

## SCHOOLS

### S 7. WESTMAR-INGLESTONE BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA QLD lobbies the Department of Education to provide access to specialist LOTE teachers in rural and remote Queensland schools through circuits organised and managed by regional HR staff.”**

#### Explanation:

LOTE is a compulsory subject of the Australian Curriculum. The Department of Education used to provide many rural schools with travelling LOTE teachers on circuits. This has been phased out in recent years and moved to an SDE model for most rural and remote schools. Teaching LOTE through SDE facilities is an inadequate form of education for a language other than English. Students cannot connect with a teacher from another culture. Often language barriers are an issue and students struggle to understand a teacher with a heavy accent. Technological issues often impede lessons from progressing at the required pace while students wait for Q Learn to load. A face-to-face teacher would provide a much richer educational experience and improved learning outcomes. Equity is not being met for rural and remote schools in the teaching of LOTE as urban schools have access to face-to-face learning.

#### CARRIED

## SCHOOLS

### A 24. SOUTHERN DOWNS BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education and Queensland Teacher’s Union to resolve the 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 small, rural school is dependent on many other acting roles throughout the state and can change more frequently than in larger, metropolitan schools. Short-term principals cause huge disruption to rural and remote schools and communities through lack of consistency of long-term strategic direction and inability to build strong community relationships.

#### CARRIED

## A 25. CHARTERS TOWERS BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education (DoE) to lower the threshold enrolment requirements deemed necessary for two full time teachers in a small rural school, from 21 to 16 enrolments.”**

### Explanation:

Small rural schools currently need a total of 21 enrolments from years Prep to 6 for the DoE to supply two full time teachers. For schools that do not meet this threshold – even by one enrolment - it means that the DoE does not provide adequate resources to employ a second full-time teacher. In such cases, the small rural school would only have one classroom, with one full-time teaching principal, and a fractional teacher, for up to 20 students across, potentially 7-year levels. Unlike most of their metropolitan colleagues, these teachers are required to teach and support seven different year levels from Prep to Year 6 – a task that can be extremely challenging and stressful. In many cases, the expectations and demands on these teachers are extremely high and their ability to provide equity and excellence in their teaching is severely compromised. Lowering the threshold of total enrolments to 16, to gain the second full time teacher would allow each student in a small rural school to receive the quality of education and support they need and deserve from their teachers, as is expected in larger regional and urban schools.

### CARRIED

## A 26. NEBO BRANCH

### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education Queensland to review and substantially increase the rural locality allowance, in relation to the current salary schedule for teaching staff who are employed in a rural or remote school.”**

### Explanation:

An extract from the Queensland Rural and Remote Benefit Booklet, released last year, explains that:-  
*A locality allowance is paid to employees specified in Directive 16/18: Locality allowances. The payment varies across rural and remote centres and is reflective of the school’s location, quality of life factors and cost of living. The amount is displayed as an annual figure in this booklet, however, it is paid fortnightly.*

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


<https://teach.qld.gov.au/teach-in-qld-state-schools/Documents/remote-teaching-booklet.pdf>

Concerningly, the last time these figures and allowances were reviewed was 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2018 which superseded the previous figures done in 1999. Also curiously, a measure of “quality of life factors” is surely subjective, and unable to be quantified, or differentiated between localities. We would suggest that ALL rural and remote locations have unique challenges and should ALL receive a component of allowance recognising this.

