



12 February 2016

An Open Letter to Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce

Dear Mr Joyce,

Congratulations on your appointment as Leader of the Federal National Party and Deputy Prime Minister.

Now, more than ever, we need a strong voice to stand up for regional Australia - and for our kids in particular.

You have previously been a strong supporter of the Gonski funding rollout, so I am calling on you to take that message to the heart of our Federal Government.

We know that rural and regional kids fall behind their metropolitan counterparts at school. We also know that the needs based Gonski funding model ensures significant additional fund will go to rural and regional schools to help counteract the disadvantage inherent in their location.

Your Nationals Education Minister in NSW, Adrian Piccoli, has been a tremendous supporter of the funding model and has brought his boss, Mike Baird, on board.

Now we need you to stand up for rural and regional Australia and to get our Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to rethink his broken promise to the students and parents of Australia.

Not only does the Gonski funding address the disadvantage our regional kids face but it will also lead to additional jobs in rural and regional communities.

In his resignation speech, former Nationals Leader Warren Truss reminded us he had come from a small regional school and wondered whether a kid like him could still aspire to be Deputy Prime Minister. The answer to that question is in your hands.

Our kids deserve the same chances in life as their city cousins - and education is the key to those chances. If the Nationals still claim truly to stand up for rural and regional Australia, they cannot fail our kids now.

Mr Joyce, congratulations again on your new position. Please use it for the benefit of rural and regional Australia and insist your Government proceed with the full rollout of the Gonski funding model now.

Yours sincerely

*J Vials*

Jason Vials  
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Federation of P&C NSW