



# New professionalism and the future of teaching

What if... we reframe the teacher debate,  
building on next practice that already exists  
in teaching and teacher education?

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## What if... we reframe the teacher debate?

“The future is already here,  
it is just not spread evenly”

- Next practice within the research literature  
(versus the history of schooling)
- Next practice within schools  
("micro-innovations")



## Overview

**Teacher personas** add necessary complexity to the debate

The value of supporting teacher **collaboration**

New professionalism concept, “**connective professionalism**”

Using **foresight** and **next practice** to respond to the challenges

Some provocations/ insights from the **Ambition Loops framework**

## Background

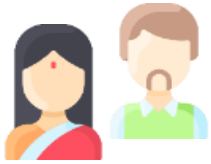
- Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI)

New professionalism and the future of teaching project

- Four Working Papers to develop conceptual work
- Multi-national study using two tools that have been developed:
  - Tool 1: Teacher personas
  - Tool 2: Ambition loops framework
- The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS 2018)
- Higher Education Support for Schools project

# Meet some teacher personas

(see Nilsson Bróden, 2022)



Kim and Bill, the opportunity-seeking **confident** problem solvers  
Gen X



Sam and Beatrice, the unheard middle-aged seekers  
Gen X



Robin and Florian, the time-stressed family builders  
Gen Y



Eden and José, the networked and **ambitious** collaborators  
Gen Y



Cinders and Pheonix, the **exhausted** doubters

**BURNOUT**



Ciel and Spacey, the hyperconnected, well-being centred professionals of the **future** (Gen Z and Alpha)







## Personas

### Eden and José, the networked and ambitious collaborators

*Eden and José are in their early 30's. They work full time and are ambitious at work and in their personal lives. They have a strong connection with broad networks in person and online, which they use to lead new projects at the school and connect with other teachers and professionals beyond their school. Even though their peers in other professions have greater flexibility, they appreciate working in a school with a collaborative mindset and opportunities for professional collaboration. They aren't as stressed as their friends working in schools with less of a collaborative environment. They seek out, and receive, impactful feedback on their teaching from a variety of sources.*

## Research

Eden and José belong to the **Millennials/Generation Y (25-41 year olds)**. For people in this generation a basic expectation is to **achieve work-life balance**. There is also a desire for **travel and flexibility**. They have multiple **expectations** for their **working environment**, including flexibility, variety, culture, fun, training, rewards and feedback from managers. Their **loyalty** is **incentivised**. From this, the parts of the persona describing a variety of personal and professional collaborations and their appreciation for working in a collaborative school and receiving impactful feedback are derived.

## Insights from TALIS

TALIS 2018 revealed significant correlations between a collaborative culture in the school and job satisfaction. Receiving impactful feedback was also related to job satisfaction. Furthermore, a collaborative school culture and reported perception of being able to rely on each other, was associated with lower stress levels. Working full time was related to higher reported levels of participation in deeper forms of professional collaboration, as well as higher self-efficacy compared to those who work part time.

See: [Nilsson Brodén, D. \(2022\), "Cross-sector and interprofessional collaborations: A powerful tool for the teaching profession?"](#)  
OECD Education Working Papers, No. 283, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/7144c6ac-en>.





## 2. Conceptual work, research, evidence

# What we know about teacher collaboration

TALIS 2018 Results  
TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS  
AS VALUED PROFESSIONALS  
VOLUME II



OECD

- **Widespread positive views on collegiality**
- **Different profiles of teachers (greatest variation WITHIN schools)**
- **Deeper forms of collaboration are rarer, but positively associated with:**
  - Higher levels of job satisfaction and self-efficacy (**job attractiveness**)
  - Involvement of staff in school decision making (**teacher leadership**)
  - A collaborative school culture

OECD Reviews of School Resources  
**Working and Learning  
Together**  
RETHINKING HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES  
FOR SCHOOLS



OECD

Regular collaboration promotes reflection and practice improvement if:

Alignment to school (and potentially system) goals

**Adequate time and support**

School-embedded development





## A paradox to navigate that is highlighted in the teacher personas (and pandemic)

“On the one hand, the idea of **change can be daunting**... leads to people seeking comfort in the known as the teaching profession faces... challenges.

