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**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP**  
Secretary of State

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6/1 April 2014

*Dear Jennette,*

Thank you for your letter of 10 March about regional schools commissioners (RSCs).

I was sorry to hear of your concerns about the handling of the appointment of RSCs, and hope I can provide some reassurance about these new roles.

The eight RSCs will be civil service appointments and will make decisions on my behalf within the current departmental framework of powers. We did not, therefore, consider that a consultation was necessary. The changes are intended to bring additional expertise to bear on my department's management of the academies programme.

No new organisation, additional regulator or new powers are being created. RSCs will help officials in my department to advise me on how best to tackle academy underperformance, create new academies and ensure that the sponsor market meets local needs.

Monitoring the performance of sponsors will be an important role for RSCs. They will be responsible for helping me to tackle sponsor underperformance, including advising me on when to pause the growth of sponsors. RSCs will have overall responsibility for advising me on how many more academies a sponsor can support. Where a sponsor operates across more than one region, we expect RSCs to work together with the Schools Commissioner and ministers.

Given the wealth of expertise in the London region, the proposed RSC regional structure is designed to help spread education leadership across the country. The split of regions is not intended to create any new organisational boundaries, but rather to deliver an even split of responsibility for the eight RSCs.

Thank you for writing to me on this important matter. I hope my response is helpful to you.

*M. Gove*

MICHAEL GOVE