



RURAL SCHOOLS/SCHOOL TRAVEL PORTFOLIO

Rural and Remote locations in Australia provide the greatest challenges for improving provision of education options and pathways for children and families. Many children attend small schools with limited subject availability. More isolated schools consist of one teacher classrooms that comprise multi-levels from Prep to year 6. Air and road travel are essential modes of travel for rural and remote living and education as long distances are not avoidable and most times difficult with current challenges for families.

WHATS GOOD TO KNOW

3 motions were presented under the banner of Rural Schools and School Travel at the 2020 ICPA Federal Conference.

- The continuance of the National School Chaplaincy Program past 2022.
- That students who are in receipt of the AIC be able to access corporate travel (airfare and associated costs) discounts when travelling to and from school.
- That the methodology of the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) rebate can be accessed by students travelling to Canberra as support to the civics and citizenship curriculum be reconsidered and reviewed to better reflect the distances that students from remote and rural schools must travel. This motion was presented by the SA State Council in response to member feedback.

Something to be aware of is that whilst the rate for conveying students to and from school (Student Travelling Allowance) does have a small rate increase every year in line with CPI, the base rate has only seen an increase of about 4 cents in the last 10 years and is very out of touch compared to the rates other states get for similar allowances.

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

The last 12 months has been a quiet one for this portfolio in South Australia but Federal Council, as always has continued to advocate for access and equity in educational outcomes for families whose children attend rural schools and those with travel requirements for attending their places of education.

One of the more recent issues for South Australian members in this portfolio is the review and retention of bus routes and students' numbers on those buses. As it stands those schools that have had issues in the past, are maintaining the student numbers they need to retain their buses which is very encouraging for those families who rely on them for their children to get to school.