



MINISTERS' MEDIA CENTRE

Ministers of the Education Portfolio

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Australian Indigenous Education Foundation 15 Year Anniversary

Ministers:

The Hon Jason Clare MP
Minister for Education

I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

[Acknowledgements omitted.]

We are joined in the room by students from as far north as the Torres Strait, to as far west as Kununurra.

For some students, like JJ and Zeljko, this is their first visit to Canberra.

Welcome to Australia's Parliament.

We're also joined by a very special AIEF alumni, who I want to give a shout out to, Lowanna Moran.

Lowanna was a 2010 graduate and is now the Deputy Principal of Walgett High School.

Inspiring young people in Walgett to aim higher, to work harder, to be braver, to be kinder, and to believe in themselves.

Thank you for everything you do.

Today we celebrate 15 years of the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation.

It is a story of success, and the story of successful young Australians, like Lowanna.

At its core, it is a story of the power of education.

And you can see it in the lives of the students lucky enough to experience this program.

From one student in 2008 to more than 1,200 students from more than 400 communities in every State and Territory of Australia.

And it works.

90 per cent of AIEF students complete Year 12.

That is more important now than ever.

Because nine out of 10 jobs being created today require you to finish high school and then go on to TAFE or university.

A recent evaluation also found that AIEF students are more likely to go on to university.

What this shows is the work you do really does change lives.

And not just for the individual in the classroom, but for their families too.

For their younger brothers or sisters who might follow in their footsteps.

Or their children or grandchildren.

Education ricochets through families and ricochets generations.

Because if you finish school your children are more likely to finish school.

You are more likely to go on to TAFE or university.

And earn more money, pay more tax.

And your children are more likely to live better lives.

That's the power of education.

That's what this Foundation does.

And it started with a conversation.

A conversation with then Prime Minister Rudd – who I am told we will hear from shortly - in the lead up to the 2020 Summit. 15 years ago.

A classic example of right people, right place, right time.

Right people like Andrew and everything he brings to this Foundation.

His tenacity, his passion, and his connections.

Because Kevin didn't just give him a grant. He gave him a challenge.

Kevin pledged \$20 million in funding to AIEF, on the condition that it would be matched by private sector funding by 2028.

And Andrew did that.

Not only did he do it, he smashed it. Already matching the initial investment from the Commonwealth and then some.

That is some achievement.

Creating a multimillion-dollar joint venture between the Australian Government and the private sector.

The best kind of joint-venture – one that harnesses the power of education to help young Australians.

It's made possible by the people in this room.

The support of The Australian and Sky News is a big part of this as well.

Thank you for that contribution.

And thank you to everyone at AIEF.

Congratulations on 15 years of changing lives.

I look forward to seeing this continue to grow in the years ahead.