

# Blacktown Co-educational Consultation Report

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# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 About the Community Consultation

The NSW Government has made a commitment to guarantee access for all NSW students to coeducational high schools by 2027.

In 2024, families living in the Blacktown Boys and Blacktown Girls High Schools intake area, do not have guaranteed access to a public co-educational high school. Each year any student residing in this area who is seeking a co-educational setting must make an out-of-area application to a nearby co-educational high school with no guarantee of being accepted.

The consultation's aim is to capture perspectives of local communities and assist the department in determining an appropriate way of meeting the NSW Government's commitment of guaranteed access to co-educational settings.

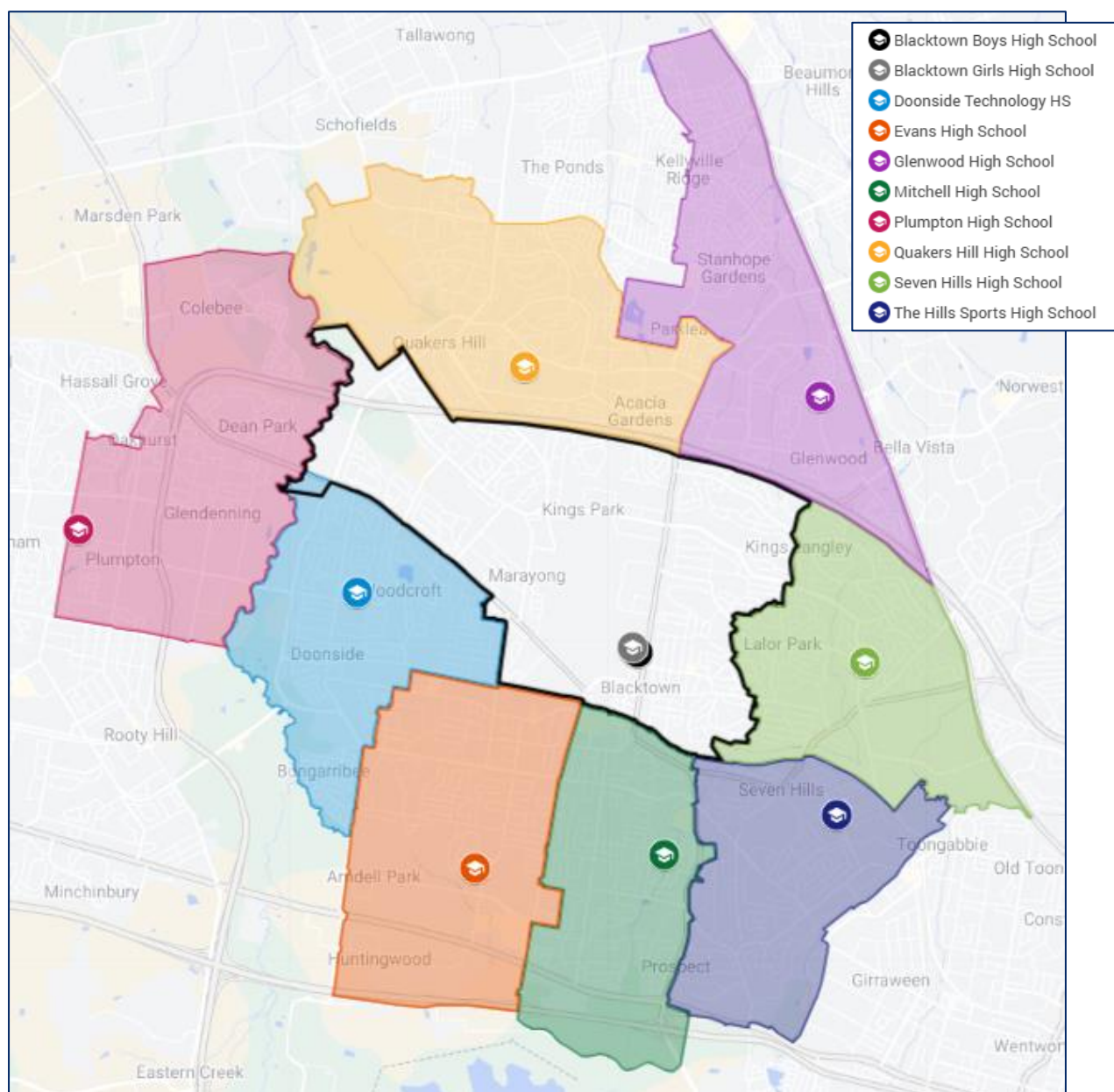


Figure 1. Intake area for Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School (centre, unshaded) surrounded by the intake areas of co-educational public high schools (coloured shading).

### 1.1.1 Who was involved

The consultation engaged:

- Students, parents and carers and school staff of the two single sex government high schools in Blacktown
- Students, parents and carers and school staff of feeder primary schools
- Parents and carers of early childhood aged children
- Special interest groups
- Community members of the Blacktown area

### 1.1.2 How many people participated



#### Students

1105 Secondary Students



#### General public

239 General public



#### Parents and carers

757 parents or carers of current primary school students  
411 parents or carers of current secondary school students  
269 parents or carers of children current in early childhood



#### School staff

259 staff members of either primary or secondary school



#### Workshop Attendance:

Across 13 workshops, 847 people participated in discussions



#### Additional Correspondence:

The department received and responded to an additional 54 direct emails about the consultation

### 1.1.3 Report considerations

**This is community engagement, not research.**

- This was an opt in engagement project. Participants were not incentivised or recruited to participate in this consultation.
- There were multiple channels whereby participants could provide feedback as part of the consultation. This included channels such as surveys, workshops and written submissions.
- The consultation was flexible to suit the stakeholders being engaged.

#### **Why can't we establish a combined metric across all cohorts?**

The data shown in the report is grouped under different stakeholder cohorts. It can be said to be indicative of the general, overarching sentiment of the survey participants in each cohort. It cannot be said to be representative of the community at large.

To represent the community at large we would need to weight each cohort to its approximate relative incidence within the true population. This cannot be achieved because:

- The cohorts overlap with each other to an unknown extent. i.e. most cohorts can be represented in the broader community sample. This will distort the weighting.

- The cohorts are all answering the questions from slightly different frames of reference.

### 1.1.4 Proposals for the educational offerings at Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School.

Two proposals were presented to stakeholders to select preferences and provide comment. Proposals A and B will be referenced in this report as described below. Participants who were unsure or had no preference are described as “No Preference”.

#### **Proposal A**

##### ***Create a single co-educational school***

Create one co-educational school by combining Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School to establish a single co-educational campus in the current location.

#### **Proposal B**

##### ***Retain two single-sex schools***

Retain Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School as separate single-sex schools and adjust surrounding co-educational high school intake areas to provide all students guaranteed access to a co-educational high school within their intake area.

#### **No Preference**

No preference

### 1.1.5 Survey results: Parent and carer preferences for co-educational or single-sex settings

Across all parent cohorts there was a preference for single-sex education. This preference was strongest in the current parent community made up of existing single-sex parents/carers.

#### **Future school community insights** (parents/carers of primary and early childhood aged children):

##### **Co-ed or single-sex preference**

52% of primary parent/carers and 50% of early childhood parents/carers preferred single-sex settings. 38% of primary parent/carers and 40% of early childhood parent/carers preferred co-educational settings.

#### **Current school community insights** (parents/carers of high school aged students):

Most current high school parents/carers preferred single sex settings. Although parents and carers of other high schools preferred co-educational settings, the number of participants from this cohort (47 participants) was much smaller than parents from Blacktown Boys and Blacktown Girls (305 participants).

##### **Co-ed or single-sex preference**

53% of **parents/carers of Blacktown Boys High School preferred single-sex settings**, 34% preferred co-educational, and 13% had no preference.

69% of **parents/carers of Blacktown Girls High School preferred single sex settings**, 18% preferred a co-educational school, and 13% had no preference.

57% of **parents/carers** of other high schools **preferred a co-educational school**, 19% preferred **single-sex** and 23% had no preference.

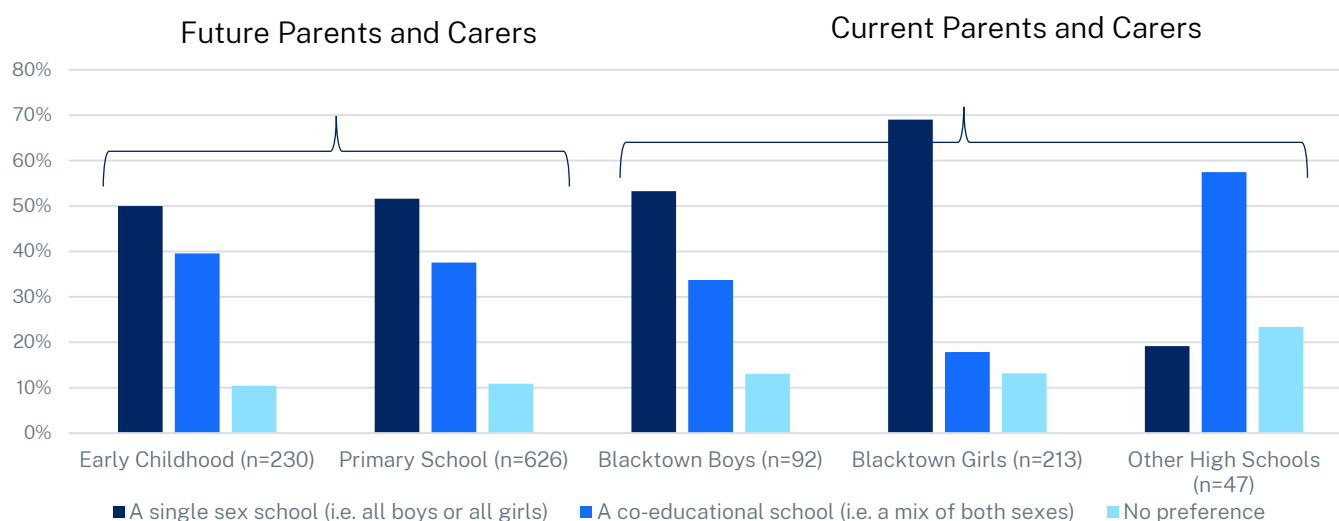


Figure 2: Parent and carer preferences for co-educational or single-sex settings

### 1.1.6 Survey results: Option preferences

The consultation was not a voting exercise on the two proposals. The data collected from the survey is to be considered along with other deciding factors, including qualitative data obtained through workshops, interviews and emails as well as enrolment trend data and student population projections.

#### Future school community insights (primary/early childhood age students and their parents/carers):

There was a preference for Proposal B – retention of the single-sex schools and expansion of co-educational intake areas. **69% of primary as well as 71% of early childhood parents/carers** preferred this proposal.

Proposal A – merging of the single-sex schools into one co-educational site was preferred by **25% of primary parents/carers**.

Proposal A – merging of the single-sex schools into one co-educational site was preferred by **24% of early childhood parents/carers**.

#### Current school community insights (secondary students and their parents/carers):

**60% of parents/carers** from **Blacktown Boys** High School preferred Proposal B – retention of the single-sex schools and expansion of co-educational intake areas. Proposal A – merging of the single-sex schools into one co-educational site was preferred by 35%.

**73% of parents/carers** from **Blacktown Girls** High School preferred Proposal B – retention of the single-sex schools and expansion of co-educational intake areas. Proposal A – merging of the single-sex schools into one co-educational site was preferred by **20%**.

**63% of parents/carers** from other high schools (a small sample size of 46 participants) preferred Proposal B – retention of the single-sex schools and expansion of co-educational intake areas. Proposal A – merging of the single-sex schools into one co-educational site was preferred by **24%**.

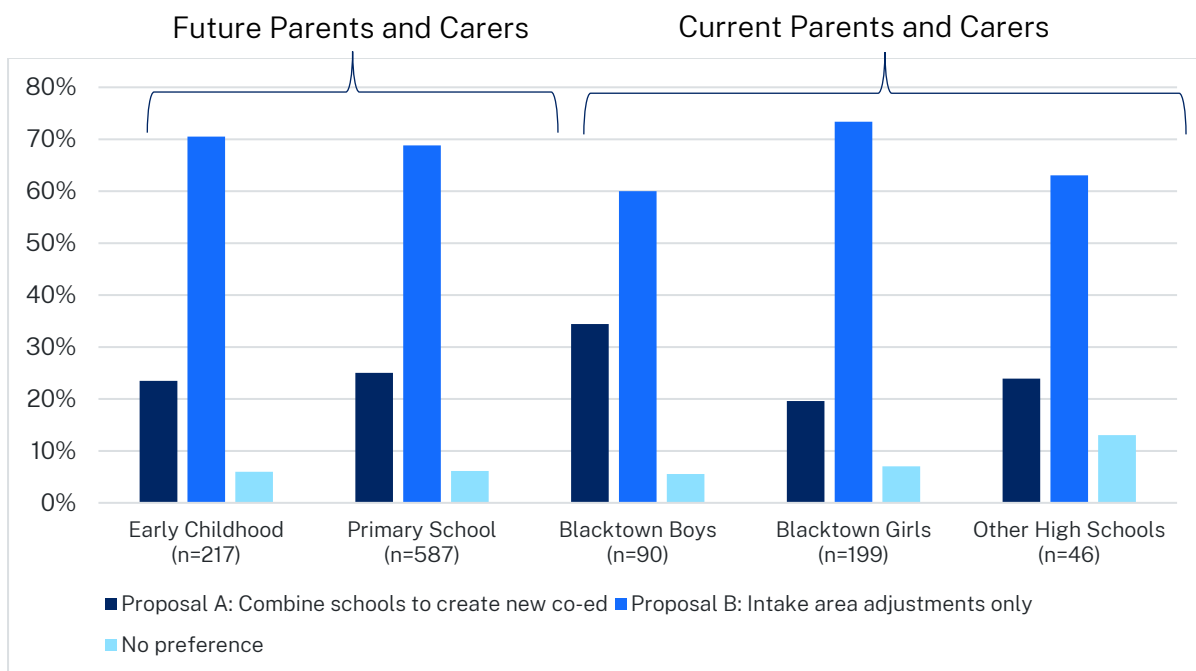


Figure 3: Parents and Carers Option preferences

### 1.1.7 Survey results: Decision-making factors

When analysing decision-making factors, three key factors were highly rated across the different cohorts:

1. The gender mix: single sex
2. The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities.
3. Academic performance
4. The gender mix: co-educational.

The gender mix: single sex was rated most highly by all cohorts.

### 1.1.8 Workshop findings

General / across multiple proposals:

- Across all cohorts, participants expressed a strong desire to retain the existing single-sex secondary schools.
- A recurring topic raised by participants pertained to the existing selective streams available within the single-sex schools. The preservation of the selective streams, under either proposal, was of high importance with the need for continued support for current and future students highlighted.
- The transport needs of existing and future students were a high priority for families with consideration to be given to appropriate changes to services and routes to support students to their closest school.
- Concern was expressed by participants in several workshops regarding the capacity of surrounding secondary schools to absorb additional students under the indicative intake area changes. Questions regarding the timing and planning for funding and infrastructure were raised with an expressed need for certainty for families that sufficient space will be available for those choosing a co-educational setting.



### **Regarding Proposal A:**

- Single-sex high school staff and students expressed strong objections to this model, citing the need to retain both single-sex and co-educational secondary schools in the area. The loss of the school's strong, high performing, educational framework and gender specific learning environment would be a significant loss to the community, particularly as the sites are the only government single-sex options within the Western Sydney area.
- The unique demographics and diversity of students attending Blacktown Boys and Blacktown Girls High Schools were raised in numerous workshops with significant concern that the loss of a single-sex government secondary option will cause the migration/loss of students to the private sector.
- The potential loss of specialist single-sex teachers and staff to the private sector under this model was emphasized.
- Concerns were raised by primary-aged parents that merging the single-sex schools would impact negatively on the surrounding co-educational schools - drawing students to the merged site and reducing enrolments at existing co-educational schools.
- The logistics of a large co-educational school on the single-sex site was seen as problematic with a loss of individual interactions and cohesiveness amongst the students and difficulties maintaining quality educational settings within larger classrooms.
- Across all cohorts, if a reclassification to co-education was to occur, questions were raised as to the logistics of how the transition would be conducted. Participants were concerned with how current single-sex students would cope with the change to a co-educational setting and the need for support systems to be in place.

### **Regarding Proposal B:**

- Participants across all workshops expressed strong support for this model which provides choice to the community by retaining single-sex government schooling whilst providing co-educational options. They also noted the importance of having the option to 'choose', considering factors such as location and transportation.
- The need to include different surrounding co-educational high schools in the indicative intake area planning was raised – with specific requests for Evans High School and Mitchell High School to be assessed for viability as co-educational options.
- Single-sex high school staff expressed that this model was preferable as a simpler, more cost-effective and less disruptive option which satisfies the requirements of the government's co-educational promise. The option allows for the retention of gender-focussed education, maintaining government share in the Blacktown area and meeting the wholistic needs of the community.
- The need to retain single-sex government schools in the area was a consistent topic across the workshops. Commentary specific to the stigma (religious and cultural beliefs) attached to sexes mixing in a school setting were raised and the loss of a sense of safety for students/families with single-sex educational needs.
- Retaining the government single-sex schools provides opportunity to continue to draw out-of-area enrolments for families in the wider Western Sydney area – preserving government market share.
- A student from Blacktown Girls High School suggested an alternative option of Proposal B, with extra opportunities for the two school to interact more. Some of this student's peers expressed support for her idea.

## 2. Project Scope and Background

### 2.1 Background

The NSW Government has made a commitment to guarantee access for all NSW students to coeducational high schools.

Currently, families living in the Blacktown Boys and Blacktown Girls High School intake area who wish to enrol a child in a co-educational public high school must make an out-of-area application and hope their application is not refused. The government's commitment *guarantees* all families to be able to enrol in a co-educational high school. There are different methods that have been used to deliver this guarantee in different locations.

From 2022 to 2024, the department has undertaken public consultations with other communities across metropolitan Sydney who experience barriers in accessing public co-educational settings. The findings from these consultations have informed department decision-makers on the most appropriate ways to deliver the commitment in a way that responds to each area's local context.

The department identified two potentially viable proposals to deliver the commitment in the Blacktown area. The two proposals were agreed upon by NSW Department of Education representatives across a range of expertise and areas.

This consultation was deemed a necessary step to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data, capturing community sentiment regarding the two proposals.

### 2.2 Aim

The consultation aimed to determine:

- a) Parent and student decision making factors regarding high school enrolment choices.
- b) Stakeholder and wider community feedback regarding the two proposals relating to the availability of co-educational options for families in the area. These were:

**Option 1** – Create one co-educational school by combining Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School to establish a single co-educational campus in the current location. The below visual of existing single-sex and co-educational intake areas was utilised during the consultation process. The dark grey shading is an indicative intake area for the proposed new co-ed high school on the Blacktown Boys and Girls HS site.

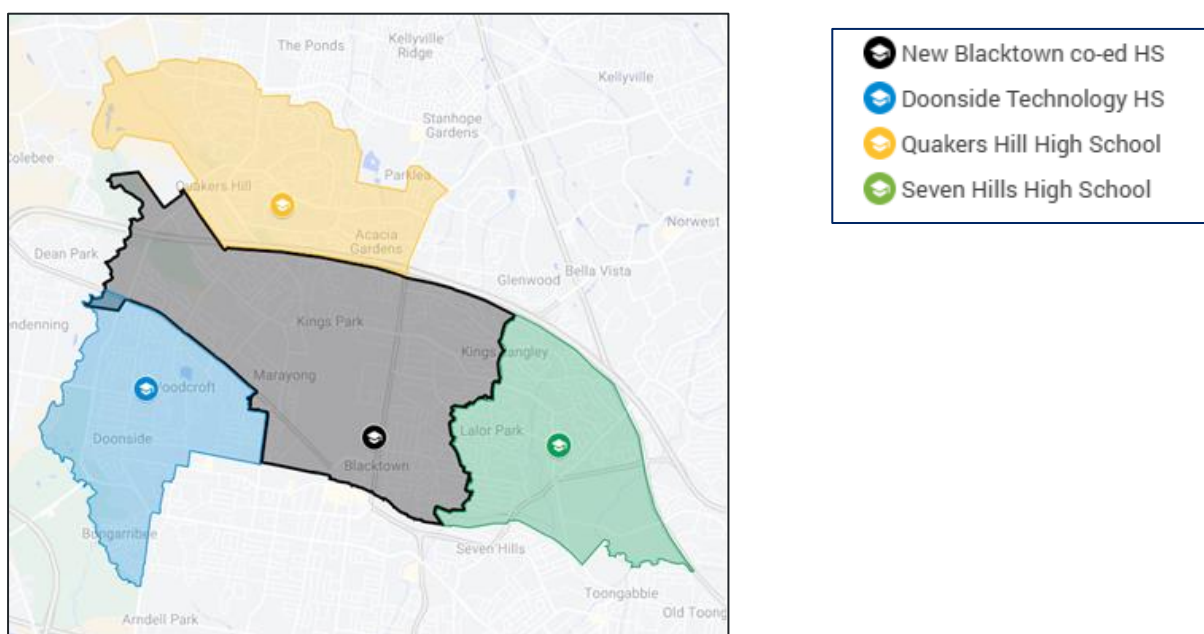


Figure 4: Proposal A indicative intake area map

**Option 2** – Retain Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School as separate single-sex schools and adjust surrounding co-educational high school intake areas to provide all students guaranteed access to a co-educational high school. The below visual of indicative intake areas was utilised during the consultation process. The blue, green and gold shading shows indicative intake areas for three nearby co-educational high schools that could be extended to overlap the existing Blacktown Boys and Blacktown Girls HS intake area.

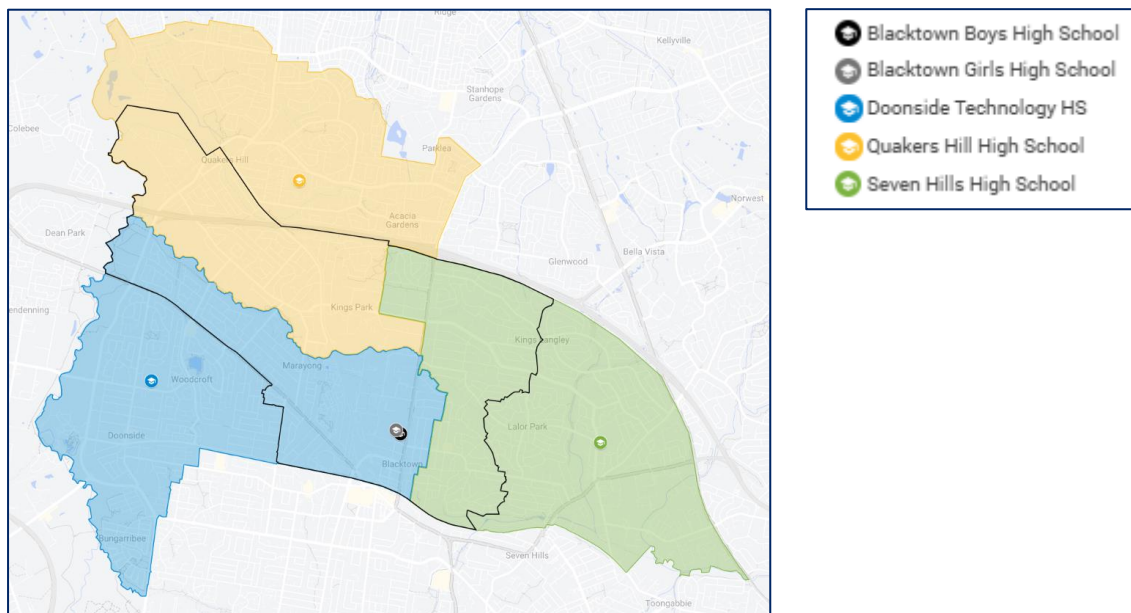


Figure 5: Proposal B indicative intake area map

## **No Preference**

Participants were also able to nominate 'no preference' when asked for their most acceptable proposal.

## **3. Consultation Methodology**

### **3.1 Stakeholders consulted**

The consultation obtained insights from multiple stakeholder groups:

- Students (Primary and Secondary)
- Parents (Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary)
- Staff (Teaching and Non-Teaching)
- Community members

Distinctions within stakeholder groups are detailed throughout the report.

### **3.2 Workshops**

13 workshops were run in late 2024 to give stakeholders an opportunity to further provide feedback.

- Blacktown Boys & Girls High School - principal combined interviews - 11 November 2024
- Blacktown Girls High School Staff (in person) - 12 November 2024
- Blacktown Boys High School Staff (in person) - 13 November 2024
- Secondary parents & carers (online) - BBHS and BGHS combined - 14 November 2024

- Feeder Primary School - parents/carers (online) - 18 November 2024
- Student leadership group (in person) Feeder Primary Schools - 20 November 2024
- Secondary parents & carers (in person) BBHS and BGHS combined - 20 November 2024
- Feeder Primary School - parents/carers (in person) - 20 November 2024
- Feeder primary school staff and other schools (online) - 21 November 2024
- General public (online) - 22 November 2024
- Special interest groups (online) - 22 November 2024
- AECG (in person) - 23 November 2024
- Student leadership group (in person) High School - 28 November 2024

### 3.3 Data Collection

Most of the quantitative data collection occurred through an online survey. The survey was open for 6 weeks from 28 October 2024 through to 6 December 2024, with a total of 3100\* responses across the stakeholder groups.

In total, the survey had responses from:

- 1105 Secondary students
- 1495 Parents/carers
- 259 Primary/Secondary staff members
- 239 community members

Detailed breakdown of the responses can be found throughout the report.

13 Workshops across consultation had approximately 847 participants

*\*Discrepancies in the data amongst questions come from participants not completing the full survey*

### 3.4 Consultation Timeline

The consultation commenced in late October and ran for six weeks.

