"Constructing professional learning communities through networking".

Networking

Keynote structure:

✓ What is networking?

✓ Why network?

✓ What forms do networks take?

✓ How do networks enhance collaborative professional practice?

✓ What are network behaviours?

✓ How can networks lead to the development of professional learning communities?

✓ What are the benefits and challenges of working collaboratively?

Networking

Introduction

In an effort to intentionally create the level of deep learning necessary for practitioners to make meaningful changes in their classrooms, **professional networks** are increasingly being promoted **as mechanisms for knowledge creation** that can lever the kinds of changes that make a difference for students.

Katz & Earl, 2010, p.27)

Networking

Introduction

Networking and **collaboration** have become increasingly popular in education. Local and national initiatives have stimulated a variety of **cooperative arrangements**, from groups of schools that have volunteered to work together, to groups that have been induced to do so in the context of incentives, to others that have been subject to direct external pressure to collaborate.

(West & Ainscow, 2006, p.5)

Networking

Introduction

" … there has been a growing conviction that greater **autonomy** and **empowerment** of individual schools is needed to stimulate sustainable high-quality school development. This **paradigm shift towards autonomy**, combined with the **demand for public accountability**, is **consistent with the proliferation of school networks**. Networks bring together individuals or institutions, … where **the rationales** are **democratic exchange**, and **mutual stimulation** and **motivation**, rather than top-down reforms."

(Sliwka, in OECD, P.63)

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Networking

Definition

"a way for different **actors** and **levels of school education systems** - policy makers, schools, school education leaders, teachers and a range of stakeholders - to **promote and support school development** and to address and potentially solve problems concerning the education of young people **in collaborative** and flexible ways."

(European Commission, 2017, p.5)

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Stakeholders

Typical stakeholders in education networks are:

- teachers and principals;

- Pupils/students/ parents

- universities, research institutes;

- government agencies and charitable foundations;

- consultants or trainers to provide members with professional training, reflection and advice;

- evaluators and researchers collecting data relevant to the process and the evidence of a network's impact;

- policy-makers to further the cause of school improvement.

(Sliwka, in OECD, P.57)

Networking

Definition

"groups or systems of interconnected people and organisations (including schools) whose aims and purposes include the improvement of learning and aspects of well-being are known to effect learning"

The *[word]* "**organisations**" is of some import here, as educational networks may consist of a school and one or more other organisations, rather than two or more schools. Collaboration can then be described as "joint activities between actors from different organisations within the network".

(Hadfield et al., 2006, p. 5)

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Levels of cooperation and collaboration:

Cooperative Trust Schools – Midlands

Internal Cooperation and Collaboration School

A recognise a range of development activities learning from others and sharing learning with other staff. CPD is a routine part of professional life and not a series of special events or courses. CPD is about teachers and the children they teach, their "joint endeavour through learning". The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) model the learning processes of staff to enhance the learning of children in relation to school priorities. The SLT stressed that CPD is a high priority in order to have impact on the standards.

(Devlin, 2013)

Networking

Levels of cooperation and collaboration:

Cooperative Trust Schools – Midlands

External Cooperation and Collaboration

Cooperative values underpin the collaborative principles of the network. Synergistic benefits are evident in all schools but further opportunities to share practices can be created through embedding peer coaching, engaging staff inter-school, recognition of the expertise within the Trust schools and encouragement for shared learning. Cross-curricular projects and subject-focused support from colleagues may also enhance collaborative learning. Some staff in all schools indicated that they consider their school has gone through a culture shift by recognising that a group of schools working together have the capacity and expertise to deliver many aspects of their professional learning needs.

(Devlin, 2013)

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Functions

comprise elements of one or more of the four following functions:

- **A political function:** individuals pursuing a particular aim to meet with like-minded people. Co-operation can lead to greater political force and input than they would individually have. Networks thus serve as lobby groups for innovative ideas.

- **An information function:** allows for the rapid exchange of information relevant for individual and organisational development processes, bypassing red tape and hierarchies.

- **A psychological function:** Innovators are often isolated within their organisations. Networking provides them with opportunities for collaboration and exchange and thus can empower innovative individuals.

