

## BOARDING SCHOOLS/ HOSTELS

### A 1. QUEENSLAND STATE COUNCIL

**“That ICPA Qld, on behalf of its members and their families, thanks Independent Schools Queensland, Queensland Catholic Education Commission and the Australian Boarding Schools Association, for their tireless work and understanding of the needs of boarding students at all times, but especially during Covid times.”**

**CARRIED BY ACCLAMATION**

### A 2. QUEENSLAND STATE COUNCIL

**“That ICPA Qld, on behalf of its members, thanks the Department of Education and the Department of Health for their swift action and willingness to include all education stakeholders in regular meetings regarding the Code for Boarding School Students at the beginning of 2022.”**

**CARRIED BY ACCLAMATION**

## COMMUNICATIONS

### A 3. ALPHA BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education for an increase to the Distance Education Broadband Internet subsidy for geographically isolated students, to more adequately reflect the current costs of broadband connectivity in remote classrooms.”**

#### **Explanation:**

Education Queensland provides an annual subsidy for geographically isolated students currently enrolled in an SDE of \$500 to assist with offsetting the costs of broadband internet access for the home classroom. This subsidy has not increased over the years as the demand for data and classroom connectivity expenses have grown. The average cost of a broadband connection to a SDE schoolroom is approximately \$85/month\* (BIRRR Survey stats), leaving some families significantly out of pocket for broadband access, particularly when they have only one child in the schoolroom.

The SDE curriculum, materials and resources are predominantly accessed and delivered online, thus broadband connectivity is an essential service for SDE classrooms. The current ICT subsidy needs to more adequately reflect the costs of broadband.

**CARRIED**

### A 4. DAWSON VALLEY BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to have trained local IT support personnel or funding available for small schools to buy support time to manage hardware and software issues that arise within the school environment.”**

### Explanation:

In some small rural P-10 schools, IT support is managed by a classroom teacher who has been provided with extra training to have an orange card level of access. Whilst this is appreciated, teacher transfers and class commitments mean that the class teacher/IT support person may not be able to provide consistent and ongoing support when most needed.

With online NAPLAN testing, the need for IT to be seamless is essential if rural students are to have the same access to this testing platform as their city counterparts who enjoy faster speeds and actively maintained computers and programs. An on the ground IT support person with a higher level of access is essential for this connectivity.

If there comes a time when students bring their own laptops/iPads to school, IT support staff with administration level access will be essential in ensuring students are able to access the programs they need both at school and at home.

An example of the feedback received from teachers is:

Teacher A: "In our small P-10 school we have one teacher with their Orange card. This teacher is our go-to person when things go wrong or when new computers need setting up. However, any support they give takes away from the time they can devote to their own teaching and preparation."

Teacher B: "When we need to move issues to a higher level with software providers for example, we are advised to take this up with our IT department. We are our IT department! Are small rural schools now expected to fundraise to access additional IT support when issues are beyond Orange card access or if the teacher is absent or transferred?"

Previously our school purchased one day per month of support time from a larger State School that is located one hour away. However, that IT person is now so busy with IT issues in the larger school that we are no longer able to access this support. The One School 1800 hotline is useful but wait times can be long which is exacerbated if issues need to be escalated to a higher-level service support technician. Although this assistance is useful, it takes up valuable teaching time. Could a workable solution be found for smaller cluster schools in our area to share a technician for example?

### **CARRIED**

#### **A 5. DAWSON VALLEY BRANCH**

**"That ICPA Qld continue lobbying the Department of Education to assist rural schools in having adequate bandwidth/internet speed to ensure the connectivity supports the digital capabilities required by our students to participate in all online lessons and programs."**

### Explanation:

Some small rural P-10 schools have observed difficulties using online lessons with much of the lesson time spent logging on.

We were heartened to hear on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 that the Palaszczuk Government has committed to making internet speeds in every state school 40 times faster by the end of 2023, and 200 times faster in 2026.

In the meantime, however, teachers are struggling to teach certain aspects of the curriculum and our students are at risk of falling behind as a direct result of poor internet speeds.

Parents have also observed that students leaving small rural schools to further their education in larger centres are often at a disadvantage with their limited computer skills compared to city counterparts.

Examples of the feedback received from teachers:

Teacher A - "When I try to get my class logged onto the computers, the bandwidth does not support everyone logging in at the same. By the time everyone has logged on, it's time finish the lesson." Teacher B - "I try to avoid using the computers due to the time taken to get all students logged on and into the program. I'm not sure if this is a combination of internet speed, older computers or students not logging off properly from a time before. With limited access to technical support it's all very frustrating for both myself and the students."

Teacher C - "Internet connection is terrible and when things go wrong there is just no-one we can reach out to for help in rectifying! Every time we try to log in it takes half an hour and even then, not all students are logged in. I now allow twice the time it should take for a computer-based task and I feel guilty about wasting time."

Teacher D - "In Japanese the computers have glitches, they freeze, the writing goes fuzzy and the speech is out of sync with the language teacher so lip movements are not matching what is heard. If another class happens to log in at the same time or just before us, it takes at least 15 minutes to get everyone on. I'm starting to avoid using computers for other lessons and learning opportunities as it is not worth the time."

Teacher E - "If I have a student whom I want to use a computer-based program as an extension or further practise to the lesson, as an impromptu thing, it is not as easy as jumping onto a computer and starting. It takes too long to log on and the moment is lost. I often give up and then feel that I have wasted valuable time and missed out on providing a specific learning opportunity."

Teacher F - "If two classes are doing Japanese at the same time (this would be 30 students in total) the connection just continuously streams. I don't know how our school would go if all students had a laptop and all lessons were on a device."

Teacher G - "Last year the school paid for extra bandwidth or internet speed upgrades. It cost a significant sum and I don't think it made any difference."

## **CARRIED**

### **A 6. NEBO BRANCH - WITHDRAWN**

#### **Motion**

**"That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to ensure that each and every rural and remote school in Queensland is included in the Telstra Exchange Program for Internet Speed Upgrades."**

#### **Explanation:**

In March 2021 Minister Grace Grace announced a state government investment of \$190 million dollars to make internet speeds in Queensland schools 40 times faster by 2023, and 200 times faster by 2026, an initiative partnering with Telstra, "The Telstra Exchange Program". A substantial list of locations were flagged on their media outlets, and upon viewing we have noticed that just in our area, Coppabella, Valkyrie and Clarke Creek State Schools were not listed, likewise in viewing other rural areas across Queensland in no particular order and for example, locations like Chillagoe, Abercorn, and Kilkivan are not listed yet all have small rural schools. We are seeking assurance that every rural and remote school are adequately addressed in these upgrades, and not just their closest regional town such as Nebo or Moranbah. The schools that are more remote in location are the ones who require these upgrades the most, as they generally exist on poor connections as opposed to their metropolitan counterparts who enjoy reliable and quick internet speeds. As most rural schools deliver lessons and learning material online, these upgrades are

imperative to them moving forward in an ever increasing digital and online world and ensuring that our children's learning is not adversely affected. There are real challenges going forward being experienced by rural schools who are now required to deliver NAPLAN in an online platform. This is of great frustration to staff who battle slow and unsuccessful internet connections preventing proper usage and delivery and ultimately it is our students missing out. This too has a flow on effect to the attraction and retention of staff to rural areas who are constantly battling slow and difficult internet, waiting long periods for lessons and material to load, something not experienced by their city colleagues.

## **WITHDRAWN**

### **A 7. NEBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld raise awareness to the relevant Communications and Government Departments of the mobile phone black spots throughout rural and remote Queensland, particularly on school bus runs.”**

Many parts of rural and remote Queensland have limited, to no mobile phone coverage. We are seeking that Telstra identify all rural bus routes in Queensland that have black spots, and upgrade the coverage in their areas to ensure that all routes can be travelled with sufficient mobile coverage to ensure ongoing safety in case of emergency contact needed.

## **CARRIED**

## **CURRICULUM**

### **A 8. JULIA CREEK BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to ensure there is adequate funding for a full-time position of Curriculum Resource Review within each School of Distance Education to assist with the implementation of the changes to the national curriculum in schools of Distance Education.”**

#### **Explanation:**

The C2C writing team, which produced our classroom materials, has been disbanded, however the materials are constantly needing to be reviewed and updated, including the supporting resources. Therefore, there needs to be a teacher employed, in the specific position to continue the process of review and updating of resources. We are currently on version 8 of the curriculum, a process of review which required all classroom teachers to be involved in many adapt and adopt days, whereby these teachers were taken away from “on air” contact with their students, to review and update ILM resources. As the curriculum review process is due again within 2 years, we are calling for a curriculum experienced teacher to be based at each school of distance education, whose sole responsibility is reviewing and updating materials and liaising with teachers and home tutors. This position needs to be in addition to the current allotment of teachers at these schools of distance education, not an additional role for a current teacher to be given, or a teacher removed from their current position with no one to replace them.

## **CARRIED**

### **A 9. CLERMONT BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Minister for Education to ensure changes to the Australian Curriculum to refine, realign and declutter the curriculum and agreed upon by Education Ministers in April, be applied to the curriculum in**

**Queensland schools to make the curriculum more manageable for distance education tutors and in rural schools with multi age classrooms.”**

In 2012 the Queensland Government implemented the newly developed Australian Curriculum in its entirety across years 1 to 10 and this resulted in an extraordinary increase in workload and learning expectations, which continues to cause issues, particularly for distance education tutors and their students in home schoolrooms, with many families negatively impacted as they try to meet these expectations. It is essential that refinements, realignments and decluttering of the Australian Curriculum should now be implemented to alleviate these ongoing challenges.

**CARRIED**

**S 1. MOUNT ISA BRANCH OF THE AIR**

**“That ICPA Qld advocate to Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) and other relevant bodies for geographically isolated students to continue to be offered practical choices/alternatives for sitting National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing and for information about these options to be shared consistently across schools and school families.”**

**Explanation:**

In light of NAPLAN moving to an online format, our branch is concerned that the options for geographically isolated students to complete the tests have been restricted particularly for those families who:

are unable to travel to their school to participate in the NAPLAN testing due to distance/family work etc, do not have suitable internet connection to access the tests from home/place of schooling and possible limitations on student’s being allowed to complete the testing where they reside.

We also understand there may have been inconsistencies across schools as to the options available, with some schools providing differing information to families.

Options for sitting NAPLAN need to remain in place for geographically isolated students who may have difficulty in getting to a school for testing due to distance, and others may have difficulty in accessing NAPLAN in an online format due to being in a remote area without internet. Families need to be clearly informed of their options and these options offered consistently.

