NSW Department of Education

Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School - Consultation Report

NSW Department of Education

October 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

We recognise the Ongoing Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live. We pay respect to Elders past and present as ongoing teachers of knowledge, songlines and stories. We strive to ensure every Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander learner in NSW achieves their potential through education.

Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School - Consultation Report

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1 Summary of consultation

1.1 About the community consultation

The NSW Department of Education (the department) conducted a comprehensive community consultation regarding potential changes to educational offerings at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School (Farrer MAHS). The consultation specifically focused on community attitudes towards the introduction of female students at the currently all-male boarding school.

Farrer MAHS, established in 1939, is one of three government selective agricultural boarding schools in NSW. Currently, it offers 60 Year 7 boarding places exclusively for male students, while Yanco Agricultural High School (30 boys, 30 girls) and Hurlstone Agricultural High School (15 boys, 15 girls) provide co-educational options. This means there are significantly fewer boarding places available for female students across the state (60 Year 7 places).

Boarding applications are made directly to the school and assessed on academic merit and suitability for boarding life through an interview. Applicants do not sit the Selective High School Placement Test, and local Tamworth boys are only considered after the first round of offers. Applications require recent school reports, NAPLAN results (or similar), a photo, proof of address, and may include an interview later in the year.

The school also caters to day students from the Tamworth area. There are 50 day places in Year 7 and these are selective, requiring students to sit the selective schools test to secure enrolment.

Farrer MAHS is the only boys boarding school (public or private) between Sydney and the Queensland boarder. Over the past three years, 38% of applications to Farrer MAHS came from Year 6 students enrolled at non-government schools.

Figure 1. Aerial view of Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School (Eagle Eye, Nearmap 2025)

1.2 Who was involved

The consultation engaged a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including:

- Current Farrer MAHS students.
- Parents and carers of current students, other high school students and/or primary students.
- Parents or carers with children aged 18 years or younger not enrolled at Farrer MAHS.
- Staff members of Farrer MAHS and other public schools.
- Community members from the general public and special interest groups.

1.3 How many people participated

Students

128 Current Farrer MAHS Students

Parents and carers

843 parents or carers of current primary school students
688 parents or carers of current secondary school students
43 parents or carers of children current in early childhood

Workshops:

Across 20 workshops, parents, staff students, special interest groups and the general public participated in discussions and qualitative data was collected

General public

459 General public

School staff

53 Farrer MAHS staff members

Additional Correspondence:

The department received an additional 18 direct emails providing feedback on the proposal of Farrer enrolling girls

1.4 Report considerations

This is community engagement, not research.

- This was an opt-in engagement project. Participants were not incentivised nor 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 by adding more workshops as required and allowing participants who belonged to multiple cohorts to attend the workshop most convenient for them.

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, each cohort would need to have been weighted to its approximate relative incidence within the true population. This cannot be achieved because:

- The cohorts overlap with each other to an unknown extent. That is, 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.

1.5 Focus questions presented to all stakeholders

Different questions about single sex and co-educational settings as well as decision-making factors that influence high school choice were put to different stakeholders in surveys and workshops. All stakeholders in both surveys and workshops were asked two key focus questions.

Focus Question A

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

Focus Question B

Do you support the introduction of places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School?

Additional Question for all stakeholders

Respondents were also asked to identify what considerations would need to be factored in if Farrer MAHS were to accept female students. Across all stakeholder cohorts, the factor that was consistently ranked most important was **School facilities/infrastructure**.

1.6 Survey findings summary: Parents and carers

Parent cohorts have been grouped as future school community (early childhood and primary parents and carers) and current school community. Two further sub-sections of the future school community have been highlighted to understand the appetite for change at Farrer MAHS amongst the parents of girls (prospective day students from Tamworth and prospective boarders from outside of Tamworth). These two cohorts answered questions about their likelihood of enrolling their daughters at a co-educational Farrer MAHS.

While survey findings across past and current school community members in support of the introduction of female students was limited, insights provided by the future Farrer MAHS community and parents of girls outside of Tamworth local government area demonstrated stronger support. Additionally, in the workshops and email submissions, most participants said that equal places for girls and boys should be addressed.

