



MEDIA RELEASE

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Education review confirms CEF's commitment to closing the gap

The Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF) welcomes the release of the Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education (IRRRE) discussion paper published last week.

This eagerly anticipated paper, and subsequent review, are essential steps towards overcoming the challenges facing young people in rural, regional and remote Australia when considering participation in higher education and vocational training.

The review was commissioned by Federal Minister for Education, Simon Birmingham. The discussion paper was prepared by Emeritus Professor John Halsey.

The IRRRE review aims to identify innovative and fresh approaches to support improved access and achievement of students and their transition to further study, training and employment.

CEF's contribution to the IRRRE review will address one of the nine themes outlined in the discussion paper, "Transitioning beyond school".

CEF CEO, Wendy Cohen, is gratified by the minister's acknowledgment of CEF's work in the discussion paper.

"I'm thrilled that CEF, through this paper and by being involved in the review, will have the opportunity to be the voice of so many talented and ambitious young people, who, by virtue of their postcodes, face additional obstacles when moving from school to university, TAFE or apprenticeships."

"We are keen to participate in the review and anticipate we'll have a role in addressing, and closing, the gap that exists between those in the country and those in the city when it comes to further education and equal access to professional opportunities."

Speaking to recent Australian National University graduate - originally from Bathurst, NSW – Daniel McKay said CEF's work is vital to the continuation of educating and training rural and regional youth.

"Young people from the country face many additional challenges in pursuing their future, yet these are more readily overcome when they know they have the backing of their community."

"The support provided by local branches of the Country Education Foundation is not just material. It is also an invaluable statement of confidence in the potential of country students to succeed when given full access to opportunities to learn. It is exciting that the IRRRE is considering issues around equity and access and is seeking fresh thinking about how as a country we can overcome these challenges."

CEF looks forward to the findings of the IRRRE review, expected to be released in late 2017.

Further information available:

Education Minister Simon Birmingham's discussion paper media release:

<http://www.senatorbirmingham.com.au/Media-Centre/Media-Releases/ID/3597/Improving-education-opportunities-and-outcomes-for-country-kids>

Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education discussion paper:

https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/03917_independent_review_accessible.pdf

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