**Examples:**

A family living and working in a camp situation in remote Northern Territory and attending a Queensland School of Distance Education, asked if their children could sit the NAPLAN online at their camp. They have recently set up a transportable satellite internet unit at a huge cost to their family which would allow them to do the testing online. Their school of distance education put in a request for all students at the school to sit NAPLAN at home if required, however, this family was one of eight families in the school that were not granted permission. The family was advised that the children would need to go to the closest school to sit NAPLAN in person as they were considered to be too close to a school for them to receive permission to participate from home. The closest school for the family at the time was located more than 200kms away at Borroloola NT and it was not possible for the family to attend at this school due to work commitments on the property that they were on.

Another family that our branch is aware of also lives and works in a camp situation, this family did receive permission to conduct NAPLAN at “home” however they were out in camp and did not have internet facilities available to them for their children to participate.

**CARRIED**

**S 2. MOUNT ISA BRANCH OF THE AIR**

**“That ICPA Qld work with relevant bodies to raise awareness among boarding schools that some rural and remote students are unable to participate in National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing**

**and other external examination programs ICAS assessments due to geographic isolation reasons, and this should not impact on their eligibility for enrolment at boarding schools”**

**Explanation:**

There are students living in rural and remote areas who have difficulty accessing examination programs such as NAPLAN, ICAS and ACER due to the distance they have to travel in order to be at a testing centre or lack of adequate internet (or any internet) where they reside for most of the school year. Some boarding schools ask for NAPLAN results, ICAS, ACER and other external examination information to be submitted during enrollment processes. Geographically isolated students who are unable to sit these types of examinations should not be penalized if they are unable to participate due to where they live or lack of internet service. We ask ICPA Qld to help raise awareness with Qld boarding schools of the situation that some geographically isolated students are in and for schools to take this on board when considering these students for enrollment, so that there is no detrimental effect on these students who are unable to sit those types of examinations.

**CARRIED**

**S 3. QUEENSLAND STATE COUNCIL**

**Motion:**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Minister of Education and the Dept of Education to ensure that the delivery of foundational skills in the curriculum, such as Manual Arts, Graphics, Ag Science and Home Economics, continue to remain an option for secondary students.”**

**Explanation:**

It has become clear that there is very little, if any, formal education preservice teachers can undertake at universities to enable them to teach Manual Arts, and as such we are seeing a large number of vacancies for teachers in this subject area in schools that still offer it – mainly in regional and rural high schools. Manual Arts and other hands-on subjects offer students opportunities to excel and learn foundational skills which may assist them in their future career pathway, particularly for those tracking toward apprenticeships.

The lack of teachers available to deliver this curriculum in our schools is concerning and will quite certainly lead to the decline of it being offered to the detriment of many of our children. For those children in particular who may not excel at subjects which require extensive written or oral assessments, these hands-on subjects provide alternative ways for them to prove their knowledge and skills, and to think that these opportunities are being eroded is devastating. The Turn to Teaching Internship Program could be targeting these sorts of skilled workers within these areas to ensure that the foundational skills they trade in are available for our own children to learn.

We would request the department investigate how to best address this shortage, and that the Minister ensure universities are aware of the vital importance these foundational skills play in the lives of our children.

**CARRIED**

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**A 10. ALPHA BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to ensure Principals at Schools of Distance Education understand the critical importance of grouping geographically isolated children from similar**

**remote areas into the same 'on air' classes."**

**Explanation:**

Currently at certain SDE's students are often placed into 'on air' classes with no local peers. These classes are often made up of students who are not geographically isolated, leading to poor social outcomes for GI students. Rather than grouping GI students from the same local districts together for 'on air classes', they are spread across multiple classes and grouped with students they will never have the opportunity to interact with at minischools or within their local districts. Sometimes non GI students are enrolled in distance education due to having higher behavioural and learning needs, which then impacts those students who are enrolled because of geographical isolation. Our branch has had numerous reports from families that this current structuring of 'on air classes' is greatly impacting GI students, with considerable disruption occurring during 'on air' lessons. This leads to poorer social and educational outcomes for the GI students. It is critically important that Principals understand how remote GI students engage and interact with their communities, and that these students are grouped together for 'on air' with peers that they can build positive social and emotional relationships with. Social development is a critical component of a child's development, influencing their self-confidence, empathy and the ability to develop meaningful and lasting friendships and partnerships and a sense of importance and value to those around them. Current 'on air' arrangements risk GI students becoming even more isolated and less engaged within their local communities, with their education being compromised due to the disruptive groupings of on air classes.

**CARRIED**

**A 11. ALPHA BRANCH**

**"That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to encourage Schools of Distance Education to streamline and reduce the large number of online platforms currently being used to deliver and submit student work and communicate with students and home tutors."**

**Explanation:**

The current number of online platforms used by Schools of Distance Education to complete and submit student work is not sustainable. Home tutors have to become experts in multiple platforms, some of which are not user friendly, with different platforms being used across year levels. For example, a family with three SDE students in Prep, Grades 2 & 3, needs to use the following list of platforms on a daily basis:

SeeSaw	BlackBoard	Reading Eggs	Math Seeds	Typing Tutor	Wordmania	Dance
Dropbox	One Drive	Mat				
One Note	Gmail					
One School						

Often home tutors have no IT training or skills in navigating their way through the use of these programs, which is causing frustration, wasted time and stressed students and home tutors. There are also multiple methods of communication that require checking each day, including blackboard notices, one school, email to each child's email, email to parents etc.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 12. ALPHA BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to ensure Schools of Distance Education maintain their flexible curriculum delivery mode and support students and families who choose to complete part or all of their schooling offline.”**

**Explanation:**

It is essential that Schools of Distance Education provide their students the flexibility to complete part or all of their curriculum offline, and allow families to find the balance that provides the best possible learning outcomes for their child. For many students spending multiple hours online per day is not an effective learning environment.

Schools of Distance Education should ensure that students are provided with digital materials that can be printed if the families choose this line of delivery, and ensure that families are aware that this option exists.

Schools of Distance Education should not in any way make families feel that offline delivery is not an available option, to do so removes the flexibility of distance education that for so long has been an integral part of remote learning.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 13. LONGREACH BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby Education Queensland to limit the amount of ‘compulsory’ on-air lessons and screen time per day, maintaining an option of *flexible delivery* of lessons for geographically isolated students enrolled in Schools of Distance Education.”**

**Explanation:**

Distance Education was initially established to provide education for students in isolated areas. The model has been built on a strong partnership of trust and respect between school and home, enabling geographically isolated students to learn despite the often conflicting demands of life on the land, the vagrancies of weather, or unreliable internet connection. Over the past five years there has been an increasing shift in Schools of Distance Education to more screen time and on-air delivery of lessons, with many students as young as eight required to sit through more than 15 to 20 hours of on-air lessons per week. The students who simply cannot participate in all on-air lessons, whether it be due to unreliable internet, multiple work commitments on the property, itinerant lifestyles or different learning styles, should not be disadvantaged by missing out on these lessons. **These students should be able to access curriculum in a flexible format, either via a paper-based option and/or watching recorded on-air lessons.** Just because the student is not on-air does not mean they are not doing the work. Compassion, understanding and trust between Schools of Distance Education and families, with a flexible but committed approach to learning, has always been, and will always be, the most effective means to provide the best learning outcomes for geographically isolated students.



**CARRIED**

**A 14. LONGREACH BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby Education Queensland to provide the option of printed curriculum/paper-based lessons to School of Distance Education families.”**

With the increase in virtual lessons, decline of support to schools for printing a paper-based curriculum, and constant edits/changes to the curriculum, families and students are tied to the computer for most of the school day with very little flexibility. This presents many problems for isolated students enrolled with the Schools of Distance Education who are impacted by unreliable internet/phone issues, who simply do not learn well sitting in front of a screen, or who live a transient lifestyle due to family work/business including shearing, mustering, fencing and heavy machinery contract family businesses. Current delivery of the curriculum by Schools of Distance Education includes an excessive amount of screen time. This is disadvantaging children whose families simply cannot access all of the on-air lessons. Printed curriculum / paper-based lessons provided to these families would enable their children to still access a decent standard of education and learning.

**CARRIED**

**A 15. ARAMAC MUTTABURRA BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to set clear and flexible guidelines for Distance Education Schools and State Schools to work within, that allows flexible arrangements for students.”**

**Explanation:**

Previously, Distance Education students have attended State Schools regularly as enrolled students 1 day a week. For a geographically isolated student, the exposure to sport and traditional school routine, as well as the social development and inclusion aspect, is invaluable. Early in 2022, the Queensland Department of Education decided that dual enrolments could no longer happen unless multiple subjects were taught and reported on solely by the State School – something that would ultimately be detrimental to State School students. Distance Education students could however attend as a visitor, but not on a regular basis, and in a limited capacity. All Schools involved, as well as parents and caregivers, need flexible guidelines to help create workable solutions for the many and varied situations where dual enrolment can be a positive experience for Distance Education and State school children alike.

**CARRIED**

**A 16. WINTON BRANCH – DEEMED COVERED BY A15**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to ensure a simple and efficient process when geographically-isolated students from Schools of Distance Education would like to attend a second school face-to-face, on a regular basis.”**

This process should be an opportunity that is available to all geographically-isolated distance education students. This practice has a positive outcome for students and their families, and the second school. If it is on a regular basis such as a day per week, distance education students benefit directly by widening opportunities to develop their social skills as well as having access to sport, other extra-curricular and perhaps community activities. The second school also benefits directly as the extra student numbers add value to sport days and other activities such as music, drama and science. This process needs to be kept as simple as possible as not to deter families and schools from participating.

#### **A 17. CAPRICORNIA BOTA BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to ensure that the educational needs of geographically isolated students are not compromised by the exponential increase in Distance Education enrolments.”**

#### **Explanation:**

SDE's were originally established to service the needs of children that had no feasible education option due to Geographical Isolation. GI students' numbers have been diluted by increases in other enrolment categories such as medical, single subject, by choice and exclusion. At the recent CSDE minischool there was an influx of attending children who had moved from mainstream schooling to DE with behavioural management plans. The poor, inexcusable classroom behaviour by these students who do have other educational options compromised the social and educational outcomes of GI students who only have a small window of opportunity to spend valuable face to face time with their teachers and peers. Online lesson time has also been disrupted by students who have enrolled in DE, not because they are geographically isolated but because mainstream hasn't served their needs.

