

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with other ICPA Qld Inc Policy documents



SCHOOLS POLICY

(This policy includes RREAP)

POLICY: TO ENSURE THE CONTINUITY OF DELIVERY OF QUALITY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO STUDENTS IN RURAL AND REMOTE SCHOOLS AND ACCESS TO A BROAD RANGE OF SUBJECTS AND SCHOOL EXPERIENCES TO CATER FOR THE VARYING NEEDS OF ISOLATED STUDENTS.

OBJECTIVES:

1. That an Education Ombudsman be appointed.

Schools:

2. That small schools be considered in clusters to:
 - a. permit viable sharing of resources.
 - b. share a registrar to reduce administration workload of principals.
 - c. Deliver a variety of curriculum opportunities.
3. That school communities be consulted by their principal when the Department of Education requests enrolment projections. (2013: A47)
4. That computer Health and Safety guidelines for use for students be made available to all schools (2013:S11)
5. That P – 10 Schools be maintained.
6. That the Department of Education (DoE) place a moratorium on school closures in drought declared areas and that this moratorium remain in place for a period of not less than two years following the revocation of drought declared status. (2019: A32)
7. That guidelines be provided to rural schools to deal with disruptions to essential services. (2013:S6)
8. That alternative models, which include distribution of perishable resources to other schools, be investigated when schools are mothballed or closed. (2018:A26)
9. That mothballed schools will reopen when student enrolments increase to a viable level.

Staffing:

10. That priority is given to providing positive and innovative incentives to teachers and principals applying for positions by offering:
 - a. First priority in allocation of Government housing previously owned by DoE at minimal rental
 - b. Acceptable accommodation standards and adequate internet access (2016:A8) (2017:A28)
 - c. Realistic travel assistance
 - d. Regular opportunities to access Professional Development
 - e. Quality In-School and Region Support

Updated September 2021

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with other ICPA Qld Inc Policy documents

- f. Extensive briefing on available support services and networks
 - g. Awareness of administrative load and rural and remote teaching expectations (2017:S20)
11. That the Department of Education investigate complaints fully when it comes to verbal and physical abuse and bullying by teachers towards students (2019: S13)
12. That the Department of Education provide all rural schools with direct access to an IT Specialist to assist with all school technology and computing equipment, maintenance and upgrades. (2015:A22) (2020: S7)

Principals –

13. That the selection criteria for principals place emphasis on:
- a. 'In school' assessment of teaching.
 - b. Communication and leadership skills.
 - c. At least 3 years teaching experience.
14. That the workload of teaching principals be alleviated by:
- a. a reduction in administrative responsibilities.
 - b. increased support.
 - c. allocating additional full-time teachers.
 - d. increasing Administrative Assistants' hours.
 - e. retention and extension of the Cluster Principal support model. (2013: A48,A49)
15. That there is adequate accountability for teaching Principal's curriculum planning and teaching performance. (2014:A38) (2015:A21)
16. That school communities have input into the selection process for school principals via training for selection panels, with regular reviews of the effectiveness of these panels.
17. That acceptance of the school community be considered as a performance indicator when Acting Principals apply for permanent positions.
18. That new principal appointments in rural and remote schools have a mandatory visit prior to their appointment.
19. That principals keep school communities aware of staff professional development where absences occur.
20. That suspended Principals be allowed handover with their replacement with full transparency to the school community.
21. That executive positions at schools are acting for no longer than 6 months to allow a permanent position to be offered to prospective candidates. (2016:A33) (2017:S21) (2019: A27)

Teachers/Other Staff –

22. That there is adequate support to prevent personal and professional isolation of teachers.
23. That priority be given to appointing highly skilled teachers with recency of practice and a commitment to teaching in rural and remote areas. (2012:A8) with limited turnovers of teaching staff.

