

PORTFOLIO REPORTS - STATE COUNCIL

EARLY CHILDHOOD REPORT

Karina Walter – Portfolio Holder, March 2019

As at semester one 1/02/2018 student census there were:

- 16 Kindergarten students at Western Australian Schools of the Air (SOTA)
- 19 Pre-primary students at Western Australian Schools of the Air (SOTA)
- 9 Kindergarten students at the Western Australian School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE)
- 12 Pre-primary students at the Western Australian School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE)

Information received from ICPA (Aust)

Throughout the year there has been a lot of communication from Jane Morton, the Federal Early Childhood Portfolio leader, keeping us up to date and informed with news and developments. Parents of preschool aged children can receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) even where families do not meet the activity test. This can be revised on a case by case situation. There has been further announcement regarding the Working Holiday Visas by Prime Minister Scott Morrison about extending working visas. There has been no change to the specified work list which is a shame not to include DE tutor (Governesses) and nannies which ICPA (Aust) will continue to lobby for.

The Federal Government announced on 1st January 2019 that they will provide \$440 million to States and Territories for preschool in 2019 under the National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. This funding will be put to seeing that almost 350,000 children in Australia have access to 15 hours per week, or 600 hours per year of quality early learning in the year before they commence school.

This announcement sees ICPA (Aust) continue to advocate on behalf of members to see an extension of the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Distance Education allowance for 4-year-olds and for the increased access to preschool in rural and remote areas.

The rate of Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for In Home Care (IHC) families has seen an increase in 2019. This has seen the rate go from \$25.48 per hour/per family from 2nd July 2018 to \$32.00 per hour/per family from 1st January 2019. An increase to the Additional CCS has seen this rate rise to \$38.40 per hour/per family. It is encouraged that families review their incomes to make sure they are receiving the correct percentage of CCS. The IHC National Guidelines are available at

https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/ihc_national_guidelines_december_2018.pdf?mc_cid=6d133578a3&mc_eid=f6c5aec342

Federal Council continues to work with the Federal Government with the implementation of a national Working with Children Check (WWCC) certification. A national working party has been set up and is currently working on this. This will take time to complete due to different rules and regulations set out by each State and Territory. An announcement is expected at some stage.