- **A skills function:** Innovative work requires a range of new skills which are not necessarily offered by traditional training schemes. Networking provides innovators with opportunities for learning skills from their colleagues.

(Sliwka, in OECD, 2003, p.53)
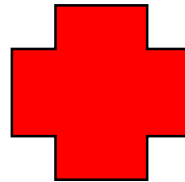
Networking

Why network?

Why should organisations (and in particular schools) network, and what benefits should, theoretically at least, accrue from this?

Galaskiewicz (1985) defined four goals
of interorganisational cooperation:
- **acquire resources,**
- **reduce uncertainty,**
- **enhance legitimacy, and**
- **attain collective goals,**

other research ... defined ...
collaboration aimed at gaining
- access to **information**, **resources**, **markets**, and **technologies**).

Economies of scale
Professional development

(Gulati, Nohria, & Zaheer, 2000)

Networking

Why network?

Government Funded
- Networked Learning Communities
- Teaching School Alliances
- Academy Chains

Values Driven
- School Federations
- Cooperative Trust Schools
- Diocesan Schools

Maintained Schools
- Local Authority support
- Voluntary controlled

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Teaching School Alliances

Schools designated Outstanding (or Good) according to Ofsted criteria apply for funding to offer support to a group of local schools.
'Teaching Schools (DfE, 2010) offer the 'Big 6':

- **school-led Initial Teacher Training** (ITT) through Schools Direct;

- leading peer-to-peer **professional and leadership development** (CPD);

- **identifying and developing leadership potential** for succession planning;

- providing "**school-to-school support**";

- designating and brokering "**Specialist Leaders of Education**" (SLEs)

- engaging in "**Research and Development**" activity (R&D)

(DfE, 2010 & NCSL, 2011)

Collaboration

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Collaboration

*Authors such as **West & Ainscow (2006) , Hadfield et al. (2006)** and **Katz & Earl (2010)** refer to the notion of "**collaboration**" as a **significant aspect of networking** in that*

Collaboration … provided the mechanisms that purport to change the way school problems are approached. The **atmosphere of collaboration**, or the uniting of two or more organizational points of view, has **created a synergy** of sorts in approaching the overwhelming circumstances of schooling today. Yet, **have collaborative efforts provided permanent solutions** and new ways of operating**?**

(Slater, in Slater & Ravid, 2010, p.16)

Networking

Collaborations & Sharing

Collaboration can involve sharing the right knowledge (or sources knowledge, including people) with the right people at the right time.

In principle sharing depends on a willingness of individuals to seek out and/or be receptive to a variety knowledge sources. This sharing can be described as having either "pull" or "push" characteristics.

The "pull" effect requires a process of actively seeking out sources of knowledge (e.g. library search, seeking out an expert, collaborating with a co-worker etc.), whereas the "push" effect pertains to a process where knowledge is "pushed" at a user (e.g. newsletters or policy and unsolicited publications).

(Frost, 2017)

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Networking

Slater's [Collaborations] Continuum

Networked Organisational Collaboration types can vary from the simplest to most complex:

a. **Professional Development:**

b. **Consultation:**

c. **One-to-One:**

d. **School/Community:**

e. **Digital Projects - online:**

f. **Policy and/or Innovation dissemination:**

g. **Interagency.**

(Adapted from Slater, in Slater & Ravid, 2010, p.8)

Networking

The Elements of each type of Collaboration:

(a)   Organizational Involvement

(b)   Level of Formality

(c)   Purpose

(d)   Resources

(e)   Mutuality Level
                 [power hierarchy]

(a)   Resistance Sources

(b)   Positives

(c)   Limitations

(Adapted from Slater, in Slater & Ravid, 2010, pp.8-9)

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The Elements of each type of Collaboration:

(a) **Organizational Involvement:** Who are the participants in the collaboration?

(b) **Formal/Informal:** Is the collaboration contractual and legally binding by state or local policies, or is it an informal relationship among participants?

(c) **Purpose:** What is the goal for each type of collaboration; who benefits and who participates; is the purpose teacher training, research, professional development, discipline innovation trials, etc.?

(d) **Resources:** What funding sources are involved, such as grants, faculty formal assignments, outside sources such as business and industry; what material and non-material resources are needed such as personnel, space, supplies, access, or faulty incentives to participate?