GI students are losing their sense of belonging within their school community as they are now a minority in a system that was custom built to service their needs.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 18. BELYANDO/MT COOLON BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld thank the Department of Education Infrastructure Services Division on the work completed and the ongoing commitment to get overnight accommodation facilities at Distance Education Schools upgraded to meet compliancy standards.”**

**CARRIED BY ACCLAMATION**

#### **A 19. LONGREACH BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby Education Queensland to acknowledge the important role Home Tutors play in the delivery of learning, and achieving the best learning outcomes, for students enrolled with Schools of Distance Education.”**

#### **Explanation:**

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to learning, and families are seeing significant declines in student engagement, enjoyment and understanding due to the increase in virtual delivery of lessons through the Schools of Distance Education. We all know the importance of providing a range of learning opportunities for students that help each child thrive. The benefit of a strong partnership between home and school is that they both provide a range of strategies that help the student. We feel that the advantages of “home-based” learning with a Home Tutor has been significantly diminished, as the current philosophy implies qualified teachers are the only ones able to achieve quality

outcomes for our students. We feel that Home Tutors play a significant role in a student's education, and can greatly enhance the delivery of curriculum if the partnership between school and home is valued and respected. Home Tutors can sometimes bring curriculum alive for students in ways that the teacher cannot simply because they are on the other side of a screen.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 20. CLERMONT BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld raise with the Minister for Education and the Department of Education the necessity for staff in distance education schools to have an understanding of the unique circumstances of geographically isolated families, compared to those undertaking distance education by choice.”**

**Explanation:**

Schools of Distance Education were largely set up in Queensland to cater for geographically isolated children so these students could receive more equitable education opportunities despite where they reside. With the changing face of distance education in Queensland, with geographically isolated students now a very small minority within these schools, our Branch feels it is imperative that staff are aware of the unique circumstances and needs of these families who have no other choice but to educate their children by distance education due to residing in some of the most geographically isolated locations of the state.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 21. CLERMONT BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld raise with the Minister for Education and Department of Education and other relevant parties the need for Schools of Distance Education to continue to cater adequately for the unique needs of geographically isolated students and their families, who have no other choice for accessing education.”**

**Explanation:**

Schools of Distance Education were largely set up in Queensland to cater for geographically isolated children so these students could receive more equitable education opportunities despite where they reside. Despite geographically isolated students now being a very small minority within these schools, it is essential that they continue to cater adequately for the unique circumstances and needs of these families who have no other choice but to educate their children by distance education.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 22. CLERMONT BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Minister for Education and Department of Education to address the often unrealistic, unfair, unmanageable and excessive learning expectations placed upon geographically isolated students and their tutors in distance education schoolrooms.”**

**Explanation:**

The expectations on geographically isolated distance education students and their tutors to complete schoolwork is extraordinary and our Branch has numerous examples of this. The issue was extenuated in term one this year, following the delay of school commencing, which saw distance education students given assessed work to complete in the weeks prior to school commencing, despite mainstream students remaining on holidays. In order to make up missed work from the two week delay, students and their tutors were given extra workloads to complete, with regular days in the schoolroom exceeding the hours of 8am to 5 pm, often with weekend and night time work as well to be able to complete the excessive amount of work set. Even in a 'normal' term however, the work required to be completed and the timeframes given, as well as a lack of understanding of the unique circumstances of geographically isolated families is unjust. At times schools require schoolwork to be completed on public holidays, student free days and on days when families are travelling many hours to attend school events for example. If a teacher is absent it is up to the home tutor to cover any lessons not being taught by that teacher. For geographically isolated distance education families, should they have a day off, be this for a medical appointment, a trip to town to get groceries or even to attend a school event (remembering that a trip to town is often an all-day event where these students live), it is expected that the home tutor will ensure anything missed on the given day is made up before they return. As an example, recently when a DE school was holding their swimming carnival, which families may travel up to 7 hours or more to attend on the last day of school, one teacher informed a parent that she expected students to complete work she had set for that day when they returned home, despite the fact that this was a school event and on returning home it was school holidays.

**CARRIED**

#### **S 4. ARAMAC MUTTABURRA BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby Distance Education Schools to set clear and flexible guidelines for the ability to deliver content both on and off air, and for the timelines of uploading completed work.”**

**Explanation:**

Previously, many Home Tutors and Distance Education students have been able to arrange their schoolwork timetable to fit into the ever-changing schedule that is required in their lives and family businesses (ie family run farms, shearing, mustering, feeding etc) - a lifestyle that generally necessitates them to attend an SDE in the first place. This may have been done by paper or online, but was flexible in delivery, especially in relation to timing of lessons, and deadlines of work completed.

In recent years there has been a shift to more daily online lessons and work to be either completed online during the lesson or uploaded immediately. This means a day of much more screen time, and a sometimes inflexible timetable. In an environment where internet access is an issue, or the home tutor who is required to supervise the lessons also has other business responsibilities this is becoming a burden on students, Home Tutors and teachers alike, causing frustration to all parties. Some families talk of leaving due to their inability to work with the current system, or going to solely paper based which is undesirable socially for the students.

The creation of more flexible individual arrangements for attendance on-air and /or home delivery of lessons, as well as submission of completed work, by the Schools of Distance Education would return the flexibility that is required within many home schoolrooms and boost the attendance of geographically isolated enrolments.

**CARRIED**

#### **S 5. SPRINGSURE ROLLESTON BRANCH - LOST**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to implement a policy where travelling, overseas and one subject DE students are automatically enrolled in a metropolitan campus or campus dedicated solely to these students.”**

### Explanation:

The concept of Distance Education schooling was to ensure that children in geographically isolated (GI) areas are able to access quality education, as they have no other options available to them. With the number of non GI student enrolments increasing, the concept of why Distance Education was established is being lost and the GI students are negatively affected. In 2021, Capricornia School of Distance Education (CSDE) had 4733 enrolments or 1449 full time equivalent (FTE) enrolments, actual fulltime students enrolled were 620. That means that 829 FTE students were enrolled at a different school with their own resources and opportunities. That figure in itself is a significant number and could justify its own campus. By basing specific enrolment categories in metropolitan based SDE campuses (e.g. Brisbane), it decreases the enrolment numbers in regional/rural campuses, allowing appropriate funding and teacher resources to be sourced as well as affording the regional/rural campuses the ability to focus on the unique educational requirements of Geographically Isolated students. Metropolitan areas have access to significantly higher staffing resources than regional/rural areas and can therefore sustainably handle the higher enrolment numbers and cater for students needs more efficiently.

### LOST

#### S 6. SPRINGSURE ROLLESTON BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to recognise that Schools of Distance Education are no longer prioritising Geographically Isolated students.”**

### Explanation:

Enrolment figures within Capricornia School of Distance Education (CSDE) for 2017 show 499 enrolments with approximately 150 or 30% of those enrolments being Geographically Isolated (GI) students. Figures from 2021 show 4733 students enrolled which included 159 or 3.5% GI students. Of those 4733 enrolments, only 620 were fulltime students. With such disproportionate figures, it is unrealistic to presume that the unique needs of GI students can be fully met in the intended purpose the school was created.

Year	Non GI	GI	Total	% Non GI	FTE Teaching Staff	Teacher: Student ratio
2017	~ 340	~ 159	499	68%	59	1:8
2018	~ 1380	~ 159	1539	89%	93	1:16
2019	~ 3078	~ 159	3237	95%	110	1:29
2020	~ 3430	~ 159	3589	95.5%	120	1:29
2021	4574	159	4733	96.6%	No data	No data

### CARRIED

#### S 7. QUEENSLAND STATE COUNCIL

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to establish an Enrolment Management Plan for Schools of Distance Education to ensure parity with other State government delivered schooling plans and policies.”**

### Explanation:

Currently Schools of Distance Education have no Enrolment Management Plan. For Distance Education schools defining a ‘catchment’ is challenging but Geographically Isolated students identified by remote postcodes, could define a ‘catchment’ in this instance.

Currently Schools of Distance Education seem to be accepting every student that completes an enrolment application even when some SDE’s are at capacity with infrastructure confinements. In addition to infrastructure,

medical enrolments are increasing and some SDEs don't have the staffing capacity, either physically or the training required to offer the high level of support required to support these students. These situations further emphasize the need for enrolment management guidelines for schools of distance education in order to safeguard the needs of Geographically Isolated students who are increasingly becoming a minority in the schools specifically designed for them.

**CARRIED**

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

### A 23. WESTMAR INGLESTONE BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to ensure that all students enrolled in State Based Kindy Programs are provided learning support and access to resources upon commencement, with appropriate supporting medical evidence.”**

**Explanation:**

With State Based Kindy Programs being implemented in school classrooms, setting supported foundations for learning in the vital early years is imperative for the student, teachers, support staff and fellow students. A supported Kindy child also allows support and learning for all students in the classroom setting. Starting in Kindy, gives the opportunity for support and learning to be enhanced before formal schooling years commence. Students who attend State Based Kindy Programs are already faced with geographical location hurdles and to have the learning program supporting them will ensure that no student is disadvantaged.

**CARRIED**

### S 8. CUNNAMULLA BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the relevant State Ministers and departments to immediately prioritise and fund re-establishing early childhood educational programs in recognised highly vulnerable rural and remote locations.”**

**Explanation:**

There are families with young children wanting to attend play group and there is no playgroup available. The Cunnamulla library has recommenced in late May 2022 a one hour per week session of singing & story time as part of 'The First Five Forever Program' which children must be vaccinated to attend.

A quote from a local Mum:

‘Basically, I want something, anything to take my daughter (10 months old) to. There is no active playgroup running in Cunnamulla. They KEYS group haven't continued the play group at the state school, the health centre ‘Mums and Bubs’ has not been operating due to Covid and Tammy at the Cunnamulla Library has only just started the First 5 Forever program for the first time this year, last week.

I can already see my daughter is struggling socially, we recently went to an event where she screamed the entire event because she was not able to cope with the volume of people or children. The only social interaction my child gets is on FaceTime to her older cousins. It is heartbreaking for me as a mother to watch my daughter be disadvantaged because of where she lives. Is it really that hard for a playgroup to run in Cunnamulla once a week?

Given the massive influx of children under 5 in Cunnamulla and surrounds this really needs to be a focus point. On top of the impacts on my daughter, I have felt isolated and have had few occasions to socialise since having my daughter. It would be nice to see other mums on a regular basis.'