We are seeking that there be immediate review of these figures, as the locality allowance is not accurately or appropriately covering the true cost of living in these rural areas, and it further fails to be attractive to warrant those considering leaving larger towns and cities to live and work in rural and remote areas. We wish to highlight that there are significant undertakings professionally and personally when taking on a role in a rural or remote setting, when compared to those in metropolitan settings. These teachers or principals often lack adequate support staff, and their school environments often have many gaps that are taken up by them, with no further remuneration, yet an expectation to undertake in order to keep the school functional – such as librarian, admin, financial, health and safety, HR, groundskeeping, fundraising, tuckshop, uniforms, water pumps, and everything in between, all whilst juggling a multi-age class of kindy to grade 6, planning all lessons, full supervision and accountability across the board, coupled with limited internet and phone, isolation, and an array of other practicalities that are less than favourable. There is simply no attractive incentive to teach outside of a metropolitan area, that compensates for the abovementioned increased undertakings that are inherent with a rural teaching position. A recent news article in the Queensland Country Life on April 7 2023, featuring member for Burdekin Dale Last, spoke at length of the teaching shortage crisis in central Queensland, where he is quoted *“There needs to be a recognition that positions in rural and regional areas, are vastly different to those in larger regional cities and because of this there needs to be packages in place to encourage them to these areas”*. Attraction and retention of staff in rural localities is becoming a critical issue, with little incentive or improvement on the horizon. This has devastating effects for children and families of school communities who suffer through high teacher turn over as the staff quickly seek out return to larger regions. At the heart of the issue is that rural areas simply cannot compete with larger city offerings, therefore, the only factor that can make a difference is increased remuneration.

We have tabled figures received by someone working in our central area, to see what the real take home amount is, and how that equates in dollar values per week, after tax:-


School Taxable and allowance combined payments	RoRRS Locality	Gross (before tax)	Net	Net p/w payment ** these are based on half rates for individual with no dependent	Distance to nearest township, in one direction, with groceries, however not necessarily larger city or township with essential services
Valkyrie SS		\$154.76 p/f \$4,024.00 annual	\$97.00 p/f \$2,522.00 annually	\$48.50 p/w	Moranbah 94kms Mackay 144kms
Clarke SS		\$150.95 p/f \$3,924.87 annual	\$95.00 p/f \$2470.00 annually	\$47.50 p/w	Middlemount 85kms (over rough, dirt road) Sarina 159kms Mackay 169kms Rockhampton 189kms

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**Valkyrie SS**

**Central Queensland**

Benefit/Allowance	Amount
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	\$1,024.00
Identified location payment	\$0.00
Total annual benefit (See disclaimers below):	\$4,024.00

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**Clarke Creek SS**

**Central Queensland**

Benefit/Allowance	Amount
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	\$924.87
Identified location payment	\$0.00
Total annual benefit (See disclaimers below):	\$3,924.87

**Central Queensland**

	TRANSFER RATING	RoRRS allowances and payments							Non RoRRS allowances and payments			
		RECOGNITION OF LOCATION TRAVEL (\$)				RECOGNITION OF SERVICE PAYMENTS			IDENTIFIED LOCATION (\$/YR)	LOCALITY ALLOWANCE (\$)		BEGINNING TEACHER PAYMENT (\$)
		TEACHER	DEPENDANT ADULT/SPOUSE	CHILD 2+	CHILD <2	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEARS 3-8		SINGLE	FAMILY	
Tresswell SS	6	2100	2100	2100	1050	2400	3600	4800	-	1252.29	2504.57	1500
Clarke Creek SS	5	1200	1200	1200	600	1800	2700	3600	-	924.87	1849.73	1000

The current locality allowance, on average in most of these transfer 5 rating schools, and most only being eligible if they are permanent, for the half rate (no dependents), is dismal, at approximately \$48.00 a week. We ask you to consider, would you live and work outside of a city for less than \$50.00 a week to cover all of the above mentioned significant increased costs of living?

**CARRIED**

## **A 27. TAMBO BRANCH**

### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education, and other relevant departments, to ensure that the surrounds of Department housing in Rural and Remote areas are maintained.”**

### Explanation:

Due to the often-transient population in Rural and Remote locations, gardens, and surrounds of Department housing in Rural and Remote areas often suffer from neglect and as such look very unappealing from the street and unwelcoming for new arrivals. As part of the campaign to attract and retain teachers, as well as other public servants to Rural and Remote areas, accommodation must be well maintained. It is an unrealistic expectation to assume that short term tenants will invest time and energy into the garden.

