



BELYANDO - MT COOLON

*ICPA Qld Inc. 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual State Conference*

*Main Agenda Motions*



## COMMUNICATIONS

### A 1. NEBO BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to extend internet coverage to include teacher housing that is connected to rural and remote schools.”**

#### Explanation:

Staff at rural and remote schools are regularly providing feedback that they have limited connectivity, particularly with unreliable internet coverage. This in turn creates a desire to relocate back to towns and cities where connectivity is easily accessible and doesn't hinder their daily lives. This is a particular issue at schools that are not connected to a township, and the teacher accommodation is in close proximity or connected to the school such as Valkyrie, Clarke Creek, Mistake Creek and Kilcummin.

A large portion of our lives is spent connected to devices, and with the added factor of isolation, having connection electronically in lieu of physically, is of great importance. We understand that the RORR's Scheme, with specific financial allowances for employees who are based at a TR4-7 schools, does not have a specific component for connectivity, or allowance to assist an employee having to gain additional means to gain an internet connection. With the rise of Starlink, as we understand, a partnership is now in place with the Department where it is being implemented at rural and remote schools. A simple solution could be to install a booster facility at the teacher housing, which would allow the staff who are also residents at the school to have a secure and reliable internet source.

We regularly receive feedback that undertaking this task themselves is both cost and time prohibitive. This, to some extent, would address the issue of attracting and retaining staff to rural and remote areas. Given the essential nature of connectivity, we urge the Department to consider ways that would financially support, or invest in greater infrastructure to supply, rural and remote staff who reside on site with greater access to a reliable internet connection. Our rural teaching staff have a multitude of things to juggle on any given day. Facing patchy to no internet when they come home is extremely detrimental to their social and mental wellbeing. It is imperative that we find better solutions so that they have reliable ability to connect with their family and friends that are considerable distances away from them whilst they undertake teaching employment in rural and remote areas.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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## A 2. KINDON BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education and all stakeholders to provide connectivity to ensure the safety of rural and remote school students, their families and school staff at standalone schools.”**

### Explanation:

The lack of phone coverage in and around rural and remote schools is a major concern for the staff of these standalone schools. These schools are isolated from rural townships and there are no other buildings in the vicinity. Due to their location, schools are constantly managing passing people who have no business being on the school grounds when they come inside the school boundary to receive help. This is a major safety concern for both staff and students. These schools have limited staff and when one is called away to assist a visitor to the school, this interrupts the students learning and places them in a vulnerable position without adult supervision.

Schools who need cellfi boosters are affected once they move out of range of that device so if there is an incident away from the main building, they do not have service where the incident is. This is not good enough and would not happen in a city school.

Currently at Kindon State School there is a Telstra tower at Wyaga which is ten kilometres away. This tower gives coverage approximately three kilometres either side and the next structure heading east is Kindon State School. Of course, people are going to go to the school to call for assistance if needed because they have no other choice. In the meantime, our staff and students are subject to safety issues which could be fixed if there was enough connectivity surrounding the school.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## DISTANCE EDUCATION

### A 3. FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education (DoE) to work with the Schools of Distance Education (SoDE) to develop a program to support the needs of geographically isolated enrolled students with Specific Needs, including out of phase learners.”**

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**Explanation:**

Since 2008, Schools of Distance Education (SoDE) in Queensland have experienced huge increases in enrolment. For example, from 2008 to 2018 Cairns SoDE had a 415% increase in enrolment and Capricornia SoDE a 505% increase. A large proportion of these increases are due to medical enrolments moving to distance education as they are not able to access suitable education to meet their needs in mainstream face-to-face school settings. For Cairns SoDE, in 2021 medical enrolments were 24% of total full-time enrolments and in 2024 are 32.5% of total full-time enrolments. SoDE are not equipped for this changing demographic in terms of the mindset of school leadership, school policies, level of understanding of medical conditions and their complexities, as well as suitably qualified staff, and access to disability workers and professionals to appropriately support the needs of these students, despite them making up a third of full-time home-based enrolments. Geographically isolated students with disability and specific learning needs are “doubly disadvantaged” in this system.

Education Queensland’s Every student with disability succeeding plan 2021–2025\* commits the Queensland government to transform the state education system to support the success and wellbeing of every student with disability through each stage of learning. The plan “includes actions to ensure every student with disability and their families are welcomed at their school, are heard and supported by confident and capable staff with high expectations that, with the right support, every student with disability can succeed”. This all looks commendable on paper, but it is yet to be seen how this policy will be embedded into practice in the distance education setting. This plan presents an opportunity for the DoE to work with the SoDE to develop a program to support the needs of medically enrolled students including out of phase learners to ensure every child’s learning and well-being needs are properly met at their level, building on their strengths, so that every student with disability can succeed, achieve their full potential, and live a life of choice.

\* <https://education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/every-student-with-disability-succeeding-plan.pdf>

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 4. FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education (DoE) to ensure that Schools of Distance Education (SoDE) are resourced and staffed in terms of suitably qualified teachers, teacher aides and counsellors, and have access to disability support workers and professionals, to support the success and well-being of those geographically isolated students who require additional learning support.”**

**Explanation:**

Since 2008, Schools of Distance Education (SoDE) in Queensland have experienced huge increases in enrolments. For example, from 2008 to 2018 Cairns SoDE had a 415% increase in enrolment and Capricornia SoDE a 505% increase. A large proportion of these increases are due to medical enrolments moving to distance education as they are not able to access suitable education to meet their needs in mainstream face-to-face school settings. For Cairns SoDE, in 2021 medical enrolments were 24% of total

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full-time enrolments and in 2024 are 32.5% of total full-time enrolments. SoDE have not been able to keep up with this changing demographic in terms of having suitably qualified staff including teachers, teacher aides, councillors and access to disability support workers and professionals to appropriately support the needs of these students, despite them making up a third of full-time home-based enrolments.

For geographically isolated students, distance and isolation limits the choice of schools available to students, but for students with disability and specific learning needs, this choice can be further limited. Having both geographic isolation and learning difficulties can be seen as a "double disability"\*. All students have a human right to participate in education appropriate to their needs and at their level through rigorous, meaningful, and dignified learning programs, supported by special provisions and appropriately qualified teachers and staff, regardless of their geographic location.

\*ICPA Australia (2023) Specific Education Needs Portfolio Briefing Paper.

### **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## **A 5. FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND BRANCH**

### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education (DoE) and other relevant departments to develop a flow chart that provides details of support contacts and pathways for parents, families, carers and home tutors of geographically isolated enrolled students with Specific Needs to navigate the programs and supports available.”**

### **Explanation:**

The diagnosis of medical conditions in children can be a challenging and stressful time for all involved. For school-aged children this is compounded by the pressures of a compulsory education, and for geographically isolated and rural and remote families, the isolation, and huge distances to travel to access medical services, education, and support\*. There is a lack of prioritized and clear pathways for intervention, diagnosis and management of special learning needs and the costs of accessing these services and supports are exacerbated by distance. Having a flow chart available as a visual guide for parents, carers and families would facilitate better understanding of the processes, resources, and support programs available to help them advocate for the needs of their child through each stage of learning.

\* Noted by ICPA NT in the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training - *Report on Education in Remote and Complex Environments (2020)*.

