Victims No More: Trends Enabling Resilience in Sexual-Minority Students

A background paper prepared for the Canadian Teachers’ Federation Conference entitled

_Education for Social Justice: From the Margin to the Mainstream_

Ottawa Marriott Hotel, May 4-6, 2007

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Despite the strength of the _Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms_ in protecting the individual rights of sexual minorities, and despite the legal, legislative, and educational policy changes making safer sociocultural spaces for those across sex, sexual, and gender differences, heterosexism, homophobia, and transphobia are still pervasive in Canadian education and culture. In this milieu in which sociocultural change lags behind changes in the law, legislation, and educational policy, one trend is increasingly apparent: More and more sexual-minority students are transgressing roles as victims and becoming more visible and vocal in their schools and communities. These students are choosing resilience and expecting school administrators, school district personnel, and others with vested interests in schooling to make schools safer and more supportive learning and social environments for them.

Another trend deeply impacting the work of those with responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of every student is this: Changes to Canadian laws and legislation in relation to the individual and civil rights of sexual minorities are requiring changes to educational policies and practices. In this regard, for example, the Alberta Teachers’ Association (ATA) is proving to be a national leader. The ATA moved quickly to protect sexual-minority students following the Supreme Court of Canada decision in _Vriend v. Alberta_ in 1998. In acknowledging that sexual-minority characteristics are analogous to other characters of person listed in Section 15 of the _Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms_, this decision granted equality rights to sexual-minority Canadians. On the heels of this decision, the ATA passed a resolution at its 1999 Annual Representative Assembly (ARA) to include sexual orientation as a category protected against discrimination in its _Code of Professional Conduct_. Then, at its 2000 ARA, the ATA provided the same protection to sexual-minority teachers by voting to include sexual orientation as a category of person protected by equality provisions in its _Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities for Teachers_. At its 2003 ARA, the ATA became the first teachers’ association

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in Canada to include gender identity in its *Code of Professional Conduct*, thus protecting trans-
identified students. In 2004, the ATA provided the same protection to trans-identified teachers. 
In 2005, the ATA passed a resolution to enable and support the establishment of Gay-Straight 
Alliance groups in Alberta high schools (ATA, 2007).

In this background paper, we reflect on these trends among others. We begin by 
providing a sense of the contemporary location of sexual-minority youth in Canadian education 
and culture. Next we provide an overview of exemplary sexual-minority educational and cultural 
projects in Canada. We conclude with a message to school administrators, providing them with 
guidelines and strategies to assist them in their educational and cultural work to make schools 
safer and more inclusive spaces for sexual-minority youth.

**Mapping the Contemporary Location of Sexual-Minority Youth in Canadian Education 
and Culture: The Trend from At-Risk to Resilience and Beyond**

There is a growing volume of Canadian-based research documenting the marginalization 
and abuses of sexual-minority persons in education, culture, and society (Bryson & de Castell, 
1993; Grace & Benson, 2000; Khayatt, 1992; McNinch & Cronin, 2004; Saewyc, et al., 2006; 
Schneider, 1997; Smith & Smith, 1998). There is extensive complementary research indicating 
that heterosexism, homophobia, and transphobia, in conjunction with racism, sexism, and other 
abuses of power, function in schools and communities to maintain a status quo often marked by 
symbolic and physical violence and exclusion (Epstein & Johnson, 1998; Friend, 1998; 
Kusmashiro, 2001; Quinlivan & Town, 1999; Sears, 2005). In Canadian K-12 education, 
tolerated hatred of sexual-minority or LGBTTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, two-
spirit, and queer) students has been normalized in school settings (CTF & ETFO, 2002; CTF, 
2005; Schrader & Wells, 2007; STA, 2000; Wells, 2006). In this milieu, LGBTTQ youth are 
vulnerable; they experience constant risks to their personal safety and wellbeing (Grace & 
Wells, 2001, 2004, & 2005). The danger and damage to LGBTTQ students, students perceived to be 
LGBTTQ, and students questioning their sex, sexual, and gender differences are immeasurable 
(D’Augelli, 1998; Kissen, 2002). The risks are exacerbated by a pervasive contemporary trend: 
LGBTTQ youth are acknowledging and embracing their sex, sexual, and gender differences at 
younger ages (Ryan & Futterman, 1998). They are becoming more assertive, and in some cases 
more confrontational, which increases possibilities of retaliatory dangers (D’Augelli, 1998).

