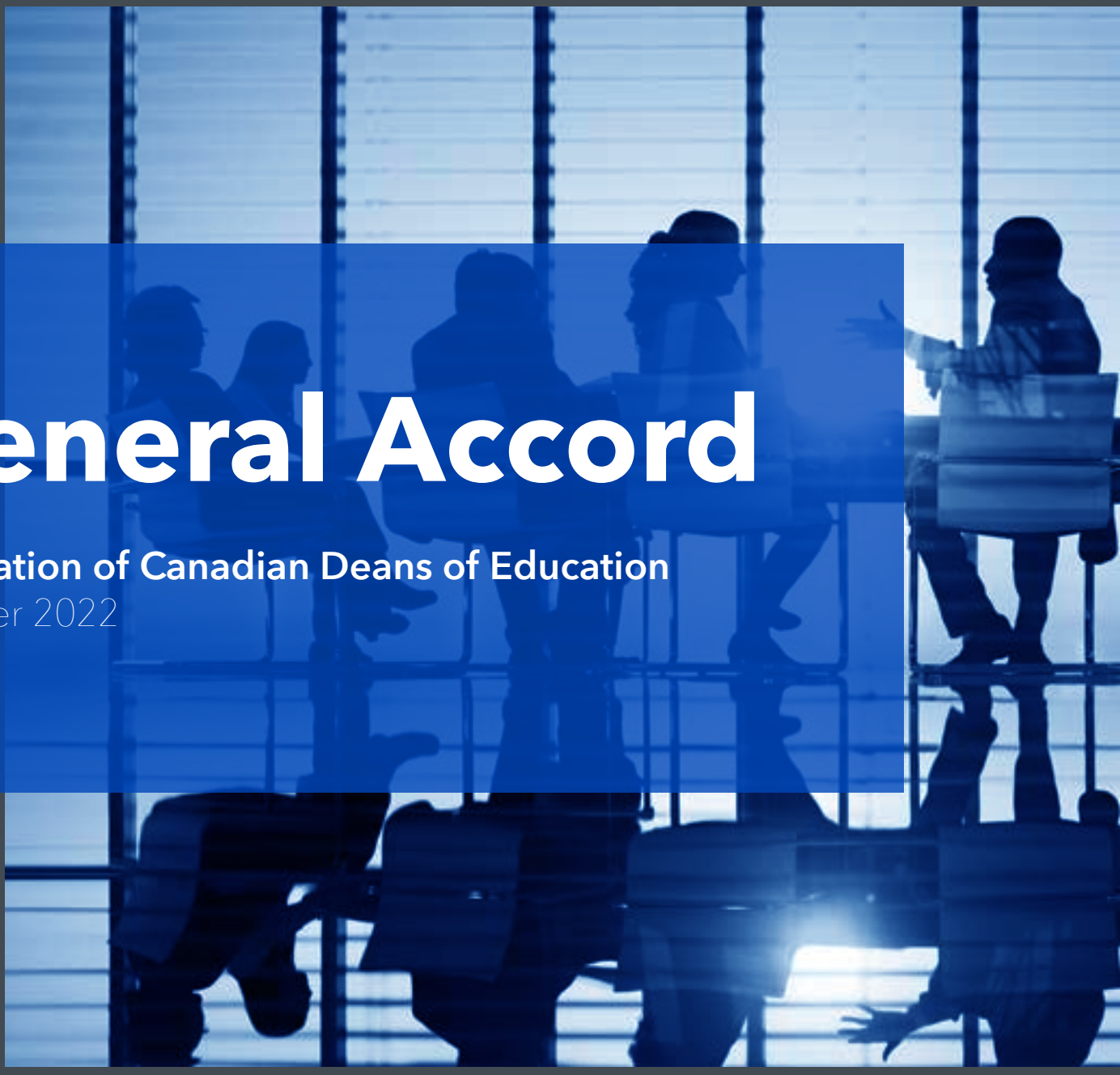


# General Accord

## Association of Canadian Deans of Education

October 2022

ACDE
Association of Canadian Deans of Education

## ABOUT ACDE

The Association of Canadian Deans of Education/Association canadienne des doyens et doyennes d'éducation (ACDE) is an association of deans, directors, and chairs of Canadian university-based based faculties, colleges, schools, and departments of Education committed to pan-Canadian leadership in professional and teacher education, educational research, and policy.

The *General Accord* was ratified at the annual meeting of the Association of Canadian Deans of Education in 2005 and was launched at the annual conference of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education in 2006. The *General Accord* was updated and reaffirmed in 2016 and in 2022.

