

# NSW state budget: scholarship funds for Indigenous students

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**EXCLUSIVE**

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A scholarship program for Aboriginal students in NSW will get a cash injection worth \$8 million in the upcoming state budget.

The new funds for boarding school and tertiary studies scholarship programs run by the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) will be a “game-changer”, the organisation’s Executive Director Andrew Penfold said.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Don Harwin said he hoped the funds would help more students attend school, ultimately inching closer to a 2023 goal of making sure at least 50 per cent of Aboriginal students reach Year 12.

“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.”

The AIEF was established in 2008 and backed one scholarship student in its first year. Now, the organisation supports more than a 1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students all over the country.

The foundation's scholarship program helps students get education at boarding schools and universities, while a separate "Pathways" program provides career support for those transitioning to higher studies or work.

"This assistance represents a promising investment in Indigenous kids, as the higher

than average educational attainment rate among scholarship recipients bears out," NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said.

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