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

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

There were **749** responses from parents and carers of primary school and early childhood students:

- Yes: **56.1%**
- No: **35.5%**
- Unsure: **8.4%**

Do you support the introduction of places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School?

There were **749** responses from parents and carers of primary school and early childhood students:

- Yes: **51%**
- No: **44.2%**

- Unsure: **4.8%**

Future school community insights – parents of girls outside of Tamworth

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

There were **125** responses from parents and carers with daughters living outside of Tamworth LGA:

- Yes: **62.3%**
- No: **30.8%**
- Unsure: **6.9%**

Do you support the introduction of places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School?

There were **125** responses from parents and carers with daughters living outside of Tamworth LGA:

- Yes: **50.6%**
- No: **45%**
- Unsure: **4.4%**

Future school community insights – parents of girls within Tamworth

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

There were **293** responses from parents and carers with daughters living within Tamworth LGA:

- Yes: **63.8%**
- No: **25.6%**
- Unsure: **10.6%**

Do you support the introduction of places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School?

There were **293** responses from parents and carers with daughters living within Tamworth LGA:

- Yes: **64.8%**
- No: **30.4%**

Unsure: **4.8%**

Current school community insights (parents/carers of Farrer MAHS students):

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

There were **438** responses from parents and carers of current Farrer MAHS students:

- Yes: **37.9%**
- No: **49.1%**
- Unsure: **13%**

Do you support the introduction of places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School?

There were **438** responses from parents and carers of current Farrer MAHS students:

- Yes: **21.5%**
- No: **71.5%**
- Unsure: **7%**

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

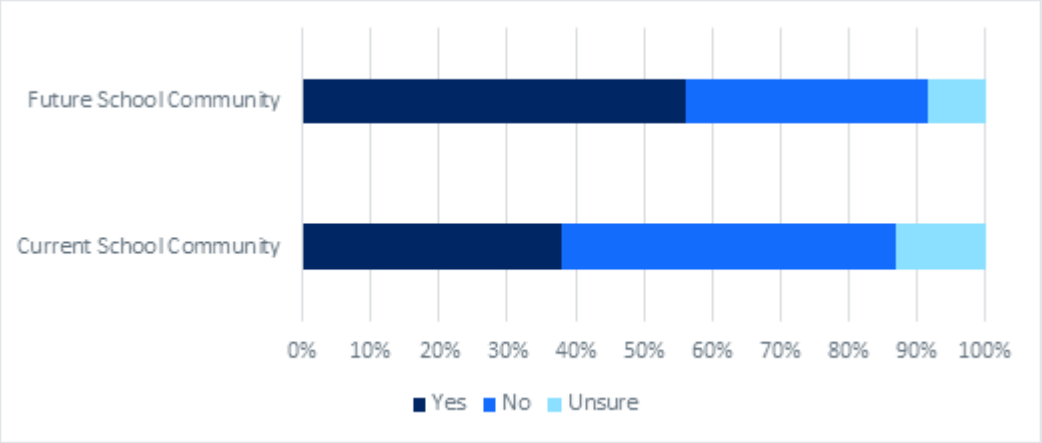


Chart 1 – Parent and carers

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

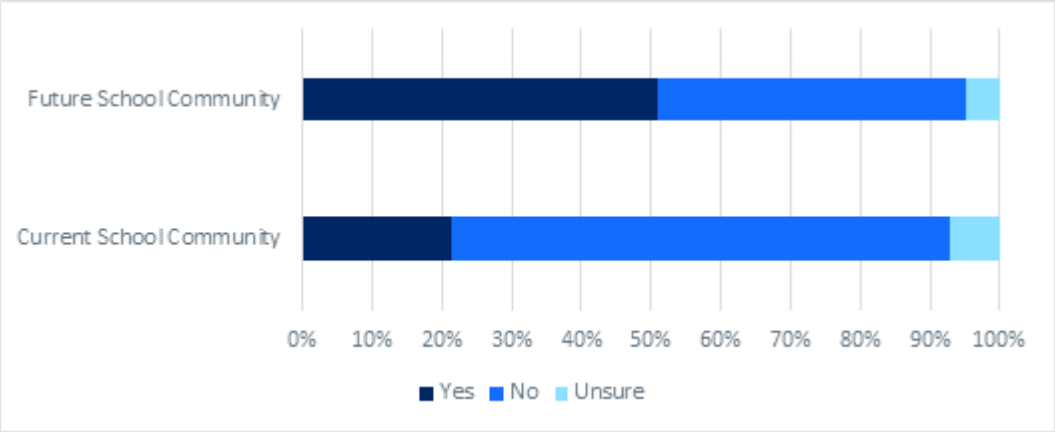


Chart 2 – Parents and carers

1.7 Workshop findings summary

Although the survey findings did not show overwhelming support for creating an equal number of places for girls to board in NSW (50% - 64%) amongst most stakeholders, in workshops the vast majority of participants were generally in agreement that the unequal number of places should be addressed. This discrepancy may be due to the ordering of the survey questions – all survey participants were presented with the question *Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?* before the specific question about Farrer enrolling girls. At least one workshop participant noted that they in their survey response said they were against equal places for girls because they thought it may be viewed as condoning the creation of places for girls at Farrer MAHS. It's possible that others did the same.

There was a consensus amongst stakeholders across all workshops that if girls were to be enrolled at Farrer MAHS, there should be no reduction in the places available to boys at the school. Many then acknowledged this would result in a much larger school of 1200 students and that this could detract from the existing strong sense of community.

Parents and Carers

Some parents of primary school-aged daughters expressed a sense of helplessness when their daughters asked them why they couldn't enrol at Farrer MAHS and that they were not happy that the current arrangements are not equal. There were diverse perspectives on the best ways to address this inequity with some saying it should happen at Farrer MAHS and others saying it should be at a single sex agricultural school for girls. Some parents of current Farrer students said they would not consider sending their sons or their daughters to a co-educational boarding school as they would not want their child living on the same campus as other students of the opposite.

Staff

Staff members of Farrer MAHS shared insights about the high demand for places at Farrer MAHS and the other available boarding options in the northern half of NSW.

Farrer MAHS is the only boys boarding school between Sydney and Queensland. If Farrer MAHS became co-educational it would lose its unique offering as there are already co-educational private schools in the north of the state. Private schools that have become co-educational may have seen an increase in day enrolments, but their boarding enrolments have not increased.

Co-educational public agricultural boarding schools Yanco and Hurlstone have not experienced the same level of demand as Farrer MAHS.

AECG (Aboriginal Education Consultative Group)

The AECG are strongly opposed to a co-educational model at Farrer Agricultural High School. The AECG representatives advocated for a separate single-sex girls' agricultural boarding school. Farrer is the only public single-sex boarding school opportunity in NSW and many aboriginal students are unable to access this model of schooling in the private sector. Some girls come from unsafe home environments and a girls' boarding school would be great for these students.

Teachers Federation, Primary Principals Association and Secondary Principals Council
There was a consensus that the department should provide an equal number of boarding places for female students. Women make up a large proportion of the rural workforce and therefore we need more opportunities for them to study agriculture at high school.

This group said if the change were to occur at Farrer MAHS, to place the welfare of the first cohorts of girls at the centre of decision-making. Enrolling day students in older grades before enrolling boarders and younger students, would be advised.

1.8 Email correspondence summary

A total of 18 emails expressing opinions on the proposal to introduce female student at Farer MAHS were received. The majority of these emails expressed a preference for Farrer MAHS to remain single sex. These submissions have been considered in this report with the qualitative data obtained via the workshops.

1.9 Alternative options

In almost every workshop, participants questioned why there was only one option being presented to them. There was a very high level of support in the workshops for creating an equal number of boarding places for girls however stakeholders wished to be able to have their say on other options, not just whether Farrer MAHS should accept girls.

Emails, workshops and free text questions in the survey produced several alternative suggestions, such as:

- Building a new girls' boarding school in Tamworth or another major regional centre in the north/central west New South Wales.
- Repurposing the site of the former Duval High School in Armidale to be a girls' boarding school. This was suggested in several meetings across different cohorts.