Many LGBTTQ youth face harassment at school that leads to increased absences, poor 
achievement, and higher drop out rates; others may run away from home, end up living on the 
streets, and engage in conduct that brings them into contact with local authorities; others are 
chased, stalked, sexually assaulted, or otherwise abused; still others turn to drugs, alcohol and/or 
other substances as coping mechanisms (Peterkin & Risdon, 2003; Remafedi, 1994; Russell & 
Joyner, 2001; Wells & Tsutsumi, 2005). In the larger community, some LGBTTQ youth are 
victimized because of their sex, sexual, and gender differences, sometimes through horrible 
crimes including assault and battery, rape, and murder (Janoff, 2005). Others turn to crime 
themselves, sometimes as a street-survival mechanism when their families disown them and their 
communities ostracize them because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Dorais & 
Lajeunesse, 2001/2004). These dangerous, disenfranchising scenarios have social, cultural, 
political, and moral implications not only for those with vested interests in Canadian K-12 
schools, but also for the communities where LGBTTQ youth are in crisis, where they might turn 
to crime as a perceived survival mechanism, or where they might become victims of crime 
themselves.
While there has been some progress in recent years in making LGBTTQ issues visible on agendas in Canadian K-12 education, it takes communities working with the educational system to address these issues and concerns in meaningful and effective ways that have long-term effects (Beckett, Tweed, & Fisher, 1999; Friend, 1998). From this perspective, schools need to work with communities to develop coordinated, collaborative, and sustained approaches that provide LGBTTQ youth with enhanced opportunities for socialization and education focused on building self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence (Ryan, 2003). This work is essential if sexual-minority youth are to grow into resilience and be victims no more.

An Overview of Exemplary Educational and Cultural Projects for Canadian Sexual-Minority Youth

Another major trend impacting LGBTTQ youth across Canada is the significant increase in representative programs, some having a university-community orientation, that exemplify positive educational and citizenship initiatives. The following is a representative overview of diverse programs focused on the individual, social, and cultural development of LGBTTQ youth. They are useful community resources for school administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers.

Our Primary Educational and Cultural Community Project: Camp fYrefly

Camp fYrefly is a summer leadership retreat for LGBTTQ and allied youth from Alberta and across Canada. We started Camp fYrefly (http://www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca) as a university-community educational initiative in Edmonton, Alberta in 2004. The camp, now held annually is an arts-informed, community-based education project that we describe as arts on the ground. This means the camp employs art forms as vehicles to enact a social-learning-for-leadership model that is communal, collaborative, productive, and ambitiously transformative. Indeed, art forms drive the camp’s nonformal and informal social learning that aims to help LGBTTQ youth and young adults (generally 14 to 24 years old) to build their leadership potential so they can make a positive difference in their own lives and in their home/group-home environments, formal learning spaces, and communities.

To our knowledge Camp fYrefly is the only LGBTTQ youth leadership camp of its kind in Canada. The camp programming is guided by a youth advisory panel and facilitated by educators and youth workers in collaboration with a team of artists, dramatists, and community and youth leaders who offer a wide range of powerful youth-focused workshops and creative skill-building and self-esteem enhancing activities. The camp is peer driven and jam-packed with drama, music, writing, visual art, empowerment and reflection exercises, anti-oppression work, personal growth opportunities, healthy socialization, and in-depth learning activities about specific youth topics and social issues.