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## A 6. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education and the seven Schools of Distance Education to ensure that Home Tutors/supervisors have a designated contact and support network at the school campus to assist with all aspects of the home classroom management and learning assistance to support the enrolled student.”**

### Explanation:

Home Tutors of geographically isolated children require support on how to support their students in the home classroom, especially those new to the role, those supporting younger Kindy or P-3 students, those children who require learning support, are neurodivergent learners or have diverse disabilities. It is often difficult to access this support given the teachers inability to field questions due to their timetabled teaching commitments. In mainstream settings if a child is struggling with a concept the Teacher Aide can seek advice from the teacher how to best support the learning outcomes of the student. This barrier to support can leave the Home Tutor feeling further isolated and alone and can contribute to poor engagement and work returns. Ease of access to an experienced and dedicated Home Tutor support contact within SDE’s would greatly assist the support provided to the student by the Home Tutor.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## A 7. FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education (DoE) to develop a policy with Schools of Distance Education (SoDE) to have Term 1 distance education school resources available for enrolled geographically isolated (GI) students to collect from the school mail room or to post to families before Week 1 Term 1.”**

### Explanation:

In the 2024 school year a number of GI students enrolled in Cairns School of Distance Education (CSDE) in Far North Queensland did not receive their distance education resources until Week 6 of Term 1. This included families with students enrolled with the school and living at the same address for over 15 years and students from each stage of learning. Not having these resources on hand from the start of Term 1 disadvantaged these students and disrupted the functioning of the distance education home schoolroom.

The delay in receiving school resources this year and in previous years is due to a number of factors, some controllable (e.g. school mail room procedures, school enrolment and finance processes) and others uncontrollable (the wet season and severe weather events). Many GI families live on isolated properties which are cut off from town during the wet season (mid-December to April/May) therefore postal services are slow and sometimes unreliable. Many families receive mail only once a week via the mail plane and at times the plane cannot land due to the weather, so they have to wait a week or more to receive mail.

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If the school does not prioritise GI students when mailing out resources, their resources get caught in the backlog and when finally mailed out they can be further delayed by wet season disruptions.

This issue could be addressed by schools prioritising GI students when preparing school resources and ensuring that Term 1 school resources are available for families to collect from the school mail room at the end of the year for the following year. This would also save the school money on postage. Alternatively, if families cannot attend the school to collect resources, they should be posted to families before Term 4 ends, thereby arriving in advance of the start of Term 1. Several years ago, at CSDE this option was offered to families but is no longer available. It is important this option becomes policy across SoDE so it cannot be changed at the whim of school leadership.

#### **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### **A 8. HUGHENDEN BRANCH**

##### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to review and/or rewrite the eTeach units being delivered to students studying Distance Education.”**

##### **Explanation:**

The current eTeach units provided to students undertaking distance education are in dire need of improvement. They suffer from various issues such as being outdated, prone to malfunctioning, and lacking engagement. These units play a role in distance education, serving as the primary means of delivering lessons to students who are unable to attend traditional classrooms however, feedback from students and home tutors highlights significant shortcomings in the current units.

One major problem is the outdated content. Many of the lessons within the eTeach units are no longer relevant or accurate and fail align with current curriculum standards. This not only hampers students' learning but also undermines the credibility of the educational material being presented.

Additionally, technical issues plague the accessibility of the eTeach units. Software glitches and compatibility issues frequently prevent students from accessing the content, causing frustration and hindering their progress. In an era where technology is meant to facilitate learning, these obstacles present significant barriers to education.

The lack of engagement within the eTeach units is a pressing concern. The content fails to captivate students' interest, leading to decreased motivation and ultimately poorer learning outcomes. Without engaging materials, students are less likely to retain information or actively participate in their own education.

In one of the music assessments, for instance, it required specific instruments to complete the assessment. However, as is often the case, these instruments are not readily available to geographically isolated students. Consequently, students find themselves in a predicament where they must resort to completing the assessment online using unconventional methods. Picture a scenario where a student,

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lacking access to a drum set, attempts to mimic drumming by using their mouse to manoeuvre a virtual drumstick on the screen. Similarly, another student, without access to a piano, struggles to produce notes by clicking keys on a digital keyboard interface.

Addressing these issues is paramount to ensuring the effectiveness of distance education. Content must be regularly updated to reflect current standards and advancements in knowledge. Technical glitches need to be promptly addressed to ensure seamless access to educational resources. And perhaps most importantly, efforts should be made to design engaging, interactive content that fosters a love for learning and encourages active participation from students.

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## EARLY CHILDHOOD

### A 9. ALPHA BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld, lobbies the Queensland Government and kindergarten service providers, to ensure that no regional, rural, or remote kindergartens and childcare centres are closed or suspended without mandated, extensive community engagement.”**

#### Explanation:

Jellybeans Community Kindergarten and Limited Hours Care was established in 2002 in Alpha after extensive community and local government engagement, fundraising and grant applications. The centre was an integral part of our community and provided the only early childhood education and care facility in the township and surrounding areas.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=631070078450209>

At the beginning of 2024, with limited community engagement and no discussion with parents or families, the C & K Jellybeans Community Kindergarten and Limited Hours Care was closed. The community and parents were not given the opportunity to discuss options and solutions, there was no community engagement around attracting staff or enrolments. This has left a huge gap in the Alpha township, with no Kindergarten or childcare services available within 150 kilometres.

The centre is owned by Barcaldine Regional Council and was administered by C & K Queensland. Jellybeans was the only childcare and Kindergarten service available within the Alpha community and has significantly impacted families and children. At the very least extensive community engagement and meetings with prospective families should have occurred, to not only advise of C & K’s intentions but also to plan for the future of the centre, the materials and equipment (funded through community fundraising) and canvas enrolment numbers.

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A 2022 report by Victoria University and Mitchell Institute outlines that,

*“The evidence is overwhelming on the impact of good quality early learning in fuelling children’s development and giving them a great start in life. Children and families in rural areas are among the most likely to benefit from early learning, yet structural problems in the system have abandoned them without the access they need.”*

The children attending this centre deserve to be supported and have their ongoing social, cognitive and emotional needs met by the centre. At a time when the Alpha community needed help, C & K QLD were not engaged, not consultative and not across the intricacies of our small community.

Alpha ICPA branch believes that any decisions about “the ongoing sustainability” of remote and rural kindergartens and childcare centres, in particular, when there are no other services available, should have mandated community and parent engagement and consultation mechanisms. There has been no further engagement with the community by C & K Queensland regarding possible models that may work for Jellybeans, so that this facility can be utilised by the families and children it was designed for.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### **A 10. AUGATHELLA BRANCH**

##### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), Department of Education, Minister for Education and early childhood service providers to ensure early childhood services are provided in rural and remote locations where no services exist.”**

##### **Explanation:**

*Pending*

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### **A 11. ARAMAC-MUTTABURRA BRANCH**

##### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the relevant bodies to fund a facilitator for a mobile daycare program in those rural and remote towns that don’t have access to childcare and or early childhood education programs.”**

##### **Explanation:**

The Longreach Mobile Daycare was an amazing asset to the Aramac and Muttaborra communities, providing one day per week childcare in both our small towns, but also the townships of Isisford and Ilfracombe.

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It closed in 2023 after 15 + years servicing our communities, and there was always a waiting list in Aramac due to the large demand for childcare and early childhood education, with children from both in and out of town attending. There was always a Director present, plus 2 other staff to accommodate children ranging in age from newborn to 5 years.

The reason given by Longreach regional Council for the closure was lack of staff, and difficulty in recruiting new staff.

With the closest other Childcare services located in Barcardine and Longreach respectively, distance and costs make these other facilities prohibitive. For some small children from properties, it provided the only regular social interaction with other children, and the only opportunity for their parents to access childcare, making both their ability to work on farm, and their ability to care for the own mental health achievable, whilst their children were in a safe and controlled environment, if only for one day per week. It also provided the opportunity for mothers residing in our Towns to return to the workforce one day per week, in council offices, schools, service providers, tourism and hospitality.

All the communities in our region are facing housing shortages and many job vacancies - providing childcare can contribute to a solution. By establishing childcare centres, parents already residing in these areas can access reliable care for their children. This would enable them to pursue employment opportunities that would otherwise go unfilled due to the lack childcare and lack of housing for any non locals hoping to move into the area.

