

STATE CONFERENCE MOTIONS

Thursday 23rd March 2023

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Motion 1 North East Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA State Council support ICPA Federal Council in seeking the establishment of a Distance Education Teaching Allowance (DETA), to recognise the ongoing out of pocket expenses families incur to educate their children via distance education.”

Explanation: The role of the distance education tutor is vital to the education of young, remote children studying via School of the Air, who have no other option than to attend school via distance education. The role of tutor often falls to the mother, who is required to manage this along with an already busy schedule, with no recompense. The hours are generally the same as paid teaching staff, yet with little to no recognition.

Some families employ a Distance Education Tutor, which comes with an additional cost to the family. Families must decide whether to pay a wage to a tutor, or the mother must somehow find more time to take on the role. A Distance Education Tutor Allowance would go some way towards recognising the important role the tutor plays and compensate the family in a small way for the high cost of educating their children.

Motion 2. North East Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA request the Minister for Education, Training and Skills and the South Australian Government to build a new, stand-alone facility that would accommodate Port Augusta School of the Air (SOTA) and Remote & Isolated Children’s Exercise (RICE) on their own premises.”

Explanation: Currently, the Port Augusta School of the Air and RICE have a campus on the Augusta Park Primary School grounds. They have the use of three separate buildings, located in different areas on the Augusta Park grounds. SOTA conducts face-to-face weeks each term in Port Augusta and the SOTA students must share the school facilities with Augusta Park students. This includes the requirement of SOTA teachers seeking permission from Augusta Park to use the school gym, oval and playground. During 2022 the buildings sustained significant water damage and the SOTA had to host their face to face week at another school premises.

It would be beneficial if both SOTA and RICE could share their own premises, not another school’s campus. This would allow students, families, educators and the outback education community to have their own facilities and create their own school campus, ethos, values and unique space that directly relates to their distinctive learning and living style. This would have a direct and very beneficial effect on the mental health and well-being of our outback families. In addition, the current facilities are outdated and badly in need of repairs, so a new, stand-alone facility would very quickly make much better financial sense.

Motion 3. Port Augusta Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA requests the Department for Education to provide a standalone all-inclusive building for School of the Air (SOTA) and Remote and Isolated Children’s Exercise (RICE) services in Pt Augusta.”

Explanation: Currently there are three separate buildings situated across the grounds of Augusta Park Primary School that house SOTA, RICE and the Outback Centre. We believe the benefits of having one site, for kindergarten, primary school, the community, and play will far out way the costs and will be beneficial for the education and wellbeing of all involved. Improved facilities would increase the sense

of belonging for students, staff and the wider community. Improved access to these buildings for educational activities and support services is vital for the safety of our children.

Motion 4 North West Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA work with the Department for Education, Open Access College and School of the Air, (SOTA) Port Augusta to prepare and provide a review of the current school buildings and grounds with the ultimate aim to provide safe and inclusive facilities, essential infrastructure and an environment suitable for the teachers and geographically isolated students of SOTA.”

Explanation: This motion was presented and passed at the State Conference in 2022. The motion was taken to the Minister for Education with a reply, in July 2022, that a review would be undertaken. We ask the Minister and the Head of Open Access College, Julie Taylor about the outcomes of the review and the short and long term goals for the buildings and infrastructure at the current location.

Motion 5. North West Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA write to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills requesting that funding for the Certificate 3 in Education Support be reinstated.”

Explanation: South Australia led the way in developing, implementing, and recognising the importance of the home supervisor when the Home Supervisor Training Grant was instigated in 2001. This gave Home Supervisors the opportunity to gain a Certificate 3 in Education Support by studying externally via Marden Senior College and Open Access College. Since then, we estimate at least 90 supervisors have completed their Certificate 3 in Education Support.

Minister Boyer stated in his letter to state council in July 2022 that *Open Access College and SOTA receive an annual grant from the department to provide financial support for SOTA supervisors completing Certificate III in Education Support. This grant includes a \$2,000 wage subsidy per student who successfully completes the certificate.* This has been an excellent incentive for both employer and employee as the funding could go towards paying for a supervisor which is a cost currently 100% covered by the family.

It is our understanding that the Certificate 3 in Education Support is no longer being offered. Where has this subsidy grant gone?

We strongly urge the government to reinstate this program for a further period as it has given acknowledgement to the supervisors and the work they do with their students in their remote classrooms.

Motion 6. Port Augusta Branch

CARRIED

That SA ICPA requests the Department for Education to provide a state Distance Education Teaching Allowance (DETA) to recognise geographically isolated distance education home tutors (usually mothers) who take themselves out of the workforce, their businesses and their normal daily lives to administer daily compulsory education to their children in the home schoolroom.