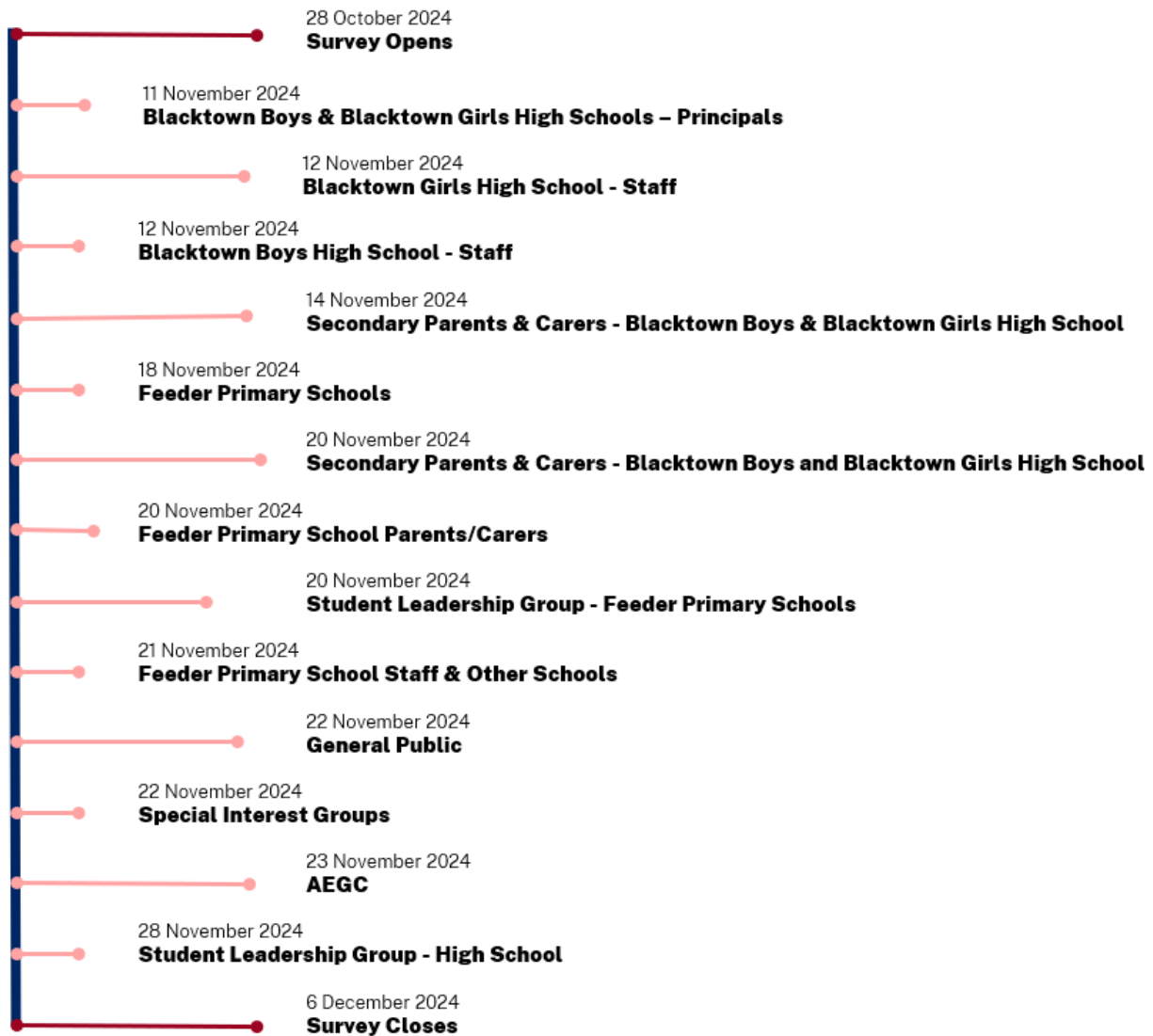


Figure 6. Consultation Timeline

## 4 Analysis across stakeholder groups

This section shows the consultation findings of each stakeholder cohort.

### 4.1 Decision-making factors

High school enrolment is a multifaced decision-making process that is unique to each family, however, there are some consistencies in how people feel across different stakeholder cohorts.

The future high school community rated **A school where your friends are going** and the **gender mix: single sex** were rated as the most important decision-making factors. **The educational offerings of the school (including subject choices and extracurricular activities)** also ranked highly.

The current high school community rated **The gender mix: single sex** as the most important decision-making factor.

**Academic performance** was also considered an important factor for both the future and current high school community.

These findings were further corroborated in various workshops, where participants emphasised the significance of these factors.

<b>Most important decision-making factors when considering a high school (by cohort)</b>				
<b>Future High School Community</b>			<b>Current High School Community</b>	
<b>Students (primary)* n=441</b>	<b>Parents (early childhood) n=230</b>	<b>Parents (primary) n=626</b>	<b>Students (secondary) n=844</b>	<b>Parents (secondary) n=230</b>
<b>47.17%</b> A school where your friends are going	<b>25.65%</b> The gender mix: single sex	<b>26.52%</b> The gender mix: single sex	<b>27.96%</b> The gender mix: single sex	<b>35.51%</b> The gender mix: single sex
<b>39.23%</b> A school where there are only girls	<b>24.78%</b> The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	<b>22.68%</b> The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	<b>17.65%</b> Academic performance	<b>17.33%</b> Academic performance
<b>36.51%</b> A school where my brother(s) and/or sister(s) already go to	<b>14.35%</b> Academic performance	<b>17.25%</b> Academic performance	<b>14.22%</b> The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	<b>15.34%</b> The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities
<b>33.11%</b> A school that is easy to get to	<b>9.57%</b> The gender mix: co-educational	<b>7.99%</b> The gender mix: co-educational	<b>12.44%</b> Distance from the school to your home	<b>11.93%</b> Distance from the school to your home

\*Primary school students were asked to select multiple options that applied

*Table 1. Top decision-making factors for students, parents and carers and community members  
n = number of responses*

Community members and school staff were asked about the most important factors in achieving a high-quality education. Like current and future school communities, the gender mix: single sex and **the educational offerings of the school (including subject choices and extracurricular activities)** were rated as the most important factors.

Most important factors in achieving a high-quality school education	
School Staff n=211	Community n=187
31.75% The gender mix: single sex	37.43% The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities
31.28% The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	28.88% The gender mix: single sex
21.80% A culture of inclusivity and support at the school	16.58% A culture of inclusivity and support at the school
7.58% Academic performance	10.70% Academic performance

Table 2. Most important factors in achieving a quality high school education

## 4.2 School preferences

*School preferences when asked about a single sex or co-educational setting.*

Parents/carers and students from Blacktown Girls High School expressed a strong preference for single-sex schooling (69% & 51.52% respectively).

The first choice for students from Blacktown Boys High School was co-education (49.53%) while 37.38% opted for single-sex and 13.08% had no preference. However, amongst parents/carers of Blacktown Boys High School students, 53% preferred single-sex settings (with 34% preferring co-educational, and 13% had no preference).

The first choice for parents and students from other local high schools was co-educational settings (57.45% & 75% respectively).

The preference amongst parents/carers of early childhood students, parents/carers of primary students was also single-sex schooling. Both cohorts rated it highest (close to 50%).

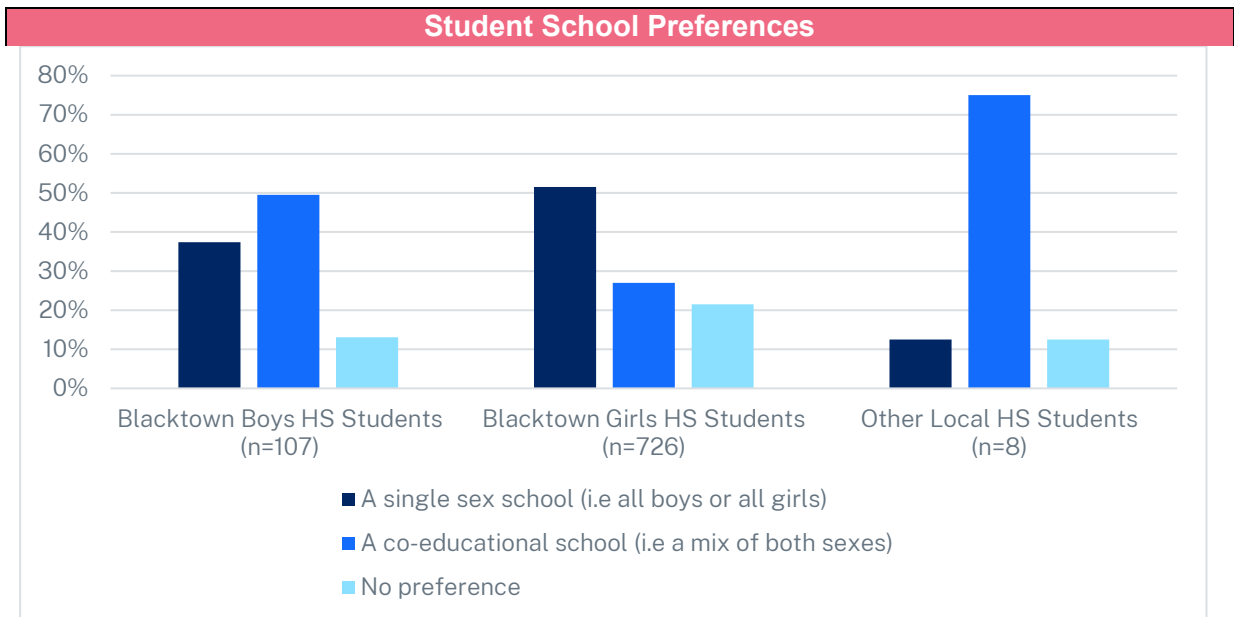


Figure 7. Student Survey Results – School Preferences

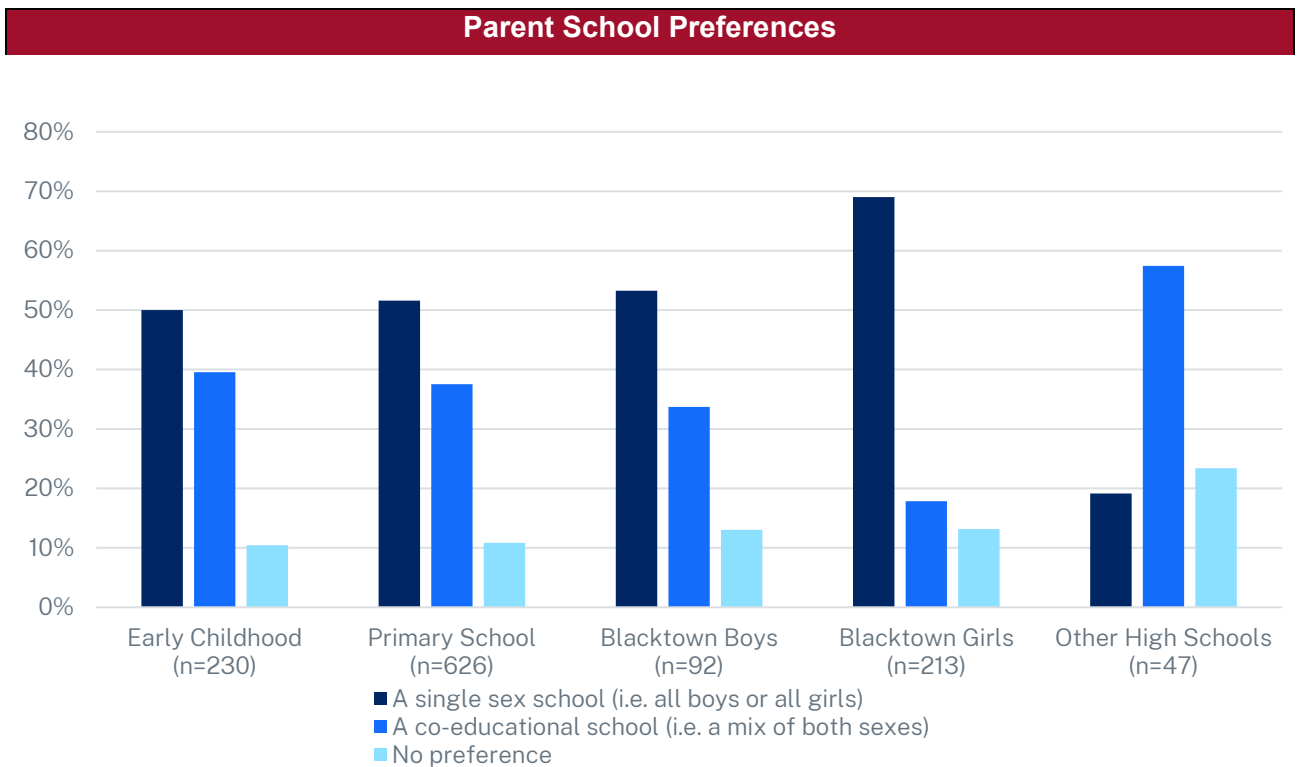


Figure 8. Parent Survey Results – School Preferences



### 4.3 Attitudes to the two proposals

The department proposed two scenarios regarding future learning options in the Blacktown area. Participants were asked to rate each of the two proposals on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being completely unacceptable and 5 being completely acceptable). Furthermore, participants were also asked about the most acceptable proposal among the two.

There is a clear preference for Proposal B as the most acceptable of the proposals across most cohorts.

#### 4.3.1 General acceptability of the proposals

This question only asks for the overall acceptability of each proposal. It did not ask participants to select the most preferred.

For a more defined response, see the **most acceptable** proposal across each cohort (section 4.3.2).

<b>Acceptability of proposals</b> Percentage of respondents that found the proposal acceptable or completely acceptable (i.e. a score of 4 or 5 out of 5)				
Category	Subcategory	Number of respondents	<b>Proposal A:</b> Combine schools to create new co-educational site	<b>Proposal B:</b> Intake area adjustments only
Students	Blacktown Boys	107	45.83%	<b>52.08%</b>
	Blacktown Girls	726	28.51%	<b>61.11%</b>
	Other Secondary	8	50%	50%
Parents/carers	Early Childhood	217	26.73%	<b>70.04%</b>
	Primary	587	29.98%	<b>65.93%</b>
	Blacktown Boys	90	38.89%	<b>60%</b>
	Blacktown Girls	199	20.1%	<b>66.33%</b>
	Other	46	39.13%	<b>63.05%</b>
Staff	Primary	37	18.92%	<b>81.08%</b>
	Blacktown Boys	43	9.30%	<b>93.02%</b>
	Blacktown Girls	88	5.68%	<b>88.64%</b>
	Other	30	43.33%	<b>60%</b>
Community		217	14.12%	<b>82.35%</b>

Table 3. Survey Results – Acceptability of the proposals

### 4.3.2 Most acceptable proposal across each cohort

#### When asked to identify the single most acceptable proposal:

Students at Blacktown Girls High School (60%) selected Proposal B as their most acceptable proposal. Acceptability was split for students at Blacktown Boys High School with 48% selecting Proposal A and 45% selecting Proposal B.

Secondary students at other local high schools (62.5%) selected Proposal A (merging single-sex schools into one co-educational site) as their most acceptable proposal, noting this was the smallest cohort, of only 8 participants.

There was a preference for Proposal B by the 'future school community' with 69% of primary parents and carers and 71% of early childhood parents and carers selecting this as their most acceptable proposal.'

73% of Blacktown Girls parents and carers and 60% of Blacktown Boys parents and carers rated Proposal B most acceptable.

Staff of the single-sex schools selected Proposal B as most acceptable (88% at Blacktown Boys and 92% for Blacktown Girls). Most primary school staff selected Proposal B as the most acceptable (76%).

Of staff from other high schools the preference for Proposal B was smaller at 50%, with 40% selecting Proposal A.

Retention of single-sex schooling was also preferred by the general community with 82% preferring Proposal B as most acceptable.

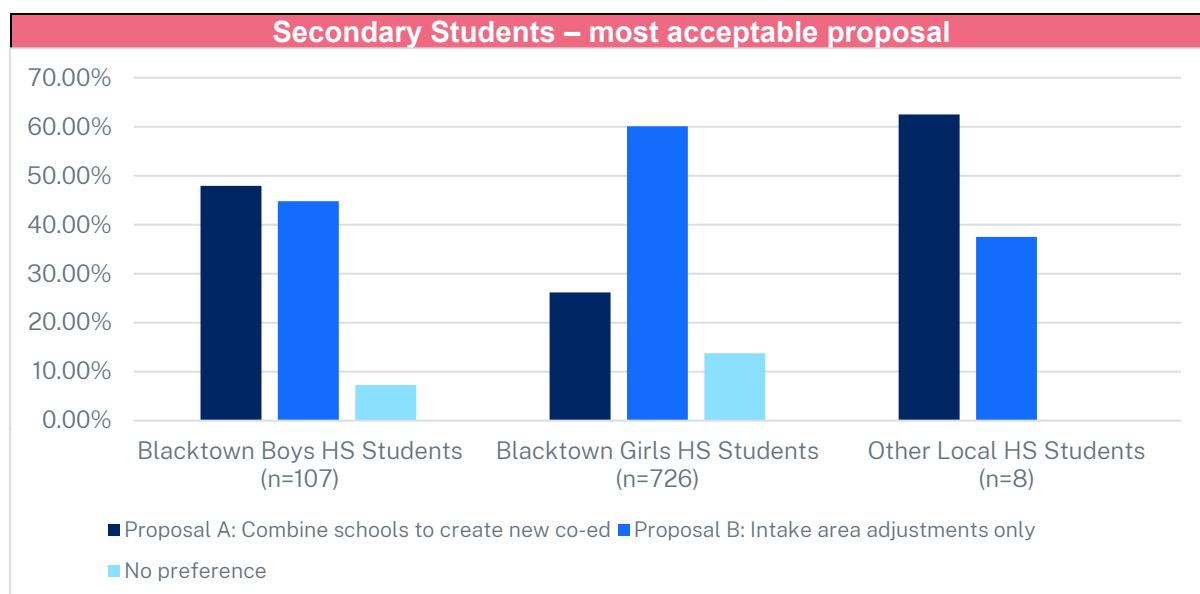


Figure 9. Secondary Students – Most acceptable Proposal

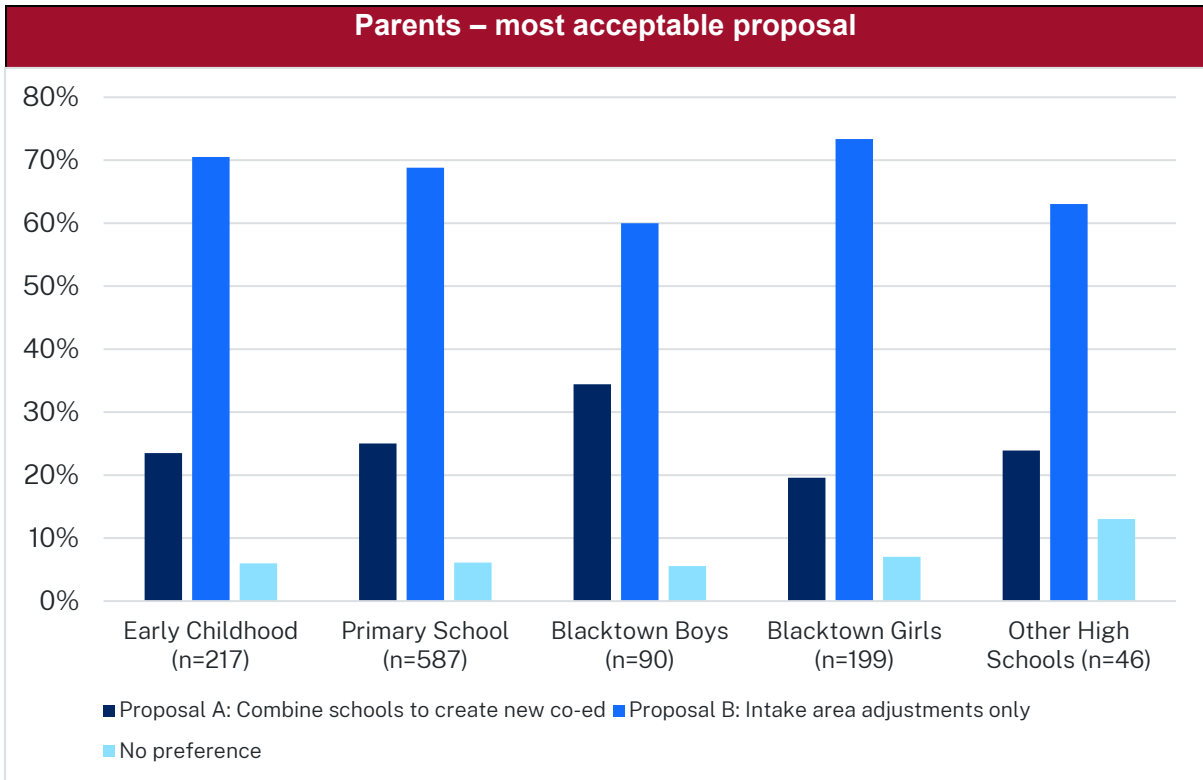


Figure 10. Parents – Most acceptable Proposal

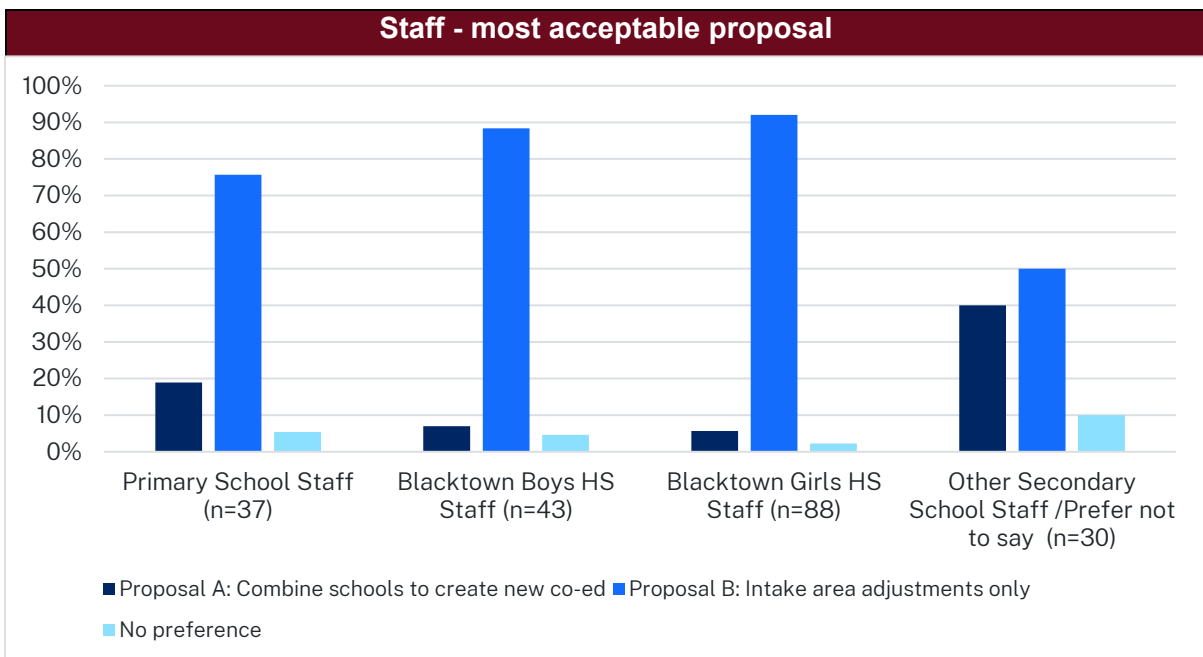


Figure 11. Staff – Most acceptable Proposal

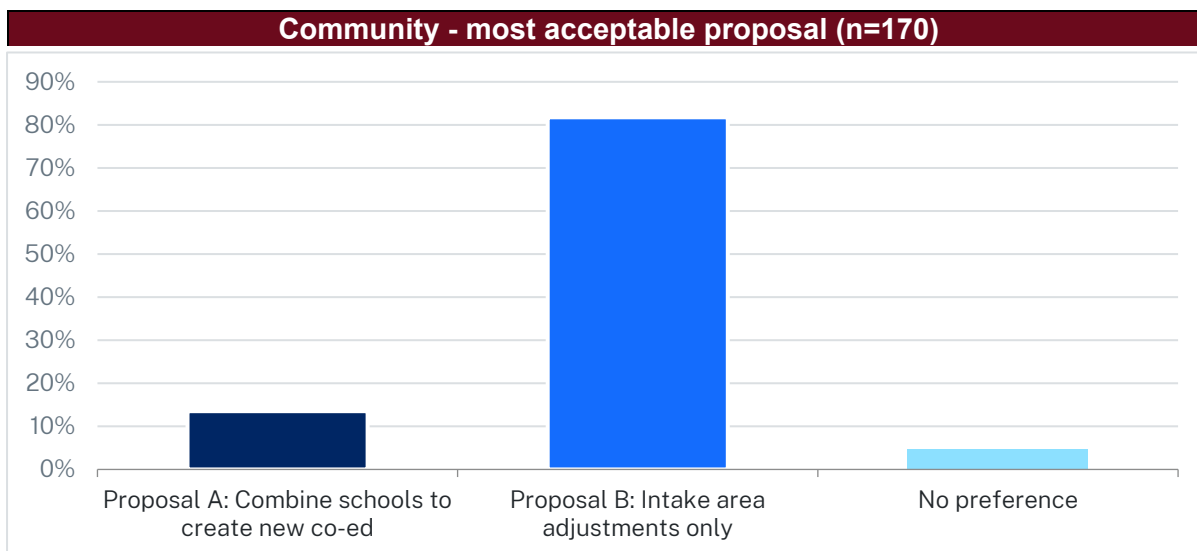


Figure 121. Community – Most acceptable Proposal

## 5 Insights by cohort

### 5.1 Students

#### 5.1.1 Primary School Students

441 current students from local feeder primary school responded to the survey, with quite an even spread of responses from Y3 to Y6 and a smaller cohort from K-2.

Primary students answered two questions as part of their parent/carer's survey.

The decision-making factor listed as most important for primary students was **A school where your friends are going** (47%). When asked about preference for single sex or co-educational settings 56% said they preferred single sex and 32% said they preferred co-educational.

