all possible ties among people exist.*
[c] *Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the homophily. That is, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*
[d] *Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the greater the heterogeneity. That is, the least similarity exists among alters in ego's network*

Network Size and Density. The number of people who were named as discussion and go-to connections—in all of the GSA advisors' networks—ranged between eight and 33 alters, representing at least 70% of each GSA advisor's total network (i.e., at least 70% of the total number of people named across the 4 different connections). This means that most of the people GSA advisors named across all connections were helpful to leverage cognitive social capital by accessing and sharing valuable resources such as information, advice, expertise, and so forth. Network densities ranged between 20% and 100% with an average percentage of 38.5% (SD=0.257); meaning that the majority of advisors' networks were not completely connected to each other, providing greater opportunities to reach diverse resources (Burt, 1992). However, the

results also show that one of the GSA advisors had a density of 100%. This high density means that the people in this advisor's network are highly connected to each other, and it is likely that redundant resources and information are shared among them (Burt, 1992). This higher density is also due to the smaller network size of this network as these two measures influence each other (Carolan, 2013).

Similarity and Diversity. Homophily measures the extent in which GSA advisors interact with similar others in their networks; conversely, heterogeneity focuses on the degree of diversity among the people in ego's network (Perry et al., 2018; Carolan, 2013). The higher the score, the greater the diversity in the network. Measures of homophily and heterogeneity were calculated in terms of relationship domains (i.e., own school, other schools, school district, local community, friends and family, and others) and professional roles[13] (i.e., teachers, guidance counsellors, school administrator, district personnel, district leader, community activist, government personnel).

Homophily: Degree of Similarity between GSA Advisors and their Connections. In all nine cases, professional role homophily measures were above 0, measuring between 0.160 and 0.780 (SD=0.054), meaning that GSA advisors interacted with people different from them in terms of their professional roles (e.g., school administrators, colleagues, GSA advisors, district personnel, community leaders). However, homophily measures from the relationship domain variable (e.g., own school, school district, local community) were below zero in two of the GSA

[13] Professional roles of friends and family were not considered when calculating network measures in the data analysis. However, in the qualitative reporting of the findings, mentions of professional roles of friends and family were highlighted if/when relevant.

advisors' networks, ranging from -0.750 to -0.160 meaning that most of these advisors' connections belonged to the advisors' own schools.

Heterogeneity: Degree of Diversity among GSA Advisors' Connections. High heterogeneity is an indicator of diversity of people in GSA advisors' networks that can support access to diverse information, experiences, expertise, and resources (Perry et al., 2018). In this study, the professional role heterogeneity measure was in average 0.798 (SD=0.54), indicating a diverse set of people in participants' networks. This means that the people in GSA advisors' networks had varying professional roles (e.g., teachers, principals, guidance counsellors, SCS itinerants). As well, heterogeneity measures around relationship had average score of 0.585 (SD=0.187); that is, alters in advisors' networks are also diverse in relation to the relationship domain they belong to (e.g., other schools, school district, local community).

Some of the participants (n=5) mentioned that conversations with some of their connections took place to access their expertise in certain topics. For example, one advisor had a very helpful conversation with a community leader when an issue arose with a student at their school that they did not feel well-equipped to address it on their own. Another advisor mentioned that they met a couple of community leaders and trans activists in a professional development session at the school district who they now consider as great sources of information around trans-related issues. In a similar manner, one other advisor had a friend who is a 2SLGBTQIA+ activist whom they sometimes talks to for information, while two other advisors rely on members of the local community who specialize in 2SLGBTQIA+ equity work and trans-related programming when they require support in the GSA work.

The egocentric network analyses results suggest that GSA advisors have accessed such expertise due to the diversity of the people in their networks (i.e., of professional roles and relational domains). As an example, figure 5 shows Advisor A's network, which illustrates the diversity of professional roles (i.e., shapes) and relational domains (i.e., colors/shades) present in this professional network. Advisor A relies on a variety of system actors such as members of the local community (i.e., shape: up triangle), who the participant shared, have offered them specialized information around 2SLGBTQIA+ and trans-specific expertise.

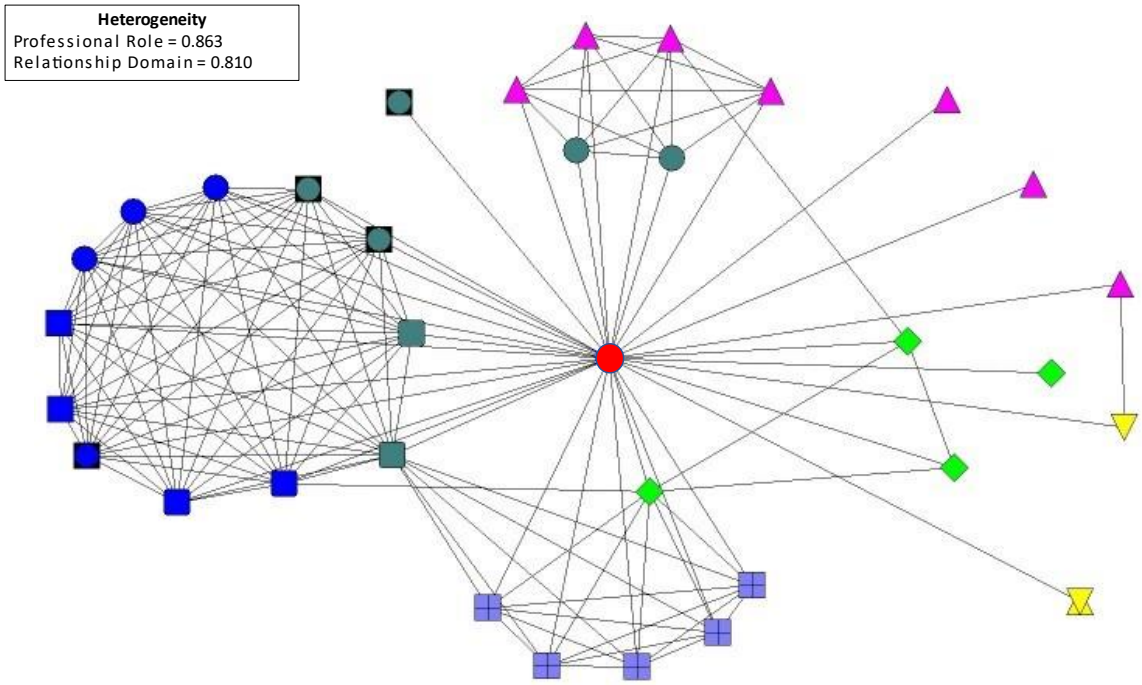

Figure 5. Advisor A's Network: Diversity of Alters (Cognitive Social Capital)

Note: Advisor A is represented in red. Professional roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA advisor/co-advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (other), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship domains are represented by color: blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

In contrast, however, not every GSA Advisor was able to access that degree of expertise and resources from community connections. Egocentric network analyses show that in some GSA Advisors' networks (n=2), the diversity of the alters mentioned as discussion and go-to connections was less prominent. For example, figure 6 shows Advisor D's network diversity with heterogeneity scores of 0.750 (professional role) and 0.219 (domain) respectively. Advisor D although having relationships with people from a variety of professional roles, these relationships stayed in only two domains (i.e., own school and school district); the professional roles are limited to school level roles (i.e., teachers, school administrators, guidance counsellor, and a GSA co-advisor) and one educational psychologist at the school district.

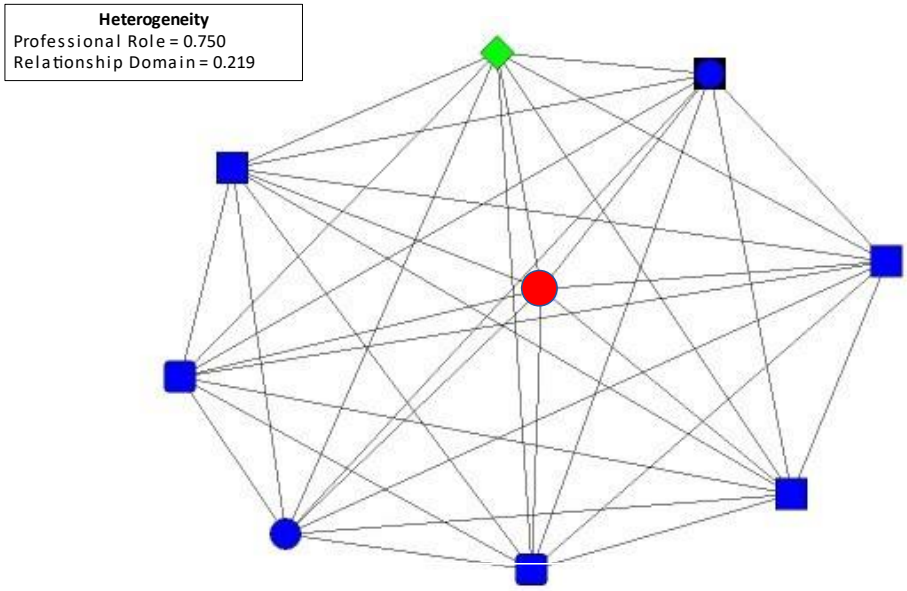

Figure 6: Advisor D's Network: Diversity of Alters (Cognitive Social Capital)

Note: Advisor D is represented in red. Professional roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA advisor/co-advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), and diamond (district personnel). Relationship domains are represented by color: blue (own school) and neon green (school district).

All of the participants in this study shared similar understandings about the GSA work, safe and caring schools, and the importance of supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ students with those individuals who supported their work. When asking GSA advisors about the people they engage with for information, advice, help, expertise, and to whom they have important conversations around the GSA work (i.e., discussion, go-to) they shared certain sentiments about these people that motivated them to engage in these interactions. GSA advisors used descriptors such as: "a good person to talk to," experienced, a person with whom they can talk openly about anything, helpful, supportive, knowledgeable, a good connection, a good ally, resourceful (e.g., providing materials, funding, expertise), open-minded, as people they can count on, supportive of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, people that will help them "no matter what", who have their backs, and who are "willing to do anything to help". SCS itinerants and school leaders (i.e., principal and vice-principal) were mentioned across these two connections (discussion and go-to).

One of the advisors named a few members of their school and described them as being open-minded and as people with whom they can talk openly about anything:

> Yeah. And my colleagues like my, my staff members, some of them, not all of them, […] are very open. We do have some staff members who are religious. And, you know, while they're not openly hostile, I know, they're not necessarily accepting of the community. [...] I just know that they're very involved in their church and the church they are, you know, is known to be anti-gay, which is unfortunate. But so yeah […] that's probably two staff members or three; the rest, I feel I could talk to, you know, very openly about anything.

Another participant, as well, when they were talking about their school's vice-principal, shared:

> He is a really cool dude. He's a no matter what. My friend at the school board, she, she's a no matter what, like she would drop anything. Yeah, they're my no matter what. Those are the ones that I know, no matter how busy they are, no matter what's going on, they'll be like, "Yeah, I got you." (Advisor D)

GSA advisors have engaged with people with different professional roles (e.g., guidance counsellors, school administrators, SCS itinerant) and who work in different spaces (e.g., schools, school district, government). Specifically, advisors have gone to these people to discuss important matters and have conversations about GSA; as well, they have engaged with them to seek information, advice, help, expertise, and support. Across cases they have leveraged cognitive social capital with people whom they believe are experienced, "a good person to talk to", supportive, knowledgeable, open minded, and people that will help them "no matter what". However, from the network measures scores and network maps, it is clear that the diversity of the network matters for the GSA work, in particular when accessing knowledgeable others beyond their own school domain. Advisors with diverse networks and with connections to people from the local community were the advisors who reported accessing expertise from these people in 2SLGBTQIA+ and trans-specific information that helped them better support their trans students.

Relational Social Capital: Understanding the Quality of Advisors' Networks

Relational social capital is very important in understanding the quality of relationships such as the trust that is fostered among the people which facilitates cooperation and the exchange of social resources among them (Claridge, 2018; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998). In particular, I examined emotional support and close professional friends as proxies of trust. The people nominated as emotional supports and close professional friends provided GSA advisors with more expressive resources; that is, those resources that are shared and reciprocated with our feelings and often take the form of trust, love, and care (Lin, 2001). Table 8 offers the relational

social capital egocentric network measures showing the different scores for network size, density, homophily and heterogeneity.

Table 8

Egocentric Network Measures: Relational Social Capital

GSA Advisor	Network Size [a]	Density [b]	Homophily [c]		Heterogeneity [d]	
	N=x (%)	%	Professional Role	Relationship Domain	Professional Role	Relationship Domain
A	12 (36%)	45.45%	0.833	0.333	0.729	0.681
B	6 (38%)	19.05%	1	1	0.633	0.633
C	8 (38%)	42.86%	1	0.250	0.656	0.594
D	6 (67%)	66.67%	1	-0.670	0.667	0.278
E	9 (43%)	22.22%	1	0.560	0.642	0.617
F	5 (24%)	60.00%	0.600	-0.600	0.560	0.320
G	2 (15%)	-	1	1	0.500	0.500
H	5 (26%)	10.00%	0.600	0.600	0.720	0.720
I	11 (64%)	25.45%	0.450	0.640	0.645	0.628

[a] *Percentage from total network.*
[b] *Measures range from 0 to 100%. A score of 100% means that all possible ties among people exist.*
[c] *Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the homophily. That is, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*
[d] *Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the greater the heterogeneity. That is, the least similarity exists among alters in ego's network*

Network Size and Density. The average number of alters mentioned as emotional supports and close professional friends was seven (SD=2.774). Furthermore, network density was of 32.41% in average (SD=0.226). These two measure results are no surprise given that people usually share trusting relationships with fewer number of people from their networks who, in this particular case, are loosely connected to each other (Lin, 2001; Perry et al., 2018).

Similarity and Diversity. Same as in cognitive social capital, homophily and heterogeneity were calculated in terms of relationship domains (i.e., own school, other schools,

school district, local community, friends and family, and others) and professional roles (i.e., teachers, guidance counsellors, school administrator, district personnel, district leader, community activist, government personnel).

Homophily: Degree of Similarity between GSA Advisors and their Connections. In all nine cases, professional role homophily measures were also above 0, with an average score of 0.831 (SD=0.222), meaning that GSA advisors hold trusting relationships with people from different professional roles than them. The average score for the relationship domain homophily measure was of 0.345, still supporting varied trusting relationships with people from different relationship domains. Homophily measures from the relationship domain were below zero in two of the GSA advisors' networks, one with a score of -0.670 and the other of -0.640; meaning that trusting relationships existed mostly with people from the advisors' own schools; this result was expected as it is most likely to foster trust among people who are in closer proximity and frequent interactions (Finnigan & Daly, 2017; Lin, 2001).

Heterogeneity: Degree of Diversity among GSA Advisors' Connections. From the emotional support and close professional friends' connections, the professional role heterogeneity measure was in average 0.639 (SD=0.72) and from the relational domain was of 0.552 (SD=0.156); that is, alters in advisors' networks are somewhat diverse in professional roles and relational domain. It is clear that heterogeneity scores were closer to 0.500 than to 1, meaning that although there was certain diversity in the network, the diversity of people who provided expressive resources are from a smaller number of professional roles and relationship domains than the ones from discussion and go-to connections.

Most prominently, all of GSA advisors turn to family and friends to vent about issues or challenging feelings about the GSA work (i.e., emotional support connections); they go to them for a shoulder to cry on (literally and/or figuratively) when times get difficult; and who they can talk to and be frank about their feelings within the limits of students' and GSA privacy. As one advisor shared: "You know, well, unfortunately, I do bring in a fair bit of it at home, so my partner would be a sounding board. Yeah." (Advisor A). Another advisor shared a similar sentiment by saying: "It's funny, the only person I ever vent to is my best friend. So yeah. That's probably the only person" (Advisor G). As well one more advisor considers their queer friends as very important supports, they said: "Probably queer friends. If I just need a shoulder to cry on. It would be queer friends outside of school, probably, or [SCS itinerant], because [they're] gonna get what's going on there." (Advisor B).

When asking advisors about the people who they consider are close professional friends' connections, most GSA advisors (n=8) talked about people in their closer professional domains (i.e., school, other schools, and school district). Some of them (n=6) nominated other teachers, a few others (n=3) mentioned guidance counsellors, others (n=3) nominated school leaders, and four advisors mentioned their SCS itinerant as a close professional friend. Two of the participants named community leaders as close professional friends as well.

Figure 7, for example, presents Advisor B's network showing only the people whom the advisor leverages relational social capital. All of these people were named as emotional supports and only one of them as a close professional friend (i.e., their SCS itinerant). Four of them belong to the friends and family domain, one other from the local community, and the last one from the school district.

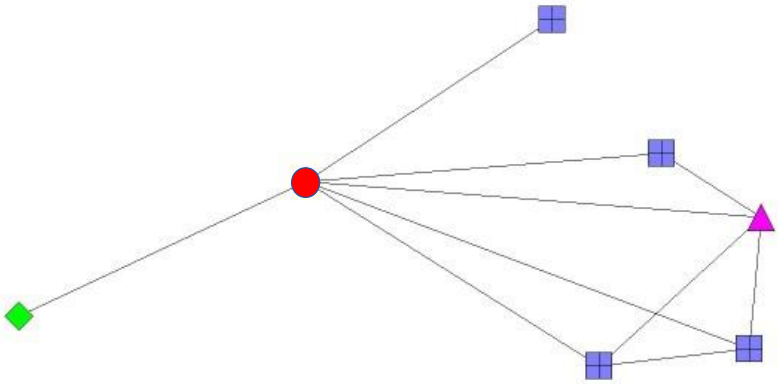

Figure 7. Advisor B's Network: Sources of Relational Social Capital

Note: Advisor B is represented in red. Professional roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA advisor/co-advisor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship domains are represented by color: Neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

Figure 8 shows a different network portraying two collections of people, one formed by family and friends and the other one by members of the advisor's school with their SCS itinerant. Similar to Figure 7, Figure 8 includes the SCS itinerant; however, in Figure 8 the principal and vice-principal are also present in the network as sources of emotional support and close professional friends; that is, as people whom the GSA advisor has trusting relationships with. In both cases, the GSA works seems to be facilitated by these trusting relationships.

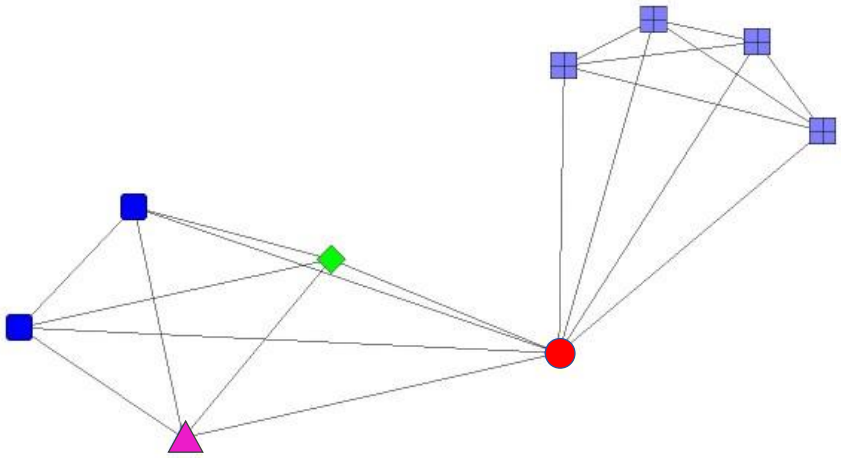

Figure 8. Advisor C's Network: Sources of Relational Social Capital

Note: Advisor C is represented in red. Professional roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA advisor/co-advisor), diamond (SCS itinerant), rounded square (school leader), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

From the findings reported in the previous section (Phase II, Part 1), SCS itinerant provided a variety of supports and resources (i.e., workshops, virtual GSA meetings, information) and school administrators were supportive of the GSA work and activities. Is clear from these additional findings, that GSA advisors are fostering trusting relationships with both of this system actors which have facilitated the GSA work since these two individuals represent key people in the school district for the implementation of the SCSP in schools. One of the advisors when naming their SCS itinerant as a close professional friend said:

> I mean, I would consider [SCS itinerant] a professional friend, you know; is it somebody I go for a glass of wine with? No, but we've had some good meetings and had some conversations outside of the school. [They're] also part of our restorative justice team. So yeah, we've developed a good friendship there. (Advisor G)

As seen throughout these findings, the GSA work may be complicated at times; GSA advisors leverage relational social capital in their GSA work by turning to friends, family for

emotional support when times get difficult in carrying out this work. They have also engaged in trusting professional relationships with people in their workplace and beyond (i.e., local community, other schools, school district), who have certainly reciprocated with advisors' feelings and commitments to the GSA work and who have become close professional friends and have offered emotional support to advisors. Apart from teachers, school administrators and SCS itinerants were mentioned as people with whom some of the advisors have trusting relationships with. We recall from findings on cognitive social capital, school administrators and SCS itinerants have also been instrumental supports to advisors in offering information, advise, expertise, and so on. To further support these findings around the quality of GSA advisors' relationships, I also examined the strength of their relationships. The following section elaborates on this matter.

Structural Social Capital: Understanding the Structure of Advisors' Networks

As seen through the findings of cognitive and relational social capital, GSA advisors support their work by engaging with people from their networks, and such networks have certain structures and configurations. Tables 6 and 7 presented the results from each GSA advisors' egocentric network measures. Appendices I through Q, provide a complete network profile of each one of the participants in this study. While most GSA advisors (n=7) leverage cognitive social capital in large and sparse networks of people from diverse professional roles and relationship domains; GSA advisors leverage relational social capital in smaller networks with somewhat diverse people who are mostly friends, family, and/or people from their closer relationship domains (i.e., own school, other schools, and school district). These network

characteristics are valuable measures of the structural social capital available to GSA advisors when engaging in their roles.

In like manner, research shows that multiplex ties are more durable and supportive and can be used as an indicator of tie strength (Perry et al., 2018). While weak ties are helpful for diffusing new ideas and gaining access to new information (Granovetter, 1973), strong ties are particularly helpful in social integration and support (Perry et al., 2018). Across advisors' relationships there were weak, strong, and very strong relationships with a number of people in their networks.

Strong Relationships: Multiplex Connections. I measured the strength of advisors' relationships by counting the number of times a person was named across the four different connections (i.e., discussion, go-to, emotional support, and close professional friend) to generate a multiplexity score; the higher the score, the greater the number of types of connections present in the network and the stronger the relationship overall. For example, a multiplexity score of 4 to a person in an advisor's networks meant that the GSA advisor named that individual in each of the four relational dimensions queried. Table 9 presents the percentage of alters (i.e., people in GSA advisors' networks) with scores of one, two, three, or four.

Table 9

Proportion of Strong Ties in Advisors' Ego Networks

GSA Advisor	Weak ties (Score of 1)	Strong ties (Score of 2)	Very strong ties (Scores of 3 and 4)
A	61%	24%	15%
B	56%	38%	6%
C	81%	0%	0%
D	22%	56%	22%
E	62%	38%	0%
F	86%	10%	4%
G	77%	15%	8%
H	74%	16%	30%
I	65%	0%	36%

Note: Multiplexity scores ranged from 1 to 4. The higher the score, the stronger the ties.

As seen in table 9, weak relationships (i.e., score of 1) are the majority in most of GSA advisors' networks (n=8). However, strong (i.e., score of 2) and very strong (i.e., scores of 3 and 4) ties existed to some extent in all of GSA advisors' networks. Stronger relationships tended towards people such as guidance counsellors, community leaders, and also people with influential positions in the school district such as school administrators and SCS itinerants. In many advisors' networks (n=5) guidance counsellors were named more than once; in other cases (n=8) GSA advisors named school administrators more than once as well. Similarly, six advisors named their SCS itinerant more than once. Finally, three of the advisors had stronger relationships as well with community leaders.

To illustrate, Figure 9 shows advisor C's network strength. Advisor C is in the center of the map and has very strong relationships with four influential and/or resourceful alters: a community leader/activist, their SCS itinerant, and the two school administrators. As pointed out previously, strong relationships are beneficial for social support and improving the quality of the relationships; as such, they facilitate group integration and policy implementation. These

findings suggest that advisor C very strong relationships with three school system actors (i.e., SCS itinerant and school administrators) facilitate the policy consolidation and implementation process (Finnigan & Daly, 2017). As well, the very strong relationship with the community leader/activist facilitates the frequent exchange of expressive and instrumental resources between the advisor and the community leader, which supported the GSA work, in particular, trans students (as noted previously).

