



Dominic Perrottet

Treasurer

Don Harwin

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

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BUDGET FUNDS \$8 MILLION INVESTMENT IN INDIGENOUS SCHOLARSHIPS

The NSW Government will invest \$8 million from the 2020-21 Budget to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boarding school and tertiary scholarship programs, to be delivered by the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) over two years.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the AIEF had a strong track record of success supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students find pathways to success that they otherwise may not have enjoyed.

“Through its great work over the past 12 years, the Foundation has nurtured more than 1,000 indigenous students, supporting them to get a great education and find pathways to rewarding work or further study.”

“This assistance represents a promising investment in Indigenous kids, as the higher than average educational attainment rate among scholarship recipients bears out,” Mr Perrottet said.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Don Harwin said that the investment will help efforts to achieve Closing the Gap targets for Year 12 attainment and extend existing progress on the Premier’s Priority to increase the proportion of Aboriginal students attaining Year 12 by 50 per cent by 2023.

“Finance is often a major barrier to entry for any family when considering options for supporting their child through secondary and higher education,” Mr Harwin said.

“Scholarships from organisations such as the AIEF help to alleviate this pressure and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach greater levels of achievement.

“Our current work with Aboriginal peoples, communities and organisations has led to increased student attendance rates in the past year, and we are confident that investment in the AIEF will help continue this progress,” he said.

The AIEF has grown rapidly since 2008 and it now supports over 1,000 young people across 400 communities. In the past year 91 per cent of its students made a successful transition to further studies or employment.

“Whether through university or TAFE, employment or other productive activity, the NSW Government is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to thrive in their chosen pathways,” Mr Harwin said.

AIEF Executive Director Andrew Penfold AM said, “We know that education is a game-changer. AIEF responds to demand for scholarships from the grassroots; from Indigenous families and communities who recognise the transformative power of education and want the opportunity and choice to provide a better future for their children.”

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