

Stanmore Public School Community Consultation

June 24 2014

Speaker Rod Megahey – Director of schools (member of working party)

Number of Participants 41

Question 1

Some public secondary schools are operating below capacity and others face pressure from increased student numbers. Any longer term decisions are going to take time to implement. What should be done in the short term (1-4 year period)?

- Allow fully selective schools to take in local students from area
- A lot of school places in the inner city area are given to children in specialist streams, who travel a long way they should consider reducing these and giving local children more places.
- Many children travel some distance to go to school which has a negative impact on the environment in terms of traffic.... Planners should take this into account
- We do not know what Marrickville offers or stands for
- Marrickville is a huge site which is underutilised
- Give Marrickville a new name as it still has a poor reputation and people still talk of the stabbing which was 25 years ago.

- Transport routes should be fed into the recommendations – Marrickville has poor transport options, consider supplying a bus.
- Take Marrickville and make it an extension of Newtown High Could consider the secondary college model of Blackwattle Bay , turn it into a senior and middle school
- Questions were asked about what other schools had done to change perception and culture – strong leadership was cited, as well as quick fixes such as specialty stream. Many parents said they would prefer a local comprehensive school.
- There was a discussion on how Leichardt and Tempe changed their perception and culture both introduced selective streams as part of their offering which was sighted as a reason.
- Make a clear delineation between selective and specialist schools so parents understand the difference
- Do we want a performing arts school? Make Newtown fully comprehensive with a selective performing arts stream.
- Change the existing selective / in area enrolments at Newtown High With the pressure on Newtown it no longer makes sense or is indeed fair to have the 60/40 split.
- I don't think parents mind about demountable classrooms they are of very good quality these days.
- Leichardt has a high male ration The working party should consider why? It was suggested that this was because more local girls were attending public single-sex comprehensives, Burwood and Canterbury Girls, both of which have great reputations.
- If you want parents to send their children to Marrickville we need to be clear on what it's strategy is
- How long will it take to get children to go to Marrickville what programmes will they offer and what financial investment will be made?
- Focusing on Marrickville High is not the single solution. I think that this was more 'There is no single fix for Marrickville High – it has to be a multi-pronged strategy.'

- The environment of High Schools is an important psychological issue in making choices. Make Marrickville High school more aesthetically attractive and create interesting and innovative learning spaces.
- Spruce up Marrickville to make it more attractive- not just a lick of paint but creative learning spaces.
- The target market at Marrickville does not know about the school. Look at ways to market Marrickville to parents and students. Could hold some classes at Stanmore in Marrickville, Marrickville principal needs to promote what is on offer. Move the momentum on this marketing now.

Question 2

What do you think are the best options for addressing the longer term situation (5-10 year period)?

- Build a new high school with a new name with a strength in maths and science
- Make Marrickville a Sports High school as we do not have one in the area
- Selective schools attract the cream of the crop – leaving the other schools not to be perceived so highly
- If you want to get me to Marrickville it needs to be a school with good results and a good reputation
- Marrickville should be connected to Newtown High with a full combination of offerings that would assist to change the perception.
- If you want to introduce specialities how are we going to resource this?
- How do we free up resources across the whole state to reduce schools having less classrooms than others, create interesting teaching and learning spaces.

Question 3

What ideas do you have for helping to create public secondary schools that meet the demands of a modern education system and prepare students for their lives ahead?

- Schools with special streams – science maths languages becoming important for the future generation
- Consider the popular model at Burwood Girls non selective with many offerings and a high academic standard
- Fort Street a fully selective high school where many children who attend are sent to after school coaching from an early age, putting other parents under pressure to do the same. These children take a bus and train to where we live, taking away a local facility.
- Inform parents of what values schools offer, and what they stand for. Burwood Girls clear on values and has a motto.
- When it comes to new ways of teaching and learning, primary schools tend to be more innovative. High schools could learn from them.
- Transport is not the issue many children travel some distance The issue is what kind of school we want to send our children to. What kind of children will my children be going to school with
- Currently unsure about education funding
- Culture is the prime thing establish schools with a good culture
- A school with high aspirations and values where most of the children go onto University

- Selective schools create a division in High Schools and should be eliminated – the future is about good comprehensive schools with good communities.
- The future of secondary schools- create a film and television speciality.
- Instead of a specialty make the school a sustainable one, a 'green' school maybe a kitchen garden etc., take advantage of the large grounds
- Children of the future need to be taught to think and problem solve for the jobs of the future.
- Good values and discipline
- Look at new ways to deliver education flip learn on line – in the future the classroom will not be the only place of engagement. Rather than make it a specialty school, turn Marrickville High into the High School of the Future with innovative teaching and learning, preparing kids for the world we live in now.
- Part of the debate should be about what we can do off campus and move to a new way of learning which is partially virtual
- The delivery of education through IT we need to rethink how we access education in both the school and home.