

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE REPORT – June 2023

Four motions were carried at last year's conference and an increase to the Living Away From Home allowance was once again one of them: it is long standing motion.

This year, in our advocacy, ICPA Qld submitted a submission to Treasury asking for a \$4000 increase to LAFHAS and then for it to be raised with CPI. As this issue affects so many of our members, ICPA Qld also invested in making a video of why an increase to LAFHAS was needed. This video was to raise awareness to the broader public including city-based politicians on why families choose boarding schools and what a difference an increase to LAFHAS would mean to them. The Financial Assistance Portfolio along with the Boarding School Portfolio formed a subcommittee to oversee the making of the video. We engaged the service of Max Hateley Media to make the video and a big thanks to the families who participated: Amanda and Paddy Walker, Guy and Ruby Newell, Naomi and Milly Back and, to Richard Stokes from ABSA who also assisted us. This was logistically a huge task to pull together, and we are very proud of what Max was able to put together. The video was launched in Brisbane along with ICPA Qld's first ever Press Conference. Since the release of the video there have been five newspaper articles written and several radio interviews. I would like to thank Ningana Trust who donated \$10,000 to ICPA Qld which was put towards this project. It is lovely to have Katie Norman from Ningana here at conference.

Thanks also to all those members, schools and stakeholders who made supporting videos to share on our social media posts. Also, thanks to all those who liked, shared, and tagged our posts. We have had acknowledgement from Minister Grace that the submission to Treasury has been received and is being considered. We await the release of the budget later in the month. This was not the only Financial Assistance motion carried at last year's conference. We have not forgotten those families who are Queensland residents but whose students attend interstate boarding schools who are currently not eligible for LAFHAS. We have raised this with the Department but, unfortunately, have not had any positive news. We will continue to raise the above issue for consideration.

In regard to the motion on the reallocation of the Remote Area Allowance which forms part of the Living Away From Home Allowance, we were told that the RAA component of the Living Away From Home Allowance has already been utilised. This portion of money has been absorbed into current LAFHAS payments.

The introduction of a Distance Education Teaching Allowance has been a motion raised at previous conferences and ICPA Qld once again raised the issue with the Department and shared several great podcasts on the issue to broaden understanding. To raise awareness and seek support of why this allowance is needed it was also on the agenda with QCWA, Agforce and the Department of Agriculture. ICPA Qld will continue to work in this area along with our Federal Counterparts.

Kate Bradshaw

Financial Assistance Portfolio Leader

Email: Councillor2@icpaqld.com.au