2021 data indicates 47% of children start school in the Cunnamulla district developmentally vulnerable

The Early childhood education and Care department have been active in Cunnamulla since July last year and no significant action or change has occurred

Results from the Australian Early Developmental Census have deteriorated since 2009 and Cunnamulla is one of 5 locations which are going backwards

Paroo shire has been nominated as a QLD state early childhood priority

The Paroo Contact Children's Mobile remains unfunded, Contact Inc (who own the equipment & did operate the service) have made no contact with Cunnamulla, the equipment including fully equipped Toyota Landcruiser 4WD with canopy all sit in Cunnamulla unused as there is no funding for the coordinator/teacher.

The Paroo Contact Children's Mobile needs to get funding to immediately recruit staff to utilise the vehicle and extensive early childhood resources/equipment to offer regular scheduled supported playgroups to Eulo, Cunnamulla, Noorama, Quilpie and Thargomindah.

The Noorama Playgroup has been running for almost a year with on average 5 parents and 8 children in attendance, with a total membership of 10 core families and 20 children. The playgroup meets monthly and is run by volunteer parents, most with minimal experience with early childhood education.

The main issues this playgroup hopes to address include:

Improving statistics on disadvantaged school starters by better preparing our children in the early years

Access to qualified educators that can help parents learn how to interact with their children at home and identify developmental abnormalities. If required, they could assist with pathways to support services.

Ensure funding and services are reaching remote children.

Provide a socialisation opportunity for both children and parents.

Prepare families and facilities/services for Distance Education, which will be required in the near future.

Eulo State School is also running playgroup.

**CARRIED**

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### A 24. FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND BRANCH

**"That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to extend eligibility criteria for the Living Away From Home Allowance Scheme (LAFHAS) to include students, whose home address is in Qld, and are enrolled in Years 1 to 12 at approved schools in all States and Territories in Australia."**

#### Explanation:

The Living Away From Home Allowances Scheme (LAFHAS) supports eligible Queensland families whose children need to live away from home to attend a state school or an accredited non-state school. The scheme provides financial support through 4 allowances:

Remote Area Tuition Allowance (RATuA)—helps pay tuition fees charged by non-state boarding schools

Remote Area Travel Allowance (RATrA)—helps pay a student's travel costs between home and boarding school during holidays

Remote Area Allowance (RAA)—contributes to the cost of boarding at a state high school campus, to complete approved agricultural courses equivalent to and in lieu of Years 11 and 12

Remote Area Disability Supplement (RADS)—helps with additional boarding costs for students with disability.

However, under the Scheme only those students enrolled in Years 1 to 12 at *approved schools in Queensland or New*

*South Wales* are eligible for the allowances. This means that geographically isolated families living in Queensland, who for various reasons including financial and mental health, have children attending schools in other states and territories, are not eligible for these allowances.

The eligibility should be extended to all States and Territories of Australia.

To give a real life example, a member's child attended distance education in Queensland as a geographically isolated student from Years 1 to 9, and completed Years 10 to 12 in Victoria. The student wanted to complete their secondary school education away from home, but the family could not afford boarding school, nor was it seen as a suitable arrangement for the student's mental health to attend boarding school. A relative living in Victoria offered for the student to board with them while they attended a state school in the catchment area. This was a positive arrangement as it supported the student's mental health being able to live with family while they completed senior school. The student successfully achieved the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), afterwards returning to the family home in Queensland. Unfortunately, the student's family were not eligible for the Remote Area Travel Allowance under the LAFHAS, which would have been an enormous support for the family financially.

For more information: <https://www.qld.gov.au/education/schools/financial/ruralremote/lafhas>

**CARRIED**

#### **A 25. QUILPIE BRANCH – DEEMED COVERED BY A25**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Minister for Education and Department of Education to be able to have the opportunity to approve individual non-state boarding schools in South Australia to be eligible for the Living Away From Home Allowance (LAFHA) – Remote Area Tuition Allowance.”**

#### **Explanation:**

LAFHA Remote Area Tuition Allowance “benefits students who are geographically isolated who reside in QLD and is paid for students who board at approved non-state primary or secondary schools and whose parents pay fees for tuition at the school”. Currently QLD non-state and certain NSW non-state schools are considered approved schools for this allowance to be paid however schools in South Australia are not. There are remote families living on the QLD/SA border that would prefer to send their children away to boarding school in SA due to reasons including easier access to transport for their children and closer family support for their children who are away from home for the first time. Adelaide, SA has less than 12 boarding schools and given the vastness of stations on the QLD/SA border, this will only result in a small number of families that may choose this option. A further consideration must be given to the distances families and students must travel to attend a boarding school. For example, the difference to one family in the South West is only an additional 50km to attend boarding school in Adelaide as it is to attend boarding school in Toowoomba, taking into consideration that the family also has emotional support in SA and much closer public access transport options.

Secondary students and their families on the QLD/SA border should be able to have the same opportunity that children on the QLD/NSW border have in regards to an option of an approved school to best suit their family's needs and their child's emotional wellbeing.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 26. JULIA CREEK BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby State and Federal government departments for the introduction of a Home educator financial allowance package, “Distance Education Teaching Allowance”, paid to families enrolled in a state-based school program and educating their children at home via the distance education model, where distance education is the only option due to geographical isolation.”**



**Explanation:**

Currently children enrolled in distance education receive between 6 and 11 hours per week of online based contact with a centre teacher. A Home Tutor (used in this context to refer to a parent/guardian who supervises and instructs the student/s in their home based isolated classroom) or a governess (used in this context to refer to an adult employed by the family to supervise and instruct the student/s in their home based isolated classroom) is necessary not only for the supervision of students whilst on air with their centre teacher, but also to deliver the curriculum of all other KLA's that are not taught on air (in some cases the SDE teacher is only teaching 1 subject e.g. English). Families have had to employ a 'governess' at their own expense, or one parent/guardian must relinquish a contributory financial position to supervise and teach their children for the school week. The role of home tutor/governess is vital for children in the isolated classroom to ensure children attend all scheduled online lessons and complete all other KLA work required. Children in the early years cannot be expected to manage their own time, nor can children in the older grades be expected to learn independently and unsupported.

Annual Salary	\$ 90,000.00
Superannuation Guarantee Rate	9.50%
Annual Superannuation Guarantee	\$ 8,550.00
Avg Annual 10 year return - Q Super Balanced	8.19%
	Value at End of Year:
1	\$ 8,550.00
2	\$ 18,500.49
3	\$ 29,265.93
4	\$ 40,913.05
5	\$ 53,514.07
6	\$ 67,147.12
7	\$ 81,896.71
8	\$ 97,854.30
9	\$ 115,118.81
10	\$ 133,797.29
11	\$ 154,005.53
12	\$ 175,868.83
Superannuation Guarantee Component	\$ 102,600.00
Interest Component	\$ 73,268.83

\* Just a simple calculation assuming both SG and investment returns are only paid once annually at the end of the year

**CARRIED**

### **S 9. BOULIA BEDOURIE BIRDSVILLE (BBB) BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the State Government to significantly raise the Living Away from Home Allowances Scheme (LAFHAS) rates for rural and remote students attending boarding school.”**

**Explanation:**

The LAFHAS provides much needed assistance for rural and remote families where boarding school provides the

only realistic option for a secondary education. There are eight shires in Qld without a high school, with ours (the Diamantina and Boulia Shires) being two of them. Ever increasing tuition boarding fees have far exceeded LAFHAS rates and geographically isolated families are finding it increasingly difficult to fund the gap. A swift significant increase to the LAFHAS is therefore necessary.

**CARRIED**

#### **S 10. WESTERN DOWNS BRANCH**

**"That ICPA Qld continue to lobby relevant authorities to expand the scope of application for the Remote Area Allowance (RAA) of the LAFHAS and re-evaluate the ineligibility of students receiving RAA to receive the Remote Area Travel Allowance (RATrA)."**

**Explanation:**

Currently the eligibility criteria for RAA is for a child to be attending a state boarding school and undertaking an approved Ag course in lieu of Year 11 + 12. These students are then ineligible to receive the RATrA despite how far they travel to their school.

Since the closure of the Longreach and Emerald campuses there is only 2 State boarding facilities offering the Access to Ag program as an option for students in QLD. The RAA is therefore being paid to a very limited number of students which provides opportunity for the LAFHAS provisions of RAA and RATrA to be broadened to envelop all rural and remote students from years 7 to 12 travelling to and living in State Boarding Schools.

Western Downs members appreciate the time put into this issue by Council so far and despite it only affecting a handful of kids, their families are grateful for the work being done on their behalf.

**CARRIED**

## **SCHOOLS**

#### **A 27. NEBO BRANCH**

**"That Nebo Branch would like to thank the Department of Education for its quick action in carrying out upgrades to water infrastructure at the Valkyrie State School, and for its ongoing support with views to long term water solutions at the school."**

**Explanation:**

The Valkyrie State School since its establishment in the early 1970s has never had a permanent water source and has relied solely on the collection of rainwater for all student, staff, amenities and grounds use. In recent years the school has completely run out of water, resulting in bottled watering being brought in and deliveries of potable water received to refill tanks. Following a detailed case study presented to the Department from our branch via the Qld ICPA State Branch, and through the school's requests through Qbuild, in 2021 the school received substantial plumbing upgrades, and the installation of 4 new rainwater tanks at the school and staff residence. These upgrades have significantly improved our water storage capabilities and the community as a whole would like to express our gratitude to the Department. Going forward, we look forward to continuing to work closely with the Department in seeking further outcomes for more permanent water sources and solutions for the school.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 28. NEBO BRANCH**

**“That Nebo Branch would like to thank ICPA Qld for its support, guidance and continued advocacy regarding the ongoing water issues in rural schools throughout Queensland.”**

**Explanation:**

In 2021 Nebo Branch presented a detailed case study to the Qld State Branch regarding significant water issues at the Valkyrie State School. Our Branch would like to express our sincerest gratitude for the advocacy you have provided surrounding this issue, helping to navigate a rather unprecedented issue with the Department. Our understanding from your delegations, is that the DOE have identified that there are over 200 schools throughout Queensland that do not have a permanent source of water. We feel strongly that this is a long term issue in which ongoing advocacy to the Department is required to get policy and parameters enacted that will see permanent water solutions for each and every school one day.

**CARRIED**

**A 29. NEBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to prioritise assessments and upgrades to water infrastructure at rural and remote schools that are not connected to a permanent water supply, and further commit to long term projects that may be required in providing more permanent and reliable water sources for rural and remote schools.”**

**Explanation:**

Following delegation feedback to our 2021 motions regarding water infrastructure and what water sources are relied upon at rural and remote schools, it was revealed by the Department that approximately 200 schools throughout Queensland are not connected to main water supplies. Of those schools identified, there is no differentiation between those that are solely reliant on rainwater and those that may be operating off a bore or other reliable water source which may have more than sufficient and surplus to their needs, and these schools likely do not need any further assistance or investigation. We are seeking that when the Department investigates all of these schools that they firstly meet with those schools reliant on rainwater alone as a matter of priority.