## **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

### **A 12. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH**

#### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to ensure that kindy students attending a state-delivered kindy facility receive the same support services/ allied health assessment and ongoing support as urban counterparts.”**

#### **Explanation:**

Kindergarten students are currently not eligible for assessments or support until they begin their prep year. However, providing equal access to quality kindergarten education is crucial. Studies have shown that early intervention can positively impact children's literacy, numeracy, and social skills while also helping them prepare for and succeed in school. The benefits of early intervention can extend to later in life, resulting in improved academic outcomes.

## **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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### A 13. CUNNAMULLA BRANCH

#### Motion

“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Minister for Education and Early Childhood providers to provide financial support and incentives for an early childhood kindergarten trained educator in highly vulnerable and rural and remote locations.”

#### Explanation:

*Pending*

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

### A 14. CUNNAMULLA BRANCH

#### Motion

“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Minister for Education and Early Childhood providers to provide housing in rural and remote communities for early childhood educators.”

#### Explanation:

*Pending*

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

### A 15. CUNNAMULLA BRANCH

#### Motion

“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Minister for Education and Early Childhood providers to deliver appropriate early childhood programs for highly vulnerable rural and remote locations.”

#### Explanation:

*Pending*

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### A 16. FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That Far North Qld ICPA Branch thanks State Council for its advocacy of motion A17 presented at the 2023 State Conference regarding “introducing a Home Tutor Distance Education Teaching Allowance as financial remuneration for the essential work the distance education Home Tutors perform in geographically isolated home classrooms. We look forward to working with State Council in 2024 and beyond to continue advocating for this campaign.”**

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

### A 17. RICHMOND BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA (Qld) lobbies the Minister for Education to provide an annual subsidy to geographically isolated families to assist with the cost of supplying a supervisor in the Geographically Isolated Distance Education schoolroom.”**

#### Explanation:

The Fee Exemptions Policy of the Department of Education (DoE) in Queensland states, ‘the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 stipulates that state education should be free for individuals who are either Australian citizens or permanent residents...’

For families who educate their children in the geographically isolated distance education schoolroom, the cost of receiving a Qld state education is far from free. The GI family not only funds the tangible items associated with a fully operational, full-time classroom; it also bears the full cost of provision of the essential tutor/supervisor.

As per the enrolment application, GI students are required by law to be fully supervised throughout the school day. This role is either undertaken by a family member, most often the mother, or a governess. When this role is fulfilled by the mother, she is removed from her earning capacity in the workforce or family business and the unseen cost is critical.

Regardless of who fills the role, the significant cost of labour to deliver ‘free’ state education to the GI student is solely borne by the GI family! This is equivalent to the state government sending a bill to a family for education access in a mainstream school. Would that be considered equitable?

Case study: A mother to two children had to cease working in their owner/ operated Contracting business to tutor / supervise the children. As the mother was no longer able to contribute to their business the family was under financial strain, additionally to this, the family then had to carry the burden of paying

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someone to replace her. Not only did her supervision in the schoolroom lessen the family income; it cost the family a Replacement wage.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## SCHOOLS

### A 18. NEBO BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to upgrade rural and remote schools to have their facilities and amenities upgraded to ensure they are inclusive of disability access, laundry and shower facilities.”**

#### Explanation:

We are seeking the Department investigate and prioritise rural and remote school amenities and facilities that are not currently inclusive of disability access, laundry, and shower facilities. We express that these are particular issues for rural and remote schools with basic amenities. The Valkyrie SS has long advocated to the Department, the challenges we experience in not having toilet facilities with ramp access, nor having any shower or laundry facilities at our school. If we were to receive a student enrolment, potential staff member or contractor, or student family member with a disability we would not be able to facilitate them.

We have further challenges in the cases of toileting accidents, sickness or soiled clothing, the only option is to hose down the affected child. In the early days, students were taken to the teacher housing for shower access, which would be inappropriate at present day. Then the only option is to send any affected rugs, towels, clothing home with staff or family to launder themselves. We reference other schools in our cluster have ground level concrete-based facilities, that cater to younger year toilets, showers, laundry room and disability toilet and access.

These facilities are well suited to rural landscapes, can be hosed out, and easily disinfected, keeping in mind that cleaning duties are often carried out by families and staff members at rural schools. We as a community are prepared to seek financial support by way of grants, programs and reaching out to surrounding mining companies. Given we have long been a registered state delivered kindergarten, we have also been raising these issues to no avail. Rural schools generally exist with facilities that are basic, which we acknowledge and appreciate have served us well. Whilst fit for purpose across the last 35 years since we've had flushing toilets, we are seeking that the Department consider investigating whether programs or funding can be allocated to support any rural or remote schools who also have aged or inadequate amenities that require upgrades.

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This support would be used to work towards solutions to achieve amenities that are inclusive of disability, laundry, and shower facilities. These upgrades would ensure the facilities are safe, hygienic, and accessible for all who attend at a school. We undertake to provide a case study as to the specific issues and challenges we have to State Council in the coming months to further support this motion.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### **A 19. JULIA CREEK BRANCH**

##### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to ensure that in Rural and Remote small schools, where a student enrolls with a physical disability, or an enrolment change to include a physical disability, there is an immediate process to ensure that facilities are acceptable and accessible in a timely manner.”**

##### **Explanation:**

When families move to rural areas, there are limited (if any) choices of schools to enrol their children in. This is made increasingly difficult should a child have a physical disability. As such, it is essential that the Department is rigorous in its processes to ensure school facilities meet the needs of these students or can be upgraded in a timely manner to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### **A 20. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH**

##### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to provide remote, standalone schools with an alternate power supply in the event of a power outage.**

##### **Explanation:**

Power outages in regional areas can be frequent and remain in place for extended periods of time. These situations severely interrupt student learning, limit, or void telecommunications, and pose increased risks to students, staff, and the wider school community. Additionally, the loss of power can add significant and unique WHS risks to medically enrolled students, creating additional pressures for teachers to navigate. Power outages also interfere with school infrastructure, such as pressure pumps that are required for supply water. Without water, basic sanitation and consumption needs are not met. Schools that are stand-alone (not located in a town precinct) face greater challenges due to a lack of access to support services. For optimal educational outcomes, and student and staff safety and wellbeing, it’s imperative that a backup power supply be made available to schools.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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## A 21. KINDON BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education for rural and remote schools to have a generator installed as a power back up.”**

### Explanation:

Currently many rural and remote schools who rely on a mains power connection are suffering when there is a loss of power. Simple services like supply of drinking water, use of toilets and washing of hands are unable to be accessed when the power goes out as all water used on the school site needs to be filtered from the tank and accessed through a pressure pump.

There is also a safety issue as many schools need Celfi boosters to have access to their telephone and internet. When the power goes out, these vital services are also lost and if an incident occurs there is no way to alert parents or authorities.

We believe that a back up generator should be installed in all rural and remote schools to ensure continuity of care, and schooling can be maintained for our children.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## A 22. KINDON BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Queensland Department of Education to provide adequate security systems for the safety of the school and staff at rural and remote stand alone schools.”**

### Explanation:

Recently our local school was broken into, with destruction to school sheds and the school residence along with property stolen from the principal's residence and the school. There is currently no security at the school. Buildings are locked and lights on the outside of buildings are set on a timer as a deterrent. This school is on a major highway and is extremely exposed. These types of events have a strong impact on the wellbeing of the staff, particularly those who live in the residence.

Due to the isolation of the school, staff are regularly away overnight, on weekends and for weeks at a time over holiday periods. Staff and principals are left uneasy, as there isn't adequate security for both their own personal belongings and the school's assets. Due to the small size of these schools, cleaners and school officers are also regularly in attendance at the school on their own, as well as administration staff working from the office alone. An improvement to security would help these staff feel safe whilst doing their job and educating our children at the school.