### **CARRIED**

## **A 29. YARAKA ISISFORD BRANCH**

### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to increase the minimum funding for a second teacher in Level 1 small schools per fortnight.”**

### Explanation:

Currently Level 1 schools (0-25 students) are entitled to department funding for a second teacher up to three days a week. To attract any teacher to the position in these remote and rural communities, many small schools are having to fund the rest of the second teacher’s full-time wage from the school’s budget which causes extreme financial strain to the school and resources and is not feasible long-term. To attract and maintain staffing in rural communities where numbers at small schools fluctuate constantly, increasing the funding to 4 days a week would make supplementing the wage for a full- time position viable. This would attract teachers to these positions and communities and ensure that students in regional areas have the same equity and access to reliable and consistent staff to ensure excellence.

### **CARRIED**

## **A 30. YARAKA ISISFORD BRANCH**

### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to fund travel for teachers whose teaching allocation is split between rural and remote small schools to ensure viability of the position.”**

### Explanation:

Some schools have split a full-time position between neighbouring towns however the department does not provide any travel allowance for these teachers and most of these teachers are travelling long

distances between schools.

For example, Stonehenge and Jundah share a second teacher. If you work within 50 minutes from your home, you are not allocated any travel allowance or a department vehicle. Stonehenge and Jundah are 67km apart and are therefore only considered a 40-minute car trip. She is allocated Education Queensland accommodation in one town so travels to and from 5 days a fortnight, within her own time and using her own fuel and vehicle. This is an issue that needs to be addressed to attract and maintain teachers to these small rural communities.

## **CARRIED**

### **A 31. RICHMOND BRANCH**

#### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to cap upper primary school multi-age class size numbers (i.e. Years 4, 5 and 6) to 25 students to bring in line with maximum class numbers for Years Prep to 3 in rural and remote schools.”**

#### Explanation:

Queensland Government schools implement strict class sizes as follows: 25 students per class in Prep year to Year 3. 28 students per class in upper primary school Years 4, 5 and 6. 28 students per class in junior high school Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. In addition, classes can have up to, but not more than, 2 additional students in the setting.

What this means is that any time throughout a year, in particular after day 8, students in years 4-10 in rural areas can be in a classroom of up to 30 students, and in many cases under the direction of a graduate or early service teacher.

To alleviate this, a consistent class size capped at 25 students total, would ensure teachers of all experience levels provide delivery of quality educational services to students in rural and remote schools and to cater for the varying needs of isolated students.

In line with the Department’s latest vision of Equity and Excellence and its acknowledgement of schools making an impact, a consistent class size of 25 students, in particular for students in year 4 to 6 – would assist the department’s vision of better outcomes for students across their schooling journey. Consistent class sizes would support the wellbeing of students as they transition from primary to junior secondary, keeping them engaged in learning as they move onto their senior schooling years.

Through equity and excellence in all our learning settings, such as consistent classroom sizes, this means every student will be given the same opportunity at every age/ learning level – with the same student teacher ratio - to succeed and remove barriers to help realise the potential of every student.

#### Amended Explanation:

Queensland Government schools implement strict class sizes as follows: 25 students per class in Prep year to Year 3 and 28 students per class in upper primary school – Years 4,5 and 6. In addition, classes can have up to, but not more than, 2 additional students in the setting.

This means that any time throughout a year, in particular after day 8, students in rural and remote schools in years 4, 5 and 6 can be in a multi-age classroom of up to 30 students, and in many cases under the direction of a graduate or early service teacher.

To alleviate this, a consistent class size capped at 25 students total as for Prep to 3, would ensure teachers of all experience levels provide delivery of quality educational services to students in rural and remote schools and to cater for the varying needs of isolated students.

In line with the Department's latest vision of Equity and Excellence and its acknowledgement of schools making an impact, reduction in class size would assist the department's vision of better outcomes for students across their schooling journey. Consistent class sizes would support the wellbeing of students as they transition through their schooling.