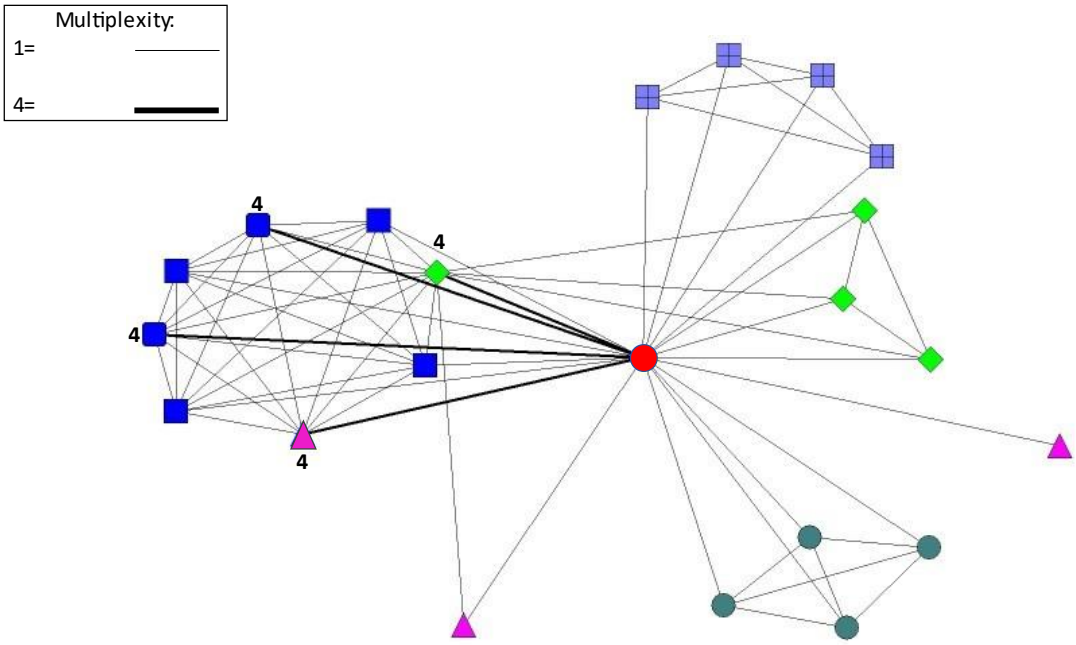

Figure 9. Advisor C's Network: Strength of Relationships

Note: Advisor C is represented in red. Professional roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA advisor/co-advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship domains are represented by color: blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

Another advisor, Advisor I, named their two GSA co-advisors and an experienced GSA advisor at a different school in three different relational dimensions. Additionally, they named three teachers that work in different schools in all of the four connections (i.e., discussion, go-to,

emotional support, and close professional friends). These three colleagues belong to different schools but have been close friends since university. This shows that this advisor has stronger relationships with six people that support him for both instrumental and expressive resources. This advisor is a novice advisor and having a strong relationship with an experienced GSA advisor has been very helpful in starting their GSA. Figure 10 shows Advisor I's network.

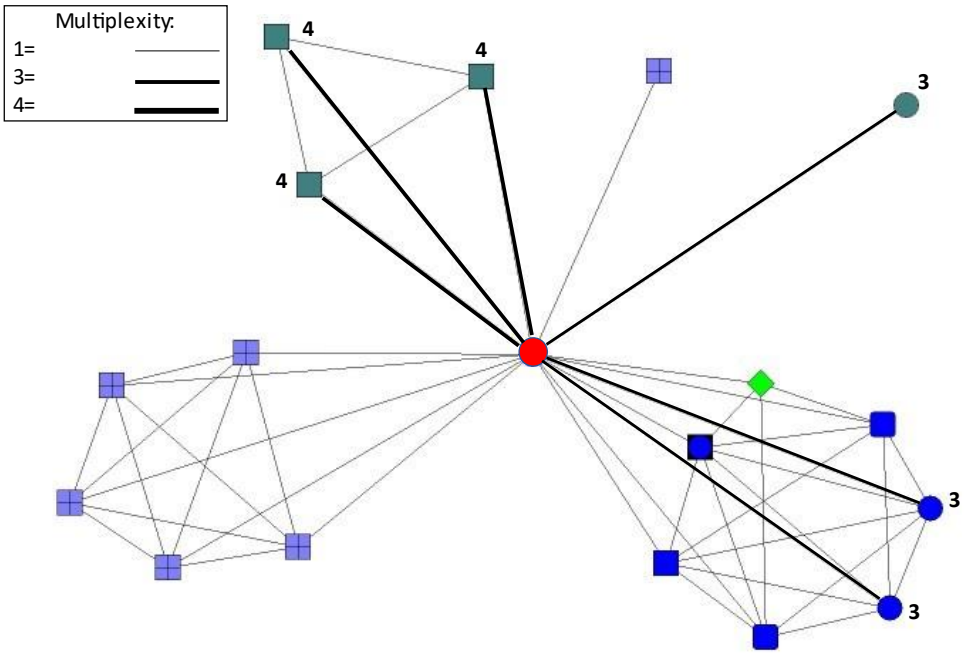

Figure 10. Advisor I's Network: Strength of Relationships

Note: Advisor I is represented in red. Professional roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA advisor/co-advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship domains are represented by color: blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

As mentioned, while weak ties offer opportunities to access new information or social resources, strong and multiplex connections offer diverse benefits to a person since they facilitate interactions. In this context, strong relationships in both cognitive and relational social capital offered positive benefits to GSA advisors by supporting their role in the GSA work. GSA

advisors have fostered strong connections with fellow GSA advisors, within staff in their school system with people from different hierarchical positions, and with community leaders and activists.

Concluding Insights: Leveraging Social Capital in GSAs

The findings outlined in this chapter provide an exploratory view of how GSA advisors in Newfoundland and Labrador are carrying out their GSA work to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students as encouraged by the SCSP. The current version of the SCSP (Department of Education, 2013) provides specific policies, guidelines, programming, and supports toward 2SLGBTQIA+ students; specifically, through more comprehensive inclusive practices that encourage the creation of GSAs in junior and senior high schools, by hiring SCS itinerants, and by allocating funds and resources to support the policy implementation (e.g., professional learning, online resources).

GSA advisors in NL schools have been carrying out this work supported by the SCS itinerants, and their school administrators within this policy context. However, the participants in this study mentioned that the support from school administrators does not span to all of the GSAs in the province and that, although the SCSP has been a great foundation for the GSA work, the implementation of the policy seems to be differentiated across schools and regions. Nevertheless, their GSA work has transformed their school communities and their students, and they have engaged with other GSAs and stakeholders to support their work.

Advisors' relationships with other people have also offered them opportunities to leverage social capital for the GSA work. Overall, GSA advisors engage with diverse people—from diverse professional roles (e.g., teachers, school administrators, community activists) and

who work in different domains (e.g., own school, school district, local community)—and have purposely shaped their interactions to support their work. GSA advisors leverage their already existing networks in their personal and professional domains; however, for some GSA advisors their network structures may restrict or enable their access to particular resources (e.g., resources to support trans students). Nonetheless, all advisors leverage cognitive and relational social capital to support their work as demonstrated in this finding chapter. In the next chapter, I discuss the importance of these findings and situate them within the broader context of the literature as well as their implications for research, policy, and practice.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

This study has provided important insights about GSA work in NL public schools. These findings suggest that GSAs and the roles of GSA advisors in NL schools may influence positive changes in the school environments and contribute to the development of safer and more caring school environments consistent with suggestions from the related broader literature (Clarke, & MacDougall, 2012; Currie et al., 2012; Fetner et al., 2012; Graybill et al., 2015; Kitchen & Bellini, 2013; Mayo, 2013; Porta et al., 2017; Seelman et al., 2015; Watson et al., 2010). Due to the scope of this study, further examination of the impact of GSAs in schools in required.

In this study, changes in the schools took the form of decreased negative slurs and bullying targeted at 2SLGBTQIA+ people; availability of gender-inclusive washrooms; teachers understanding of trans students' needs and challenges; greater number of educators, staff, and students "coming out"; as well as increased engagement from 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff, and surrounding communities in GSA activities. The findings of this study suggest that those changes in the school environments were due to the different ways GSA advisors have leveraged social capital in support of the GSA work.

By understanding the progression of the SCSP—in particular, by paying attention to the development and implementation of inclusive educational practices towards 2SLGBTQIA+ programming—and examining GSA advisors' networks and their experiences leading GSAs, the findings of this study suggest that GSA advisors leverage social capital in a variety of important ways to support their work. These findings also suggest that accessing and leveraging social capital for GSAs in NL schools are not straightforward endeavors and may be facilitated or constrained by multiple factors. In this chapter, I discuss the multiple factors that seemed to be

the most relevant in understanding the degree to which GSA advisors access and leverage social capital to support their role in GSAs. First, I elaborate on the importance of diversity and trust as essential conditions for maximizing social capital access in GSA advisors' networks. Then, I continue with the importance of having the right supports in place: school administrators and SCS itinerants are important network actors. Last, I articulate the ways in which policy shapes behaviour—an important influence in cultivating social networks in support of GSA work.

Diversity Matters for GSA Work

One of the most important findings of this study is that the diversity of GSA advisors' networks matters for the GSA work. Advisors with diverse networks—in professional roles (i.e., their position within an organization), but more prominently from diverse relationship domains (i.e., the type of connection, such as within school or outside of school connections)—were the advisors who reported accessing expertise from the local community, which otherwise was not available through the school district. These findings suggest that the more experience the GSA advisor has in this work, the more diverse resources they acquire, which resulted in an expansion of their networks. This means that the quality of ties may improve over time due to the energy, experience, and knowledge invested and developed over that time (Burt, 1992).

GSA advisors with more experience in the GSA work reported accessing information, knowledge, and expertise around LGBTQIA+, 2Spirit, and trans-specific issues. By doing so, participants were able to better support their trans students: a 2SLGBTQIA+ student cohort who experiences lesser levels of school attachment and wellbeing and who, from the Canadian literature, are more likely to report feeling unsafe in their schools (Peter et al., 2021). The GSA advisors in this study were able to identify structural holes in their networks (Burt, 1992) that

exist when resources are needed and not available within an existing network. In this case, trans-related resources were scarce within the school system, and as such, GSA advisors resorted to building connections with community leaders and activists with expertise and knowledge in this area to access this type of knowledge. As Perry et al. (2018, citing Campbell et al., 1986) argue "the more people from different groups an ego has in their network, the greater the range of non-redundant information, experiences, skills, and support they can access" (p. 171). That is, GSA advisors had access to differentiated information (i.e., LGBTQIA+, 2-spirit, and trans-specific expertise) available through the relationships they fostered with local activists and 2SLGBTQIA+ community leaders and organizations (Burt, 1992).

These findings also suggest the importance of bridging social capital for the GSA work since it helps create links to external resources (Putnam, 2000). DeMatthews (2018) found that a school and families in a high-poverty neighborhood—with the support of the school leader—engaged in bridging social capital which supported their access to unequally distributed resources and opportunities. In this study, bridging social capital supported GSA advisors in accessing information which benefited students (i.e., 2-Spirit, trans, and gender non-conforming) who faced greater barriers compared to their heterosexual and 2SLGBTQIA+ peers (Peter et al., 2021).

Diverse networks mattered for participants' GSA work. These networks facilitated bridging social capital since GSA advisors were able to reach to local community resources and expertise in trans-related issues. By extension, GSA advisors were able to better support a cohort of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community with greater barriers in accessing specialized supports and

resources. While diverse networks facilitate leveraging social capital, there is an additional component to GSA advisors' relationships that was equally significant: trust.

Trust Matters for the GSA Work

In this study, trust was an important part of the GSA work as it was also a motivator for advisors to engage with other people in their networks. Advisors reported having trusting relationships with their GSA, other GSA advisors, guidance counsellors, teachers, school administrators, SCS itinerants, and with members of the local community. Trusting relationships support cooperation, exchange of resources, risk-taking behaviours, day-to-day interactions, advice-seeking behaviours, and therefore, support policy implementation (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Liou & Daly, 2014; Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998).

In addition, engaging in trusting relationships is an important component of bonding social capital as it fosters solidarity and creates stronger relationships (Putnam, 2000). Through bonding social capital GSA advisors built trusting relationships within their schools (i.e., teachers, guidance counsellors) who reciprocate with their feelings and have been great supports for the GSA work. One of the participants in this study (Advisor D) relied mostly on bonding social capital for their GSA work. This advisor had a dense network and although the diversity of this advisor's network was not as prominent as the rest of the participants, this advisor had strong and trusting relationships with members of their school such as the school administration, the guidance counsellor and a number of teachers who supported and enabled the GSA work. These relationships became extremely important given the characteristics of the school community which is located in a conservative, rural, and religious community—communities which usually

have greater pushbacks against GSAs AND 2SLGBTQIA+ programming (Kitchen & Bellini, 2013; Peter et al., 2021; Szalacha, 2003).

As well, GSA advisors shared trusting relationships with their school principals and their SCS itinerants who are very important school system actors for the implementation of the SCSP. School principals also supported bonding social capital within school members by supporting the GSA activities, shielding backlash from parents and caregivers, and engaging the school community; thus, helping GSA advisors to foster solidarity within the school community.

GSA advisors leverage social capital through the structure and composition of their networks. As seen previously, diverse networks facilitated bridging social capital, but also trusting and strong relationships offered the conditions for bonding social capital. GSA advisors built trusting relationships with colleagues in different levels in the school system, facilitating the GSA work in their day-to-day interactions. Equally significant, trusting relationships support policy implementation, in particular, when fostering these relationships with school administrators and SCS itinerants. The following section elaborates more on the importance of these roles in the GSA work and the implementation of the SCSP.

Having the Right People on the Right Seats: The Role of School Administrators and Safe and Inclusive Schools' Itinerants

As I have pointed out, it is well-established in the research literature that social capital is not equitably distributed; its positive outcomes concentrate within dominant groups in the social system who hold a disproportionate amount of power and privileges by restricting or excluding access to such benefits to marginalized groups (e.g., women, Indigenous communities, racialized individuals, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ folks, etc.) (Arneil, 2006; Bourdieu, 1986;

Portes, 1997). The findings of this study suggest that the 2SLGBTQIA+ cohort—in particular, racialized, 2Spirit, and trans people—is the minoritized group facing these restrictions or exclusions within the SCSP design, resources, and implementation processes. Participants pointed out the need for more trans-related resources and supports from the DOE which have affected the implementation of the SCSP in support of trans and 2Spirit students. A number of scholars have also shed light on these matters and suggest that leveraging social capital for these populations can press against these equity issues (e.g., Allan & Catts, 2014; DeMatthews, 2018; Khalifa, 2010; Liou & Rojas, 2016; Trainor, 2010). In the empirical literature, school leaders have supported student outcomes by facilitating spaces for parents, students, teachers, and staff to build and repair relationships among them (Galindo et al., 2017; Khalifa, 2010; DeMatthews, 2018).

In this study, support from principals and vice-principals was a frequent point of discussion across GSA advisors. School administrators were supportive of the GSA work and had their backs which was very important for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. Principals and vice-principals in GSA advisors' schools attended GSA meetings, offered funding, and most importantly, they dealt with backlash from parents and their surrounding communities; that is, they facilitated bonding social capital. Evidence from the broader empirical literature (Adams & Strauss Carson, 2002; Fetner et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2015) suggests that this is not always the case. Even some GSA advisors in this study recognized that the support they have from their school administrators does not translate to other schools across the province—in particular, for schools in rural and religious communities.

Furthermore, school administrators have an important role of mediating policy by communicating expectations, understandings, and establishing priorities around the policy to their schools (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Spillane et al., 2002). Five GSA advisors shared that their school administrators reached out to the staff with the intention to start a GSA at their school which aligns to section 4.6.5 of the SCS policy statement: "Schools with junior and/or senior high students will encourage the development of a student-led club, such as Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), with the goal of making their school community a safe and welcoming environment for all students regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity" (Department of Education, 2013, p.13).

While the school principals facilitated the conditions to build bonding social capital within the school, SCS itinerants facilitated bridging social capital. School administrators and SCS itinerants have a very important role in GSA advisors' work as well as in the implementation of the SCSP at the school level. As seen through the progression of the SCSP, only three SCS itinerants were appointed when the first version of the policy was released, and three additional itinerants were hired after the revision of the policy (Department of Education, 2014). Currently, there are nine SCS itinerants at the NLESD (NLESD, n.d.) and their main roles are to support schools in the implementation of the SCSP (Department of Education, 2014).

SCS itinerants have offered supports to GSA advisors, their schools, and their GSAs in the form of information, workshops, professional development opportunities, and by facilitating spaces for GSA advisors to connect with each other online. The itinerants have established virtual GSA meetings with GSAs and have set up an online email group with GSA advisors across the province. This suggests that the role of SCS itinerants involves engaging in bridging

social capital (Putnam, 2000); SCS itinerants were the bridges between GSA advisors and SCSP resources. That is, they took instrumental actions by linking GSA advisors, their schools, and their GSAs with diverse supports and resources available at the school district and through the SCSP; therefore, GSA advisors were able to better support 2SLGBTQIA+ students and attain their goals in the GSA (Burt, 1992; Lin, 2001).

When SCS itinerants engaged in the role of bridging district resources to GSA advisors, advisors were able to access workshops, professional development opportunities, and even connected with other GSA advisors. On the other hand, this study also suggests that having people functioning in this role does not ensure that GSA advisors have access to the resources and supports previously mentioned; this finding aligns with findings from other studies that have found that having a formal hierarchical role in the system does not ensure that other actors in the system will access such expertise (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Daly et al., 2010; Moolenaar, 2012). One GSA advisor in this study was completely disconnected from their SCS itinerant and did not report any supports or benefits from them, which limited their access to relevant GSA resources, thus constraining their social capital development.

At the same time, this constrained the policy implementation process since the GSA advisor was not aware of all the supports and resources available at the school district. Although there might have been other factors associated with this finding that did not emerge in this study—such as being a new GSA and/or the consequences of COVID-19 procedures and closures—it is important for school districts to gain a relational understanding of the diverse ways in which GSA advisors and SCS itinerants engage within formal and informal spaces and

how this may both facilitate and constrain GSAs in benefitting from the resources available to them at the school district (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Daly et al., 2010).

The importance of the roles of school administrators and SCS itinerants in this study, aligns with current literature (e.g., DeMatthews, 2018; Khalifa, 2010). Current empirical evidence suggests that people in these roles have a very significant impact on students' experiences in schools, especially students who belong to marginalized communities (DeMatthews, 2018; Khalifa, 2010) that are frequently affected by the unequal distribution of social capital within the systems they are embedded (Arneil, 2006, Bourdieu, 1986; Portes, 1997).

In this study, the involvement and supports from these individuals supported the implementation of the SCSP by offering GSA advisors diverse resources to run their GSAs and support their 2SLGBTQIA+ students. While SCS itinerants offered resources, workshops, professional development opportunities, and virtual GSA meetings (i.e., bridging social capital); school administrators offered their support to the GSA work by attending meetings, participating in activities, and shielding them from any backlash (i.e., bonding social capital). However, closer attention must be paid to the people functioning in these roles since the participants in this study recognized that their positive experiences with their school administrators and SCS itinerants was not the same experience that other GSA advisors had in NL schools as seen with the findings in this study.

Policy Shapes Behaviour When and Where the Policy is Understood

As seen through the examination of the progression of the SCSP, the 2013 SCSP implemented specific actions intended to create safer learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+

students. These actions included directives for multiple stakeholders in the school systems; programming focused on supporting inclusive practices; encouraging the formation of GSAs in middle and senior high schools; procedures such as *Procedure 7: Guidelines for LGBTQ Inclusive Practices;* and the allocation of human resources (i.e., professional learning, hiring SCS itinerants), financial contributions (monetary investments, funding for safe and caring schools' projects in schools), and informational resources (e.g., MyGSA website). Overall, the findings of this study suggest that the policy has supported the GSA work by shaping the behaviours of the different people involved within the system (i.e., SCS itinerants, school administrators, and GSA advisors) as also seen within the broader literature (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008).

In this study, when people in the school system had and shared a solid understanding of the policy framework, positive outcomes happened at the school level, therefore, fostering safer and more caring learning environments. Sharing common understandings of the SCSP, GSAs, safe and caring schools were important aspects of cognitive social capital in this study since they facilitated the interactions between GSA advisors and the people in their networks that supported the GSA work (Nahapiet & Goshal, 1998).

Furthermore, GSA advisors had a solid understanding of the SCSP which supported their advocacy and leadership practices in their schools: they educated other actors in the school system who were not aware of some aspects of the policy (e.g., Procedure 7); they pushed for the creation of a GSA in their schools; they fostered relationships with the SCS itinerants; and they engaged the school community in GSA-related activities. One advisor, in particular, faced some resistance from other staff when trying to initiate a GSA in their school. Regardless, this advisor

referenced the SCSP policy and with the help of the SCS itinerant and the support from the school administration, the GSA was formed, and the SCS itinerant did some workshops at the school.

The findings also suggest that this process was dependent on how the policy was understood. One of the participants of this study pointed out that staff turnover—in teachers and school administrators—might explain the lack of policy understanding and implementation at their school. This advisor argued that the understanding of the policy framework was not something that they were seeing translated in the day-to-day operations of the school, even when the policy implementation was part of the school development plan. These findings align with the broader literature that has found that staff and leadership instability and turnover affect policy implementation efforts since it is known to weaken the social capital of the organization by disturbing the trust and reciprocity among the people in the school resulting in a loss of knowledge and institutional memory within organizations and school systems (Finnigan & Daly, 2017; Holme & Rangel, 2012). At the same time, this advisor felt a disconnection and a lack of collaboration and support within students and staff in the school; for instance, among established groups and student clubs whose activities and goals aligned with the SCSP framework.

This interplay between the policy and what happens in the schools it is also context dependent since it is not the same across schools. A number of participants also raised concerns that some educators in NL schools are not well aware of certain components of the policy such as *Procedure 7 Guidelines for LGBTQ Inclusive Practices* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2016). This procedure, in particular, clearly outlines 12 specific guidelines for creating safer and more caring learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ people

within the school system (i.e., students, teachers, parents and caregivers). Indicators for best practices are offered for each one of the 12 guidelines. These participants believe that educators are not aware of this procedure, therefore constraining their ability to better support students and even putting transgender students at risk. One of the procedures refers to ways for maintaining privacy and confidentiality for students by requiring explicit permission from students "before disclosing information regarding a student's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or legal matter such as name change to peers, guardians or other adults" (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2016, p. 10). Not being aware of these guidelines may put transgender students at a greater risk of victimization, violence, and loss of safety and support at their schools a beyond school walls (Peter et al., 2021).

In summary, this study's findings suggest that when the policy framework was understood, positive outcomes happened at the school level; the findings also suggest that there are still factors (e.g., staff and school administrator turnover) within the SCSP implementation process that are constraining the understandings about the policy framework and procedures in schools.

Limitations

This study has provided very important insights around the GSA work in NL as well as in the ways GSA advisors in NL schools leverage social capital to support their role. However, there are certain limitations that must be identified. First, I examined how the GSA work operates within the SCSP context. I offered a descriptive overview of the SCSP, how it came to be and how it has evolved since its inception. The findings in the progression of the policy

require further analysis as this study did not take a policy analysis approach; a policy analysis was beyond the scope of the study and further analysis of the SCSP is needed.

Second, the sample of this study was (unintentionally) limited to GSAs that are having positive experiences in GSA; participants acknowledged that their experiences were not necessarily the experiences of other GSA advisors across the province. From the study's findings it can be inferred that only GSA advisors who felt safe to share their experiences volunteered to participate. A wider examination of the ways GSA advisors from all regions navigate their relationships is needed to better understand the GSA work in Newfoundland and Labrador schools.

Third, this study took an exploratory lens with only nine participants. The sample represents about 6% from all middle and senior high schools in NL; however, the number of active GSAs in these schools is unknown. Thus, it is not possible to determine the extent of the sample's representation given the limited data collected by the school district in this space. Although the findings have provided meaningful insights, these findings are not generalizable; further research is needed to provide a much clearer examination of GSAs in NL schools and how this work relates to the SCSP implementation.

Limitations of Conducting this Study during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The data collection in this study took place during the COVID-19 pandemic where restrictions, school closures, and changes in procedures took place. This particular context limited the study's sample: educators were facing a higher workload, face-to-face interviews were not possible, and additional requirements constrained the recruitment; for instance, in order to recruit participants following the NLESD research policy, the recruitment had to be done

through the school principals who could have chosen not to distribute the recruitment call. Furthermore, the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic in the GSA work was not examined in the framework of this study; therefore, its impact on GSA work and in the implementation of the SCSP could have influenced some of the findings in this study. Further study of this matter is also an area of future research.