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We believe that security systems should now be a compulsory piece of infrastructure at all rural and remote standalone schools and the installation of these systems needs to be a Department of Education expense.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 23. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to provide a fully transparent and flexible transfer process to assist in the attraction and retention of quality teachers in rural and remote areas.”**

**Explanation:**

The attraction and retention of quality teachers in rural and remote areas remains a constant challenge. The need for a fully transparent and flexible transfer process to allow teachers the freedom and opportunity to transfer to areas that either assist in the development of their career or meet their personal or family’s needs is critical. In the current economic climate, where cost of living pressures are extremely high in metropolitan areas, teaching in rural and remote areas can be attractive due to the financial incentives and the lifestyle that it provides. The barriers that prevent teachers the flexibility to transfer need to be addressed to ensure the uptake of rural and remote positions are not negatively affected by the ongoing teacher shortages in metropolitan areas.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 24. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies relevant authorities, including the Queensland Teachers Union, to recognise the unique challenges faced by staff teaching in isolated locations by providing meaningful incentives to support and retain these teachers.”**

**Explanation:**

It is imperative that we ensure equitable access to quality education for students across all geographical locations. However, like many rural and remote areas, we face challenges in attracting and retaining qualified teachers, leading to inconsistent educational outcomes. It is imperative to establish measures that incentivise educators to serve in these areas.

By offering incentivisation to teachers in rural and remote schools, we demonstrate our commitment to ensuring equitable access to quality education for all students and wider community benefit. Through collaborative efforts and advocacy, we can create a more sustainable and inclusive education system that empowers teachers and enriches students' lives in rural and remote communities. For permanent or

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contracted staff, a better incentive that supports the boundaries of living and working in a remote community would be beneficial.

Currently, \$70 a fortnight 'locality allowance' and \$60 a fortnight 'relocation travel'. This does not reflect the costs that are incurred while living in a remote community.

## A 25. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH

### Motion

**"That ICPA Qld lobbies relevant authorities to allocate additional teacher/s on a case-by-case basis to Band 5 schools where there is either a demonstrated shortage or unavailability of support personnel, including teacher aides."**

### Explanation:

Staff recruitment and retention continues to be an issue for many schools. Schools located in small rural communities can struggle to source support staff due to a limited pool of available personnel in a geographically isolated location. Despite advertising vacant positions for many months these roles remain unfilled. The workload of teaching staff is adversely affected, and delivery of learning opportunities is impacted, particularly in a classroom where there are many cohorts enrolled. In instances where teacher aide positions remain unfilled for more than 6 months, and when a single classroom has a significant enrolment of K-2 students there should be some provision for the Education Department to fill these vacancies with an additional teacher. Priority should also be given in instances where enrolments include medical students and or students with identified specific learning needs.

### **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## A 26. JULIA CREEK BRANCH

### Motion

**"That ICPA Qld continues to lobby the Department of Education to provide an additional 0.5 teacher allocation to one-teacher schools where the total enrolment exceeds 15 students and number of K-2 students enrolled represents 50 % or more of the total school enrolment."**

### Explanation:

The implementation of Kindy means that in our one-teacher schools children now range in age from 3 years to 12 years. Children representative of such a diverse range in age adds significantly to the workload of a single teacher responsible for the learning outcome of all students. Teacher aides are an invaluable asset to small schools and play a vital role in assisting with classroom management and the implementation of learning activities. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the teacher to plan and adjust lessons to suit the diverse range in age and ability in a small school setting.

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It should also be noted that a kindy program is very different to a Prep-6 program, with a much stronger focus on student directed learning through structured and unstructured play experiences. In addition to planning and teaching, the workload for a teaching principal in a one-teacher se]ng extends beyond the classroom to include the administration and business management of the school, along with dealing with the day-to-day issues that would be shared with other staff in larger schools, such as grounds keeping, maintenance, dealing with parents, chasing snakes and fixing water pumps that have stopped working! The demand that younger students place on teacher time should be addressed by increasing the teacher allocation to one- teacher schools with more than 15 students where 50% or more of those students are representative of years K-2.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 27. JULIA CREEK BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld works in collaboration with P&Cs, Local Governments and communities to lobby the relevant Departments for additional assistance for rural and remote schools with more than 40 children enrolled.”**

**Explanation:**

The additional financial assistance will be specifically for additional qualified teacher support to the school. This fund is to ensure educational standards and overall school outcomes are reached in line with their counterparts who have less children and the same staffing level. This fund allows the Principal to continue in their critical role as the numbers of the school grow and combats challenges around distance, isolation, staff retention, employment and educational outcomes.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 28. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to increase the allocation of Teacher Aide hours in rural and remote schools and Schools of Distance Education to assist with the increasing trend of students with medical diagnosis and/or require learning support.”**

**Explanation:**

Small schools and Schools of Distance Education are under resourced to meet the needs of students who require learning support. Teachers and teaching principals in small schools and teachers who are delivering virtual online classes within Schools of Distance Education are continually challenged to fulfill their explicit teaching duties due to the complexities within the classroom. The current funding model is not meeting the learning needs of the students nor alleviating the workload of teachers. To meet these

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needs of an increasing trend of students who require learning support within small schools and Schools of Distance Education.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 29. JULIA CREEK BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld requests that the Department of Education (DoE) brings primary teacher-aide hours in line with the current secondary teacher-aide hour allocation to enable rural and remote schools to support teachers to effectively resolve the unique challenges of composite classrooms.”**

**Explanation:**

Although schools are free to allocate their allotted Teacher-Aid hours where they feel it is most effective, it seems a strange anomaly that the upper school is seen as more needy than their primary equivalent. Primary students, particularly those in the younger grades, are far less independent and require more assistance to complete learning tasks when compared to the vast majority of secondary students. An increase in primary teacher-aide hours to match secondary hours is not only an equity issue but is vital to assist improving student learning outcomes. Why is it that there are such vast differences in Teacher-Aide hours between the two sectors? (see table below.)

*Enrolments Primary (excl Prep) Hrs per week & Enrolments Secondary Hours per week*

Enrolments Primary (excl Prep)	Hrs per week	Enrolments Secondary	Hours per week
1	2	1 - 3	40
2	4	4 - 9	42
3	6	10 - 16	44
4	8	17-23	46
5	10	24-29	48
6	12	30-36	50
7	14	37-43	52
8	16	44-49	54
9	18	50-56	56
10	20		
11			
12-13	24		
14	26		
15	28		
16-17	30		
18	32		
19	34		
20-25	36		
26-31	38		
26-31	38		
32-37	40		
38-49	42		
50-69	44		

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Awaiting source of data

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 30. JULIA CREEK BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to revisit the employment arrangements for additional staffing (cleaners, schools’ officers, etc) at small, remote schools in order to develop a more flexible model that better reflects the unique challenges of recruiting and retaining staff in these locations.”**

**Explanation:**

Many of our rural and remote schools are in locations where there are no available locals to fill part time roles in the school, such as cleaners, maintenance, teacher aides and schools’ officers. Under the current staffing models, a person that may be willing to take on more than one role may require a different contract for each role and may be paid from different sources of funding. This increases the workload on school business managers and makes the roles less inviting when recruiting.