Our research indicates that the camp’s arts-based educational strategies have significant utility in helping youth engage in social learning (Grace & Wells, 2007a, in press a). In using an arts-informed, community-based social learning model at Camp fYrefly, LGBTTQ participants link artistic expression and representation to what it means to be a proactive leader who advocates for self and others in a spectral community marked by an array of sex, sexual, and gender differences. They learn that the camp is a safe and dynamic space to engage in a lived process of arts-informed, community-based education in which all are ethically bound to be responsive and responsible as they learn lessons in becoming resilient in community.
In our work with sexual-minority youth, we have gained first-hand experience regarding how challenging being, becoming, and belonging can be for them. Thus, working within a politics of hope and possibility, we focus the Camp fYrefly experience on empowering camp participants so they can work to build a healthy and happy future free from ignorance, fear, and the symbolic (like shaming, harassment, name-calling, and rightist politico-religious denunciation) and physical (like assault and battery, rape, and murder) violence that they usually engender. By helping camp participants to develop leadership strategies and a network of knowing friends, trusted adults, and community-resource contacts, we provide them with a foundation to amass resilience tools that will help them survive and thrive. This goal is in keeping with trends emphasized in the third stage of Savin-Williams’ (2005) typology found in his book *The New Gay Teenager*. The book depicts researchers’ understandings of the changing locatedness of LGBTQ youth in education and culture. In his third stage, which covers the late 1990s and the early 21st century, Savin-Williams relates that there has been a focus on education for social change in order to counter the social, cultural, and political marginalization of sexual minorities. Educational interventions have stressed the creation of safe spaces, LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum, and anti-harassment policy development. They have highly contested first-stage (1970s and 1980s) emphases on deviance, pathology, and the need for specialized medical intervention, and the second-stage (1980s and early 1990s) emphasis on LGBTQ individuals as “at-risk” for social problems, including increased drug-and-alcohol abuse, homelessness, violence, and suicide (Savin-Williams, 2005). However, any third-stage gains have been largely assimilationist in nature, and the (hetero)normalizing structures of mainstream education remain largely intact. Still, what is most reassuring about the third stage is that research on LGBTQ youth and young adults is now focused on a resilience or developmental assets-based approach. Here the goal is to identify the enabling and protective factors that make it possible for LGBTQ youth to overcome discrimination and thrive as advocates and change agents in their everyday lives (Grace & Wells, in press b; Savin-Williams, 2005).

**Other Educational and Cultural Community Projects Across Canada**

**Breaking the Silence: Gays & Lesbians in Our Schools:** The *Breaking the Silence* conference was first established in 1997 by Professor Don Cochrane in the Department of Educational Foundations, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan. Professor Cochrane laid the groundwork for this educational conference by establishing a course in his department on lesbian and gay issues in education in 1996. At the outset, this course faced vocal criticism, and doubt was expressed as to whether such a course was appropriate or even needed in the Faculty. Despite these critiques, the majority of the Faculty endorsed the course. Professor Cochrane developed a curriculum and piloted his groundbreaking course with seventeen enthusiastic students. From that first course, the seeds for the Breaking the Silence conference took root. Professor Cochrane formed the first conference advisory board with a group of dedicated students, faculty members, and representatives from the campus LGBTQ centre, the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation, and the local community. The annual Breaking the Silence conference is one of the longest running LGBTQ educational conferences in Canada. It continues to attract the participation of educators, activists, and academics from across North America. (http://www.usask.ca/education/edfdlt/breaksilence.htm)

**HelpingOut.ca:** HelpingOut.ca is a website managed by the Winnipeg Rainbow Resource Centre. This collaborative community-based website provides anti-homophobia educational information designed for teachers and students. The student section provides support and
information on sexual orientation and the coming out process. Teachers, principals, counsellors and administrators that visit the educator portal are invited to learn more about issues surrounding sexuality and homophobia. The portal includes specific information on

- terminology, myths and facts, and a comprehensive discussion of homophobia (including forms, types, and levels);
- how to handle harassment in school hallways;
- what to do when a student comes out to you;
- how to support trans-identified students; and
- how to educate yourself about homophobia and heterosexism.

The site also provides useful links to local, national, and international LGBTTQ organizations and educational resources. (http://www.helpingout.ca)

**Pink Triangle Services:** Pink Triangle Services (PTS) is Ottawa’s community-based social service agency for LGBTTQ persons in the Capital Region area. PTS operates the thriving Pink Triangle Youth group, which has between 50 and 60 youth members attending each week. As part of its educational outreach mandate, PTS developed a gay–straight alliance’s manual designed to help local students access resources and support to effect positive change in their schools. This manual can be downloaded from the PTS website. (http://www.pinktriangle.org)

**Positive Youth Outreach:** Positive Youth Outreach (PYO) offers peer support services for youth who are HIV positive or have AIDS. PYO started in Toronto in 1990 as the first for-youth-by-youth HIV/AIDS organization in Canada. PYO offers services, which include peer counselling and support programs, housing and financial need assistance, and educational outreach programs and services. (http://positiveyouth.com/static/positive.html)

