



# What is the Australian Government doing to support students in regional and remote schools?

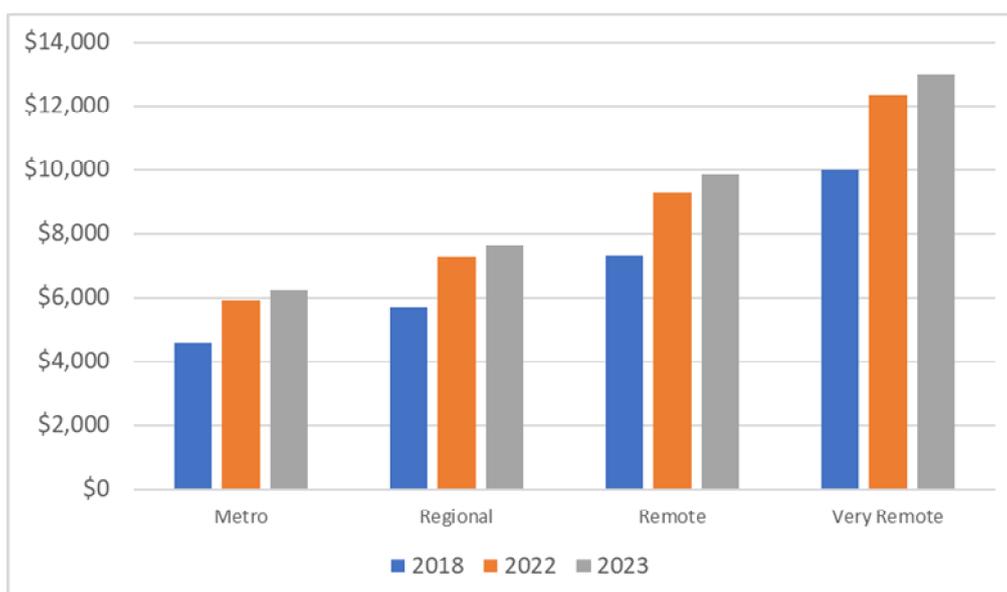
## School funding for regional and remote schools continues to grow

The Australian Government is growing its record level of recurrent funding for schools from \$18.7 billion in 2018 to an estimated \$33.0 billion in 2029.

The government is investing an estimated \$318.9 billion for school recurrent funding from 2018 to 2029. Of this, an estimated \$71.5 billion is benefitting students in regional and remote schools.

Total Commonwealth funding for students in regional and remote Australia is growing from \$4.4 billion in 2018 to an estimated \$7.3 billion in 2029— this is an increase of 67.4%. On average, per student funding for students in regional and remote areas will grow by 4.1% per year over the same period.

*Average per student Commonwealth funding for all schools by geographic location*



Source: Department of Education, Skills and Employment's school funding model, reflecting enrolment data as at 2022-23 Budget. Geographic locations are based on the classification of schools in section 13 of the *Australian Education Act 2013*.

## The location loading recognises the higher cost of schooling in regional and remote Australia

The Australian Government recognises that it generally costs more to educate students going to school in regional and remote areas than it does for students in city-based schools. This is why extra funding—called a location loading—is provided for students going to schools in regional or remote areas.

The location loading is based on a school's Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia Plus (ARIA+) score, a measure of the remoteness or accessibility of every location in Australia. Under the [Quality Schools](#) funding arrangements, the location loading in regional and remote schools is estimated to grow, on average, by 4.6% per year over 2018 – 2029.

In addition to this loading, regional and remote students attract [Schooling Resource Standard](#) (SRS) base funding to their school or system and their school may also attract funding from other loadings depending on the student's or their school's circumstances.

The National School Resourcing Board is undertaking a [review of funding for regional and remote schools and students](#) provided under the SRS. The review will focus on the total level of funding provided to regional and remote schools and make recommendations on improvements to loading settings. The Board is expected to report to the Australian Government by June 2021.

## Other financial support for regional and remote students

The government works with all states and territories to ensure that students, regardless of where they live, have access to high quality education and experience the same educational opportunities as other students.

The government provided \$20 million in 2019-20 for drought-affected schools and students through the Special Circumstances Funding for non-government schools. This funding supported schools and families facing financial hardship due to ongoing drought conditions. The intent was to ensure that students continued to access education during emergencies, and in the case of the drought, particularly students from rural and remote areas. The program funds provided schools with fee relief and other services. The funding was fully expended with payments made to eligible schools in February 2020. Further information can be found at [2019-20 Drought Relief - funding for non-government schools - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government \(dese.gov.au\)](#). From July 2020, the Choice and Affordability fund supports schools and students impacted by special circumstances or in priority areas. Further information relating to the Choice and Affordability Fund can be found at [What is the Choice and Affordability Fund Fact Sheet](#).

## Other supports to boost education in regional and remote Australian schools

The government has committed \$28.7 million over five years to establish the High Achieving Teachers Program to support the recruitment of high achievers into teaching, specifically in regional, rural and low socio-economic schools.

The government has also committed an additional \$15 million for Teach For Australia (TFA) to train more high achieving teachers and high quality school leaders in rural, remote or disadvantaged schools. This includes \$7.5 million under the Future Leaders Program (FLP) pilot. The FLP pilot is designed to give aspiring leaders in regional, rural and remote schools the skills to meet the specific leadership challenges in their schools. This will lift the quality of leadership in regional, rural and remote schools as well as help program participants to fill higher leadership positions in the future, including school principals. The pilot is currently operating for two years from 2021 to 2022. More information can be found on the [Teaching and School Leadership](#) page.

Under the National School Reform Agreement, all governments are committed to reviewing teacher workforce needs to recruit and retain quality teachers and attract teachers to areas of need. The National Initiatives to Support Teaching and School Leadership narrative was endorsed by Ministers for Education in December 2020. The narrative establishes principles for collaborative work to determine future priorities at the national level. The Australian Teacher Workforce Data collection will support future national collaborative work.

On 15 April 2020, the Minister for Education and Youth launched a review of initial teacher education. The review considers two key questions: how to attract and select high-quality candidates into the teaching profession, and how to prepare them to become effective teachers. The Expert Panel appointed to conduct the review will consult widely. See more information on the [Quality Initial Teacher Education Review](#).

Additionally, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) is undertaking research into best practice approaches to teacher and school leader training, professional development and support for regional, rural and remote settings. AITSL is developing a spotlight publication detailing the challenges and opportunities for teachers in accessing high quality professional learning and this will be available on AITSL's website from 4 September 2020. Casual and relief teachers may be employed in regional, rural and remote communities. A [spotlight publication](#) is also available focusing on professional learning for casual and relief teachers. See [spotlight publications](#).