



## **ICPA ELECTION POLICY UPDATE**

### **Outback students ignored yet again as policies are released**

**August 19 2013**

Election Neglect! Families in rural and remote Australia are yet to hear one single promise that will help alleviate the crushing financial burden faced by them, as they struggle to meet the rising cost of educating their children.

*ICPA is focused on ensuring demography is not a marker of destiny for students from rural and remote Australia.*

For 42 years, members of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association have asked why it should cost them so much more to educate their children, than families in metropolitan areas!

ICPA calls for a commitment from all 2013 Federal Election Candidates to deliver accessible and affordable education for outback students.

#### **ICPA seeks a commitment to:**

- ❖ **A Tertiary Access Allowance for all rural and remote students who have no choice but to relocate from home to attend university:** ICPA has released research findings reporting on the main factors impacting on rural and remote students' ability to access tertiary studies. Survey results show the cost of relocation and daily living in the city deters many rural and remote students from attending university.  
[Tertiary Access Research May 2013](#)
- ❖ **Extension of the Assistance for Isolated Children's (AIC) Distance Education allowance to 4 year olds taking part in early childhood programs:** Approximately 250 families throughout Australia have no option but to teach their children's early childhood program through distance education and must also supply all classroom and learning resources required for the program. This Federal Government has just announced a \$55.7m expansion of the HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents & Youngsters) program, yet cannot find \$1m per annum to expand the AIC to include 4 year olds. Where is the assistance for our rural students?
- ❖ **Introduction of a Distance Education Teaching Allowance (DETA):** Distance education is the only way to educate children in isolated areas. For the 1,500 families receiving the AIC DE allowance, learning would be impossible without crucial support from their distance education tutor. Why should parents give up the option of paid employment to undertake this unpaid, unrecognised work? This vital role must be recognised through a payment of \$4,000 per family per year, to acknowledge the essential work performed by Distance Education Tutors. This government has committed to record investment in every school, including teacher training – where is the modest amount of \$6m to implement the DETA?
- ❖ **Substantial increase in the AIC Boarding allowance:** Urban families acknowledge there is a rising cost to accessing education. Live in rural Australia and you will find this cost overwhelming! The AIC Boarding allowance is not keeping pace with the rising cost of boarding students away from home for their secondary years, and is causing great concern for rural and remote families. An increase must be guaranteed now, as families are forced to reconsider their limited options and leave the bush in order to educate their children.

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