MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
              Secretary Treasurers of School Authorities

FROM: Philip Steenkamp
      A/Deputy Minister
      Ministry of Education

DATE: June 8, 2007

SUBJECT: Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA)

I am writing to you concerning the Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) initiative and, in particular, to underline the importance of timely and accurate data submissions through the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS).

I have been learning about the range of impressive activities that boards have underway to improve their capacity to work with data in support of improved outcomes for students. The MISA initiative has helped to facilitate the progress that boards have made in upgrading technology, cleansing data and training staff in the management and use of data. I am sure you would agree that these activities are essential prerequisites for an evidence-informed environment at all levels in the system and it was this rationale that prompted the Ministry to introduce MISA as a key enabling initiative.

As evidenced by the significant funding that we have allocated for MISA, we continue to view this initiative as critical to the success of our shared goal of improving student achievement. You will have recently received a communication from Don Young indicating your MISA allocation for 2007-08 and outlining a ministry strategy for helping to ensure that critical submission deadlines for OnSIS are met. $20 million is being made available to school boards and school authorities for local capacity building and a further $1.6 million is once again being allocated to support the exciting work of the Professional Network Centres. This will bring total MISA funding to approximately $85 million since the inception of the initiative.
The full allocation for this year is conditional upon school boards meeting critical data reporting requirements. I would emphasize here the importance of school boards submitting October and March student/educator data by August 31, 2007. The calculation of board funding is reliant upon this information. I would also underline the importance of having June student/educator data submitted within specified timelines as this data is central to our analysis and reporting requirements.

As we continue to build confidence in the public education system, access to timely and accurate data is necessary to help inform refinements to policies and programs and to permit reporting about the significant achievements being realized in the education sector. In this regard, the considerable efforts of your staff to get organized around submitting data to OnSIS are also helping to ensure that your teachers, principals and board administrators have sound data to work with.

In conclusion, we recognize that the MISA initiative requires a significant change effort at all levels and remain committed to working collaboratively with board and school staff to address the challenges of OnSIS and to help build sustainable capacity for working with data to improve student achievement.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Philip Steenkamp
A/Deputy Minister

cc. MISA Leaders
Superintendents of Business
Director, Communications Branch
Director, Field Services Branch
Director, Transfer Payments and Financial Reporting Branch
Director, Corporate Finance and Services Branch
Regional Managers, Field Services Branch
MISA Advisory Committee members
Assistant Deputy Ministers
Chief Student Achievement Officer & CEO, Literacy & Numeracy Secretariat
CIO, Community Services I&IT Cluster
Director, Business Solutions, I&IT Cluster
Director, Information Management Branch