



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

“What a child wants and deserves is a parent who is SPARKY” – from *Danny the Champion of the World* by Roald Dahl

I think it could be said that for children of ICPA families, this want is well and truly delivered, for there is nothing more sparky than a parent who

is advocating for their children. Sitting back in a room with parents from across Australia during the recent Federal Conference, was certainly enough to rekindle sparks that may have perhaps waned over three years of hindered advocacy, collaboration and dare I say socialisation.

In a recent survey from our distance education school, it was asked what ‘are the benefits of inreaches and outreaches (minischools) for our children?’ This got me thinking and put simply the value of these cannot be overstated.

When you live in a geographically isolated situation, the opportunity to come together is seldom, so when these opportunities arise, they are so important, to meet and mingle, interact, collaborate, and enjoy the company of others. The chance to come together is motivating and inspiring and indeed it makes you sparky! Like minischool for our children, for me, a face-to-face Federal Conference has the same impact and that I was able to preside over our first fully face-to-face conference in three years was a privilege and an exceptional experience. I only hope that for all of you who joined us for Conference that the experience was a good one. My congratulations to all involved in bringing the conference to fruition and a very special mention to the Western Australia Convening Committee who wholeheartedly welcomed us to the west. I also thank all those who supported us to enable the opportunity to come together – without the generosity of many, we could never achieve such extraordinary events.

We farewelled several longstanding Federal Councillors during Conference and I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Lisa Slade, Jane O’Brien and Sally Sullivan for your dedication to Federal Council and all things ICPA. As I said at Conference, ICPA will always be better off for having these three ladies on its side. We also farewelled Pedals Editor and Publisher Raelene Hall and Archivist

Julia Materne, both steadfast, enthusiastic ICPA stalwarts whose presence in our Federal Council team will be sorely missed. We have though, an outstanding group of individuals continuing on this year, and I am excited to see what the next twelve months holds. It is especially exciting to now be working with our new off-Council team members – new Membership Officer Judy Newton, Pedals Editor Hannah Calcino and Publisher Tracey Dewell and Archivist Carmel Elliott. All have big shoes to fill, however, I know all have brought with them outstanding strengths and abilities and are gratefully welcomed to the folds of the Federal Council team. Without outstanding individuals willing to step into these roles, we simply could not maintain the ongoing work of ICPA Australia. My gratitude to all new and old for your commitment and efforts.

And so we have begun our 2022-23 Federal Council Year. The new Council year has commenced with a Carpe Diem frame of mind, we have seized the day, motion letters are being written, meetings are being held and actions are aplenty. In the fortnight following Conference, we have had meetings with the Department of Social Services, Services Australia, the office of the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services and the Hon Fiona Nash, the Regional Education Commissioner. We are keen to continue to represent our members and raise the topics that matter most at every opportunity. We also remind members that we represent all rural and remote families, across early childhood and care, distance education, rural schools, boarding, tertiary and training and you do not need to wait until a Conference to approach us for assistance. While we cannot guarantee we can do everything, we will do whatever we can to continue the legacy of ICPA to achieve equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for our geographically isolated children.

Federal Council are currently readying ourselves for delegations, the first with the new Government. Immediately following the election and appointment of the new cabinet, we made contact with MPs and Senators, including the Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education, the Hon Anthony Chisholm, Assistant Minister for Education, the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services and the Hon Dr Anne Aly MP, Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth to familiarise them with ICPA and share with them our full suite of briefing papers.

We have welcomed a number of responses to our correspondence and ICPA looks forward to working with the new Government and engaging and meeting with them.

On a personal note, may I thank members for the privilege once again of being your Federal President for this Council year. At Conference I reminded those in attendance that I am just like everyone else, a Mum living in rural Australia who knows that equitable education for our future generations is key to ensuring

the longevity of the communities we value so much. It is through ICPA that I have found my opportunity to dedicate myself to achieving this and hold out the hope that what we do today will make a difference tomorrow. More so though, ICPA is my reminder that despite where I live I am not alone.

Alana Moller

Federal President

FEDERAL CONFERENCE REPORT



Roxanne Morrissey (ICPA Federal Life Member) and Trish McKenzie (Cunnamulla Branch).



Georgina Luckraft (Broken Hill), Laura Stalley (Federal Council) and Bree Wakefield (Wentworth Branch).



Liz Cook, Sally Dyer (Katherine Branch) and Emily Aarts.



Kristen Coggan (Western Downs Branch) and Britt Anderson (Broken Hill Branch).

Mother nature did not consider the tenacity and grit that ICPA is known for when it tried to deter festivities by putting on its wildest weather during the week of Federal Conference. Despite flight delays, broken umbrellas, and plummeting temperatures, more than 160 delegates and guests joined together at the Carlton-Ritz for Federal Conference on Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th August.

Federal President Alana Moller opened conference by highlighting the suitability of this year's conference theme *'From the outback to the ocean – building member connections'*. Alana conferred that this theme aptly describes what ICPA is all about, coming together for common aims. She also voiced that like many, she was overjoyed to be fully face-to-face for the first time since 2019.

While the Honourable Fiona Nash – Regional Education Commissioner, was not able to join us in person, as

originally planned, she 'zoomed' in and set the tone of the conference with vigour and passion. She explained how her role provides her with the opportunity to identify key priorities in the regional education space and work towards achieving positive outcomes. She spoke optimistically about the new federal government's intentions surrounding regional, rural, and remote education and encouraged all ICPA members to not underestimate the reach and value that their advocacy has. She applauded ICPA for identifying and voicing the challenges in educating geographically isolated children but also having the solutions.

At the commencement of her president's address, Alana Moller mentioned that as she was scrolling through social media that morning, a quote from Theodore Roosevelt came up in her feed. The quote read: *'Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing'*. She expressed that she felt that Roosevelt's quote authentically articulated the