
Distance Education

Dear Madam President, distinguished Guests, fellow State Councillors, Members, Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to present the Distance Education report for ICPA-NSW for the 2022 year.

Firstly, I would like to thank Moree for hosting the 2023 Conference, and it is great to finally be here and experience what Moree has to offer.

At Bourke Conference we were excited to have the opportunity to have a Distance Education session with the NSW Department of Education, where families could attend either in person or via Zoom. It was a well-attended meeting and families could express the needs and concerns of Distance Education students.

2022 saw an increase in the number of motions in the Distance Education space, and it's great to see some of those have been resolved. One of the biggest milestones is the commencement of the NBN Sky Muster and technology roll out. Our members have reported some issues with the roll out, some resolved and some not. The weather last year has not helped with the speed of the roll out and there are currently still families that are not connected.

Earlier in the year ICPA-NSW was asked to make a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into School Infrastructure. Prior to deputation, ICPA-NSW attended Parliament House for the hearing, where we were asked questions about the roll out of technology into home classroom, the infrastructure at School of the Air Broken Hill and the hostel accommodation at Dubbo School of Distance Education. The hostel accommodation has since been opened for families to use during their classroom weeks.

At our Deputation in Sydney in June, we continued to advocate for our members issues, particularly around NBN and the technology roll out to Geographically Home Isolated children. Families have been waiting for many years for the roll out of NBN Sky Muster. There have been issues along the way, and ICPA-NSW have been conveying our members issues to the NSW Department of Education. We would encourage our members to ensure they are also contacting the Help Desk when issues arise, or you have concerns.

We continue to meet with the Regional, Rural & Remote Education Policy fortnight and have ongoing discussion around the NBN and technology roll out. We are also discussing other concerns as they come to our attention.

Since receiving the motion from several branches into a review into Distance Education, we have looked at the last review done around 2008. The NSW Department of Education supplied us with a copy, and we are due to have a meeting regarding the findings and outcomes that were achieved. We will keep our members up to date.

We have also attended some P&C Meetings at School of the Air Broken Hill and given updates on the technology roll out. If any other Distance Education centre would like us to attend their P&C Meetings, please get in touch.

On the 1 December 2022 once again Geographical Distance Education Day was celebrated. ICPA-NSW created a video thanking parents for all the sacrifices they make to educate their children. Hopefully you will get a chance to watch the video at conference.

Laura Stalley and Bree Wakefield