Implications

Implications for Practice

This study's findings suggest that, for GSA advisors, the GSA work has been extremely meaningful in supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ persons in the school system—not only for students, but also for staff, parents, caregivers, and other actors in the school community. This study takes a social network and social capital perspective that has shed light on the importance of GSA advisors' relationships and how GSA advisors intentionally cultivate and draw up resources from their social networks in ways that support 2SLGBTQIA+ students. The findings of this study can help GSA advisors in Newfoundland and Labrador reflect on their current practices and relationships. The participants of this study were able to paint a clearer picture on the different ways in which their networks support and/or constrain their work in GSA and the ways in which they have leveraged social capital in their role. Trusting relationships and diverse networks seemed to be part of the key ingredients that supported the GSA work and offered opportunities to leverage social capital resources. Additionally, these findings may support schools in NL who have not yet started in the GSA work and provide some guidance in starting them.

Likewise, this study sheds light on the influence of important actors (e.g., SCS itinerant and school administrators) in GSA advisors' networks. School administrators hold a position of

power and influence in the school; their support is very important for 2SLGBTQIA+ students' relationships to the school and their perceptions of safety and belonging. School administrators in this study were key individuals in fostering solidarity and shared understandings within the school community. From these findings, we know that not all of the GSAs across the province experience this level of support from school administrators. It is imperative that the school districts engage school principals and vice-principals in specialized professional learning. Through the progression of the SCSP there seems to be a decline in funding towards professional learning opportunities for school administrators. It is imperative for school districts to invest in building greater knowledge, skills and expertise for school administrators in fostering safe and caring schools for GSAs and 2SLGBTQIA+ students. A way to do so is by building stronger partnerships with the local community who specialize in 2SLGBTIQA+ issues and create the spaces for GSA advisors, school administrators, school districts, and local experts to engage in professional learning opportunities.

With equal significance, SCS itinerants should also be engaging in these professional learning opportunities since their role in advisors' networks was very significant in connecting GSA advisors with helpful resources and supports. This study suggests that when GSA advisors are disconnected from their SCS itinerant, they are unaware of resources and supports from the school district that could greatly benefit their GSA work. The supports from SCS itinerants to GSAs were not perceived as equally distributed across schools. It is important for the school districts to pay closer attention to the roles of SCS itinerants—with GSAs in particular—as they implement the SCSP.

Implications for Policy

This study was conducted in Newfoundland and Labrador where the SCSP provides the framework for creating and fostering safer and more caring learning environments. It provides an exploratory overview of GSA advisors' networks and their experiences in GSA in Newfoundland and Labrador's schools. Although this is an initial exploratory study, it provides several initial implications for the SCSP implementation in the province. It is also important to mention that at the time of this study, the current version of the SCSP (Department of Education, 2013) was under review, offering the opportunity for implementing improvement efforts based on these findings (B. Ottenheimer, personal communication, June 29, 2020; J. Webb, personal communication, February 1, 2021).

The SCSP shapes common understandings around GSAs, safe spaces, and best practices to supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ students. These findings suggest that the GSA work and the implementation of the SCSP may be constrained when the policy is not fully understood and incorporated at the school level. High turnover hinders policy understandings and implementation. When educators at the school level are not aware of specific components of the policy— such as Procedure 7—the policy may even pose risks to some people (e.g., trans students). There is a need for differentiated professional learning that speaks to the needs of the people functioning in different school sites and spaces that helps build their understanding, not only on the intentions of the policy, but on the components that are embedded in that policy, and this process takes time (Rodway, 2008). This study suggests that the GSA work in NL and the SCSP are in its early stages; a need to measure the sensemaking processes or the level of understanding and awareness of educators' abilities to put this into practice is required.

Policy implementation has facilitated the GSA work by providing resources, funding, and setting out formal roles to support schools such as the SCS itinerants. Inclusive practices, such as the GSA, are just a small part of the SCSP, and therefore, one part of the SCS itinerants' roles. Revised policy documents should consider a review of the roles of SCS itinerants, in particular with 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusive practices. Having a defined role will facilitate greater interactions among GSA advisors and SCS itinerants across NL. Greater trans-related resources should be incorporated to the SCSP; as well, the policy should increase the scope of the policy to create safer and more caring learning environments to all members of the school system.

Implications for Future Research

This study suggests diverse areas for future research in Newfoundland and Labrador. First, future research must take a closer analysis of the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* through a critical lens. This study offered insights into the policy background and its progression in terms of programming for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. r, I only considered this component as a descriptive reference of its progression. Many components in the policy documents warrant a closer examination and analysis (e.g., funding, partnerships).

Second, this study's findings offer an initial glance at the GSA advisors' role in leveraging social capital through their relationships. This small sample of GSA advisors does not offer the full picture of these relationships from a provincial level. Research incorporating a greater sample of GSA advisors representing the different district regions would provide a wider understanding of their experiences. The study design should also consider SCS itinerants and school administrators in the sample to better understand their roles in GSAs and in implementing the SCSP.

Finally, this study considered the perspectives of GSA advisors. Further research in understanding GSAs in NL should also incorporate students' experiences in GSA since this perspective is needed for the understanding of the impact of the GSA in the school environments and in 2SLGBTQIA+ students' wellbeing and success in school.

Conclusion

This study has expanded the research literature in four distinct ways. First, it advances research on social capital that studies its unequal distribution in society (Arneil, 2006; Bourdieu, 1986; Portes, 1998). In particular, it does so from educational spaces where key actors (e.g., parents, caregivers, principals, teacher leaders, and so forth) leverage social capital to support minoritized students (e.g., DeMatthews, 2018; Khalifa, 2010; Liou & Rojas, 2016; Zambrana & Zoppi, 2002). Second, it advances social capital and social network research in understanding policy implementation in education (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008). Third, it advances research on GSAs and GSA advisors, and their impact in school systems and in students' lives (i.e., Cavins, 2017; Kitchen & Bellini, 2013; Mayberry, Chenneville, & Currie, 2011). And fourth, this study adds to the understandings of *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* initiatives across Canada and how they have the potential to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students, teachers, educators, and staff across school systems.

Although an initial examination of GSAs in NL schools, I have provided an understanding of the ways in which GSA advisors access and leverage social capital for the GSA work. GSA advisors have taken an important role in supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ students through their advocacy and leadership attributes. As well, interactions through their personal and professional relationships matter for the GSA work and may facilitate or constrain the ways they

leverage social capital to support their efforts. Through this study, I have learned that when GSA advisors foster trusting relationships and engage in expressive and instrumental actions with diverse others, the GSA work results in positive changes in their schools that foster safer and more caring learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff, and educators.

I argue that the GSA work is a space that presses against the inequitable distribution of resources, power, and supports (i.e., social capital) that affect 2SLGBTQIA+ people across school systems. But these spaces do not exist across all schools. This work is a call to action, it brings requisite knowledge and sets forth recommendation for future work to ensure this necessary space is created and fostered in all schools. To do this, the GSA work requires clear policy directions and the support and engagement of school system actors such as school administrators and SCS itinerants. It is not enough to have the policy on the shelves and the people and the resources in place when they are not reaching all of the relevant actors in the system. It is not enough for educators and administrators to pick and choose which parts of the policy they will implement and which parts they will ignore. It is the responsibility of both the district and the Department of Education to provide the necessary opportunities for all system actors to develop a deep understanding of this policy and to engage in the (un-)learning necessary to implement it ways that positively impact the lives of the students that it purports to serve. NL still has a long way to go in creating safer and more caring learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students, educators, and staff. Nonetheless, these findings suggest that the province is moving in the right direction and needs to continue to take safe and more caring approaches to equity building within the school system.

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Appendix A. Glossary of Terms

The following definitions and images are taken exactly as they were produced in *Egale Canada Human Rights Trust: Glossary of Terms* available at the Department of Education Safe and Caring Schools website (https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/files/k12_safeandcaring_pdf_glossary_terms.pdf).

GENDER

Gender is a system that operates in a social context to classify people, often based on their assigned sex. In many contexts this takes the form of a binary classification of either 'man' or 'woman'; in other contexts, this includes a broader spectrum.

SEX/GENDER BINARY

The notion that there are only two possible sexes (male/female) and genders (man/woman), and that they are opposite, distinct and uniform categories. This view also asserts that gender is determined by sex.

LGBTQ

An acronym for "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Two Spirit, Queer and Questioning" people. This acronym is often used as an umbrella term to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to gender and attraction. This acronym takes many forms and can include: LGBPTTIQQ2sAAS+.

ALLY

An ally is someone who believes in the dignity and respect of all people and takes action by supporting and/or advocating with groups experiencing social injustice. An ally does not identify as a member of the group they are supporting (e.g., a heterosexual person can act as an

ally for gay people and communities; a cisgender lesbian can act as an ally for trans people and communities).

As described in this definition, the responsibilities of trans allyship are reserved for those who do not themselves identify as trans, most commonly cisgender people. The specifics of trans allyship vary depending on the circumstance, but can be summed up through acts of supporting and including trans identities within all aspects of community. Equally important is the recognition that allyship is an ongoing process of support, as opposed to a singular goal or achievement which can be attained and then forgotten.

Acting as an ally to trans communities means constant re-assessment of one's surroundings in terms of their inclusion of, and accessibility to, trans community members. Acknowledging and incorporating the voices of trans community members, as well as their needs and wishes, is an essential part of allyship. Otherwise, allies risk alienating and further sidelining the communities they intend to support. Allyship is a never-ending process of education, as allies learn more about the social systems and institutions that continue to isolate, stigmatize and discriminate against trans and gender variant people. Only through education can allies gain the skills and language to recognize and help to disrupt, the workings of these systems, which are otherwise invisible to many cisgender individuals.

INTERSECTIONALITY

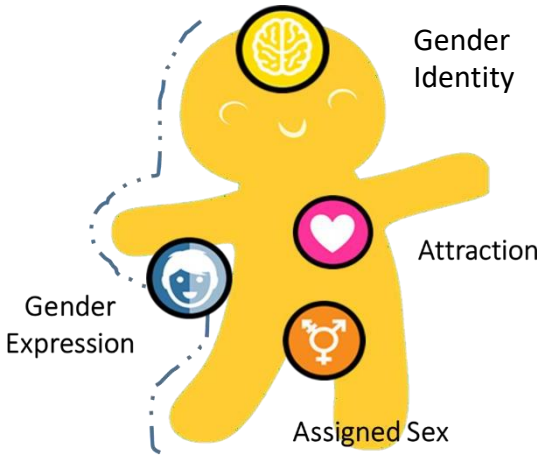
A lens of analysis of social relations and structures within a given society. The concept of intersectionality recognizes how each person simultaneously exists within multiple and overlapping identity categories (including but not limited to: ability, attraction, body size, citizenship, class, creed, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, race, religion). The ways

in which an individual experiences systemic privilege and oppression are impacted by the interplay of these identity categories, depending on how they are valued by social institutions.

SPECTRUM

This is a term that is often paired with sex or gender to recognize that people may have a range of experiences (and realities) in both of these aspects of identity.

COMPONENTS OF HUMAN IDENTITY



SEX/ASSIGNED SEX

Sex / assigned sex is the classification of a person as male, female or intersex based on biological characteristics, including chromosomes, hormones, external genitalia and reproductive organs. The reason we say assigned sex versus biological sex is to acknowledge that sex is often

a value determined by medical professionals and is commonly assigned to newborns based on visual assessment of external genitalia.

Inclusion here of the recognized category of "intersex," frequently overlooked in discussions of sex, serves as a reminder that even at the level of biology, sex is not a binary system.

GENDER IDENTITY

Gender Identity is a person's internal and individual experience of gender. This could include an internal sense of being a man, woman, both, neither or another gender entirely. A person's gender identity may or may not correspond with social expectations associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Since gender identity is internal, it is not necessarily visible to others. It is important to remember that gender identity is not the same as sex / assigned sex.

GENDER EXPRESSION

The way a person presents and communicates gender within a social context. Gender can be expressed through clothing, speech, body language, hairstyle, voice, and/or the emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics or behaviours, which are often associated with masculinity and femininity. The ways in which gender is expressed are culturally specific and may change over time. May also be referred to as gender presentation or gender performance.

ATTRACTION

Often referred to as sexual orientation, this classifies a person's potential for emotional, intellectual, spiritual, intimate, romantic, and/or sexual interest in other people, often based on their sex and/or gender. Attraction may form the basis for aspects of one's identity and/or behaviour.

TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH SEX/ASSIGNED SEX

INTERSEX

Refers to a person whose chromosomal, hormonal or anatomical sex characteristics fall outside the conventional classifications of male or female. The designation of "intersex" can be experienced as stigmatizing given the history of medical practitioners imposing it as a diagnosis requiring correction, often through non-consensual surgical or pharmaceutical intervention on infants, children and young adults (some people may not be identified as "intersex" until puberty or even later in life).

FAAB

An acronym that refers to someone who was assigned female sex at birth. It stands for Female-Assigned at Birth. This may also be expressed as Coercively Assigned Female at Birth (CAFAB).

MAAB

An acronym that refers to someone who was assigned male sex at birth. It stands for Male-Assigned at Birth. This may also be expressed as Coercively Assigned Male at Birth (CAMAB).

TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH ATTRACTION

HETEROSEXUAL

A person who experiences attraction to people of a different sex and/or gender. Also referred to as "straight".

GAY

A person who experiences attraction to people of the same sex and/or gender—gay can include both male-identified individuals and female-identified individuals, or refer to male-identified individuals only.

LESBIAN

A female-identified person who experiences attraction to people of the same sex and/or gender.

BISEXUAL

A person who experiences attraction to both men and women. Some bisexual people use this term to express attraction to both their own sex and/or gender, as well as to people of a different sex and/or gender.

ASEXUAL

A person who may not experience sexual attraction or who has little or no interest in sexual activity.

PANSEXUAL

A person who experiences attraction to people of diverse sexes and/or genders. The term pansexual reflects a desire to recognize the potential for attraction to sexes and/or genders that exist across a spectrum and to challenge the sex/gender binary.

TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH GENDER IDENITY

CISGENDER

A person whose gender identity corresponds with the social expectations associated with the sex assigned to them at birth. E.g., imagine a newborn baby. The midwife who just delivered this child takes a look at the external genitalia, recognizes a vulva, and declares “she’s a girl,”

thus assigning the child's sex as 'female.' Based on this information, it's generally assumed that this child would then grow up to identify themselves as a girl or woman. If that was the case, they could be described by the term cisgender. Cisgender, or cis for short, is a particularly important term in that it describes an extremely common, and in fact socially dominant, experience of gender identity in relation to assigned sex at birth. At first reading, it is often difficult for many people to distinguish the difference between sex / assigned sex and gender identity.

This is quite common due to the fact that the two are frequently portrayed as essentially the same thing. One reason for this is that many individuals experience the sex they were assigned by medical professional at birth as very similar to their conception of their own gender identity. The term cisgender describes this particular relationship. Without access to the word cisgender, people have often resorted to language like 'real/normal men and women.' Referring to cisgender individuals as 'real' or 'normal' when compared to trans individuals is particularly violent language in that it implies that trans men and woman are not in fact real or normal. This is inaccurate and it excludes and alienates trans individuals from community, and propagates transphobic attitudes.

Cisgender is the appropriate term whenever describing individuals whose gender identity aligns with the social expectations of them based on their sex assigned at birth.

THE TRANS UMBRELLA

The term trans is frequently used as an umbrella term for a variety of other terms, including transgender, transsexual and can also refer to terms like genderqueer, agender, bigender, Two Spirit, etc. Some people may identify with these or other specific terms, but not

with the term trans. Similarly, some people may identify as trans, but not with other terms under the trans umbrella. At their simplest, each of these terms has commonalities with the term trans, and yet they are all unique in their specific reference to the context of, and specific relationships between, conceptions of gender identity and assigned sex.

The existence of a diversity of terms is important when discussing trans identities simply because there is quite a lot of variation in the lived experience and identities of individuals who may identify, or be described, as trans. The example above regarding a newborn baby represents only a fraction of the possibilities, and specifically those that remain within a binary (i.e. male, female) gender system. The reality is that for many people their experience of their own gender identity may not align with social expectations based on the sex assigned to them at birth, nor with any gender options available within a binary system. Acknowledging this means moving from a binary gender system to something better described through metaphor, like a spectrum with unlimited combinations of light, or a universe with the potential for unlimited constellations of gender.

TRANSGENDER

A person who does not identify either fully or in part with the gender associated with the sex assigned to them at birth—often used as an umbrella term to represent a wide range of gender identities and expressions.

TRANS MAN

A person whose sex assigned at birth is female or intersex, and who identifies as a man, may identify as a trans man. May also be referred to as FtM/F2M (Female-to- Male) or ItM/I2M (Intersex-to-Male).

TRANS WOMAN

A person whose sex assigned at birth is male or intersex, and who identifies as a woman, may identify as a trans woman. May also be referred to as MtF/M2F (Male-to- Female) or ItF/I2F (Intersex-to-Female).

GENDER DIVERSE

An umbrella term for gender identities and/or gender expressions that differ from cultural or societal expectations based on assigned sex. Other common terms associated with gender diversity are gender variance and gender non-conformity. Gender variance, diversity or non-conformity is different from transgender, which refers to a specific identity. (for example, a child saying “I prefer girls’ clothing” is different from a child saying “I am a girl”).

GENDER FLUIDITY

Gender fluidity refers to the potential for change in ideas, experiences, and expressions of gender at an individual and/or societal level. This concept recognizes the potential for individual movement within a gender spectrum when it comes to self-presentation or expression. For some people this concept is embodied by self-identifying as ‘gender fluid.’ The following definitions are intended to provide a common language, answer questions and provide clarifications regarding a variety of terms related to LGBTQ identities. This is not an exhaustive list of

language, but instead provides some basic terminology to support an introduction to the topics presented as part of.

GENDERQUEER

A person whose gender identity and/or expression may not correspond with social and cultural gender expectations. Individuals who identify as genderqueer may move between genders, identify with multiple genders, or reject the gender binary or gender altogether.

TRANSITION

Frequently discussions around trans identities are focused on the ways in which individuals may align elements of their identity and bodies with their gender identity. While many voices in popular culture may use the expression “sex change” to describe these processes, the term transition is much more appropriate, being preferred and used by members of trans communities. Refers to a variety of social, medical and/or legal changes that some trans people may pursue to affirm their gender identity. For many trans individuals, pursuing some form of transition is essential to their overall health and wellbeing. This is evident in research data related to the impacts of transition on suicidal behaviour within trans communities. For instance, Ontario’s Trans Pulse study found that 27% of respondents who were planning, but had not yet begun, transition had attempted suicide within the last year, compared to only 1% of those who had transitioned medically (Bauer, Hammond, and Travers 2010). The potential elements of transition can be broken down into three categories. It’s important to note that none of these three categories are required steps as part of a process of transition. The transition process is a very personal one. Each individual trans person will decide the ways in which they may choose to transition, or not, depending on what is comfortable and accessible to them.

SOCIAL TRANSITION

This expression is used to describe the common ways in which individuals may choose to publically affirm their gender identity in social environments. This may include changes to:

- name(s).
- pronouns.
- gender expression (e.g., clothing, accessories, mannerisms, way of speaking, etc.).
- access to gendered spaces (e.g., washrooms, change rooms, religious/community spaces).

Social transition is often the most common form within elementary or secondary school contexts. Educators can create safer and more inclusive spaces for trans persons who socially transition by structuring opportunities for students to share their preferred names and pronouns, and respecting these requests throughout the year. Equally important is creation of a class culture of respect and understanding, including clear guidelines regarding the ways in which everyone, including trans and gender variant students, can show respect for diverse expressions of gender. This could include lesson plans, media, books, movies, television, theater, music and web content that are trans- inclusive and that reflect gender diversity.

PRONOUNS

Using the correct pronouns at someone's request, is a way of validating that we all have the right to live our truth, to share our truth, and to be granted safety, respect and dignity in doing so. This involves knowledge about personal pronoun options beyond she/her/hers for women and he/him/his, for men when referring to someone in the third person. Some people go by the non-

binary, gender neutral pronoun set; they/them/theirs. Over time, we have also seen the addition of other non-binary, gender neutral options.

Here is a handy chart that will help you go over and practice the most common personal pronoun sets, currently in use:

MEDICAL TRANSITION

Medical transition is often at the focus of discussion of trans identities, despite the fact that the term represents only one potential part of the transition process. As with social transition, medical transition can involve a variety of procedures and treatments.

Potential elements of medical transition can include:

• Counselling/support (from psychologists, vocal/ behavioural coaches, social workers, etc.).

• Hormone therapy (e.g., administering testosterone, estrogen, hormone blockers).

• Gender affirming surgical procedures (e.g., hysterectomies, orchiectomies, oophorectomies, vaginoplasty, phalloplasty, mastectomy, tracheal shaving, facial feminization, etc.).

Within an Ontario context, some of these transition stages are covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). This means that residents of the province will not be required to pay out of pocket for these support services. However, given the limited number of medical professionals and facilities equipped to offer these services, there are often challenges in access due to prolonged wait times and prohibitive travel costs for those living outside of major urban centres. Many trans people and their families are unable to access inclusive healthcare, and community advocacy for improvements to the healthcare system is ongoing. As with any medical procedure, the details of medical transition are part of the private relationship between an individual and their health care providers. On a personal level, each individual interested in transitioning has the right to decide what processes they will undertake. There is no universal model for what medical transition looks like, and an individual's gender identity or sex cannot be

assumed simply by knowing which procedures someone has or hasn't undergone. An important element of a trans-inclusive classroom is an understanding of appropriate discussions around bodies and transition. Boundaries around discussions of bodies in transition can be part of broader discussions around respecting one another's privacy (including recognizing inappropriate questions, such as whether a trans person has undergone gender-affirming 'bottom' surgery or not). Educators can create safer spaces for medical transition by doing their own research into the subject so as not to feel compelled to ask for details from individual students, or their family members, who may have undergone transition or who may be at the beginning stages of transition.

LEGAL TRANSITION

For the most part legal transition refers to the process of changing the ways in which official (provincial or federal) documentation refers to an individual's sex designation.

This process differs substantially between regions and jurisdictions, but can include updates to documents such as:

- Birth certificate
- Passport
- Citizenship card
- Driver's license
- Health card

The process of accessing gender-affirming identification can be time consuming and complex. Many countries, including Canada, have yet to create sex or gender categories for identification that are reflective of the actual diversity existent within their populations.

Countries like Germany, Nepal and Australia have all acknowledged the need for such updates to state identification, and have created further designation options outside of the gender/sex binary which reflect a more diverse spectrum of identity. As an educator you have the responsibility of maintaining privacy and confidentiality in relation to information on any student's official identification, information which may be particularly sensitive for trans students. The sex designation, or name, indicated on official documents is not your information to share. This may be pertinent if you view students' documents as part of a registration process, or for the purposes of school trips. As always, the best practice is to refer to the wishes of a student or community member themselves when determining the pronouns or gender identifiers used in reference to that individual.

TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH BOTH GENDER IDENITY AND ATTRACTION

QUEER

A term used by some in LGBTQ communities, particularly youth, as a symbol of pride and affirmation of diversity. This term makes space for the expression of a variety of identities outside of rigid categories associated with sex, gender or attraction. It can be used by a community to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to sex, gender or attraction (as with the acronym LGBTQ), or by an individual to reflect the interrelatedness of these aspects of their identity. Queer was historically a derogatory term for difference, used in particular to insult homosexuality and LGBTQ people.

Although sometimes still used as a slur, the term has been reclaimed by some members of LGBTQ communities.

QUESTIONING

An umbrella term that often reflects a process of reconciling three different pieces of information: 1) The feelings you have within yourself about the attraction(s) you experience and/or how you experience gender; 2) The language you have available to you to frame those feelings; and 3) The sense you have of how this will impact your interactions with other people in a social context.

TWO SPIRIT (OR 2-SPIRIT)

An English umbrella term that reflects the many words used in different Aboriginal languages to affirm the interrelatedness of multiple aspects of identity—including gender, sexuality, community, culture and spirituality. Prior to the imposition of the sex/gender binary by European colonizers, some Aboriginal cultures recognized Two Spirit people as respected members of their communities. Two Spirit people were often accorded special status based upon their unique abilities to understand and move between masculine and feminine perspectives, acting as visionaries, healers and medicine people. Some Aboriginal people identify as Two Spirit rather than, or in addition to, identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer.

TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH DISCRIMINTION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION AND ATTRACTION

CISNORMATIVITY

A cultural and societal bias, often unconscious, that privileges cisgender identities and gender norms, and ignores or underrepresents trans identities and/or gender diversity by assuming that all people are cisgender and will express their gender in a way that aligns with perceived gender norms.

CISSEXISM

Prejudice and discrimination against trans or gender diverse identities and/or expressions. This includes the presumption that being cisgender is the superior and more desirable gender identity.