We are further seeking that the Department make consideration of several things regarding water at rural schools, emphasising that we understand that this is a complex and long term discussion that will evolve:-

That where a school does not have a permanent water source, that the Department continue working closely with the school to achieve long term solutions that enables them to have water usage that is aligned with their metropolitan counterparts. The Valkyrie State School received a report that was commissioned by the DOE which concluded that rainwater tanks and trucking in water met a daily usage calculation based on a per head formula of which they deemed to be sufficient and no further water resources at the school are required. Our understanding is that the Department are indicating they've met their obligations to us and do not intend on assisting in achieving any other water source in the future. Our community feel this is not a sufficient outcome, rather a band-aid to an issue that will continue to live on, and seek that schools in our circumstances, be kept on the agenda for further upgrades and options that will one day provide for more holistic use of water for grounds, gardens and staff residence;

That the Department give consideration to enacting policy and parameters around water usage at rural schools that goes beyond personal usage. We are of the understanding that no precedent exists for what a school can reasonably expect in terms of provision of water in a range of areas being:-

personal consumption by school personnel,

school grounds usage to establishment of and maintenance to a lawn, gardens, grassed sports oval, horticulture projects such as fruit and veg gardens, green house projects etc;

staff residence usage for both personal use, and enjoyment of their residence being a lawn. This directly affects attraction and retention of staff to rural and remote areas who rely on their residence for leisure and enjoyment outside of school hours as they reside in areas not connected directly to townships.

Permanent, long term water solutions and infrastructure at rural schools is imperative. We acknowledge each schools' circumstances and solutions are unique and that this is an enormous area to explore. We feel strongly that in order for rural schools to both survive and thrive, reliable, permanent water is essential to ensuring this. We also urge the DOE to continue working with schools that remain proactive in seeking further outcomes, and do so in a timely and supportive manner.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 30. NEBO BRANCH**

**“That Nebo Branch would like to thank the Department of Education for its quick action in carrying out upgrades to the Valkyrie State School fencing, lighting and signage.”**

**Explanation:**

Following our 2021 motion at the Cunnamulla State Conference regarding safety and security concerns at the Valkyrie State School due to lack of fencing, lighting and signage, we are pleased to have received these upgrades being carried out mostly in 2021, with the balance being carried out by the end of this year. These upgrades have greatly improved the overall safety and security and the community as a whole would like to express our gratitude.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 31. SOUTHERN DOWNS BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to resolve the long term and ongoing situation with Acting Principal positions causing disruption in rural and remote schools.”**

**Explanation:**

Rural and remote students are more disadvantaged by the process whereby Principals are 'acting' in a position that is held by another Principal who is 'acting' for another, etc. Therefore, the principal's position in a rural and remote school is dependent on many other acting roles throughout the state and can change more frequently than in larger, metropolitan schools. Short-term principal tenure can cause huge disruption to rural and remote schools and communities through lack of consistency of long-term strategic direction, stalling of progress and inability to build strong community relationships.

This issue has been raised by multiple branches for more than 20 years and there has been no change. Rural and remote students and communities continue to be disadvantaged.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 32. ROMA BRANCH - LOST**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to promote the work of ICPA to the Principals of Rural and Remote Schools.”**

**Explanation:**

Principals of Rural and Remote schools would benefit from improved awareness of the work of ICPA in advocating

for and supporting the education of our rural and remote students. A successful working relationship between ICPA (at both a State and local level) and rural and remote principals would strengthen the combined position and its ability to ensure rural and remote students receive an equitable education.

## **LOST**

### **A 33. CHARLEVILLE BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and Queensland Catholic Education Commission to ensure that there is a balance of experienced and graduate teachers in rural and remote schools.”**

#### **Explanation:**

It is imperative that there be a balanced number of experienced Teachers and graduate Teachers in rural and remote schools. Graduate Teachers require support and mentorship from experienced Teachers, within their own school. All Teachers should also attend Professional Development (PD) sessions throughout the year.

There is a school in Charleville which has been experiencing an imbalance of experienced and inexperienced Teachers. In 2021, 4 of the 6 Teachers were graduates, with these same graduates continuing on as second year Teachers in 2022. They have had very little support due to limited experienced Teacher availability. With the majority of Teachers being graduates, they have had limited opportunity to attend PD sessions as the school would be understaffed. When graduate Teachers come to Charleville there are not enough experienced Teachers within the schools to adequately support them, unlike schools in metropolitan areas which have a more balanced mix of graduate and experienced Teachers.

## **CARRIED**

### **A 34. ALPHA BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby Education Queensland and the Minister for Education to urgently address the criteria used to assess small school staffing allocations and not solely base allocations on number of students.”**

#### **Explanation:**

Small schools with multiple year levels in one classroom, including kindy to Prep & Year 6 need individual assessment for teacher allocation. Current practice is a number formula, when a small school reaches a specific number of students, extra staffing hours are supplied by Education Queensland. However, this assessment is restrictive and does not adequately reflect the demands placed on staff at small schools with multiple ages, abilities, special needs, classroom space and resources. Small school P & C's should not have to carry the financial burden of trying to make up the financial difference between Education Queensland funding for teachers and what is actually required to ensure individualised learning can occur. Education Queensland should develop individualised assessment criteria for staffing allocation that is not based solely on numbers.

## **CARRIED**

### **A 35. TAMBO BRANCH - WITHDRAWN**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to buy back into rural and remote towns where they have previously sold departmental homes.”**

#### **Explanation:**

Shortages of staff accommodation seems to be an ongoing issue in attracting teachers to come to rural and remote communities.

Over the years QLD Education have sold off many of their houses for varying reasons, however we have not seen them reinvest in the communities.

Without being able to offer permanent housing in rural and remote communities, possible teaching positions have had to be declined. In turn this discourages teachers from taking a rural and remote teaching post.

### **A 36. TAMBO BRANCH - WITHDRAWN**

**“That ICPA Qld Lobby the Department of Education to purchase or provide adequate housing to meet the needs of a varying demographic.”**

#### **Explanation:**

Rural and remote schools are finding it more and more difficult to attract and retain experienced teachers due to the lack of suitable housing. Teacher housing needs to meet the needs of a variety of personal circumstances and the varying demographics due to those personal circumstances.

For example: In Tambo we had a family of 7 where the mother accepted a teaching position in our local school. She moved her family from the coast , 1,000km away to live in a house that she thought she would spend her 3 year teaching contract, however because the QLD Education Department had only rented it for the short term due to the house being for sale (and it sold), this teacher and her family were left feeling isolated and concerned in a new town and possibly without a job as they were faced with the prospect of moving back to the coast without a job or still having a job but facing the prospect of being homeless in a remote community. Luckily for this family, a house in Tambo did come up for rent, however it wasn't suitable for such a large family, so 2 teachers were forced to move out of their share house and move into other accommodation so that the family could then move into their old house. This left a large family and 2 singles feeling displaced. The housing crisis in Tambo and many other small communities is dire. Houses just aren't getting built anymore due to the rising cost of materials, freight etc in rural and remote towns. The number of children in Tambo is growing, which in return means that our school is maintaining and in some years growing in numbers, however maintaining teacher numbers without teacher accommodation is proving impossible. In Tambo the school has 11 teachers, and only 4 houses owned by Education QLD. This is not sustainable for the long-term education requirements of our small community.

### **S 11. SPRINGSURE ROLLESTON BRANCH - LOST**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to drop the mandatory COVID 19 vaccination requirements for all staff.”**

#### **Explanation:**

There are currently staff shortages nationwide within all sectors of the education system. For reasons that are their own, there are many DoE staff that have lost their positions, whether it be teaching or support staff, for not being vaccinated for Covid 19. Staff shortages and availability was a huge issue for rural, remote and distance education schools long before Covid 19. Mandatory vaccination has played a role in increasing the staffing pressure on many schools where there is not the ability to easily fill these positions.

#### **LOST**

### **S 12. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld continue to lobby the Department of Education to provide an additional 0.5 teacher allocation to**

**one-teacher schools where the total enrolment exceeds 15 students and number of K-2 students enrolled represents 50 % or more of the total school enrolment.”**

**Explanation:**

The implementation of Kindy means that in our one-teacher schools children now range in age from 3 years to 12 years. Children representative of such a diverse range in age adds significantly to the workload of a single teacher responsible for the learning outcome of all students. Teacher aides are an invaluable asset to small schools and play a vital role in assisting with classroom management and the implementation of learning activities. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the teacher to plan and adjust lessons to suit the diverse range in age and ability in a small school setting.

It should also be noted that a kindy program is very different to a Prep-6 program, with a much stronger focus on student directed learning through structured and unstructured play experiences.

In addition to planning and teaching, the workload for a teaching principal in a one-teacher setting extends beyond the classroom to include the administration and business management of the school, along with dealing with the day-to-day issues that would be shared with other staff in larger schools, such as grounds keeping, maintenance, dealing with parents, chasing snakes and fixing water pumps that have stopped working! The demand that younger students place on teacher time should be addressed by increasing the teacher allocation to one- teacher schools with more than 15 students where 50% or more of those students are representative of years K-2.

**CARRIED**

**S 13. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby DOE to revisit the employment arrangements for additional staffing (cleaners, schools’ officers, etc) at small, remote schools in order to develop a more flexible model that better reflects the unique challenges of recruiting and retaining staff in these locations.”**

**Explanation:**

Many of our rural and remote schools are in locations where there are no available locals to fill part time roles in the school, such as cleaners, maintenance, teacher aides and schools’ officers. Under the current staffing models, a person that may be willing to take on more than one role may require a different contract for each role and may be paid from different sources of funding. This increases the workload on school business managers and makes the roles less inviting when recruiting.

A possible employee is far less likely to consider relocating to a school for a part time role compared to a full-time role. For example, a small school may only be allocated 15 hours a week for a cleaner, which is not enough for someone to consider moving house. In many cases that would barely cover rent. Because it can be so hard to attract people to these part time roles, teachers, teaching principals, business managers and aides end up taking on the extra workload in many cases.

We would like to see a more flexible staffing model available for schools to use where someone could be offered a role that may include a number of smaller, part time roles bundled together under a single contract.

