

Additional Information about AIEF

This information is provided in order to supplement other sections of AIEF’s website, Annual Reports and other information, with additional details about AIEF, its programs, partners, model, results and explanatory information.

Please refer to the definitions section below.

AIEF Scholarship Program – Schools

Most boarding schools in Australia with Indigenous education programs have been engaged in this field for many years before AIEF was established. The issue that AIEF sought to address when established, after being approached by boarding schools to help with scholarship funding for their existing Indigenous education programs, was to support schools to increase the number of Indigenous boarders to cope with scholarship demand from Indigenous families. These boarding schools identified that expansion was constrained and a scholarship provider was critical for growing their programs, due to difficulty accessing external funds to pay for their Indigenous education programs and the financial cost already being absorbed by schools themselves.

Since AIEF was established it has provided scholarship funding to enable its Partner Schools to respond to the increasing demand from Indigenous families and increase the number of Indigenous boarders at their schools. Each Partner School’s Indigenous education program is run and led autonomously by the school itself, and they enrol Indigenous students through a variety of different programs, organisations and funding arrangements.

This approach to Indigenous education is what we call a ‘school-led’ model. It acknowledges that each school is independent, with differences in culture, local context, historical origins, values, beliefs, teaching styles, leadership, ethos and approaches to education, pastoral care, parental engagement and student support.

In terms of Indigenous education, the ‘school-led’ model means that applications, enrolment and student selection, education delivery, pastoral care, student safety, health and wellbeing and other things within the school are managed and led autonomously by each school rather than a third party.

The school-led model also enables a direct relationship between the school and the families and communities of the students at that school. AIEF recognises that many Indigenous families themselves want to choose a particular school for their children so they should have the ability to choose which schools they prefer and go through the same application and enrolment process as other families. AIEF ‘sits behind’ the school to provide funding through a direct agreement between AIEF and the school, but is not involved in who is enrolled, how a school is run, delivery of education or pastoral care, or the relationships with families and communities.

We believe the direct relationship between the school and the family is the best approach. Parents will have been through the whole process with the school and therefore have points of contact at the school for questions, concerns or feedback about what happens within the school regarding the education or pastoral care of their children.

AIEF seeks to enable Indigenous families to make their own decisions about where they want their children to go to school when they may not otherwise be able to afford it. Once a school enrolls an Indigenous student they wish to put forward for one of the AIEF scholarship places at that school, the school sends the eligibility information to AIEF at various times throughout the year. For an Indigenous student to become eligible for AIEF funding, the student must satisfy a number of eligibility criteria such as being Indigenous, and in receipt of government funded ABSTUDY, and also that they have completed the year at school. AIEF pays the Shortfalls as scholarship distributions to Partner Schools in December each year for those students who are eligible.

Not all Indigenous students at Partner Schools are funded by AIEF. Partner Schools enrol Indigenous students through a variety of different programs, organisations and funding arrangements. Indigenous students at Partner Schools who are not funded by AIEF are not Scholarship Students and of course are not included in AIEF's data or Annual Reports. All Scholarship Students are included in the AIEF Annual Report for the relevant year and are classified as a Retention, Completion, Attrition or Alum in that year.

When it comes to the school fees, AIEF works directly with the administration and finance office at the school and other relevant staff to obtain information about eligibility and all the processing, acquittal, data management and reporting functions related to the scholarship distributions to the school each year on account of the Scholarship Students.

Each year AIEF publishes its annual Retention and Completion Rate in its Annual Report for that year to provide a real-time measurement on how the success of the program is tracking from one year to the next. This shows all Retentions and Completions compared to the Attritions for the year. This annual measurement each year enables AIEF and its Partner Schools to identify any issues and discuss improvement strategies in real time, and gives stakeholders information about what happened in the year covered by the Annual Report. After allowing for Adjustments, adding up all the annual data provides a cumulative historical rate.

Over the years AIEF has made substantial changes and improvement in the AIEF Scholarship Program, including through publishing and sharing the *AIEF Compendium of Best Practice for Achieving Successful Outcomes With Indigenous Students in Australian Boarding Schools*. As well as this, in recent years AIEF has changed the composition of the Partner Schools involved in the program and implemented an annual performance evaluation system which informs improvement targets, action plans and monitoring frameworks agreed with Partner Schools in the highest quartile for Attritions each year.

The Indigenous education programs at Partner Schools have also continued to evolve and are substantially different to what they were 10 years ago, based on the ongoing feedback they have received from Indigenous students, their families and communities, building on their learnings, greater sharing of experiences among Partner Schools, and learnings from AIEF's best practice research.

Aside from AIEF's role paying the Shortfalls in scholarship distributions to Partner Schools, AIEF's scholarships also provide Scholarship Students with participation in the AIEF Pathways Program. The AIEF Pathways Program supports Scholarship Students whilst at school to prepare for their transition from Year 12 into further education and careers, and provide ongoing career support after they leave school. As part of the offering for Scholarship Students, the costs of the AIEF Pathways Program, travel and accommodation for participation in events and activities, and associated costs are also covered.

The AIEF Pathways Program aims to:

1. **Prepare** Scholarship Students for post-school pathways by assisting them with personal and professional skills development while they are at school.
2. **Support** Scholarship Students by connecting them to career related networks and providing one-on-one support as they make the transition.
3. **Monitor** and track students' career progression after they complete Year 12, providing ongoing support as needed.

Partnership Principles

AIEF aspires to make a sustained and significant, positive impact by achieving outcomes aligned to its mission, and believes that it is only through the collective efforts of many parties that this goal can be achieved.

