

# Background Information

## Strengthening the Provision of Public Secondary Education in the Inner Sydney Area

Sydney's population is projected to grow by an additional 1.3 million people by 2031, including 241,000 people in the inner west, lower north shore, central and eastern suburbs.

With the growing number of families with school-aged children in the inner Sydney area the Department is seeking community input to help formulate short term and long term strategies to meet projected public secondary education demand over the next ten years.

The inner Sydney area covered by this consultation process includes the City of Sydney, Leichhardt and Marrickville local government areas (LGAs). The public secondary schools with catchments largely within these LGAs are included in this strategy.

Over the last five or so years the Department has been working closely with local principal and P&C networks across inner Sydney LGAs to develop strategies for meeting projected public primary education demand. This process is well advanced, generating outcomes such as a recommended new school for the Ultimo/Pymont area and highlighting the need for significant future investment in other inner Sydney LGAs.

Primary and secondary schools in the public education system have a designated enrolment boundary or catchment area to ensure that all school-aged children who live within the boundary can be accepted into their in-area public school. If there are more classrooms than students then some schools are able to accept children who live outside the school's boundary or drawing area. There are more primary schools in the NSW public education system than secondary schools. Primary schools and secondary schools do not have the same boundaries.

Since secondary schools have significantly larger drawing areas, the Department believes it should consult across a wider area than when considering local primary school networks. While the suggested primary school strategies will be an important input into the secondary strategy, the focus of this consultation process is on public secondary education provision in inner Sydney.

As a way to start a discussion on public secondary education provision in inner Sydney, the Department has put together this information brochure to assist parents, communities and all interested stakeholder groups to engage effectively in this consultation process.

The Department is a well-informed user of population and enrolment data to help it plan for future education provision. We provide this information in good faith and acknowledge the following sources in its compilation and presentation:

- **NSW Department of Education and Communities enrolment statistics**
- **Australian Bureau of Statistics**
  - Census data
  - Estimated resident population
  - Publications
  - Professional liaison
- **NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure**
  - Population statistics and projections
  - Household and dwelling data
  - Population Planning Group (consultative group of which the Department is a member)
- **NSW Department of Human Services**
- **NSW Bureau of Transport Statistics**
- **Other commonwealth, state and local government agencies**

We look forward to gathering and considering your ideas as we develop this very important public secondary school education strategy for the inner Sydney area.