A possible employee is far less likely to consider relocating to a school for a part time role compared to a fulltime role. For example, a small school may only be allocated 15 hours a week for a cleaner, which is not enough for someone to consider moving house. In many cases that would barely cover rent. Because it can be so hard to attract people to these part time roles, teachers, teaching principals, business managers and aides end up taking on the extra workload in many cases. We would like to see a more flexible staffing model available for schools to use where someone could be offered a role that may include a number of smaller, part time roles bundled together under a single contract.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 31. ST GEORGE BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA QLD lobbies the Department of Education to allocate more Non-Contact Time for teachers/ teaching principals in schools that offer State Delivered Kindergarten.”**

**Explanation:**

Schools that provide State Delivered Kindergarten (SDK) are provided resourcing for purchasing physical resources, employing a teacher aide to work with the Kindy students and an extra two hours for Business Managers, but there is no extra Non-Contact Time (NCT) allocated to the teachers/ teaching principals who are expected to be planning for this additional year level under a different curriculum. Kindergarten students are educated under the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines (QKLGs) and not under

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the National Curriculum that all other grades are educated under.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 32. ST GEORGE BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA QLD lobbies the Department of Education to allocate additional administration time for teaching principals.”**

**Explanation:**

Teaching principals are allocated five hours a week for administration time. With the ever-increasing workload in both the teaching and principal section of the job many small schools are self-funding more administration time for the teaching principal to ensure that all department requirements are met. If the department allocated and resourced more time, then schools could utilise the funds they have been using to pay for extra time for the principal, to purchase resources for the students. With the implementation of Version 9 curriculum, the new Framework and new Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines (QKLGs) the workload on a teaching principal that is responsible for all of this is unrealistic. There is a flow on effect from these expectations to other staff and ultimately the students as their teachers are time-pressured.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 33. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to ensure that teaching principals in small schools are given the required level of virtual and face to face support so the increasing requirements of administrative tasks do not detract from valuable teaching and planning in the classroom.”**

**Explanation:**

The demands placed on teaching principals in small schools is enormous and ever increasing. In addition to teaching, planning, and supporting students their time is being consumed by administration tasks – such as budgeting, parental liaison, onsite staff training, planning, grant writing, staff co-ordination and school camps. In addition to an already overburden workload those small schools that are providing State Delivered Kindy programs have been required to meet increasing demands. A statewide teacher shortage compounds the situation, with Principal admin days needing to be reallocated and if necessary, decreased due to a lack of available relief or second teaching staff. Increases of pressures, responsibilities, and expectations are resulting in teacher burnout and teachers choosing to exit the profession. Additionally, career pathways are being inhibited by these experiences.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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#### A 34. ST GEORGE BRANCH

##### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to implement a Head of Curriculum Small Schools for each cluster that contain small schools with teaching principals.”**

##### Explanation:

With the restructure of the department, the Principal Advisors Teaching and Learning (PATL) positions and the Centres for Learning and Wellbeing (CLAWS) have ceased. PATLs provided an invaluable support to small schools including ensuring that planning was aligning to the curriculum, assessment tasks and guide to making judgements were fit for purpose and for providing updates in teaching and learning practices. CLAW staff provided on the ground support for staff in schools and helped fill the void when the PATL positions ended. With the realignment of resources to Version 9 curriculum, a HOC Small Schools would be able to provide these important supports and professional development for small schools. This would alleviate pressure on teaching principals as they ensure that in their school, teaching and learning are aligned to the new curriculum.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### A 35. JULIA CREEK BRANCH

##### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to resolve the long term and ongoing situation with Acting Principal positions causing disruption in rural and remote schools.”**

##### Explanation:

Rural and remote students are more disadvantaged by the process whereby Principals are ‘acting’ in a position that is held by another Principal who is ‘acting’ for another, etc. Therefore, the principal’s position in a rural and remote school is dependent on many other acting roles throughout the state and can change more frequently than in larger, metropolitan schools. Short-term principal tenure can cause huge disruption to rural and remote schools and communities through lack of consistency of long-term strategic direction, stalling of progress and inability to build strong community relationships. This issue has been raised by multiple branches for more than 20 years and there has been no change. As recently as term 2 of 2024 the Mount Isa school of the Air principal was removed to fulfil the position of Acting Principal at a Mainstream school within Mount Isa giving the School community less than a weeks’ notice and with an Acting Principal and Deputy Principal. Rural and remote students and communities continue to be disadvantaged when this occurs.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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### A 36. JULIA CREEK BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education (DoE) to ensure executive positions at schools are acting for no longer than six months to allow a permanent position to be offered to prospective candidates.”**

#### Explanation:

A principal in an acting position makes it difficult for consistency and forward planning within a school. Until a principal has a permanent placement, the Department of Education is unable to appoint a permanent school Principal. Often, with acting executive placements, it is difficult to foster bonds and develop direction and identity within the school staff, students and parents. This is not an unusual situation, and fulfilling permanent positions in rural and remote schools is difficult enough without this added obstacle.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

### A 37. AUGATHELLA BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to ensure small rural and remote schools only have multiage classes of no more than three year levels together.”**

#### Explanation:

*Pending*

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

### A 38. JULIA CREEK BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Minister for Education to provide a reduction in the teacher:student ratio in rural and remote schools with multi-age classrooms from 1:25 to 1:16.”**

#### Explanation:

(Case Study)

Julie Creek State School currently has 39 enrolled students with two allocated classrooms. Classroom 1: Prep-Year 2, has 14 students with a full-time teacher and a full-time teacher aide. Classroom 2: Years 3-6 has 25 students with a full-time teacher and a teacher aide (who has other roles in the school, including librarian, book club co-ordinator, and other complementary roles essential to school operation.

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It is forecast that in 2035, Julia Creek State School will have 43 enrolments: 26 students in P-2, 18 students in 4-6. A full-time teacher allocation for a P-1, 2-3 and 4-6 classroom would provide a manageable teacher:student ratio, so that students receive high-quality education. Only having to plan and implement the curriculum for two year levels in one class will also assist with teacher well-being.

#### **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### **A 39. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL**

##### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld seeks commitment from the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to create a state-run Agricultural High School with co-educational boarding facilities, that combines academic studies with hands-on practical learning in all aspects of agriculture.”**

##### **Explanation:**

Students with an interest in any/all aspects of agriculture, including developing the diversity of skills, knowledge and capabilities required to work in agriculture, should have the opportunity to combine academic learning with practical hands-on learning. This should be delivered face to face by trade/industry quality facilitators/educators, allowing these students to gain a nationally recognised qualification and complete their senior school outcome so they can pursue a career in the industry.

In this school if Agriculture was a compulsory subject for all students in Years 7 to 10, and is offered as an elective subject for Years 11 and 12, it would not only enhance experience but give opportunity for learning and development of skills. There would be opportunity for the students to experience in a broad sense, all components of agriculture to assist them identify where their interests and strengths lie. Years 11 and 12 would offer more specific pathways, whilst the student continues to achieve relevant academic results along with vocational outcomes that are supported with workplace/industry pathways and experience.

Academics learning should be recognised and weighted the same as industry placement, training and course materials to increase the success of students to be able to transition from school to work. When students gain experience, knowledge and skills through a specific Agricultural high school this enhances not only the positive academic outcomes but employment opportunities, skills development and pathways that are relevant and required.

The provision of suitable boarding facilities (co-educational), in the sector of Agricultural learning, would provide the opportunity for a student, regardless of their original locality, to access learning, develop and grow a sense of community and engage a support network for learning, work and future pathways.

There is clearly a demonstrated need with Agricultural High schools with boarding facilities in NSW and WA, being at capacity with families calling for more facilities to be built to cope with demand. Students who complete an education at an Agricultural high school will be work ready and able to fill a gap in an area that is in dire need of skilled employees.