(e) **Mutuality Level:** What is the power hierarchy in the collaboration? This varies and can be a one-sided benefit to one of the collaboration partners, a community service benefit, or a mutually beneficial level that equally supports the work of the collaborating institutions.

(f) **Resistance Sources:** Most collaborations encounter resistance of one sort or another, therefore knowing potential sources of resistance for each type of collaboration is important in order to anticipate problems that may occur with implementation; this resistance can come from participants, administration, bureaucratic rules and regulations, etc.

(g) **Positives:** Benefits of each type of collaboration must be real and product oriented creating changes from the status quo for each organization and its participants.

(h) **Limitations:** What are the possible limitations of the type of collaboration described by participants and would a different type of organizing scheme been more beneficial to achieve desired outcomes?

(Slater, in Slater & Ravid, 2010, pp.8-9)

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Activity

Networking

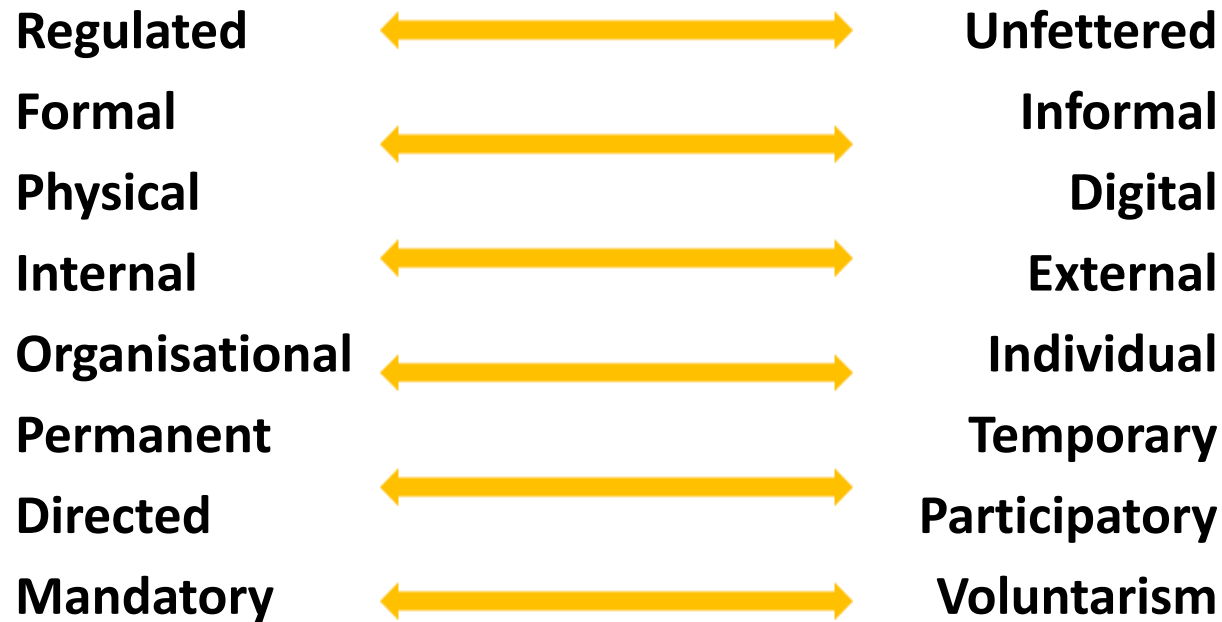## Types Elements & Elements of Networks:

(Slater, in Slater & Ravid, 2010, pp.8-9)

Networking

Networking Binaries/Spectra

Next to these theoretical distinctions, networks can be varied in form and can be categorised along a number of other key dimensions.