TRANSPHOBIA

Fear and/or hatred of any transgression of perceived gender norms, often exhibited by name-calling, bullying, exclusion, prejudice, discrimination or acts of violence—anyone who is trans and/or gender diverse (or perceived to be) can be the target of transphobia.

HETERONORMATIVITY

A cultural and societal bias, often unconscious, that privileges heterosexuality, and ignores or underrepresents diversity in attraction and behaviour by assuming all people are heterosexual.

HETEROSEXISM

Prejudice and discrimination in favour of heterosexuality. This includes the presumption of heterosexuality as the superior and more desirable form of attraction.

HOMOPHOBIA

Fear and/or hatred of homosexuality, often exhibited by name-calling, bullying, exclusion, prejudice, discrimination or acts of violence—anyone who is LGB (or assumed to be) can be the target of homophobia.

MONONORMATIVITY

A cultural and societal bias, often unconscious, that privileges attraction to a single sex and/or gender, and ignores or underrepresents diversity in attraction and behaviour by assuming all people are monosexual.

MONOSEXISM (BINEGATIVITY)

Prejudice and discrimination in favour of single sex and/or gender attraction. This includes the presumption of monosexuality as the superior and more desirable form of attraction.

BIPHOBIA

Fear and/or hatred of bisexuality, often exhibited by name-calling, bullying, exclusion, prejudice, discrimination or acts of violence—anyone who is or is assumed to be bisexual or experiences attraction to multiple sexes and/or genders can be the target of biphobia.

PERCEIVED GENDER IDENTITY

The assumption that a person is trans, cisgender or genderqueer without knowing what their gender identity actually is. Perceptions about gender identity are often predicated on stereotypes relating to gender expression (e.g., what a man "should" look like).

PERCEIVED ATTRACTION

The assumption that a person is lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual without knowing how they actually experience attraction. Perceptions about attraction are often predicated on stereotypes relating to gender expression (e.g., what a heterosexual woman "should" look like).

Appendix B: Recruitment Emails

Appendix B1: Recruitment Email to Community Organizations

Hello [NAME],

I hope this email finds you well. I am reaching out asking for your support. As you know I am working on my master's degree and I am now conducting a research project for my thesis called "Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)".

The purpose of my project is to explore how educators working in gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs), also known as gay-straight alliances, define their work and access resources in order to support and provide safer learning environments for LGBTQ2S+ students in their schools.

I was wondering if through your work with [ORGANIZATION NAME] you know any educator **currently working** or **who has worked** as a **GSA advisor in previous school years** in schools here in Newfoundland and Labrador (or any other leader who supports students engaging in clubs that do similar work, such as social justice clubs, rainbow clubs, etc.).

If you know anyone willing to participate in this research, I would really appreciate if you could forward the recruitment information on my behalf. The invitation letter and the project summary are attached below. Please let them know they can contact me at kesparzasosa@mun.ca or 709-730-3369, or alternatively, they may contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Joelle Rodway at jrodway@mun.ca or 709-864-6980.

Please note **the participation of GSA advisors is strictly confidential** and **their involvement in this study will not be confirmed to you or your organization.** If you have any questions or concerns about the project or have ethical concerns about the research, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

I have attached the documents below. Thank you in advance for the support in forwarding this information on my behalf.

Warmly,

Karina Esparza Sosa
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and was found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Appendix B2: Recruitment Email to School Principals

Dear School Principal,

My name is Karina Esparza Sosa and I am a master's student at the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. The following information is an invitation for your school to participate in my master's thesis called **"Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)"**, also known as gay-straight alliances.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy and by the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District research Board.

The purpose of the study is to explore how educators working or who have worked as **GSA advisors** define their work and access several social resources (e.g. information, advice, expertise, support) in order to support and provide safer learning environments for LGBTQ2S+ students in their schools.

Participating in this study is up to the GSA advisors, is completely **VOLUNTARY**, and it would be taking place on the educators' own personal time, **outside of school hours.** Participation consists of answering an online questionnaire (5 mins) and a one-on-one interview with me (about 90 mins).

The benefits of participating in this study are:

- First, this work will contribute to an emerging body of educational literature that considers the role of social capital in education by studying social networks from a diversity and inclusion perspective. By participating in the research, participants may

gain new insights related to the structure of their social network, helping them better understand how they can access professional social capital in their GSA work.

- Second, this work will provide policymakers and educational practitioners insight into how GSA policy is shaping the work of educators working in public schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. Once the research is completed, the participants will be made aware of research products emerging from the study (e.g., the thesis itself, presentations, and/or published articles). These research products may be useful in their own professional work with GSAs.

If your school has or has had an active GSA, I would really appreciate it if you could distribute this invitation to your staff and/or GSA facilitator(s). They may contact me at kesparzzasosa@mun.ca

Thank you in advance for considering my request and for forwarding the information. Below you will find the invitation letter. If you would like to learn more about this valuable project, a research proposal overview is attached to this email.

With warm regards,

Karina Esparza Sosa

Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland

Appendix C: Invitation Letters

Appendix C1: Invitation Letter (NLESD)

Invitation to participate in the study

"Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)"

My name is Karina Esparza Sosa, and I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting a research project called "Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)" for my master's thesis under the supervision of Dr. Joelle Rodway.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how educators working in gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs), also known as gay-straight alliances, define their work and access resources in order to support and provide safer learning environments for LGBTQ2S+ students in their schools. This research will focus on educators **who are working or who have worked** in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador (or any other leader who have supported students engaging in clubs that do similar work, such as social justice clubs, rainbow clubs,) where their work falls under the provincial Safe and Caring Schools Policy, which provides guidelines to ensure the safety of LGBTQ2S+ students in provincial public schools.

This research will provide an opportunity for GSA advisors, school district leadership, and provincial policymakers to reflect on current work within this space to date and will provide insights for use in future planning as they continue to develop safer and more inclusive learning environments for all students. It is important to mention that this study is not a requirement from the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District; your participation is strictly confidential and will not be reported to anyone.

I am looking for Gender and Sexuality Alliance advisors in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, to participate in my study. Participants must had been in this role for at least one full school year. As part of your voluntary participation, you will be asked to complete an online demographic/professional questionnaire (5 mins) and take part on a one-on-one interview (90 mins aprox), which will be held in your own time outside school hours.

If you are interested and willing to participate in this research, please contact me. I would be more than happy to speak with you and to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me (kesparzasosa@mun.ca or 709-730-3369), or alternatively, you may contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Joelle Rodway (jrodway@mun.ca or 709-864-6980), if you have any questions or concerns about the project. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Thank you in advance for considering my request. I am looking forward to learning from and with you.

With warm regards,

Karina Esparza Sosa Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District research Committee and by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and was found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Appendix C2: Invitation Letter (Community Organization)

Invitation to participate in the study

"Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)"

My name is Karina Esparza Sosa, and I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting a research project called "Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)" for my master's thesis under the supervision of Dr. Joelle Rodway.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how educators working in gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs), also known as gay-straight alliances, define their work and access resources in order to support and provide safer learning environments for LGBTQ2S+ students in their schools. This research will focus on educators working as GSA advisors in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador (or any other leader who supports students engaging in clubs that engage in similar work, such as social justice clubs, rainbow clubs, etc.) where their work falls under the provincial Safe and Caring Schools Policy, which provides guidelines to ensure the safety of LGBTQ2S+ students in provincial public schools. This research will provide an opportunity for GSA advisors, school district leadership, and provincial policymakers to reflect on current work within this space to date and will provide insights for use in future planning as they continue to develop safer and more inclusive learning environments for all students.

I am looking for Gender and Sexuality Alliance advisors **currently working** or **who have worked** as a GSA advisor in previous school years in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador (or any other leader who supports students engaging in clubs that do similar work, such as social justice clubs, rainbow clubs, etc.). **Your participation** in this study **is strictly**

confidential. Your participation is not a requirement of the person and/or the organization who contacted you; and **your involvement in this study will not be reported to the person and/or the organization who contacted you**.

If you are interested and willing to participate in this research, please contact me. I would be more than happy to speak with you and to answer any questions you may have. You may contact me at kesparzasosa@mun.ca or 709-730-3369, or alternatively, you may contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Joelle Rodway (jrodway@mun.ca or 709-864-6980), if you have any questions or concerns about the project. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Thank you in advance for considering my request. I am looking forward to learning from and with you.

With warm regards,

Karina Esparza Sosa Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and was found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Appendix D: Research Overview

Thesis Proposal Overview
Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)

Background

Gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs), also known as gay-straight alliances, are student-led clubs within the K-12 schools; these groups pursue goals and outcomes focused on improving experiences of LGBTQ2S+ youth in schools. LGBTQ2S+ youth are more likely to feel unsafe in schools; tend to have lower rates of academic achievement; and are at a higher risk of dropping out of school than their cisgender heterosexual peers (Kosciw et al, 2015). Because of this, GSAs have been a great initiative to reduce these risks and challenge current school practices that segregate LGBTQ2S+ students (Fetner et al, 2012). GSAs work alongside an advisor, who belongs to the school staff, and who provides guidance, advocacy, support, and facilitates collaboration with other groups (EGALE Canada, 2015).
The latter has increased the focus towards GSAs within research and policy. One important milestone in policies encouraging the creation of GSAs has been the Safe and Caring Schools Initiative in Canada. With regards to research, GSAs have been of relevance in understanding school climate (Kitchen & Bellini, 2013), school engagement (Seelman et al, 2015), advocacy (Watson et al, 2010), and social justice (Mayo, 2013). Although, most of the research in GSAs has been from the students' perspectives, it has been suggested to explore the advisors' perspectives to better understand their role in ensuring the GSAs' achievements (Cavins, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Cavins (2017) argues, GSA advisors play a key role because they utilize and mobilize resources for the GSAs' benefits; resources are an important component of social capital theory (Lin, 2001), which can be defined as the potential resources within a network of individuals who invest their own capital to access and share resources through purposive actions (Bourdieu, 1986; Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1988, 1990; and Lin, 2001). Exploring GSA advisors work through a social capital perspective will add to the gaps in understanding how certain resources (e.g. information, advice, expertise, support) are acquired and mobilized by them within their professional network.
Additionally, social capital has helped in providing insights for policy implementation and design (Coburn & Russel, 2008), student achievement (Daly et al, 2014), and to understand the role of central actors (e.g. principals, teachers, community leaders) that lever social capital resources for the sake of students of minority populations; social capital has been a powerful framework to understanding how collective actions from certain key actors (e.g. principals, parents, community leaders) leverage social capital resources for the sake of positive outcomes and academic success in these minority populations (i.e., Khalifa, 2010; DeMatthews, 2018, etc.).

Purpose and Study Design

The purpose of this study is to explore how educators working as advisors in GSAs, define their work and access resources in order to support and provide safer learning environments for LGBTQ2S+ students in their schools. This research will focus on educators who are **currently working** or **who have worked** as a **GSA advisor in previous school years** in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador in Newfoundland and Labrador (or any other leader who supported students engaging in clubs that engage in similar work, such as social justice clubs, Pride clubs, rainbow clubs, etc. In those school years) where their work falls

under the provincial Safe and Caring Schools Policy, which provides guidelines to ensure the safety of LGBTQ2S+ students in provincial public schools. This research will provide an opportunity for GSA advisors, school district leadership, and provincial policymakers to reflect on current work within this space to date, and will provide insights for use in future planning as they continue to develop safer and more inclusive learning environments for all students.

The research questions guiding this project are: 1) What is the history of policy and investment in programming to support LGBTQ2S+ students in Newfoundland and Labrador?; 2) What work is currently happening in the Newfoundland English School District that supports LGBTQ2S+ students?; and, 3) What social resources (formal and informal) are GSA advisors engaging to support their work and with what effects?

Given the exploratory nature of this study, a holistic multiple case study design will be used, where each GSA advisor's experience counts as one case. The data for the study will be collected by collating a repository of relevant policy documents, professional profile questionnaires, and private/ one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The total number of participants is expected to be of approximately 10 GSA advisors.

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Appendix E: Recruitment Poster

Appendix F: Consent Form

Faculty of Education/Educational Leadership Studies

Faculty of Education
G.A. Hickman Building
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL A1B 3X8
www.mun.ca/educ

[DATE]

Informed Consent Form

Title: *Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)*

Researcher: *Karina Esparza Sosa, Faculty of Education*
Supervisor: *Dr. Joelle Rodway, Faculty of Education*

Dear colleague,

My name is Karina Esparza Sosa and I am a Master of Education student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. As part of my master's thesis, I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Joelle Rodway. You are invited to take part in this project entitled, *"Leveraging Social Capital in Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)."*

As part of the informed consent process, this letter outlines the purpose of this research project and describes your involvement should you choose to participate. It includes further details about the design of the project and describes your rights as a participant as well as the risks and benefits of participating in this research. Please read this document carefully. Should

you have any questions about the study or if you would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at kesparzasosa@mun.ca or by phone at 709.730.3369.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. There will be no negative consequences should you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has begun.

Purpose of study:

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how educators working in gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs), also known as gay-straight alliances, define their work and leverage their social capital—that is, resources exchanged through social interaction such as advice, information, and social support—in order to support and provide safer learning environments for LGBTQ2S+ students in their schools. This research will focus on educators working as GSA advisors in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador (or any other leader who supports students engaging in clubs that engage in similar work, such as social justice clubs, rainbow clubs, etc.) where their work falls under the provincial *Safe and Caring Schools Policy*, which provides guidelines to ensure the safety of LGBTQ2S+ students in provincial public schools. This research will provide an opportunity for GSA advisors, school district leadership, and provincial policymakers to reflect on current work within this space to date and will provide insights for use in future planning as they continue to develop safer and more inclusive learning environments for all students.

What you will do in this study:

I will collect data for this study in two phases: a professional profile questionnaire followed by a private, one-on-one interview. Upon your consent, I will send you a link to an online professional profile questionnaire with the purpose of collecting additional information needed to inform the interview and data analysis. This questionnaire must be completed prior to our one-on-one interview. **The questionnaire has questions that are personal and private (i.e., sexual orientation, gender, religious affiliation, etc.) and might make you feel uncomfortable; you are free to skip any questions or to not answer the questionnaire at all.** The reason I am interested in this demographic information is rooted in the analysis from the "The Every Teacher Project on LGBTQ-inclusive education in Canada's K-12 schools: (2015)" that suggests the experiences of educators in LGBTQ-inclusive education are diverse depending on their personal identities. For example, one of the findings in the report showed that LGBTQ educators were more likely to identify their school as unsafe for LGBTQ students than their white, cisgender, heterosexual colleagues. You can find the full report at https://egale.ca/awareness/every-teacher-project/. It is important to mention that all phases of data collection will take time in your own time outside of school hours.

Following completion of the questionnaire (should you choose to complete it partially or in full), you will participate in a private, one-on-one interview with me using online digital tools (or via telephone should you prefer). During the interview, I will ask you about your professional background, your understanding of the role of the GSA in your school (i.e., how you define your GSA work), and how it is supported by current education policy. I will also ask you about the people you engage with to support this work in order to achieve your GSA's desired outcomes (i.e., about your social capital) because social capital has been shown to influence organizational

outcomes for disadvantaged groups. Social network analysis is a research method often used in social capital research, enabling researchers to map individuals' social networks in order to better understand them. Figure 1 shows an example of the social network map that I will use to visualize the social capital reported in your social network. Please note that I will at no point in time use personally identifying information in these graphic representations. References to people will be at the aggregate level using general terms such as colleague, school/district leader, friend, community organization representative, and so on. Further details on confidentiality and anonymity are outlined in a subsequent section of this consent letter.

Figure 1

Source: Hansen, D. L., Smith, M. A., & Schneiderman, B. (2011). Analyzing Social Media Networks with NodeXL : Insights From a Connected World. Morgan Kaufmann. *(p. 168)*

With your consent, interviews will be audio-recorded only and fully transcribed using NVivo 12 (a qualitative data analysis software package). After your interview, and before data are included in the final report, I will send a copy of your interview transcript as well as your social network map to review; you may add, change, or delete information from these materials as you see fit.

Length of time:

The professional profile questionnaire will take an approximate time of 15 minutes to complete and the one-on-one interviews will take approximately 90 minutes. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary; there will be no compensation for your participation. However, you will receive a gift card for a local coffee shop as a small token of appreciation for your participation.

Withdrawal from the study:

There will be no judgement or evaluation placed on your responses regarding your performance as a GSA advisor. **At any time, you may refuse to answer a question or you may withdraw completely from the study without any consequences.** If you decide to withdraw from the study, your information and data will be permanently destroyed. Paper copies of data will be shredded and discarded through the university's secure data disposal system and digital data will be permanently deleted from all digital devices. For this request to be successful, you will have to do so anytime during the study or up until two weeks after receiving your final interview transcript and network map. After this time, it will be assumed that all data will be included in data analysis procedures.

Confidentiality and anonymity:

The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. At all times, your interview will remain private and confidential; your name, contact information, and any other information

you provide, will remain confidential between you and me. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the data, which will be anonymized using pseudonyms or codes (e.g., Colleague1, Colleague2, SchoolLeader1) to avoid participant identification.

Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics, such as name or description of physical appearance. Pseudonyms or codes will be used to ensure data anonymity and to minimize possibility of identification. There are 256 schools in the NLESD with a majority of schools engaged in some form of GSA activity. In this study, I will be speaking with ten (10) GSA advisors. Because the participants for this research project have been selected from a relatively small group of people, some of whom may be known to each other; it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said. I will make every reasonable effort to ensure your confidentiality and privacy. I will not report your participation to the school district and I will remove any identifying information from the findings and in any other written products (e.g., including interview transcripts, thesis, conference presentations, etc.)

Possible benefits:

There are several potential benefits to participation in this study. First, this work will contribute to an emerging body of educational literature that considers the role of social capital in education by studying social networks from a diversity and inclusion perspective. By participating in the research, participants may gain new insights related to the structure of their social network, helping them better understand how they can access professional social capital in their GSA work.

Second, this work will provide policymakers and educational practitioners insight into how GSA policy is shaping the work of educators working in public schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. Once the research is completed, the participants will be made aware of research products emerging from the study (e.g., the thesis itself, presentations, and/or published articles). These research products may be useful in their own professional work with GSAs.

Possible risks:

As a result of participating in this study, you may experience:

- Discomfort talking about your relationship with your employer, your work, struggles, about your own identity (i.e., if you are from the LGBTQ2S+ population, etc.), and so on.
- A sense of risk by disclosing private and personal information such as your sexual orientation and gender identity. According to "Every teacher project on LGBTQ-inclusive education in Canada's K–12 schools" this is a very common experience for LGBTQ educators. To address this risk and the previous one, although all information collected will be kept confidential and will be anonymized, you may opt not to disclose this personal information. You may choose not to talk about certain sensitive topics. If you later experience any discomfort as a result, you may use the following free mental health support resources provided by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the teachers' association, and/or community organizations within the province:
    - **Mental Health Crisis Line**, available 24/7 for any emergencies at 1-888-737-4668.
    - The EAP services from the **Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association**, which include counselling intervention and other services at 1-800-563-3599; or through its coordinator Judy Beranger ext. 265, email: jmberanger@nlta.nl.ca; and
    - **Planned Parenthood**, a community organization that provides health services in a safe space regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, religion, religious creed, national or social origin, marital status, family status and political opinion. It can be reached at 1-877-666-9847.

- Discomfort disclosing names of colleagues, students, and/or third parties. To minimize or avoid possible discomfort during the one-on-one interview, you may choose to refer to any colleagues, students, or any other parties by a pseudonym or their initials in order to protect their identities. Any information you provide will remain confidential, and should you accidentally provide real names, I remind you that all data will be anonymized prior to analysis and I will use pseudonyms (e.g., Colleague1, Colleague2) to refer to the individuals identified throughout all data analysis and reporting activities.

- Because the participants for this research project have been selected from a relatively small group of people, some of whom may be known to each other, it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said. I will make every reasonable effort to ensure your confidentiality and privacy as described in the confidentiality and anonymity section of this letter.

Recording of data:

With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. Doing so enables the analysis of verbatim data.

Use, access, ownership, and storage of data:

All digital data (e.g., transcripts, audio recordings, etc.) will be maintained on a secure, password-protected external storage device (e.g., USB key, external hard drive) for the duration of the study. This external device, along with other collected hard copy documents (e.g., consent forms) will be kept in a locked drawer in my home. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the complete data set. No other individual, group, or organization will have access to these data.

Third-Party Data Collection and/or Storage:

Data collected from you as part of the Professional Profile Questionnaire in this project will be hosted and stored electronically by Qualtrics, Memorial University's current approved

survey tool, meeting all privacy, security, and legislative requirements of the University (see http://www.mun.ca/surveysolution/ for more details). However, anonymity and confidentiality of data may not be guaranteed in the rare instance, for example, that government agencies obtain a court order compelling the provider to grant access to specific data stored on their servers. If you have questions or concerns about how your data will be collected or stored, please contact the researcher and/or visit the provider's website for more information before participating. The privacy and security policy of the third-party hosting data collection and/or storing data can be found at: *https://www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement/*

Reporting of results:

Upon completion, my thesis will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library and it will be available online at: http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses. Additionally, thesis data may be used for future research publications and/or conference presentations. In all cases, your identity will remain confidential and anonymity will be maintained.

Sharing of results with participants:

I will provide an executive summary of the research findings upon completion of the study. Additionally, I will advise when the full thesis is available at the Queen Elizabeth II Library.

Questions:

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and was found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or

your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: Karina Esparza Sosa at kesparzasosa@mun.ca or the thesis supervisor, Dr. Joelle Rodway at jrodway@mun.ca.

I thank you in advance for your consideration and participation in my research study.

Sincerely,

Karina Esparza Sosa, B.Ed.

Consent

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any **data collected from you up to that point will be destroyed.**
- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to **two weeks after** receiving your final transcript.

I agree to be audio-recorded ☐ Yes ☐ No

I agree to the use of direct quotations using a pseudonym ☐ Yes ☐ No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your Signature Confirms:

☐ I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.

☐ A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

_____

_____

Signature of Principal Investigator Date

Appendix G: Professional Profile Questionnaire

[Email Message]

Dear colleague,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research project and for going through the consent form with me, I have received your signed consent form. Below you will find the link that will direct you to the Professional Profile Questionnaire, which collects the personal and professional information needed to inform the interview and subsequent data analysis. The reason I am interested in this demographic information is rooted in the analysis from the "The Every Teacher Project on LGBTQ-inclusive education in Canada's K-12 schools (Taylor et al, 2015) that suggests the experiences of educators in LGBTQ-inclusive education are diverse depending on their personal identities. For example, one of the findings in the report showed that LGBTQ educators were more likely to identify their school as unsafe for LGBTQ students than their white, cisgender, heterosexual colleagues. You can find the full report at https://egale.ca/awareness/every-teacher-project/

It is recommended for you to complete the questionnaire prior to our interview. As per the informed consent letter, I remind you that you may choose to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer, or should you prefer, you may refuse to respond the questionnaire entirely if it makes you uncomfortable.

<LINK INSERTED HERE>

If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire do not hesitate to contact me via email at kesparzasosa@mun.ca or by calling at 709-730-3369.

Kind regards,

Karina Esparza Sosa

Memorial University of Newfoundland

Faculty of Education

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

[Qualtrics Platform]

Professional Profile Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research project. This research aims to explore how you define your work as a GSA advisor as well as to how you access resources to provide safer learning environments for LGBTQ2S+ students. The purpose of this questionnaire is to build a personal and professional profile that describes you. Please complete this questionnaire prior to our meeting as I will be referring to it during our interview. This questionnaire will also provide valuable information that will inform interview data analysis.

The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete; your responses will be kept completely confidential. You will notice that the questions are very personal and might make you feel uncomfortable; you are free to skip any questions or not answer the questionnaire at all. The reason I am interested in this demographic information is rooted in the analysis from

the “The Every Teacher Project on LGBTQ-inclusive education in Canada’s K-12 schools (Taylor et al, 2015) that suggests the experiences of educators in LGBTQ-inclusive education are diverse depending on their personal identities. For example, one of the findings in the report showed that LGBTQ educators were more likely to identify their school as unsafe for LGBTQ students than their white, cisgender, heterosexual colleagues. You can find the full report at https://egale.ca/awareness/every-teacher-project/

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Click **YES** if you wish to continue or click **NO** to exit the questionnaire.

