Ties with potential: nature, antecedents, and consequences of social networks in school teams

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Relationships among teachers are increasingly regarded as important building blocks of a strong school community. A dense teacher network that reflects a common exchange of information, knowledge, and social support is often believed to benefit both teachers and students. Yet, research on social networks among teachers is scarce. This book describes a study that offers valuable insights in the nature, antecedents, and consequences of social networks in school teams.

Results provide support for the premise that ‘relationships matter’. Dense school teams are characterized by higher levels of trust, increased shared decision-making, and a more innovation-oriented climate than less dense school teams. Findings suggest that strong relationships among teachers affect a variety of teacher outcomes that may ultimately impact student achievement. It is through these ties with potential that the creation and development of new knowledge and practices flow and hold the promise of building capacities toward improvement.