Regulated	⟷	Unfettered
Formal	⟷	Informal
Physical		Digital
Internal	⟷	External
Organisational	⟷	Individual
Permanent		Temporary
Directed	⟷	Participatory
Mandatory	⟷	Voluntarism

Networking

Strategic Network Management

a continuous decision-making process which can be divided into seven major stages:

The first stage, *considering networking;*

The second stage, *selecting network partners;*

The third stage, *negotiating the network relatlionships & agreement;*

The fourth stage, *setting-up the network;*

The fifth stage, *operating the network - competition & cooperation;*

The sixth stage, *evaluating the network performance;*

The seventh stage, *modifying the network.*

(Adapted from Das & Teng, 1997, p.50)

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CPD Leaders Case

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CPD Leaders West Midlands
CPD Standard - Pathway

Chair: Helen Martin

Members: 250

Twitter: @CUREE_official
Website: www.curee.co.uk

Outline

- **Who** are **CPD Leaders, West Midlands?**

- **Why** the **CPD Pathway**?

- **What** is the **CPD Pathway**?

- **How** the CPD Pathway **can be used?**

Who are **CPD Leaders West Midlands?**

- CPD leaders who want to offer support to other CPD Leaders across their region in England and beyond.

- A semi-formal organisation that meet face to face 3 times per year and communicate digitally.

- The members exist both internally and externally in Education Institutions but require permission to be released to attend meetings.

- CPD leaders represent themselves and their organisation.

- West Midlands CPD Leaders participate voluntarily and adopt a participatory approach. They hope to sustain their activities for mutual and wider benefit.

Why the CPD Standard Pathway

- CPD leaders want to **plan CPD that impacts on teacher and student learning**

- The DfE Standard for teachers' professional development is an evidence-based DfE document

- **But**

- CPD leaders are time-pressured

- Interpreting the National Standard takes time and specialist knowledge

So

- West Midlands CPD Partnership with CUREE developed a practical school-friendly planning guide, the Pathway.

CPD Standard Pathway

Department for Education

Standard for teachers' professional development

Prioritised by school leadership

Focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes

Include collaboration and expert challenge

Sustained over time

Underpinned by robust evidence and expertise

Department for Education

Standard for teachers' professional development

Starting Point

Caludon Castle wanted to strengthen collaboration and peer relationships within the school. These relationships were between students, students and teachers, and teachers. Based in Coventry, the comprehensive school with a sixth form has over 1500 students. Ann Rayns, Deputy Head Teacher, led a project to engage colleagues in using and carrying out research about effective collaboration. The school asked CUREE to develop a bespoke Route Map to support the project. This was co-constructed with key colleagues and enabled the teachers to access and use robust evidence about collaboration in user friendly resources. The teachers' own research projects were then incorporated as case studies on the Route Map.

> As Caludon Castle use staff peer coaching on a regular basis, having a "one-stop shop" for research relevant to Caludon Castle that can be used in the coaching sessions has helped get staff further engaged in professional development and reflection.

What They Did

All teachers across the school engaged with the Route Map through a CUREE facilitated carousel session where colleagues who had been involved in carrying out case studies shared what they had learnt about developing collaboration with their students. Teachers could move to different tables to hear about different case studies. At this time Caludon Castle had a large group of staff who...
Assistant Principal Leade...
used the Route Map to...
developed by Kees into...
of staff participates in a...
basis for informing and...

Making your learning visible
For example, you might:

- Participate in action research alongside other colleagues and share what you have learnt in a 'celebration' day
  Link to case study
- Include leaders in Research Lesson Study (RLS) triads
  Link to RLS tools
  Link to RLS workshops and tools