Explanation: Currently there are less than 50 families that would be eligible for this allowance, who meet the criteria of geographically isolated and teach their children via distance education. The Gross Regional Product per capita for the Outback Communities Authority (OCA) region in which these students reside is \$417,000. This compared to the Gross State Product of \$62,100 per capita highlights the fact that inhabitants of the OCA area contribute well above the state average towards the finances of the state.

Unemployment for the OCA region is lower than both state and federal levels. This highlights the fact that there is not a lot of scope for taking on the extra workload involved in supervising. Often families seek an additional employee to supervise schooling. However, without financial support the reality is that many families cannot afford this option and the family must absorb the added work load and responsibility themselves. This continues to be a huge contributing factor to the reason many families leave the bush.

BOARDING SCHOOLS AND HOSTELS

MOTION 7. Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA writes to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills to request an increase in the State Education Allowance (SEA) in recognition of the rising cost of living pressures, exacerbated by the tyranny of distance for rural and remote families.”

Explanation: Over the 12 months to December 2022 quarter, inflation/cost of living rose by 7.8%, the highest it has been since 1990. The cost of day-to-day necessities including food, electricity, and fuel have increased in line with inflation. For people who live rurally, the price of these commodities is generally higher the further you live from metropolitan/built up areas before inflation is factored into it. Having no alternative but to send your child away to boarding school for their secondary education, or to set up a second home to educate your children, families are having to pay high out of pocket expenses to ensure their children receive a compulsory education. With the rising cost of living pressures, this is adding to much stress and anxiety for families.

The SEA is currently set at \$4486.27, and we request that in line with inflation, an increase of \$400 per student be provided. For an estimated 50 students that would mean a cost to the Government of \$20,000. In turn it would make the world of difference to those geographically isolated families who rely on the SEA to ensure their children receive an equitable education.

MOTION 8. Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA requests the Department for Education for an increase to the Remote Travel Allowance component of the State Education Allowance (SEA).”

Explanation: The current rate of the Remote Travel Allowance is set at \$250. This has been the flat rate since its inception and given the current cost of living and the level of inflation we are seeing we believe that an increase to this rate is necessary for families to alleviate the financial strain of transporting students long distance. For an estimated 50 families in receipt of this allowance the cost to the Government would be \$12,500, a small amount that would go a long way for families.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE

Motion 9. North East Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA State Council continue to work with ICPA Federal Council towards having the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) extended to 3/4-year-olds doing Kindergarten by distance education.”

Explanation: Currently, 4-year-old students studying Kindergarten via distance education are ineligible to receive the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Distance Education Allowance. If families received this allowance, it would alleviate the cost of providing an educational experience for their children. Most children who are enrolled in a distance education Kindergarten program are found to have better

educational outcomes in later years, by forming these important foundations early in their educational journey.

Motion 10. State Council

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA, on behalf of all its members, offer their gratitude and thanks to the Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS) for their willingness to work with SA ICPA State Council and other interested parties on improving outcomes for our members.”

Explanation: In recent years there has been several motions and issues brought to State Council from members, with concerns about a gap in some of the services being provided by CaFHS. As a council we have taken those motions to CaFHS during delegations, and we have always been welcomed and made to feel like our concerns have been heard. While some of the ‘kinks’ have still not been ironed out, SA ICPA wanted to offer our thanks to all those involved for their openness with their processes and willingness to work with us to find solutions that can benefit all interested parties. It should be noted that this is not always the case with other areas of advocacy and it is most appreciated.

RURAL SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL TRAVEL

MOTION 11 Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA ask the Department for Education for an increase in the Car Allowance component of the Student Travelling Allowance Scheme, which is paid to families who transport their children to a school or a suitable bus stop.”

Explanation: A motion presented at the 2017 SA ICPA State Conference regarding an increase in the rate paid for the Car Allowance component of the Student Travelling Allowance Scheme, quoted that the rate was just over \$0.22 cents per kilometre. This year it has been quoted to us that the rate for 2023 is \$0.2687 per kilometre. That means the increase for 6 years stands at 22% and around 4 cents. Historically this allowance has increased in relation to the CPI.

In 2017 the cost of diesel was around \$1.35 per litre. At the beginning of 2023 the cost of diesel was hovering around \$2 per litre. This would suggest an increase in the cost of diesel of around 48%. In 2017 the cost for an average priced four-wheel drive tyre was around \$150 per tyre. Currently the cost of the same type of tyre is around \$300. This is an increase of 100%. These are just two of the main costs that families in rural and remote South Australia incur when running a car to and from a school or a bus stop and the cost of running a vehicle has increased at a far greater rate than that of the Car Allowance.