**CARRIED**

**S 14. TAMBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to provide adequate teacher housing to sufficiently meeting the needs of a varying demographic, particularly in rural and remote communities where ‘teacher’ housing has**

**been reallocated to the Government Employee Housing portfolio.”**

**Explanation:**

In Tambo, the school has 11 teachers, and only 4 houses owned by the Department of Education. This is not sustainable for the long-term education requirements of our small community.

The housing situation for teachers in many small communities continues to be untenable. Government Employee Housing (GEH), which owns and manages all Queensland Government employee housing, was introduced in recent years to allow for teachers, police, nurses, doctors and other government employees to access housing in isolated communities where rentals were limited and allow them to use the surplus from housing sales to reinvest in construction, as well as upgrades and maintenance of existing housing. This reallocation has meant that many communities are now faced with limited options for teacher accommodation, as well as limited options for those teachers with larger families. The difficulties associated with accessing suitable housing for a varying demographic of staff within a rural and remote community are impacting on the attraction and retention of teachers within our schools.

**Case Study:**

In Tambo we had a family of 7 where the mother accepted a teaching position in our local school. She moved her family from the coast, 1,000km away to live in a house that she thought she would spend her 3 year teaching contract, however because the QLD Education Department had only rented it for the short term due to the house being for sale (and it sold), this teacher and her family were left feeling isolated and concerned in a new town and possibly without a job as they were faced with the prospect of moving back to the coast without a job or still having a job but facing the prospect of being homeless in a remote community. Luckily for this family, a house in Tambo did come up for rent, however it wasn't suitable for such a large family, so 2 teachers were forced to move out of their share house and move into other accommodation so that the family could then move into their old house. This left a large family and 2 singles feeling displaced. The housing crisis in Tambo and many other small communities is dire. Houses just aren't getting built anymore due to the rising cost of materials, freight etc in rural and remote towns. The number of children in Tambo is growing, which in return means that our school is maintaining and, in some years, growing in numbers, however maintaining teacher numbers without teacher accommodation is proving impossible.

**CARRIED**

**S 15. WESTMAR INGLESTONE BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to ensure that clusters of small schools in rural and remote areas have relevant and sufficient support in place for Principals who experience situations of trauma and adversity with their students.”**

**Explanation:**

In the event situations of trauma and/or adversity for students and/or their family, Principals are the first port of call for support to the student, siblings, and families to ensure that there is capacity for education to continue, as well as providing support to siblings for their wellbeing and education. Principals currently must find their own way to ensure that the school is properly equipped, Individual Education Plans are designed and implemented, as well as making sure the needs for wellbeing and safety are met. Principals subsequently require increased support, in regard to direction and wellbeing, as well as assistance to ensure that they are able to cater for the needs of that student and continue with their responsibilities for the day to day running of their school and its students. There is a need for a transparent process that Principals can access to provide guidance and support as required.

**CARRIED**

**S 16. WESTMAR INGLESTONE BRANCH**



**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to ensure that in Rural and Remote small schools, where a student enrolls with a physical disability, or if an enrolment changes to include a physical disability, there is an immediate process to ensure that facilities are acceptable and accessible in a timely manner.”**

When families move to rural areas, there are limited (if any) choices of schools to enrol their children in. This is made increasingly difficult should a child have a physical disability. As such, it is essential that the Department is rigorous in its processes to ensure school facilities meet the needs of these students or can be upgraded in a timely manner to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff.

**CARRIED**

#### **S 17. BOLLON BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to allocate more resources to the mental health of rural and remote students, particularly those engaged in Distance Education.”**

**Explanation:**

Access to mental health services in rural and remote areas is limited. This is particularly so for vulnerable groups like children and families doing distance education. Some services, such as the Wellbeing in Schools Program (WISE) program, funded through the Western Queensland Primary Health Network, provide in-school psychological support for students at small schools in rural areas with mild to moderate mental health issues. The Bollon Branch of ICPA proposes that the equivalent services be provided, as needed, to the students doing distance education. For example, online mental health support based on a referral from online school teachers. These services could be provided via telehealth by (preferably rural-based) psychological service providers, funded through local Primary Health Networks.

In addition, funding to implement a “building resilience program” targeted to those students leaving distance education and entering boarding school, might help with this huge transition, and could be delivered as online lessons as part of the final semester of primary school.

**CARRIED**

#### **S 18. QUEENSLAND STATE COUNCIL**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Premier of QLD, Education Minister, the Department of Education and Department of Agriculture to work together with Industry to create a state run agricultural school with boarding facilities in QLD.”**

**Explanation:**

QLD, a state with a diverse and vast agricultural production currently has no school facility dedicated to learning these skills regardless of if a student is from a rural area or an urban area. Educating and skilling students to learn not only the academic but also practical components of working and being able to gain employment or further study in a growing industry is imperative for future food and fibre supply. Working with Industry will also help to ensure the materials taught are relevant and appropriate for skills and knowledge transfer. Other than Victoria, QLD is the only state that does not offer these opportunities.

**CARRIED**

#### **S 19. TAMBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Minister for Education to establish a dedicated Agricultural High School with Co-Ed boarding facilities in Qld to meet the needs of all Rural and Remote Students and any students wishing to further develop their skills in these areas.”**

**Explanation:**

The closures of the four Agricultural Colleges in Qld, Burdekin, Dalby, Emerald and Longreach has created a void in Agricultural education in Queensland. Whilst we acknowledge and appreciate that some schools are offering an element of agriculture in the curriculum, it is only a minor component. The students undertaking these courses are only seeing a fraction of what is involved in the running of an agricultural business or a grazing property. For a full understanding of the processes, and to be job ready, students need to undertake a full suite of learnings that would be provided by a dedicated Agricultural High School. Currently the Vocational Education model is not meeting the needs of students and families who wish to gain a broader understanding of Agriculture. Given that Agriculture is one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy, the shortfall in Agricultural studies beggars belief.

Currently there are four dedicated Ag schools in WA and two in NSW, all at capacity, clearly demonstrating the need for these facilities. It is time for the Qld Government to take this on notice and establish an Agricultural High School in Queensland for all students who wish explore agriculture as a career.

**CARRIED**

**S 20. TAMBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to ensure students from Bypass eligible schools are given priority enrolment over mainstream school students who are choosing to study a subject via Distance Education.”**

**Explanation:**

The bypass school procedure and related documents have been in place since 2002 and it is time to review these documents to ensure that they are current and relevant. There are presently only 19 Bypass schools. To ensure that the students that remain in the communities that have bypass schools have the best possible education and opportunities, it is vital that they are given priority access. Students that choose to stay in these communities should not be disadvantaged due to low enrolments and less specialised teachers when they go to enrol in Distance Education and miss out on places in classes. We must continue to support the purpose of Distance Education being for students that are burdened by distance. We should be protecting the students’ rights to a broad range of subjects and a diverse education that will enhance their future career aspirations.

**CARRIED**

**S 21. TAMBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to ensure that students who attend a bypass eligible school, as well as their parents/caregivers, are fully informed of all available avenues, including Distance Education, to access a full suite of suitable curriculum offerings that are available to that student to match their interests and future study/employment aspirations.”**

**Explanation:**

It is currently acknowledged in the *Bypass Schools Procedure* that, ‘distance education enrolment and/or virtual schooling enrolment are currently required to complete the senior secondary program.’

(Bypassing procedure -<https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/bypass-schools-procedure> )

This statement needs to be supported with a procedure that schools follow to ensure that students are having timely and equitable access to these distance education classes with the support from their principal and

parents/caregivers, to make subject choices that match their interests. When making their subject choices in the preceding year, students and their parent/caregivers should be offered the Distance Education options at this time. *(This aligns with giving Bypass students priority access to these classes)*

The students' needs should be able to be met by offering them access to the broad range of subjects if and where they are offered, despite their location in a bypass school that may only offer limited classes because of low enrolments and less specialised teachers.

This new procedure needs to be about keeping very clear, open communication between Schools of Distance Education, bypass school principals, students, and parents/caregivers.

**CARRIED**

**A 51. TAMBO**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Recreation, Sport and Arts and other relevant departments to develop a funding scheme that helps bring qualified sports coaches into Rural and Remote communities.”**

**Explanation:**

Many rural and remote children miss out on the opportunity to be coached by qualified sports coaches and play sport on the weekends. It would be helpful if our small communities could access funding to bring these coaches to our children more often. We try to bridge this gap with many sports camps being run across the state, but it comes with great cost. Given that Queensland is hosting the Olympics in 10 years' time this is the perfect time to start developing and spotting the sporting talent that exists in rural Queensland.

**CARRIED**

**F1. SPRINGSURE/ROLLESTON BRANCH - LOST**

**“That ICPA Qld Inc lobby all relevant authorities to drop the mandatory Covid 19 vaccination requirement for all staff of Department of Education, Catholic and Independent schools.”**

**LOST**

## **SPECIFIC NEEDS**

**A 37. KINDON BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education for improved support for Rural and Remote students with disabilities, in particular, students with behavioural disabilities such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).”**

**Explanation:**

The current model for support for students with disabilities is calculated on the number of children with a verified disability in the school. With this analysis it means that 2 children with a disability in a single class school (in an 8 student school is equivalent to 25% of the class) which are entitled to receive a visit from an SEP teacher being two times a term. This model does not provide enough support for students with additional learning needs, particularly children that have behavioural support requirements. The Department of Education need to evaluate the current model and incorporate support for all students that require additional learning needs.

**CARRIED**

### **A 38. SOUTHERN DOWNS BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to liaise with Queensland Health to extend the services of School-Based Youth Health Nurses (SBYHN) to primary school students in rural and remote areas to assist in supporting the mental health and wellness needs of all students at the earliest possible stage of learning.”**

#### **Explanation:**

SBYHN currently work with secondary students in every state secondary school in Queensland. They are paid by the Department of Health, but work with the Department of Education through an existing MOU. SBYHN’s support students in many areas of social, emotional, and physical health. Often in rural and remote schools, they are the only health professional students can regularly access for support. School-Based Youth Health Nurses would be more effective in their roles if they were able to work with primary aged students in an early intervention/support capacity. Individual health consultations with a SBYHN could support student outcomes in any of the following areas

Healthy eating and exercise

Relationships

Personal and family problems

Feeling sad, worried and angry

Sexual health

Smoking, alcohol and other drugs

Growth and development

Promoting health and wellbeing with a “whole school approach” to support the development of healthy school environments.

Making recommendations on health resources to support curriculum, teaching and learning activities in schools.

This would lead to:

A significant health and wellbeing gains for students as they progress through their primary years, mitigating some need for support in Secondary.