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with other ICPA Qld Inc Policy documents

24. That a flexible and more appropriate model for staffing of small schools be implemented, taking into account:
 - a. Student needs and the demands of curriculum.
 - b. Number of Prep/Year One students and the demands of a play-based curriculum.
 - c. Class groupings and their size (equivalent 25 students).
 - d. Number of children enrolled with specific needs.
 - e. Impact of access to subject specialist teachers.
 - f. Number of transient enrolments.
 - g. School Location and characteristics.
 - h. Availability of Contract and teacher relief staff. (2017:S18) (2018:A24)
 - i. Responsibilities of a teaching principal.
 - j. Experience of current staff.

25. That a small school staffing model for rural and remote schools consider:
 - a. Day 8 enrolments in term one and three be used to appoint an additional 0.5 teacher allocation to eligible one-teacher schools.
 - b. Multi-age classrooms with 3 or more cohorts be capped at 20 students where a Graduate teacher has been appointed.
 - c. Band 5 schools with 42 or more students be eligible for an additional 0.5 teacher allocation.
 - d. One-teacher schools with 20-25 students be eligible for an additional full time FTE, regardless of cohort distribution.
 - e. Student-teacher ratios in rural and remote secondary schools where distance education subjects are offered. (2016:A40)
 - f. The discrepancy between secondary and primary school teacher aide allocation models. (2017:A20)
 - g. Teacher Student ratio in rural and remote schools with multi-age classrooms be reduced from 1:25 to 1:20. (2018:A25)
 - h. Provision of a discretionary fund for schools of 40-52 children in multi-age classes to apply for when needed to assist with staffing. (2018:S12)
 - i. That Department of Education allocate extra teaching support to one teacher schools where enrolments exceed 15 and K-2 is represented by 50% or more. (2021:S11)

26. That all transfers, promotions and leave be allocated and finalised before the start of the school year to ensure minimum impacts on student learning outcomes.

27. That graduates are placed in larger rural and remote schools and consideration is given to those graduates who have completed coursework and practical experience in small and remote schools.

28. That strategies be put in place to support and manage:
 - a. An ongoing Professional Development Program for school based staff.
 - i. where relief teachers are in short supply.
 - ii. whereby professional development is conducted out of school hours wherever possible, or online.
 - iii. whereby teacher aides are included to upskill and gain additional responsibilities. (2017:S22)
 - b. A system whereby all staff, particularly graduate teachers, appointed to rural and remote small school are monitored and mentored through district office.
 - c. A role to provide “in School” support for first time Principals, and a principal induction program.
 - d. Technical support staff accessibility in band 5 schools. (2015:A22)

29. That a teacher rating be applied to all preservice teachers prior to gaining employment. (2016:A32)

30. That all reasonable measures are taken to have two adults present at all times during school hours. (2018:F2)

31. That teachers delivering VET receive required upskilling and professional development. (2017:S28)

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with other ICPA Qld Inc Policy documents

32. That the teacher aide allocation formula for schools with teaching principals includes:
 - a. a base minimum.
 - b. weighting for classes with 4 or more year levels.
 - c. a fulltime aide for classes containing Prep students.
 - d. a fulltime aide for all one-teacher schools.
 - e. a provision for implementing in class learning support recommendations. (2016:A39)
33. That teacher aides are replaced immediately.
34. That the Administration model in small schools accurately reflects skill level and job description. (2015:S13)

Support Services:

35. That timely access to specialist support such as Guidance Officers & Allied Health professionals is provided.
36. That there is provision of an adequate behaviour policy. (2018:A27)
37. That a safe reporting system, including grievance guidelines and contact information, be implemented for parents to access. (2014:A39) (2015:12) (2017:S17)
38. That the State Government fund 50% of the Chaplaincy program in Rural and Remote Schools to ensure schools have access to a fulltime chaplain. (2019: A31)
39. That the current level of in school support be maintained following year 7 moving to high school. (2014:A40) (2015:A19)
40. That adequate specialist staff and school support be provided in a timely fashion in areas including:
 - a. Specific needs (including gifted & talented).
 - b. Speech pathology. (2014:S9,S10)
 - c. Curriculum.
 - d. Guidance Officers. (2015:A20)
 - e. Allied Health (including annual Hearing, Vision and Dental screening). (2015:A14, A15)
 - f. Behaviour management (including the Denise Kable Behaviour Management Unit, Toowoomba) for 'at risk' students. (2019: A29, A30)
 - h. The Queensland Police Service (2020:A16)
41. That programs promoting positive mental health be implemented.

