To: Directors of Education

From: Mary Jean Gallagher
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Student Achievement Division

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Date: March 26, 2010

Re: Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement, Kindergarten to Grade 12

As we work through this first year of K-12 planning, we thank you for your ongoing efforts to make your board improvement plans living documents that impact student learning. Thank you as well for the rich and informative feedback you provided to us regarding the components and the process.

As you are aware, all board improvement plans were reviewed in the fall using the Board and School Improvement Planning Assessment Tool. Since September, 2009 a working group from Student Success, Leadership, Special Education, French Language and The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat have been receiving feedback regarding the components in the board improvement plan and the planning process. Feedback was gathered from the regional session for Supervisory Officers in September, the meetings with senior staff and regional teams in September and October, and the mid-year conversations in January as well as from informal conversations between senior staff in boards and members of the Student Achievement Division.

To support our continued collaborative work with the board improvement planning process, resources have been revised and some are being developed in direct response to the feedback we received.

**Purpose of the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement**
Attachment #1 provides clarity regarding the purpose and scope of a board improvement plan. To further emphasize the precise nature of the board improvement plan it has been renamed the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement.

**Timelines**
The timelines related to the process of improvement planning and associated activities are outlined in attachment #2.
Most boards indicated that submission of the draft board improvement plan for student achievement in June did not allow for all information to be included in the needs assessment; therefore the date has been moved from June 30th to September 15th.

**Improvement Planning Assessment Tool**
As a result of ongoing consultation with the Special Education Branch, the Assessment Tool has been revised to be reflective of all student data and analysis. Please include the Supervisory Officer responsible for Special Education as a member of the team that develops, implements and monitors your board improvement plan for student achievement. See attachment #3 for the updated Improvement Planning Assessment Tool.

**Options for Board Improvement Planning**
The 4th attachment outlines two options for board improvement plans. Both options rely upon a comprehensive needs assessment that leads to determining areas of priority for gains in student achievement. Both options require boards to develop a few, focussed SMART goals for student learning and achievement.

The first option is to develop SMART goals for each of the four pillars: literacy; numeracy; pathways; and community, culture, and caring. The one refinement is the selection of indicators from the School Effectiveness Framework K-12 (SEF) that align with and support each SMART goal.

Option 2 allows a board to develop SMART goals that align with identified priority areas that have the potential of delivering the most gain in student achievement. In Option 2, boards would select the indicators from the SEF that align with and support each SMART goal. As well, boards should consider how the four pillars support the selected goals.

**Support to Write SMART Goals**
In the input received, Boards requested support in writing SMART goals. The Student Achievement Division will be producing a DVD that will illustrate the board improvement planning process including the writing of SMART goals. In the meantime, samples of effective SMART goals will be shared.

**2010-2011 Fall and Mid-Year Conversations and Data Requests**
Boards should continue to plan for a fall planning meeting and the mid-year conversation regarding the implementation of their plans and monitoring of student achievement results. Based on feedback from boards, we are reviewing data points and considering options for data gathering and a future memo will provide additional information.

**Spring 2010 Conversations**
As indicated at the fall 2009 regional sessions, in this first year of K-12 improvement planning, there are three opportunities for Board and Ministry teams to meet. In acknowledgement of these busy times, we are offering boards the option of a teleconference meeting in May/June. This conversation will provide feedback from the mid-year meeting and allow for any clarification of planning expectations and your board needs as we move forward.

Once again, we express our deep appreciation for your commitment to students and for the fine work that you are doing in your boards. As we visit school districts we are truly impressed with the commitment to deep implementation in classrooms and believe we all have reason to be optimistic about student outcomes.