

CURRICULUM PORTFOLIO

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Curriculum motions at the 2019 ICPA Federal Conference revolved around the inclusion of Primary Production and the processes to provide food and fibre in the Australian Curriculum along with recognition of how important it is to have correct understanding of these topics.

Federal Council made contact with various Ministers, Members of Parliament and Senators to request that Agricultural Production studies are embedded in the Australian Curriculum, including the actual “where, why and how” of producing food and fibre and that this be taught to all students in schools across Australia to create a better opportunity for understanding. As part of this correspondence, ICPA (Aust) highlighted the critical part Agriculture plays in the Australian economy and the importance of dispelling apparent misconceptions and misunderstandings around agricultural production in Australia. In our October delegation meetings with the Senior Adviser to then Agriculture Minister Bridget McKenzie, we were informed of \$5 million in funding being made available to state-based farming organisations to implement agricultural-related subject matter in schools. This funding has been made available for three years beginning in 2020 through the Educating Kids about Agriculture: Kids to Farms Grant Program (Community Grants Hub).

<https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/grants/educatingkidsaboutagriculturekidstofarms>

Applications for these grants closed on 26 February 2020.

In addition to our meetings with those in government, Federal Council has also discussed with groups such as Primary Industries Education Foundation of Australia (PIEFA), Agforce Qld and National Farmers’ Federation the importance of ensuring food and fibre production is part of schools’ curriculum and how we can support and further its implementation. ICPA (Aust) is now an Associate Member of PIEFA and also has a representative on the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Peak Parents Stakeholder group where we have been able to include in discussions the need for better inclusion of food and fibre into the Australian Curriculum.

As part of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Peak Parents Stakeholder Group, ICPA (Aust) also has the opportunity to represent rural and remote families throughout many elements of the Australian Curriculum which ACARA manages.

NAPLAN

NAPLAN testing has remained a focus of the curriculum sphere for ACARA in 2019 and 2020, with commitment made to a review of NAPLAN testing “to identify what a standardised testing regime in Australian schools should deliver, assess how well NAPLAN achieves this, and identify potential short and longer-term improvements.” Federal Council welcomed the opportunity to make a submission to this review to ensure the key issues associated with the delivery, implementation and use of results from NAPLAN for rural and remote students were identified. One of the key components of the Review of NAPLAN has been to identify shortfalls of the current reporting of NAPLAN results, especially to limit the availability of comparison information between schools, with a focus more on individual student results. Consultations with key stakeholders in the Review of NAPLAN were delayed as schools and education systems responded to changes in educational delivery due to the impact of COVID-19. As a result, the timeframe for the NAPLAN Review has been extended, and Stage 2 will now report to Education Council in September 2020. Stage One of the NAPLAN Review is completed, and the Interim Report can be found at

https://naplanreview.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1158420/NAPLAN_Review_Interim_Report_Final.pdf

With the onset and subsequent impacts of COVID-19, the Education Council which consists of State and Federal Education Ministers made the decision to cancel NAPLAN testing of students as well as the scheduled testing of the NAPLAN Online platform for 2020. The communique on this decision can be found at:

<http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/EC%20Communiques%20and%20media%20releases/Education%20Council%20Communique%20-%202020%20March%202020.pdf>

At this stage, NAPLAN testing will re-commence in 2021, however on the 02 June 2020, the Education Ministers made the decision to defer full transition to NAPLAN Online from 2021 to 2022. With issues arising with NAPLAN Online in 2019, this delay will allow for refinement of the program, which would otherwise have been conducted this year, to be completed next year. It remains to be seen in 2021 exactly how NAPLAN testing will look.

The Australian Curriculum

An ongoing call to declutter the current Australian Curriculum has been addressed recently by the Federal Government, with the announcement in June that a commitment has been made to review the Australian Curriculum by 2021 for all eight Key Learning Areas from Foundation to Year 10, except Languages. Languages will be reviewed and reported on by the end of 2021. The purpose of the Review of the Australian Curriculum Foundation to Year 10 will be to ensure the Australian Curriculum is still meeting the needs of students and providing clear guidance for teachers and it will be overseen by ACARA, who aims to work with stakeholders throughout the process. ICPA (Aust) will continue to monitor the progress of the review and put forward the needs of rural and remote students where possible. More information on the Curriculum Review can be found here: <https://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/curriculum-review>

ACARA has been working to develop closer relationships with key stakeholders over the past twelve months. ICPA (Aust) had the opportunity to participate in a survey in late 2019 to provide feedback on ACARA's interaction and engagement with key stakeholders. Following on from this survey, ACARA has focused on improving and strengthening stakeholder interactions and engagement. As part of this engagement, Federal Council has had the opportunity to participate in collaboration and information sharing across topics. ACARA has been providing ICPA (Aust) with regular updates for our members which we have shared in our Branch Bulletins. ACARA also provides resources and information specifically for parents through their website portfolio, and Federal Council encourages members to look at the content and information available to them from ACARA.

Members may wish to know that the Australian Curriculum website has a separate section with information specifically for parents https://australiancurriculum.edu.au/parent-information/?mc_cid=be42ba9715&mc_eid=39a00b9dc1 and there is also an overview for parents to learn about how the Australian Curriculum is organised, including information about the learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. <https://australiancurriculum.edu.au/media/6517/the-australian-curriculum-an-overview-for-parents.pdf>

Recently, ACARA has been seeking to identify constructive changes which would improve their website resources for parents. ICPA (Aust) was contacted seeking feedback to assist in improving the access and usability of these resources, and this request was shared across our social media to give members the opportunity to give feedback.

ICPA (Aust) continues to ensure that rural and remote students and educational contexts are recognised and considered in all aspects of curriculum design and implementation. Through engagement with key national curriculum stakeholders and the Federal Government we have had the opportunity to put forward the concerns of our members and will