*© 2006, 2016, 2022 Association of Canadian Deans of Education*

# Overview

Central to ACDE's mission is fostering teacher education and continuing professional education of teachers, engaging in educational research, and participating in educational policy development. ACDE supports access, participation, and success in education for all. ACDE supports the professional development of educators through undergraduate study, initial teacher education, graduate study and continuing professional learning. ACDE is committed to high quality educational research and to developing policies and initiatives in conjunction with other educational partners such as provincial governments, colleges of teachers, teachers' associations, and professional societies and organizations.

ACDE's *General Accord* represents agreement among members to work together to advance education in Canada with shared goals, values, and principles. By supporting the *General Accord*, deans, directors, and chairs of education add to ACDE's institutional capacity to advocate for positive change in public education in Canada. The *General Accord*, together with ACDE's other publications, contributes to national, public discourse on the importance of public education in developing and sustaining a civil society.

Through agreement with the *General Accord* membership in ACDE represents an ongoing relationship among universities in Canada that are publicly funded or are members of Universities Canada, and that offer teacher education. The *General Accord* promotes and supports a range of activities, including advocating for increased public investment and involvement in education, constructing accords, developing partnership opportunities, sharing institutional data, advocating for educational research, and promoting knowledge access for educators and the public.

> *"Education*
> is the cornerstone of human development.

# The Canadian Context

ACDE represents those responsible for the delivery of university-based preparation of professional educators and the majority of the educational research and scholarship in Canada. ACDE members foster high-quality educational programs, including teacher education programs, set within a pan-Canadian framework.

ACDE affirms that Canadian university-based faculties, colleges, schools, and departments of education are in the best position to prepare professional educators to work in diverse learning settings and to address systemic inequities. Teachers are primary conveyors of society's civic cultures and their preparation must attend to societal attitudes and values, as well as relevant content knowledge. Canadian faculties, colleges, schools, and departments of education are nested within and responsible to their communities and have a history of engagement with local, provincial, and national educational communities. ACDE members are committed to First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and to the Calls to Action of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. ACDE members endorse the Scarborough

Charter and commit to further learning and actions within their own institutions.

Constitutionally, education in Canada is the responsibility of the provinces and territories, with relatively few national or pan-Canadian groups representing or concerning themselves with public education. ACDE's role is to speak with a collective voice to achieve, maintain, and advocate for commonly held professional goals across institutions. The *General Accord* provides the means for ACDE members to do so.

The context of education within each province and territory is unique from linguistic, cultural, historical, economic, and social contexts. ACDE has no wish to impose a system of national standards that would erode the important local and regional characteristics of teacher education or education more broadly. Within this framework, there is room for joint action. Deans, directors, and chairs of education believe that their collective commitment to work together will create synergies that will benefit education in each province and territory as well as the country as a whole.

# Vision

ACDE's vision is for a pan-Canadian network of reciprocal relationships, both among ACDE members and with other groups concerned with education in Canada. For members, the *General Accord* affords recognition and review, exchange and transaction, reciprocity and respect. Consistent with accords in other professions, the *General Accord* invites ACDE members to exchange information, explore principles to guide the advancement of the education professions, and examine institutional processes, policies, and procedures for education programs.

In addition to these activities, ACDE advocates for increased public funding of and engagement in public education. The value of a pan-Canadian network of deans, directors, and chairs of education acting in concert to shape public policy cannot be overstated. One of ACDE's goals is to enhance public discourse around the crucial role of public education in shaping Canadian society. By promoting the importance of public education and encouraging investment in it (investment in terms of funding, research, and human resources, among others), ACDE members work to develop an engaged, responsible public that demands quality and mobilizes resources to educate all Canadians.

In establishing a network of relationships with governments, agencies, and professional organizations concerned with education such as national and provincial teachers' associations, ACDE facilitates information sharing and cooperative research within a framework that respects the diversity of Canada's regions and educational contexts. The strength of the network ensures that close connections may be developed and supported; its flexibility allows for differing levels of involvement.

# *Principles*

The *General Accord*:

