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MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Supervisory Officers of Consortia of School Authorities

FROM: Sue Durst
Director
Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch

DATE: December 11, 2007

SUBJECT: 'Making GAINS' Conference– Engaging your district in the dynamics of promising practices in 7-12 Literacy and Mathematics Learning, February 12 and 13, 2008

I am pleased to inform you of the Ministry's plan to provide, between now and June 2008, multi-faceted supports in literacy and mathematical literacy, Grades 7 to 12. This plan, part of Phase 3 of our Student Success/Learning to 18 initiative, recognizes the importance of collaborating with boards in our efforts to reach every student.

Once again, a provincial conference is being hosted for board planners/leaders, and more targeted supports are being made available, over time, to teachers. This memo provides information about both activities.

Provincial Conference for Board Level Planners/Leaders

Boards are invited to send a team of leaders to the February 12-13, 2008 provincial conference – *Making GAINS*. This joint literacy and mathematics conference will showcase *GAINS* (Growing Accessible Interactive Networked Supports), launch Literacies for Lifelong Learning, and share models and tools for moving mathematics instruction forward.

The primary purpose of the 'Making GAINS' conference is to share promising practices for all levels of the system, and to suggest access points for boards, schools, and teachers. With this goal in mind, *Making GAINS* will provide opportunities in a combination of plenary and breakout sessions for district teams to explore the following:

- **promising practices for improving instruction in Literacy and Mathematics**, with variations of these across boards. Examples include coaching, lesson study, demonstration classrooms, cross-panel co-teaching, collaborative assessment development and scoring, contexts for effective use of CLIPS and interactive whiteboards in differentiating instruction, and collaborative development of school and family-of-schools Agendas for Action to Differentiate Mathematics Instruction

- **supports for principals and promising practices for their use**
- meaningful **research findings** from pilot projects
- promising ways of harnessing **collaborative technologies**, such as Adobe Connect, SMARTboards, and the GAINS First Class Server
- **tools for data analysis and measurement** of effectiveness, and promising applications of these
- **readiness conditions**, ways of scaling up and sustaining promising practices while honouring the complexities of implementation and change.

Sessions will address the range of roles represented on board teams and endeavour to engage participants as much as possible in interactive sessions.

The *Making GAINS* conference will take place at the Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre Hotel on February 12 and 13, 2008. Each school board and consortium of school authority may send a team of **up to six**, preferably comprised of individuals who play an active role in board-level strategic planning:

- Student Success Leader
- Mathematical Literacy lead, 7-12
- Literacy lead, 7-12
- 3 of the following:
 - elementary school (7-8) principal representative
 - secondary principal representative
 - IT lead
 - Curriculum or Program superintendent.

Hotel Reservations for Out-Of-Town Attendees

Hotel reservation details will be sent to Student Success Leaders by December 19th for forwarding to your board team.

Symposium Registration

On-line symposium registration information will be sent to Student Success Leaders in January, 2008.

Targeted Supports for Teachers

In response to requests that teachers be provided with ongoing, job-embedded professional learning supports, we are currently developing searchable print and video classroom and professional learning resources. We are also hosting various series of Adobe Connect web-conferences. We ask that you encourage all teachers to check www.EDUGAINS.ca regularly, and become part of an Adobe Connect community of practice. It is hoped that some provincially organized Adobe Connect communities will spin off into more local groups over time. To that end, we have provided all boards with licenses for up to 40 concurrent users of Adobe Connect, and 3 Adobe Presenter licenses.

As you can see, we have an ambitious agenda for improving literacy and mathematics instruction in Grades 7-12. We thank you in advance for your efforts to ensure that the appropriate stakeholders from your board attend activities outlined above.

Thank you for your board's ongoing work to ensure that Student Success supports in 7-12 reach every teacher and through them, every student.

Sue Durst

cc: Kirsten Parker, Director, Student Success/Learning to 18,
Implementation, Training & Evaluation Branch, Ministry of Education

Kit Rankin, Director, Field Services Branch, Ministry of Education
Regional Managers, Field Services Branch, Ministry of Education