On the other hand, the **status quo is unlikely to provide the solutions required** for a prosperous and sustainable future for the teaching profession.” (McGrath 2023, p.7)



OECD Education Working Papers No. 296

What systematic connections should we have around schools to support the work of teachers?  
Global lessons and the potential of ambition loops

Jason McGrath

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/77de597c-en>





2. Conceptual work,  
research, evidence

## Professionalism is changing: “Connective professionalism” (Noordegraaf, 2020)

“Professions involve essentially intellectual operations with large **individual responsibility**; they derive their raw material from **science** and learning; this material they work up to a practical and definite end; they possess an educationally communicable technique; they tend to **self-organization**; they are becoming increasingly **altruistic** in motivation.”

Flexner (1915)

“A profession stands in a complex, transactional and **reciprocal relationship** with the public and society at large, characterised by professional competence, public recognition and **trust**, and by a strong service orientation in which **public interest** is paramount but also susceptible to **contextual influence**.”

Abadi, Ayentimi & Coetzer (2020)

### How to reinforce teacher professionalism?

Specialisation and career progression

Autonomy

Status

### How teaching can innovate professionalism?

Collaboration

Continuing professional learning

Engagement with research

Mezza (2022)







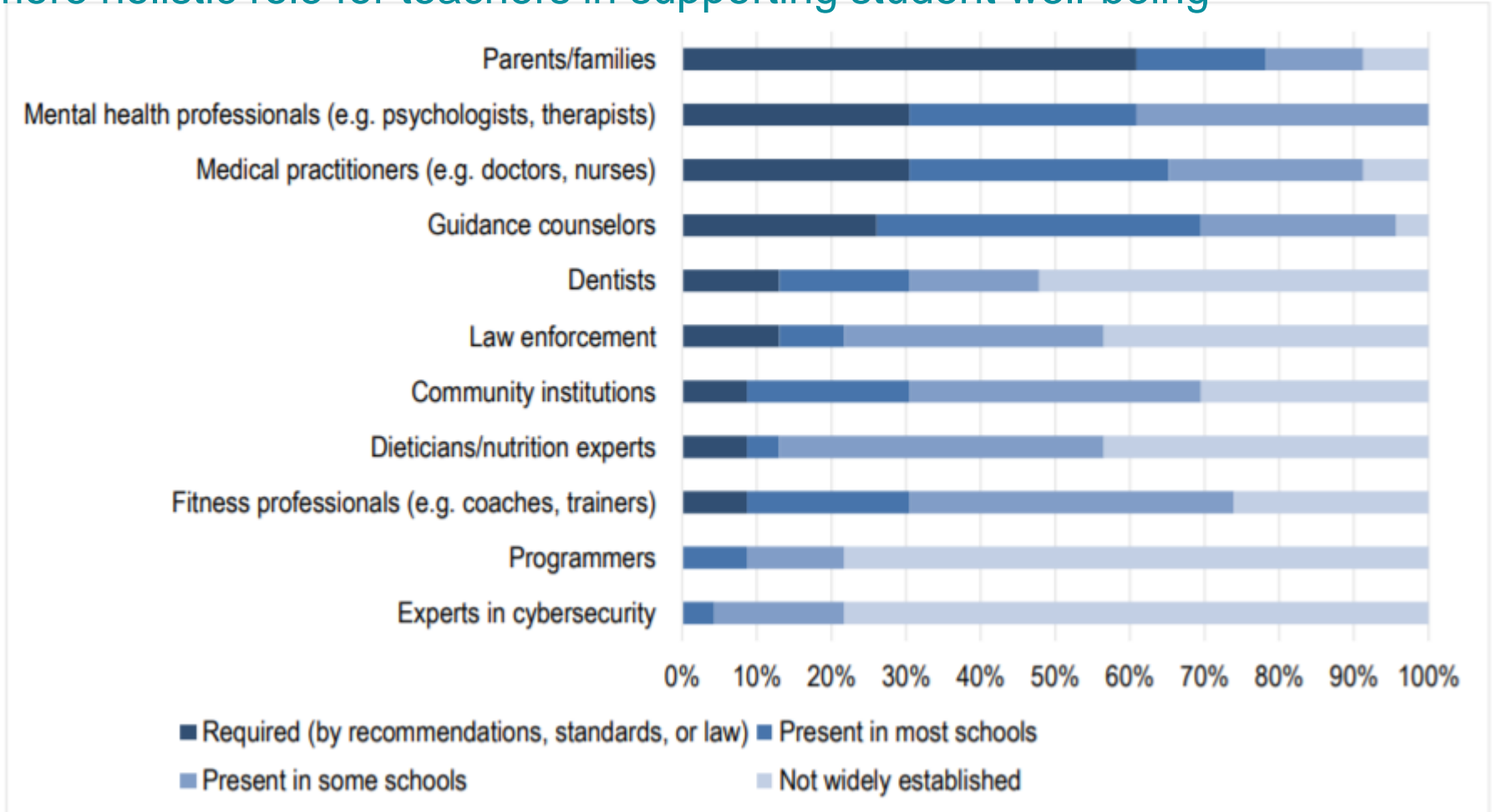
2. Conceptual work,  
research, evidence