#### Primary school student leadership workshop themes

Student leadership representatives from feeder primary schools participated in a workshop. Opinions shared by students were diverse, with a large number stating support for both Proposal A and Proposal B.

Comments from participants supporting Proposal A included:

- Single sex schools have less opportunity to develop communications skills with the other gender.
- A single-sex school might not give you the subject choice you want e.g. chef/dance might only be available at a girl's school (stereotyping). Co-educational schools would have all choices.
- Siblings & friends who are different genders can be together.
- Co-educational means you hear perspectives from both genders.
- Gives everyone the opportunity to get out of their comfort zone and be with other genders.

Comments from participants supporting Proposal B included:

- Single sex schools are good because staff know & understand the gender and can help in different gender-specific situations.
- Generally, boys and girls don't go well together and so it is better if they are separated.
- Boys & girls together might focus more on 'love' than academics - co-ed could be distracting with relationships.
- People say girls & boys learn differently – teachers teach to gender
- Many teenagers are more comfortable with their own gender.
- Religious/cultural reasons for keeping single-sex schools
- Would there be room for growth of school in Proposal A? Would it become a really big school?
- With Proposal B people can still choose a co-educational school if they want it, e.g. Seven Hills High School

### 5.1.2 Blacktown Boys High School Students

144 current students from Blacktown Boys High School responded to the survey, with quite an even spread of responses from Y7 to Y9 and a smaller cohort from Y10-Y12.

When rating the importance of various factors in their decision-making process, **Academic performance** was the most important with 90% of students rating them as option 4 or 5. **The educational offerings of the school (including subject choices and extracurricular activities)** and **The school's amenities and facilities** also rated highly – with over 76% of students rating either these a 4 or 5. When asked what the most important factor was, 21.5% of students chose **The gender mix: single-sex**.

When asked a hypothetical question about remaking the decision of the type of high school they would like to enrol in, 49.5% of students chose a co-educational setting, 37% chose a single sex setting, and 13% had no preference.

The most acceptable proposal for students from Blacktown Boys High School was **Proposal A** - merge the two single sex schools into one co-educational site (48%), followed closely by **Proposal B**, retain the single sex schools and adjust surrounding co-educational school intake areas (45%).

### Decision making factors – Blacktown Boys High School Students

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important were each of the following factors in your decision-making process to enrol at Blacktown Boys High School?

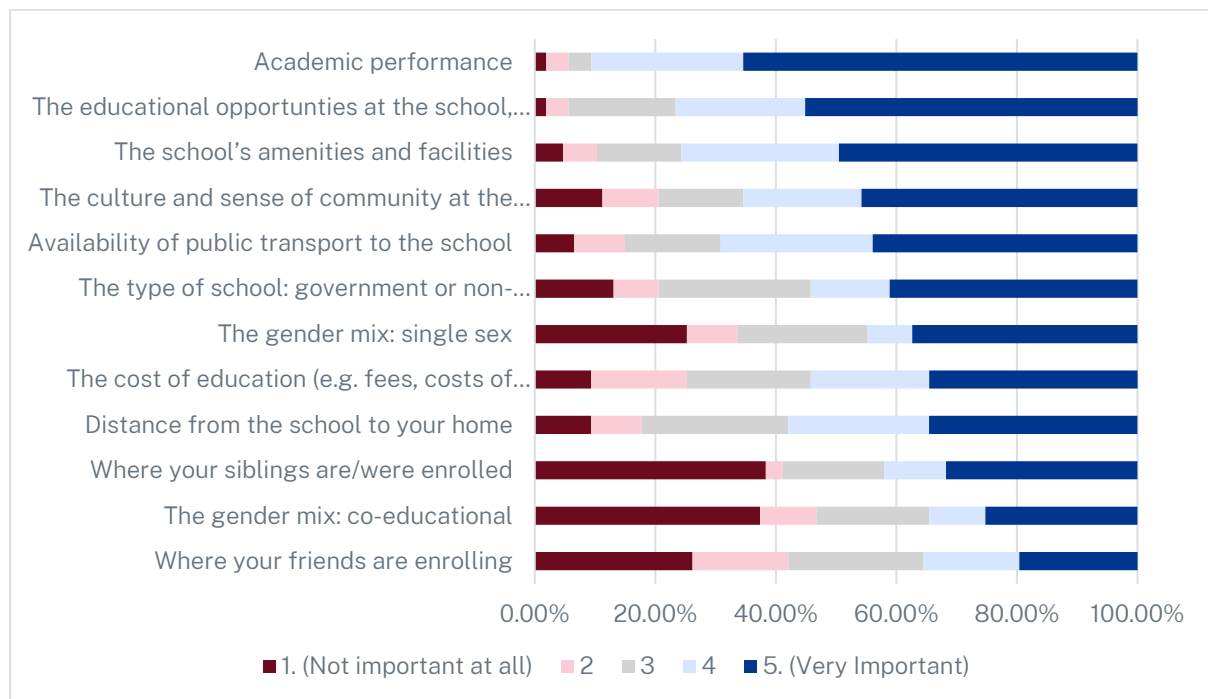


Figure 13. 2Blacktown Boys High School – Decision making factors

### Most important decision-making factor - Blacktown Boys High School Students

Which one of these factors was most important in your decision to enrol at Blacktown Boys High School?

<b>Academic performance</b>	<b>27.10%</b>
The gender mix: single sex	21.50%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	10.28%
Distance from the school to your home	9.35%
The gender mix: co-educational	6.54%
Where your siblings are/were enrolled	5.61%
Where your friends are enrolling	5.61%
The type of school: government or non-government	4.67%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	2.80%
The school's amenities and facilities	2.80%
The culture and sense of community at the school	1.87%

Table 44. Blacktown Boys High School – Most important decision-making factor

### Single Sex vs Co-educational Preference – Blacktown Boys High School Students

If you were making the decision again, which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol in?

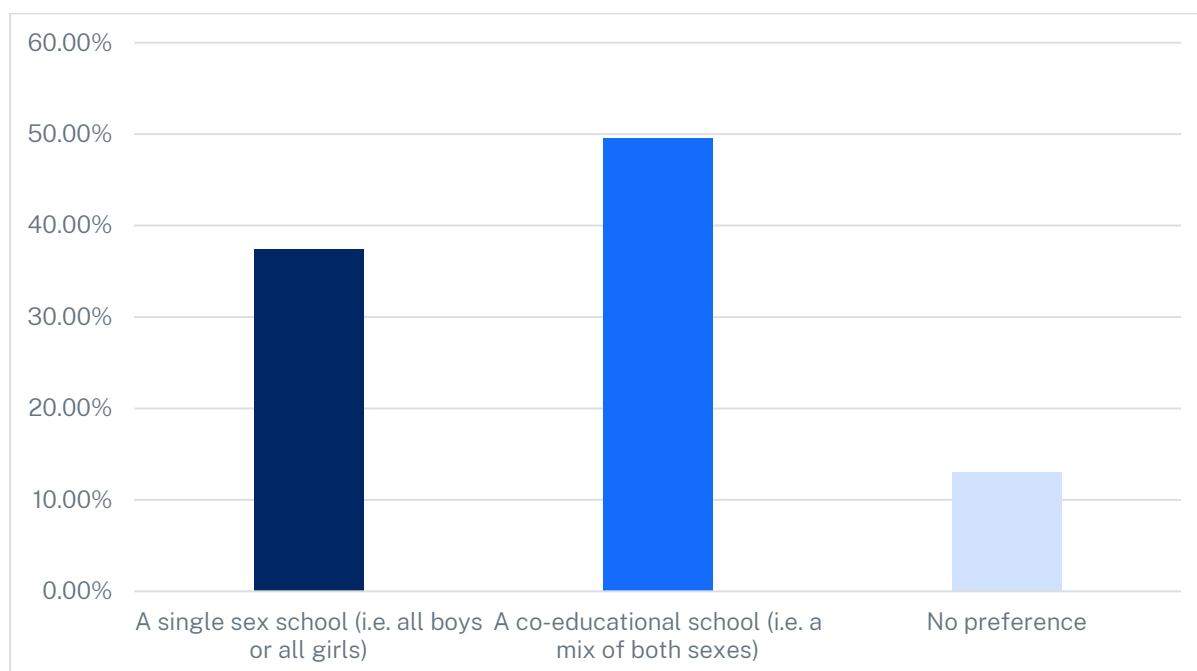


Figure 143. Blacktown Boys High School students – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### View of proposals – Blacktown Boys High School Students

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

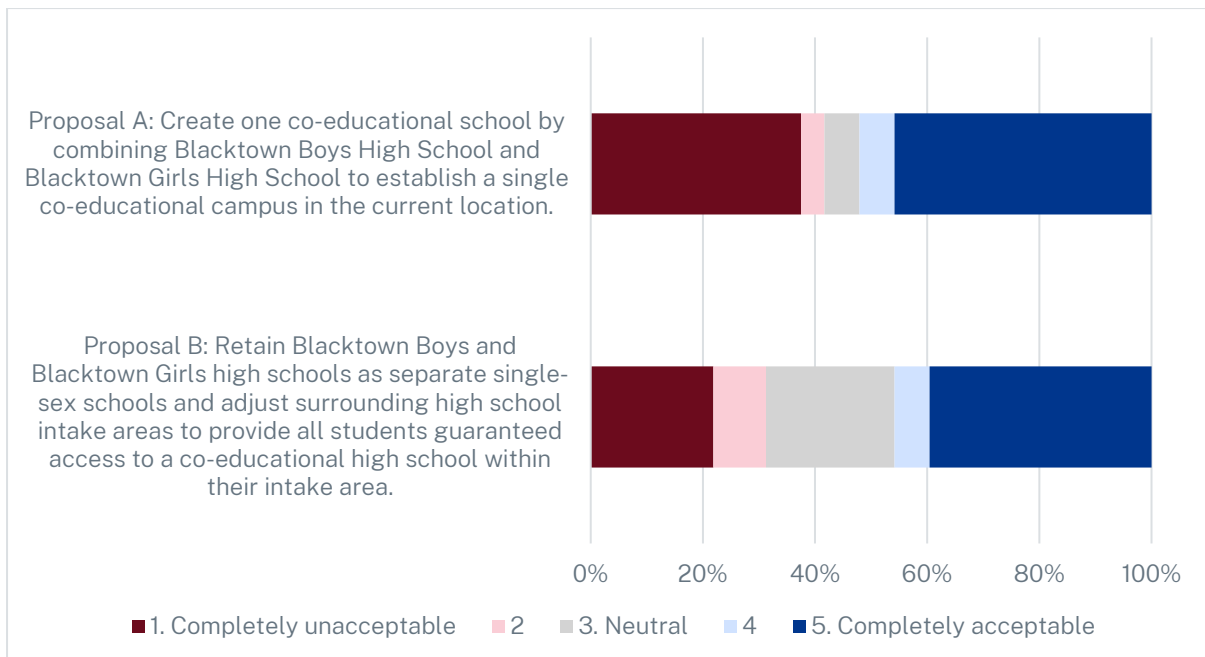


Figure 154. Blacktown Boys High School students – View of proposals

### Most acceptable proposal – Blacktown Boys High School Students

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

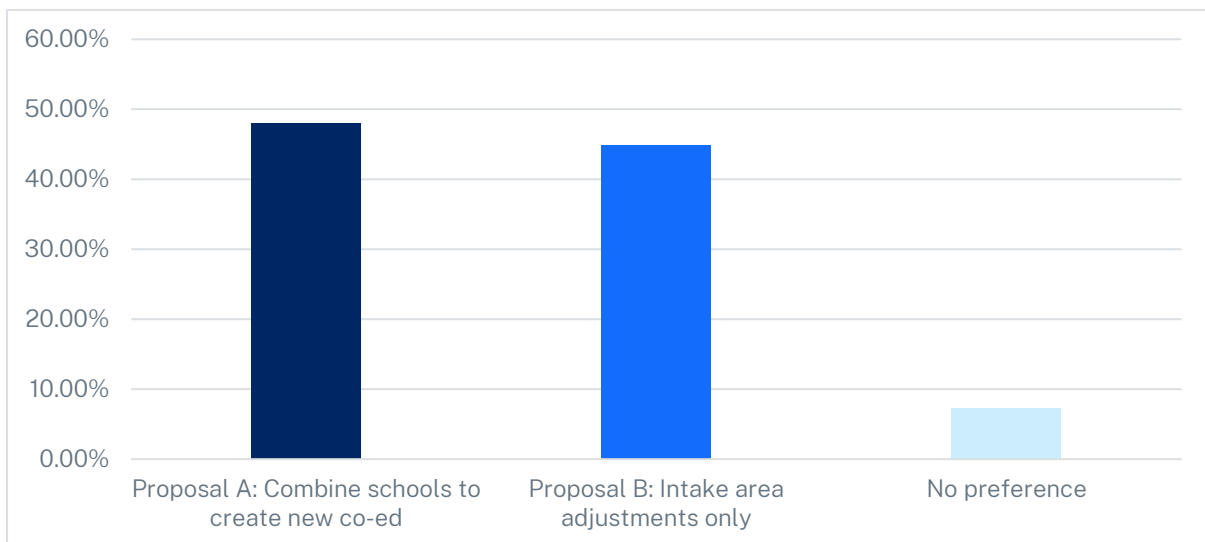


Figure 165. Blacktown Boys High School students – Most Acceptable Proposals

#### Why/further comments

“Single-sex school choice should not be taken away” Blacktown Boys High School Student

“Growing up in a boys only school environment gives boys less exposure and understanding of the opposite sex and can contribute to confusion and fear regarding interactions. I think it would be a more enriching experience for young boys and men to grow up side-by-side with girls and women to gain a better understanding of the world around them. It would also reflect the real world environment more accurately for boys and give them a better idea of



*what life is like after school compared to single sex environments. Boys only environment and similarly girls only environments also restrict the ability to form meaningful relationships which can really improve the lives of boys and girls in single sex environments that they may not be able to access or understand. Schools are an environment where kids should be taught together and with each other, and this environment should reflect the presence of both boys and girls”* Blacktown Boys High School Student

*“The schools are already large enough, adding more people will result in more fees for the school, more stress for the teachers and more competition for students. As both schools are thriving being both a single sex school, why change it?”* Blacktown Boys High School Student

### 5.1.3 Blacktown Girls High School Students

870 current students from Blacktown Girls High School responded to the survey, with quite an even spread of responses from Y7 to Y12.

When rating the importance of various factors in their decision-making process, **Academic performance, The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extra-curricular activities** and **The availability of public transport** were ranked highest – with over 70% of students rating it a 4 or 5. However, when asked about the *most* important factor in their decision making 29.34% of students chose **The gender mix: single-sex**.

When asked a hypothetical question about remaking the decision of the type of high school they would like to enrol in, 51.52% of Blacktown Girls students preferred a single-sex setting, 27% of students preferred a co-educational school and 21.49% of students had no preference.

The most acceptable proposal for students from Blacktown Girls High School was Proposal B (60.09%). When considering the acceptability of the two proposals, 50.73% stated that Proposal B – was completely acceptable with 49% of students stating that Proposal A – merging the two single-sex schools into one co-educational site was completely unacceptable.

#### High school student leadership workshop themes

The student leadership workshop included students from both Blacktown Girls High School and Blacktown Boys High School. Both groups expressed similar opinions about single-sex and co-educational settings with a strong preference for Proposal B. Some common and notable themes and ideas included:

- Blacktown and Greater Western Sydney is a very diverse area with a high Muslim population. There are also many other religions and cultures that have a strong preference for genders to be schooled separately and Proposal A would take this opportunity away from these groups.
- Many of the students from diverse cultural backgrounds are from lower economic backgrounds from right across Western Sydney, not just the Blacktown area - these families are unable to afford private schools if they are seeking a single-sex environment.
- There are no other single-sex public high schools from Parramatta to the Blue Mountains.
- Parents should have a choice of either single-sex or co-education.
- Proposal B meets the commitment well, without taking away choice.
- The current arrangement of two schools operating with around 900 students fosters a sense of community where students and teachers all know one another. Under

Proposal A the school would be very large and lose some of the sense of community.

- Female students are more confident and perform better in subjects that are traditionally male-dominated, when they are in a single-sex environment.
- Many students were concerned about the potential impact on the high academic performance of the schools and the selective streams under Proposal A. Single-sex settings have fewer distractions and allow more focus on academic studies. Questions about the number of selective student places for each gender were raised – would there still be 30 places for boys and 30 places for girls in each year group? Or would there just be 60 places for any gender?
- A student from Blacktown Girls High School suggested an alternative option of Proposal B, with extra opportunities for the two school to interact more. Some of this student’s peers expressed support for her idea.

**Decision making factors – Blacktown Girls High School Students**

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important were each of the following factors in your decision-making process to enrol at Blacktown Girls High School?

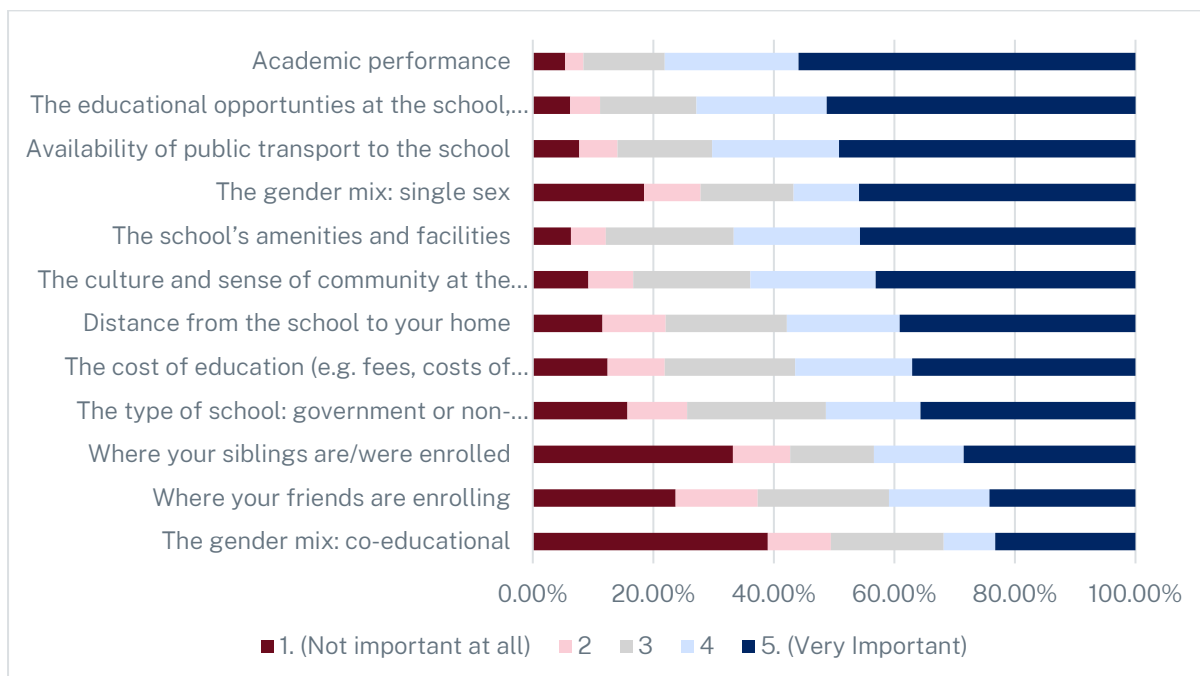


Figure 176. Blacktown Girls High School students – Decision making factors.

### Most important decision-making factor - Blacktown Girls High School Students

Which one of these factors was most important in your decision to enrol at Blacktown Girls High School

The gender mix: single sex	29.34%
Academic performance	16.53%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	14.60%
Distance from the school to your home	12.81%
Where your siblings are/were enrolled	6.34%
Where your friends are enrolling	5.23%
The culture and sense of community at the school	3.58%
Availability of public transport to the school	3.31%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	2.75%
The gender mix: co-educational	2.48%
The type of school: government or non-government	1.65%
The school's amenities and facilities	1.38%

Table 5.5 Blacktown Girls High School – Most important decision-making factor.

### Single Sex vs Co-educational Preference - Blacktown Girls High School Students

If you were making the decision again, which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol in?

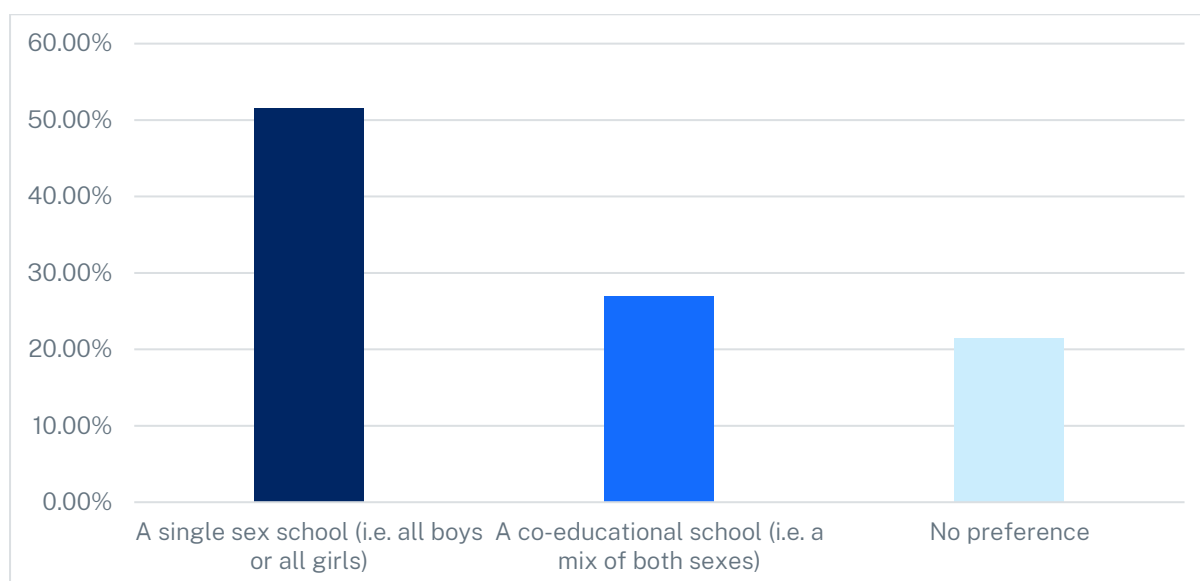


Figure 187. Blacktown Girls High School students – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### View of proposals - Blacktown Girls High School Students

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

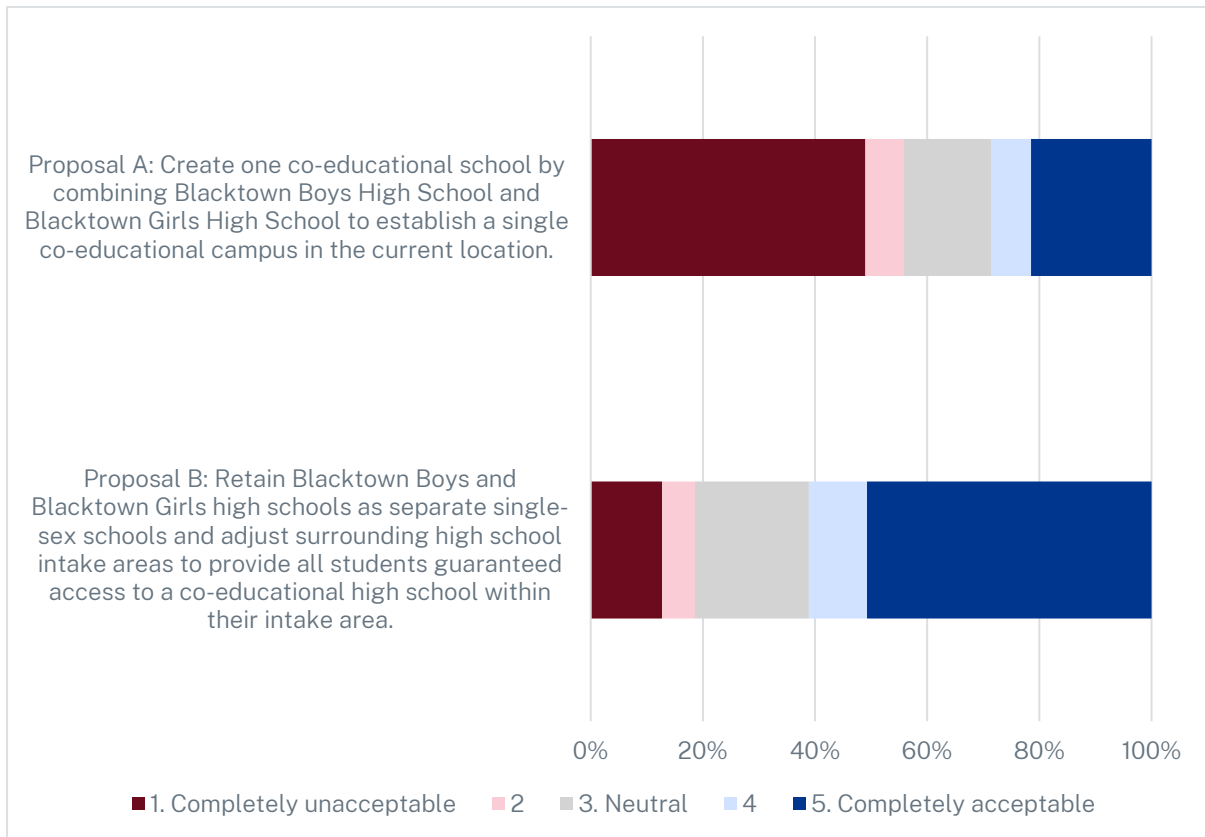


Figure 198. Blacktown Girls High School students – View of proposals

### Most acceptable proposal - Blacktown Girls High School Students

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

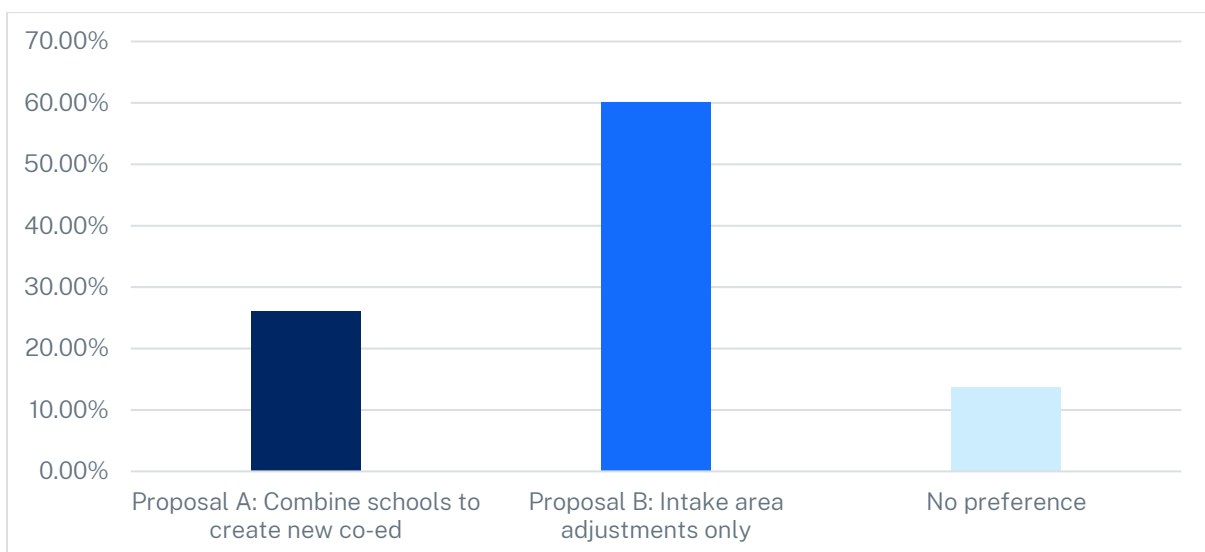


Figure 209. Blacktown Girls High School students – Most acceptable proposal

#### *Why/further comments*

*“Attending a single-sex school can provide a safer and more supportive environment, particularly for girls. In such settings, students may feel more comfortable navigating social interactions with their peers of the same gender, which can enhance their confidence. Moreover, single-sex schools often allow for a stronger focus on academic achievement, as there are fewer distractions related to relationships or social pressures, enabling students to dedicate more attention to their studies”* Blacktown Girls High School Student

*“An all-girls school should remain a same-sex institution to preserve its unique environment that fosters confidence, leadership, and academic excellence among female students. Research suggests that single-gender schools help mitigate gender stereotypes, allowing girls to excel in traditionally male-dominated fields like STEM without the pressures of comparison or bias. These schools often emphasize female empowerment, creating a supportive community where students can freely express themselves and take on leadership roles. Furthermore, the tailored curriculum and teaching strategies can address the specific needs of girls, encouraging their holistic development in a safe and focused atmosphere. Preserving the single-sex structure ensures the continuation of these benefits, which might be diluted in a coeducational setting”* Blacktown Girls High School Student

*“I would prefer to have a co-educational school where we can socialise and build relationships with everyone just like how we have to learn in the real world. We are eventually going to have to work with everyone, so it is better to learn and start now and not struggle or be uncomfortable later.”* Blacktown Girls High School Student

#### 5.1.4 Other Local Schools

Only 14 students from other local high schools participated in the survey, a relatively small amount compared to other cohorts. The cohort includes students attending Evans High School, Mitchell High School, Seven Hills High School and other gov/non-gov high schools. 58% of survey respondents were in Year 7 or Year 8.

