

## Question 1.

The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX: In relation to the school travel subsidy, you mentioned it is not available for childcare. Is it available for TAFE?

Ms BUTLER: There is a travel allowance for TAFE, I believe. I will take that on notice, and I can get some more information for you. But there is no travel allowance for university. That is something we are advocating for in our current issues papers. But I can get more information on that for you. When you mentioned is there travel for childcare, we are asking for the School Drive Subsidy—which is currently available for primary right through to secondary—we are asking for that for preschool children.

## Answer 1.

**TAFE students** are eligible if:

- they are a resident of NSW or an overseas student eligible for free government education
- they are under 18 years of age at 1 January of the year of application
- they are enrolled in a full-time TAFE course for a minimum of 16 hours per week
- they are not employed
- from their home address:
  - The walking distance from home to TAFE exceeds 3.2 km, **and**
  - The distance to the nearest transport pick up point (where available) exceeds 2 km (straight line distance) or is at least 2.9 km walking distance.
- they attend the closest TAFE where enrolment is available.

Where public transport is available at the prescribed minimum distance from home, eligible students may also be eligible for a free [school travel pass](#) under the School Student Transport Scheme. Details are given during the application process for the School Drive Subsidy scheme

The problem is many university students from rural and remote areas in NSW, due to lack of public transport, travel long distances by private car at their own expense to get to a regional community to access these transport options. Metropolitan students can access the transport options available while living at home and attending university. Rural and remote students must live away from home to attend a university of their choice, and having a vehicle is the only option for some.

Therefore ICPA-NSW is recommending to Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to have rural and remote university students included in the School Drive Subsidy (SDS) when travelling to and from the university of their choice, at the beginning and end of each trimester, using private vehicles.

## Question 2.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:

In terms of Gonski funding arrangements, how do they work with distance education and school of the area? Are you familiar with that at all?

Ms BUTLER: I will have to take that on notice. I am not overly familiar with it. Ms Strachan?

Ms STRACHAN: I am the same.

Ms BUTLER: Sorry.

## Answer 2.

ICPA is not equipped to answer this question it is best directed to the NSW Department of Education.

Question 3.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:

The first question I have is in relation to distance education.

How comprehensive is the coverage of the Sydney Distance Education High School, which I think can have about 1,300 students enrolled from across the State? What is your experience with the Sydney Distance Education High School?

Ms BUTLER: I have not really had any experience with the Sydney Distance Education High School.

The distance education schools that we deal with are out of Bathurst and through School of the Air. I would have to take that question on notice, I am sorry. I have not had any experience with the—so that is the Sydney Distance Education High School?

Answer 3.

These schools are zoned so no students from rural and remote would be attending Sydney Distance Education High School and therefore can make no comment on this school in question. For any other information the Department of Education would be able to answer your questions.

Question 4.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Is there one hub that provides the School of the Air, a hub that provides that high school distance education for the rest of the State?

Ms STRACHAN: I know all the students who do high school are through the Dubbo distance education centre in our area.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:

What are the resources like there? Is there a waiting list? Are there adequate resources for that?

Ms STRACHAN: No, I am not sure on that. We are not familiar with the high school. We could take that on notice and find more information for you.

Answer 4.

The parents that attend the Dubbo School of Distance Education Secondary have not approached ICPA to either complain regarding resources or having to wait for enrolment so ICPA believe all must be satisfactory, we do have children from our area enrolled in the centre and this would have been brought to our attention. Once again, the Department of Education would be able to answer any questions regarding Dubbo School of Distance Education.