

### SCHOOLS PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE REPORT – June 2021

Since conference last year, the main areas the Schools Portfolio have been lobbying for include:

#### **Touring Arts Program**

Ongoing discussions across various departments have included government assurances that following extensive consultation with Arts organisations, the new Touring Queensland Fund (TQF) and Touring Queensland Fund Quick (TQFQuick), will invest in touring performing and visual arts projects across the state. These aim at providing a range of performances, exhibitions, workshops and arts in education programming including artist-in-residence programs in regional areas. Minister Enoch has stated that “These new funds are designed to be more responsive, flexible and adaptable, giving communities across the state the opportunity to engage with more first-class arts experiences.” From a rural perspective, this system does not seem to be too different to the existing system, which continues to disadvantage rural and remote students. ICPA Qld will continue to lobby this issue.

#### **Direct Access to IT Specialist**

The Department has reinforced the importance of schools accessing their regional IT specialist with issues.

#### **Best Practice Swimming Lessons**

The Department acknowledges the unique situation small schools in rural and remote areas are in regarding accessing swim lessons. They have suggested that:

- REAP funding can be used for lessons/camps (this funding/grants has been well utilised).
- There is a ‘swim and water safety’ training course available for PE teachers, who – with the assistance of other resources – may be able to reduce group numbers.

The Department has acknowledged that there could be a possibility that new teaching Principals might be unaware of what options and resources are available to rural and remote schools. Affected schools are invited to contact ARD or CLAWS – who also pass on information through newsletters, school visits etc. for more advice pertaining to specific localities.

#### **Working Relationship Between DoE and QPS**

Whilst ICPA Qld are still working on securing a meeting with the QPS, the Department has detailed the following points in regards to improving the working relationship between DoE and QPS to ensure safe schooling in rural and regional areas:

- At the moment there is Adopt-a-cop and QLD Policing Program frequently utilised in schools. Developing relationships of this nature will provide a better insight into the needs of small schools in rural areas.
- The implementation of infrastructure could be put into place in regards to security. Regional office would have been notified in the case of the motion that was passed at conference, and would be able to provide more specific information to that branch. The Department also suggests “future planning”, in the form of discussions with regional offices and local police stations.

#### **Defibrillators in Small Schools**

The Department has reinforced that the possession of defibrillators in a school is a decision that can only be made by an individual school. Consultation with the Principal/P&C would be an ideal starting point.

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