This cohort displayed **stronger preference towards co-educational school environments** when compared to Blacktown Boys and Girls students.

When considering the importance of decision-making factors when choosing a school 75% of respondents chose **The gender mix: co-educational** as very important, with a further 75% of students rating the culture and sense of community as the school and distance from the school to your home as a 4 or 5. However, when asked which was the most important factor 25% of students chose **The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extra-curricular activities.**

The cohort had equal representation for the acceptability of both Proposal A – merging the two single sex schools into one coeducational site and Proposal B – retaining the single sex schools and adjusting surrounding co-educational school intake areas with 50% of students considering them both completely acceptable options.

When asked which was the most acceptable 62.5% of students chose Proposal A - merging the two single sex schools into one coeducational site and 37.5% selected Proposal B.

### Decision making factors – Other Local School Students

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important were each of the following factors in your decision-making process to enrol at your current school

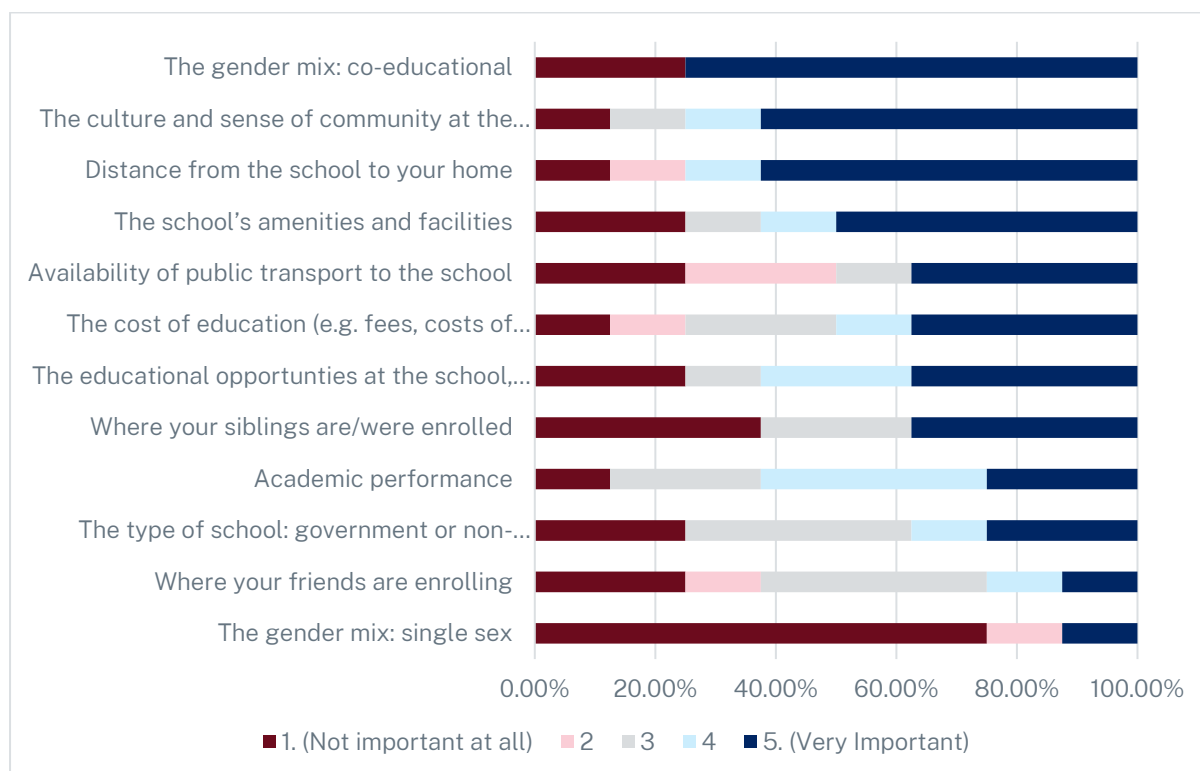


Figure 2110. Other Local Schools students – Decision making factors

### Most important decision-making factor - Other Local School Students

Which one of these factors was most important in your decision to enrol at your current school

The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	25.00%
Distance from the school to your home	12.50%
The gender mix: co-educational	12.50%
The type of school: government or non-government	12.50%
The culture and sense of community at the school	12.50%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	12.50%
The school's amenities and facilities	12.50%
The gender mix: single sex	0.00%
Where your siblings are/were enrolled	0.00%
Where your friends are enrolling	0.00%
Academic performance	0.00%
Availability of public transport to the school	0.00%

Table 66. Other Local School Students – Most important decision-making factor

### Single Sex vs Co-educational Preference – Other Local School Students

If you were making the decision again, which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol in?

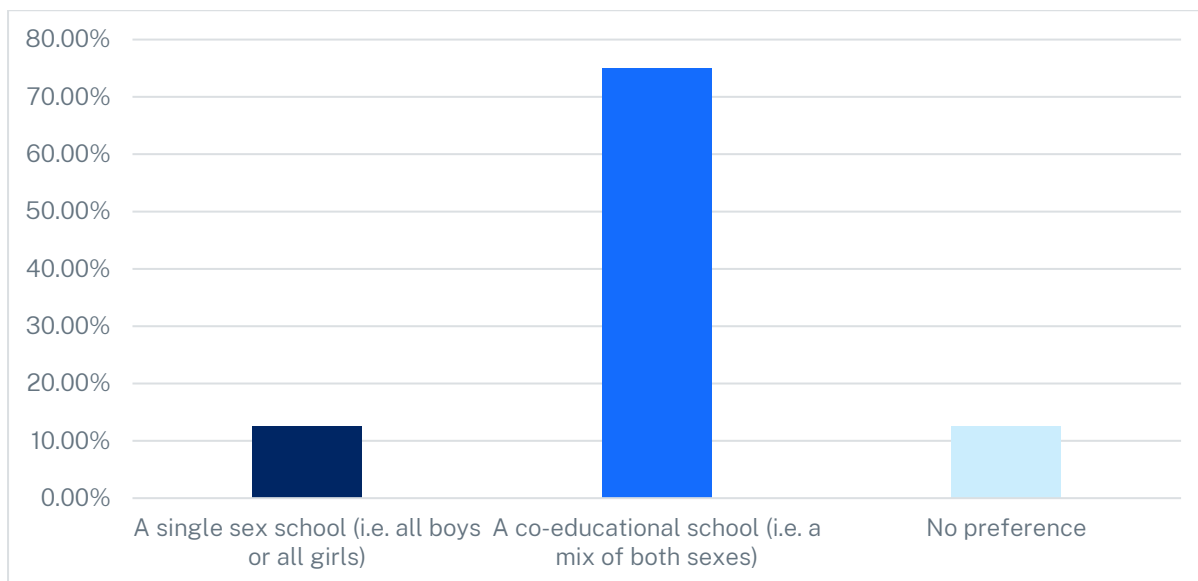


Figure 2211. Other Local School students – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### View of proposals – Other Local School Students

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

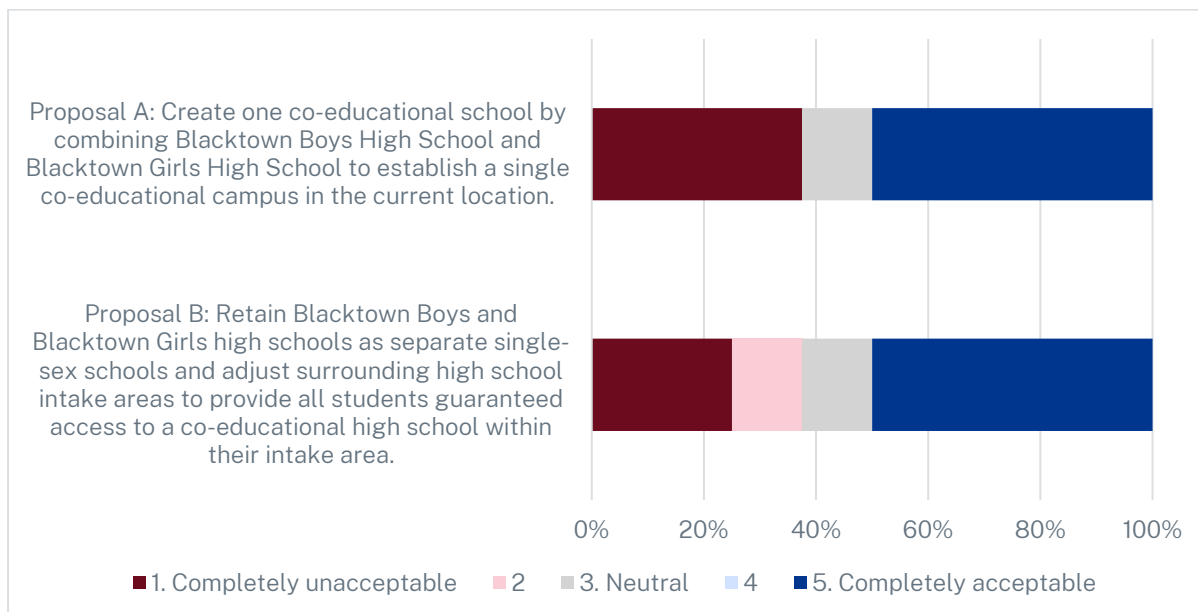


Figure 2312. Other Local Schools students – View of proposals

## Most acceptable proposal – Other Local School Students

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

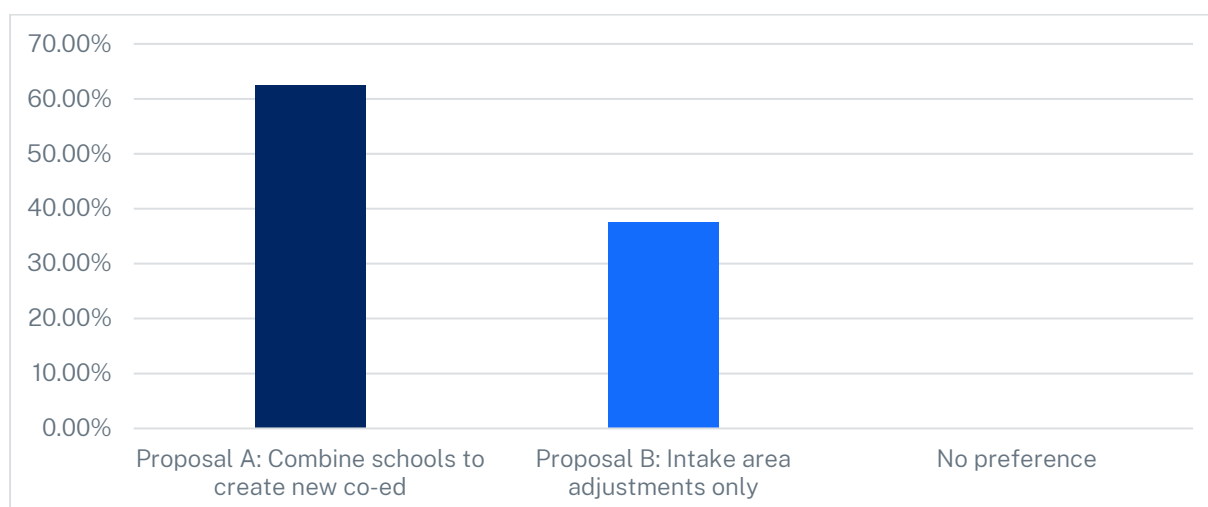


Figure 2413. Other Local School students – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### Why/further comments

“Students thrive in different (*sic*) environments, safety & diversity is a big factor” Other local high school student

“Because I think those who are choosing a high school to go to should be able to pick from a single sex school that isn’t private in Blacktown” Other local high school student

“We have so many Coed (*sic*) schools in the area and most options are Catholic or private education for Same sex schooling” Other local high school student

## 5.2 Parents

### 5.2.1 Early Childhood Parents

269 parents of children who had not yet started primary school participated in the survey. This cohort represents the youngest generation that will enter secondary school in 2031 at the earliest.

For parents of early childhood aged children, most factors had significantly high importance ratings, except for **Where your child’s friends are enrolling**. The four highest (>85% ratings) were:

- **The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities** (most important)
- **The culture and sense of community at the school**
- **The school’s amenities and facilities**
- **Academic performance**

When asked about the type of school they would like to enrol their children in 50% of respondents preferred single sex educational settings, (39.57% chose co-educational settings and 10.43% has no preference).

When asked about the two proposals, most parents (70.51%) preferred Proposal B - to retain the two single sex schools and adjust surrounding co-educational school’s intake areas.



## Decision-making factors – Early Childhood Parents

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important are each of the following factors in your decision-making process in sending this youngest child to a particular high school?

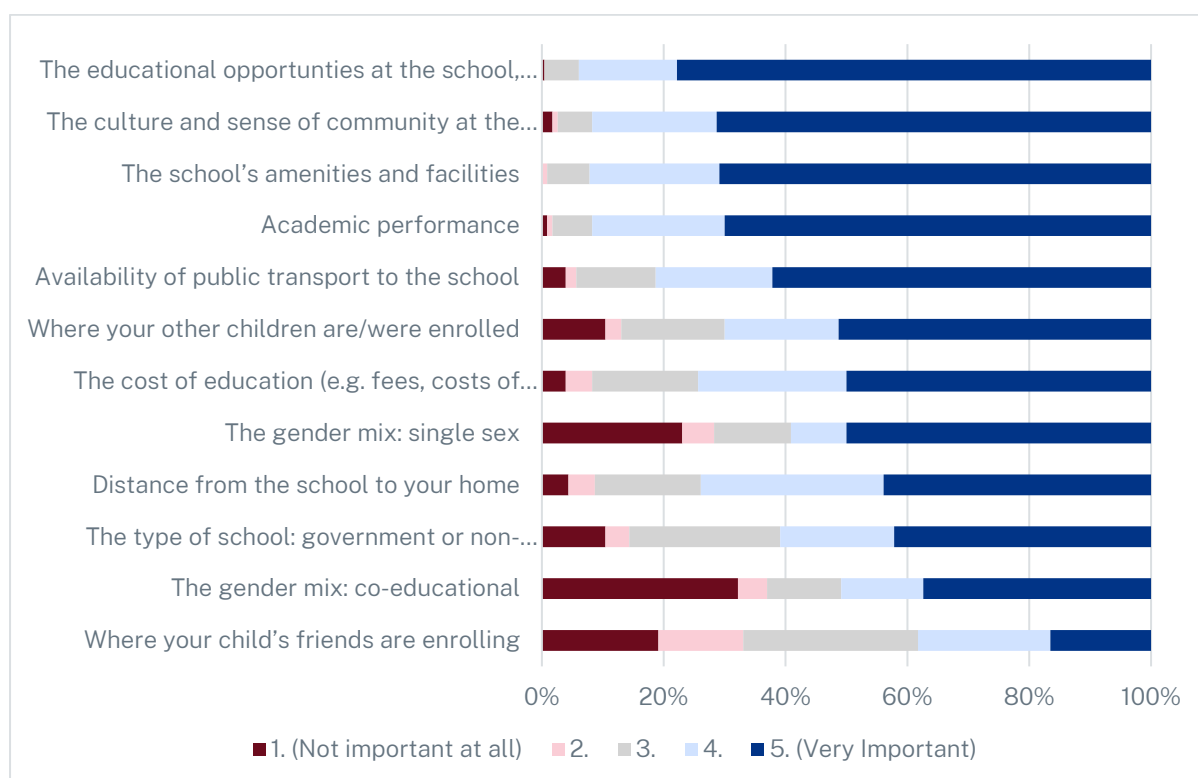


Figure 25. Early Childhood Parents – Decision-making factors

## Most important decision-making factor - Early Childhood Parents

Which one of these factors is most important in your decision making to send this youngest child to a particular high school?

The gender mix: single sex	25.65%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	24.78%
Academic performance	14.35%
The gender mix: co-educational	9.57%
The culture and sense of community at the school	8.70%
Where your other children are/were enrolled	4.35%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	3.91%
The type of school: government or non-government	3.04%
Where your child's friends are enrolling	2.17%
Distance from the school to your home	1.30%
Availability of public transport to the school	1.30%
The school's amenities and facilities	0.87%

Table 77. Early Childhood Parents – most important decision-making factor

### Single Sex vs Co-educational Preference - Early Childhood Parents

Which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol this youngest child in?

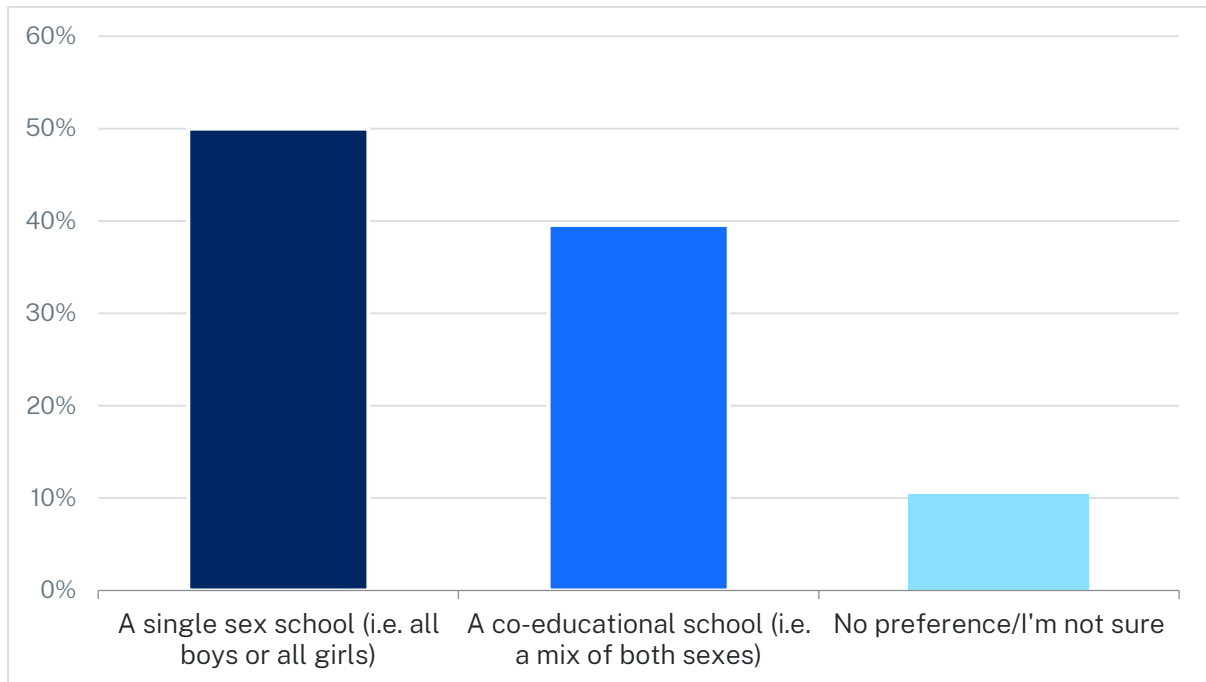


Figure 26 15. Early Childhood Parents – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### View of proposals - Early Childhood Parents

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School sites. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

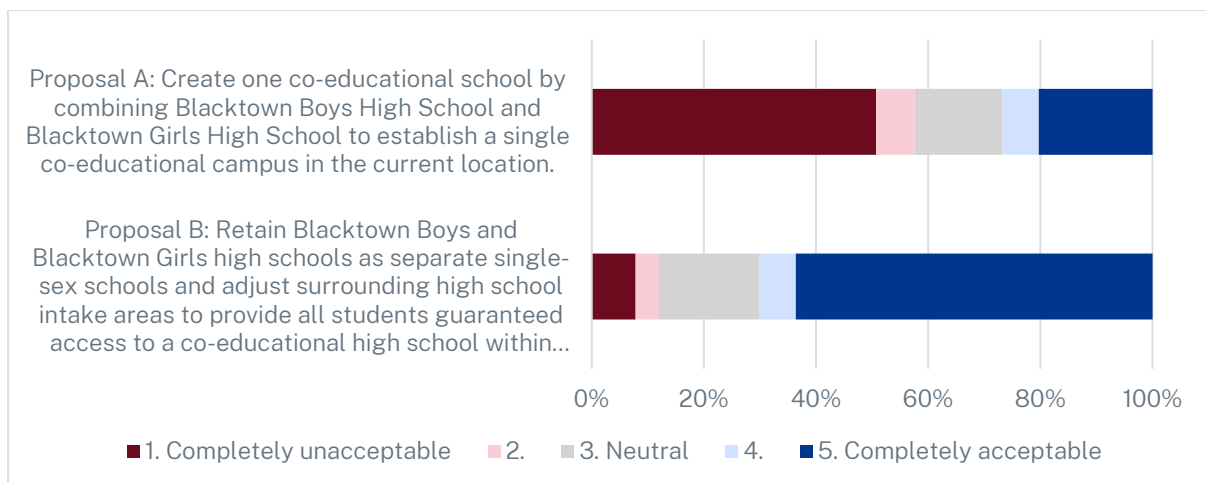


Figure 27 16. Early Childhood Parents – View of Proposals

## Most acceptable proposal – Early Childhood Parents

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

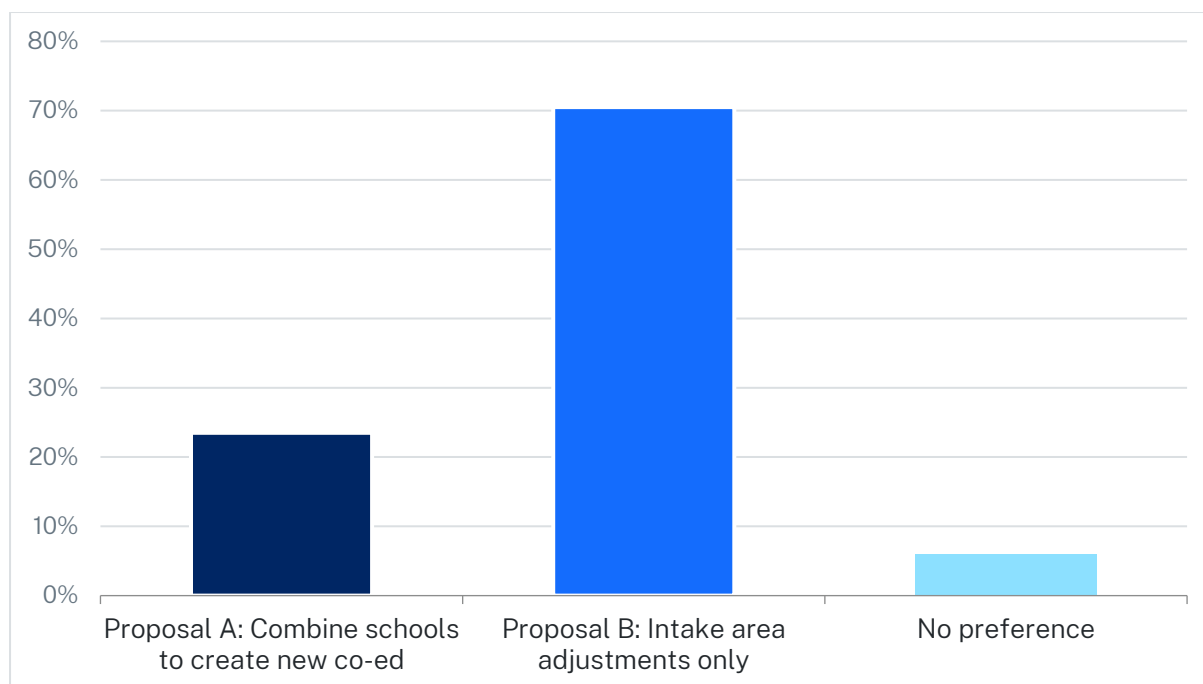


Figure 28.17. Early Childhood Parents – Most acceptable proposal

### Why/further comments

*“(Single sex) minimizes gender bias, social distraction, bullying, loss of safe space for kids”*  
Early childhood parent

*“There are very few single sex non-government schools in the Western Suburbs, if families wish to enroll (sic) in a single sex school, then they need to go to a Catholic or a Private school. Not all families can afford that option nor wish that option for their families. There are plenty of Government co-ed schools in close proximity, so there is no real reason to join the two schools”* Early childhood parent

*“Females prefer better academically when males aren’t present; pedestrian and traffic congestion - currently, due to the staggered start times for the boys school and the girls school, it lessens the danger to students who are already at risk due to the amount of traffic around these times. If they were to combine schools and have all students start at the same time, it would pose a significant safety risk due to the higher volume of traffic; it’s a beautiful school community and combining schools threatens this and will change the dynamics”* Early childhood parent

*“I believe with the strong diversity in Blacktown council, some families would really appreciate single sex education facilities. However, having a second school as an option in the drawing area would be beneficial to provide families with the options they want and would better cater to the future growth of the area. Honestly, I also find that Blacktown high schools both have pretty poor reputations and most people I have spoken to agree that they love the area and the primary schools but worry they will need to leave the district when the time comes for high school for their children. I think a lot of the local families might stay in the area if there was another option available”* Early childhood parent

## 5.2.2 Primary Parents

756 parents of primary aged students participated in the survey. Most came from local schools (Blacktown North Public School, Kings Langley Public School, Marayong Public School and Quakers Hill Public School). This cohort represents the next seven (7) years of secondary students for the Blacktown area.