# An evolving reality of schools working with external actors

- Ongoing shift to a more holistic role for teachers in supporting student well-being



Answers from 23  
countries/systems -->





2. Conceptual work,  
research, evidence

## Five guiding principles for cross-sector and interprofessional collaboration

1. The collaboration needs to be continuously warranted for everyone involved
2. Teachers and other stakeholders need to be involved in planning and developing the collaborative effort
3. Trust-building leadership is vital
4. Clarity facilitates collaboration
5. Good interprofessional and cross-sector collaboration needs to be learnt

Nilsson Brodén  
(2022)



# Creating preferred future scenarios for the teaching profession: Using foresight and next practice to respond to the challenges

Moving from... “leadership for reform and improvement” to...  
**“professional leadership for anticipation and uncertainty”**

Valuing networked, multi-level learning and the importance of the local.

(International Summit on the Teaching Profession, 2022)

## Foresight approaches:

- do not predict the future but provide a way to examine possible futures that can impact on the present and the future
- show how futures are “shapeable” at all levels.





## Working with ‘next practice’

“Next practice’ is about **critically reflecting on how our current practices could work differently**, more efficiently, more powerfully, thinking about failures, and taking into account future contexts and scenarios. **It is about the process** and not the final output.” (Zimmerman et al., 2021)

“Next’ practice... is adaptable, able to identify, interpret, act on multiple change signals, and **privileges experimentation, discovery, co-creation, and genuine inclusion.**” (Lundy et al., 2021)

“**Policy ambidexterity**” (Bingham and Burch, 2018):

“Although counterintuitive, identifying aspects of long-term change needed can also help ameliorate short term pressures. A **two-path approach to planning** provides a way to identify long term, preferred changes while separating shorter term needs that require attention” (McGrath, 2023, p. 55).



