

Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia Inc.

"Access to Education"



Submission

to the

Department of Education and Training

on the

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Contributions-SDG 4

from the

Federal Council

of the

**Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia Inc.
ICPA (Aust)**

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SUBMISSION TO THE 2030 AGENDA – *Voluntary National Review* addressing Sustainable Development Goal 4:

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

4.1

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

For geographically-isolated students, equitability requires:

- Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Distance Education (DE) allowance increases to cover out-of-pocket costs of educating students at home where no face-to-face schooling is available due to distance
- Distance Education Teaching Allowance (DETA) be provided to the distance education tutor (often the mother) who has to forgo a wage to educate her children
- A national Working with Children Check (WWCC) to assist travelling teachers and carers to work across borders
- Substantial AIC Boarding Allowance increases to cope with ever-increasing boarding school fees
- Provision of a Rural Hardship Fund to enable continued secondary education where there are droughts, bushfires or other disasters affecting families.

4.1.1

Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex

The Grattan Institute Report *“Widening Gaps – What NAPLAN tells us about student progress”* <http://www.grattan.edu.au/report/widening-gaps/> indicates rural and remote students are educationally disadvantaged. The *“learning gaps between Australian students of different backgrounds are alarmingly wide and grow wider as students move through school. Importantly, the learning gaps grow much larger after Year 3. Disadvantaged students are falling further behind each year they are at school.”*

4.2

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

4.2.1

Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex

4.2.2

Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex

For geographically-isolated children to be school-ready the following must occur:

- Extension of AIC DE allowance to 4-year-olds so the distance education schoolroom can be set up and preschool requisites provided
- Universal access funding (federal or state) continued, so there are enough preschool places in Schools of Distance Education (SDEs) and preschool in small rural schools
- Flexibility of Home Based Education and Care (HBEC) educators to enable them to teach preschool in the home.

4.3

By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

4.3.1

Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex

Rural and remote students are under-represented at university, need to relocate to undertake tertiary study, and need financial assistance for accessing their chosen institution by way of:

- Relocation Scholarships for geographically isolated students who have to leave home in order to access tertiary education or
- A Tertiary Access Allowance (TAA) to enable rural and remote students to access their place of study including securing their place of accommodation, assisting with relocation expenses, travelling to their institution for enrolment to commence study travelling home during the year.

4.4

By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

4.4.1

Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill

- More relevant VETiS courses be available in rural and remote schools
- Provide more assistance with the costs of relocation for work placements

4.5

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

Facilitate early diagnosis and intervention through:

- Supporting mobile playgroups servicing remote areas
- Year 1 checks

4.5.1

Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated

Geographically-isolated students are a distinct disadvantage group and must be recognised as such. All students need the opportunity to attend a school that is commensurate to their education and social needs, allowing them to reach their potential.

4.6

By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

4.6.1

Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex

4.7

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

4.7.1

Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment

4.A

Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

4.A.1

Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)

Small rural and remote schools require:

- Facilities for preschool children
- Facilities for students with Specific Education Needs
- Advanced, affordable internet with nbn Education Ports, better data allowances and good mobile coverage.

4.B

By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

4.B.1

Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study

4.C

By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

4.C.1

Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country

Permanent, specialised teachers with a Rural and Remote Education major plus training in Specific Education Needs are essential to provide consistency and adequately prepare geographically-isolated children for the world. Teachers need to be adequately prepared for teaching in rural and remote areas.