Parents of primary aged students in this area valued **The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities** as the most important.

**Academic performance** and **The culture and sense of community at the school**, also had importance ratings higher than 70%.

When asked about the most important factor, **The gender mix: single sex** (26.52%) came in highest, followed by **The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities** (22.68%).

Parents showed a preference towards single sex settings (51.6%), then co-education education (37.54%) and no preference (10.86%).

Proposal B, retain both single-sex schools and adjust surrounding co-educational school intake areas was the most acceptable proposal for 68.82% of primary parents. This was also reflected in workshop conversations.

### **Workshop and email conversations had the following strong themes:**

- Education and opportunity for choice was considered one of the most important topics
- Supporting community cultural and religious needs for gender-based school settings while also providing the option of co-educational schools is vital
- The potential loss of selective streams and loss of the opportunity to enrol at high academically performing schools (Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School) under Proposal A concerned most participants.
- Retention of the only public single-sex schools in the greater Western Sydney area was a high priority with concerns for a loss of government share under Proposal A.
- The need to include different surrounding co-educational high schools in the indicative intake area planning was raised – with specific requests for Evans High School and Mitchell High School to be assessed for viability as co-educational options.
- The need for significant infrastructure upgrades and funding to ensure that there are enough teaching spaces at surrounding co-educational schools to absorb families that elect to enrol at a mixed gender school setting.
- Some parents believed that schooling needs to reflect society and provide opportunity for mixing between genders to build confidence and experience. Some presenting an idea that a lack of early socialisation in school can impact on students' ability to interact with confidence with the opposite sex.
- Concerns were raised by primary-aged parents that merging the single-sex schools would impact negatively on the surrounding co-educational schools - drawing students to the merged site and reducing enrolments at existing schools.

### Decision-making factors – Primary Parents

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important are each of the following factors in your decision-making process in sending this youngest child to a particular high school?

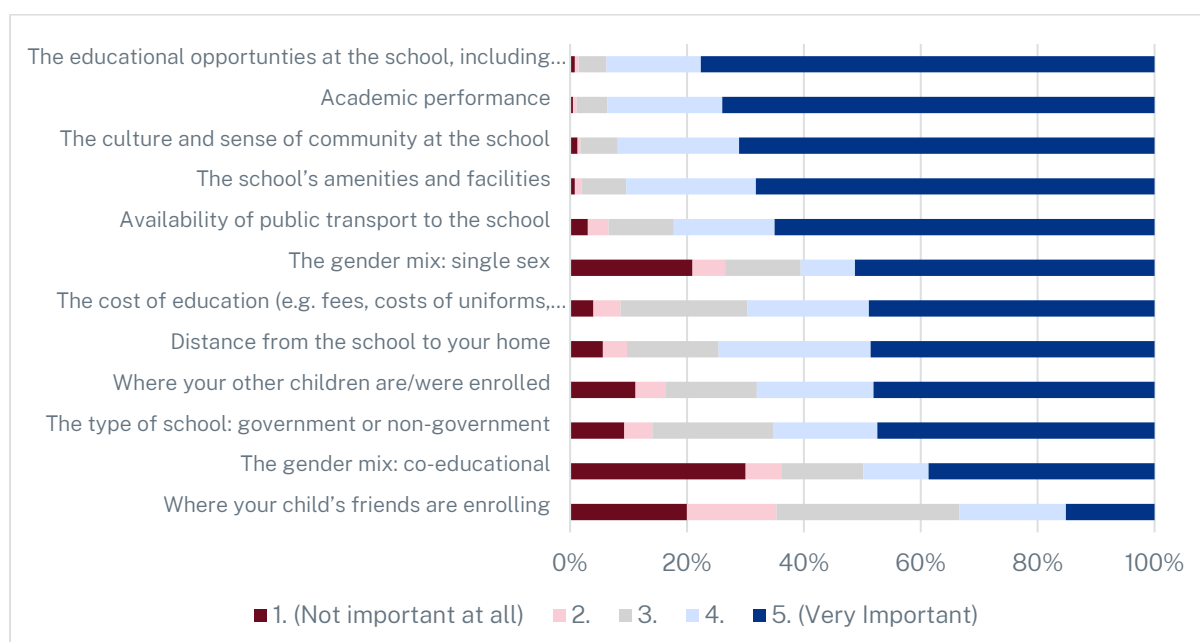


Figure 29. Primary Parents – Decision-making factors

### Most important decision-making factor - Primary Parents

Which one of these factors is most important in your decision making to send this youngest child to a particular high school?

The gender mix: single sex	26.52%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	22.68%
Academic performance	17.25%
The gender mix: co-educational	7.99%
The culture and sense of community at the school	7.03%
Where your other children are/were enrolled	5.91%
Distance from the school to your home	3.83%
Availability of public transport to the school	2.40%
The type of school: government or non-government	2.24%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	1.76%
The school's amenities and facilities	1.44%
Where your child's friends are enrolling	0.96%

Table 88. Primary parents – most important decision-making factor

### Single Sex vs Co-educational Preference - Primary Parents

Which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol this youngest child in?

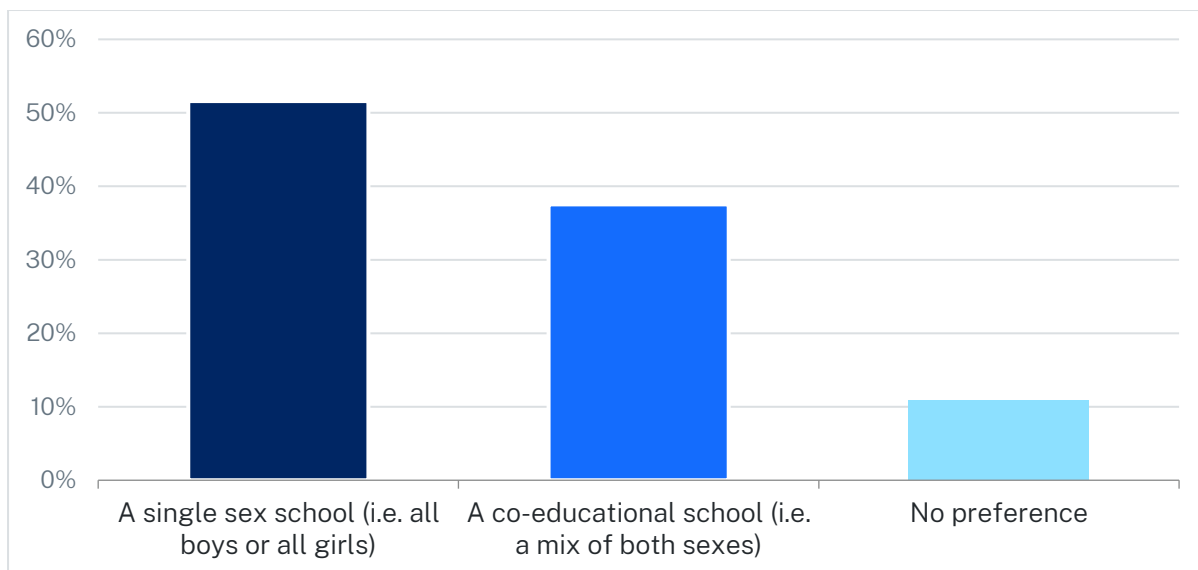


Figure 3018. Primary Parents – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### View of proposals - Primary Parents

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School sites. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

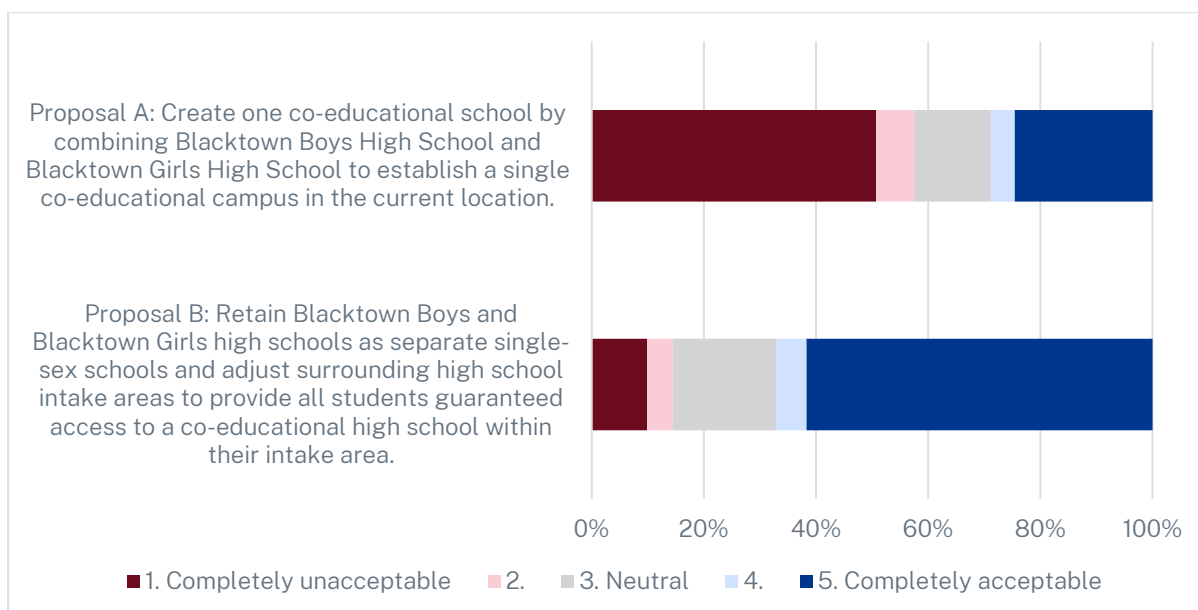


Figure 3119. Primary Parents – View of proposals

## Most acceptable proposal - Primary Parents

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

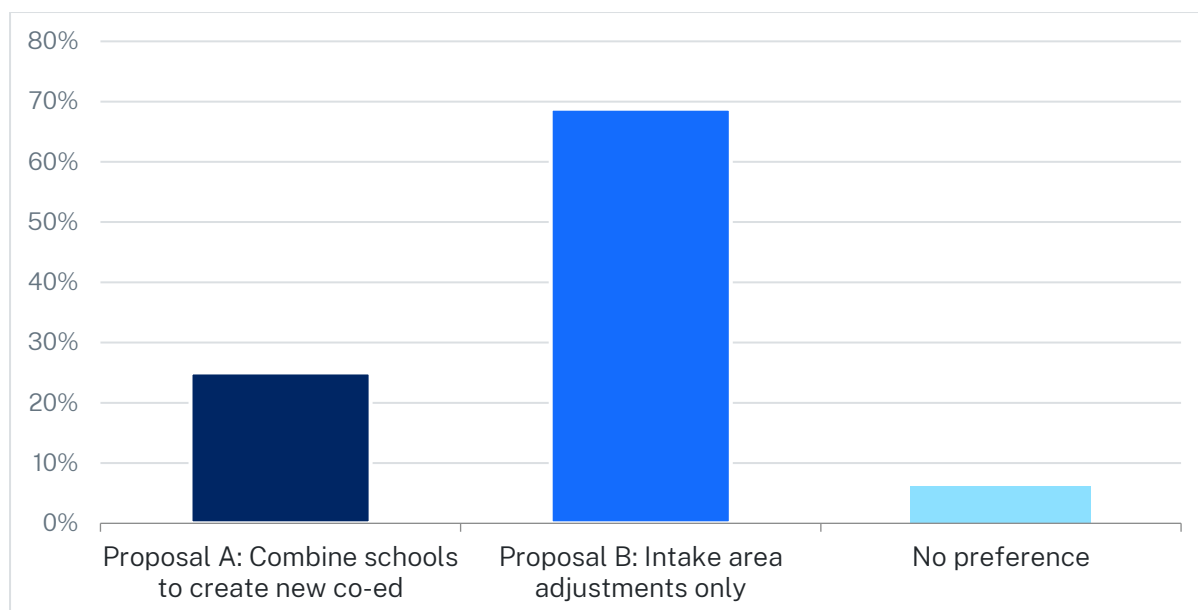


Figure 3220. Primary Parents – Most acceptable proposal

### Why/further comments

*“Proposal B is very important to me as my children are in area for other coeducational government high schools yet I choose and wish to send them to a government single sex school as this is beneficial for my children. My child enjoys a single sex environment and is able to thrive and be more confident, and merging the schools would be a huge negative impact for both my children. Proposal A would be disruptive and unnecessary for students, staff, parents and community as there are plenty of coeducational schooling options available, yet not as many single sex and by keeping Blacktown girls and boys as they are, you are able to give people a choice rather than restricting them to only coeducational schools. I choose to send my children to single sex schools, it is not only because they are the only school in the area” Primary parent*

*“I believe coeducation helps students understand both genders well. It aids their careers and gives them the confidence to explore. It helps them be friendly with both genders without hesitation” Primary parent*

*“My reasoning is mostly religious reasons, I would feel most comfortable if my child continues her education at a single sex high school and allow her to focus more on her education without any unreasonable distractions” Primary parent*

*“Children will feel comfortable when they progress to higher studies as most of the colleges that offer higher studies are co-eds’. At the same time, co-ed at this stage will help build an “healthy competitive/sportsmanship kind mindset” and don’t have to worry about the gender discrimination in relation to skills, studies, sports and any services that are helpful for the community” Primary parent*

*“My son has Autism and would require a support unit setting. A single sex school would be most suitable for his development as there a very few local support unit high school settings and no other with single sex support units. I would like to hope whilst a small cohort that these students are being taken into consideration given the Girls High School has no support setting” Primary parent*

### 5.2.3 Blacktown Boys High School Parents

108 parents/carers of students currently attending Blacktown Boys High School participated in the survey. Most of the respondents have children in Years 7 and 8 (64% respondents).

Parents/carers of students at Blacktown Boys High School valued **The gender mix (single sex)**, **The educational offerings at the school (including subject choices and extracurricular activities)** and **Academic performance** as the most important decision factors when selecting a school for their children.

**The gender mix (single sex)** as the most important had an importance rating of 32%.

When asked if they had the opportunity to make the decision again with all options available (co-educational and single-sex), which type of school they would prefer to enrol their child in, 53% answered that they would prefer to enrol their child in a single-sex school setting, 34% selected a co-educational setting and 13% had no preference.

A large proportion of respondents (60%) rated Proposal B to retain the single-sex schools and adjust surrounding co-educational intake areas as the most acceptable option.

#### Workshop conversations had the following strong themes:

- Availability of both single sex and co-ed schooling options is highly valued by parents, emphasising the importance of maintaining these choices for their children's education.
- If a transition were to take place, participants expressed concerns about the potential impact on the area's government share if families elect to enter the private schooling system to seek single sex options.

#### Decision-making factors – Blacktown Boys High School Parents

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important are each of the following factors in your decision-making process in sending this youngest child to a particular high school?

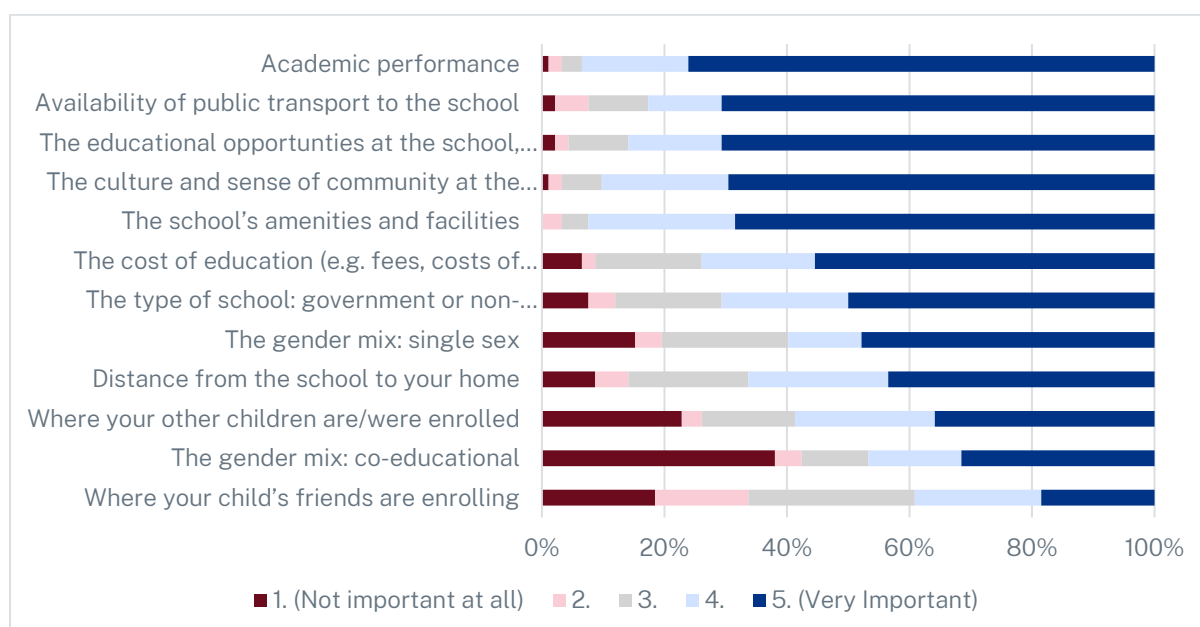


Figure 3321. Blacktown Boys High School Parents – Decision-making factors



### Most important decision-making factor - Blacktown Boys High School Parents

Which one of these factors is most important in your decision making to send this youngest child to a particular high school?

The gender mix: single sex	31.52%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	20.65%
Academic performance	17.39%
Distance from the school to your home	8.70%
Where your other children are/were enrolled	6.52%
The gender mix: co-educational	4.35%
The culture and sense of community at the school	4.35%
The type of school: government or non-government	2.17%
The school's amenities and facilities	2.17%
Where your child's friends are enrolling	1.09%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	1.09%
Availability of public transport to the school	0.00%

Table 99. Blacktown Boys High School Parents – Most important decision-making factor

### Single Sex vs Co-educational Preference - Blacktown Boys High School Parents

Which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol this youngest child in?

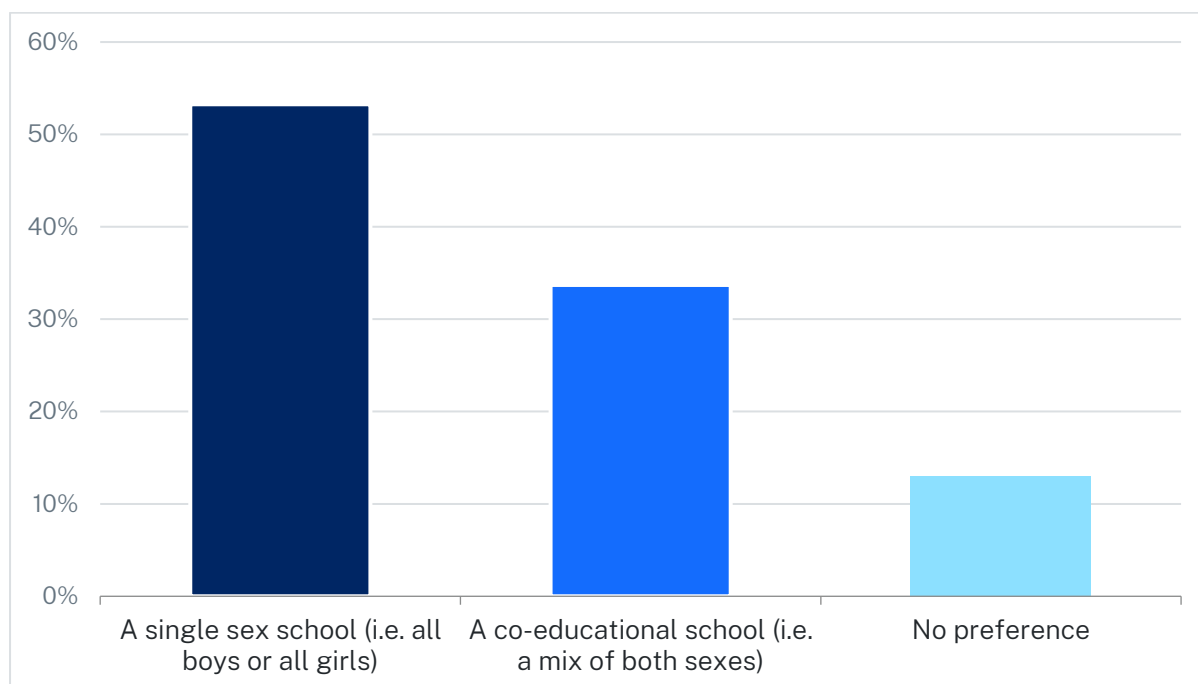


Figure 34. Blacktown Boys High School Parents – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### View of proposals - Blacktown Boys High School Parents

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School sites. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

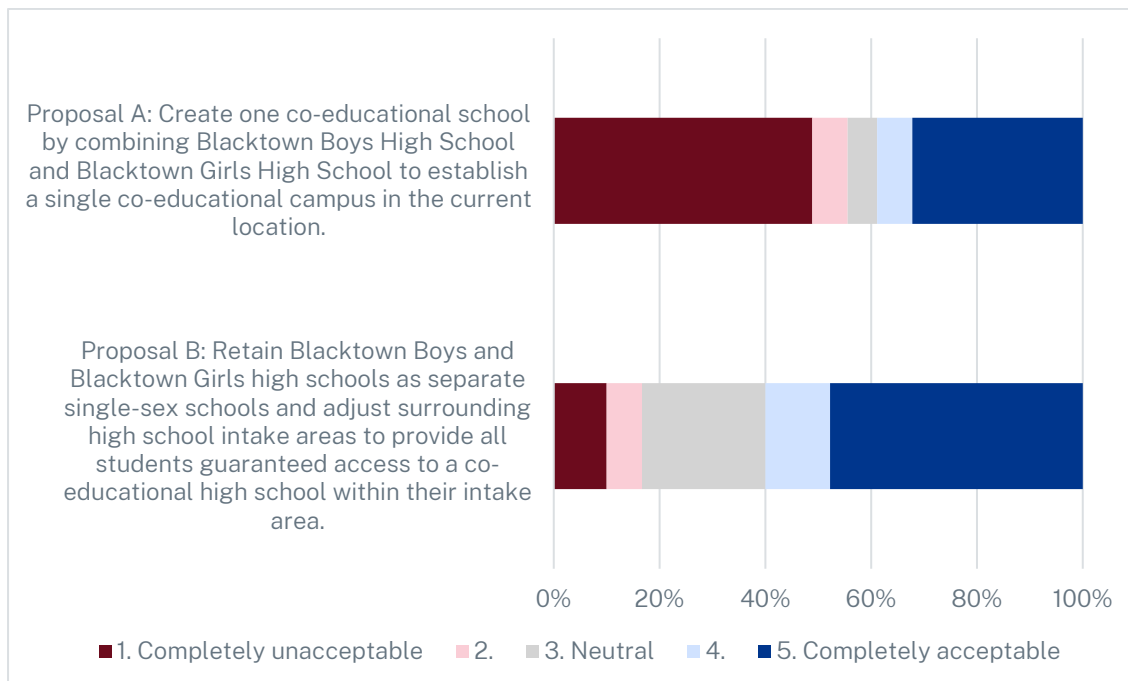


Figure 3522. Blacktown Boys High School Parents – View of proposals

### Most acceptable proposal - Blacktown Boys High School Parents

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

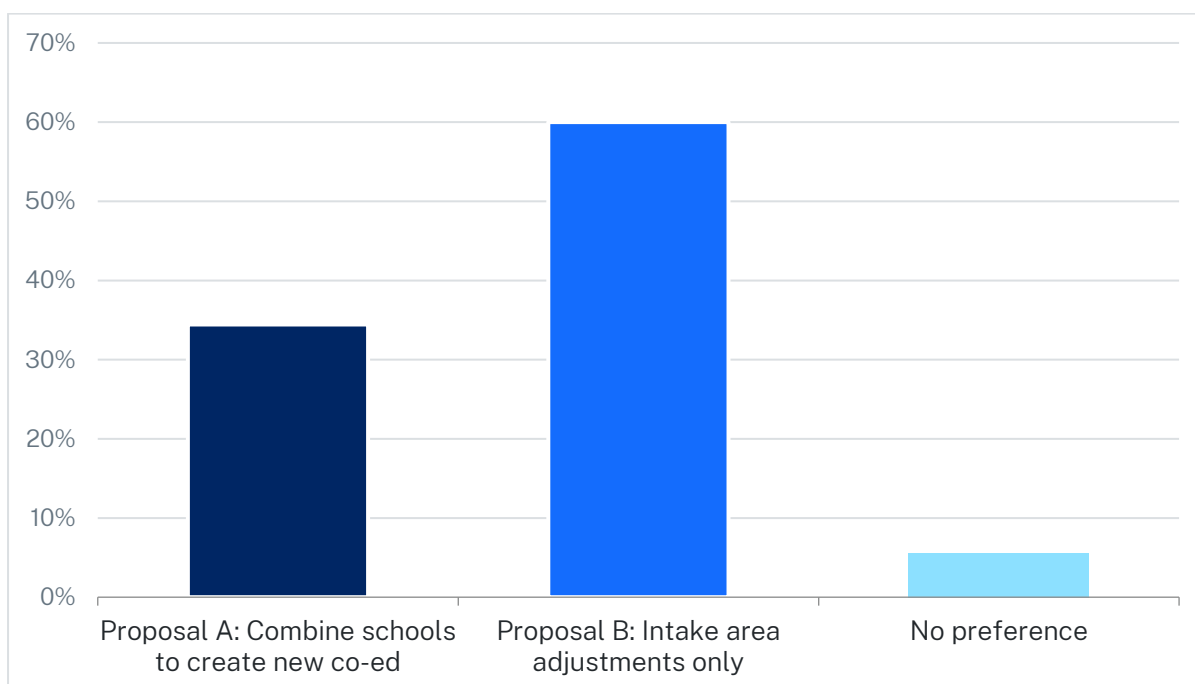


Figure 3623. Blacktown Boys High School Parents – Most acceptable proposal

#### *Why/further comments*

*“I would like both my son and daughter enrolled in single sex schools because as a Muslim I believe co-education is not important, however it is important to me both my children get the best education. Both genders should should (sic) have their own space and feel comfortable in their learning environment to thrive to their best”* Blacktown Boys High School Parent

*“The culture and opportunities of the students in the area depend highly on why they choose to attend either school, majority of the students attending single sex schools is due to their cultural and religious beliefs not to mention the comfortability of having the thought of it being a safe space for both genders whether it be students or staff”* Blacktown Boys High School Parent

*“Gender acquaintance is as important as cultural acquaintance to the children. The children needs to understand the other genders too as part of their education process before they get into the wider world”* Blacktown Boys High School Parent

*“Gender diversity within the same classroom fosters an environment that actively reduces gender-based discrimination and the dominance of a single perspective. This inclusive setting helps children develop a culture where they view peers of different genders as colleagues rather than as unfamiliar entities confined to separate silos. By interacting and collaborating with one another, students can form well-rounded opinions and mutual respect, which are crucial for their personal and social development. Moreover, such an environment encourages empathy, understanding, and cooperation among students, preparing them for diverse workplaces and communities in the future. It helps break down stereotypes and promotes equality, ensuring that all students feel valued and included”* Blacktown Boys High School Parent

#### **5.2.4 Blacktown Girls High School Parents**

241 parents of students currently attending Blacktown Girls High School participated in the survey. Most of the respondents have children in Years 7 to 9 (82% of respondents).

