

BRANCH MOTIONS

48th Annual State Conference,

Friday 22nd March 2019



SA ICPA Conference motions 2019

EARLY CHILDHOOD

1. Marree Air Branch

CARRIED / LOST

"That SA ICPA lobby Child and Family Health Services and the Department for Health and Wellbeing to reinstate a full-time CaFHS nurse to service remote and outback areas, not just rural areas.

Explanation

It was advised in late 2018 that commencing 2019 CaFHS will employ the child health nurse as a dedicated remote service with regular clinics in Hawker and Quorn locations to assist those living in remote areas along with a telephone number to access. Previously Remote & Isolated Children's Exercise (RICE) had a nurse that travelled to remote and outback properties that was funded 0.4 by CaFHS. Our concern is that there are a number of families with new babies and other children requiring child health and development checks that cannot easily access these clinics due to the distance needed to travel. Families in our branch would need to travel up to 780kms to access the closest clinic and mothers with new babies and children should not feel the daunting experience of having to travel hundreds of kilometres to get their new baby or child health development checks.

It is understood that the RFDS has been doing a lot of these checks due to no local visiting CaFHS nurse. We have families in our branch that are not serviced by RFDS Central Operations based out of Port Augusta but by RFDS Broken Hill which are not aligned to the SA Health service and therefore records are not shared. It is not expected that the RFDS should be doing our checks if it is a SA Government supplied service unless they are funded for this.

2. SA State Council

CARRIED / LOST

"That SA ICPA lobbies the Minister for Health and Wellbeing to provide funding and support for a dedicated child health nurse to be part of the RICE team to service remote and isolated families."

Explanation:

On the 13 December 2018, ICPA SA were notified by the Project Officer (Communications) for Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS) that *commencing from January 2019, all child health checks for remote and isolated families would be undertaken by a CaFHS Nurse, employed by CaFHS and not RICE* and could we update our web page to reflect that information.

CaFHS has since removed their contribution of funding and support from RICE and employed a child health nurse, employed by CaFHS, in a so called dedicated remote services role.

CaFHS have also advised that they will be offering regular clinics and providing quality services in Hawker and Quorn locations to further assist - This is of little assistance to those isolated and remote families leaving them with no reliable service unless they are able to travel many hundreds of kilometres. The RICE nurse was a full-time position that was a lifeline for mothers and families living remotely.

RICE is perfectly placed to continue to deliver the CaFHS services as part of their holistic approach to assisting families with young children that live in some of the remotest regions of the state.

It would be detrimental for families in isolation to lose this service. We urge the Minister for Health and Wellbeing to reconsider this decision.

3. North East Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SA State Council write to the Minister for Education asking that the RICE kindy teacher position be converted from a contract to a permanent position.”

Explanation:

Attracting staff to any rural or remote South Australian school or pre-school is difficult at the best of times. When a position is on an ongoing contract basis, this task is made even more complex and challenging. Throw in the uniqueness of RICE, and the mission becomes almost overwhelming. By converting this important position from a contract to a permanent position, prospective employees would have much more certainty around their tenure and their career stability. It would also allow RICE management much greater clarity around their annual and ongoing planning. Given that RICE delivers pre-school education to the vast majority of SOTA Reception students, the stability and continuity of the delivery of this program is vital for our children’s education.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

4. North East Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SA State Council continue its efforts to pursue the very important goal of autonomy for the Port Augusta SOTA.”

Explanation:

The NE branch would like to thank State Council for the work they have been doing around this issue, which is close to the hearts of many SA ICPA members. The NE branch wishes to endorse this work to date and urge State Council to continue their efforts to engage any and all relevant parties.

5. Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SA ICPA continue to ask the Department for Education to undertake an investigation into the feasibility of the Port Augusta School of the Air becoming a standalone school.”

Explanation:

At the 2018 SA ICPA State Conference motions were raised like the one that is being put forward by the Flinders Ranges branch today. The response from the SOTA community was overwhelmingly positive and fully supportive of an investigation into SOTA becoming its own independent school again. Unfortunately, this has not been the case from those who have addressed the motions within the Department for Education. Whilst there has been some discussion surrounding this idea, there has been no real headway made regarding an initial investigation into the feasibility and logistics of returning SOTA to a stand-alone school.

What the Flinders Ranges branch is asking with this motion is that the Department for Education conduct a quantified and appropriate investigation into this matter. The community of South Australian families who have, currently are and who may educate their children through Distance Education are wanting to see SOTA return to a school that is driven and supported by SOTA families, remote and rural communities and SOTA’s rich history.

6. North West Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“SA ICPA lobby the Minister for Education to investigate the reinstatement of the Port Augusta School of the Air to be a stand-alone school.”

Explanation:

Last year our members requested that the Minister of Education investigate the merits of reinstating the Port Augusta School of the Air to be a stand-alone school. We are told that it would not be economically feasible. We would like the department to work with SA ICPA to provide costing figures that sustain this. Our members still have strong concerns that the current arrangement of Port

Augusta School of the Air managed under the umbrella of Open Access College is no longer beneficial or in the best educational interests of our students, the staff and school community.