- Adding boarding facilities for girls at other co-educational high schools in Tamworth (Peel, Tamworth and Oxley high schools).
- Adding boarding facilities for girls at other co-educational high schools outside of Tamworth with specific mentions of Quirindi, Gunnedah and Dubbo.
- 'Sister school' - building a separate girls' school on department land in Calala, near to Farrer MAHS and sharing some of the Farrer MAHS facilities with the new school.
- Purchasing existing girls boarding school facilities from the private school sector.

2

Project scope and background

2.1 Background

Over a number of years, the department has received representations from individuals and groups requesting Farrer MAHS provide boarding facilities for girls.

Currently there are fewer boarding opportunities in NSW for female students than there are for male students.

From 2022 to 2024, the department has undertaken public consultations with other communities across New South Wales regarding co-educational and single sex settings. The findings from these consultations have informed the department decision-makers on the most appropriate ways to respond to each area's local context and educational needs.

This consultation was deemed a necessary step to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data, capturing community sentiment regarding the need to address the unequal number of boarding places for girls and if there is a need to progress with co-educational day and boarding offerings at Farrer MAHS.

2.2 Aim

The consultation aimed to determine:

a. Stakeholder and wider community feedback regarding the need to increase the number of boarding places for girls in New South Wales.

b. Stakeholder and wider community feedback regarding a proposal to open up Farrer MAHS to female students.

c. Stakeholder perspectives on the most important factors the department would need to consider for Farrer MAHS if it were to become co-educational.

d. An estimation of demand for girls' places at Farrer MAHS if it were to become co-educational.

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)
- Special interest groups
- General public community members.

Distinctions within stakeholder groups are detailed throughout the report.

3.2 Data collection

A mixed methodology approach was adopted, combining quantitative survey data, qualitative open text and conversational responses, and cohort groupings to ensure a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder perspectives.

The primary data source was an 18-question online survey, open from Thursday 29 May 2025 to Friday 18 July 2025. A total of 1,983* responses were received across stakeholder groups.

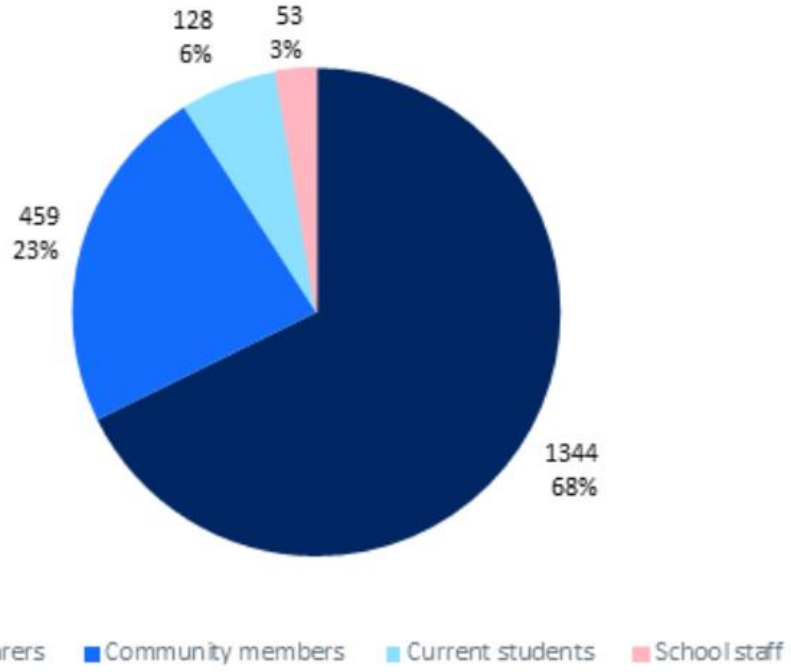
In addition to the survey, 20 workshops were held throughout the consultation period, engaging participants across diverse stakeholder groups.

Stakeholders were also invited to submit email correspondence. A total of 18 emails were received expressing an opinion on whether girls should be enrolled at Farrer MAHS. An additional 3 emails were received that did not express an opinion on the proposal (these were primarily seeking information or commenting on the consultation process).

A detailed breakdown of survey responses, workshop feedback and email feedback is provided throughout the report.

