

# Centre of Excellence Agricultural Education

Information pack | April 2021



Artist impression of the Centre of Excellence

The NSW Government is investing \$7 billion over the next four years, continuing its program to deliver more than 200 new and upgraded schools to support communities across NSW. This is the largest investment in public education infrastructure in the history of NSW.

The NSW Department of Education is committed to delivering new and upgraded schools for communities across NSW. The delivery of these important projects is essential to the future learning needs of our students and supports growth in the local economy.

We will deliver:



Agriculture labs and  
science labs



Aboriginal farming enterprise  
(in partnership with community  
and industry)



Pods for partnership  
work with industry  
(e.g. vertical farming)



Flexible learning  
and collaborative  
spaces



Food technology  
space



Short term accommodation  
facilities for visiting  
students & teachers



Administrative  
facilities



Agricultural  
enterprises

## Overview

The construction of a new Centre of Excellence in Agricultural Education (CoE) was announced by the NSW Department of Education in December 2019, and will be co-located on the Western Sydney University (WSU) Hawkesbury campus. The Centre of Excellence currently utilises WSU and TAFE/industry partnership facilities, delivering a range of programs to support agricultural and STEM education for students from across NSW. The Centre of Excellence received its first cohort of agricultural specialist stream (AgSTEM) students from Richmond Agricultural College in 2021. These students are enrolled through Richmond High School and spend three days a week at the Centre of Excellence campus. In 2022 the first academically selective agricultural (AgSTEM) stream will commence.

The project proposes to deliver a contemporary agricultural education facility which will be used as a state-wide resource, delivering world class agricultural and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. The CoE will involve farming enterprises, learning facilities and a residential facility to support teaching and learning for students in agricultural education.

The project has been through a planning phase, and we have received approval to start tenders for a design and construction contractor for the next stage of the project.

## Progress summary

A Project Reference Group (PRG) for the delivery phase of the project will be established to include architects, planners and design professionals, and Department of Education, Western Sydney University and parent / community representatives.

## Next steps

We will start the detailed design and seek planning consent through the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) for the proposed new build facilities. We will also start tenders for a construction contract.

