

## **Native student funding a failure: report**

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CBC News

The current school-funding program for aboriginal youth is wrought with problems and should be phased out, with the money instead given directly to students, according to a report.

"This funding system is failing the tests of accountability and transparency; most importantly it is failing the test of getting the money to those it is intended to help," the report says.

The report says more than \$300 million goes toward the PSSSP each year and that the money is transferred from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to individual native bands. Those bands then distribute the money to the students.

"While certain bands have proven capable of effectively distributing the funds, many have not," the report states.

It said some problems, which have already been documented, include nepotism and favouritism, a lack of performance measurement or accountability, and that some band councils are using surplus funds for non-eligible expenses.

"The program is patently not achieving its goal. Indeed, there is every indication that many Indian students are being denied the money to which they are entitled."

Instead, the report proposes the creation of an Aboriginal Post-Secondary Savings Account, which would be opened at birth for every registered Indian.

The APSSA would include a basic amount of money, with additional sums added after the completion of each year of secondary education.

According to the plan, students would be allowed to use the money for colleges or universities although there would be strict controls to ensure that money intended to cover tuition would be paid directly from the account to the post-secondary institution.