

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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“Advocating for equitable education opportunities and support for rural and remote students”

SUBMISSION

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association Inc. (ICPA Qld Inc.) advocates for equitable access to quality educational opportunities for children in rural and remote areas. ICPA Qld Inc. represents forty-five branches, comprising over 1200 families throughout rural and remote Queensland.

ICPA Qld Inc. is a voluntary, not-for-profit, apolitical parent organisation and is the only community-based parent group with interests in all sectors and levels of education – state schools, independent, church, or boarding schools, early childhood and care through to tertiary education and all methods used to facilitate access to a continuing and appropriate education.

In regard to the amendments of this Bill, ICPA Qld will provide comments on the amendments that will affect the organisations members and are within ICPA Qld policy.

State Delivered Kindergarten

ICPA Qld supports streamlining of regulations around SDK with schools having only to adhere to one regulatory framework rather than several. This should alleviate some of the workload on teaching principals and staff in one teacher schools. ICPA Qld believe the benefits of enrolling Kindergarten children in schools rather than being registered will have a positive flow on effect for families whereby they can access travel and ICT subsidies and allowances. By allowing the kindergarten children to be enrolled and not “registered” this will also ensure that they can access all school support services which are essential for young children.

eKindy

Kindergarten students living in rural and remote areas rely on the valuable service of the eKindy program to utilise early childhood teachers and resources. An essential element of the eKindy program is the interactions of all students when they travel for face-to-face activity days. This important element of the eKindy program sets the foundations for students moving into the next stage of their schooling. Without essential access to centre-based visits during the eKindy program some students may not be able to access this crucial element of their kindergarten year. eKindy students need to be given access to the full range

of services provided by the delivery of the eKindy program however it is necessary that workforce shortages of Early Childhood Teachers are taken into consideration.

P&Cs

ICPA Qld supports the changes to different campuses of one school being able to form separate P&C Associations, especially when there are vast distances and demographics between campuses. Separate P&C Associations will enable the best outcomes for children and families in the schools these Associations have been established to service.

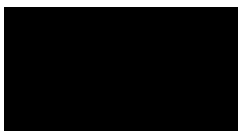
ICPA Qld welcomes the change which will enable P&C's to donate funds and goods to other P&Cs who have experienced adverse events. Rural Queensland has experienced several natural disasters over the past five years and true to the Queensland spirit many non-affected schools offered to assist those in need. It was difficult to guide P&C Associations on the correct protocols of how they could assist within the parameters of the existing EGP Act.

Transfer Notes

ICPA Qld supports the sharing of transfer notes in a timely manner between school enrolments to assist not only the student to receive the best educational outcomes and support that enhances their learning needs. This will enable schools to have the opportunity to plan, staff and support every student's learning and wellbeing needs from the commencement of their schooling at their new location.

Online Services

The use of online educational programs and platforms that assist with the delivery, consolidation and learning engagement of the Australian Curriculum is on the increase as learning is adapted to prepare students for future digital learning. A streamlined approach to gaining permission and approval processes for school staff, students and families is imperative to assist with the effective and efficient use of time for all parties. The choice of programs and platforms is vital and should be at the discretion of the school staff to allow for flexible facilitation of subject specific tailored learning, whilst maintaining the safe keeping of students' data is critical.



Mrs Wendy Henning
ICPA Qld President

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