7. North West Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SA ICPA lobbies the Minister for Education to ensure that the Department for Education has a strategy in place to refill a teaching position which is vacated by the applicant leaving to pursue another teaching position elsewhere.”

Explanation:

In recent times School of the Air has had the unfortunate event that a teacher has been appointed a class at the beginning of the school year only to be offered another position at another school and left immediately to pursue that role. This has left OAC and SOTA to hastily undertake the task of filling the vacated position before the school term starts, with at times an unsuitable applicant.

Similarly, this year kindergarten students learning through the Remote and Isolated Children’s Exercise Inc kindergarten program were left without a teacher at the beginning of the school year as the incumbent teacher found out that she had won another position two days before first term started.

Although this is not isolated to the realm of distance education, and is most certainly a problem for many other schools, distance education is at more of a disadvantage as the pool of teachers willing to take on these positions, and familiar with the delivery method, is far smaller than that of face to face schools.

We would like to see a policy put in place that protects schools & their students from these instances by ensuring a teacher who agrees to take on the position has to give sufficient notice before vacating that role. In this time the teacher can still undertake planning and delivery of lessons while the school has more time to fill the role with a suitable applicant.

8. North West Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SA ICPA lobbies the Minister for Education to assist providers of distance education to have access to relief teachers trained in the delivery of distance education to assist in any shortfall of staff.”

Explanation:

In order for our distance education students to receive continuity of their education, we feel that having a pool of relief or short term contracted teachers who have appropriate training and knowledge in the delivery of Distance Education, would help alleviate the pressure SOTA and RICE are under to fill short- and long-term absences of teachers.

BOARDING SCHOOLS & HOSTELS:

9. Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SAICPA write to Government and Non-Government Boarding schools to highlight the difficulties faced by drought affected rural and remote families meeting school fee payments in times of hardship and to ask them to consider flexible payment arrangements for these families moving forward.”

Explanation:

Boarding school is not a ‘choice’ for many of our members, but rather a ‘necessity’ due to geographical isolation. Many families currently affected by drought are facing crippling financial hardship. Families will often be hesitant, or too proud, to approach their boarding schools to ask for help with fees. They may not know who the best contact person would be to discuss such issues. If schools could be considerate, and perhaps be proactive in contacting their families that live in drought affected areas, that would be a way of starting the conversation and a welcome token of support.

10. Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SAICPA write to Government and Non-Government Boarding schools to highlight the wellbeing of boarding students from drought affected rural and remote areas and ask for extra assistance and resources to help children navigate through times of hardship.”

Explanation:

Children from drought affected areas, living away from home at boarding schools, know all too well the impact the drought is having on their families. They are also living through this hardship and require specific support to ensure their wellbeing is maintained accordingly.

In discussing the recently released UNICEF IN THEIR WORDS DROUGHT REPORT 2019, UNICEF Australia Senior Policy Advisor, Oliver White said there is ‘an evident need for dedicated psycho-social support, coupled with a heartfelt desire to be included in solutions.’

“These young people care deeply about and are abundantly aware of the trauma their parents are going through, while at the same time, are operating with the over-arching attitude that they shouldn’t talk about their own psychological reactions and concerns because ‘it is always worse for someone else’,” he said. “We found that they have been put in the position of having to make very adult decisions about their lives, their parents’ lives, their family’s farms and businesses – these decisions, their insights and solutions are based upon real, lived experience, have clarity and offer valuable contributions.”

<<https://www.unicef.org.au/about-us/media/february-2019/children-in-drought-affected-areas-have-a-you-jus>>

Link to the UNICEF In Their Words Drought Report 2019 -

<<https://www.unicef.org.au/Upload/UNICEF/Media/Documents/Drought-Report-2019.pdf>>

Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SAICPA write to the Minister for Education to seek some form of financial assistance for rural and remote families from drought affected areas to help them keep up with boarding fee payments (private or public) during these harsh economic conditions.”

Explanation:

Boarding school is not a ‘choice’ for many of our members, but rather a ‘necessity’ due to geographical isolation. Many families currently affected by drought are facing crippling financial hardship and it is paramount that our children’s education is not put at risk by the inability of their parents to afford school fees.

11. Port Augusta Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SA ICPA approaches the boarding schools in Adelaide and asks that they consider financial assistance in the form of a bursary to students that live at least 56km from the nearest school offering year 7-10 entry. “

Explanation:

There is a widening gap between the true cost of boarding and the AIC and SEA available to families of students that must board in order to receive their secondary education. The gap needs reducing in order that these families are able to meet the cost of educating their children. Since 2015 the costs of sending a child to a boarding school has risen from an average of \$37 237 to \$41 769.

TRAVEL

12. Port Augusta Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That SA ICPA approach airlines servicing the northern areas of South Australia and request that they implement a student fare.”

Explanation:

Boarding students returning home during term are faced with the dilemma of long bus journeys that greatly erode available down time or huge airfare costs. Families are faced with the situation that they need to cut a long weekend short to allow for the two days travel via the bus because the cost of air fares precludes families from being able to utilise them.

ADMINISTRATION

14. North East Branch

CARRIED / LOST

“That the North East branch host the 2020 SA state conference.”