Standard Part 5 rationale
Evidence highlights that the leadership activity that has the most impact on student learning is promoting and participating in teacher learning and development (effect size of 0.84).
Link to research summary
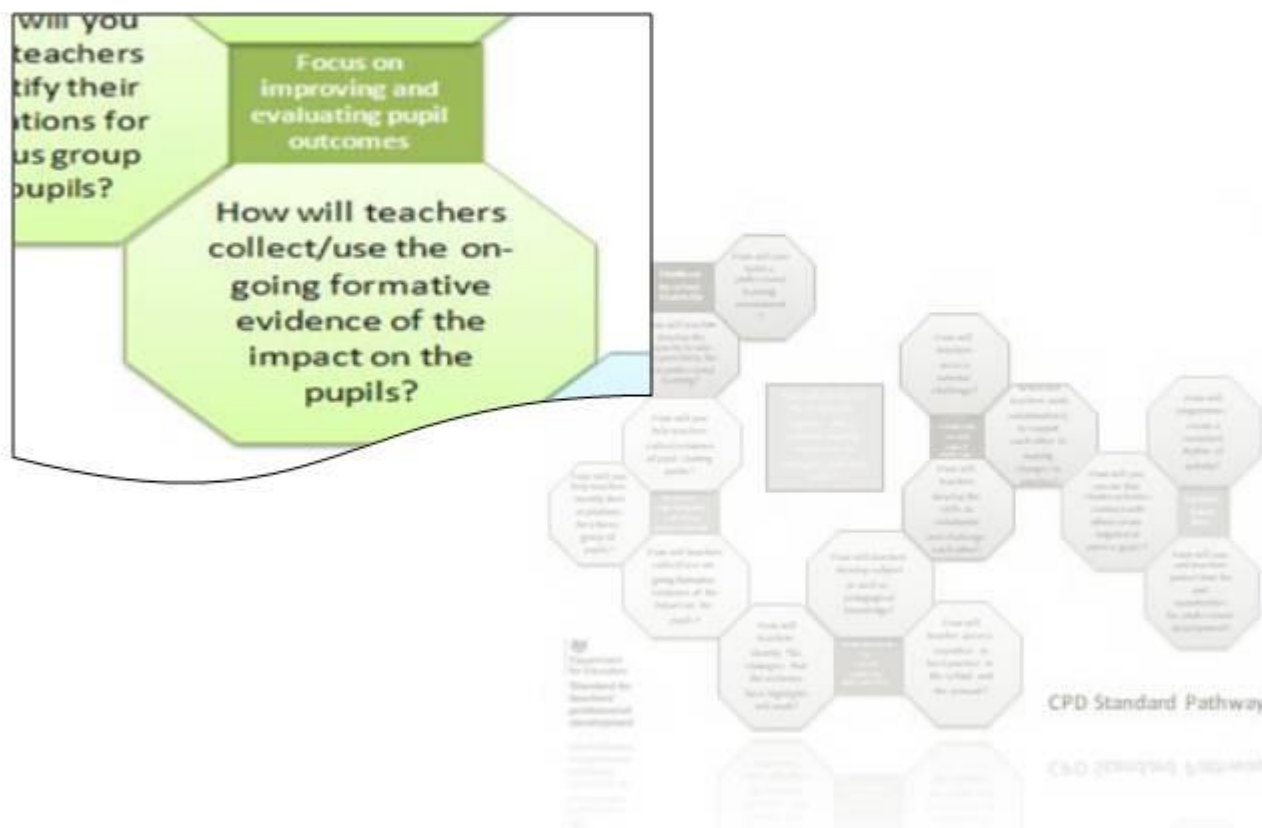
Growing professional...

CPD Standard Pathway

West Midlands CPD PARTNERSHIP

curee

Commissioned by the West Midlands CPD Partnership

CPD Standard Pathway

Commissioned by the
West Midlands CPD Partnership

How the CPD Pathway can be used?

To guide planning of:

