

ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



2024 FEDERAL CONFERENCE RURAL SCHOOLS PORTFOLIO MOTIONS

A40. Goldfields Eyre Branch (WA)

CARRIED

“That ICPA (Aust) lobbies the Federal Government for funding to be sought to further incentivise experienced teachers to take up contract and long term rural, regional and remote positions.”

Explanation:

Students from rural, regional, and remote areas are facing, at times constant, disruptions to their education in the form of teacher shortages. Teacher retention in rural areas can be problematic and even in those schools where teachers are committed long term their ability to access vital professional development days, long service leave and even sick days is limited due to the lack of relief teachers and/or support staff. It is not uncommon for small schools to have only two classroom teachers across all year levels and minimal funding for additional support staff such as Education Assistants (EAs) or Library Technicians. When one teacher is away from the classroom the other teacher must take the whole school and/or EAs are being asked to step in and take classes. In some cases teachers are being called in without completing their training which effects the students and teacher alike. Additionally the mental health of teachers is becoming increasingly worrisome due to their burdensome workload.

The states all have varying incentives to encourage teachers to rural schools however it has been our experience that these incentives are not always well advertised and experienced teachers often think these are graduate positions only when they are actually open to all teachers. As well as federal funding we suggest the Federal Government run an advertising campaign to get teachers into the bush pitched at experienced teachers and their families.

Additional Incentives to those already on offer could include:

- Financial incentives for short term or contract work in the regions
- Increased childcare rebates for teachers with young families wanting to take up rural positions
- At present only high school teachers are allowed in on special visa's, this could be extended to primary teachers also
- Clear potential for permanency
- Increased potential for permanency in the city after completing a set amount of time in a rural, regional or remote school.