Parents of students at Blacktown Girls High School (45%) valued the gender mix (single sex) as the most important decision-making factor.

**Academic performance (18%), The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities (13%) and The distance from the school to your home (11%)** were the next highest rated responses.

When asked, if they had the opportunity to make the decision again with all options available (co-educational and single-sex), about which type of school they would prefer to enrol their child in, 69% answered that they would prefer to enrol their child in a single-sex setting, 18% selected a co-educational school, and 13% had no preference.

Among the parents of Blacktown Girls High School students, when analysing the acceptability of the proposals – Proposal B, retaining the current offering of single-sex education at Blacktown Boys High School and Blacktown Girls High School was the highest with 73% of respondents rating it as most acceptable.

#### **Workshop conversations had the following strong themes:**

- Availability of both single sex and co-ed schooling options is highly valued by parents, emphasising the importance of maintaining these choices for their children’s education.
- If a transition were to take place, participants expressed concerns about the potential impact on the area’s government share if families elect to enter the private schooling system to seek single-sex options.

### Decision-making factors - Blacktown Girls High School Parents

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important are each of the following factors in your decision-making process in sending this youngest child to a particular high school?

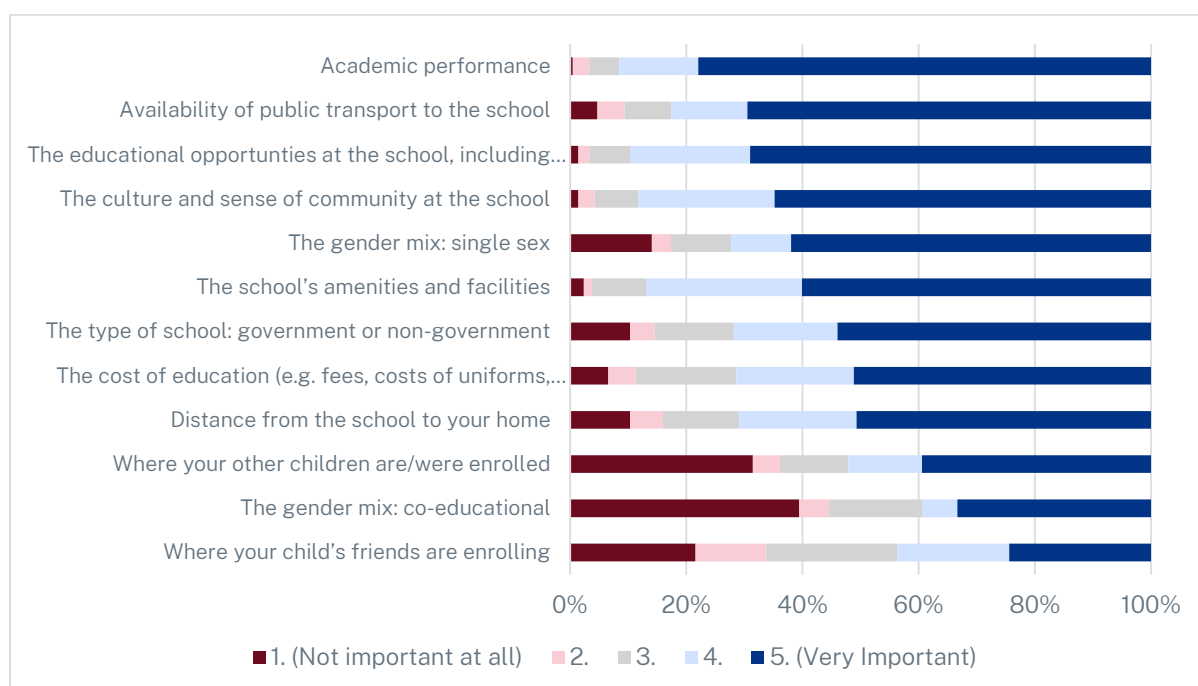


Figure 3724. Blacktown Girls High School Parents – Decision-making factors

### Most important decision-making factor - Blacktown Girls High School Parents

Which one of these factors is most important in your decision making to send this youngest child to a particular high school?

The gender mix: single sex	44.60%
Academic performance	18.31%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	12.68%
Distance from the school to your home	10.80%
The school's amenities and facilities	3.29%
Where your other children are/were enrolled	2.82%
The gender mix: co-educational	1.88%
Availability of public transport to the school	1.88%
The culture and sense of community at the school	1.41%
The type of school: government or non-government	0.94%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	0.94%
Where your child's friends are enrolling	0.47%

Table 1010. Blacktown Girls High School – Most important decision-making factor

### Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference - Blacktown Girls High School Parents

Which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol this youngest child in?

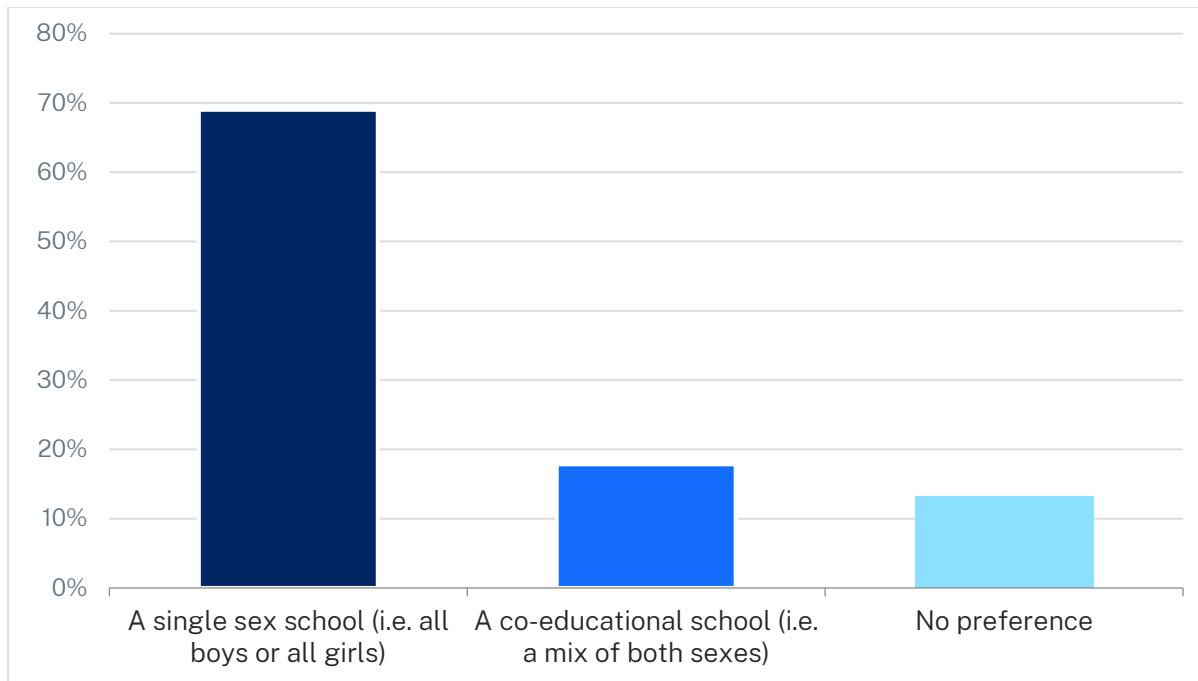


Figure 3825. Blacktown Girls High School Parents – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference

### View of proposals - Blacktown Girls High School Parents

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School sites. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

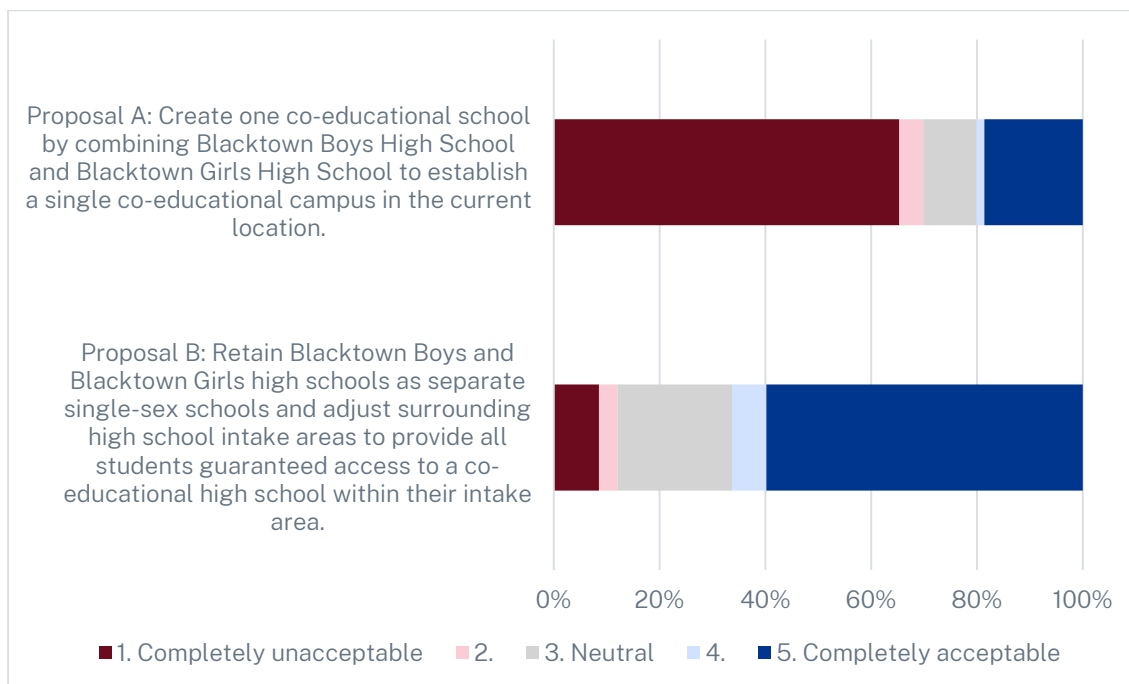


Figure 39. Blacktown Girls High School Parents – View on proposals

## Most acceptable proposal - Blacktown Girls High School Parents

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

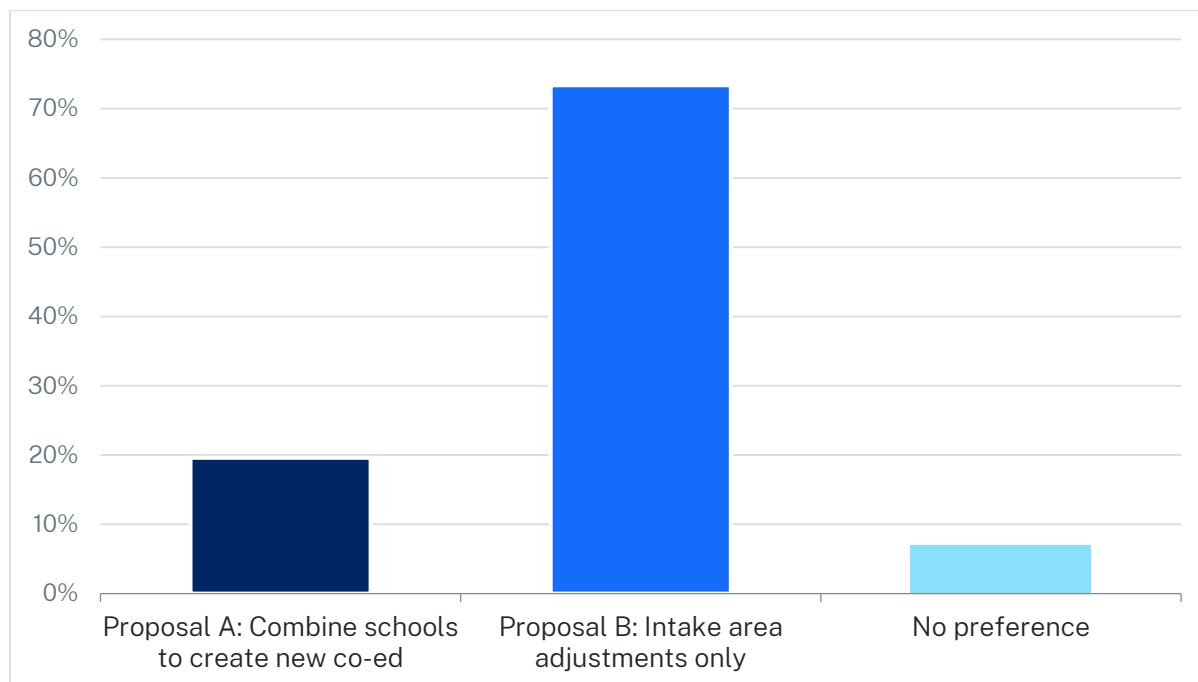


Figure 4026. Blacktown Girls High School Parents – Most acceptable proposal

### Why/further comments

*“It helps for better academic achievement, gives girls more confidence, single sex school gives girls more chance to pursuit extra - curricular activities also single sex school girls are rhe beneficiaries of a competitive boost. Initiates positive self image in girls. Research has shown girls are much better at STEM (Science, Technology, Engenering, and Mathematics). Also provides them with female empowerment. Single sex girls school gives girls a enhanced self-esteem and well-being. In all girls school, girls are more aspirational, their voices are heard more readily, and they are more motivated. And why does the government want to waste time and money on something that’s not broken and trying to change it. Blacktown Girls High School has been there for so many years and girls want to come their as the numbers of girl students increases every year”* Blacktown Girls High School Parent

*“Create one coeducational school by combining Blacktown girls and boys so that students who have been selected for the selective stream do not loose out of the academics and have a better competition and sense of belonging in the society”* Blacktown Girls High School Parent

*“Keeping the schools as single sex education schools is the most important and acceptable proposal. Many parents feel comfortable sending their children to Blacktown Girls as they feel a better sense of security, well-being and opportunities for their children. High school is a big step for many students, especially girls going through many physical and emotional changes in their early years of school. The girls have their own well-being and support programs that are tailored to them, and the school really assists with the girls being encouraged to be able to do anything”* Blacktown Girls High School Parent

*“I believe co-education plays a vital role in shaping a balanced and respectful society. By learning together, children develop mutual respect for all genders and understand the value of collaboration early in life. This mirrors the dynamics they will encounter later in universities and workplaces, preparing them for real-world environments. Additionally, co-education helps students appreciate the qualities and perspectives of the opposite gender, fostering*

*empathy and breaking down stereotypes. Such an environment encourages equality and inclusivity, creating a foundation for healthier relationships and professional interactions in the future” Blacktown Girls High School Parent*

### 5.2.5 Other Secondary School Parents

53 parents of students currently attending another high school participated in the survey. 82% of respondents had children in Y7 to Y9. Most of the respondents are from local schools such as Seven Hills High School, Mitchell High School, Quakers Hill High School and other gov/non gov high schools.

Parents of students attending other secondary schools rated **The distance from the school to their home** as the most important factor in their decision making when choosing a secondary school. **Educational offerings (including subject choices and extracurricular activities), Where their other children attended, and Academic performance** also rated highly.

When asked if they had the opportunity to make the decision again with all options available (co-educational and single sex), about which type of school they would prefer to enrol their child in, 57.45% answered that they prefer to enrol their child in a co-educational setting, 19.15% selected a single sex school preference, and 23.40% had no preference.

Most respondents (63%) rated Proposal B to retain the existing single-sex schools and adjust the surrounding co-educational intake areas as most acceptable.

#### **Decision-making factors – Other Secondary School Parents**

*On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important are each of the following factors in your decision-making process in sending this youngest child to a particular high school?*

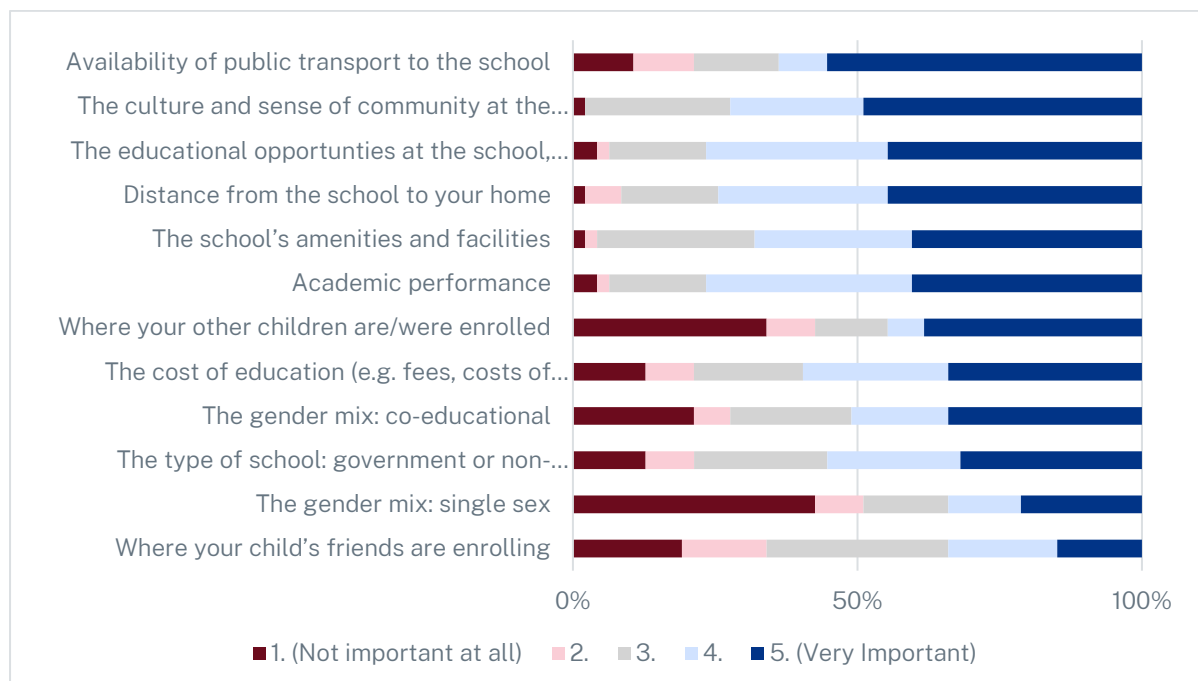


Figure 4127. Other secondary school parents – Decision-making factors

### Most important decision-making factor - Other Secondary School Parents

Which one of these factors is most important in your decision making to send this youngest child to a particular high school?

Distance from the school to your home	23.40%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	17.02%
Where your other children are/were enrolled	12.77%
Academic performance	12.77%
Where your child's friends are enrolling	8.51%
The gender mix: co-educational	6.38%
The culture and sense of community at the school	6.38%
Availability of public transport to the school	6.38%
The school's amenities and facilities	4.26%
The gender mix: single sex	2.13%
The type of school: government or non-government	0.00%
The cost of education (e.g. fees, costs of uniforms, transport, textbooks)	0.00%

Table 1111. Other secondary school parents – Most important decision-making factor

### Single Sex vs Co-educational Preference - Other Secondary School Parents

Which type of high school would you most prefer to enrol this youngest child in?