- aspects of CPD provision that want to prioritise for development
- CPD programmes within the school offer where want to maximise the impact on teacher and student learning
- To encourage collaboration between education institutions
- To promote continuity and quality of practice to a national standard.
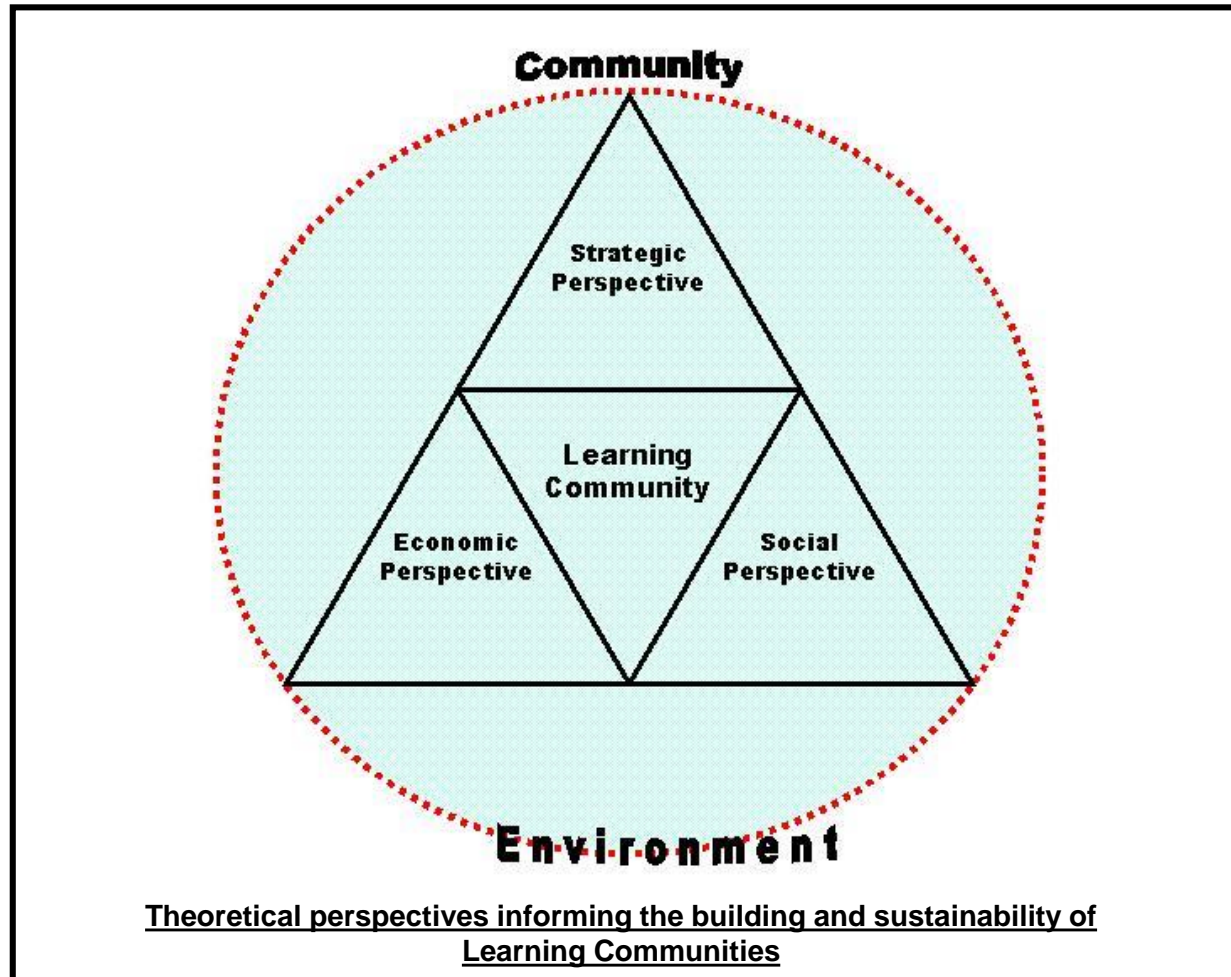
What impact does it have?

- Following use of the Pathway CPD by leaders helps to e.g.:
  - *Redesign how we approach self assessment and CPD planning and provision*
  - *[Develop]Coaching. This was already our plan but the questions in the tool will help focus this activity.*
  - *Use the tool to standardise planning for CPD*

