TO: Directors of Education  
Supervisory Officers and Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities  
Director of Provincial Schools  
Supervisory Officer of Centre Jules-Léger

FROM: Philip Steenkamp  
Deputy Minister

DATE: April 19, 2007

RE: Emergency Preparedness

I am sure that each of you was shocked and saddened by the recent tragic event in Virginia. It is always difficult to hear about tragedies like this. While we hope that we never experience similar situations at our schools and on our campuses, this event serves as a sad reminder that these terrible occurrences do take place.

I know that school boards and schools make the safety of their students and staff a top priority, and I want to thank you for the work that has already been done in this vital area. I also want to assure you that the Ministry of Education is committed to working with school boards to ensure the safety of Ontario’s students.

In light of this terrible incident, however, I urge you to review your board and school emergency procedures. You may also wish to contact local police forces to seek their support in reviewing and possibly improving protocols for emergency situations. I know that all of our school boards have emergency procedures in place, but we want to ensure that we are doing everything possible to protect the safety of our students.

Thank you for your partnership and collaboration to ensure our schools are safe places for students to learn and for teachers to teach, and for helping our students to reach their full potential.

Philip Steenkamp