ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN DEANS OF EDUCATION

ACDE

Accord on Teacher Education

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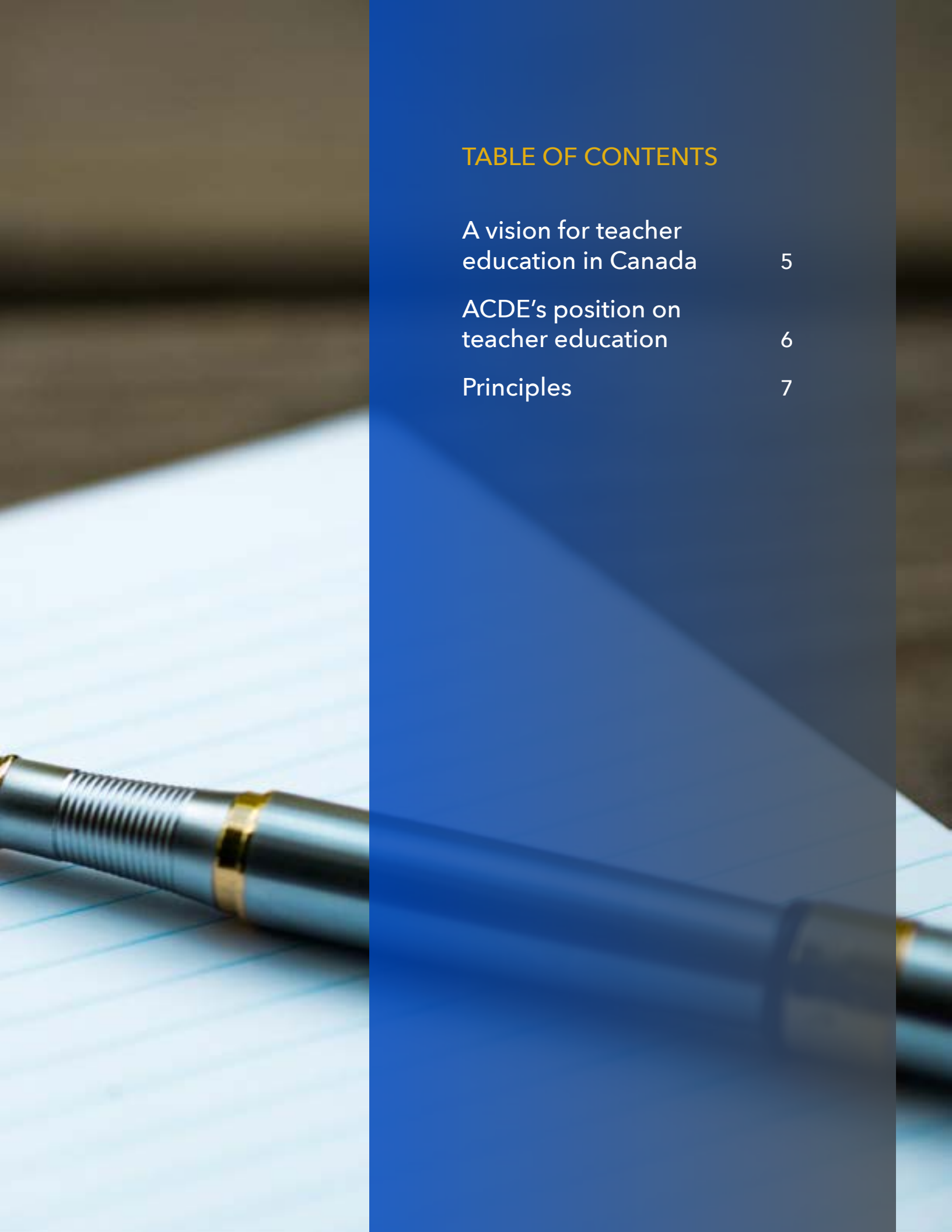
ABOUT ACDE

The Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) unites Deans, Directors, and Chairs of Canadian Faculties, Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education.

ACDE advances and sustains research and research culture in education; forms and advises upon educational policy; and develops programs and initiatives that advance the quality and accessibility of education in Canada.



