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## **Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia**

Advocating for equitable access to education for students in rural and remote Australia

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

**7 May 2021**

### **Rural and Remote Students Must Not be Forgotten**



Rural and remote education will be front and centre as all roads lead to Canberra next week for the Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia (ICPA Aust) Federal Council when they embark on delegations in the nation's capital to ensure the needs of geographically isolated students are not forgotten.

This visit will be the first opportunity since 2019 for Federal Council to travel to Canberra on delegation and Councillors are very much looking forward to meeting with Members of Parliament, Senators and relevant stakeholders, particularly as the 2021 Federal Budget is finalised.

ICPA Federal President Mrs Alana Moller said "While the COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it many challenges in education across the population, there are ongoing issues associated with educating children in geographically isolated areas that need to be addressed urgently."

Other key topics on the agenda for ICPA (Aust) include the need for a review of the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme and recommendations for improving remote early childhood education including the extension of the AIC to 3-4 year olds and secure funding for mobile playgroups. An expansion of the Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) and increases to the Commonwealth Living Away from Home Allowance (LAFHA) for apprentices and trainees will also be raised.

High on the agenda also is the introduction of a Distance Education Teaching Allowance (DETA) to support the approximately 1500 families who, due to geographical isolation, must teach their children at home via distance education.

ICPA (Aust) will also continue its advocacy for a permanent Rural Hardship Education Fund, to assist families in times of rural hardship, including drought or flood, to educate their children. ICPA (Aust) were heartened in October 2019 when a motion for a fund of this nature to be established was passed in the Senate. Unfortunately this is yet to come to fruition.

The visit to Canberra will be a chance to reaffirm the message that ongoing and increased support is needed to provide rural and remote children equitable access to educational opportunities.

Further information can be viewed in the ICPA (Aust) Briefing Paper [here](#).

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