

Established in 1971, the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) is a national organisation representing rural students and their families at all stages of education and has a large network of branches throughout Australia.

ICPA WA works within the community to provide support and assistance to rural and regional families across Western Australia. We advocate and lobby to assist families to access appropriate education for their children.

## **Media Release 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2017**

### **EDUCATION MINISTER ANNOUNCES A REDUCTION TO THE BOARDING AWAY FROM HOME ALLOWANCE**

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Western Australia (ICPA WA) have been informed by the Education Minister, Hon. Sue Ellery MLC that the Boarding Away From Home Allowance (BAHA) will decrease after 2017.

As of 2018, the BAHA will reduce over four years due to the Royalties for Regions (R4R) funding ceasing after 2017.

The BAHA was last increased in 2010 from \$1320.00 to \$2105.00, with \$785.00 coming from R4R funding. ICPA WA have been informed that the following rates will apply: -

**2018 - \$1948.00**  
**2019 - \$1791.00**  
**2020 - \$1643.00**  
**2021 - \$1477.00**

Many families throughout WA rely heavily on this funding. ICPA WA have continually lobbied the previous and current State Governments for an increase to this vital allowance.

Members throughout the State are disappointed with this decision saying that once again the Government have forgotten about rural & remote families.

One Kimberley member was quoted as saying "The State Government talk about developing the north, yet give families no incentive to live in remote areas"

Past ICPA Federal President & WA State President, Roxanne Morrissey has said "Any savings the Government may make will be minimal compared to the anguish that this announcement will cause our members who rely heavily on this much-needed allowance".

Government and Independent boarding facilities throughout the State raise boarding fees from between 3 – 8% per annum, with the gap widening progressively between the true cost of sending a child away for school and the allowances received by the Government.

For many students, their closest high school is several hundred kilometres away and their only option is to travel to Perth to attend high school. For students residing in the Pilbara their only option is to attend school in Perth as they have no direct access to the Government Country Residential Colleges.

Pilbara Branch member, Robin Pensini has said “My husband and I were shocked to learn the State Government have implemented a decrease in the BAHA beginning in 2018. Our youngest child of four will begin boarding in Year 8 next year in Perth. Our family has relied heavily on federal and state allowances in order to make ends meet over the past 8 years since our eldest began boarding in 2010. Based on experience, educating children in the northwest in an isolated area has been the most challenging aspect of raising our children. Why doesn't the state government support families like ours who are committed to developing sustainable long term living in regional and remote areas”.



**Pilbara Residents, Robin, Preston & Evan Pensini**

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