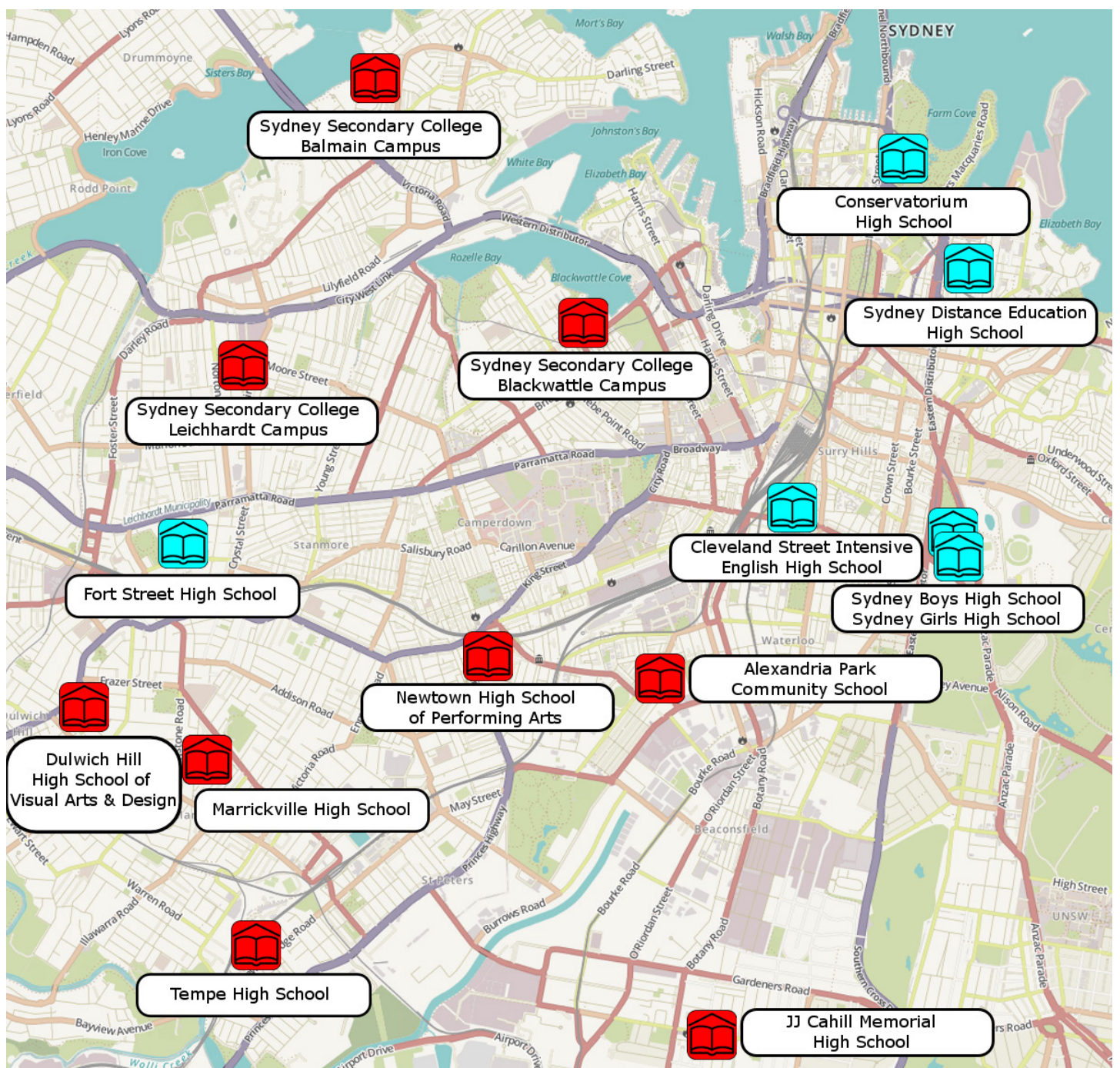
## Inner Sydney public secondary schools

Right now, the total capacity across all these public secondary schools is enough to accommodate projected demand until 2018. The Department does however acknowledge that there are differences at present in the utilisation of these public secondary schools that need to be addressed.

Some schools have spare capacity to accommodate growth within existing buildings while other schools are at or near complete utilisation. The Department also acknowledges parent concerns around the supply and demand of current public secondary school offerings in the inner Sydney area, particularly with respect to choice.

Projections for changing demographics, an increasing population, changing teaching and learning practices, and a growing number of families with school-age children settling in the area means the Department needs to balance the demand for high quality public secondary school provision with the available supply.

The provision of public secondary school places in inner Sydney must also be balanced against the demand for finite resources from other areas of Sydney and NSW. Currently the numbers show that there are enough public secondary school classrooms to meet forecast demand for the medium term.



## How are we currently using our secondary schools?

Table 1 below shows the current utilisation of classrooms and Table 2 shows the sample distances from different locations in the inner city to inner Sydney secondary schools.

Right now, across the nine non-fully selective public secondary schools in the inner Sydney area, classrooms operate at around a combined 79% utilisation, meaning there is still room to grow. However, projections indicate that some time after 2018 public secondary schools in this area will be running at or near full utilisation.