Networking

Professional Learning Communities

Networking

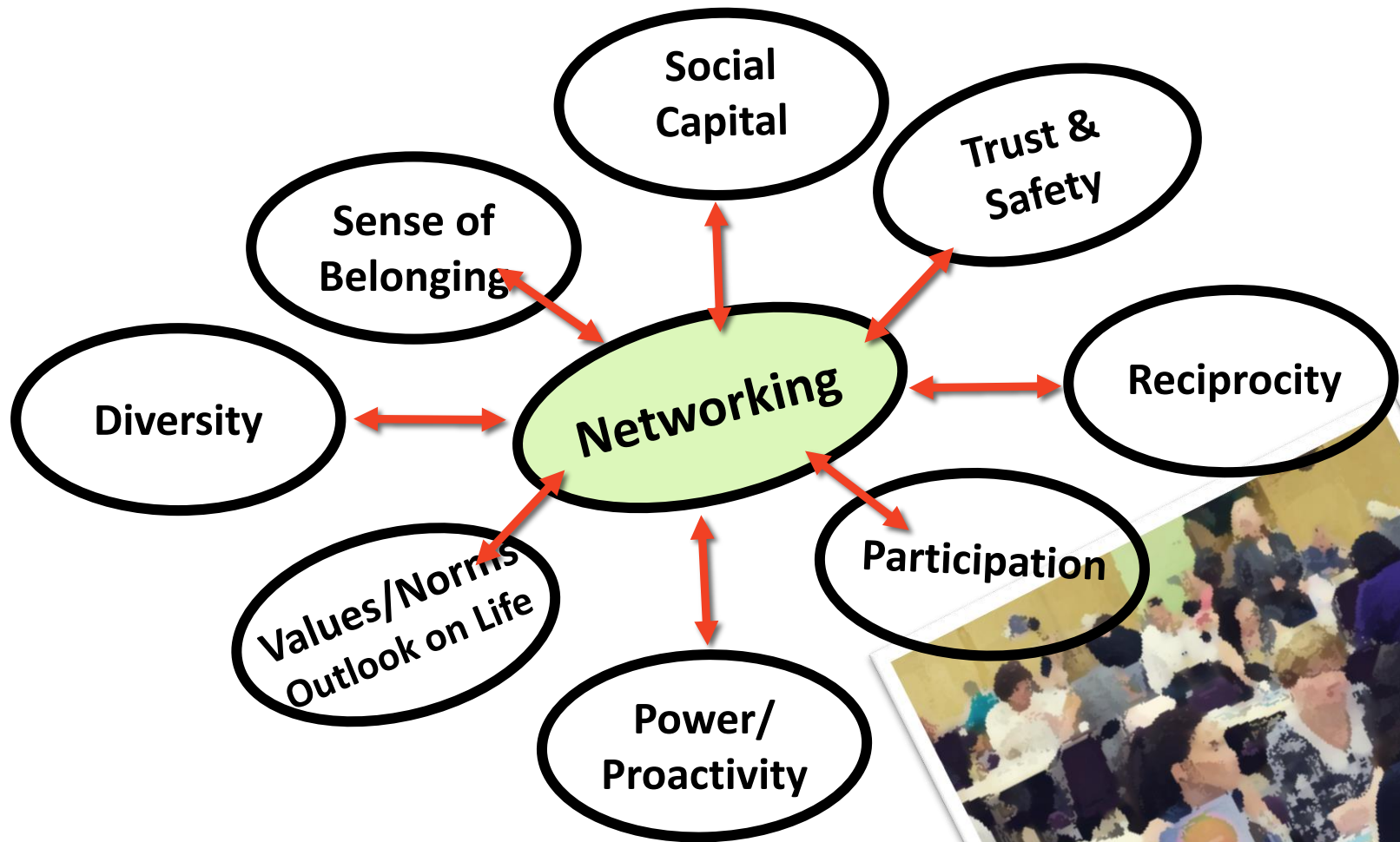Theoretical perspectives informing the building and sustainability of Learning Communities

(Devlin, 2000)

Networking

a **group** of people who are **socially interdependent**, who **participate** together in discussion and decision making, and who **share certain practices** that both define the community and are nurtured by it. Such a community is not quickly formed. It almost always has a history and so is also **a community of memory**, defined in part by its past and its memory of the past

(Bellah, et al. 1985, p. 333 in Rovai, 2002)

Networking
Builds Benefits & Brings Challenges

Social Capital

Trust & Safety

Sense of Belonging

Diversity

Networking

Reciprocity

Values/Norms Outlook on Life

Participation

Power/ Proactivity

Networking

Professional Learning Communities

(http://www.ourclipart.com/clipart/professional%20learning%20communiti
es%20clipart/)

Networking

Conclusion

"Networks are **purposeful social entities** characterised by a **commitment to quality**, **rigour**, and a focus on **outcomes**. They are also an effective **means of supporting innovation** in times of change. In education, networks promote the dissemination of **good practice**, enhance the **professional development** of teachers, **support capacity building** in schools, **mediate between centralised and decentralised structures**, and assist in the process of **re-structuring** and **re-culturing educational organisations** and systems."

(Hopkins, in OECD, 2003, p.153)

Networking