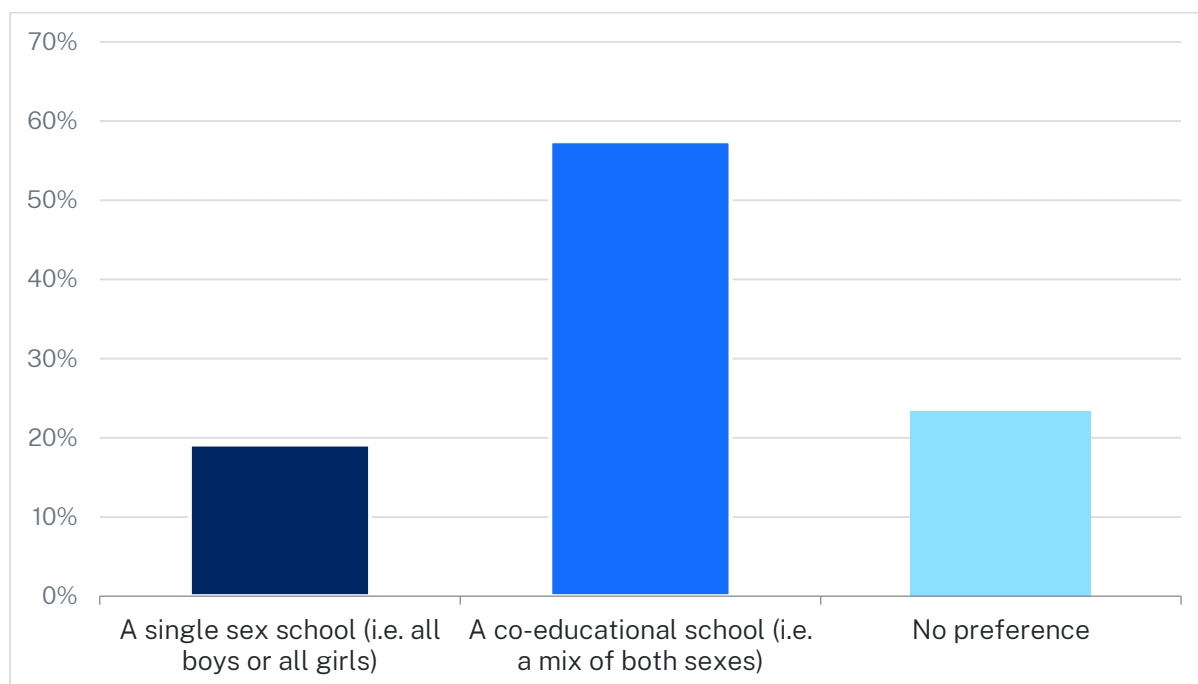


Figure 4228. Other secondary school parents – Single Sex vs Co-ed Preference



### View of proposals - Other Secondary School Parents

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School sites. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

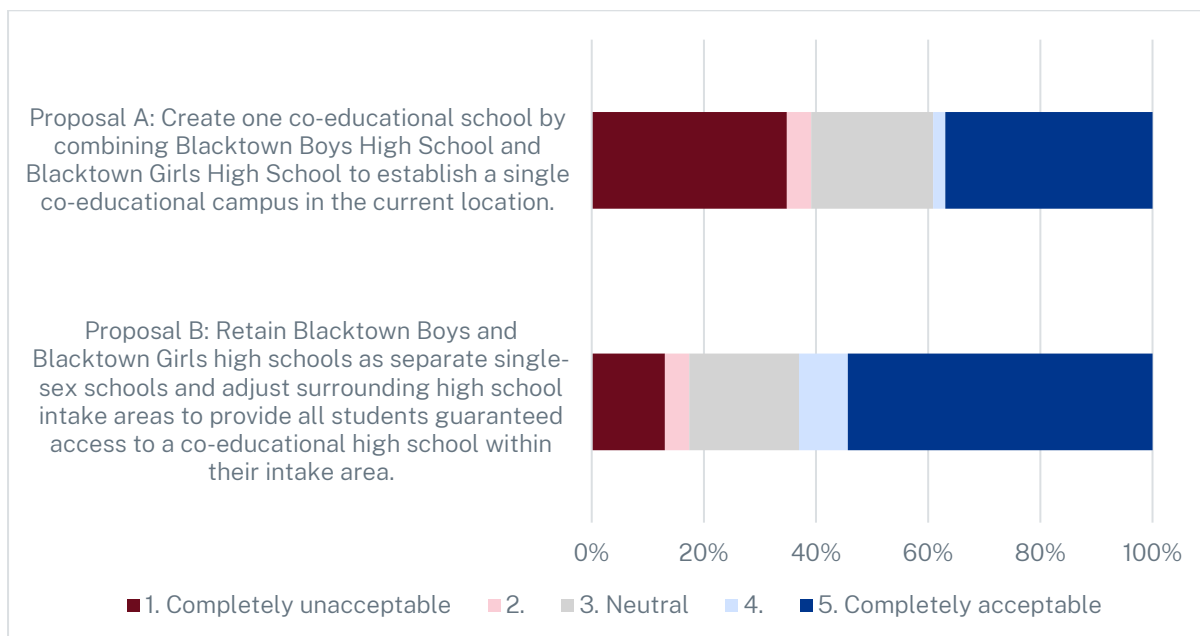


Figure 4329. Other secondary school parents – View of proposals

### Most acceptable proposal - Other Secondary School Parents

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

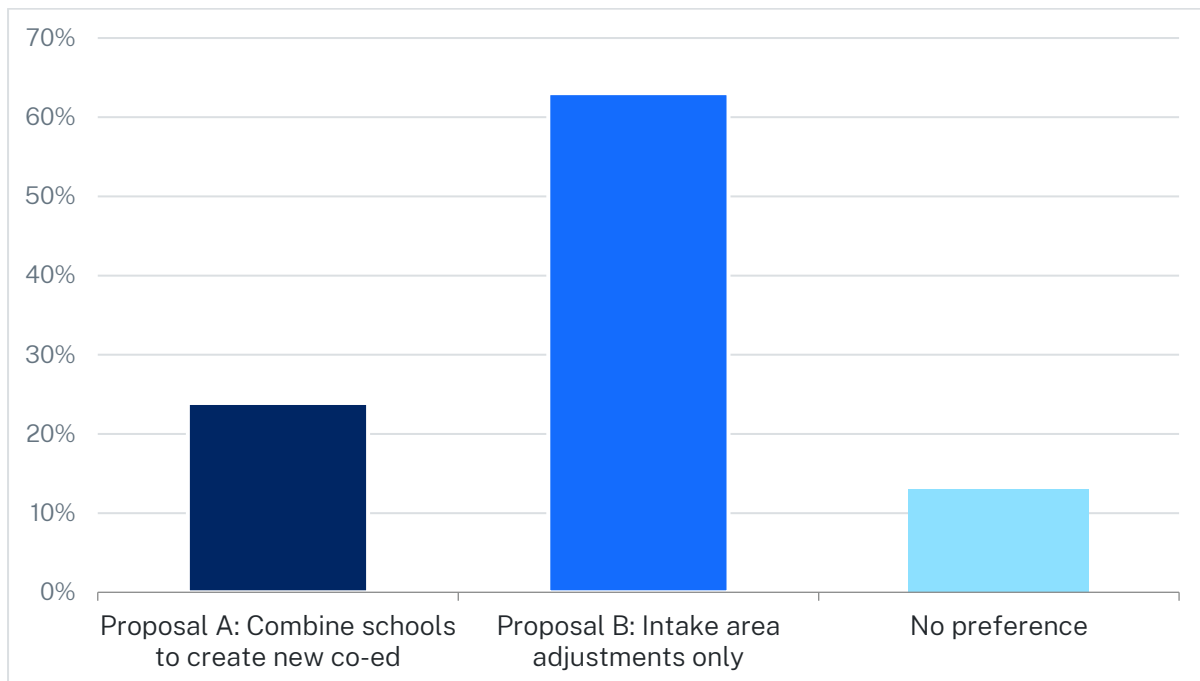


Figure 4430. Other secondary school parents – Most acceptable proposal

### *Why/further comments*

*“At the age we are living, I believe, boys and girls should be in education/at the school together. Separating them at the high school level prevents day to day interaction between boys and girls and this is not inline (sic) with the standards of advanced democracy. Lack of direct interaction between boys and girls at their high school age creates problems later in life”* Other secondary school parent

*“The option to choose a single-sex school is important. Given there are already plenty of co-ed schools in the region and no other single sex schools, it just makes good sense to retain the option and allow parents/carers and students to have a choice”* Other secondary school parent

*“I live within the Blacktown Girls and Boys High School intake areas, and I was very disappointed that I did not have an option to send my children to a co-educational school. I don't believe in single sex education and yet that was my only choice apart from applying out of area. I feel strongly that all families should be given a co-educational school option as their local school”* Other secondary school parent

## 5.3 Staff

### 5.3.1 Primary School Staff

44 staff members from government and non-government primary schools participated in the survey.

95% of staff who participated from these schools rated **A culture of inclusivity and support** at the school as a 5 (very important) on the scale of least to most important. **A culture of inclusivity and support at the school** was also rated the single most important factor in their decision making (37%).

**Educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities** (32%) and **The gender mix (single sex)** 24% also rated highly when considering the most important factor in their decision making.

Among the primary staff, when selecting the most acceptable proposal, 76% chose Proposal B.

## Education quality factors – Primary School Staff

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important do you think each of the following factors are in achieving a quality high school education?

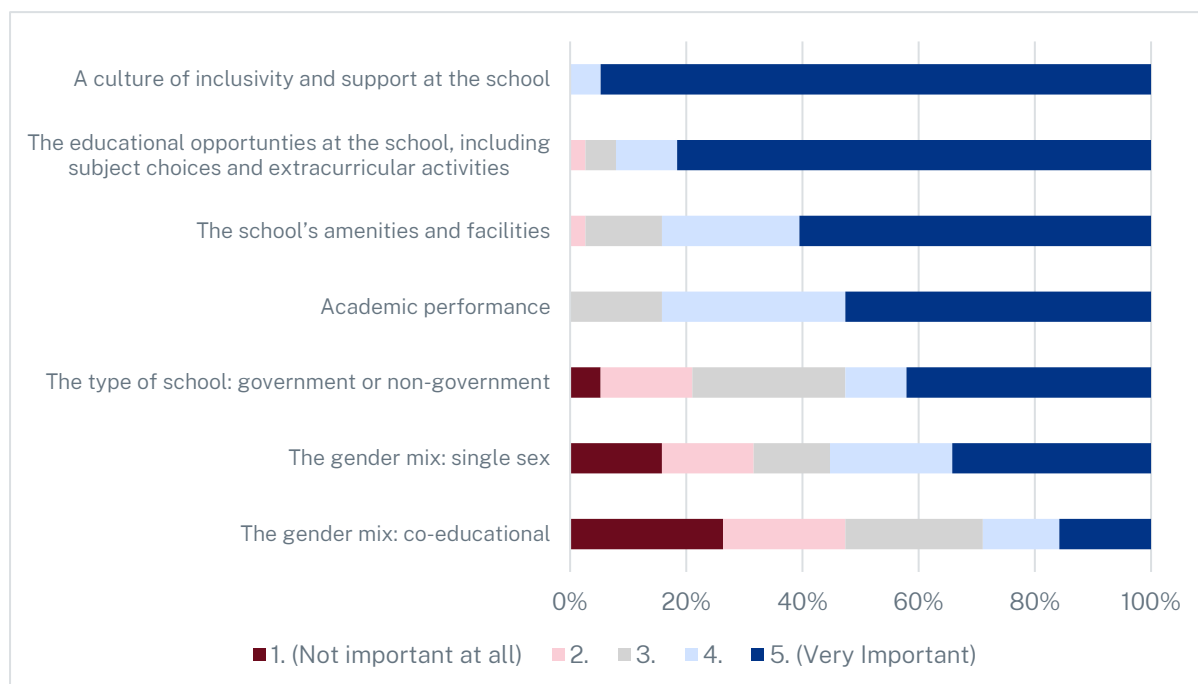


Figure 4531. Local Primary School Staff – Education quality factors

## Most important education quality factor - Primary School Staff

Which one of these factors is most important in achieving a quality high school education?

A culture of inclusivity and support at the school	36.84%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	31.58%
The gender mix: single sex	23.68%
The gender mix: co-educational	2.63%
Academic performance	2.63%
The school's amenities and facilities	2.63%
The type of school: government or non-government	0.00%

Table 1212. Local Primary School Staff – Most important education quality factor

### View on proposals - Primary School Staff

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

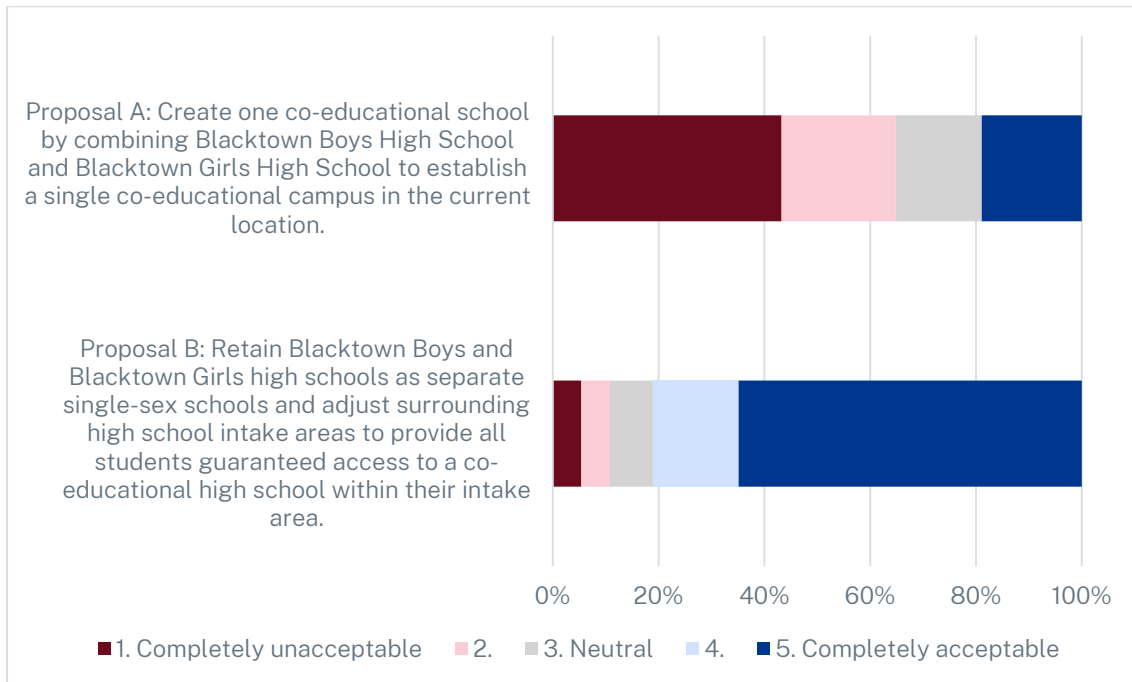


Figure 4632. Local Primary School Staff – View on proposals

### Most acceptable proposal - Primary School Staff

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

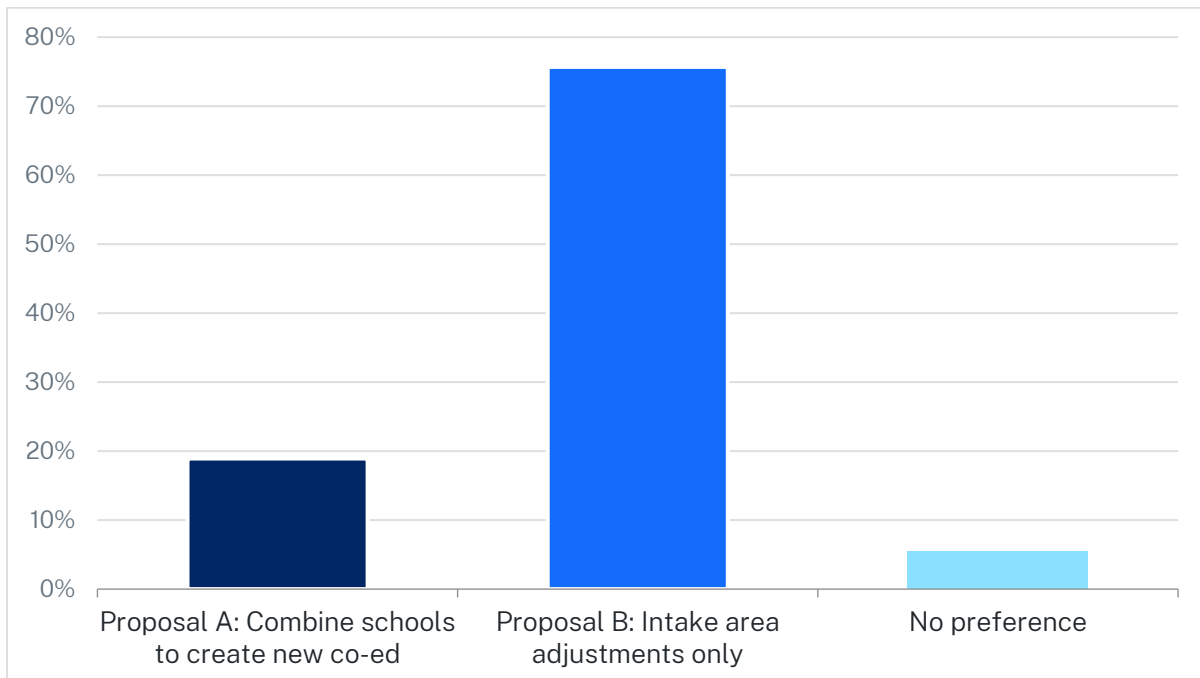


Figure 4733. Local Primary School Staff – Most acceptable proposal

#### *Why/other comments*

*“Some parents value single sex schools. Removing them reduces parental choice. Single sex private schools are usually high performers academically. Students in low socio economic areas like Blacktown deserve to be given the choice of also accessing single sex schooling in the interests of equity”* Primary school staff member

*“Education of students will be dependent on teachers and the quality of teaching practices. The individuality of students and their sense of belonging to the school/community”* Primary school staff member

*“Cultural background of many people in this area would see single sex schools as necessary, however students should have the choice to go to a co-ed school if that is their preference. Removing single sex schools takes the choice away from students and their parents to go to a single sex school if that is their preference”* Primary school staff member

*“By creating one co-educational school parents will withdraw students from the two government schools and seek inrollment (sic) at non government school that offer single sex education. Parents send their children to those schools as they want single sex education for the thier children for many reasons. This will decrease enrollments (sic) at government schools not increase inrollments (sic)”* Primary school staff member

### **5.3.2 Blacktown Boys High School Staff**

53 staff members from Blacktown Boys High School participated in the survey.

87% of the staff who participated rated the culture of inclusivity and support at the school and **The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular** as a 5 (very important) on the scale of least to most important in achieving a quality high school education. **The gender-mix (single sex)** ranked the highest (33%) as the most important factor in achieving a quality high school education.

When asked about the single most acceptable proposal, 88% of Blacktown Boys high School staff selected Proposal B.

#### **Workshop conversations had the following strong themes:**

- Proposal B provides a model that satisfies the requirements of the governments co-educational promise whilst retaining gender specific single sex schooling options and providing choice to the community.
- Risk of government share loss due to the removal of government single-sex options with families seeking gender specific schooling though the private sector in Proposal A.
- If a decision to change to co-education is made, factors such as overcrowding, the need for significant upgrades, and ensuring the local community needs are met, need to be considered.
- If co-education is preferred, consider a third proposal of keeping two separate smaller standalone schools rather than merging to form one mega-school. This will preserve the sense of community.
- Consideration of the loss of speciality single sex teachers from the government sector if the single-sex schools are removed.

### Education quality factors – Blacktown Boys High School Staff

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important do you think each of the following factors are in achieving a quality high school education?

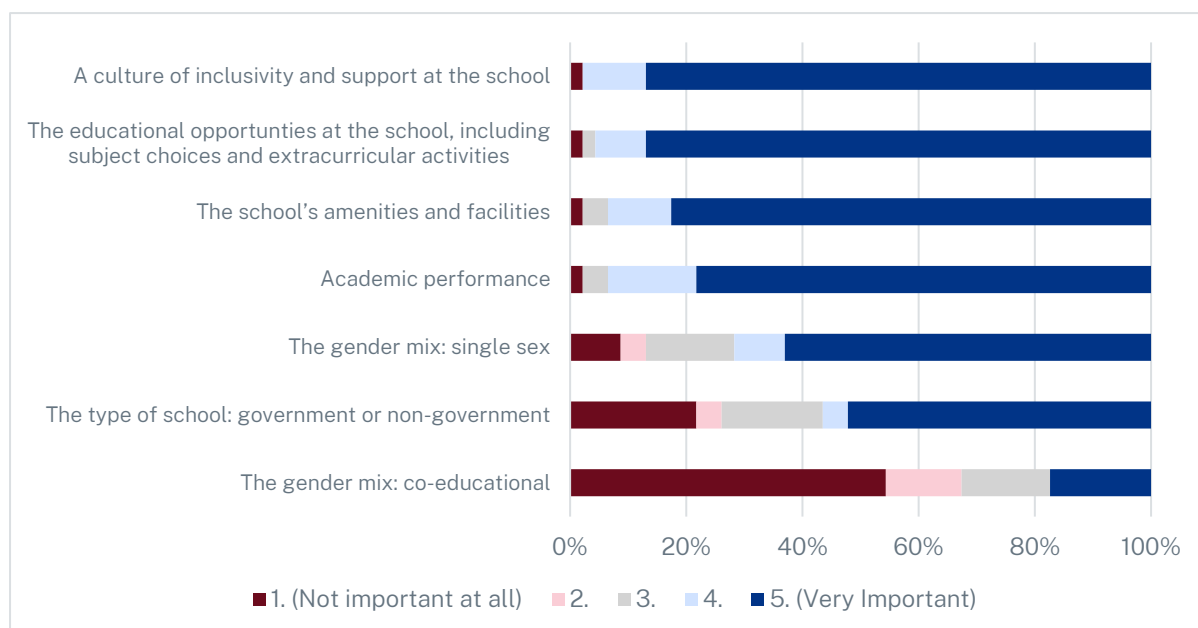


Figure 4834. Blacktown Boys High School Staff – Education Quality factors

### Most important education quality factor - Blacktown Boys High School Staff

Which one of these factors is most important in achieving a quality high school education?

The gender mix: single sex	32.61%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	30.43%
A culture of inclusivity and support at the school	15.22%
The school's amenities and facilities	13.04%
Academic performance	6.52%
The gender mix: co-educational	2.17%
The type of school: government or non-government	0.00%

Table 1313. Blacktown Boys High School Staff – Most important education quality factor

### View on proposals - Blacktown Boys High School Staff

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

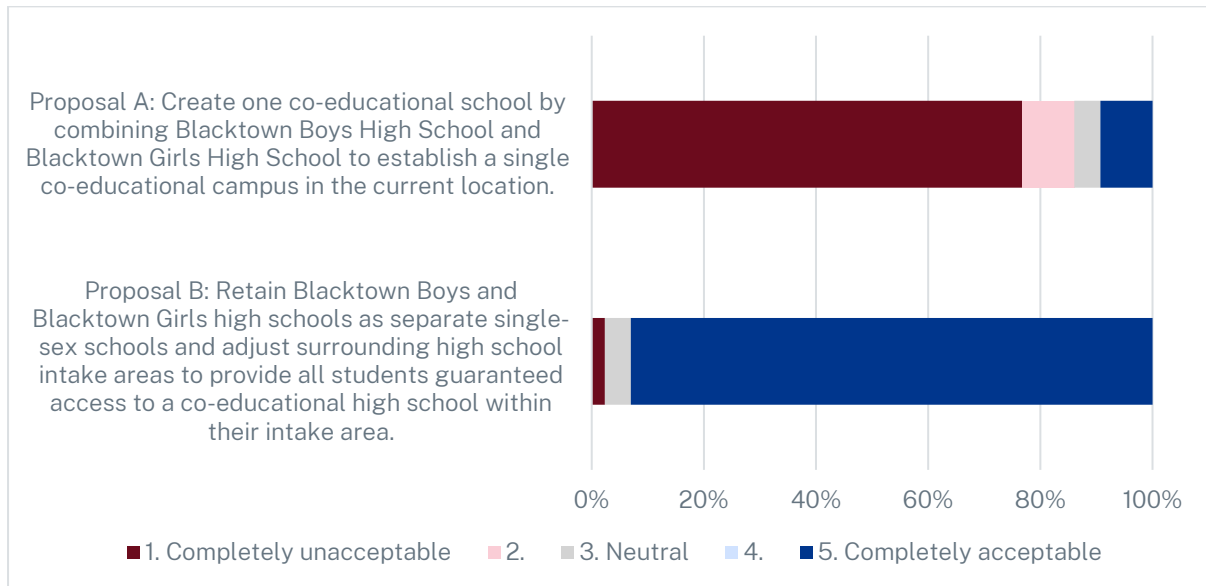


Figure 49. Blacktown Boys High School Staff – View on proposals

### Most acceptable proposal - Blacktown Boys High School Staff

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

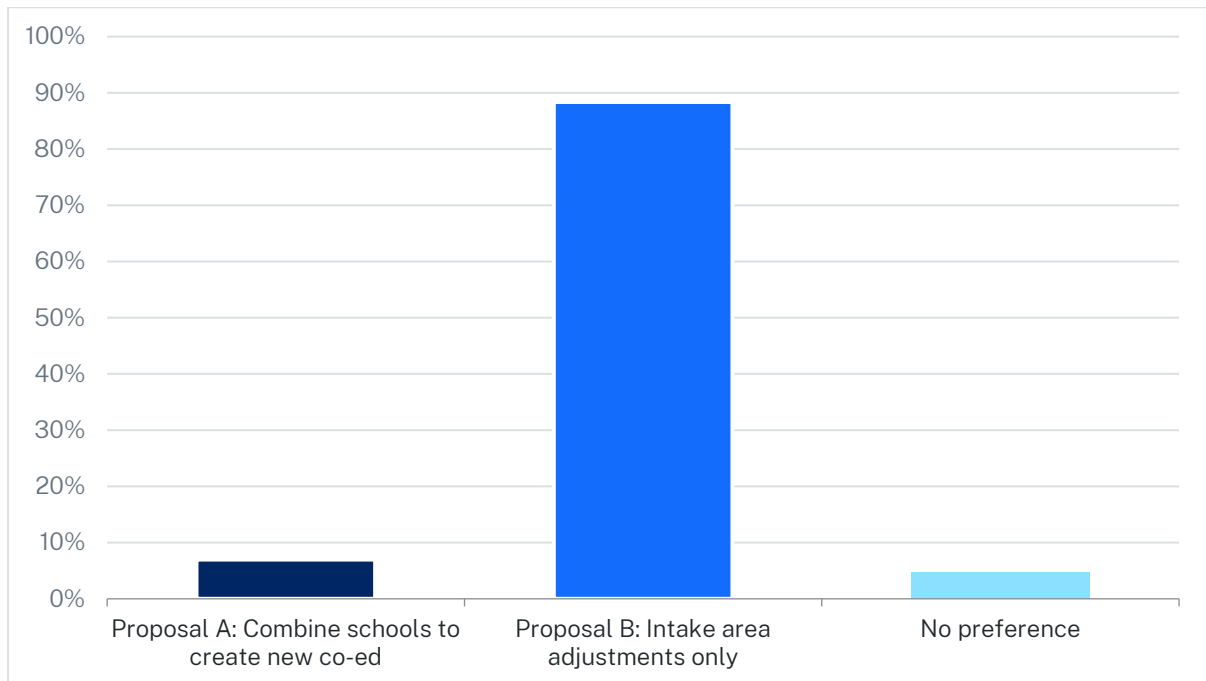


Figure 5035. Blacktown Boys High School Staff – Most acceptable proposal

### 5.3.3 Blacktown Girls High School Staff

106 staff members from Blacktown Girls High School participated in the survey.

90% of staff who participated rated **A culture of inclusivity and support at the school** as a 5 (very important) on the scale of least to most important. However, when asked about the single most important factor in their decision making the cohort selected **The gender mix (single sex)** was selected as the most important.

When asked about the most acceptable proposal, Proposal B was considered completely acceptable (84%) while Proposal A (merging the two single sex schools into one co-educational site) was considered completely unacceptable by 85% of respondents. 92% of Blacktown Girls High School staff selected Proposal B as the most acceptable.

#### Workshop conversations had the following strong themes:

- Safety and a sense of belonging for students, mental health considerations, increased opportunities for leadership and a non-judgmental environment were key discussion points.
- Emphasis on the importance of single-sex education for higher female participation to co-curricular activities and a tailored approach to girls' learning needs.
- Overall strong preference for Proposal B over Proposal A.
- The need for significant infrastructure upgrades and funding to ensure that there are enough teaching spaces at surrounding co-educational schools to absorb families that elect to enrol at a mixed gender school setting.

#### Education quality factors - Blacktown Girls High School Staff

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important do you think each of the following factors are in achieving a quality high school education?