☐ YES ☐ NO

Section 1. Personal Information

1. Age [NUMBER FIELD]
2. Please describe your gender identity. (e.g., two-spirit, non-binary, genderqueer, transgender woman, transgender man, cisgender woman, cisgender man, etc.) [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
3. Please describe your sexual orientation. (e.g. asexual, homosexual, pansexual, bisexual, heterosexual, questioning, etc.) [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
4. What is the race/ethnicity you mostly identify with? Select all that apply. [MULTIPLE SELECTION RESPONSE] *Options: Multi-racial/multi-ethnic; Canadian born; Aboriginal/First Nations, Inuit, Métis; Black; White; East Asian; South Asian; Southeast Asian; Latin American; other, add.*
5. What is your religious affiliation if any? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
6. Region of place of work at the time of your GSA. [SINGLE SELECTION FIELD] *Options: Avalon, Central, Western, and Labrador.*
7. Did you grow up in the region? [SINGLE SELECTION FIELD] *Options: Yes, No*

Section 2. Professional Information

8. How long have you been an educator? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
9. How long have you been an educator in Newfoundland and Labrador? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
10. How long have you been working at your current school? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
11. What is your current position at your school? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
12. How long have you held this position? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
13. What type of appointment/contract do you hold? [MULTIPLE SELECTION RESPONSE] *Options: Permanent, Contractual, Full-time, Part-time, Other*

14. How long have you been a GSA advisor in this school? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
15. What are the grade levels and ages of your GSA students? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
16. What is your relationship to the LGBTQ2S+ community? (e.g., A family member or friend is queer, it started when I became a GSA advisor, I am queer, etc.) [OPEN TEXT FIELD]
17. Have you been a GSA advisor in the past? [SINGLE SELECTION FIELD] *Options: Yes, No*
18. If yes, For how long? [OPEN TEXT FIELD]

Appendix H: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Part 1. Gender-Sexuality Alliances

Let's begin with some questions about your work as a GSA advisor. Remember you may choose to skip any questions you do not wish to respond or that make you feel uncomfortable.

1. How did you become a GSA advisor?
2. How would you characterize your GSA work?
3. What are the goals of your GSA? Do you believe each GSA in NL pursue the same goals?
4. In what ways does the policy context in Newfoundland and Labrador, and in Canada in general, facilitate (i.e., enables) your GSA work? In what ways does it constrain it?
5. What do you think are important conversations to have within the school and/or within the community around your GSA work?
6. Can you share a time when you felt you were successful as a GSA advisor?
7. Can you share a time when you felt that you failed as a GSA advisor?
8. What types of resources are required to carry out this work? For example, funding, space, knowledge, and so on.

Part 2. Social Capital and Social Networks

In this section, I'm going to focus on social resources and ask you specific questions about the people you work with and/or who supports your GSA work. As a reminder, I ask you to refrain of using real names of the people you mention and refer to them by their initials. Should you accidentally provide real names, I will substitute them with pseudonyms for the remainder of data collection, analysis, and reporting.

9. Who are the colleagues with whom you discuss important matters about your GSA? By discuss important matters I mean, someone with whom you talk about important issues, and/or someone who gives you advice, information, and so on. **DISCUSS IMPORTANT MATTERS**
10. Who are the people you can really count on to help you carry out this work? Who are your "go-to" people? Who are the people who, no matter what, they are going to help you? **GO TO / HELP / COUNT ON**

11. Who are the people who provide you with emotional support? To whom do you go to vent about issues related to your GSA work? Whose shoulder would you cry on when times are difficult in this context? **EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

12. [Referring to a list of the names generated from questions 8–10.] From the colleagues you have mentioned, are there any colleagues whom you consider to be a close professional friend? Would you say you're closer to some of your colleagues than others? If so, who? **CLOSE PROFESSIONAL FRIEND**

13. [Referring to a list of the names generated from questions 8–10.] What is their professional role in their organization? **PROFESSIONAL ROLE**

14. Do any of these people know each other?

Appendix I: Advisor A's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor A: Network Measures

Network Type	**Network Size**	**Density** [a]	**Homophily** [b]		**Heterogeneity** [c]	
	N=x	%	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	33	20.27%	0.758	0.455	0.863	0.810
Cognitive Social Capital	33	20.27%	0.758	0.455	0.863	0.810
Relational Social Capital	12	45.45%	0.833	0.333	0.729	0.681

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor A: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go-to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity*
GSA Advisor 1	1	0	0	0	1
GSA Advisor 2	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 1	1	1	0	0	2
Community Leader 2	1	1	0	1	3
Community Leader 3	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 4	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 5	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 6	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 7	1	0	0	0	1
GSA Co-advisor 1	1	1	1	1	4
GSA Co-advisor 2	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 1	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 2	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 3	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 1	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 2	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 3	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 4	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 1	0	1	1	0	2
Friend 2	0	1	1	0	2
Friend 3	0	1	1	0	2
Family 1	0	1	1	0	2
Family 2	0	1	1	0	2
Guidance Counsellor 1	1	1	1	1	4
Guidance Counsellor 2	1	0	0	0	1
Guidance Counsellor 3	1	0	0	0	1
Guidance Counsellor 4	1	0	0	0	1
Political Leader 1	1	0	0	0	1
School Principal 1	1	1	0	1	3
School Vice-principal 1	1	1	0	1	3
School Principal 2	1	0	0	1	2
School Vice-principal 2	1	0	0	1	2
Union Leader	1	0	0	0	1

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

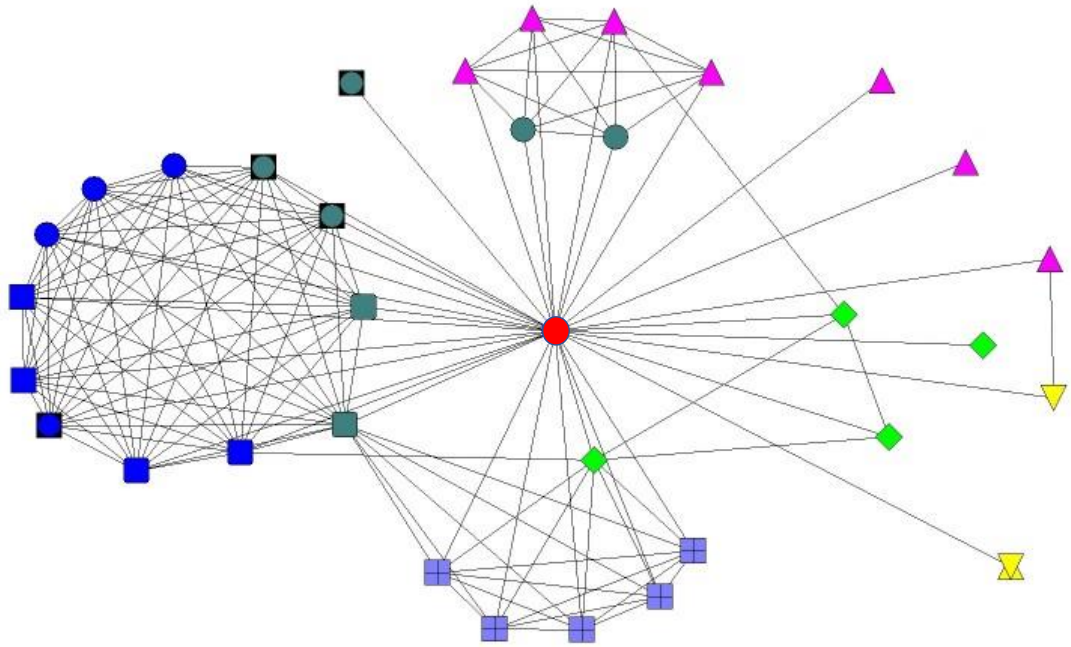

Figure 1. Advisor A's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor A is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (other), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

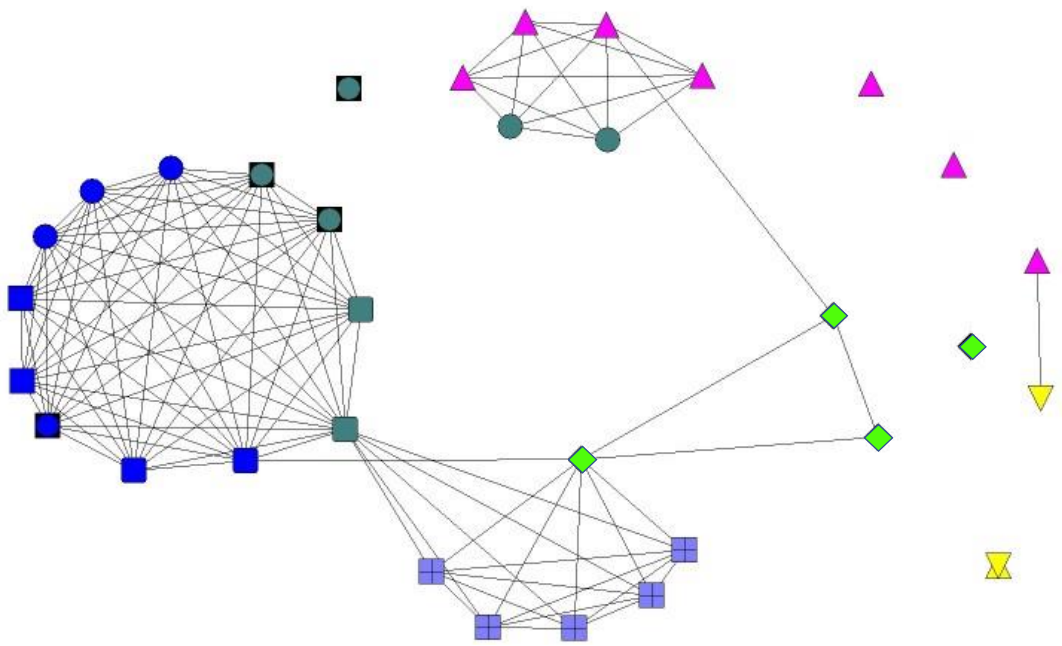

Figure 2. Advisor A's Network (Ego Out)

Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (other), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

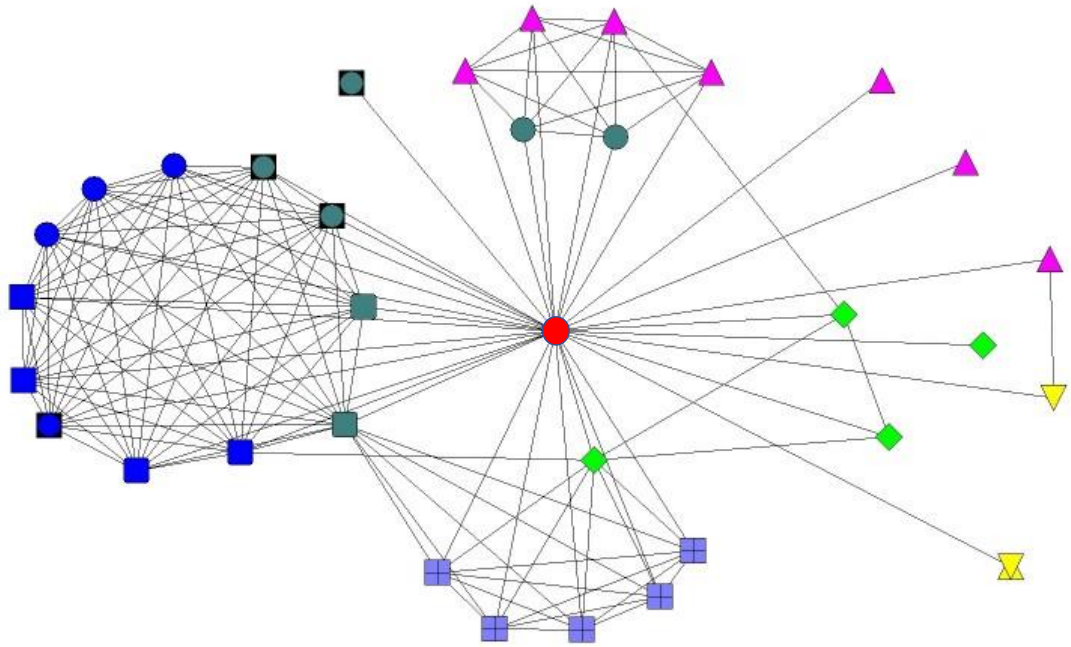

Figure 3. Advisor A's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor A is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (other), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

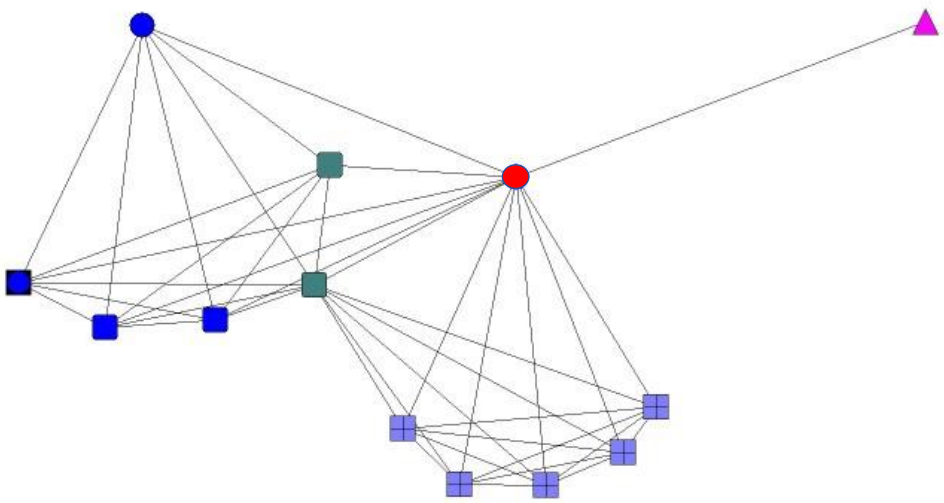

Figure 4. Advisor A's Relational Social Capital Network
Notes: Advisor A is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), up triangle (community leader/activist, and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

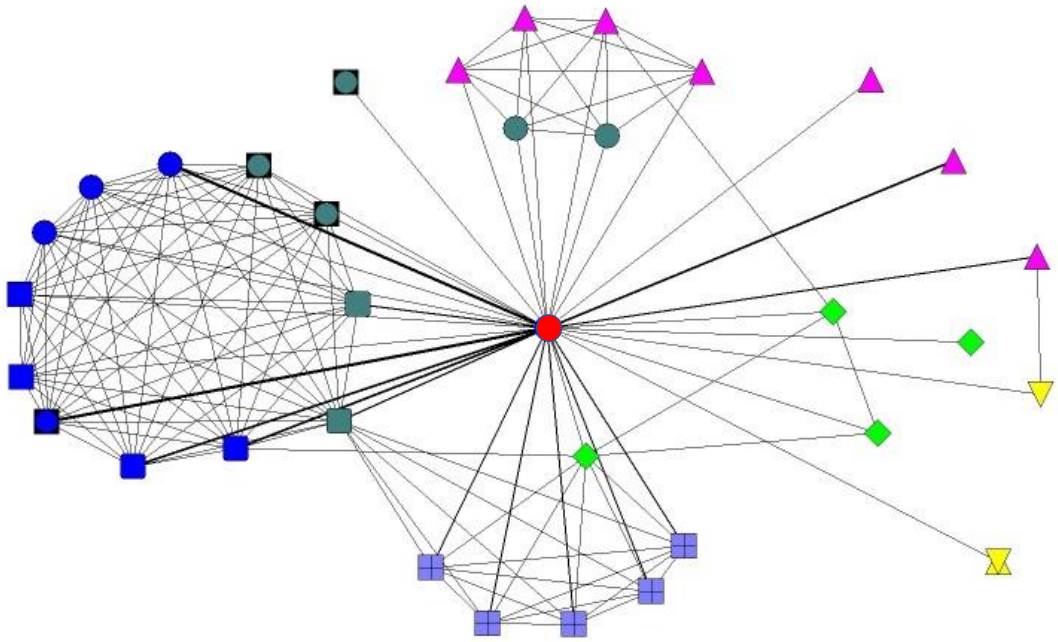

Figure 5. Advisor A's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor A is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (other), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2

Appendix J. Advisor B's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor B: Network Measures

Network Type	**Network Size** N=x	**Density** [a] %	**Homophily** [b]		**Heterogeneity** [c]	
			Professional Role	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	16	37.50%	1	0.250	0.789	0.695
Cognitive Social Capital	12	46.97%	1	0	0.792	0.625
Relational Social Capital	6	19.05%	1	1	0.633	0.633

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor B: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go-To	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
Community Leader 1	1	0	1	0	2
Community Leader 2	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 3	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 4	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 1	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 2	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 1	1	1	1	1	4
Friend 1	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 2	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 3	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 4	0	0	0	0	1
Friend 5	1	0	1	0	1
Guidance Counsellor 1	1	1	0	0	2
Guidance Counsellor 2	1	1	0	0	2
Principal	1	1	0	0	2
Vice Principal	1	1	0	0	2

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

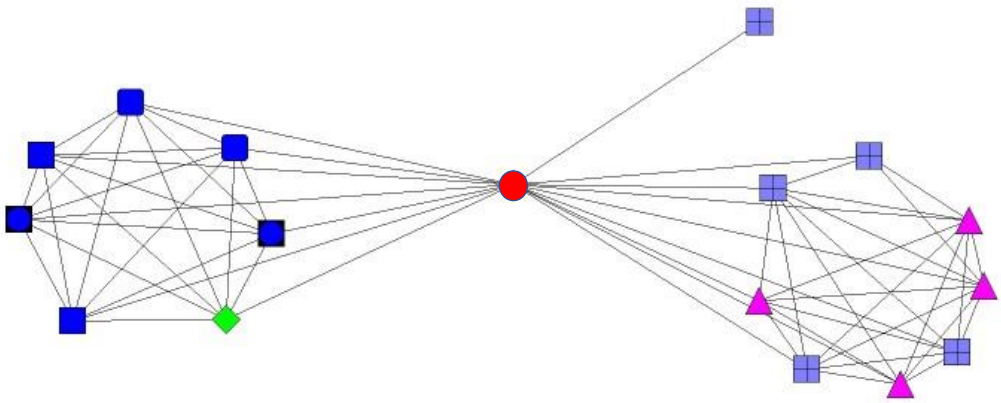

Figure 1. Advisor B's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor B is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Note$_3$. Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

Figure 2. Advisor B's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

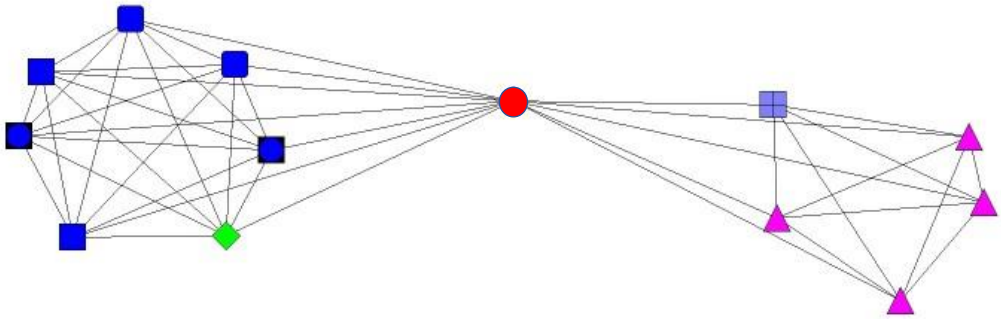

Figure 3. Advisor B's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor B is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

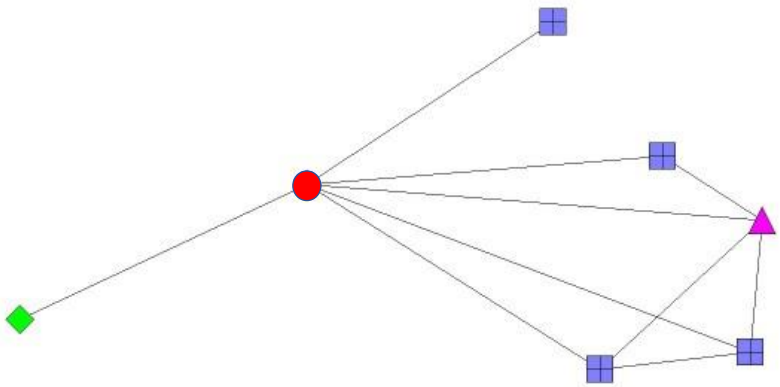

Figure 4. ***Advisor B's Relational Social Capital Network***
Notes: Advisor B is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

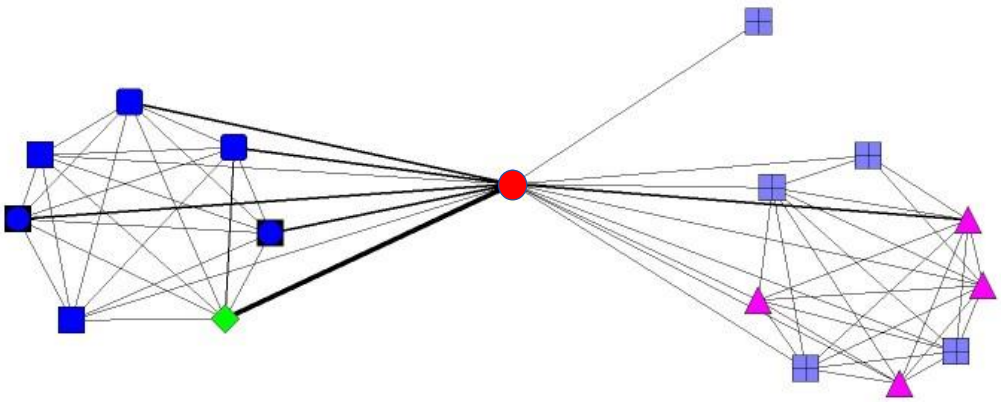

Figure 5. Advisor B's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor B is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Note$_3$. Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2.

