

## Special and Specific Needs Report

### **Kym Burns – Portfolio Holder, March 2021**

There were no Special Education motions raised at the 2020 ICPA (WA) state conference. However as always, the area of Special Education remains of great interest to ICPA (WA) and its members.

As education is a vital part of every child's life, families with children who have special and or specific educational needs want reassurance that their children are guaranteed the correct support and services available to their unique learning needs.

The Student-Centred Funding Model (SCFM) introduced in 2015 is the funding mechanism allocated to public schools for each student enrolled and additional funding for students needing extra support. The objective of the funding model is:

- allocate resources based on the learning needs of students
- ensure funding is responsive to the needs of individual schools and their students
- increase flexibility for principals in relation to financial and workforce management decisions
- provide a simple and transparent funding mechanism

Further information can be obtained at [SCFM@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:SCFM@education.wa.edu.au)

ICPA both at a State and Federal level continue to lobby for the needs of all students across Australia. ICPA members have highlighted many issues impacting students with special/specific learning needs. A brief summary of these are:

- Provision of a Medicare rebate for telehealth Services
- Provision of travel and accommodation assistance for travel to face-to-face services
- Improved staff training for teachers in rural and remote locations
- Workshops for rural and remote parents of gifted students
- Early identification and intervention for learning difficulties
- Provision of additional resources in boarding schools for students with Disability

Recommendations on the above summaries can be found at –

<https://www.icpa.com.au/page/attachement/217specific-education-needs-briefing-paper-december-2020>

An area of interest to members, especially those with family members who may have special educational needs is, The School of Special Educational needs: Medical and Mental Health. (SSEN: MMH).

This learning facility provides educational support for those whose medical or mental health prevents them from successfully participating in their enrolled school programs. They are 1 of 4 schools of Special Educational Needs federated Schools. The others being Behaviour and Engagement, Disability and Sensory.

Support is available to both public and private school students. Referrals are received through the Department of Health, with parent consent. They deliver over 60 teaching and liaison programs in more than 40 "Department of Health" settings state – wide.

### **GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS**

Children with exceptional abilities from country Western Australia who wish to participate in a Gifted and Talented Academic, Arts or Languages Secondary Selective Programs have access to a range of options:

- participate in the [Selective Academic Program Online](#)
- attend [Bunbury Senior High School](#) or [Albany Senior High School](#), our regional schools
- study in Perth and board at [City Beach Residential College](#)

- study in Albany and board at Albany Residential College (students must live outside Albany).

Students in regional Western Australia are not required to travel to Perth for testing. They will be allocated a testing venue within their education region based on the location of their current school.

Country testing is coordinated by Regional Assessment Coordinators who organise venues based on the location of students in their region. For more information phone the Gifted and Talented Selection Unit on (08) 9264 4307 or email gtsu@education.wa.edu.au.

### **Selective Academic Program Online:**

If you live in country Western Australia, your child can apply for the Selective Academic Program Online. Using computer links and innovative technology, your child can access the program without moving to Perth.

Each online program is managed by a coordinator from one of the following schools. Who conduct:

- mathematics and science from Perth Modern School
- humanities (English, society and environment) from Kelmscott Senior High School.

If your child will attend a public secondary school in a regional area, they will be able to access the online program.

Selection into these programs is based on the results of the Academic Selective Entrance Test.

For more information about the Selective Academic Program Online, visit the program's website, email PerthModern.GTOnline@education.wa.edu.au or phone (08) 9392 6818.

### **Residential College:**

Country students offered a Gifted and Talented Secondary Selective Program placement are able to apply to board at City Beach Residential College or Albany Residential College.

The Gifted and Talented Boarding Allowance is also available to those who do not qualify for:

- the Australian Government Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme
- a State Government Boarding Away from Home allowance.

In 2020, the Gifted and Talented Boarding Allowance was valued at up to \$1 634 a year.

To find out more, phone:

City Beach Residential College on (08) 9285 2672, email citybeach.rescol@education.wa.edu.au or visit their website.

Albany Residential College on (08) 9842 1007, email albany.rescol@education.wa.edu.au or visit their website.