

DISTANCE EDUCATION CONFERENCE REPORT – 2020

At the 2019 Charters Towers Conference 13 motions regarding Distance Education were passed.

DISTANCE EDUCATION SCHOOLS

Five of these motions addressed the issues surrounding the ever-increasing enrolments within Distance Education and lack of facilities on campus to accommodate the growing numbers of students and teachers. The Department of Education assures ICPA QLD that Geographically Isolated Students are the priority within these schools. ICPA stressed that Geographically Isolated students have no other options, these students deserve a quality education and adequate facilities just like their urban counterparts. When meeting with the Department of Education Infrastructure Services Branch ICPA Qld were informed that work is currently being undertaken around Distance Education and meeting core responsibilities and optional learning enrolments. A formula regarding space per student is currently being investigated. ICPA QLD would like to assure families that we understand their frustrations and the slow progress with this issue, rest assured we will continue the lobby.

LEARNING PLACE

ICPA Qld are aware of the issues with the change over to Blackboard Ultra and the affects on Distance Education schoolrooms. Louise Martin covers this in more detail in her Communications Portfolio report.

CURRICULUM

Four motions regarding up to date Curriculum were also raised and passed at conference. The Department of Education has stressed that it will not be doing a rewrite or maintenance on what is available, the onus of this has fallen onto the Distance Education. Judy Menary Principal of Brisbane DE has been leading the Prep curriculum overhaul and this will be ready to roll out at the start of next year. The Capricornia school staff have been working on updating the eTeach resources and this will also be ready for use at the start of next year. The three Distance Education schools involved in the Western Alliance have updated the Independent Learning Materials from years 1-10s to version 8. The roll out of these resources will also be ready at the start of next year. This is very positive news for Distance Education families.

AHWISE

COVID-19 has had a big impact on AHWISE this year with many tutors not being able to get to placements because of border closures. A lot of tutors were reluctant to travel with concerns around getting the virus or becoming stuck and not being able to return home with border closures.

Kate Bradshaw

Distance Education Portfolio Leader

Email: Councillor2@bigpond.com