Whilst we understand that an increase to the allowance to match the above running cost increases may not be achievable, we do ask that the Department for Education increase the allowance for families who are educating and driving their children to school and or bus stops in rural and remote South Australia so that it is closer to the physical increases and not just the CPI.

Motion 12. Port Augusta Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA liaise with the Minister for Regional Roads and the Department of Infrastructure and Transport (DIT), Road Maintenance – Regional North & Outback division to highlight how vital having a functional road system is to ensure our members are able to access educational opportunities.”

Explanation: The road is our lifeline. It needs to be maintained to a safe and acceptable level to ensure that our children can safely access their schools. Roads are critical in providing an essential link to enable remote and isolated families to access educational facilities, mail to be delivered and children to access school events, as well as improving the livelihood and productivity of our outback regions. Within the Port Augusta branch we have families that attend School of the Air, families that drive into school in Port Augusta each day, families with students that are weekly boarders and families that have

sent their children to Adelaide to board full time. It is essential that unsealed roads are maintained and repaired to allow safe travel. Over the years the money for maintenance of outback roads is getting less and less.

The roads need to be maintained to support us accessing compulsory education for our students.

Motion 13. Port Augusta Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA lobbies airlines servicing the northern areas of South Australia to provide 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

Motion 14. Marla Oodnadatta Branch

CARRIED

“That the Marla Oodnadatta Branch host the 2024 SA ICPA state conference.”

State Council

MOTION 1

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA, on behalf of all its members, offer their gratitude and thanks to the Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS) for their willingness to work with SA ICPA State Council and other interested parties on improving outcomes for our members.”

Explanation: In recent years there has been several motions and issues brought to State Council from members, with concerns about a gap in some of the services being provided by CaFHS. As a council we have taken those motions to CaFHS during delegations and we have always been welcomed and made to feel like our concerns have been heard. While some of the ‘kinks’ have still not been ironed out, SA ICPA wanted to offer our thanks to all those involved for their openness with their processes and willingness to work with us to find solutions that can benefit all interested parties. It should be noted that this is not always the case with other areas of advocacy and it is most appreciated.

Motion S1: Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA write to the Minister for Education to request that basic ‘Student with Additional Needs (SWAN)’ support training be standard for all School Support Officers (SSOs) across Rural Schools and Open Access College School of the Air Campus.”

Explanation:

Currently SSOs assist teachers to work with SWAN children in classrooms; this is increasingly difficult due to time/funding constraints when considering the skillset of SSOs. Many different needs within each classroom require upskilling for SSOs to meet speech, additional physical needs, ADHD, children with Autism as examples. In rural towns, there is a gap emerging between what a school can fund for training to support SWAN children and what children on NDIS actually receive. Visits from visiting professionals in rural areas is below student demand. The process for a school to apply for additional funds for SWAN children is lengthy and arduous, which in itself acts as a prohibiting factor. Requiring all SSOs in rural schools to receive mandatory basic SWAN training will relieve pressure from all parties involved, the SSO, the Teacher, the School and most importantly will ensure that SWAN children are appropriately supported.

Motion S2: Flinders Ranges Branch

CARRIED

“That SA ICPA write to the Minister for Education to request financial support for Rural Schools and Open Access College School of the Air Campus to enable the appropriate teachers to become trained in the management of ‘Students with Additional Needs’ (SWAN) children, which will enable them to train the School Support Officers in SWAN fundamentals suited to their classroom requirements.”

Explanation:

Currently rural schools are funded by the department to train Autism Lead Teachers. However, specific needs teacher training is not funded so must compete with whole school demands for finite financial resources. We would like to see dedicated specific needs funding for each rural school to allow teachers to be released for SWAN training and to cover the costs of attending this training to ensure each school is able to access such an important resource.

Floor Motion: North West Branch

CARRIED

“That SAICPA is assured that Open Access College continues to provide the Certificate 3 in Education Support in conjunction with Central Queensland University.”

Explanation: South Australia led the way in developing, implementing and recognising the importance of the home supervisor with the instigation of the Home Supervisor Training Grant in 2001. Studying externally via Marden Senior College and Open Access College, home supervisors were given the opportunity to gain a Certificate 3 in Education Support. We estimate at least 90 supervisors have completed their Certificate 3 in Education Support. We understand that Marden Senior College can no longer provide this VET course due to lack of government funding and hope that with the collaboration of UniHub Spencer Gulf Central Queensland University and Open Access College this course can continue to be delivered to remote and isolated home supervisors.

The Certificate 3 in Education Support has been an excellent incentive for both employer and employee and we would like to see this further grow and develop.