

### SCHOOLS PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE REPORT – June 2024

What a big year the schools Portfolio team has had. ICPA Qld had presented numerous motions to the Department of Education and other relevant stake holders, over the past 12 months. While in Brisbane at delegations ICPA Qld had the chance to visit the Queensland Children's Hospital, which was such a humbling experience. Seeing first-hand the number of children that attend this school, either themselves or siblings is something I was not aware off. During our visit there was the chance to attend the school's assembly and it was so great to see awards handed out for hard work and birthdays. We thank the Queensland Children's Hospital staff and amazing children for allowing us to be part of their school.

Motions presented to the Department of Education (DoE) and Qld Teacher's Union (QTU) around the ongoing situation with Acting Principals were discussed at our first delegations. DoE are aware of the situation there is no easy fix with a current restructure occurring within the Department of Education. The Department of Education have informed State Council that they are exploring a range of avenues to obtain and retain staff from all sectors, not only principals and they would prefer to have permanent staff in schools. The DoE have invested in boosting the recognition of Rural and Remote Service (RoRRS) to attract and retain permanent staff. The RoRRS is scaling up the retention payment from year 1 to year 8 rather than year 3 to year 5 thus, enhancing the incentive for staff in rural and remote areas. The Department of Education is working on streamlining processes retaining to position availability, currently recruitment teams are located in each region, and from 2024 the DoE will be transitioning to a more borderless approach and have been trialling a centralised vacancy system where application forms can be filled out by the teaching candidates, and then in consultation with the recruitment team can be matched to a relevant position.

Discussion has also been held around the need to lower the threshold enrolment requirements for two full time teachers. The QTU had suggested that this motion may fall under the Enterprise Bargaining agreement. They suggested that ICPA branches contact teachers to complete a log of claim to the Teachers Union. The DoE has taken this information on board as in some cases the P&C is helping to fund the second teachers or other extra support roles at some schools., if your school P&C is helping to support a second teacher can you please let me know so we can pass this information onto the DoE. ICPA Qld would like to remind branches to reach out to State Council if their school is in this situation so information can be forwarded to the DoE to make them aware of the number of schools that have P&C support in this area. The DoE has taken the information presented so far onboard along with all case studies. ICPA Qld will continue to work with DoE over the next year to achieve a result that is favourable for all.

Over the past council year discussions were held around pertaining to allowances available for teachers that are working in different schools within the same cluster and an increase to these allowances. The Queensland Teacher's Union advised ICPA Qld that the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EB) is occurring this year and that teachers could lodge a log of claim so this issue can then become a part of this going forward. The new EB is coming into effect-next year. There are several motions that State Council are currently working on with the DoE including funds for travel for teachers whose teaching allocation is split between rural and remote small schools to make them viable. Currently the DoE directive does not require additional payment to staff where daily travel to work is within a reasonable distance to or from their residence. The DoE is looking at ways to support teachers and how to employ them on a cluster basis. Employment via a cluster model would see teachers shared between schools and it may include travel assistance packages. Currently some roles are under different guidelines which means not all teachers are receiving the same incentives.

More information is available on allowances for teachers, in the booklet called *Choose your Teaching Adventure*, available on the Teach Queensland Website. ICPA Qld look forward to discussing this issue more at our next delegations.

ICPA Qld have continued to ask for updates on the Water Quality Security and Planning Program that came about from a motion brought to conference a couple of years ago.-This motion has highlighted the issue to the DoE. Listed below is the latest update.

As of July 2023, there has been 210 schools selected for remediation and the following is a breakdown of what is happening. Of the 210 schools

- 85 education facilities in the program have remediation works completed.
- 41 education facilities have work in progress.
- 44 education facilities have proposed remediation work under review.
- 40 education facilities are at the design phase, so need assessments to progress. This has been a large project for the infrastructure Division, and it is great to see the numbers that have already been completed, and ICPA Qld will continue to work with the DoE to ensure other schools are completed.

The motion presented to conference around the maintenance of lawns etc of DoE houses falls with the tenant of the house throughout the year. The DoE tenant is responsible for the maintenance of the yard and the Local Accommodation Committee (LAC) looks after major work and maintenance of properties. LAC have representatives from local schools, the principal, and the property owner if not a DoE house. This committee will oversee any major works that may need to be undertaken. If a tenant is aware of things needing to be maintained, they need to contact the principal of the school and the LAC to make arrangements for the work to be completed. The DoE will receive \$48.3 million over 4 years for housing acquisition and renewal of augment through the existing Government Employee housing (GEH) program. This will ensure the housing acquisition and renewal funding will assist to meet the challenges and emerging needs in rural and remote areas by making sure staff are adequately housed.

State Council look forward to the year ahead within the school's portfolio and working with new and old motions to receive an outcome for our members and especially for our Rural and Remote children.

Thanks

Loretta Goodwin

Schools Portfolio Leader