**Table 1:** Teaching space (TS = classrooms) utilisation and capacity in Inner Sydney secondary schools in 2014 and projections to 2018

Secondary school	No. of Students	TS Perm.	TS Dem.	TS Total	TS Demand in 2014	Total Utilisation	TS Spare in 2014	Projected TS Demand to 2018	Site area
Alexandria Park Community School	307	23	0	23	21	91%	2	+3	3.4 ha.
Dulwich High School of Visual Arts and Design	634	44	0	44	35	80%	9	+2	2.2 ha.
J J Cahill Memorial High School	320	58	0	58	23	40%	35	+1	3.5 ha.
Marrickville High School	364	57	0	57	27	47%	30	+3	3.0 ha.
Newtown High School of the Performing Arts	1,039	45	3	48	48	100%	0	+4	3.1 ha.
Sydney Secondary College Blackwattle Bay Campus	675	39	0	39	39	100%	0	+5	3.2 ha.
Sydney Secondary College Leichhardt Campus	770	45	0	45	36	80%	9	+7	2.3 ha.
Sydney Secondary School Balmain Campus	707	37	0	37	37	100%	0	+4	3.5 ha.
Tempe High School	945	40	3	43	45	100%	-2	+3	2.0 ha.
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,761</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>+32</b>	

## Sample relative distances from public secondary schools to various locations

**Table 2:** Sample distances from different locations in the inner city to inner Sydney secondary schools

Secondary schools	Distance from:			
	Central Station	Darlinghurst/Kings Cross (William Street tunnel)	Pymont	Green Square Town Centre
Alexandria Park Community School	3km	5km	4km	1.5km
Cleveland Street Intensive English High School	0.5km	3km	3km	2km
Dulwich High School of Visual Arts and Design	8km	10km	7km	7km
Fort Street High School	6km	8km	8km	3km
J J Cahill Memorial High School	6km	8km	8km	3km
Marrickville High School	7km	9km	7km	6km
Newtown High School of the Performing Arts	4km	6km	5km	3.5km
Sydney Secondary College Blackwattle Bay Campus	3km	5km	1km	5km
Sydney Secondary College Leichhardt Campus	7km	8km	4km	8km
Sydney Secondary School Balmain Campus	6km	8km	4km	8km
Sydney Girls High School	2km	3km	4km	3km
Sydney Boys High School	2km	3km	4km	3km
Tempe High School	7km	10km	9km	5km

## What are the data projections for the future telling us?

At present there are up to 83 spare classrooms in public secondary schools in the inner Sydney area however, the distribution is not uniform. In a finite resourcing environment, this spare capacity is something that the Department must take into consideration when planning for future education provision.

The Department's preliminary projections show an increasing number of public secondary school students living across inner Sydney for at least the next 12 years. When compared with the 2011 Census projections, there is little doubt that actual increases are running well ahead of the 2011 Census forecasts out to 2026. What is not clear is whether or not this early increase in the number of public secondary school students in inner Sydney, when compared with the 2011 Census forecasts, will be sustained into the later years.

Preliminary projections based on current data are showing between 2,200 to 2,500 additional public secondary students from 2014 to 2026. This equates to a net additional 25 to 40 classrooms in addition to the existing 83 spare classrooms in the public secondary schools across inner Sydney to the year 2026 however, what we don't know with any certainty is when these additional spaces will be required.

Even though there appears to be considerable spare capacity across inner Sydney public secondary schools the uncertainty around future growth rates is one of the key reasons the Department has decided to start consulting the inner Sydney school community about future secondary school provision. Updated projections to the year 2026 are currently being finalised by the NSW Government and the Department, and are expected to be completed later this year for inclusion in the planning strategy for secondary schools in inner Sydney.

The Department's short term projections at this time show an increasing number of students, equivalent to 32 additional classrooms, to the year 2018. This projected short term increase could be accommodated within the 83 spare classrooms existing at this time in all the public secondary schools across inner Sydney. However, there are significant variances in the utilisation and number of spare classrooms across individual secondary schools and this needs to be taken into account as part of this discussion on inner Sydney public secondary education provision.

Broadly, the data at this time indicates the following future needs for public secondary education in inner Sydney:

- a short term need to address the variances in demand and utilisation across existing public secondary schools; and
- a long term need for additional public secondary school teaching spaces/classrooms across inner Sydney at some time after 2018.

The Department would like to hear your ideas about further strengthening the provision of public secondary school education in inner Sydney for now and into the future. The consultation period is 16 May – 27 June 2014.