MEMORANDUM TO:

Directors of Education
Supervisory Officers and Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities
Principals of Secondary Schools
Student Success Leaders

FROM:

Kirsten Parker
Director
Student Success/Learning to 18 Implementation, Training and Evaluation Branch

Ginette Plourde
Director
French-Language Education Policy and Program Branch

Grant Clarke
Director
Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Policy Branch

DATE: June 8, 2007

SUBJECT: New Resources on Postsecondary Education and Skills Training

On May 8, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities began a staged release of the First Generation Students Toolkit and Your Future website <www.ontario.ca/yourfuture>. These resources will provide Ontario high school students, especially first generation students, students whose parents have had no college, university or skills training experience – with additional information on postsecondary education and skills training choices. These resources will prove to be a valuable help to other educational supporters, and yourself.

In an effort to reach as many Ontario students as possible, our campaign includes disseminating almost 1.5 million toolkits to close to 2,500 education institutions and organizations with youth relationships across Ontario. The Your Future website provides another source of information and includes videos of current first generation college and university students answering questions high school students typically have about postsecondary education.

Shortly, First Generation Students Toolkits will be sent to your schools (please see attachments).
The toolkit and Your Future website support the Ministry’s ongoing work with educators and others to raise the postsecondary participation rate of first generation students. While youth whose parents have postsecondary training are almost two and a half times more likely to attend college or university, first generation students face distinct barriers in pursuing their postsecondary education.

From idea to action, first generation high school and postsecondary students from across Ontario have played a key role in the development of the toolkit and website. Their efforts and enthusiasm have been captured in these products.

These resources are designed to stimulate the ambitions of students in grades 9 to 12 by getting them excited about postsecondary education and to see further education as an exhilarating and natural progression after completion of secondary school. The colourful toolkit features a brochure, postcards and posters with clear, concise messaging and directs students to the highly interactive Your Future and Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) Access Window websites.

As educators, you are instrumental in helping Ontario’s youth to achieve their potential and find success. We encourage you and your staff to use these products at your schools and when reaching out to young people through events and other organizations.

Please direct questions on this campaign to Cynthia Watt, Colleges Branch, MTCU at 416-325-4008 or <cynthia.watt@ontario.ca>.

We greatly value your efforts, and hope that you will find the First Generation Students Toolkit and Your Future website valuable resources in the next academic year and the years to come.

Thank you,

Kirsten Parker
Ginette Plourde
Grant Clarke

c: Council of Ontario Directors of Education
   Ontario School Counsellors Association
   Kit Rankin, Director, Field Services Branch
   Regional Managers