Targeted help in addressing the reported increased need for support in Primary age students.

### **CARRIED**

### **A 39. MOUNT ISA BRANCH OF THE AIR**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby relevant government departments for the provision of fiscal support to private organisations that provide allied health to rural and remote students with specific learning needs where there are insufficient or non-existent government supplied service providers to enable regularised student support to improve learning outcomes.”**

#### **Explanation:**

There is a shortage of specialists to deliver services such as Speech Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy and other learning support for students in many rural and remote areas of Queensland. In Northwest Qld, some of the gap in support services has recently been filled by groups such as Outback Futures (<https://outbackfutures.org.au/>). Families in our branch have commented that the Outback Futures program has been working very well for their situations in remote areas, where previously there was only one Speech Language Pathologist available to service the entire area (including mainstream schools), and families were unable to access the assistance they needed for their children on a regular basis (if at all). Where the Department of Education is unable to provide enough specialists who are willing to travel and offer these services regularly and effectively to all children requiring them, support should be available for programs such as Outback Futures to continue their work in addressing the learning support needs of rural and remote students.

Private organizations don't always have sufficient funding to extend their services to all areas where they are needed. At other times these groups have to reduce services due to lack of funding and no longer see students they were already seeing, which is devastating for these families. Families in our area (Mount Isa School of the Air) that have worked with programs such as Outback Futures say it has made a tremendous difference in helping their students, but now due to a lack of funding, the program is limited in the areas it is able to cover, and students in some communities who were receiving learning support are now missing out on assistance once again. It is imperative that in situations where there are insufficient numbers of government supplied service providers to address specific learning needs in rural and remote areas, that fiscal support be available to private organisations to fill the gap of learning support in these communities.

**CARRIED**

## TEACHER EDUCATION

### A 40. TAMBO BRANCH

**"That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education to expand the criteria of the Beyond the Range scholarship program to accommodate applications by students already residing in rural and remote areas and performing placements within the regions."**

#### **Explanation:**

Under the current criteria for Beyond the Range, students have to reside 120 minutes from their home address while on prac experience – BUT if a student already has permanent residence in the regions they might not have to travel those distances to get a placement at a school (band 4-7) that is targeted by the Beyond the Range program, as you already live there. We are talking about students who have a permanent address in a rural or remote location and study from that address. By encouraging rural and remote students to do their placements in the regions the department is investing in pre-service teachers who are likely to be the permanent teachers who will stay. These students know the environment and the communities, and you don't have to convince them that living rural and remote is a great place to be. Example case – Student X lives 120mins from placement school in Morven and home location is Tambo – Morven is a band 5 school; Tambo is a band 5 school – so that student is travelling every day to Morven and they are not eligible for the grant because the school is not more than the required KM from their home address. This is even though they are doing placement at a school that Beyond the Range scholarship would target for a regional/city-based student to attend. Accommodation costs for student X could be \$135 per night, so to perform the placement it becomes very costly. If you weigh up travel KM (200km) and fuel costs – both options are expensive. If criteria were expanded to accommodate these types of students, it would help them continue in the regions and it fills some of the rural and remote teaching jobs. Supporting rural and remote-based students, through Beyond the Range, will benefit the Department of Education long term by having teachers who want to be in the regions while having had the same access to scholarship dollars as their city counterparts do to access rural and remote placements. We feel an extension or adjustment to accommodate this cohort of pre-service teachers would be an enormous benefit to communities as well as the students.

**CARRIED**

### A 41. WESTMAR INGLESTONE BRANCH

**"That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and other relevant education stakeholders to ensure that any scholarships, bursaries or programs promoting 'Teaching Rural' as a career are inclusive of, and indeed targeted towards, students from rural and remote areas who are studying at private and independent schools as well as those in regional & rural state high schools."**

**Explanation:**

Students who are born and raised in the country are far more likely to return to the country after completing their secondary and tertiary education in the profession they choose, and teaching is no different. The criteria of the recent pilot program 'Future Teachers Bursary' required any applicants to be studying at a state school, completely ignoring the fact that the bulk of Year 11 and 12 students from rural and remote areas have little alternative but to head to private boarding schools to complete their education. It is these students who need to be targeted and encouraged to take their career back to the rural and remote areas of Queensland, and it is these students who should be offered every opportunity and assistance to do so. Including these students in any future projects offering financial incentives or opportunities is crucial when attempting to address the shortage of teachers who are wanting to teach rural, and we urge the Department of Education to take note of this in their efforts to promote Teaching Rural as a viable career path for students.

**CARRIED**

**A 42. WESTMAR INGLESTONE BRANCH**

**"That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education and other relevant stakeholders to provide opportunities and financial assistance to potential 'teachers' who are already living and working in rural and remote areas to enable them to study Education."**

**Explanation:**

There are many mature-age people already living in rural and remote towns across Queensland who may be interested in studying teaching if they were provided with the appropriate levels of support and financial assistance by the Department or another education employer. The teacher aide, the distance education home tutor or simply a parent who has older children – if people such as these were given the opportunity to study in their own community to become a teacher, the benefits for these communities would be substantial. 'Growing Your Own' is not a new concept, and it is people such as these examples who would then remain in our rural communities, thus addressing the ongoing issue of attraction and retention of teaching staff. Too many new teachers are sent out west, unprepared for the realities of life in rural communities – they don't want to be there, and their unhappiness affects their mental health and their ability to teach capably, thus affecting the education of our children. Teacher shortages are becoming critical across the state and the nation, and rural and remote schools are bearing this burden – action must be taken to ensure that we are utilising all of the resources that are already there for us – the people who already love where they live, love the people they are surrounded by and want to stay in that community and be a part of it.

**CARRIED**

**A 43. WINTON BRANCH**

**"That ICPA Qld lobby the Queensland Council of Deans to consider implementing one rural and remote placement for all teaching degrees."**

**Explanation:**

In the past, some universities had the requirement of pre-service teachers having to undertake a rural and remote placement. The Winton Branch asks that this be revisited for the benefit of our small communities who often struggle to attract and retain high quality educators to their local schools.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 44. TAMBO BRANCH**

**That ICPA Queensland lobby the Department of Education to offer more professional development and support including human resourcing to schools of distance education where there has been an increase in enrolments of students with special needs.**

##### **Explanation:**

Charleville School of Distance Education is experiencing an increase in enrolments of students presenting with disabilities, anxiety, mental health, school refusal and family trauma.

The enrolment process is demanding of time and staff input; developing the appropriate program is difficult without deep understanding of the child; understanding the students' needs and supporting an untrained tutor/supervisor in the home to deliver the program is difficult for a class/subject teacher; distance is a barrier to meeting with the student/family to build relationships and support the family. Current staffing ratios, professional development and resourcing do not support these increased levels of support.

**CARRIED**

#### **S 22. WESTERN DOWNS BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the relevant authorities to encourage the uptake of mentorship roles by experienced teachers to mentor graduates in their first year of teaching by offering more flexible and inclusive options for senior teachers to do so in a rural context.”**

##### **Explanation:**

There is a program in place within QLD Ed that has teachers volunteer to mentor younger teachers, generally those within the first year of their teaching career. This isn't taken up particularly well within rural areas due to distance, time, and lack of opportunity to demonstrate teaching practices in an appropriate setting. We are not aware of how private schools in rural areas address mentorship within their schools and as such our motion speaks to our experience of the QLD Ed system.

Currently, mentor teachers do not receive designated release time from class to mentor first-year teachers. It is often necessary for the mentor teacher to demonstrate teaching strategies in front of a class of students, to the first-year teacher to give a hands-on experience of the situation, especially in a multi-age classroom situation. This is not possible when mentorship activities need to occur outside classroom contact hours e.g., after school finishes. Added to this, is the time burden of the mentorship placed on the mentor teacher, in addition to their regular workload. The problem can be compounded in small rural and/or remote 2 or 3 teacher schools, where a mentor is at a school nearby, which may be still 100km + away. In this case, release time needs to be blocked into a whole day to allow mentor and mentor teachers quality time together, to facilitate shadow teaching and classroom observation by the mentee and/or teacher of either or both of their classes.

Dedicated mentorship release from contact hours' time for mentor teachers, would be an incentive to recruiting more senior teachers to take up mentorship roles which would be instrumental in supporting the growth and capability of our younger teachers in rural areas and positively impacting the education of rural children going forward.

**CARRIED**

# TERTIARY TRADE TRAINING

## S 23. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld Lobby the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) to provide additional apprenticeship support and easier access to services currently provided.”**

### Explanation:

Many young people from rural areas undertake apprenticeships. Often these opportunities are offered a significant distance from the family home, whereby they have no option but to relocate and live independently. For most of these young people, it is their first time in the workforce and navigating independent living. Without a strong support network around them, offering additional financial and pastoral care, sadly many apprenticeships fail.

Employers are offered many incentives to take on apprentices. Once signed up, apprentices are largely left to their own devices to navigate through day to day, complex financial and pastoral care issues. The current support systems on offer are complex and too cumbersome for many apprentices to access or therefore benefit from. The low completion rate of apprenticeships (less than 50% across the board) commands immediate attention. Unless these issues are addressed immediately the current skill shortage across the state will remain and some of the best rural apprentices will be lost to the malfunctioning system.

## CARRIED

## S 24. MITCHELL-TOMOO/DUNKELD BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld continues to lobby the Department of Education and the Department of Employment, Small business and Training, the importance of support networks being provided to Apprentices.”**

### Explanation:

The career path for many rural students is often securing an apprenticeship. These apprenticeships are usually offered away from their home, which requires relocation and requiring the student/apprentice to live independently. For many this will be their first time in the workforce.

Employers are offered large incentives to take on apprentices, however there seems to be a lack of pastoral care. Networks such as Registered Training Organisations (RTO) are at the forefront and very important in helping these young apprentices navigate their apprenticeship, however support needs to be offered independent of their workplace.

We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Federal Living Away from Home Allowance for Apprentices, however there are many other areas that require genuine support in order to achieve best outcomes for our young apprentices.

## CARRIED

## S 25. QUEENSLAND STATE COUNCIL

**“That ICPA Qld lobby DESBT to develop a user-friendly platform/app for apprentices and trainees to enable simplified access to all relevant information pertaining to them.”**



### **Explanation:**

The current system is complex and often too difficult to navigate. A One Stop Shop or Dashboard app would allow apprentices/trainees to easily access the required information. Currently, many apprentices are not receiving the support that they require because the information is too difficult to access and located across several locations. For Rural and Remote apprentices who have to move away from home and don't have a strong support network behind them (Family or similar) obstacles such as this are adding to the high apprenticeship incompleteness rates.

