January 29, 2008

Dear colleagues,

Under the leadership of Dr. Avis Glaze, Ontario’s Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat has established strong, collegial relationships with Ontario educators that have increased effective practice in the field and helped to improve student achievement. Last year, the Secretariat was recognized with the prestigious Amethyst award for excellence in the public service. During my time as your Deputy, I have relied on Avis’ advice and expertise on countless occasions. Today, I am very pleased to announce that Avis has agreed to take on a new assignment until August 31, 2008. With the Secretariat well-established, I have asked her to serve as Ontario’s Education Commissioner and as a Senior Advisor to the Minister on equity and character development. In this important role, Avis will share Ontario’s successes with national and international audiences and ensure that Ontario continues to learn about leading-edge practices being implemented elsewhere.

Avis has spent thirty-eight years in education, with a total of twenty-eight years at the elementary, secondary, community college and university levels in Ontario. She was a supervisory officer for twenty-three years in the Catholic and public school systems, and in rural and urban Ontario. She taught at faculties of education and has worked as a Researcher at the Ministry of Labour. She was a member of the team sent to South Africa to assist with education reform and a member of the Ontario Royal Commission on Learning. Her role in establishing the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and in launching its ambitious program of work is the crowning achievement of a long and distinguished career in education. She has won numerous awards, including the Order of Ontario and a number of honorary doctorates, for her outstanding contribution to education. She is a mentor to many Ontario educators, with a reputation as an innovative educator who gets things done. I look forward to continuing to benefit from Avis’s skills and experience in the months ahead.

It is my pleasure to also announce that Ann Perron, currently Senior Executive Officer in the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, will serve as Interim CEO of the Secretariat until a search is conducted and a permanent appointment made. Ann, working collaboratively with education partners, will focus on the strategies needed to take student learning, achievement and system improvement to new heights.
Ann joined the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat in 2006 from the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario where she served as Director of Education. Ann began her career in education at the Toronto Catholic District School Board and, with over 25 years as an educator in Ontario, she brings a wealth of knowledge and wide experience to this position.

These appointments are effective February 13, 2008. Please join me in congratulating Avis and Ann on these exciting new assignments.

Sincerely,

Philip Steenkamp
Deputy Minister