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Union supports ICPA call for urgent overhaul of education support for geographically isolated students

The Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory Branch (IEU-QNT) stands with the Isolated Children’s Parents’ Association (ICPA) in its call for critical funding increases and new support measures to ensure equitable education access for geographically isolated students.

ICPA Australia says rural and remote families are being left behind by an outdated education support system that fails to keep pace with rising costs and increasing needs.

IEU-QNT Branch Secretary Terry Burke said funding increases and new supports were essential to ensuring equitable access to education for all children in rural and remote Australia.

“It’s an undeniable fact that no state, territory, or federal government will fund the provision of local secondary schools for geographically isolated students,” Mr Burke said.

“As a result, boarding schools remain the only feasible option for secondary education.

“However, the current level of government support leaves parents of limited means unable to afford even this option.

“The significant costs associated with boarding schools far exceed the existing allowances, effectively denying many children the education they deserve.

“The IEU-QNT supports the ICPA in its call on the federal government to urgently address this disparity by increasing the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Distance Education Allowance and through the provision of a one-off \$4,000 increase to the AIC Basic Boarding Allowance and alignment to the CPI Education sub index.

“When it comes to the start of their education journey, geographically isolated students also lack of access to quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services.

“Our union also supports the ICPA’s call for pay parity for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teachers in remote regions and assured funding for Mobile Early Learning Services.

“These changes are essential to ensure that all children, regardless of their geographic location or financial situation, have access to quality education,” Mr Burke said.

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