

## SPECIFIC NEEDS

### A 34. WESTMAR INGLESTONE BRANCH

#### Motion

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to ensure that small schools with students identified with physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioural and/or diverse learning needs, be provided with sufficient support for teaching staff and students, so that the Australian curriculum is accessed by all students in the entire multi-aged classroom.”**

#### Explanation:

In small schools where there are multi-aged classrooms and no specialised support services, it is not only the student with the learning adversity that has their learning interrupted and challenged, but the entire classroom. Specialist teachers and support staff provided to our small schools, are usually visiting staff (on a roster) who travel from a larger centre. These visits can be unreliable if there are “unforeseen circumstances” at the larger centre, to the detriment of the staff and students at the small school. Small schools ideally need their own cluster support services and not rely upon services distributed from a larger facility. Teaching principals are trained to teach, however in these circumstances their time becomes strained trying to facilitate this support.

#### Case Study example –

Teacher Aide hours of support were reduced in 2022/2023 – and consequently our small school must apply for extra hours to fill the gap. This is an extremely time intensive process – time which our teaching principal does not have, due to many other constraints. Support for our students comes from a variety of places. GO based in Chinchilla, OT based in Bollon, Physio based in Roma and our Speech Language Pathologist comes from Toowoomba – these services are all more than 90 minutes away.

Our HOSSES (Head of Special Education Services) is based in Tara. This year our HOSSES contact has been one phone call and a physical visit for 3 hours (during teaching hours). This person has since taken over the role of Deputy Principal at Tara, so our small school has not had a dedicated HOSSES since mid-March. In Term 1 we also had staffing issues with no second teacher in the school until week 2 and then only one day per week (not two days, as we were allocated).

EQ has a new system where schools can access support using Specialist Disability Support for Schools (<https://education.qld.gov.au/about-us/budgets-funding-grants/grants/other-organisations/sdss/schools>). This system is adequate if you are located somewhere near where services such as this exist – unfortunately however, not in our district.

#### **CARRIED**

## **S 8. TAMBO BRANCH**

### **Motion**

**“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education to broaden its criteria for Rural and Remote Schools to access Allied Health Services that are education related.”**

### Explanation:

Living and educating children in rural and remote schools, families are continually faced with the challenge of accessing Allied Health Services that will assist with positive educational outcomes.

It is challenging for Education Queensland to fill Allied Health positions in Rural and Remote locations, due to many factors out of their control.

It is paramount that the criteria be reassessed to allow more flexibility for rural and remote schools to access such vital services that may be available in the community from an external provider.

It is really important that children have access to Allied Health in their own communities as taking children 1000's of kms away from home to access these services is disruptive to their schooling due to requiring many days off, where it would only require a 40-minute session in their own environment.

**CARRIED**