Appendix K. Advisor C's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor C: Network Measures

Network Type	**Network Size** N=x	**Density** [a] %	**Homophily** [b]		**Heterogeneity** [c]	
			Professional Role	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	21	22.38%	0.620	0.330	0.816	0.771
Cognitive Social Capital	17	30.15%	0.530	0.180	0.775	0.706
Relational Social Capital	8	42.86%	1	0.250	0.656	0.594

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor C: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go-to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
GSA Advisor 1	1	0	0	0	1
GSA Advisor 2	1	0	0	0	1
GSA Advisor 3	1	0	0	0	1
GSA Advisor 4	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 1	1	1	1	1	4
Colleague 2	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 3	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 4	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 5	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 1	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 2	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 1	1	1	1	1	4
District Personnel 2	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 3	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 4	1	0	0	0	1
Family 1	0	0	1	0	1
Family 2	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 1	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 2	0	0	1	0	1
School Principal	1	1	1	1	4
School Vice-principal	1	1	1	1	4

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

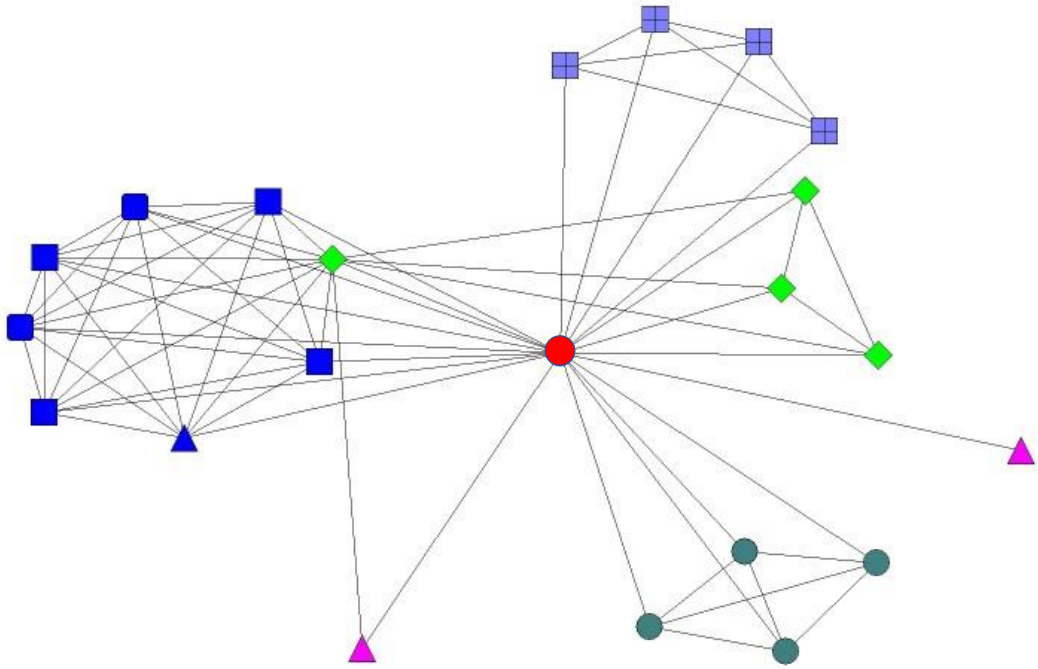

Figure 1. Advisor C's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor C is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

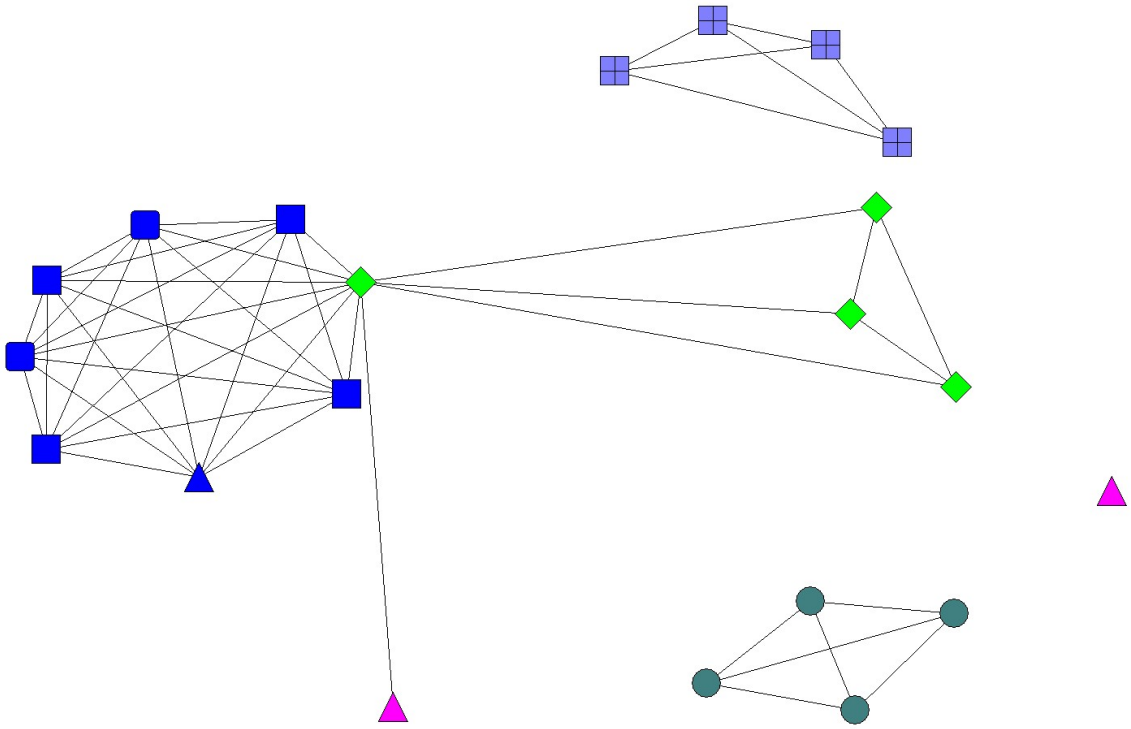

Figure 2. ***Advisor C's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)***
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

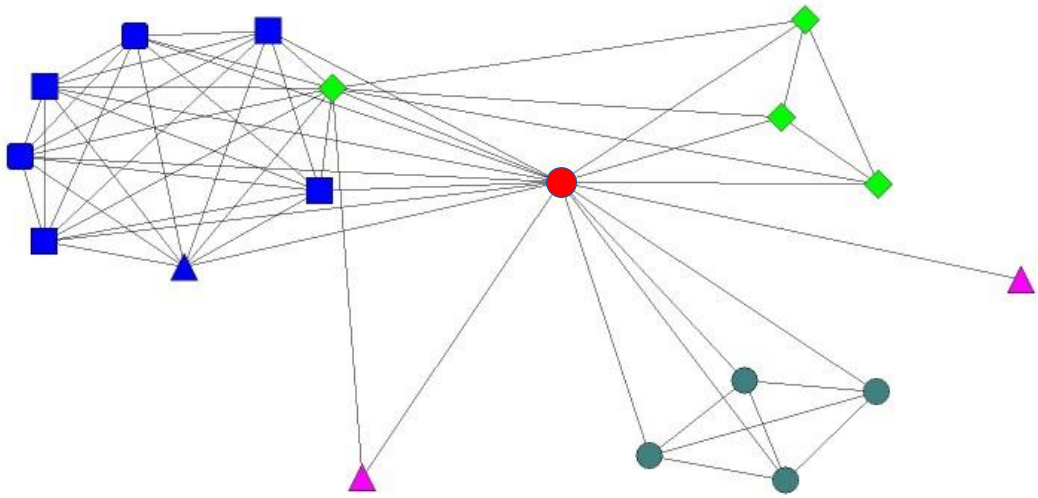

Figure 3. Advisor C's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor C is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), and up triangle (community leader/activist). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

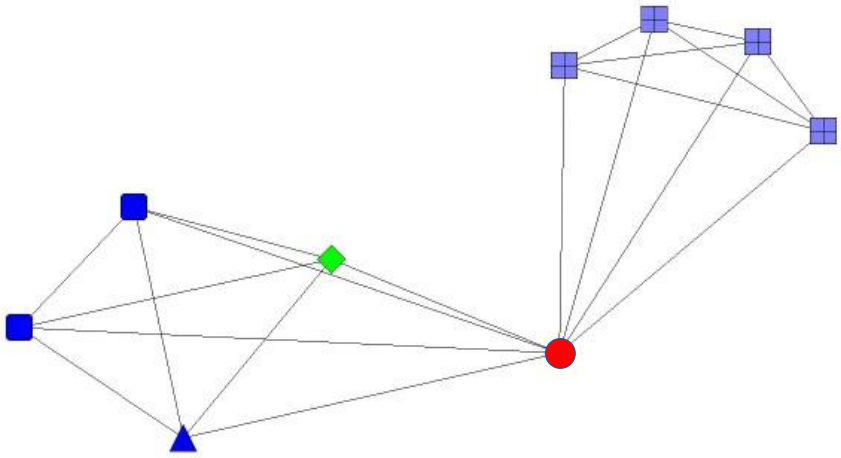

Figure 4. Advisor C's Relational Social Capital Network
Notes: Advisor C is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

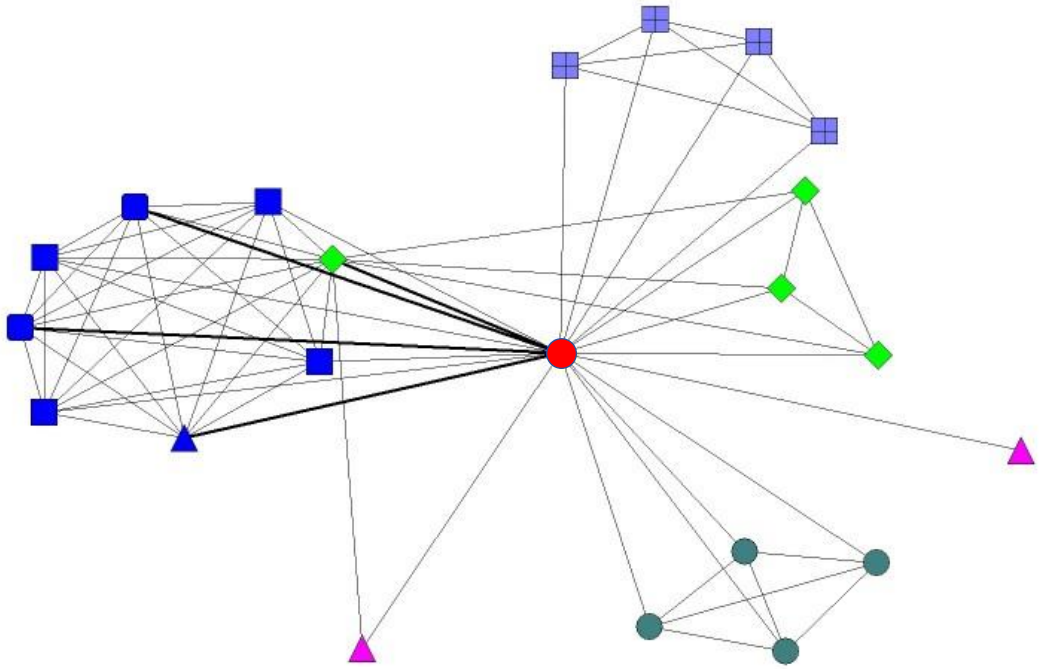

Figure 5. Advisor C's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor C is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2.

Appendix L. Advisor D's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor D: Network Measures

Network Type	Network Size	Density [a]	Homophily [b]		Heterogeneity [c]	
	N=x	%	Professional Role	Relationship Domain	Professional Role	Relationship Domain
Aggregate Network	9	77.87%	0.780	-0.400	0.790	0.370
Cognitive Social Capital	8	100%	0.750	-0.750	0.750	0.219
Relational Social Capital	6	66.67%	1	-0.670	0.667	0.278

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2

Advisor D: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go-to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
Principal	1	0	0	0	1
Vice Principal	1	1	1	1	4
Colleague 1	1	0	0	1	2
Colleague 2	1	0	0	1	2
Colleague 3	1	1	1	1	4
GSA co-advisor	1	1	0	0	2
Guidance Counsellor	1	1	1	1	4
District Personnel	1	1	0	0	2
Friend	0	0	1	0	1

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

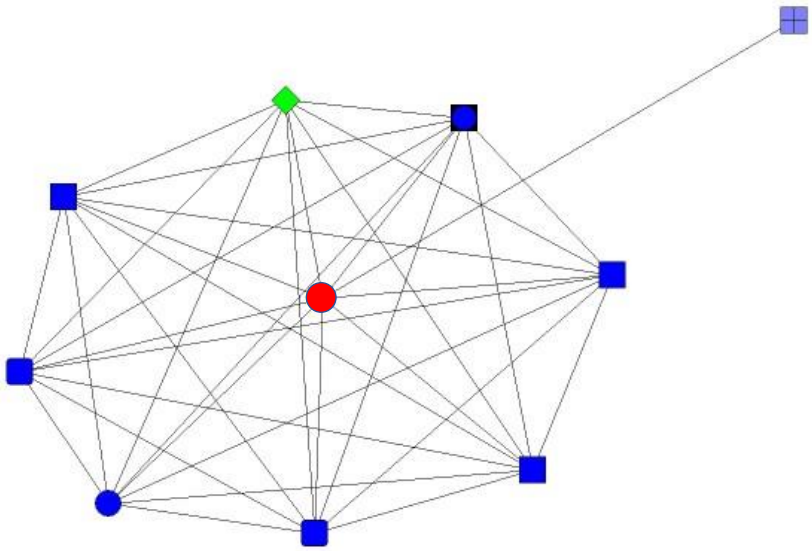

Figure 1. ***Advisor D's Aggregate Network***
Notes: Advisor D is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (district personnel), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

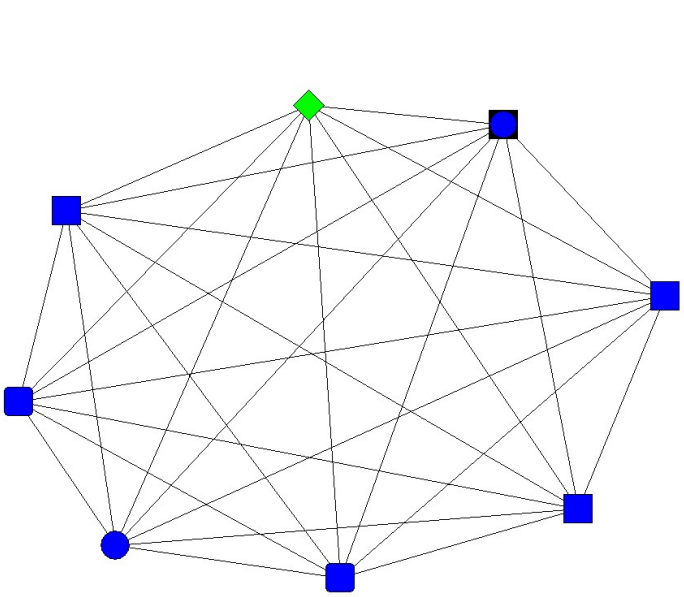

Figure 2. Advisor D's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (district personnel), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

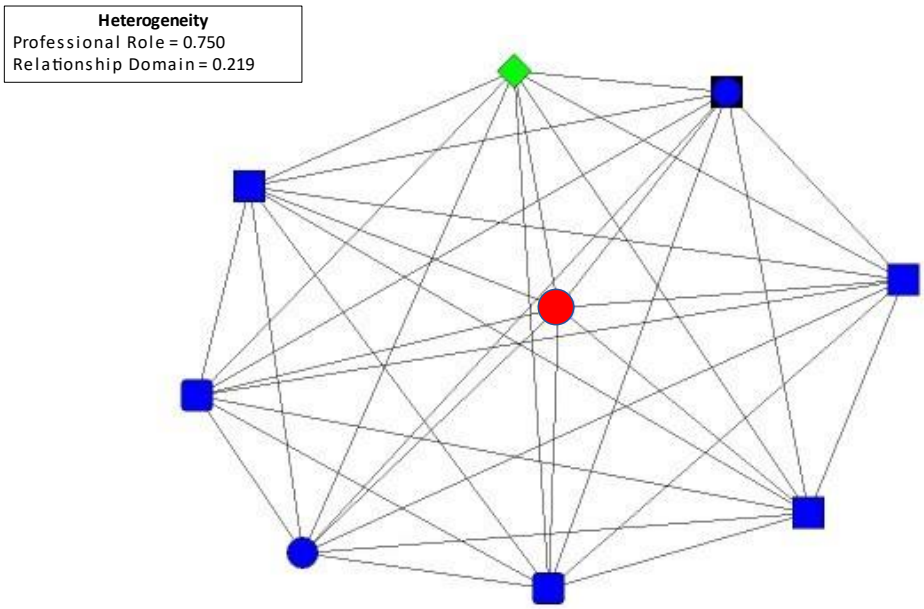

Figure 3. Advisor D's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor D is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), and diamond (district personnel). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), and neon green (school district).

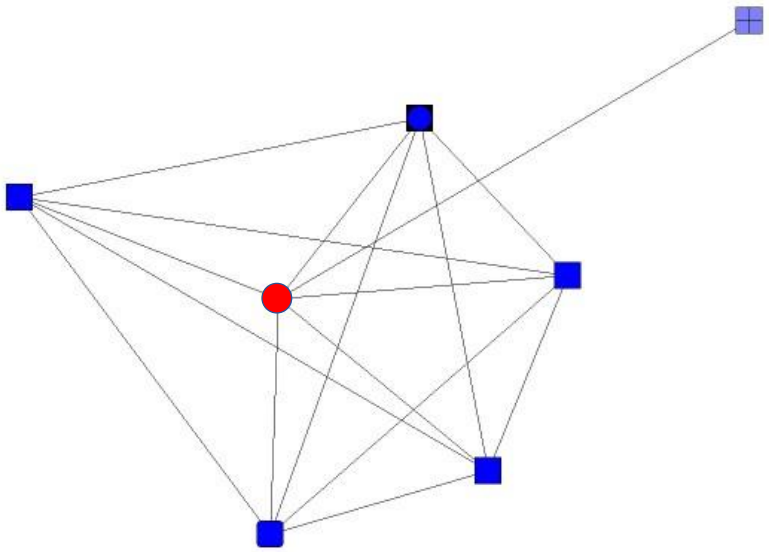

Figure 4. Advisor D's Relational Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor D is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school) and purple (friends and family).

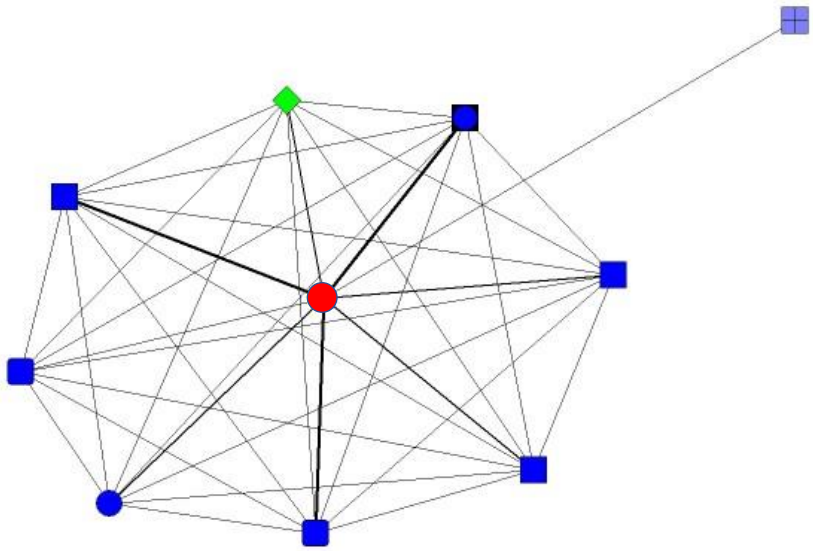

Figure 5. Advisor D's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor D is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (distirct personnel), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2.

Appendix M. Advisor E's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor E: Network Measures

Network Type	**Network Size** N=x	**Density** [a] %	**Homophily** [b]		**Heterogeneity** [c]	
			Professional Role	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	21	13.33%	1	0.710	0.789	0.735
Cognitive Social Capital	18	22.88%	1	0.670	0.802	0.716
Relational Social Capital	9	22.22%	1	0.560	0.642	0.617

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor E: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go-to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
Community Leader 1	1	0	0	1	2
Community Leader 2	1	0	0	1	2
Community Leader 3	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 4	1	0	0	1	2
Community Leader 5	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 6	0	0	1	0	1
Community Leader 7	0	0	1	0	1
District Leader 1	1	0	0	0	1
District Leader 2	1	0	0	0	1
District Leader 3	1	1	0	0	2
District Leader 4	1	1	0	0	2
District Leader 5	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 1	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 2	1	0	0	0	1
Guidance Counsellor	1	0	1	0	2
Government Personnel 1	1	0	0	1	2
Government Personnel 2	1	0	0	0	1
Government Personnel 3	1	0	0	0	1
Friend	0	0	1	0	1
Principal	0	1	1	0	2
Vice Principal	0	1	0	0	1

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

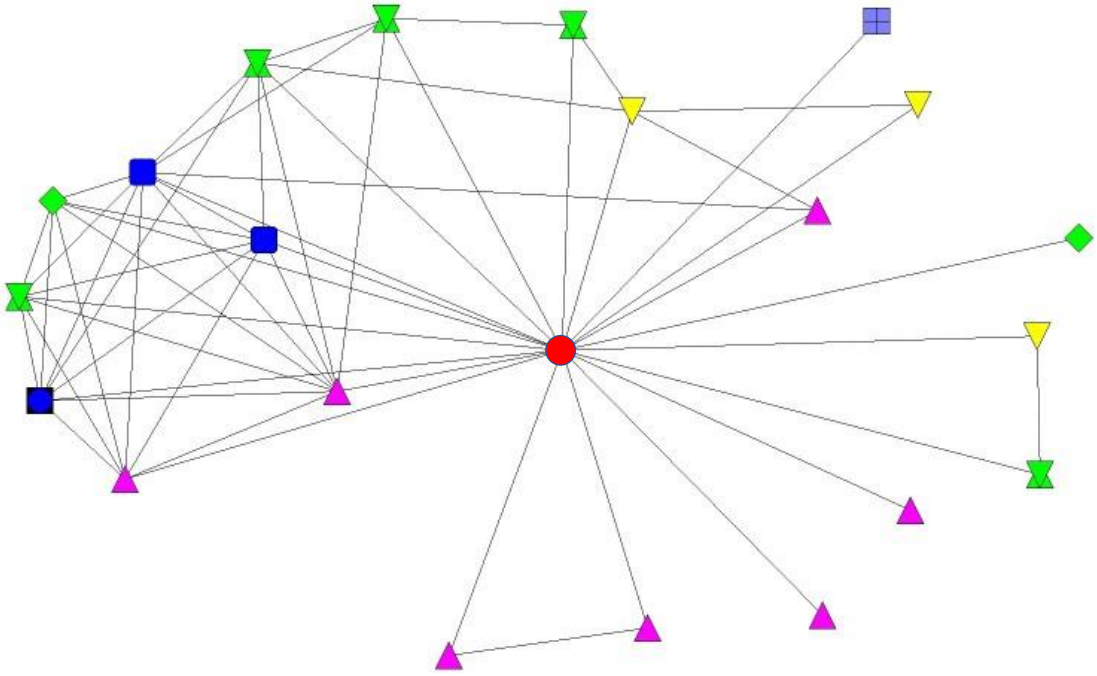

Figure 1. Advisor E's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor E is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (district leader), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

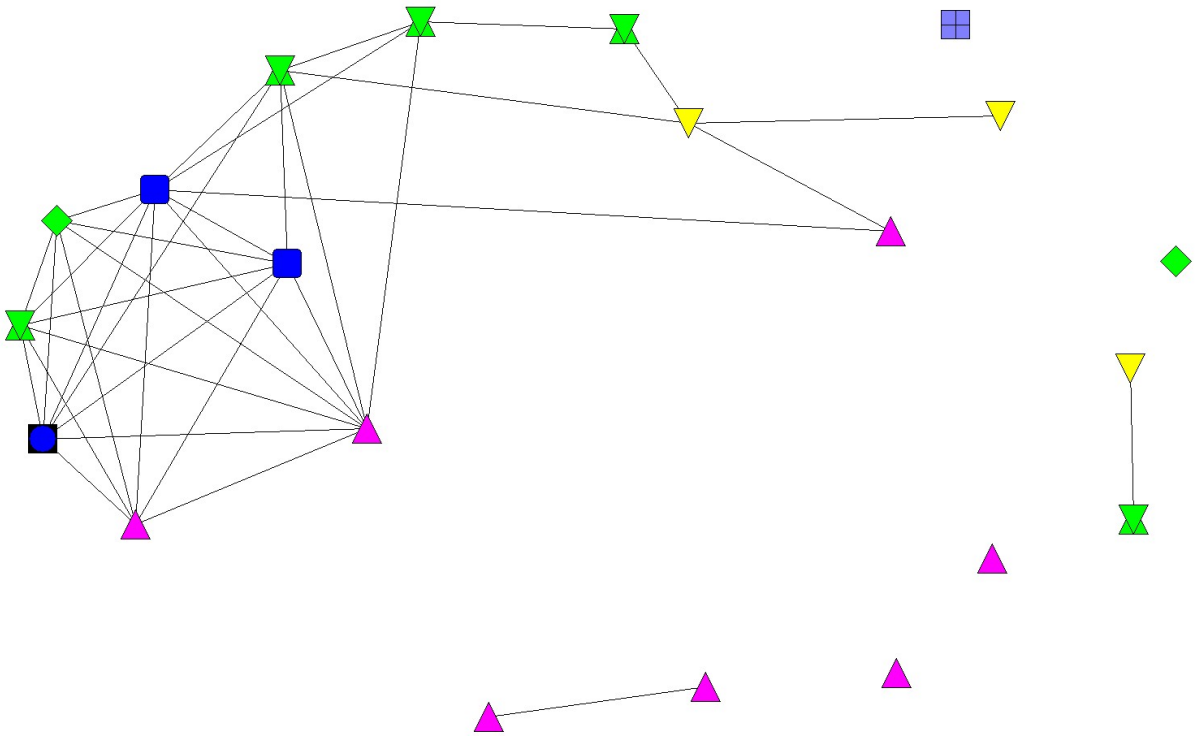

Figure 2. Advisor E's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (district leader), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

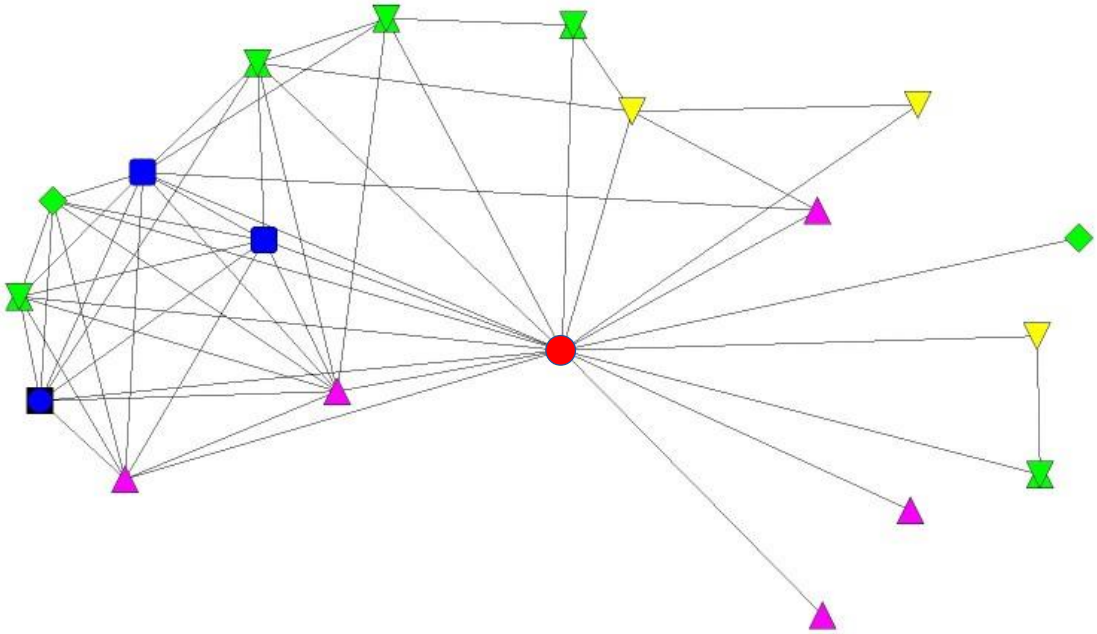

Figure 3. Advisor E's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor E is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), and overlapped triangles (district leader). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and yellow (government or others).

