



ACT Government

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Taking the Territory forward

MEDIA RELEASE

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EXTENDED BURSARY GIVES BETTER SUPPORT TO FAMILIES

The 2007-08 Budget will make it possible for more young students to access the Secondary Bursary Scheme, Minister for Education and Training, Andrew Barr, announced today.

Mr Barr said the Scheme currently supported financially disadvantaged families by providing \$500 a year for students aged 14 and 15 (usually Years 8 and 9). This Budget initiative widened the availability to students in years 7 and 10.

“The Stanhope Government believes everyone has the right to access high-quality education, no matter their life circumstances or their ability to pay,” Mr Barr said.

“This initiative widens the opportunity for students from disadvantaged families to participate in education. This is aimed at the students who most need it – those from low-income families who face extra barriers to success.”

Currently, the Secondary Bursary Scheme is paid to eligible families who have students aged 14 and 15 (usually students in Years 8 and 9) in government and non-government schools. The bursary provides financial support for families so children can stay in school, rather than leaving when they turn 15.

“The extension of the bursary to include Year 7 students will assist in easing the transition from primary to high school for families in need. Extending the bursary through to the end of Year 10 provides an incentive for students from financially disadvantaged families to stay in school through to the completion of Year 10,” Mr Barr said.

“The Secondary Bursary Scheme has benefited students and this expansion of the eligibility will widen the benefits to students throughout all their high school years. The bursaries will help ease the burden on families and encourage high school students from less well-off families to continue their education.”

The proposal complements the Schools Equity Fund, which supports government schools with a high concentration of students from low socio-economic backgrounds and at-risk families, and Student Support Funds, which are provided to all schools to meet the additional needs of these students.

“The extension of the bursary scheme addresses a gap in provision and should encourage disadvantaged students to continue their education,” Mr Barr concluded.

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