## Timeline



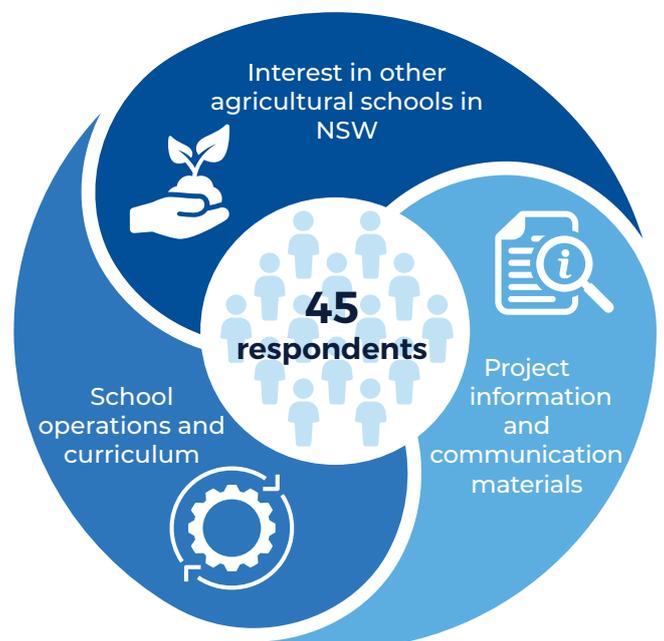
## Consultation

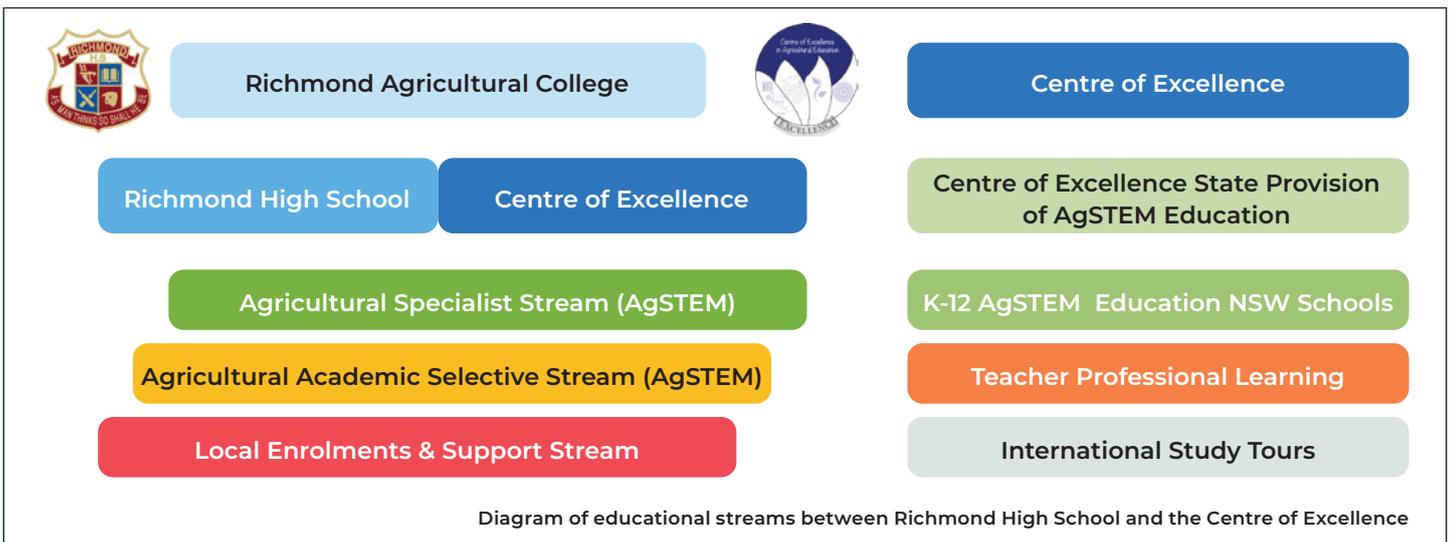
In February 2020, 16 community members attended a Community Information Session at Richmond Marketplace. Between February and March 2020, there was also an opportunity for members of the community to provide feedback on the project proposal via a survey. We received 45 survey responses with feedback on the project proposal.

The most important themes raised from all the feedback we received were:

- Project information and communication materials
- Interest in other agricultural schools in NSW
- School operations and curriculum

You can stay up to date by visiting the School Infrastructure NSW website: [schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au](http://schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au)





## Frequently asked questions

### What consultation has been undertaken for the Centre of Excellence?

Consultation with school communities, local communities and other stakeholders interested in and impacted by the Centre of Excellence was undertaken in February and March 2020. The aim of this consultation was to ensure stakeholders and community members were informed about the project in the early planning stage and to gather their feedback to help inform the project.

### How can I enrol my child in the Centre of Excellence?

You cannot enrol directly in the CoE. The CoE will provide various programs and project-based learning opportunities to visiting school groups from across NSW. Students in the agricultural specialist stream (AgSTEM) and agricultural academic selective stream (AgSTEM) at Richmond Agricultural College will be enrolled at Richmond High School. These students complete a portion of their studies at the CoE.

For more information on how to enrol, please contact:

**Centre of Excellence in Agricultural Education**  
**E:** richmondAgCollegeh.school@det.nsw.edu.au  
**W:** <https://richmond-h.schools.nsw.gov.au>

### What is involved in the agricultural education model?

The NSW Department of Education is implementing a new model for state-wide agricultural education. This includes delivery of the new Centre of Excellence in agricultural education, co-located at the Western Sydney University's Hawkesbury Campus, investing in Richmond High School and Hurlstone Agricultural High School.



Artist impression of Centre of Excellence

## How can I get involved?

We are committed to working together with our school communities and other stakeholders to deliver the best possible learning facilities for students. Your feedback on this project is important to us. For more information, questions or to make a comment please email us at [schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au) or phone 1300 482 651.

## Changing the way we communicate

The health and safety of our students, staff and community is our priority. We are temporarily changing some of the ways we keep you informed about our project in your community to account for social distancing measures.

Until further notice we will share information with our communities online instead of in person. The SINSW website will continue to have up-to-date information about the project in your area. Our information hotline and email address will continue to operate as normal.

[schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au](http://schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au)

## Stay informed



### Website

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### Email

Contact the Community Engagement team by emailing [schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au)



### Phone

Contact us between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday on **1300 482 651**