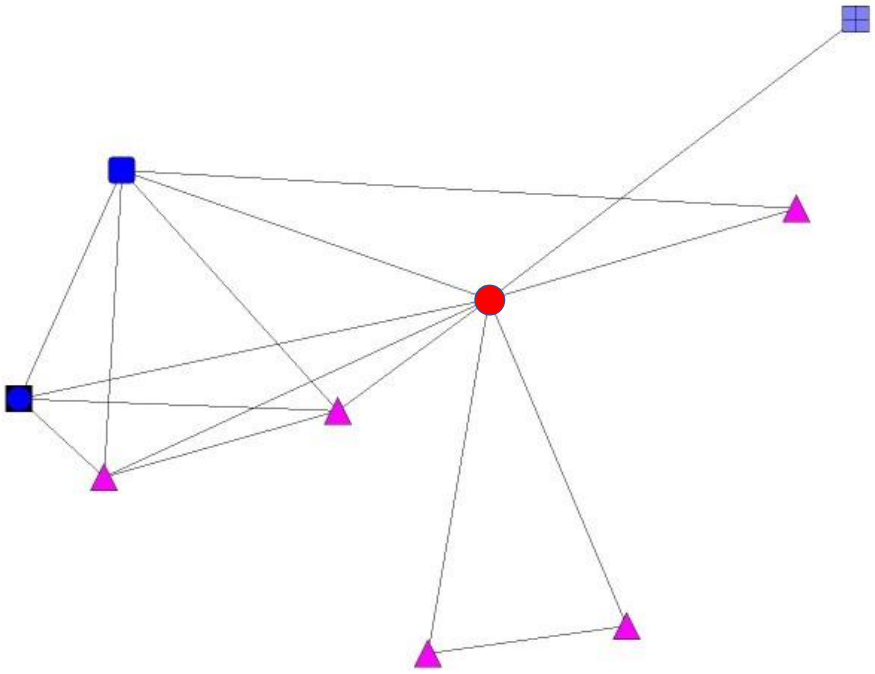

Figure 4. Advisor E's Relational Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor E is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

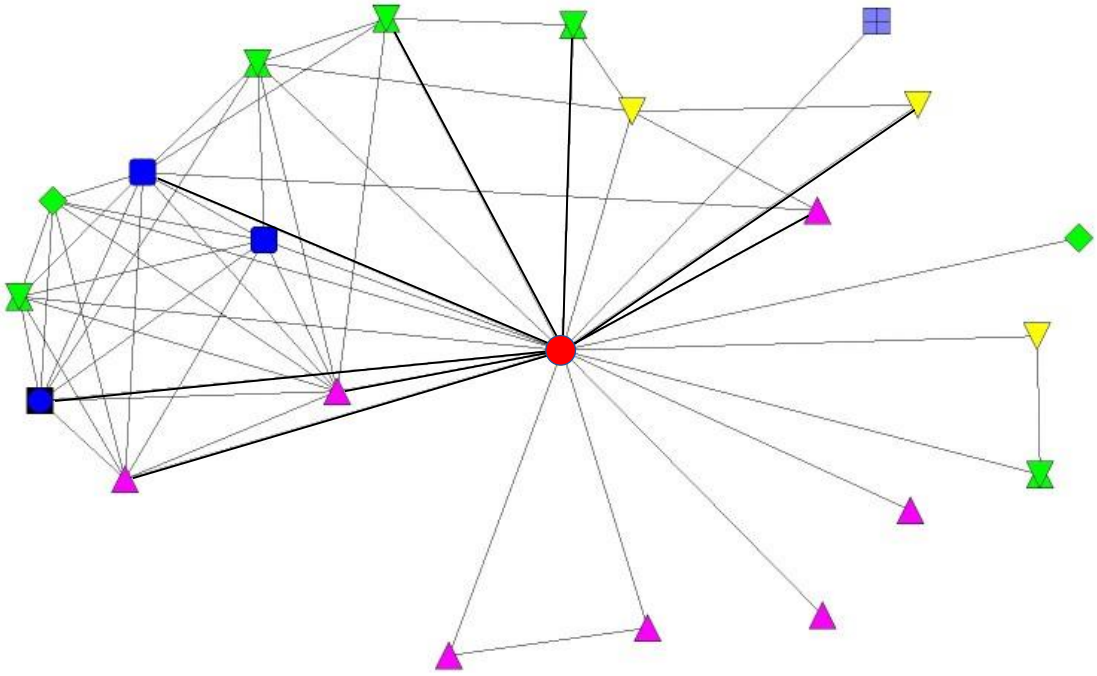

Figure 5. Advisor E's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor E is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), down triangle (government personnel), overlapped triangles (district leader), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family). Note4. Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2.

Appendix N. Advisor F's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor F: Network Measures

Network Type	Network Size	Density [a]	Homophily [b]		Heterogeneity [c]	
	N=x	%	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	21	27.14%	0.810	0.140	0.848	0.721
Cognitive Social Capital	18	23.53%	0.780	0.220	0.840	0.741
Relational Social Capital	5	60.00%	0.600	-0.600	0.560	0.320

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor F: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alters	Discussion	Go-to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
District Personnel 1	1	1	0	0	2
District Personnel 2	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 3	1	0	0	0	1
District Personnel 4	1	0	0	0	1
Principal	1	0	0	0	1
Vice Principal	1	0	0	0	1
School Administrator	1	0	0	0	1
Guidance Counsellor 1	1	0	0	0	1
Guidance Counsellor 2	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 1	1	1	1	1	4
Colleague 2	0	0	0	1	1
Colleague 3	0	0	0	1	1
GSA Co-advisor	1	0	1	0	2
GSA Advisor	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 1	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 2	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 3	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 1	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 2	1	0	0	0	1
Community Leader 3	1	0	0	0	1
Family	0	0	1	0	1

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

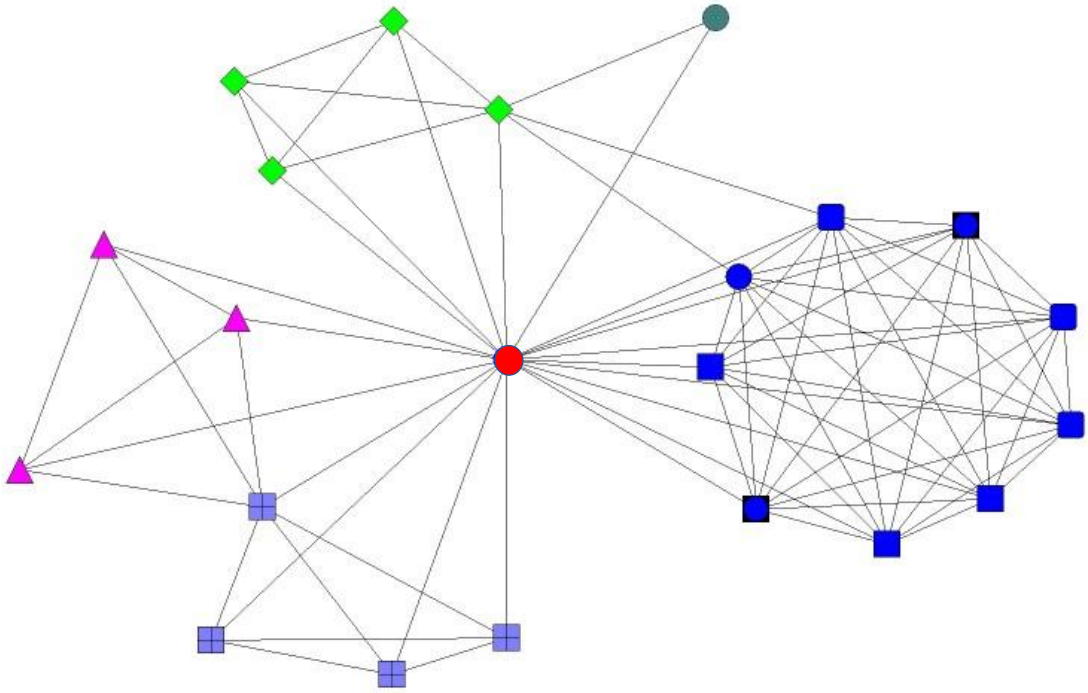

Figure 1. Advisor F's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor F is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

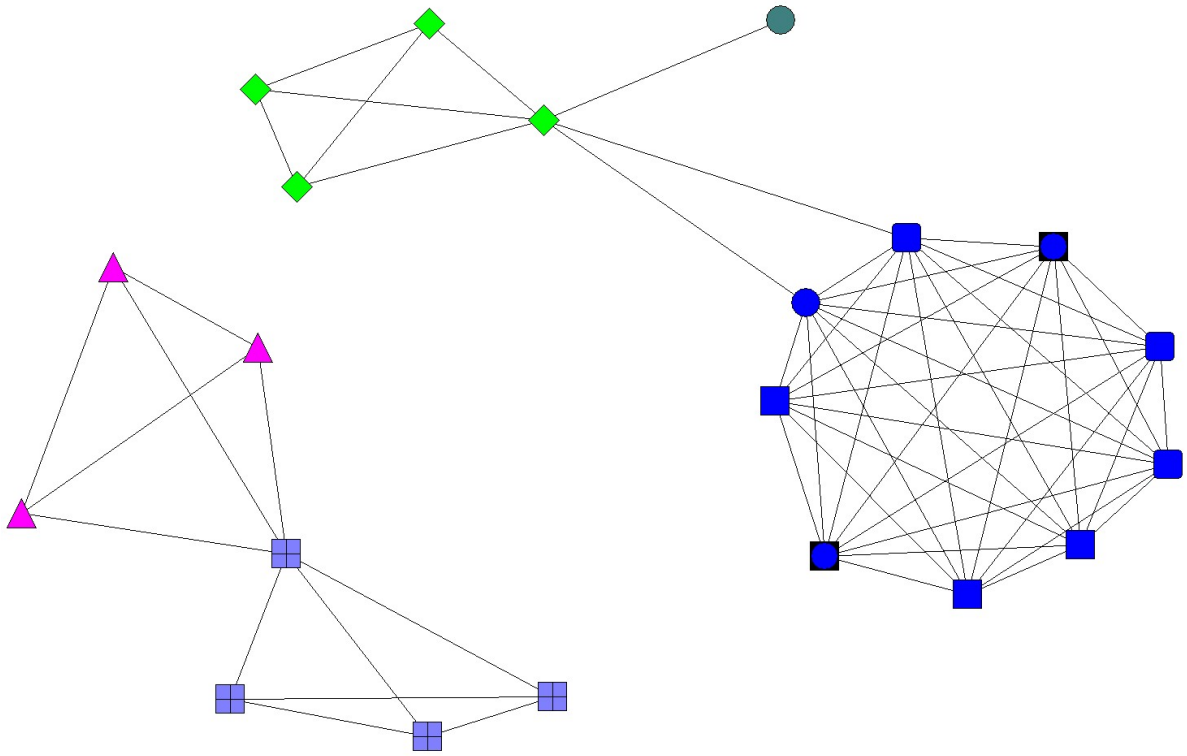

Figure 2. Advisor F's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

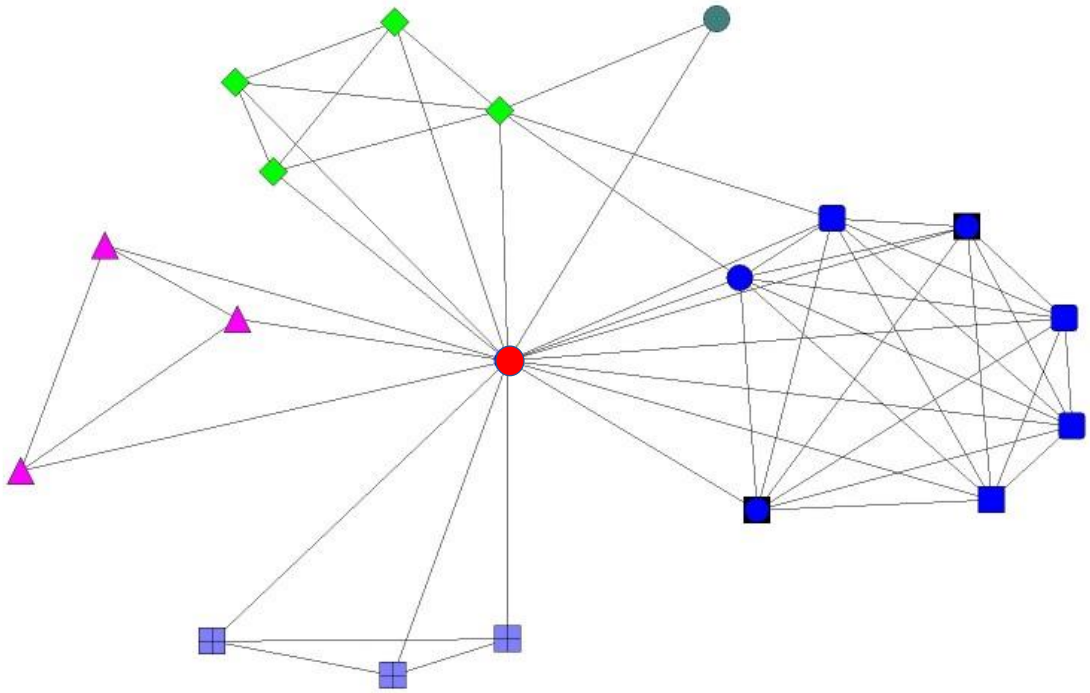

Figure 3. Advisor F's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor F is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family).

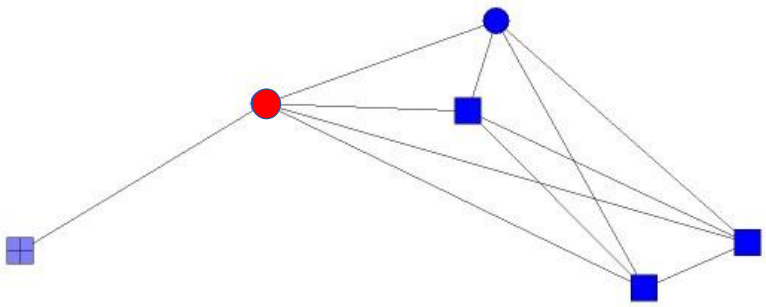

Figure 4. Advisor F's Relational Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor F is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school) and purple (friends and family).

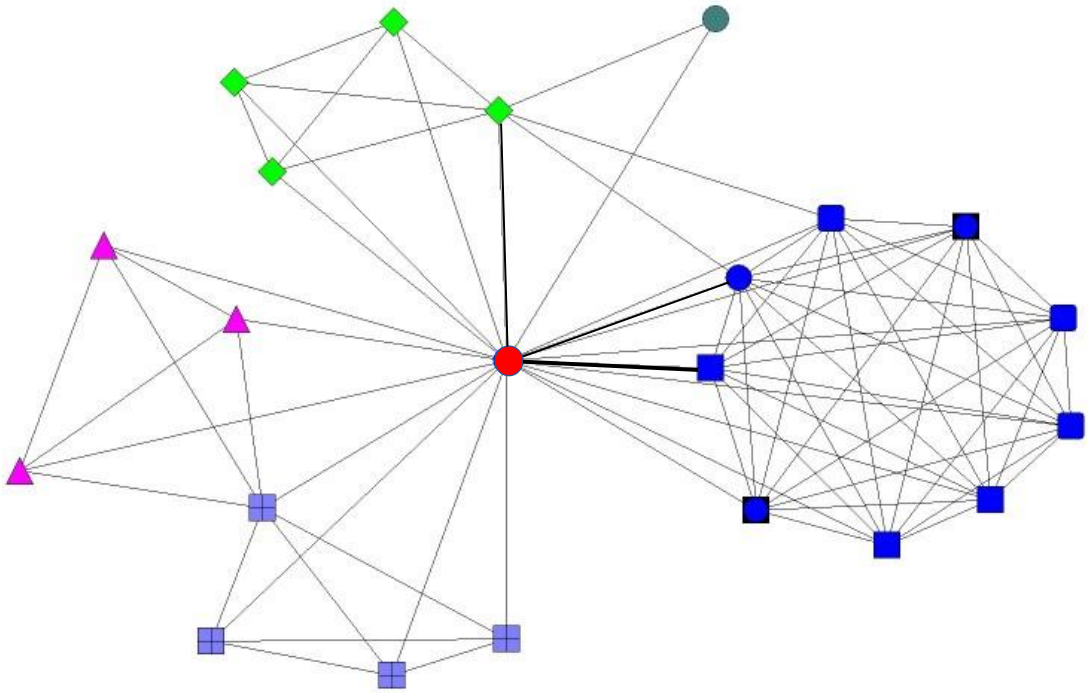

Figure 5. Advisor F's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor F is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), up triangle (community leader/activist), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), fuchsia (local community), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2

Appendix O. Advisor G's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor G: Network Measures

Network Type	**Network Size**	**Density** [a]	**Homophily** [b]		**Heterogeneity** [c]	
	N=x	%	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	13	48.72%	1	-0.080	0.547	0.667
Cognitive Social Capital	12	51.52%	1	-0.170	0.681	0.542
Relational Social Capital	2	0	1	1	0.500	0.500

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor G: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
District Personnel	1	1	0	1	3
Principal	1	1	0	0	2
Vice Principal	1	1	0	0	2
Colleague Leader 1	0	1	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 2	0	1	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 3	0	1	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 4	0	1	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 5	0	1	0	0	1
Friend 1	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 2	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 3	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 4	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 5	0	0	1	0	1

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

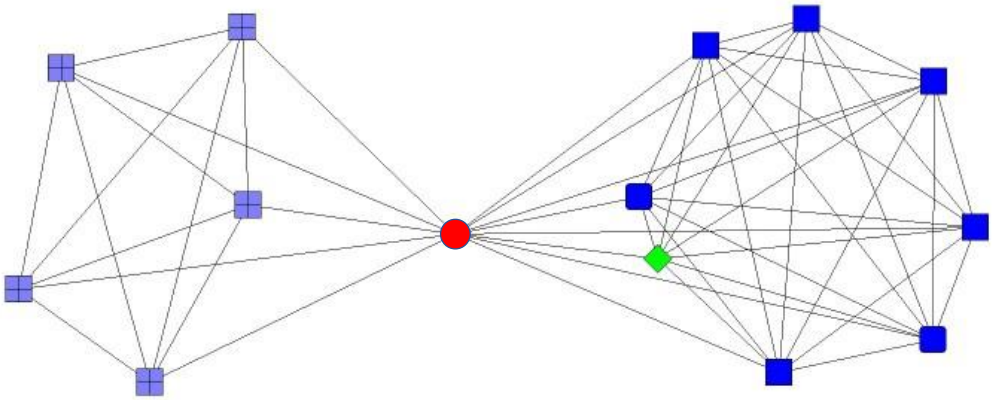

Figure 1. Advisor G's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor G is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

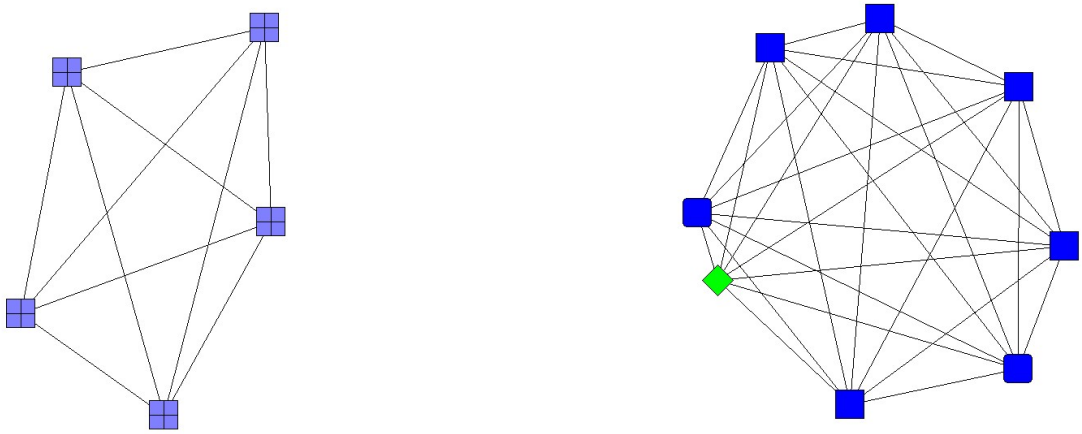

Figure 2. Advisor G's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

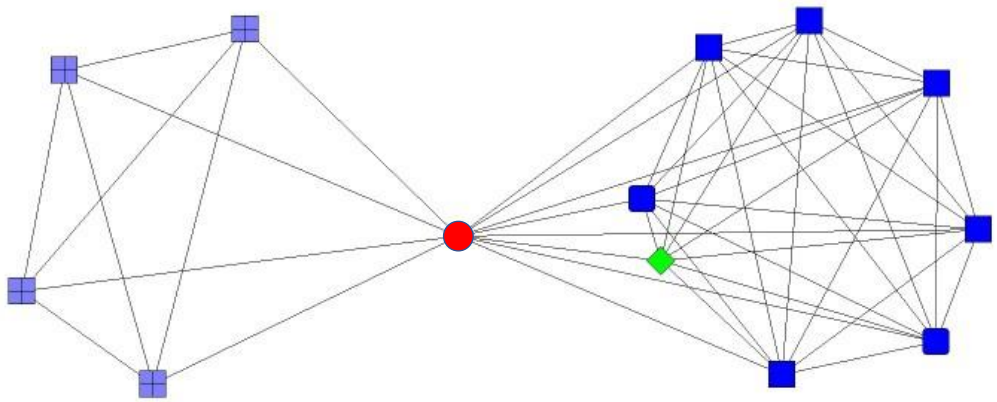

Figure 3. Advisor G's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor G is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

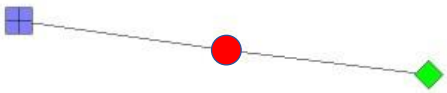

Figure 4. Advisor G's Relational Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor G is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: neon green (school district) and purple (friends and family).