**Supporting Our Youth:** Supporting Our Youth (SOY) is an innovative community development program designed to improve the lives of LGBTTQ youth in the Toronto area. SOY operates a community-mentoring program and a unique assisted housing program for LGBTTQ youth. SOY also helps to support Fruit Loopz, a festival for LGBTTQ youth at Toronto’s pride and the Pride Prom in conjunction with the Toronto District School Board’s Triangle Program. In addition, SOY supports a variety of diverse LGBTTQ youth initiatives which include: 1) Trans Fusion Crew, a youth social/support group designed to help meet the needs of trans-identified and intersex youth and their allies; 2) EXPRESS: The SOY Newcomer Immigrant Youth Project, and 3) BQY: The Black Queer Youth Initiative. SOY also operates many other innovative youth driven programs, which can be found on their website. (http://www.soytoronto.org)

**Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia:** Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia (TEACH) is a Planned Parenthood of Toronto program that incorporates an anti-oppression educational foundation to deliver workshops, train service providers, and develop resources for local schools and social service agencies. TEACH uses a peer-to-peer educational approach to help participants learn to think critically about the damaging effects of homophobia and heterosexism. TEACH was presented with the 2003 City of Toronto Access, Equity and Human Rights Award. (http://www.teachtoronto.ca & http://www.ppt.on.ca/teach.html#)
Trans Youth Toronto: Trans Youth Toronto (TYT) is one of Canada’s only trans-specific and trans run youth groups in Canada. TYT meets at the 519 Community Centre and provides a drop-in and social support group for trans youth under 26 who want to access resources, referrals, or just want to hang out and chat with other trans youth. (http://www.the519.org/programs/trans/transyouthtoronto/index.shtml & http://www.the519.org)

Triangle School Program: The Triangle School program, which began in 1995, operates as a unique transitional outreach initiative of the Toronto District School Board for students who have left mainstream schools as a result of pervasive homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism. The Triangle School is currently Canada’s only school directly dedicated to the educational needs of LGBTTQ students. (http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/triangle/index.html)

Gai Écoute (Queer Hear): Gai Écoute is a help, listening, and information service for Québec youth and adults that concerned volunteers created in 1980 to provide anonymous support and sexual-minority related information. As part of its ongoing mission to encourage LGBTTQ individuals to live with dignity and pride, it operates a toll-free hotline, website, and offers sensitivity training programs to help combat prejudice in schools. (http://www.gaiecoute.qc.ca)

Montréal Youth Coalition Against Homophobia: Created in 2004, the Montréal Youth Coalition is supported by a diverse collection of LGBTTQ community organizations that advise and provide technical and professional support to the Coalition. The Coalition’s mandate is to counter homophobia and encourage the social integration and acceptance of LGBTTQ youth. To support this goal the Coalition develops resources and provides training to teachers, outreach workers, and decision makers who work with youth. (http://www.coalitionjeunesse.org)

Project 10: Project 10 is a bilingual, non-profit organization, which offers support, information, and services to LGBTTQ youth to help promote healthy sexual and emotional wellbeing. The organization focuses on suicide awareness, dealing with sexual transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV/AIDS prevention. Notably, Project 10 also provides workshops for educators and health and social service workers on sexual orientation, gender identity, homophobia, and other school related issues. In November 2003, Project 10 hosted a full day of workshops, focusing on homophobia, at the Québec Provincial Association of Teachers’ Conference. Project 10 also operates the Allies Program, which is a by-youth-for-youth, anti-homophobia workshop designed for schools. The Montréal Regional Board of Health and Social Services funds Project 10. (http://www.p10.qc.ca)

Safe Spaces Project/Projet Sain et Sauf: Moncton, New Brunswick was one of four sites involved in a national Safe Spaces Project. This pan-Canadian initiative was developed in 1998 as part of a study addressing the isolation of LGBTTQ youth. The goals of the project were to help LGBTTQ youth find acceptance and support for their orientation in a safe environment, and to increase the community’s knowledge and understanding of LGBTTQ youth issues (Ryan, 2003). The Moncton Safe Spaces Project made information kits available and delivered public education and school-based workshops and presentations on homophobia. They also spearheaded a Safe Spaces sticker project through the University of New Brunswick, which involved SIDA/AIDS-NB and SIDA/AIDS Moncton. The goal of this local Safe Spaces Project was to help individuals identify LGBTTQ allies. While the funding for the project ended in 2002,
Moncton has developed their local project into a province-wide initiative that supports homophobia education, including continuing visits to classrooms and schools. (http://www.unb.ca/safespaces)