Through equity and excellence in all our learning settings, such as consistent classroom sizes, this means every student will be given the same opportunity at every age/learning level – with the same student teacher ration – to succeed and remove barriers to help realise the potential of every student.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 32. WESTMAR INGLESTONE BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to ensure that teaching principals in small schools are given the required level of administrative support to ensure that administration tasks do not take away valuable time from teaching and planning in the classroom.”**

Explanation:

Regardless of the number of school enrolments, the demands placed upon principals of small schools is ever increasing. In addition to teaching, planning, and supporting learning (as they are trained to do), their time is being consumed by administration tasks - like budgeting, camp planning, grant applications, learning support, parental liaison, staff co-ordination, staff recruitment and contributing to essential school / community interaction. A state-wide 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. Teacher burnout is likely the result of these increasing pressures and expectations.

**CARRIED**

#### **A 33. NEBO BRANCH**

**Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education Queensland to include greater, and more specific allowances and inclusions under the *Recognition of Rural and Remote Services Scheme (RoRRS)* to better financially support those teaching and living in rural and remote areas.”**

Explanation:

Educators who undertake positions in rural and remote areas are subjected to far greater personal costs due to isolated localities. There appears to be no attractive, or substantial incentives for anyone to leave metropolitan or regional areas. Any uptake to rural or remote areas is generally short term, as these costs are generally not understood until they are living it, and they quickly realise how out of pocket they become. The practical and logistical challenges faced, without appropriate and proportional financial support, often leads to high staff turnover, or general deterrence from taking up advertised positions in these settings. We acknowledge the current three level payment system in place being the Recognition of Location, Recognition of Service, and Locality Allowance, however these fall short of providing an exciting and stimulating package that entices people to remain in rural locations long term. Where a school is not attached to a township, and is the only landmark of its area, for example in our central area,

Valkyrie, Clarke Creek, Kilcummin and Mistake Creek, staff have significant travel to get groceries (anywhere from 50 to nearly 200 kilometres in one direction) greater internet and phone costs due to limited coverage and increase of use for entertainment. Also, higher electricity bills from running water pumps, or generators. When they are finally able to get their groceries, the cost is far higher due to limited availability, a small independent grocer, and no other alternative. These members of staff also travel great

distances to undertake any social or personal endeavours, which if they choose not to pursue due to cost, quickly leads to their own isolation, dissatisfaction and ultimate departure. Likewise, those positioned in small rural or remote towns, also have higher costs of living as the cost of limited supplies in those localities is at inflated prices with no alternative and significant distances to the next regional city, such as Clermont, Alpha, Julia Creek, Tambo, Cunnamulla, essentially any township without a major supermarket relying on smaller independent grocers.

Greater financial provision under the RoRRs Scheme needs to be explored by the DoE to attract and retain staff to rural and remote areas, so they are not financially disadvantaged or deterred. Suggestions of additional support would be:-

Substantial financial increase to the Recognition of Travel payment (listed annually, paid fortnightly) to more accurately reflect the great distances travelled by road for groceries, appointments etc.

Substantial financial increase to the Recognition of Service payment (listed annually, paid fortnightly, increasing with subsequent years of service) to contribute to other necessary but increased costs such as exorbitant groceries, phone and internet, car and tyre servicing, mental health and wellbeing (attending appointments other than medical).

**CARRIED**

**F1 NEBO BRANCH - SCHOOLS**

**“That ICPA Qld Inc. lobbies the Department of Education to fund travel for all staff whose roles are positioned across multiple schools, to ensure the viability of these positions.”**

Explanation:



Rural and remote schools are experiencing staff shortages across the board and are struggling to attract and retain staff for positions such as a second teacher, admin, teacher-aide, cleaner, IT support, groundskeeping, sport and HPE, music and LOTE. These positions are often part time, one day or one session positions and the location of rural schools, coupled with the lack of greater hours to make it attractive and viable, especially when there is no guaranteed travel component to support these travelling roles. Sharing these positions within a cluster in the most viable option and we ask these positions be fully supported financially for travel and the flexibility to be employed in a shared capacity to meet the needs of these unique circumstances.

**CARRIED**