



**NATIONALS** for Regional NSW

**Austin Evans MP**

**MEMBER FOR MURRAY**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

6 September 2018

### **MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS IN MURRAY**

Member for Murray Austin Evans is urging Aboriginal people in Murray to apply for a scholarship that will support them in studying a bachelor level early childhood teaching qualification.

Mr Evans said the Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Scholarship program will complement ongoing training and leadership opportunities designed to support Aboriginal educators working in the early childhood sector in Murray.

“It is absolutely crucial Aboriginal culture is embedded in early childhood education in Murray and this scholarship investment will encourage more of that,” Mr Evans said.

“Currently, less than 10 per cent of Aboriginal staff working in NSW preschools have a bachelor degree or above, compared to the NSW average of more than 30 per cent.

“This investment by the NSW Government aims to close the gap for degree-qualified professionals in Murray.”

The Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Scholarships program will offer 15 scholarships per year of up to \$20,000 each, with the funding going towards costs incurred during studying such as travel, technology and textbooks.

Minister for Early Childhood Education Sarah Mitchell said the scholarships will also go beyond financial assistance, with the NSW Government committing to supporting scholarship recipients throughout their studies by linking them with mentoring programs and other support.

“Through the scholarship program and additional mentoring and support, NSW can look forward to seeing more Aboriginal students successfully joining the early childhood education workforce,” Ms Mitchell said.

“All children in NSW deserve the best start to their education, and we need a diverse and highly skilled workforce to achieve that.”

Applications for the Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Scholarships program close on Friday, 7 December.

**ENDS**

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