The Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia (Inc)

DISTANCE EDUCATION

It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with the Education Allowances Policy, other individual Portfolio Policies and associated ICPA Aust documents

POLICY

ICPA seeks a distance education service for Early Childhood Education – Year 12 rural and remote students including services delivered by schools of distance education and Schools of the Air (SOTAs).

OBJECTIVES

1. Recognition of the importance and value of Schools of the Air and Schools of Distance Education with geographically isolated student enrolments being based in and part of their respective rural and remote communities.

2. Support mechanisms are in place which assist in reduction of costs associated with educating rural and remote students to access distance education.

3. Provision of a nationally accredited distance education course for distance education tutors.

4. Experience gained as a distance education tutor is acknowledged as Recognition of Prior Learning.

5. Distance education classroom supervisors remunerated in recognition of the essential work they perform.

6. That schools of distance education are not overlooked in initiatives made available to mainstream schools.

7. A distance education skills component is available in teacher training courses.

8. Schools of distance education provide pre-service courses for new staff.

9. Provision of home visits by suitably qualified personnel to support students and distance education tutors.

10. Mobile diagnostic and service support units be available to test students in consultation with respective teachers.

11. Regular face-to-face activities be conducted by schools of distance education.

12. A free call phone number for students studying by distance education be provided to enable access to teachers.

13. Fast, reliable and affordable two-way voice and data communication be available for all students.

Objectives endorsed by FC November 2025

14. Technology to enhance rather than replace face-to-face interaction for students, teachers, parents and distance education tutors.

15. A hard copy of distance education material be made available to families on request at no additional cost.

16. Financial support be available to families to assist with providing required communication equipment for distance education lessons.

17. Universal Service Guarantee (Postal) to ensure distance education material is delivered as a letter delivery service, regardless of a person's place of residence or mode of delivery.

18. Provision of subsidised travel cost for mail collection where no regular mail service exists.

19. Provision of a nationally accredited pre-employment security screening program for those choosing to work with children.

20. Support for volunteer educator programs for geographically isolated students.

21. Commonwealth school funding models support:

    a: geographically isolated students regardless of where they are educated.
    b: a 5th student loading to the School Resourcing Standard (SRS) for Geographical Isolated (GI) Students.

22. Schools of Distance Education must have adequate resources, qualified staff and suitable polices to cater for rural and remote students with a disability.

23. Supervisors in rural and remote distance education classrooms are eligible to be employed under the In-Home Care Program.

24. Regional University Hubs (Rush's) to provide support with appropriate safeguards to local secondary students who are learning by distance.

25. Recognise and implement a wage system for Supervisors under a suitable award structure.