

Press Release

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McREL and CTAC call for strategies that focus on, and honor, educators' career-long professional development

The chief executives of McREL International and the Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) have collaboratively published a white paper, "Improving Teacher Practice: Debunking the Myth of Conventional Wisdom," that urges schools and districts to think systemically about development of teacher talent in order to make bigger difference in student outcomes.

The paper's authors, McREL CEO Bryan Goodwin and CTAC Founder and Executive Director Bill Slotnik, call out a widespread but, according to recent research, inaccurate belief that new teachers' expertise and talent is mostly innate, and generally peaks and plateaus within their first few years of teaching. The authors present an alternative, evidence-based viewpoint that most teachers *do* continue to get better throughout the course of their careers.

"Many districts and schools indicate their need to reset their approach to developing the talent of teachers," said Slotnik. "By combining reimagined hiring protocols, modeling, peer coaching, and self-directed learning, teachers as well as schools will improve performance trajectories and increase impact."

To support teachers' continued growth, the authors recommend fundamental changes in the way schools and districts recruit, hire, train, evaluate, and support teachers over their entire careers. They show how to create a growth-oriented human capital management system that connects and aligns a school district's personnel, professional development, and instructional practices.

"Smart companies in every industry know that employee talent needs to be developed over entire careers, even if they're hiring the best and the brightest to begin with," said Goodwin. "In education, professional learning should be approached as an embedded, lifelong, mutually beneficial partnership between school districts and teachers."

The paper is freely available on each organization's website (www.mcrel.org and www.ctacusa.com). In addition to publishing this paper, McREL and CTAC are launching a talent development consortium to assist districts that seek to improve and innovate their human capital management policies, procedures, and practices.

About McREL International

Headquartered in Denver, McREL is a non-profit education research-and-development organization that conducts research and evaluation and analyzes best practices in teaching and school leadership, and transforms that knowledge into strategic guidance, training, and resources for educators.

About CTAC

Headquartered in Boston, CTAC is a non-profit organization that provides technical assistance, research and evaluation, and public policy consulting at local, state, and national levels to achieve significant, long-term improvements in student achievement, teacher effectiveness, and organizational capacity.

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