**CARRIED**

## **S 26. QUEENSLAND STATE COUNCIL**

**“That ICPA QLD lobby the Minister for Education to be the voice of change for rural and remote students wishing to further their early childhood studies in the form of Diploma of Childcare (or equivalents) to have the required hours of practical placement to be inclusive of In Home Care work/supervision of children to enable completion of the practical component of course requirements.”**

### **Explanation:**

With the desperate need for more qualified Early Childhood Qualified personnel there is a limiting factor for many potential graduates with beginning and then attaining their qualification. With the need to complete 240 hours of placement, the student is often already working in the childcare area in rural and remote areas through the In Home Care Program. Families rely and depend on their carers to be able to perform their core business. If their Early Childhood Cert 3 qualified carer has to then be away for 240 hours (1 month) the flow on effect is limiting for all involved.

### **Example:**

A 21 year old with her Cert 3 qualification is working for a family caring for 2 children through In Home Care. Since graduating from year 12 and with her Cert 3 she has worked for 2 1/2 years caring for children but has applied and then declined studying online for her Diploma of Childcare as a requirement is 240 hours of placement hours to be worked in an approved workplace/centre. For this young lady that means 30 days of unpaid work, 30 days her employing family are without childcare for their children. The carers accommodation is provided by the family that employ her and is still 1 1/2 hours to a larger centre that has an early childhood/child care facility. The young girl has 4 weeks leave per year which would then need to be taken to work accumulating the required hours. She would need to find somewhere to live for this period too. If with negotiation the family allowed her to go and work to do the hours then two children 1 & 3 years of age would then need to be absorbed into their parents work environment and not be being cared for by a qualified carer in an approved safe working/caring environment.

**CARRIED**

## **TRAVEL**

### **A 45. TAMBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby Translink and any other government departments to request the conveyance allowance for rural and remote students be calculated from the home garage-not the property boundary.”**

### **Explanation:**

Currently rural and remote families are compensated for travel from their property boundary to their nearest bus stop or school gate, if there is no bus. However, this is not a true reflection of the distance that rural and remote families are required to travel to either a bus stop or the nearest school.

For example; a family's house is located 20km from their boundary, but their boundary is 8km from the bus stop, as it currently stands they are only getting paid for the 8km.

For rural and remote families that don't have access to a bus run, they may be travelling 80km to school, the first 25km gets them to their boundary and then it is 55km from the boundary to school, they are only being paid for the 55km.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 46. NEBO BRANCH – DEEMED COVERED BY A45**

**“That the Nebo Branch supports ICPA Qld’s ongoing efforts to lobby Translink and any other relevant Queensland Government Departments in requesting the conveyance allowance to be calculated from the home garage – not the property boundary.”**

##### **Explanation:**

The Nebo Branch understands that this is an issue that has been on the agenda for decades. It is disappointing to see that the same issue still exists with no change in policy from Translink, on such a recurring problem, despite such ongoing efforts to continually raise awareness from ICPA State Counsellors. Presently, families are compensated for travel from their mailbox at their property boundary to school. This does not adequately cover the travel rural families undertake on property for the distance travelled between their actual place of residence and their front boundary. In our area, families are travelling driveways ranging from 2 to 23 kilometres in each direction to reach their front boundary. The implication for families is that the current calculation is not reflective of the true distance travelled for children to and from school every day. Due to the location of their front boundary, and not their actual place of residence, some families are also falling into a lower allocation bracket.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 47. TAMBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Transport and all other relevant departments to ensure that rural and remote bus drivers/owners are being paid for children that are absent from their bus due to weather events, illness, or a pandemic where children are unable to attend school.”**

##### **Explanation:**

It is imperative that bus drivers are remunerated properly and equitably for providing a bus run for rural and remote schools and families. If rural and remote children that catch a rural and remote bus service are unable to get to school due to weather events, such as rain that makes unsafe and often unpassable road conditions preventing children from getting to the bus, illness, or a pandemic like Covid 19, it should not mean that the service provider misses out on being paid for something that is out of everyone's control.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 48. NEBO BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Department of Education, Department of Transport and Main Roads and Translink to make Kindergarten children attending local schools that offer State Delivered Kindergarten an allocation so that they can travel on designated Class I bus runs.”**

##### **Explanation:**

We are seeking that Translink include in their policies guaranteed seating allocation for kindergarten attendance children. Formal recognition of kindergarten children is required for bus operators to receive any State Government financial assistance. Currently, where space permits, bus operators are transporting kindergarten children on their service as a matter of goodwill. Whilst in many cases the inclusion of these children will assist in the long term viability of bus runs due to increased numbers, there may be short term instances where the total number of children seeking to travel on a bus run may exceed the number of allocated seats a small bus has capacity to carry. In these instances we are seeking that there be provision made to allow some discretion and decisions of the local community, together with either their bus committee or bus operator, to decide how any additional numbers will be handled. We would be seeking that in making the allocation a guarantee, that a small bus operator should not be automatically necessitated to upsize their bus to accommodate the extra numbers if it a short term increase.

Since State Delivered Kindergarten has now been in place at any State School throughout Queensland since 2019, it is time that these students be provided for in alignment with all other students.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 49. DAWSON VALLEY BRANCH**

**“That ICPA Qld seeks written clarification from the Department of Transport and Main Roads on rules for transporting children who are three years of age and turning four on unseatbelted rural school buses.”**

#### **Explanation:**

At least one school bus operator servicing our small P-10 school has requested permission from the Department of Transport and Main Roads to carry children who are three years old and turning four who attend the local community kindy and childcare when room on the bus is available. The Department has given the school bus operator verbal authority to carry these pre-school-age children on unseatbelted buses however when written confirmation was requested by TECCA, the Department has only provided guidelines and information. These advise that a student who is four years or older is exempt from the requirement to use an approved child restraint on a school bus fitted with seatbelts but is silent for a child that is younger than four traveling on a school bus without seatbelts.

In one instance, the school bus operator received verbal permission from the Department to carry a three-year-old child turning four who attends Theodore Early Childhood Centre (TECCA) however when written approval was sought for TECCA it wasn't provided. Her sister attends prep at Theodore State School so the school bus is already stopping at their pick-up point, travelling to Theodore State School and TECCA, and there are seats available on the bus. Consequently, the parents are having to put their school-age child on the bus then follow the bus for 16km to TECCA to drop-off their younger child 2-3 times per week. The parent then returns along the same route past their home and bus stop to travel 50km to their workplace. In another instance, the school bus operator requested and received verbal permission from the Department to carry a three-year-old child turning four from Cracow to Theodore to attend TECCA 2 days per week. The request was made to save the mother traveling 200km in total for drop-off and pick-up on each of those days. Verbal permission was given so this child was transported on the school bus. In this case written permission was not requested as, at the time, it was not required by TECCA.

This is becoming an access and inclusion issue as support teachers notice a stark difference between children with and without prior kindy/preschool learning and socialisation exposure once they enter the schooling system. Without the ability to utilise the bus service, many rural families will be unable to access early learning centres and therefore miss out on a vital pre-prep education.

**CARRIED**

## A 50. YARAKA ISISFORD BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld lobby the Queensland Government and Qantas/QantasLink to reintroduce the ability to book one-way resident fares for the benefit of travelling students and geographically isolated families.”**

### Explanation:

Children and families in remote areas are being disadvantaged as they can no longer book one-way resident airfares on Queensland Government subsidised routes. Qantas in partnership with the Queensland Government provides subsidies for eligible residents of a town or city serviced by Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Moranbah, Longreach, Barcardine or Blackall Airports. Eligible residents can access discounts starting from 20% off the Qantas-controlled component of return fares only (i.e. excludes government taxes, security and airport charges) from the listed regional airports to their nearest capital city or major town. To book a resident’s airfare, residents also need to be a member of the Qantas Frequent Flyer program which automatically links the passenger’s eligible residential address. Qantas does offer the option for regional residents to join their Frequent Flyer program for free. The onset of COVID-19 saw Qantas reduce their local customer service presence in these regional areas as well as removing the ability to book one-way resident fares through local booking agencies. The only current option is to book a return residents airfare from the passengers nearest regional airport to their nearest capital city or major town, which is placing increased financial pressure on rural families. Due to costs and time constraints, families are often not able to drive long distances to collect children from boarding schools and travel dates are often not known in advance. There are examples of families having to pay upwards of \$500 for a single one-way airfare between Brisbane and Longreach. Re-introduction of flexibility around booking resident fares for one-way trips has the potential to save geographically isolated families hundreds of dollars. Qantas could easily implement this option via their website and by also re-introducing the ability for local booking agencies to book one-way fares for eligible residents. Motion approved via email after it was proposed at branch teleconference meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**CARRIED**

## S 27. WESTERN DOWNS BRANCH

**“That ICPA Qld Inc lobby the relevant authorities to consider the impact on rural families who have students living away from home, when transport timetables are changed and preclude them from utilising economic forms of transport to get their child/children home or to school at weekends and holidays.”**

### Explanation:

Transport in regional and rural areas must take into consideration the impact of change on the local community. Students who can travel home via bus or train should be able to do so without impacting their schooling as well as balancing their family wellbeing. We have several families in our district impacted by the recent changes in the bus timetables which decrease the amount of time children can spend at home on a weekend and negatively impacts on their family both financially and emotionally.

In December 2021, Greyhound won the contract to provide the government subsidised outback bus service. Prior to that, Bus Qld had held the contract.

Since the changeover, several services on a weekend have disappeared making it very difficult to get kids home from boarding school for the weekend and back to Toowoomba in time for school on a Monday.

Bus Qld Toowoomba-Miles	Greyhound Toowoomba - Miles	Bus Qld Miles-Toowoomba	Greyhound Miles-Toowoomba
Friday Afternoon approx. 3:40pm departure	Friday afternoon 4pm departure	Friday Afternoon service	5am and 1pm departure on weekdays

Saturday Morning approx. 9am departure	No service offered on Saturday	2 x Saturday afternoon services at 2pm and 3pm departure	5am departure only on Saturday
Sunday Morning approx. 9am departure	No service offered on Sunday	2 x Sunday afternoon services at 2pm and 3pm departure	5am departure only on Sunday

As can be seen, students can still come home on a Friday evening, just as before however they either must catch a 5am bus back to Toowoomba on Sunday morning which makes it little point coming home or 5am Monday morning which sees them late for school or is not an option if the boarding facility does not have the capability to cater for returning students on a Monday morning. This has a negative impact on students and families.

**CARRIED**