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**MEMORANDUM TO:** District School Boards  
OYAP Coordinators / OYAP Supervisory Officers

**FROM:** Barb Simmons  
Director, Service Delivery Branch

**DATE:** September 13, 2013

**RE:** **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)  
OYAP Participant Application Form**

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Welcome back from your summer vacation. I trust you had an enjoyable break and are excited for another successful year for our OYAP students.

I would like to take the opportunity of the start of a new school year to highlight the successes of the OYAP program. Those of us who have seen Ontario's apprenticeship system grow over the years have been especially delighted by the enormous headway that has been made in the number of high school students who recognize the rewards of pursuing a career in the skilled trades. It goes without saying that the work of the OYAP coordinators has been critical to that shift in attitudes among youth.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind us all, as public servants and educators, of the importance of obtaining the informed consent of our clients and the protection of their privacy. As you know, school boards must obtain the signed consent of participants before enrolling them into the OYAP program and into the ministry's Employment Ontario Information System (EOIS-APPR).

Rather than an administrative chore, obtaining that consent is, as educators like to say, a "teachable moment". As our Privacy Commissioner has put it so eloquently, as Canadians, we see privacy not just as an individual right, but as part of our social or collective value system. Our right to privacy and consent is vital to our ability to be ourselves, and critical to a free and democratic society. Loss of privacy and control over our personal information can have a significant impact on our ability to be autonomous. This is an especially important message for youth in today's technologically integrated world.

As you know, the ministry is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and school boards are bound by the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA). Both acts outline laws regarding the collection, use, and security of personal information. In addition, the OYAP contract agreement outlines the requirements of school boards regarding privacy.

In addition to being a legal requirement, there are real tangible benefits to obtaining the signed consent of students or their parents/guardians prior to enrolling them into the OYAP. The ability to share the information gathered ensures that accurate statistics on OYAP participation is available to demonstrate the program's success and to inform ministry decision making. With accurate and validated data, the ministry is able to make evidence-based decisions for the continued support and growth of OYAP.

Our OYAP Consultant, Anita Webb, will be in touch with you on the specific methods and forms used in this regard and is ready to provide any assistance required. In closing, I would point out the resources available on the Information and Privacy Commissioner's website which includes Resource Guides for Teachers. These can be accessed at <http://www.ipc.on.ca/english/Home-Page/>

I thank you again for all the fine work accomplished so far and look forward to another fruitful year.

Best regards.