



RURAL AND REMOTE FAMILIES DEMAND URGENT OVERHAUL OF EDUCATION SUPPORT FOR GEOGRAPHICALLY ISOLATED STUDENTS

MEDIA RELEASE

03 February 2024, Canberra, ACT: The Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) Australia is calling on the Federal Government to commit to **critical funding increases and new support measures** to ensure **equitable education access for geographically isolated students**. ICPA Australia says rural and remote families are being left behind by an outdated education support system that fails to keep pace with rising costs and increasing needs.

To discuss their asks in the crucial pre-election environment, the ICPA Australia team are headed to Canberra to advocate for reform – securing 31 meetings to date with MPs and their offices on 5th February, 2025.

ICPA Australia Federal President, Louise Martin, says current levels of support for rural and remote students are inadequate and in urgent need of reform.

“Families living in rural and remote Australia are facing rising education costs, yet government assistance has failed to keep up. Without an immediate increase to financial support, more children will be priced out of a fair education simply due to where they live.”

ICPA Australia is urging the Federal Government to agree to several key funding commitments to prevent further disadvantage for geographically isolated students, including:

- Geographically isolated distance education students remain under-supported. **ICPA Australia is calling for an increase to the AIC Distance Education Allowance.**
- Boarding schools play a crucial role in ensuring geographically isolated students have access to education, yet funding has failed to keep pace with costs. **ICPA Australia is calling for a one-off \$4,000 increase to the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Basic Boarding Allowance and alignment to the CPI Education sub index.**
- Early learning access in rural and remote areas is at risk due to a shortage of early childhood educators and a lack of funding for essential services. **ICPA Australia is pushing for pay parity for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teachers in remote regions and assured funding for Mobile Early Learning Services**, to ensure young children receive quality education no matter where they live.

With a federal election imminent, ICPA Australia's presence in Canberra is timely, says Mrs Martin, “This is a crucial opportunity for policymakers to commit to genuine change for rural and remote students.”

ICPA Australia urges the Federal Government to act now to address these inequities and ensure geographically isolated students receive the support they deserve.



Media Call Details:

The ICPA's Federal Council will be in Canberra and available for interviews on **5th February**. Please contact the media representative below to arrange interviews and photo opportunities during the delegation.

For more information on ICPA Australia's advocacy and to support ICPA Australia via membership, visit [ICPA's website](#).

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For further information and comment, please contact:

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About the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA)

Established in 1971, ICPA is a voluntary, not-for-profit, apolitical parent body dedicated to ensuring equity of access to education for all students who live in rural and remote Australia. To find out more, visit their [website](#).