# “Ambition loops” tool: What if we strengthen connections to support teacher professionalism in the future?

## The school community

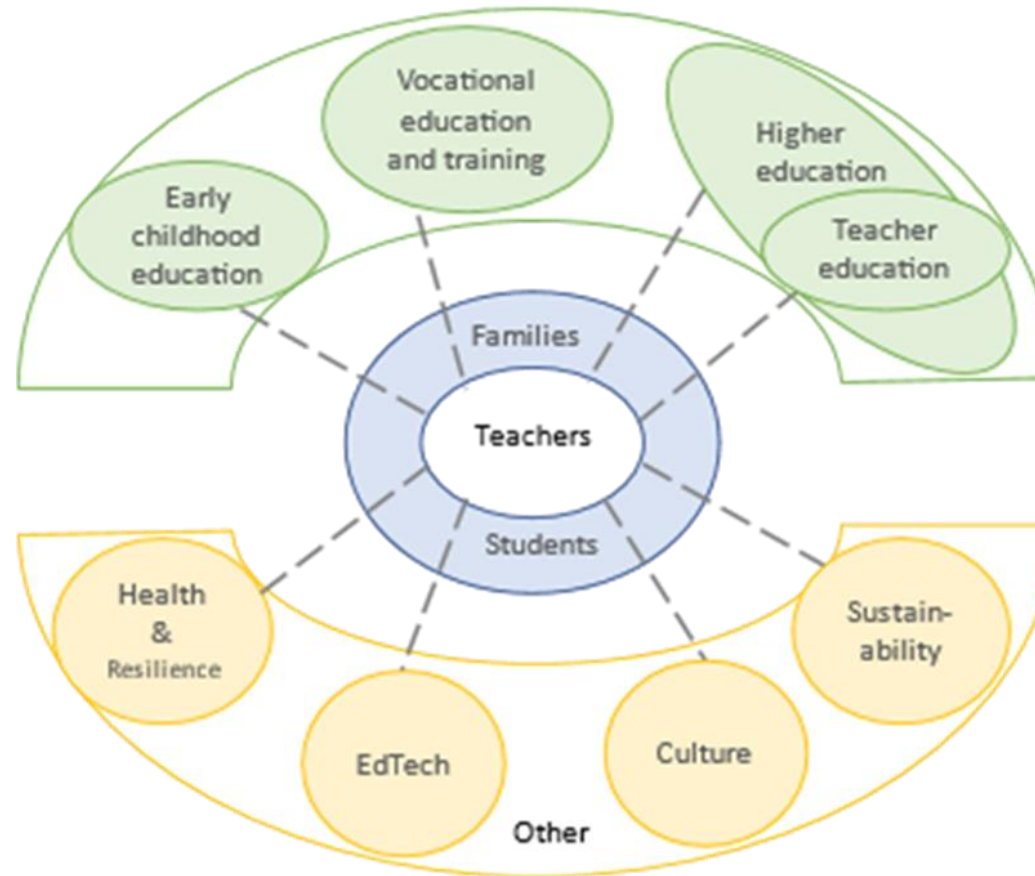
What if.... We create space to think collectively about the future and develop new ideas?

What if.... We reframe the roles of teachers and learners within a broader community of expertise?

What if.... We value schools as a physical place for interactions within the community for learning?

What if.... We value that all adults in the school community play a role in caring for children and youth?

What if.... We unlock student voice and involvement in decision making?



## Professionals in the education sector

What if.... We form partnerships to strengthen teacher leadership throughout the career span?

What if.... We value and support interdisciplinary learning and working as a core part of professionalism?

What if.... We think about “the learning journey” and accompany learners through formal education, informal learning and learning to learn?

## Professionals in other sectors

What if.... We see schools as a hub for learning and connecting with the community?

What if.... We use learning partnerships for real-life experiences?

What if.... We see teachers as pedagogical innovators?

McGrath (2023)



## Anchor organisations

“Anchor organisations are what their name implies—something **solid and grounded, ‘here for the long haul’** with sufficient presence, respect, and openness to working in partnership with others to grow and sustain worthwhile futures for individuals and communities” (Halsey, 2018, p. 50).

(See McGrath, 2023)

## Fourth-generation institutions

- \* supporting local contexts as well as broader goals respond to larger societal challenges such as sustainability, technological change, health crises and changing political discourses.
- \* Three questions: ‘**who are we**’, ‘**who do we serve**’ and ‘**how do we serve**’? (Pedretti and Navas Iannini, 2020, p. 701)
- \* As part of an innovation ecosystem, **policy making needs to expand beyond independent institutional thinking** (Asgari, Khorsandi Taskoh and Ghiasi Nodooshan, 2021) to focus on more interdependent and cross-sectoral collaboration (Mezza, 2022; Nilsson Brodén, 2022).



**Ambition: Higher education partners, including Teacher Education, have an explicit focus on providing future and current professionals with the necessary skills to work effectively within cross-sectoral/ interprofessional collaborations**

*Interprofessional work and cross-sector collaboration* is a key feature of professional work (Lawson, 2013; Nilsson Brodén, 2022). The skills need to be explicitly learnt (Lawson, 2013) to maximise value from these efforts (Hamilton and Margot, 2020).

(McGrath, 2023)





## **Ambition: Education policy makers value and promote the potential for schools to establish long-term relationships with universities in their local context**

Schools often face societal challenges which they cannot adequately address on their own, but they can provide foundational support to connect different parts of a community to achieve social benefits.