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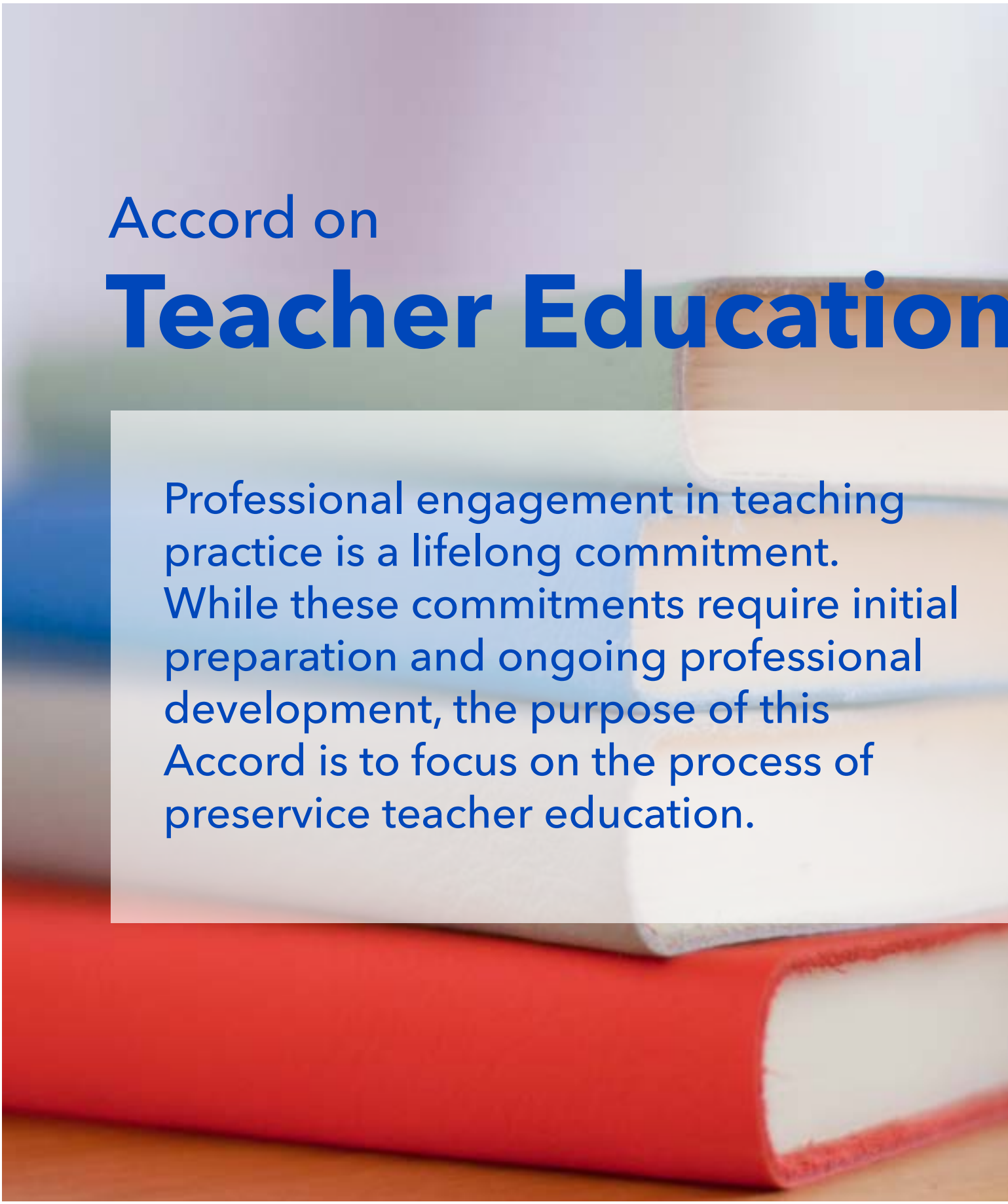
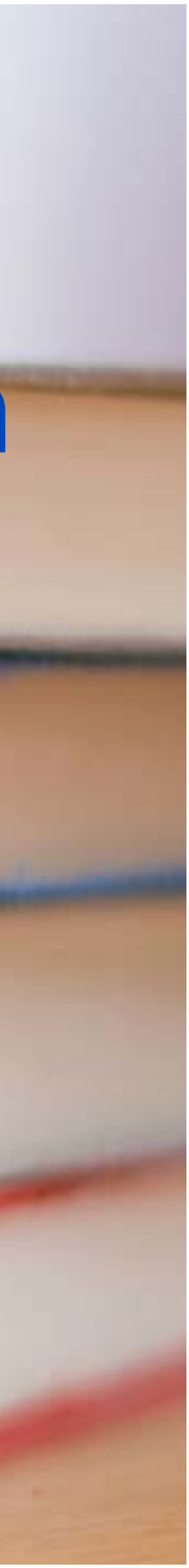


Accord on Teacher Education

Professional engagement in teaching practice is a lifelong commitment. While these commitments require initial preparation and ongoing professional development, the purpose of this Accord is to focus on the process of preservice teacher education.