**The Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Project:** The Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Project (LGBYP) began in 1993. LGBYP describes its mandate as working to make Nova Scotia a safer, healthier, and happy place for LGBTTQ youth through the provision of education, resources, support services, and community development initiatives. LGBYP offers inservice training to schools and school boards, provides free onsite tutoring, and operates a transitional educational day program for LGBTTQ youth who have dropped out of school due to harassment. This unique educational program assists students in making the transition back to regular classrooms. LGBYP has also developed an LGBTTQ allies program that currently has over three hundred trained members. Significantly, LGBYP also provides a unique “Safe Home” housing program and a Youth Health Centre to help meet the primary health care and social/support needs of LGBTTQ youth. In May 2003, the Project held a full-day “Towards Safer Spaces” counselling workshop at the Nova Scotia Teachers’ Union. (http://www.youthproject.ns.ca)

**Newfoundland Gays and Lesbians for Equality (NGALE):** NGALE is a community-based volunteer organization committed to providing education and support for LGBTTQ persons in Newfoundland and Labrador. In September 1998, NGALE launched the “Homophobia Awareness Project.” The purpose of the Project was to raise awareness of homophobia and its effects on people and their communities. The Project places particular emphasis on students and educators in the secondary school system. The Project was made possible through the assistance of the Provincial Strategy Against Violence. (http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/4291/oldpage.html)

**PEI Homophobia Task Force:** The PEI Homophobia Task Force has a membership comprised of representatives from the provincial government, the Department of Education, local non-profit groups, and key individuals from the community. The Task Force members meet regularly to plan workshops, locate and distribute related resources, and provide consultation for public and private organizations. The PEI Homophobia Task Force has been one of the pioneering organizations advocating for the development of safe and inclusive environments for all LGBTTQ persons within the province. (http://www.aidspei.com)

**Gay and Lesbian Alliance Yukon:** The Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA) is a non-profit organization based in Whitehorse, Yukon. GALA has been in operation since 1992 and they describe their primary purpose as establishing a “social, recreational, educational and political outlet for the gay and lesbian, bisexual and transgender, multicultural community.” (http://www.gaycanada.com/galayukon/index.html)
Guidelines and Strategies to Assist Caring School Administrators in their Work with Sexual-Minority Youth

André: There has been a trend in my educational research into educational policies and practices impacting LGBTTQ teachers and students: These sexual-minority individuals tell me that they perceive school administrators as a barrier to their freedom, comfort, and inclusion in school settings. My first instinct is not to get angry with principals as authority figures and mediators of life in schools. After all, I have been a school administrator. I know the demands of the job. I know that every day is a political adventure and an exercise in negotiating power and interests. Moreover, I know that addressing sexual-minority issues means working in the problematical intersection of the moral and the political. Many school administrators are uninformed and unprepared when it comes to engaging in this difficult work.

Becoming informed is the first step in working successfully toward sexual-minority inclusion. Building LGBTTQ knowledge takes many school administrators into new territory with respect to role-related learning. So when sexual-minority students and teachers tell me that school administrators leave them out, my first inclination is to ask two questions: What do school administrators need to know in order to become LGBTTQ-inclusive? How might school administrators be supported in this educational and cultural work? In answering these questions, I have developed guidelines to help school administrators get started.

- Work everyday to see, speak to, and interact with every student and teacher across sexual-minority differences.
- Set a caring tone and use an ethic of respect to accommodate sexual-minority differences in your school.
- Use language that is inclusive and sensitive around issues of sexual-minority differences.
- Educate yourself about the realities of sex, sexual, and gender differences, and learn about heterosexism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and different constructions of family.
- Educate yourself about the history of Canadian and provincial/territorial laws and legislation that have abetted sexual minorities in efforts to achieve the rights and privileges of citizenship. See, for example, Lahey (1999) and MacDougall (2000).
- Learn about the social and cultural realities of living as a member of a sexual minority in Canada. See, for example, Janoff (2005). As well, check Egale Canada (2007). Egale Canada was founded in 1986 to advocate for Canadian LGBTTQ citizens. This national organization engages in political action to achieve more equitable laws for LGBTTQ people; intervenes in legal cases that have an impact on LGBTTQ human rights and equality; and increases public education and awareness by providing information to individuals, groups, and the media. The Egale acronym stands for equality for gays and lesbians everywhere.