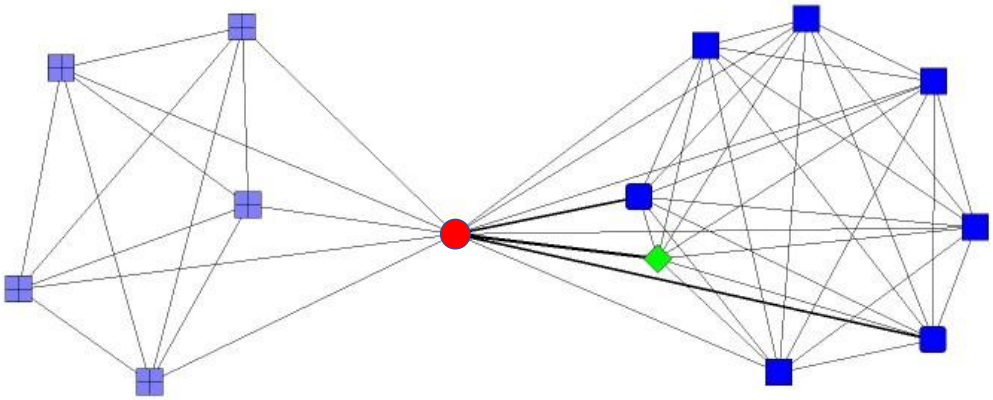

Figure 5. Advisor G's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor G is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2

Appendix P. Advisor H's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor H: Network Measures

Network Type	**Network Size** N=x	**Density** [a] %	**Homophily** [b]		**Heterogeneity** [c]	
			Professional Role	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	19	20.47%	0.160	0.580	0.737	0.438
Cognitive Social Capital	19	20.47%	0.160	0.580	0.737	0.438
Relational Social Capital	5	10%	0.600	0.600	0.720	0.720

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor H: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go-to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
District Personnel	1	1	1	1	4
Advisor 1	1	0	1	0	2
Advisor 2	1	0	0	0	1
Advisor 3	1	0	0	0	1
Advisor 4	1	0	0	0	1
Advisor 5	1	0	0	0	1
Advisor 6	1	0	0	0	1
Principal	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 1	1	0	0	1	2
Family	0	0	1	0	1
Guidance Counsellor	1	1	0	1	3
GSA Co-advisor 1	0	1	0	0	1
GSA Co-advisor 2	0	1	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 2	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 3	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 4	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 5	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague Leader 6	1	0	0	0	1
Union Leader	1	0	0	0	1

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

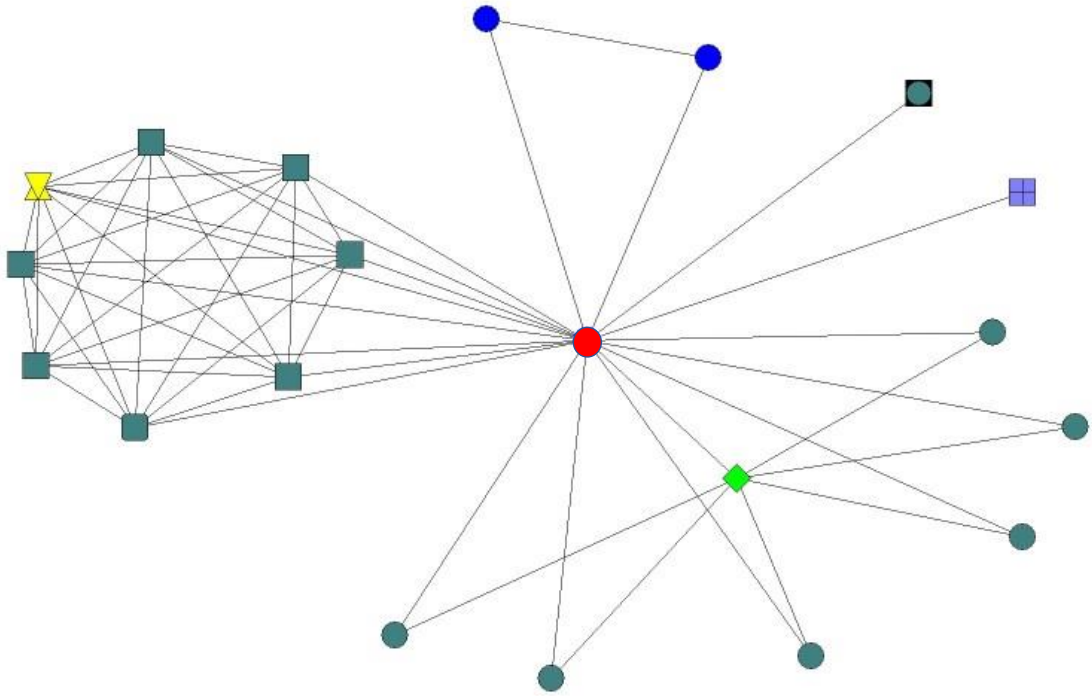

Figure 1. Advisor H's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor H is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), overlapped triangles (union leader), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

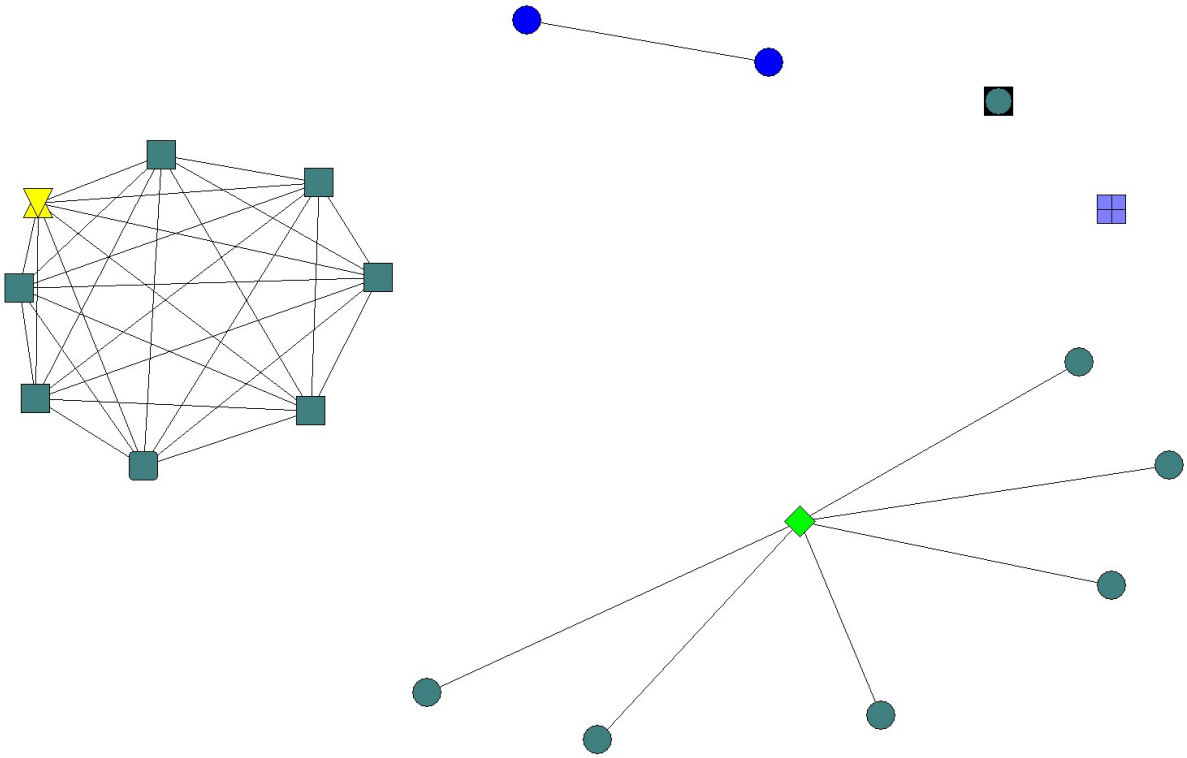

Figure 2. Advisor H's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), overlapped triangles (union leader), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

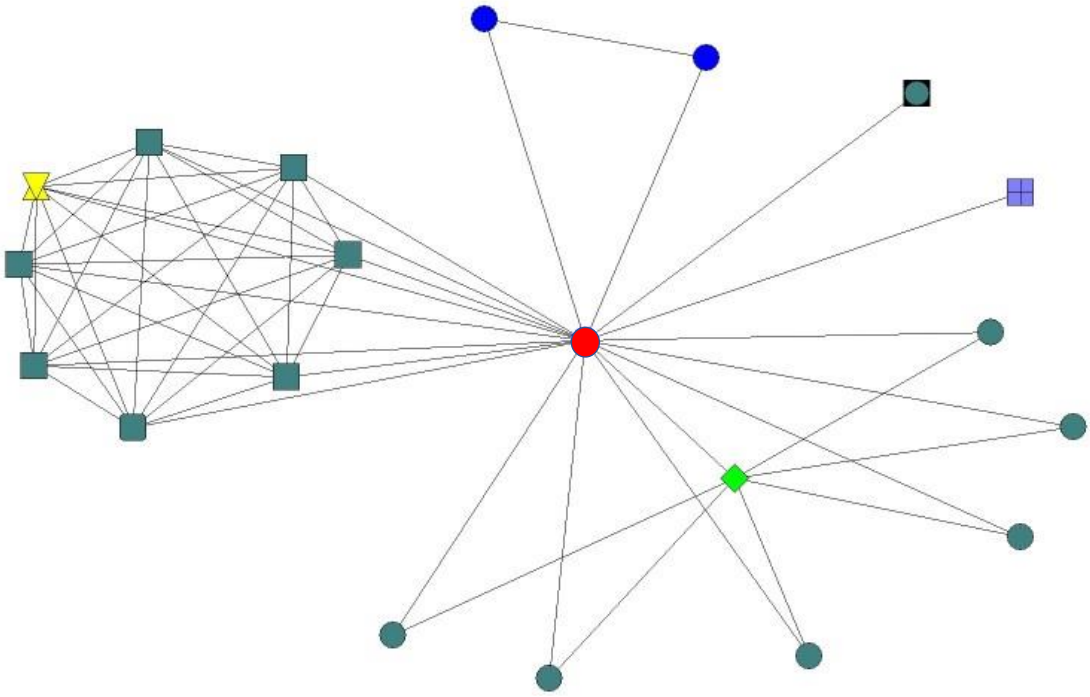

Figure 3. Advisor H's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor H is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), overlapped triangles (union leader), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family).

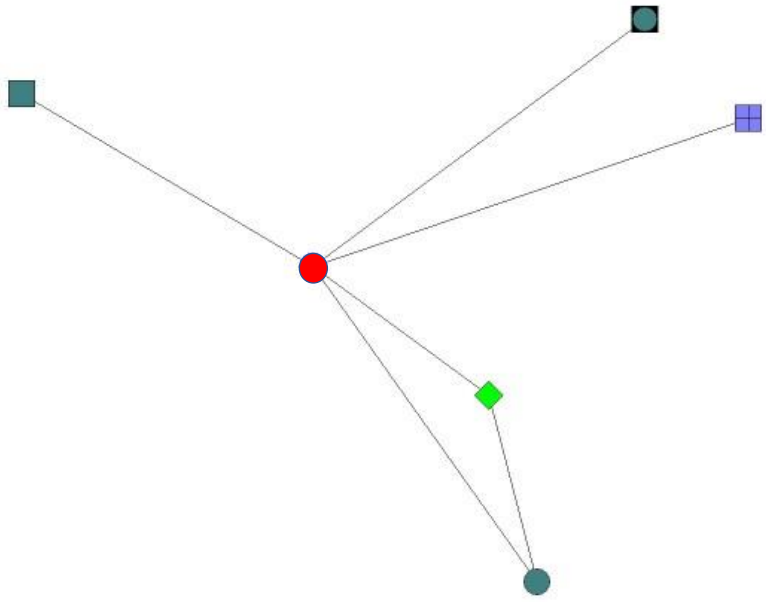

Figure 4. Advisor H's Relational Social Capital Network
Notes: Advisor H is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

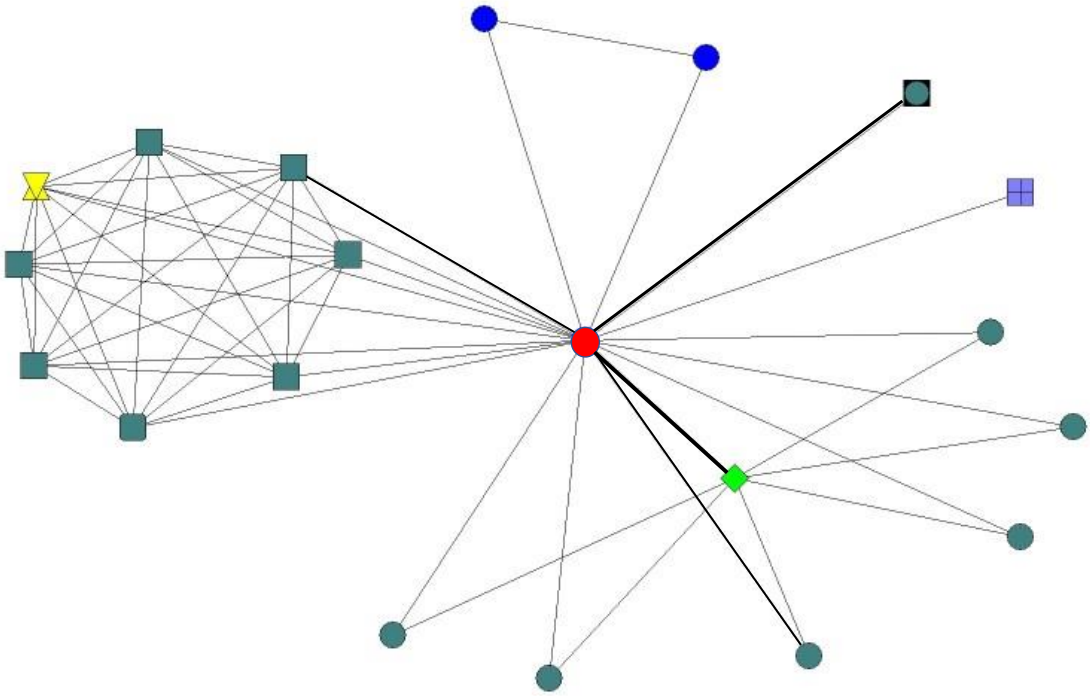

Figure 5. Advisor H's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor H is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), overlapped triangles (union leader), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), yellow (government or others), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2.

Appendix Q. Advisor I's Network Profile

Table 1

Advisor I: Network Measures

Network Type	**Network Size** N=x	**Density** [a] %	**Homophily** [b]		**Heterogeneity** [c]	
			Professional Role	**Relationship Domain**	**Professional Role**	**Relationship Domain**
Aggregate Network	17	22.06%	0.650	0.290	0.768	0.692
Cognitive Social Capital	12	30.30%	0.500	0	0.778	0.417
Relational Social Capital	11	25.45%	0.450	0.640	0.645	0.628

[a] *Density: Measures range from 0 to 100. The closer to 100%, the greater the density.*

[b] *Homophily: Measures range from -1 to 1. The closer to -1, the greater the degree of similarity between ego and alter.*

[c] *Heterogeneity: Measures range from 0 to 1. The closer to 1, the most diversity exists among alters in ego's network*

Table 2
Advisor I: Tie Strength (Multiplexity)

Alter	Discussion	Go-to	Emotional Support	Close Professional Friend	Multiplexity
District Personnel	1	0	0	0	1
GSA Co-advisor	1	1	0	1	3
GSA Co-advisor	1	1	0	1	3
Colleague 1	1	0	0	0	1
Colleague 2	1	1	1	1	4
Colleague 3	1	1	1	1	4
Colleague 4	1	1	1	1	4
GSA Advisor	1	1	1	0	3
Guidance Counsellor	1	0	0	0	1
Principal	1	0	0	0	1
Vice Principal	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 1	1	0	0	0	1
Friend 2	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 3	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 4	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 5	0	0	1	0	1
Friend 6	0	0	1	0	1

Note: The multiplexity score counts the number of times a person in the advisor's network was named across the four different connections. A number one appears under each connection if the person was named there.

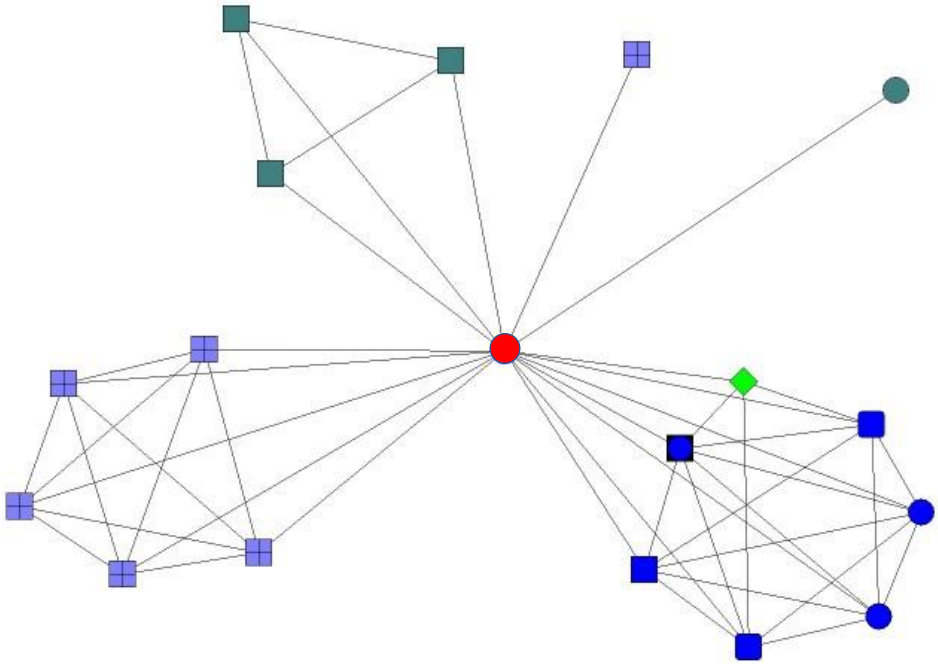

Figure 1. Advisor I's Aggregate Network

Notes: Advisor I is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

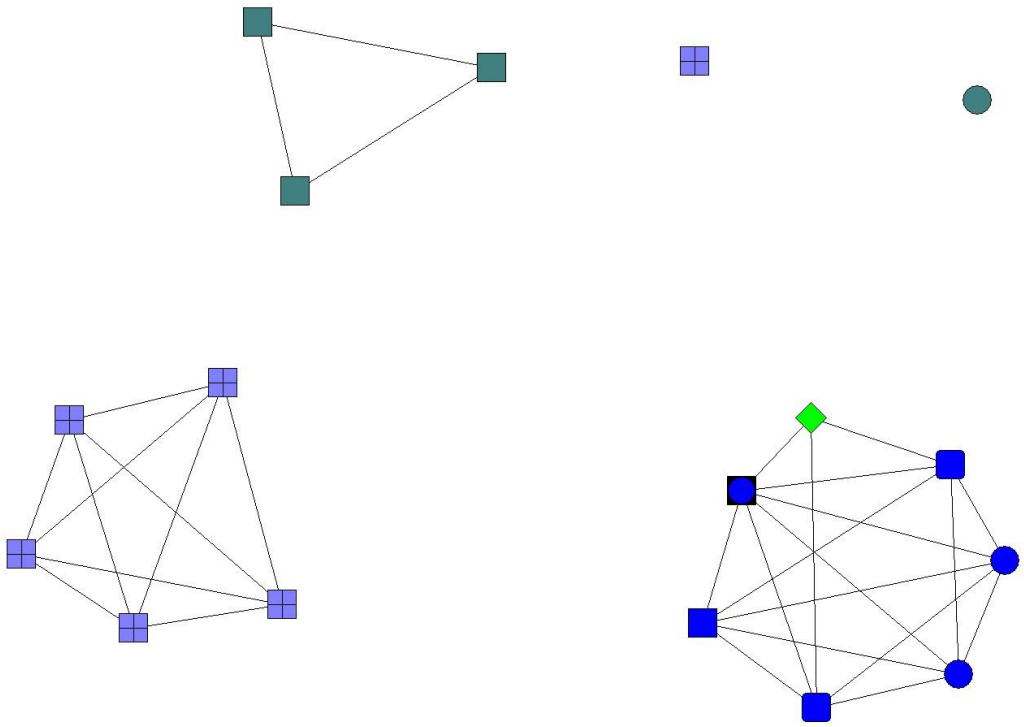

Figure 2. Advisor I's Aggregate Network (Ego Out)
Notes: Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

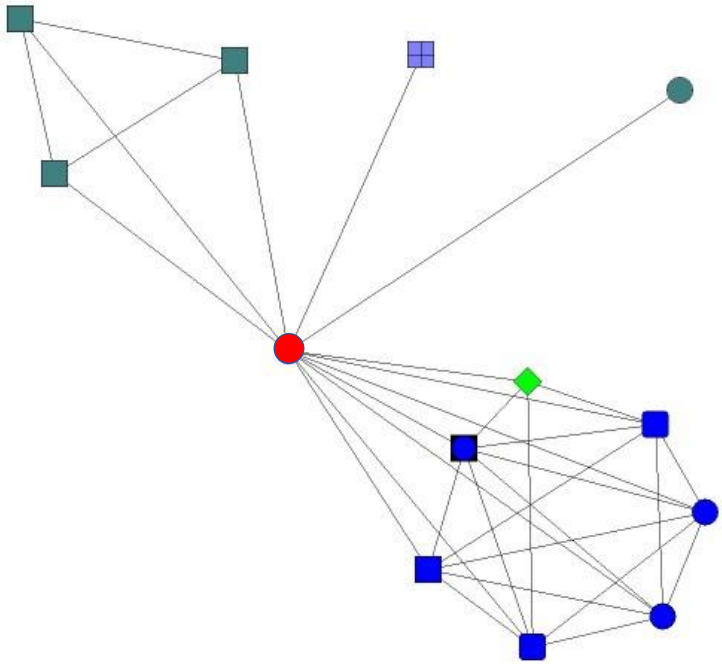

Figure 3. Advisor I's Cognitive Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor I is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family).

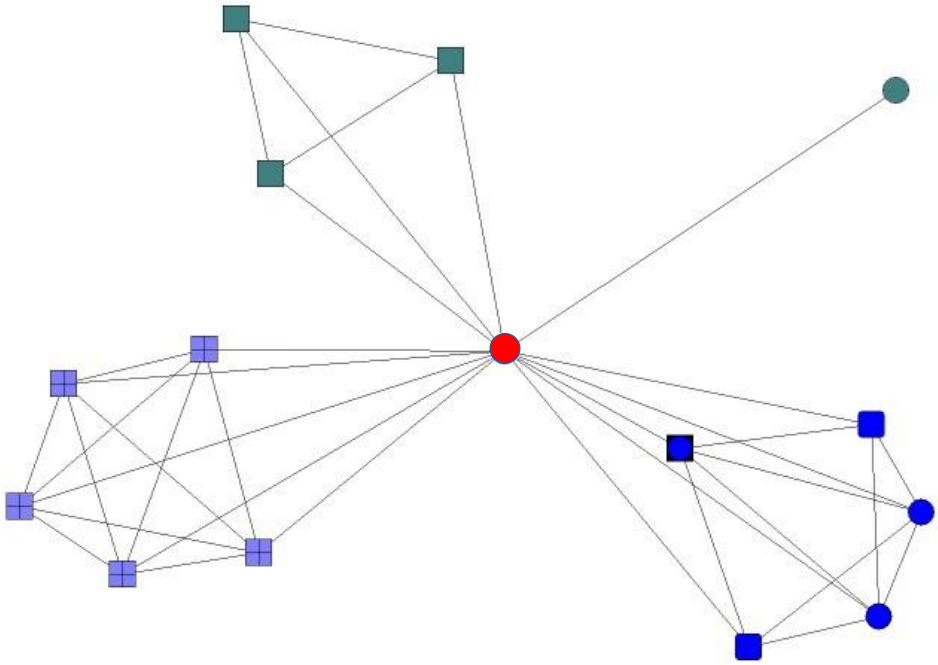

Figure 4. Advisor I's Relational Social Capital Network

Notes: Advisor I is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), and purple (friends and family).

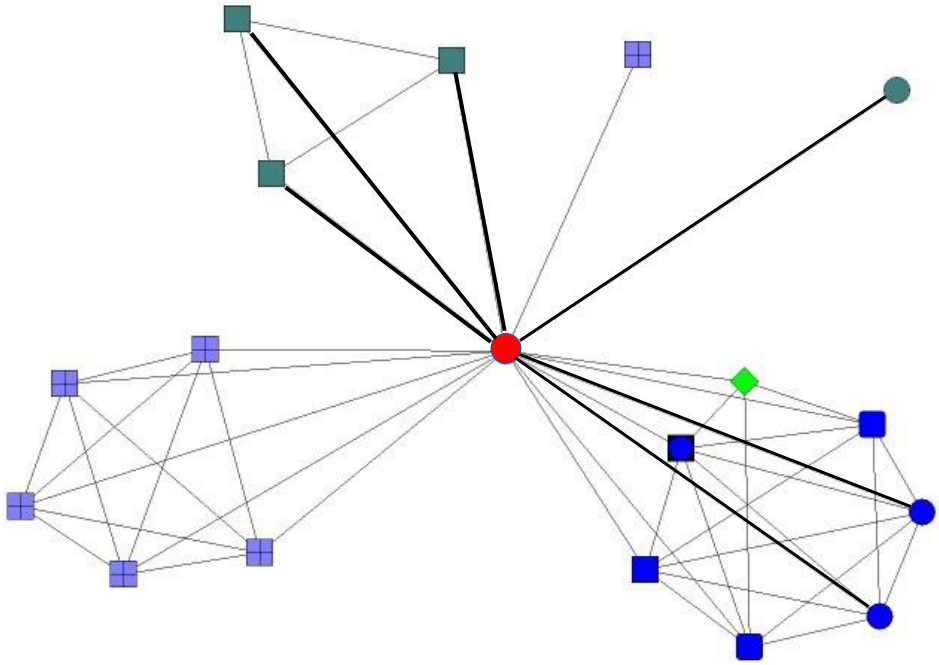

Figure 5. Advisor I's Aggregate Network with Tie Strength

Notes: Advisor I is represented in red. Professional Roles are represented by shapes: Circle (GSA Advisor/Co-Advisor), square (teacher), rounded square (school administrator), circle-in-square (guidance counsellor), diamond (SCS itinerant), and box (unidentified from friends and family). Relationship Domains are represented by color: Blue (own school), pine green (other schools), neon green (school district), and purple (friends and family). Tie strength is represented by line thickness, the thicker the line the stronger the tie. They represent the Multiplexity score (1–4) from Table 2.