A vision for

Teacher Education in Canada

ACDE is committed to teacher education programs that foster skilled professional educators who cultivate knowledge, critical thinking, and responsible action among learners, in order to create and sustain an inclusive and equitable society.

ACDE's position on Teacher Education

Teacher education is a form of higher education, one that introduces preservice educators to the nature and key concepts of learning. There is both an intellectual and a practical component to teacher education. It must be situated within a university context, both to allow the meaningful interaction of preservice educators with research-oriented faculty and to promote awareness of the interconnected nature of theory, research, and practice in the profession.[1]

ACDE believes that teacher education programs should involve the development of situated practical knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and academic content knowledge, as well as an introduction to research and scholarship in education. Essential to that development is a form of induction into the profession, most often in the form of a practicum placement in a school or other learning or community-based setting. In acknowledgment of the international character of many Canadian learning settings, and of the varied paths of education professionals that may lead to employment in international settings, ACDE encourages international practicum placements.[2]

ACDE asserts that effective teacher education programs demonstrate the transformative power of learning for individuals and communities. Teacher education programs should ensure equitable access to the opportunity to become an educator, including for those from non-traditional backgrounds and those who may be economically disadvantaged. Teacher education programs inspire educators to become societal leaders who work toward the public good, advocate for the betterment of society, and demonstrate their ethical and moral purposes in all professional engagements.

1 For more information on educational research and its relationship to teacher education, please see the *Accord on Educational Research* (2010), available at www.ACDEAccords.ca

2 For more information on ACDE's commitments to internationalization in education, please see the *Accord on the Internationalization of Education* (2014), available at www.ACDEAccords.ca

Principles

ACDE's principles for teacher education are, by design, broad. The way these principles are articulated within education programs depends on the nature and context of the member institution; ACDE continues to advocate for institutional autonomy in the development, design, and operation of its teacher education programs. Within this framework of diversity, however, some broad characteristics may be discerned.

ACDE has identified the following principles to guide teacher education programs in preparing educators who:

- Effectively and skillfully foster learning;
- Support collaborative approaches to teaching and learning; and
- Foster social responsibility.

PRINCIPLE 1

Prepare professional educators who effectively and skillfully foster learning

ACDE believes professional educational practice involves an evolving constellation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Initial teacher education and continued learning enhance the profession and the educator's own professional competencies. Professional educators contribute to, and keep abreast of, research to inform their practice. A program of professional teacher education:

- Supports comprehensive grounding in the disciplines, multiple literacies, ways of knowing, student engagement, and pedagogical expertise;
- Provides an understanding of the nature of learning and the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, creative, spiritual, and moral development of learners;
- Supports diversity and the differentiation of instruction, enacting inclusive curricula and pedagogies to support the needs of all learners;
- Encourages teacher candidates to recognize, create, critically apply and engage with resources and technologies to help learners evolve in a digital world;
- Develops teacher candidates who demonstrate compassion, understanding, and an awareness of the duty of care toward learners.

PRINCIPLE 2

Prepare professional educators who engage in responsive and responsible collaboration

ACDE believes that educators improve their practice through collaboration with others. Through professional learning communities, peer feedback, and collaboration with external organizations, they envision innovative pedagogies and unique solutions to teaching challenges. Educators are responsive and responsible to learners, schools, colleagues, and communities, and work in partnerships with these groups. A program of professional teacher education:

- Provides opportunities for teacher candidates to research their practices through investigation, critical thinking, reflection, analysis, and evidence-informed practice;
- Promotes professional collaborations that interweave theory, research, and practice, to elicit feedback, promote collaborative learning, and build self-efficacy; and
- Partners with communities, including schools, districts, and Indigenous communities, and collaborates with workplace environments and other sites of learning to enrich educational practice and to advance mutual goals.

PRINCIPLE 3

Prepare professional educators who foster social responsibility

Programs of teacher education ensure that educators are committed to providing a transformative learning experience that inspires inclusiveness, social responsibility, reciprocity, and sustainability. A program of professional teacher education:

- Promotes social justice, equity, and inclusion; and prepares educators to challenge all forms of social oppression and violence;
- Understands and promotes a socio-ecologically just and environmentally literate society;
- Acknowledges the centrality of land in Indigenous worldviews and teachings, respects the inherent rights and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, and champions the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada[1];
- Creates learning environments that foster mental health and wellness among educators and learners.

1 The TRC's Principles of Reconciliation may serve as an important guide to this work. For more information about ACDE's vision for Indigenous education in Canada, please see the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (2010), available at www.ACDEAccords.ca

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