

SCHOOLS

1. **A27.** BLACKALL BRANCH

“That ICPA Inc. lobbies DoE to ensure executive positions at schools are acting for no longer than 6 months to allow a permanent position to be offered to prospective candidates.”

Carried

Explanation: A principal in an acting position makes it difficult for consistency and forward planning within a school. Blackall State School (P-12) presently has an acting Principal. The previous Principal came on a 3-year contract commencing mid-2016. Part way into his tenure he took up the position of acting Deputy Principal at Stanthorpe. Until he has a permanent placement, the Department of Education is unable to appoint a permanent school Principal at Blackall. Often, with acting executive placements, it is difficult to foster bonds and develop direction and identity within the school staff, students and parents. This is not an unusual situation and fulfilling permanent positions in rural and remote schools is difficult enough without this added obstacle.

2. **A28.** SPRINGSURE/ROLLESTON BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld Inc. lobby relevant authorities to ask that year 10 in P-10 schools be included in the bypass to ensure continuity.”

Carried

Explanation: Students studying at P-10 schools must wait until year 11 to be eligible for bypass. By bringing it back a year, it allows a better option for subjects before students have to settle down and pick subjects for their senior years.

3. **A29.** TAMBO BRANCH

“That ICPA QLD Inc. lobby the Department of Education to ensure that allocation for additional teaching or support staff is immediately made available when serious behavioural issues arise in rural and remote schools.”

Carried

Explanation: Rural and remote schools are already working hard with limited teaching and support allocations to ensure excellent socio, sporting and academic outcomes. When behavioural issues occur, it is often in circumstances beyond the control of the teaching and support staff. Beginning teachers, experienced teachers, teacher aides, and the student with behavioural issues as well as their peers are put at risk of emotional and often physical violence in these circumstances. It is a priority of the Education Department to ensure a safe environment for students and teachers to achieve the desired learning outcomes. This priority does not exist in rural and remote schools where adequate support is limited or non-existent for students with serious behavioural issues and beginning teachers with limited experience in behaviour management. This is particularly important when students transfer schools with known behavioural issues, as delays in support can cause major disruptions to schooling life.

4. **A30.** TAMBO BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld Inc. lobby the Dept of Education to provide extra staff and resources that specialise in rural and remote education, to the existing Denise Kable Behaviour Management Unit in Toowoomba.”

Carried

Explanation: When a rural and remote school requests guidance from the Behaviour Management Unit and their related professionals, it often must wait weeks, sometimes months, before practical support is offered in some way. Extra staff and resources would allow there to be an immediate response to these calls for help.

Extra staff would also be of benefit when the Denise Kable Behaviour Management Unit visits rural and remote schools, as supply teachers are very hard to find, and all staff need to be given the opportunity to undertake the professional development being offered.

5. **A31.** ST.GEORGE BRANCH

“That ICPA QLD Inc. lobby the State Government to fund 50% of the Chaplaincy program in Rural and Remote Schools to ensure schools have access to a fulltime chaplain.”

Carried

Explanation: Students face a myriad of challenges in their day-to-day life that can impact on their education. School chaplains play an important role in the school communities assisting students who are struggling with issues of self-doubt, bullying, peer pressure, anxiety, family breakdown, impacts of family drug and alcohol use and more.

Due to the tyranny of distance, Guidance Officers are not as easily accessible for rural and remote schools and this is where the Chaplaincy Program is incredibly valuable.

School Chaplains assist students through programs such as:

- Rock & Water (focusing on managing emotions and reactions)
- Love Bites (focusing on building healthy relationships)
- Bella Girls program (teaching girls about their value, beauty & purpose)
- Strength (teaching boys about resilience and their purpose)
- Lunchtime activities
- Individual support and mentoring.

In St George, there are two Chaplains - one is based at the High School and one is based at the Primary School and services three other schools in the cluster. Their wages are funded partly through a Federal Government grant (5 days/week combined) and supplemented by community funding (5 days combined). For rural and remote communities affected by drought and recent floods, raising 50% of the wages is difficult and puts a lot of pressure on the community.

6. **A32.** YARAKA ISISFORD BRANCH

“That ICPA QLD Inc. lobby Department of Education (DoE) to 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.”

Carried

Explanation: The severe drought conditions, which have ravaged most of Queensland for the longest time in recorded history, have meant that families have not been employed on properties and as rural contractors, shearers etc. based in the local towns. The agricultural industry needs time to rebuild and re-establish stock numbers. The flow on effect will be the need to once again employ staff and re-energise communities. Small schools are an integral part of any community and we respectfully request that DoE be mindful of the impact of drought on school enrolment numbers.

7. **S13.** KINDON BRANCH

“That ICPA (Qld) lobby DoE to investigate complaints fully when it comes to verbal and physical abuse and bullying by teachers towards students.”

Carried

Explanation: Rural and Remote families are already limited in schooling options. Families are then further disadvantaged when situations arise where attending their local school becomes not a viable option this also then has a flow on effect to not only the school but also the whole community.

One of our families have had to move their children to another school due to the inadequate dealing of complaints made to the Education Department. This family has had to endure their children be bullied,

verbally abused which at the time was reported to the Principal of that school, Department of Education and the Ombudsman and resulted in the complaint being substantiated and expressed in writing to this family. This teacher is currently employed at this school even though more complaints have risen by other families that followed the same path with reporting, though some of their children suffered physical abuse as well. One of the families sent a letter to Minister Grace with a reply that she would forward to the Department of Education - Regional office for further review which never happened. We are all hell bent on teaching our children that bullying is wrong and want our children to understand this sort of behaviour is not acceptable. How about we start this lesson at the top with Minister Grace to set an example to families that she so kindly represents by holding this prestigious position within Parliament to have this flow on affect to her departments to do their job properly. By doing this will prevent our children from being too scared to go to school because of a teacher in her chain of command. This case study is from a family that did not attend the Kindon school though from another local school in the area.