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**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 40. NEBO BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld extends our appreciation, on behalf of Nebo Branch to the Department of Education for the upgrades to teacher housing residences at Rural and Remote Schools during 2023/2024.”**

**Explanation:**

Teacher housing upgrades by way of installation of concrete driveways have been carried out both Nebo and Valkyrie SS's. We wish to express our appreciation to the Department of Education for these works. Whilst these projects fall within a planned \$48.3 million over 4 years through the 2023–24 State Budget, we wanted to provide feedback on the positive impact these upgrades have. These greatly appreciated improvements make real, effective, and attractive changes, and increase the liveability of teacher housing in rural and remote schools. We have regularly in the past, as a Branch advocated for upgrades to our rural teacher housing, as it directly affects the ability to attract and retain quality teaching staff. At the 2023 Qld ICPA State Conference we referenced the teacher shortage across rural and remote Queensland. We would like to strongly encourage the Department to consider ongoing programs and improvements in future State Budgets, as being a worthy and vital investment into rural education. Without suitable, safe, and liveable housing, we as communities struggle to attract and retain teaching staff, and in turn our schools see a high staff turnover. This becomes detrimental both short and long term, to our rural students, families, and communities.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 41. JULIA CREEK BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to provide adequate teacher housing to sufficiently meet the needs of a varying demographic, particularly in rural and remote communities where ‘teacher’ housing has been reallocated to the Government Employee Housing portfolio.”**

**Explanation:**

The housing situation for teachers in many small communities continues to be untenable. Government Employee Housing (GEH), which owns and manages all Queensland Government employee housing, was introduced in recent years to allow for teachers, police, nurses, doctors and other government employees to access housing in isolated communities where rentals were limited and allow them to use the surplus from housing sales to reinvest in construction, as well as upgrades and maintenance of existing housing. This reallocation has meant that many communities are now faced with limited options for teacher accommodation, as well as limited options for those teachers with larger families. The difficulties associated with accessing suitable housing for a varying demographic of staff within a rural and remote

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community are impacting on the attraction and retention of teachers within our schools.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 42. WESTMAR-INGLESTONE BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to work with their Local Accommodation Committee (LAC) and Regional Offices to develop a Housing Usage Plan to allow the opportunity for other Education Queensland (non-teaching) staff the opportunity to lease government housing while filling roles at schools.”**

**Explanation:**

Finding staff to fill positions with EQ is a difficult proposition, made more difficult by lack of housing/accommodation for people who are willing to work in regional, rural, or remote areas. Teaching staff are given priority when housing is available, however, in some situations teachers do not access government housing because they already live within the local area. In these cases, housing may sit vacant for many years while schools continue to find it difficult to employ teacher-aides or ancillary staff due to lack of rental properties within the district. It seems a commonsense approach to offer this housing to all EQ (non-teaching) staff when not required by teaching staff.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**A 43. YARAKA ISISFORD BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to ensure that Allied Health staff employed by the Department of Education in rural and remote locations are eligible for housing.”**

**Explanation:**

Currently the policy is that non-teaching staff are deemed eligible for housing at the discretion of the region. Generally, this does occur in more remote locations however if housing is available and offered to allied health staff employed by the Department of Education in rural and remote locations, this will help to increase retention rates in these areas. Qualified staff are more likely to stay in these locations if they have access to suitable and affordable housing.

By advocating for housing eligibility for allied health staff in rural and remote locations, we can ensure our students have consistent access to vital services, supported educational outcomes and are not being disadvantaged by where they live.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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## SPECIFIC NEEDS

### A 44. YARAKA ISISFORD BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to ensure that Allied Health staff employed by the Department of Education in rural and remote locations receive parity with their counterparts employed by Queensland Health.”**

#### Explanation:

As of April 2024, there are two full-time speech pathologists employed by the Department of Education, based in Longreach. Prior to this, there has only been one full-time speech pathologist since 2021. They cover an area of 396,650 kms<sup>2</sup> and service 17 schools. This area encompasses 23% of the state’s total area.

In locations such as Longreach, a Speech Language Pathologist could gain up to \$70, 000 in additional allowances if they do a full-time fixed term two-year contract with Queensland Health compared to the Department of Education through the *Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme* ([https://www.health.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0028/1290484/hed-0623.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0028/1290484/hed-0623.pdf)).

Allied Health staff employed by the department do not receive the same financial benefits that teachers employed in that location receive. Teachers in rural and remote locations receive additional allowances which increase each year. These may include a Remote Area Allowance, Locality Allowance, Transfer and Relocation Assistance, Subsidised Housing, Travel Allowance, Retention Bonuses, Professional Development Allowance and an Isolated Schools Allowance.

For a single adult commencing employment as a teacher, they would be eligible for the following payments in addition to the salary:

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**Longreach SS**

**Central Queensland**

<b>Benefit/Allowance</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Recognition of location travel allowance	\$1,200.00
Recognition of location travel allowance – dependant benefit	\$0.00
Recognition of service payment	\$1,800.00
Locality allowance	\$1,485.78
Identified location payment	\$0.00
Total annual benefit (See disclaimers below):	\$4,485.78

(Figure 1: <https://teach.qld.gov.au/teach-in-queensland-state-schools/pay-benefits-and-incentives/rural-and-remote-service-calculator>)

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

**TERTIARY, TRADE AND TRAINING**

**A 45. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That Clarke Creek ICPA Branch commends the work of Queensland State Council and encourages ongoing advocacy for the establishment and expansion of Regional University Hubs.”**

**Explanation:**

Regional University Hubs support regional, rural, and remote students to successfully pursue higher education and vocational studies or training, while remaining in their communities with family, friends, and local employment. By expanding the Queensland network of these centres an increased number of rural students and communities will benefit.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

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#### A 46. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH

##### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Small Business and Training (DESBT) to increase the travel and accommodation allowance paid to apprentices and trainees (VET students) who must travel away from home to complete their training.”**

##### Explanation:

In 2022 the Queensland Workforce Strategy emphasised the importance of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in helping regional areas to “Grow your Own.” VET ensures skills development in a wide range of occupational fields through school-based and work-based learning. It plays a key role in ensuring low school dropouts and facilitates the school to work transition. The recent Education, Employment, and Training Parliamentary Committee Review highlighted travel and accommodation costs, associated with all training, including apprenticeships, as a significant barrier for rural and remote students. These additional costs are potentially adding to an increased dropout rate across the sector. Therefore, it crucial that funding covers costs associated with accessing and undertaking training regardless of location.

Students undertaking training are often some of society’s lowest wage earners, and the additional financial pressures of accessing their training should not be a barrier to completion. Currently, apprentices and trainees (VET) receive a kilometric travel allowance of 32c/km for road and rail travel (travel must be at least 100km return to their closest training organisation), and \$55 per night for intrastate accommodation. With the increased costs of living, the support that is currently available falls well short of adequate. Immediate attention is required to ensure that all apprentices and Trainees (VET) can successfully complete their chosen training.

#### **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### A 47. BELYANDO / MT COOLON BRANCH

##### Motion

**“That ICPA QLD lobbies the relevant Departments, Ministers and tertiary sector for the provision of paid practicums for rural and remote tertiary students undertaking placements to ensure students are given equitable access to opportunities by reducing financial and geographical barriers.**

##### Explanation:

Some tertiary students study degrees that have a considerable number of practicums that must be completed to successfully graduate. These students are encouraged to travel from their study-based location to complete their practicums to broaden their knowledge and experiences, often considerable distances and without any reimbursement. During these practicums, students are experiencing enormous financial hardship with loss of income, as they are unable to continue their part-time job on top of at times having to pay a second amount of rent or accommodation costs at their new location.

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It has been recommended by the Australian University Accord Summary Report that paid placements in the areas of nursing, care and teaching professions be introduced to reduce the financial burden on tertiary students undertaking unpaid work placement and tackling the “Placement Poverty”. This would reduce the financial hardship on tertiary students and increase the completion rate.

For example, Bachelor of Nursing Science and Midwifery requires 46 weeks of practicums over the 4 years of study. Weekly share-house rent at their study-base location is \$200/week. During practicum they continue to pay their normal rent plus accommodation expenses, e.g. \$150/week at the practicum location (some locations are considerably more, and some are subsidised), equating to an extra \$7000 in additional rental expenses for the duration of study. These considerable expenses are compounded by a significant loss of income over \$34,000 for the duration of practicums. A paid practicum would enable students to complete the practical requirements without the added stress of financial costs allowing more students studying these degrees to experience a variety of practicums including rural and remote areas.