AIEF has already entered into more than 500 contracts with stakeholders and the number of stakeholders in the AIEF partnership ecosystem grows year by year. The key relationships we seek are those that positively and unequivocally make a contribution to the partnership dynamics and tangible outcomes in an efficient way.

AIEF is committed to achieving the best outcomes for Scholarship Students and using its time, energy and resources in the most efficient and effective manner to do this. Because effective collaboration is so important to our work, we are disciplined about focussing on partnerships that are the most likely to have enduring success. In this regard, some of the guiding principles in our partnerships and collaboration are as follows:

1. Avoid duplication or overlap
2. Avoid mission drift
3. No outsourcing of the core business of either partner
4. Ensuring that partners bring different skills and expertise so that the product of their respective contribution and their core competencies results in outcomes that are greater than the sum of the parts
5. Ensuring that the partnership is mutually willing and enthusiastic and is entered into voluntarily without external duress or other agendas
6. Partners have mutual respect and approach the partnership in good faith
7. Partners support each other's work, purpose and mission - publicly and privately
8. Risks are shared according to who is best able to control the risks

Definitions

Adjustments

Adjustments to Scholarship Student data reported in a prior year are made when events occur after the date of that prior Annual Report which retrospectively change the data in that prior Annual Report. Adjustments are made to program data in the following circumstances:

(i) *Return:* a Scholarship Student who was an Attrition at the time of a previous Annual Report returns to a Partner School and is a Retention or Completion in the year they return. On their return that Scholarship Student is reclassified from their previous status as an Attrition to a Retention or Completion (as the case may be) in the relevant year. Their classification from then on as a Retention, Completion or Attrition operates the same way in the current and future years.

(ii) *Unwind Ab Initio:* A Scholarship Student is by agreement, transferred from the AIEF Scholarship Program to another scholarship program (which may include the student staying at the same school), and as part of that transfer agreement the scholarship funding previously paid by AIEF to the AIEF Partner School on account of that Scholarship Student is refunded to AIEF. In this case the relevant student is transferred from the AIEF data to the data of the other scholarship program and is therefore treated as a student of that other scholarship program *ab initio*.

(iii) *Double Scholarship:* A Scholarship Student who was a Completion from a Partner School in a previous year and therefore included in the annual data for the relevant year as a Completion and later receives an AIEF tertiary scholarship for university. In this case the student should not be double counted in both the school scholarship data and the tertiary scholarship data when school data and tertiary data is combined. Therefore an adjustment is made so they are not counted twice.

AIEF Pathways Program

A careers program supporting Scholarship Students whilst at school to prepare for their transition from Year 12 into further education and careers, and provide ongoing career support after they leave school.

Alum

A Scholarship Student who was a Completion (i.e. finished Year 12) in a previous year. The plural of Alum is Alumni and the number of Alumni is a cumulative count of all Alum (i.e. Completions in previous years).

Attrition

A Scholarship Student who was a Retention in the previous year but leaves the school during the current year (but is not a Completion or Transfer).

Completion	A Scholarship Student who completes Year 12 that year (but is not a Repeat).
Parental Contribution	A contribution by the parents of a Scholarship Student towards the cost of the student's enrolment and attendance at a Partner School based on their financial means and capacity.
Repeat	A Scholarship Student who chooses to repeat Year 12 or complete Year 12 over two years. Such students are counted as a Retention in the first year of their Year 12 study (i.e. like they were in Year 11 in that year) and as a Completion in the second year of their Year 12 study.
Retention	A Scholarship Student who is progressing through school towards Year 12 that year (i.e. a student in Year 11 or below).
Retention and Completion Rate	The sum of Retentions and Completions in the year divided by the sum of Retentions, Completions and Attritions in the year.
Scholarship Student	A student who has been awarded scholarship funding from AIEF in any year (but is not an Adjustment)
Shortfall	The scholarship amount paid by AIEF to the relevant school on behalf of a Scholarship Student each year calculated as A+B-C Where: A = the standard boarding and tuition fees for the Scholarship Student, including any discounts or deductions applied in accordance with the usual fee discount policies at the school; B = incidental expenses up to an agreed maximum; and C = funds committed or available from other sources including ABSTUDY, Parental Contributions, and other sources to reduce the overall cost.
Transfer	A Scholarship Student who leaves one AIEF Partner School and continues their schooling at another AIEF Partner School. (Transfers get counted as a Retention, Completion, Attrition or Alum as the case may be in the same way as if they had not changed schools).
Zero Funded Student	A Scholarship Student who is not eligible for AIEF funding in the relevant year but is still at the school and has been eligible and funded by AIEF in a previous year. This could occur in the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ABSTUDY: Due to a change in circumstances the student is no longer receiving ABSTUDY and is receiving a different support payment instead. (ii) Day Student: The student has moved out of boarding and becomes a day student.

(iii) School Status: AIEF is no longer funding scholarships at the relevant school due to an agreed change in the partnership.

A Zero Funded Student gets counted as a Retention, Completion, Attrition or Alum as the case may be in the same way as if they had a Shortfall paid by AIEF or not in the relevant year.

Zero Shortfall Student

A Scholarship Student who has no Shortfall in the relevant year. This occurs when a Scholarship Student was funded by AIEF in a previous year but then in a subsequent year that student has no Shortfall due to lower school fees, higher ABSTUDY, a higher Parental Contribution, other funding available for that student from another source or any other reason that leads to no Shortfall that year. A Zero Shortfall Student might also not be a Zero Shortfall Student in a subsequent year (i.e. have a Shortfall funded by AIEF again). A Zero Shortfall Student gets counted as a Retention, Completion, Attrition or Alum as the case may be in the same way as if they had a Shortfall.