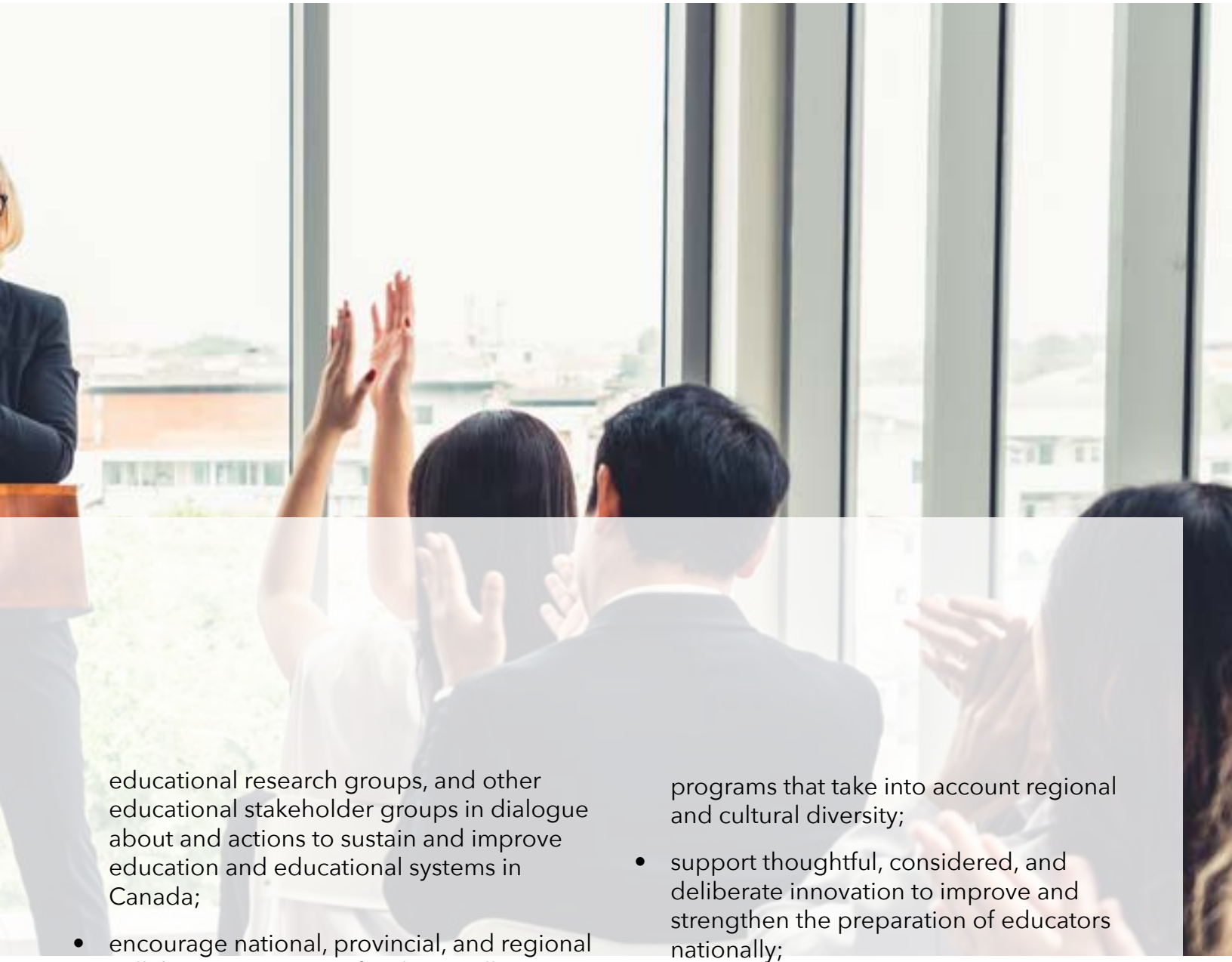
- is open to deans, directors, and chairs of faculties, schools, colleges, and departments of education situated within Canadian universities that are publicly funded or are members of Universities Canada;
- respects the diversity of programs that have been developed to serve a diverse Canadian population; and
- recognizes institutional autonomy, regional differences, and provincial prerogative over teacher education, educational policy, and practice.

# Goals

Education is the cornerstone of human development. To support that notion, ACDE expresses its commitment to pan-Canadian leadership in professional and teacher education, educational research, and policy in universities and university-colleges.

The *General Accord*'s goals are to:

- identify and address national issues in education especially those involving teacher education;
- develop a robust, focused, and informed national consciousness about education;
- engage representatives of provincial and federal governments, Indigenous communities, agencies, national and provincial teachers' associations,



educational research groups, and other educational stakeholder groups in dialogue about and actions to sustain and improve education and educational systems in Canada;

- encourage national, provincial, and regional collaborations among faculties, colleges, schools, and departments of education, in order to influence education policy and practice;
- promote the funding, recognition, and dissemination of educational research, including but not limited to teacher education and teaching practices in formal and informal learning settings;
- foster pan-Canadian recognition of teacher education programs, while respecting institutional autonomy and differentiated programs that take into account regional and cultural diversity;
- support thoughtful, considered, and deliberate innovation to improve and strengthen the preparation of educators nationally;
- affirm pivotal collaborations between university and school system grounded in the scholarship of teaching and learning;
- create inter- and intra-provincial linkages and strengthen partnerships around teacher education, graduate education, and continuing professional education programs; and
- promote professional development and succession planning for deans of education in Canada.

acde-acde.ca