Rural and remote tertiary students who have had to overcome many educational barriers due to geographic isolation must be given every opportunity to succeed in their chosen career path as these students are often undertaking studies in areas where there is an acute skills shortage.

#### **CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### **A 48. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL**

##### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education and the Minister for Education to provide tertiary students studying Education degrees who undertake placements in rural or remote state schools with paid practicums.”**

##### **Explanation:**

ICPA Qld is a huge advocate of pre-service teachers experiencing rural and remote locations during practicums. Undertaking time in such a setting often creates a connection to small schools and sees students who have taken these placements returning to similar rural communities. Different universities have different placement requirements and ICPA Qld has been advised by a regional university placement officer that 4<sup>th</sup> year students specialising in secondary teaching are required to do a 3 week placement in Semester 1 and 5 weeks in Semester 2, as an example. The duration of these practicums places a huge financial burden on pre service teachers, especially in the current economic climate where cost of living is high. In October 2023, a James Cook University placement officer enquired about ICPA branch incentives to financially assist 3 pre-service primary teachers who were wanting to do rural placement at Longreach. Various options were investigated including the use of the Distance Education quarters and private residences of Longreach branch members however the opportunity for Longreach to host these young teachers was lost purely based on the increased expense of travel to Longreach and not being able to find shared accommodation.

ICPA Qld advocates that a rural placement for a pre-service teacher is imperative to attracting graduate teachers to rural and remote areas. Placement poverty is a barrier to study and enticing preservice

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teachers to rural areas. Paid practicum would alleviate financial hardship and drop-out rates created by undertaking lengthy mandatory practicums in rural areas away from their usual place of study and residence and better prepare students for the diverse workplaces they will enter upon graduation. Paid practicums would enable pre-service teachers to experience a robust and diverse placement program not limited by financial barriers to increase their work readiness, career development and aid in attracting quality teachers to rural and remote areas.

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Australian Universities Accord - Final Report (Page 267)

**7.4.1 Barriers to Study**

7.4.1.3 The financial hardship caused by mandatory placements

*Regional students provided strong feedback about the vexed issue of mandatory placements. As discussed in Chapter 2 – Meeting our current and future skills needs, mandatory placements and clinical training requirements often lead students to forgo paid work to undertake placements, creating considerable financial hardship. These placements can also require students to move or travel long distances, incurring additional costs. The Employment White Paper noted these financial barriers to participation, stating “additional upfront costs such as transport, childcare, and forgoing unpaid work during placements can result in students changing courses or withdrawing from study entirely”.<sup>407</sup> The Review considers this a crucial issue and has made recommendations in Chapter 2 – Meeting our current and future skills needs*

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## Financial support for placements

14. That to reduce the financial hardship and placement poverty caused by mandatory unpaid placements, the Australian Government work with tertiary education providers, state and territory governments, industry, business and unions to introduce financial support for unpaid work placements. This should include funding by governments for the nursing, care and teaching professions, and funding by employers generally (public and private) for other fields.

Source: Australian Universities Accord Final Report, Findings - Financial Support for Placements – Page 23

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## Diamond Sponsors

#### A 49. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL

##### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld encourages the Department of Education to develop and provide training programs for the accreditation of Teacher Aides in Queensland.”**

##### Explanation:

Difficulties attracting staff in rural and remote schools has resulted in teachers operating without the support of trained or experienced teacher aides. Programs aimed at developing teacher aide skill set would result in better educational outcomes for students and support for the teaching principals. Also, these programs would help increase earning capacity and teaching career pathways for teacher aides.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

#### A 50. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL

##### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to provide ongoing Fee Free TAFE Certificate 3 in School Based Education Support courses for all Teacher Aides and learning support staff in rural and remote schools.”**

##### Explanation:

Fee-Free TAFE courses have been specifically chosen based on local skills demand and advice from industry. These in demand skills in high-priority areas such as Education has seen Certificate III in School Based Education Support included in the Fee Free TAFE funding. This qualification is perfect for those looking to work as a teacher aide across various school settings. It provides the foundation skills required of a Teacher Aide and covers core skills such as assisting in the implementation of planned learning experiences, supporting the numeracy, literacy and communication skills of students, supporting students at risk and working with diverse communities.

Small rural and remote schools often have a reduced pool of applicants to fill positions of Teacher Aides and Learning Support Staff. This is further exacerbated in small rural schools where the school is isolated and ‘stand-alone’ and not situated in a town precinct where there are additional benefits of a wider community support network and basic requirements such as accommodation to attract applicants. This often results in having to draw staff from the local area or properties within the district and most candidates do not have any experience in education. This situation creates an increase in workload to teaching principals in these small schools as they are often providing on the job training to these staff whilst undertaking their teaching duties. The provision of ongoing Fee Free TAFE courses would incentivise candidates who may find the cost of gaining a qualification prohibitive due to the cost as well as offering a solution to the need to upskill teacher aide and learning support staff in these areas where it is difficult to source staff.

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**A 51. ICPA QLD STATE COUNCIL**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to provide ongoing Fee Free TAFE Certificate 3 in School Based Education Support courses for all nominated supervisors of students enrolled in Distance Education programs.”**

**Explanation:**

For geographically isolated families where distance education is a common or the only education option, the responsibility of having to educate children in an isolated setting without any experience in education is extremely overwhelming. It is an enrolment requirement of State Delivered Distance Education to have an adult ‘supervisor’ to assist with the students learning in the home schoolroom in conjunction with explicit teacher instruction. Similar to that of a Teacher Aide role within a mainstream school, these ‘supervisors’ play a critical role within the delivery of distance education and are responsible for a wide variety of learning support to compliment the delivery of virtual teaching by a qualified teacher across all year levels including literacy, numeracy, reading, handwriting, e-teach (arts, technology & physical education) and consolidation of explicitly taught concepts across all subject areas. Interestingly, the vast majority of these ‘supervisors’ undertake this critical role without any qualifications specific to education. Without the assistance of these ‘supervisors’ in remote home school rooms, this form of state delivered education could not be delivered. ICPA QLD conducted a Home Tutor survey in October 2023, the results indicated that a qualification in Education Support was the preferred pathway for Home Tutors.

Currently, due to the in-demand skills in the high priority area of Education, Certificate III in School Based Education Support is included on the ‘Fee Free TAFE’ list. This course covers core skills such as assisting in the implementation of planned learning experiences, supporting the numeracy, literacy and communication skills of students. These core skills would provide a strong foundation skillset to a ‘supervisor’. Given, it is an enrolment requirement of a State Delivered Distance Education school, to either be or provide a ‘supervisor’, ICPA Qld would urge the DoE to provide these ongoing ‘Fee Free’ accredited training pathways to gain formal qualifications to all nominated ‘supervisors’ of enrolled students within all seven schools of distance education. This initiative would provide those ‘supervisors’ who are willing to upskill themselves the education specific foundation skills required to support and increase the educational outcomes of the students in their care. These foundational skills can be further bolstered by additional professional development often provided by SDE’s during in-service.