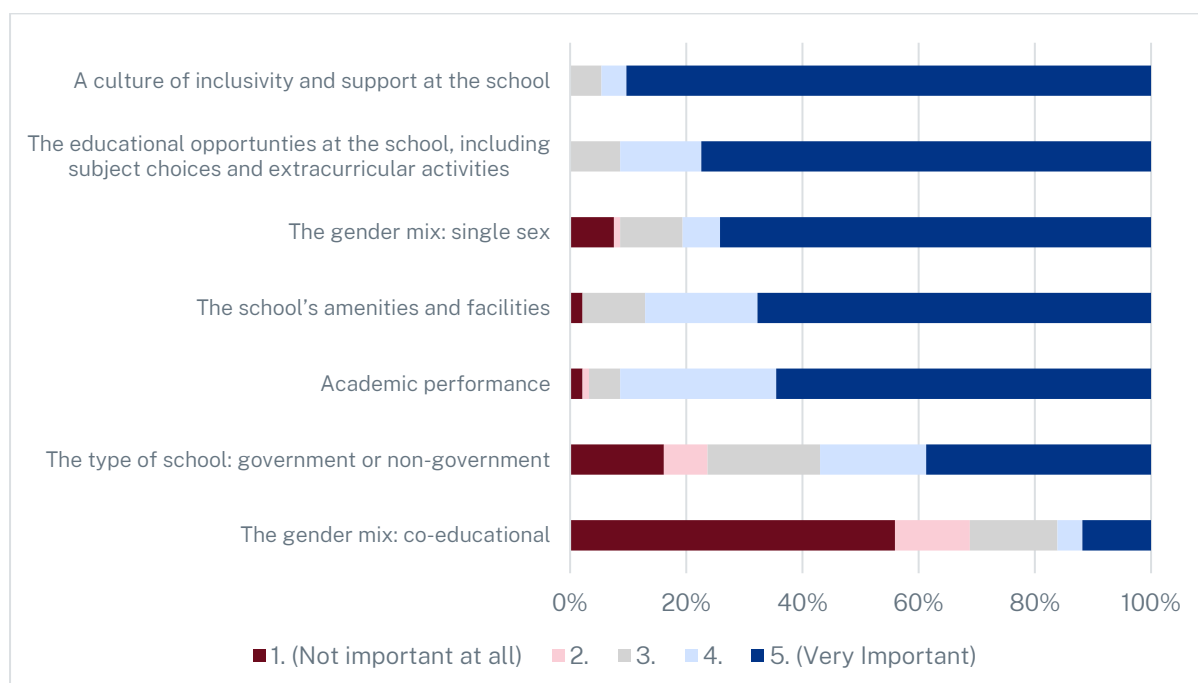


Figure 5136. Blacktown Girls High School Staff – Education Quality factors



### Most important education quality factor - Blacktown Girls High School Staff

Which one of these factors is most important in achieving a quality high school education?

The gender mix: single sex	45.16%
The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	19.35%
A culture of inclusivity and support at the school	18.28%
Academic performance	9.68%
The gender mix: co-educational	3.23%
The school's amenities and facilities	3.23%
The type of school: government or non-government	1.08%

Table 1414. Blacktown Girls High School Staff – Most important education quality factor

### View on proposals - Blacktown Girls High School Staff

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

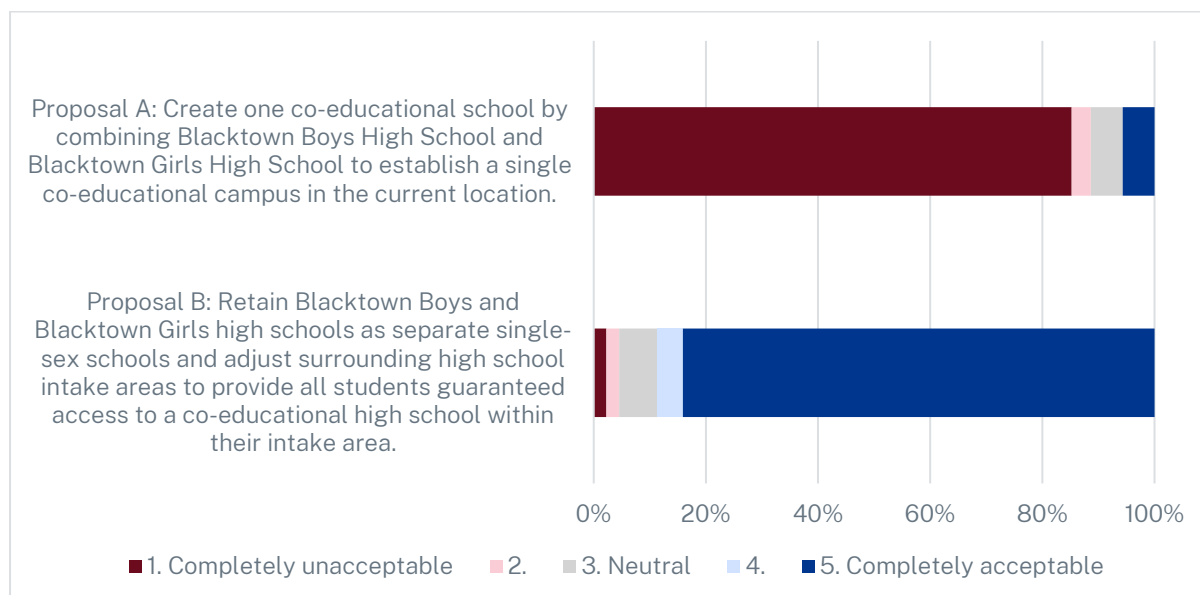


Figure 5237. Blacktown Girls High School Staff – View on proposals

### Most acceptable proposal - Blacktown Girls High School Staff

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

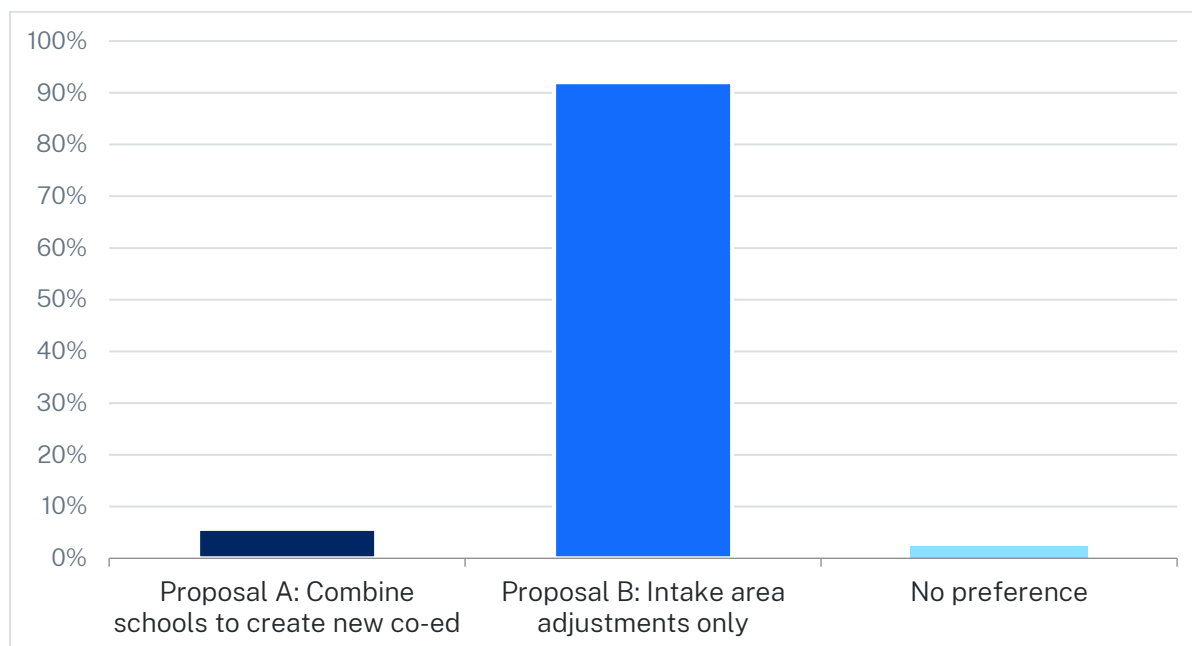


Figure 5338. Blacktown Girls High School Staff – Most acceptable proposal

#### 5.3.4 Staff from other schools

43 staff members from other schools participated in the survey.

More than 70% of staff who participated from other schools, including Mitchell High School, Seven Hills High School, Wyndham College and other secondary schools, rated **The educational opportunities at the school (including subject choices and extra-curricular activities)** and **A culture of inclusivity and support at the school** as a 5 (very important) on the scale of least to most important. This preference was mirrored within the cohort when asked about the single most important factor in their decision-making, with 65% selecting **The educational opportunities at the school (including subject choices and extra-curricular activities)**.

When asked about the most acceptable proposal there was a slight preference (50%) for Proposal B over Proposal A (40%). 10% of respondents had no preference.

### Education quality factors – Staff from other schools

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important do you think each of the following factors are in achieving a quality high school education?

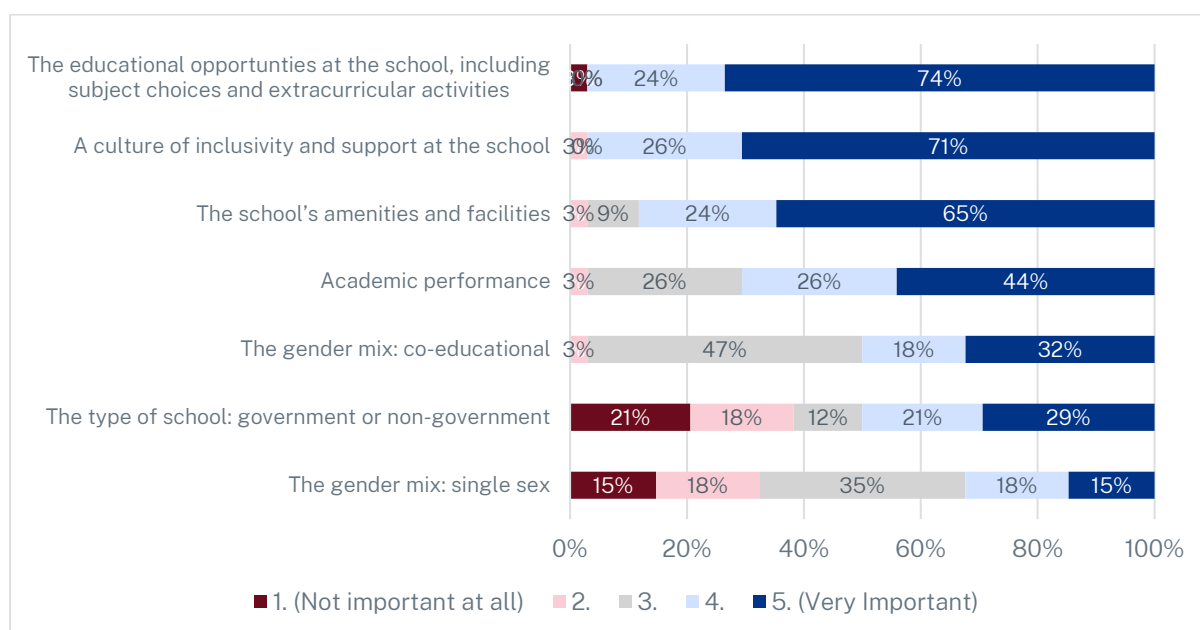


Figure 54. Other School Staff – Education quality factors

### Most important education quality factor

Which one of these factors is most important in achieving a quality high school education?

The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	64.71%
A culture of inclusivity and support at the school	23.53%
Academic performance	8.82%
The gender mix: single sex	2.94%
The gender mix: co-educational	0.00%
The type of school: government or non-government	0.00%
The school's amenities and facilities	0.00%

Table 1515. Other School Staff – Most important education quality factor

### View on proposals - Staff from other schools

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

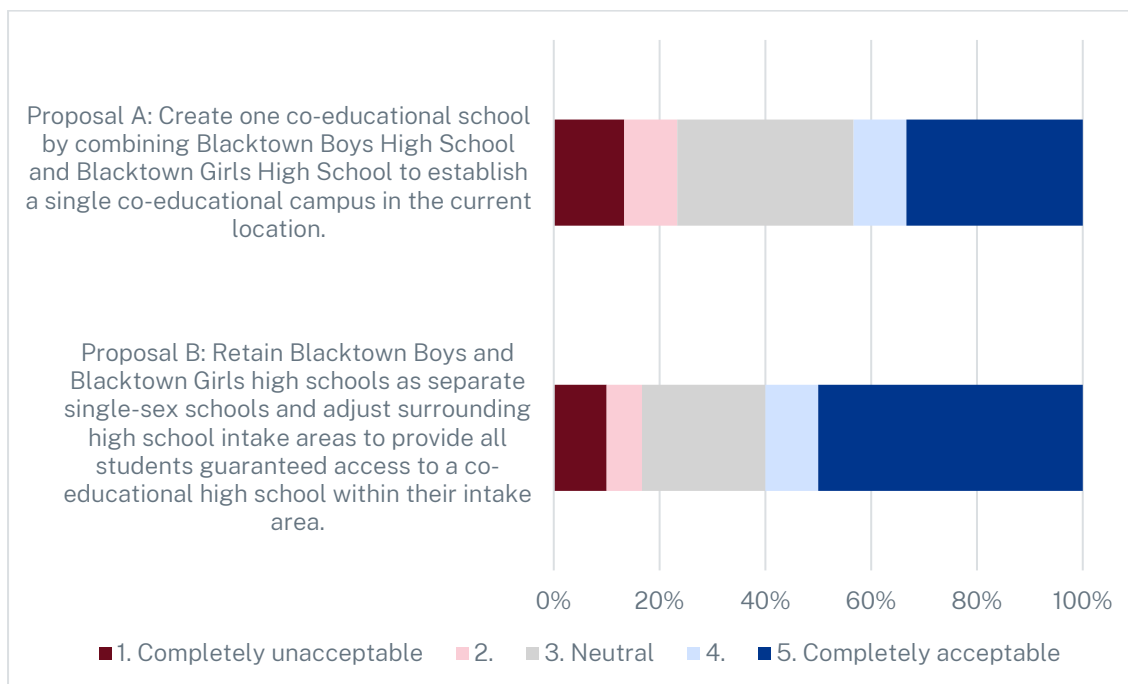


Figure 5539. Other School Staff - View on proposals

### Most acceptable proposal - Staff from other schools

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

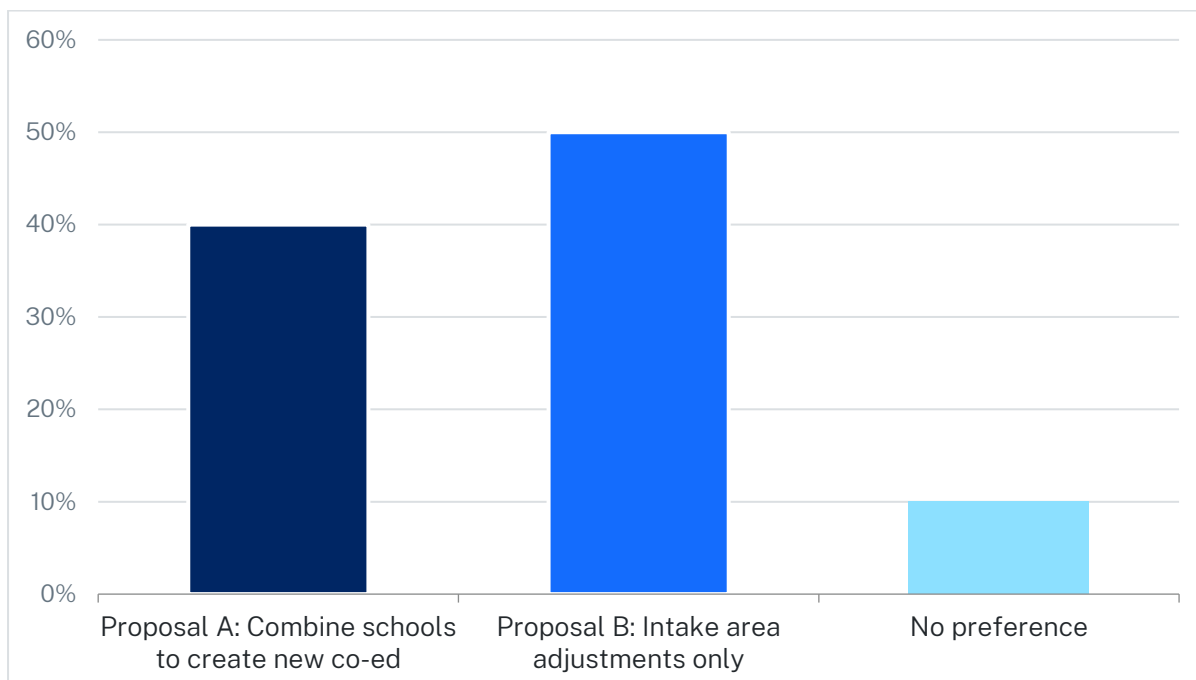


Figure 5640. Other School Staff – Most acceptable proposal

## 5.4 Special Interest Groups

The special interest group workshop highlighted the importance of catering to the needs of the community who have expressed a desire for single sex schooling options for cultural and religious reasons.

The Teacher’s Federation was in favour of Proposal A (merging both single sex schools into one co-educational site).

In the event of Proposal A (merging both single sex schools into one co-educational site) being implemented, the need for significant planning to reduce pressure and stress on single sex school staff, students and the community was raised.

Concerns were also broached in relation to the need for thorough infrastructure assessments on surrounding co-educational schools to ensure that sufficient teaching spaces are available to absorb students under both Proposals.

## 5.5 General Community

239 members from the general community participated in the survey.

Over 95% of general community members who participated from other schools rated **The culture or inclusivity and support at the school** and **The educational opportunities at a school including subject choices and extracurricular activities** as a 5 on the scale of least to most important. When asked about the single most important factor in their decision-making 37.43% rated **the educational opportunities at a school (including subject choices and extracurricular activities)** as most important.

When asked about the most acceptable proposal, Proposal B – retaining the single-sex schools and adjusting surrounding co-educational intake areas was ranked highest by the general community (81.76%).

### **Educational quality factors – General Community**

*On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important), how important do you think each of the following factors are in achieving a quality high school education?*

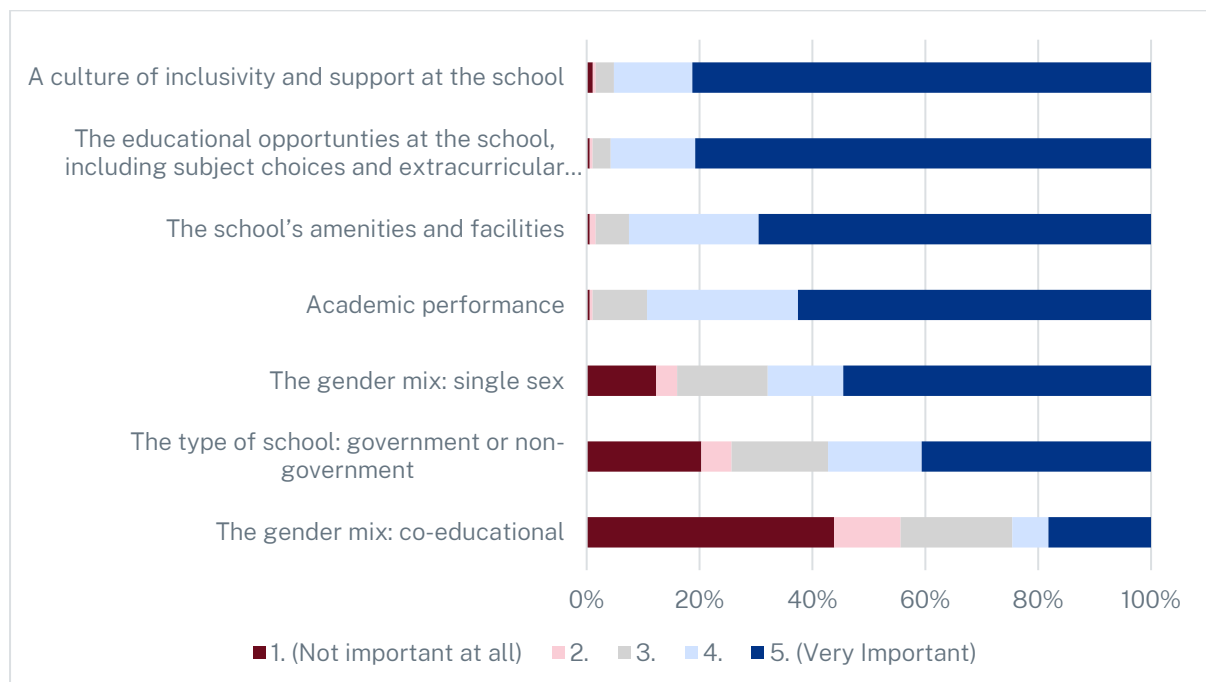


Figure 5741. General Community – Education quality factors

### Most important education quality factor - General Community

Which one of these factors is most important in achieving a quality high school education?

The educational opportunities at the school, including subject choices and extracurricular activities	37.43%
The gender mix: single sex	28.88%
A culture of inclusivity and support at the school	16.58%
Academic performance	10.70%
The gender mix: co-educational	4.28%
The school's amenities and facilities	1.60%

Table 1616. General Community – Most important education quality factor

### View on proposals - General Community

The NSW Department of Education would like to know your views on some potential proposals for the educational offerings at the Blacktown Girls and Blacktown Boys High School site. How acceptable are these ideas to you?

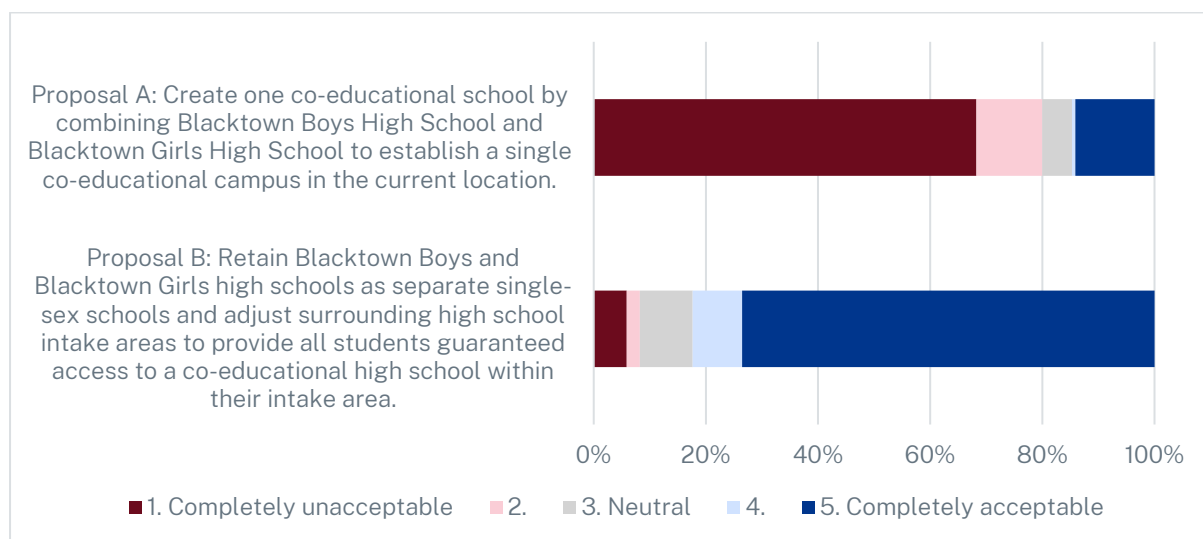


Figure 5842. General Community - View on proposals

**Most acceptable proposal - General Community**

Which one of these proposals would be the most acceptable to you?

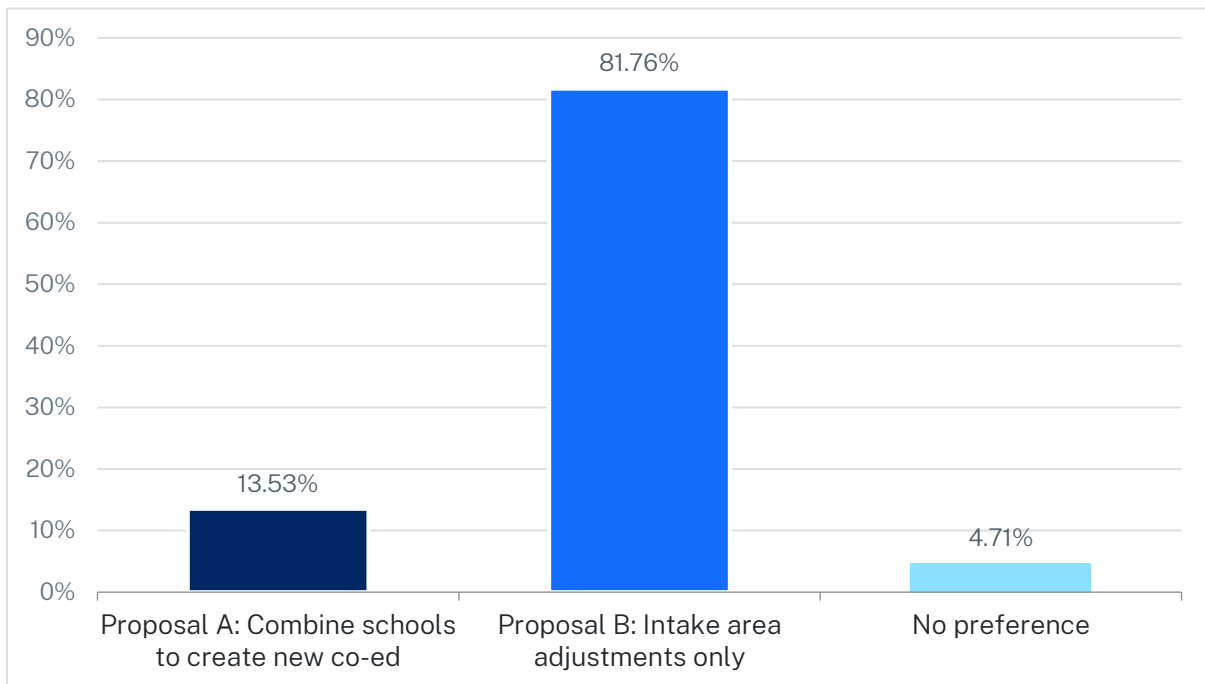


Figure 5943. General Community – Most acceptable proposal