

PORTFOLIO REPORTS - STATE COUNCIL

Distance Education, SOTA & Curriculum Report

Louise Ford – Portfolio Holder, March 2022

At the 2021 State Conference two motions were presented.

A5 presented by Goldfields Eyre Branch

“That ICPA (WA) lobby the Department of Education to ensure the role of Support Teacher Learning (STL) and the funding for the position in Schools of the Air (SOTA) continues past 2021”

A response has been received from Executive Director of Statewide Services, Mr. Martin Clery stating that: *“In 2021 each SOTA was provided with an Operational Response: Support Teacher Learning of \$114,795.12, which is equivalent to the salary rate for one FTE teacher. The Department of Education is not anticipating changes to the funding approach”*.

S2 was presented at the 2021 State Conference as a supplementary motion by Gascoyne Branch. *“That ICPA (WA) lobby the Minister for Education to change the funding model for Schools of the Air to a service delivery model rather than the student-centered funding model (SCFM) to ensure that Schools of the Air do not have to cut services delivered.”*

A response received from the Executive Director of Statewide Services, Mr. Martin Clery outlined that:

- the SCFM offers targeted funding allocations to meet specific learning needs.
- an Enrolment Linked Base and locality allocation for each school.
- provides targeted initiatives and operational response funding.
- also supporting greater local control by Principals and school communities.

So, in all, no change to the funding model will happen.

CURRICULUM

NAPLAN for 2021 moved from 11th to 21st May. Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 sat the assessment.

NAPLAN’s transition to go fully online was delayed by one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In preparation for NAPLAN being fully online in 2022, 70% of schools participated in NAPLAN online this year.

NAPLAN online testing platforms have been strengthened to accommodate regional and remote schools with limited internet access, by including low and no bandwidth solutions. In addition, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has implemented adjustments to cater to students with diverse learning needs and functional abilities. This includes alternative questions, rest breaks, extra time, tailored testing and magnification.

NAPLAN 2022 testing is from 10th to 20th May in a nine-day test window.

There has been concern from Federal ICPA that the new changes to how NAPLAN is delivered will negatively impact rural and isolated children, these points being:

- the extension of testing times at face-to-face locations.

- earlier in the year testing not being a true reflection of a student's performance especially ones that have just started boarding and are dealing with the pressures of being away from home.
- the negative impacts small schools will face with staffing and resources needed while teaching goes ahead in the rest of the school.

The Australian Curriculum was under review with the Ministers for Education giving their consideration and endorsement to the final revisions at the end of 2021. The new updated Australian Curriculum was to be made available on a newly redesigned curriculum website at the start of 2022.

In January, Minister for Education, Hon. Sue Ellery announced the development of three new languages for Australian schools. These being Hindi, Tamil and Korean. The Year 3 syllabuses for these languages will be available from 2023 with the announcement that every student from Years 3 to 6 in Australian public schools will learn a language.

Minister for Education, Hon. Sue Ellery released a media statement stating that from week one of Term 4 2021, a COVID-19 vaccination program would commence with priority schools being Residential Colleges, Agricultural and Boarding Schools as well as education support settings.

A new board chair for the School Curriculum and Standards Authority was announced on 10th December 2021. Ms. Pauline White will replace Professor Patrick Garnett.

SOTA

Most Schools of the Air numbers show a steady average for the past 5 years.

- Meekatharra SOTA Mean average 31.6
- Carnarvon SOTA Mean average 34.8
- Kalgoorlie SOTA Mean average 56.4
- Port Hedland SOTA Mean average 18.6
- Kimberly SOTA Mean average 27

SIDE

School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE) continues to self-improve with an open online question time and opportunities to give feedback with Principal Paul Mathews and Deputy Principal Shane Yardley in mid-September.

They have had a good line-up of guest speakers with Writer and Entertainer Alton Whalley, Mathematician Chris Mathews and Author Gavin Aung.