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## A 52. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Small Business and Training (DESBT) and other relevant stakeholders to provide a formal graduation ceremony for Apprentices and Trainees, to recognise and celebrate student achievements.”**

### Explanation:

Apprentices and trainees invest a considerable amount of time and effort into obtaining their qualification, often similar or equal in duration to that of a university degree. There is currently no formal ceremony or opportunity to celebrate this sector. A graduation ceremony, similar to that carried out at universities, would positively influence public perceptions, promote the value of training, and create pride in the sector, while delivering deserving recognition for students.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## TRAVEL

## A 53. NEBO BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education, Department of Transport and TransLink to make Kindergarten children attending local schools that offer State Delivered Kindergarten an allocation so that they can travel on designated rural bus runs.”**

### Explanation:

We are seeking that TransLink include in their policies guaranteed seating allocation for kindergarten attendance children. Formal recognition of kindergarten children is required for bus operators to receive any State Government financial assistance. Currently, where space permits, bus operators are transporting kindergarten children on their service as a matter of goodwill. Whilst in many cases the inclusion of these children will assist in the long-term viability of bus runs due to increased numbers, there may be short term instances where the total number of children seeking to travel on a bus run may exceed the number of allocated seats a small bus has capacity to carry. In these instances, we are seeking that there be provision made to allow some discretion and decision making by the local community. Together with either their bus committee or bus operator they can decide how any additional numbers will be handled. We would be seeking that in making the allocation a guarantee, that a small bus operator should not be automatically required to upsize their bus to accommodate the extra numbers if it is a short-term increase.

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Since State Delivered Kindergarten has now been in place at any State School throughout Queensland since 2019, it is time that these students be provided for as an allocation in alignment with all other students.

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**A 54. DIRRANBANDI BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies relevant bodies (including the Department of Transport and Main Roads), to reconsider/revise existing rules and regulations pertaining to small school bus runs/subsidised bus runs, specifically with reference to the numbers used to close/establish bus runs.”**

**Explanation:**

In the same way small schools that close can be ‘mothballed’ for a period of time, subsidised bus runs should be given the same treatment, especially when the reasons for closing are commercial, and not driven by reduced student numbers.

As mentioned in the ‘Policy on the introduction and administration of subsidised school bus services’, “The Department of Transport and Main Roads will close a subsidised service when the number of distance eligible students falls to five (5).” It also states that, “...The minimum number of eligible students required to institute a subsidised school bus service is seven (7). Eligible students must come from a minimum of three (3) different families, in order to institute a subsidised school bus service. It should also be noted that these seven (7) students must reside more than 16km from the nearest state school and more than 16km from the nearest approved bus service which can transport the students to school.”

Dirranbandi recently faced a situation where the local school bus run owners couldn’t sell their business and notified families to say that had begun the process of closing their (two) bus runs. Even though student numbers were not the problem in maintaining the runs, this meant that the likelihood of being able to find seven students from three different families, all of whom resided over 16km from the school in order to reinstate the service was incredibly low. One property 10km from town often contributes student numbers towards the bus run that count for the purposes of maintaining the run, but not in the establishment of the same run.

‘Mothballing’ a closed bus run would be of significant benefit to small schools, as the numbers and policy regulations required to establish them are more attainable for small communities. (5 students, as opposed to 7 from three separate families, more than 16km from a school).

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## A 55. NEBO BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld on behalf of Nebo Branch, wishes to acknowledge and thank TransLink for their continued reviews surrounding viability and funding of registered rural bus runs.”**

### Explanation:

Nebo Branch would like to express our appreciation to TransLink, particularly the Mackay Regional Operations Office, for their ongoing reviews and understanding during times of low student numbers onboard our rural bus service, the *Valkyrie Access Road Rural Bus Run*. These have sometimes fallen below the threshold, which warranted review of ongoing funding and viability. We have been fortunate to have been given several rounds of review, during which our entire community and school were given the opportunity to make submissions as to the ongoing and future need for the bus run. Due to these extensions, whilst remaining funded, we have now returned to viable numbers and thank TransLink for continuing to recognise the vital connection between the rural bus service and school enrolments. Our community sincerely thanks TransLink for supporting our registered rural bus run through to this successful outcome.

**CARRIED/LOST/WITHDRAWN/DEEMED COVERED**

## A 56. NEBO BRANCH

### Motion

**“That Nebo Branch wishes to thank ICPA Qld Transport Portfolio Leader Mrs Kylie Camp, and ICPA Qld State Council for their advocacy and submission to TransLink regarding the ongoing need for a funded *Valkyrie Access Road Rural Bus Run*”.**

### Explanation:

In 2023 our Branch provided ICPA Queensland State Council, particularly Transport Portfolio Leader Mr Kylie Camp, with information that cancellation of funding for our rural bus run, due to falling below the threshold of student passengers, was imminent. In response, a submission was made by them to TransLink emphasising the detrimental outcomes for the bus run and the school it services, as well as flow on effects to families, employment, and the shape of our community if the loss of funding were to occur. This submission was an important consideration and reference point for TransLink and we thank you for your advocacy on our behalf.

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## MISCELLANEOUS

### A 57. NEBO BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld reiterates to the Department of Education, the importance and significance of a rural/remote school to a community, particularly where they are the only school within a town or locality.”**

#### Explanation:

In 2024 two schools in our area are celebrating significant milestone anniversaries: 150 years for Nebo SS and 50 years for Valkyrie SS. We therefore reflect and emphasise our school’s beneficial impact to the lives of all who’ve been connected, likewise for all other rural and remote schools across Queensland. We wish to express to the Department the special and important significance that a small, rural, and remote school is to a community. Particularly in the case of Valkyrie, where the school is the only landmark for the community, which is not attached to a township, and is the central hub bringing the entire community together. Our schools host associated organisation meetings such as local ICPA Branches, and our Rural Fire Brigade. Our schools host playgroups which are a much-anticipated reprieve for rural, isolated mothers which have a focus on enhancing their mental health and providing social interaction for both mothers and children. Playgroup at rural and remote schools is also a unique introduction for bush kids into early childhood education facilitating learning and social engagement opportunities as a stepping stone prior to commencing Kindergarten. They also provide employment for persons who otherwise would not have opportunities being rural and remote. Our schools provide important socialisation and connection for bush kids, who otherwise do not interact with many other people. By way of example, our Valkyrie school has hosted a special event for nearly every family in our district, for me personally my husband was Christened at Valkyrie and our eldest had her first birthday party at the school. Our rural and remote schools are far more than education facilities. They are the lifeblood of our communities, central meeting points, and aid during times of natural disasters or emergencies. They are also the location of all fundraising endeavours, as well as an essential service drop off point for our mail run and freight. Many rural communities and P and C Associations have made significant contributions to the establishment and continual development of our rural and remote schools by way of considerable donations and volunteering. Nebo SS is on to some third and fourth generation family enrolments and Valkyrie SS has second-generation enrolments. Our rural schools experience times of high and low enrolments as the generations circle around. We encourage the Department to continue to recognise the multitude of roles our rural schools play in forming part of healthy, thriving, and connected communities and hold a view to continuing to support our rural and remote schools, particularly in times of low enrolments, understanding that they play an essential role to entire communities.

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## A 58. CHARLEVILLE BRANCH

### Motion

**“That Charleville ICPA Branch thanks ICPA Qld State Council and ICPA Federal Council for working together to simplify the membership system and process.”**

### Explanation:

Charleville Branch acknowledges the improvements to the membership system and thanks the parties involved for their work. This new system will streamline the roles of Treasurer at Branch, State and Federal level, and that of the State and Federal Membership Officers. Given these are all volunteer positions, time-saving measures are appreciated. ICPA members will also benefit from the simplified system once the automatic renewal process is complete.

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## A 59. FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND BRANCH

### Motion

**“That the Far North Queensland Branch host the 55th ICPA Qld Inc Annual State Conference in 2026 on the Atherton Tablelands.”**

### Explanation:

The Tablelands is the jewel in the Far North QLD crown, our region has been severely impacted this year by cyclone Jasper and other major weather events, while time is needed to recover economically before embarking on holding a significant conference in the area we would like to host the 2026 State conference and showcase to you the amazing food, entertainment and natural wonders, encompassing all of the wonderful things the North has to offer. Additionally, Cairns has an international and domestic airport enabling all to access the region.

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