A key feature of an *anchor institute* is the development of a long term relationship (Halsey, 2018; Nilsson Brodén, 2022) that is centred within a local context (Halsey, 2022) to support holistic and multi-purpose goals (Halsey, 2022) that create strengths through weaving connections and a commitment to fostering a common good. This can support community and the work of teachers.

(McGrath, 2023)

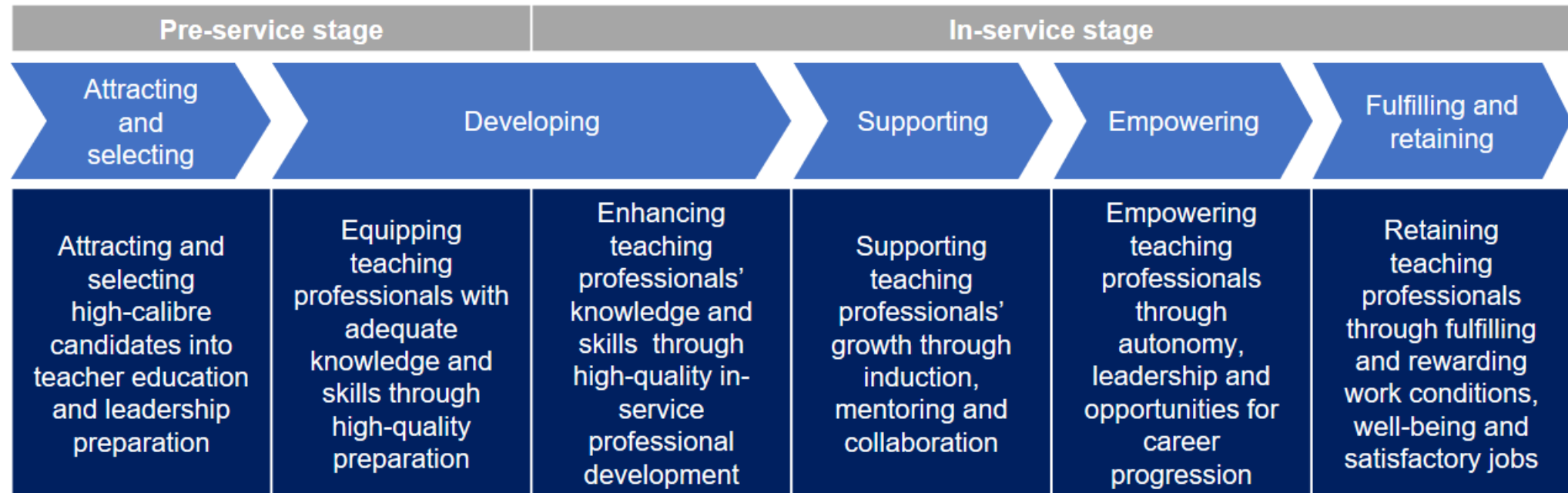






## Teacher education contributes to the development of teacher leadership and school leadership across the lifespan of teachers' careers

*A lifespan approach to teachers' development* (Mezza, 2022). creates opportunities to offer tailored opportunities relevant to needs and interests. Teacher educators are well placed to support co-construction of opportunities across the lifespan of a teacher's career and to benefit from the opportunity focus supporting the full range of needs and interests of new and experienced teachers.



(McGrath, 2023)





**Ambition: All partners establish partnerships with schools that value both the practice of teachers and the research base that supports this work**

Partnerships can be developed with a strong pedagogical focus that values, promotes and explores the *and practice of teachers in classrooms the research base that supports this work* (Oates and Bignell, 2022).

(McGrath, 2023)

**Ambition: All partners seek ways to create a shared equal space to work collaboratively as partners with schools, teachers and other experts**

While there are different purposes for a partnership to be developed, the partnership can exist within a *third space to work collaboratively as partners* (Green et al., 2021; Green, Tindall-Ford and Eady, 2020; Hamilton and Margot, 2020). There is also opportunity for schools and universities to involve other stakeholders such as community as part of the third space (Green et al., 2021).



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For more information: see <https://www.oecd.org/education/ceri/new-professionalism-future-of-teaching.htm>







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