Infrastructure & Sustainability:

42. That small schools be consulted in relation to the budgetary impact of mandatory infrastructure upgrades.
43. That provision be made for students to bypass small geographically isolated Secondary Schools with no reduction of services to these schools.
44. That funding be allocated to all schools for installation, upgrade or replacement of air-conditioning in teaching spaces. (2017:A19)

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with other ICPA Qld Inc Policy documents

45. That the Department of Education ensures all rural and remote schools are fitted with defibrillators. (2020:A14)
46. That the Department of Education ensures that sufficient water storage and associated plumbing is available in rural and remote schools, including on-site staff residences, and implement a program to ensure water quality and cleaning of tanks. (2021:A36)
47. That the Department of Education support schools in securing a reliable water supply where necessary (2021:A38) and ensures schools are not liable for costs to procure water during drought. (2021:S10)
48. That security measures at on-site staff residences are reviewed and upgrades undertaken as needed to ensure safety of staff and property. (2021:A35)

Funding:

49. That charges by BAS (Building Assets & Services) for routine repairs and maintenance are reasonable. (2013:A60)
50. That the needs of rural and remote students are met through flexible and innovative means of delivery and funding. (2016:A36)
51. That immediate remedial assistance and funding be provided to schools where the majority of students are not reaching the minimum standard of education as assessed in National and State tests.
52. That funding is available for:
 - a. Locally Hosted Senior Distance Education. (2014:F2) (2016:A35)
 - b. Community models which aim to retain year 7 students in rural and remote areas where no high school exists. (2014:A41)

Curriculum:

53. That rural and remote schools have access to a full secondary curriculum. (2016:A36)
54. That rural and remote schools have adequate access to Distance Education options for subject delivery.
55. That one teacher schools be supported in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum by the addition of P-6 units to C2C materials. (2013:A56)
56. That NAPLAN practice tests are not used as part of the curriculum for reporting and assessment purposes. (2016:A34)
57. That internet access be considered when setting homework and assessment tasks. (2016:S16)

Extra-Curricular:

58. That there is encouragement and provision of additional time, resources and funding for staff and students to participate in Regional and State arts, cultural and sporting activities and competitions at all levels. (2017:S16) (2017:A18)
59. That mobile units be provided to deliver music programs to students. (2013:A58) (2014:A35,A36,A37) (2015:F3) (2016:A38)
60. That the Schools Touring Program (Queensland Arts Council/QMF) be reinstated. (2020: A19)

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with other ICPA Qld Inc Policy documents

61. That the Department of Education ensure all rural and remote students that choose to participate in school swimming lessons are able to access compulsory lessons in accordance to their individual situations. (2020: A17)

Early Years:

62. That parents have the power of choice regarding the age of commencement of their child's Education
63. That the Queensland school starting age be aligned with a common Australian starting age.
64. That Queensland Home Education Unit students can enrol in Prep in alignment with mainstream schools.

RURAL AND REMOTE EDUCATION ACCESS PROGRAM (RREAP)

62. That RREAP objectives match those of the former Priority Country Area Program (PCAP) and:
 - a. aim to help schools and school communities improve the educational outcomes and opportunities of students who are educationally disadvantaged because of their geographical isolation.
 - b. are available for projects that would enhance the educational achievements and increase the opportunities and choice available to students disadvantaged by geographical isolation. (2011:A62,A63)
63. That RREAP expenditures be carefully monitored through the annual financial audit of schools in receipt of RREAP funds as well as verification that RREAP funds have been utilised in accordance with RREAP guidelines. (2011:A64)
64. That community members have input into the composition of School Cluster Committees. (2011:S6)
65. That the integrity and funding of RREAP be maintained and used to its best advantage to enhance the quality of education and access to social and cultural activities for rural and remote students. (2012:A60)
66. That there is a review of RREAP. (2017:S19)