



ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Achievements

Since its inception in 1971, the Isolated Children's Parents' Association has been lobbying for equal educational opportunities for regional, rural and remote students. Noteworthy achievements include:-

THE 1970s

- The first Queensland ICPA Branch was formed at Cunnamulla in June 1971, followed by Kindon, Dirranbandi and Bollon.
- Queensland was the first Council to hold a State Conference and did so in Blackall in 1972, with there now being 22 ICPA Branches across the State.
- The first major achievement of ICPA (Federally) was the introduction of the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme, which continues to benefit Queensland Rural and Remote families to offset educational expenses.

THE 1980s...

- From 1983 – 85 ICPA Qld was heavily involved in the restructuring of Correspondence Schools and Schools of the Air. There are now seven Schools of Distance Education in Queensland which cater for Rural and Remote students who do not have daily access to a physical school due to distance.
- One of the most successful lobbies of ICPA Qld was the introduction of the Living Away from Home Allowance Scheme (LAFHAS) in 1985, providing financial assistance for students who have no reasonable access to a school and must live away from home e.g., to attend boarding school.
- In 1985 ICPA Qld liaised closely with the Department of Transport to formulate a Conveyance Allowance to assist with travel expenses for Rural and Remote students travelling to school daily.

THE 1990s...

- ICPA lobbying assisted in the introduction of the Remote Area Incentive Scheme to improve the teacher housing and provide travel concessions and inductions programs for Rural and Remote teachers.
- The Queensland Government released its Drought Assistance Package in 1994, which included assistance for drought affected families to drive children to school or school transport.

THE 2000s...

- Schools of Distance Education switched from HF Radio telephone for lesson delivery in 2006. ICPA and its members were instrumental in the trials leading up to the changeover.
- Following seven years of lobbying, ICPA Qld State Council was successful in gaining an additional .5 FTE for one teacher schools with 20 or more students in seven or eight year levels thus enabling school communities to choose to have a second teacher.

THE 2010s...

- In 2013 the eKindy program was rolled out and is now firmly entrenched in the Distance Education syllabus, providing access to kindergarten for geographically isolated children.
- The Distance Education ICT Subsidy was changed from a per family basis to a per child basis.
- Following increased lobbying by ICPA Qld, the Department of Education created the Autism and Reading Hub with accessibility for all schools and families across the state.
- The Department of Education introduced the Remote Kindergarten Pilot Program to eligible small schools in 2016 as a result of ICPA Qld's lobby for more accessible opportunities for kindergarten aged children. From the beginning of 2019 this became a permanent program, being rebranded the State Delivered Kindergarten Program and it benefits communities with no accredited kindergarten program provider within a 45km radius.

THE 2020s and beyond...

- Establishment of a Rural and Remote Branch within the Department of Education.
- ICPA Qld hosted its first Virtual Rally via Zoom to draw attention to the plight of boarding school students being unfairly disadvantaged by the border closures and boarding school regulations implemented by the Qld Government and Chief Health Officer in 2020 during Covid.
- ICPA Qld hosted its first Virtual Conference via Zoom from the Toowoomba Grammar School Pavilion due to the Covid 19 social distance regulations.
- ICPA Qld was successful in its advocacy to have the ICT Subsidy raised from \$250 to \$400 per student.
- ICPA Qld held a Press Conference in 2023 at the grounds of Parliament House in Brisbane, lobbying for the LAFHAS to be increased.
- 2023 Julia Creek Conference saw the announcement by the Director-General of Education, Michael De'Ath on behalf of Minister Grace Grace MP, of an increase to the LAFHAS of \$4000 per student per year.



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