MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
FROM: George Zegarac
Deputy Minister (A)
DATE: December 10, 2008
RE: Enhanced Provincial School Finder Data

Dear Colleagues,

As you are aware, the Ministry is firmly committed to the use and reporting of data to inform decision-making and improvements in education. We are undertaking a range of initiatives to support this work provincially. By sharing information across the system about the important work we are all engaged in, we can make better decisions around student success.

Further to Steve Marshall’s memo from November 14 regarding Directors’ Annual Reports, we are exploring ways of improving access and reporting of provincial data for boards and schools, as well as to the general public. This will include enhancing the School Finder tool on the Ministry of Education website to provide more information on Ontario’s publicly funded schools.

Currently, there is only some basic information available for each school on the School Finder. As of April 2009, the new version will include a variety of publicly available data that will create a more detailed profile for each school. Further enhancements are being considered for 2010 and beyond that could include new data.

The profiles will include summary overview information about schools drawing on Ministry-held data from schools and boards, EQAO and Statistics Canada, such as information about student achievement and contextual school data. Users will be able to find schools in several different ways, including looking at schools with similar information.
We believe that this enhancement will help lead to more confidence in the publicly funded education system by increasing transparency, accountability and openness.

George Zegarac