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3 This section of the paper is an excerpt from a book chapter by André P. Grace entitled In Your Care: School Administrators and their Ethical and Professional Responsibility toward Students across Sexual-Minority Differences (Grace, in press a). It is forthcoming in Approaches to Educational Leadership and Practice, which is a book edited by William Smale and Kelly Young, professors of education at Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario.
• Assist your teachers to engage in similar education and learning, and provide them with opportunities for professional development so they can build an LGBTTQ knowledge base and learn about age appropriate ways to address LGBTTQ issues and concerns (Grace & Wells, 2007b). For example, see workshops developed by Wells (2003).

• Build a resource base in your school that will provide you with material to help you mediate conflict with those within and outside the school who resist LGBTTQ inclusion. The resource base will also be useful to teachers who want to engage in LGBTTQ-inclusive pedagogical and co-curricular practices. The following resources provide helpful starting points: Seeing the Rainbow: Teachers Talk about Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Two-Spirited Realities (CTF & EFTO, 2002); Lessons Learned: A Collection of Stories and Articles about Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Issues (CTF, 2005); Schrader and Wells’s (2007) book of LGBTTQ resources for use in schools; and, the Alberta Teachers’ Association’s Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Website, which was developed by Wells (2007). This website is an encompassing resource for educators. It provides suggestions, guidelines, and an extensive resource base to help teachers address LGBTTQ issues and concerns in their schools, classrooms, and community environments.

• Check with your teacher association and school district to see what LGBTTQ-inclusive educational policies have been developed to assist and support you and your teachers in educational and cultural work to create a school that respects and accommodates sexual minorities. If such policies are not in place, then advocate and work to have LGBTTQ-inclusive policies developed and implemented. Remember, policy enables protection.

• If you are an administrator in a Catholic school, then check with your diocese to see if they have pastoral guidelines for working with LGBTTQ youth. For example, in November 2004, the education commission of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops released Pastoral Guidelines to Assist Students of Same-Sex Orientation (OCCB, 2004). This document was developed to help school chaplains, guidance counselors, principals, and teachers address the “pastoral challenge” of counseling and caring for lesbian and gay students (Swan, 2004, p. 4).

• If you are an administrator in a Catholic school district that has a policy recommending reparative therapy as a possible treatment for unhappy sexual-minority youth, then educate yourself about the dangers of reparative therapy as stated by the Canadian Medical Association and an array of mainstream national and international mental-health associations (Grace, 2005; Grace, in press b). As well, read critiques of Courage, a Catholic apostolate that promotes reparative or sexual-reorientation therapy in religious and psychotherapeutic forms (Grace, 2005).

• Intervene in your school by supporting students who want to initiate a Diversity Club or Gay–Straight Alliance Club. Help them find a teacher-facilitator and provide them with advice around safety and security issues. To develop guidelines see, for example, Wells (2006).
Intervene to enable sexual-minority teachers to have their needs met in relation to their welfare and work, and their personal safety and professional security. Learn about teachers’ association initiatives and sections of collective agreements that provide them with individual protections in keeping with the Charter. As well, explore websites such as the one developed by the Gay and Lesbian Educators of British Columbia (GALE-BC) (2007). GALE-BC was formed in 1990 as a community-based educational advocacy and resource group. As part of its mandate, GALE-BC emphasizes the need to work towards the full inclusion of LGBTTQ students, parents, teachers, and administrators in the BC educational system. GALE-BC is the largest community-based LGBTTQ educational organization in Canada. It actively supports Gay–Straight Alliances in BC Schools.

This list is certainly not exhaustive, but it is a substantive starting point for building LGBTTQ knowledge and resources that I have found useful in my work with school administrators as well as pre-service and practicing teachers. The upshot in educating yourself about sexual-minority differences is this: Knowing about LGBTTQ differences makes a difference in the work to create truly safe, caring, and inclusive schools.

References