**Discrepancies in the data amongst questions come from a portion of participants not completing every question in the survey.*

3.3 Participant demographics



3.4 Workshops

Twenty workshops were run throughout June 2025 to give stakeholders an opportunity to further provide feedback.

Date	Workshop
2 Jun 25	Principal Interview (online)
2 Jun 25	Farrer MAHS Staff (online)
6 Jun 25	Feeder Primary School staff and other schools (online)
6 Jun 25	Special Interest Group / Farrer Old Boys Association (online)
10 Jun 25	Special Interest Groups (online)
10 Jun 25	Farrer Secondary Parents & Carers (online)
11 Jun 25	School Principals of other schools (online)
11 Jun 25	High school staff of other schools (online)
11 Jun 25	Other Schools Secondary Parents & Carers (online)
16 Jun 25	Special Interest Groups (online)
16 Jun 25	Feeder Primary School Parents & Carers & Other schools (online)

17 Jun 25	Farrer Student Leadership Group (online)
17 Jun 25	General Public (online)
19 Jun 25	AECG (Aboriginal Education Consultative Group) (in person)
23 Jun 25	Principals of other Schools (online)
23 Jun 25	Farrer Secondary Parents & Carers (online)
25 Jun 25	Farrer Non/teaching Staff (online)
27 Jun 25	Primary Student Leaderships (online)
27 Jun 25	High School Student Leaderships of other schools (online)
30 Jun 25	Farrer Secondary Parents & Carers (online)

3.5 Consultation timeline

The consultation commenced on 29 May and ran until 18 July.

4 Insights by cohort

4.1 Students

4.1.1 Primary school students

Primary school student leadership workshop themes

Student leadership representatives from feeder primary schools participated in a workshop. Opinions shared by students were diverse, with some in favour of places for girls at Farrer MAHS and others not in favour.

Comments from participants in favour of introducing places for female students at Farrer MAHS included:

- “It was fair to have the same opportunities for girls as boys.”
- “You can learn to get along with the opposite gender which helps prepare you for life after school.”
- “Siblings and friends who are different genders can be together.”
- “It is a good idea, but you should keep a separate area for the dorms.”

Comments from participants not in favour of introducing places for female students at Farrer MAHS included:

- “It will be distracting - some boys and girls might not get along and others might get distracted by love."
- “Farrer has good programs and ways of teaching for boys."
- “The school might be too big if it doubles in size to accommodate girls.”

Other students expressed concern that students from non-gov primary schools get offered places at Farrer MAHS while some public students miss out. They said this was unfair and that students who want to go to Farrer MAHS should attend a public primary school.

4.1.2 Farrer MAHS students

Farrer MAHS survey findings

When asked if the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls, there were **100** responses from current students of Farrer:

- Yes: **30%**
- No: **60%**
- Unsure: **10%**

When asked if they support the introduction of selective places for females at Farrer MAHS, there were **100** responses from current Farrer MAHS students:

- Yes: **14%**
- No: **82%**
- Unsure: **4%**

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

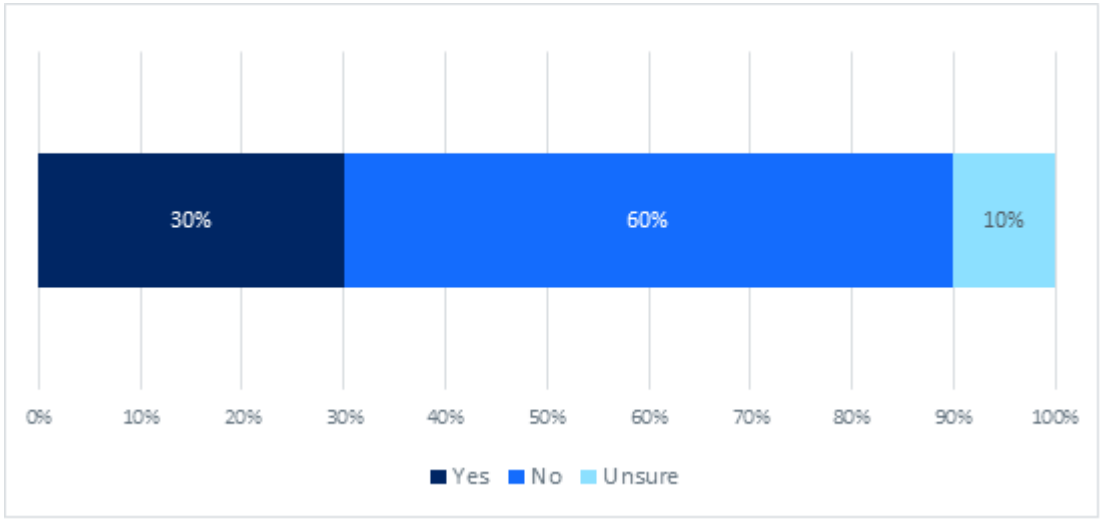


Chart 3 - Current Farrer MAHS students

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

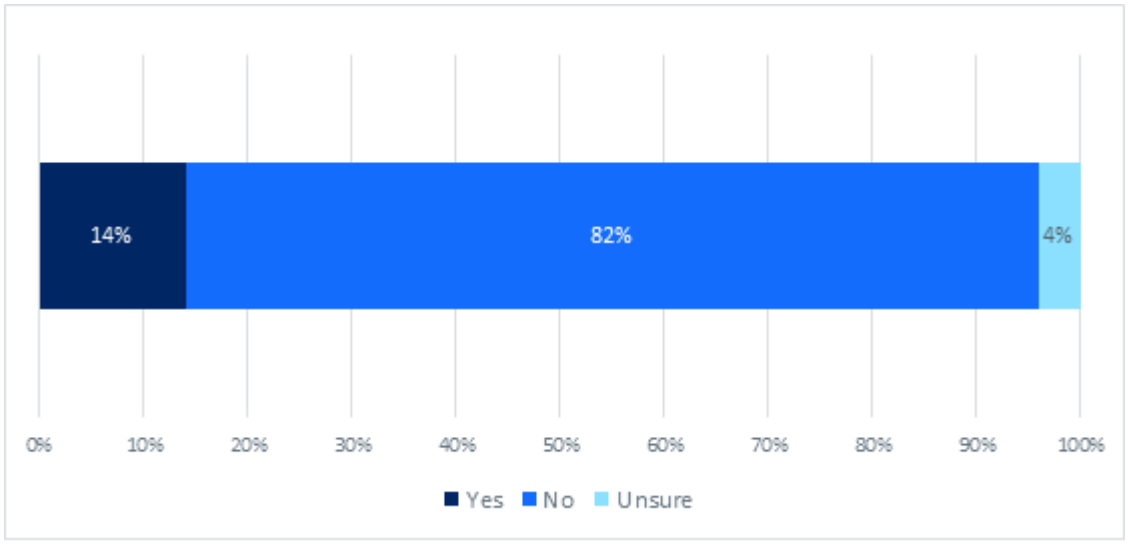


Chart 4 - Current Farrer MAHS students

If Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School were to accept female students in addition to male students, what considerations would need to be factored into this change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, an increase in female bathrooms	88.54%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	64.58%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	60.42%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	59.38%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	58.33%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	56.25%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	56.25%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	56.25%
A wellbeing team/school counsellor for all students and staff	51.04%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	46.88%
Other	19.79%

Out of these considerations which one do you think is the most important to be factored into this type of change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, bathrooms for girls	60.64%
Other (please specify) (100 characters)	13.83%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	6.38%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	5.32%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	4.26%

Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	3.19%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	2.13%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	2.13%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	1.06%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	1.06%

Farrer MAHS school student leadership workshop themes

The student leadership workshop included a mix of day students and boarding students. There was a clear consensus that the current single-sex model was working well and that it had been a significant factor in their decision to enrol at the school. The sense of community and brotherhood that exists at Farrer MAHS supports students and turns them into successful young men.

On the benefits of the current single sex environment:

- “After speaking with both parents and teachers, I think that this decision wouldn't necessarily produce the same men that you see coming out of this school.”

On the best way to address the current unequal number of places:

- “I think that parents I've spoken to on this, coming as a day boy living not far away, they just want the same school for their daughters [a sister school for girls].”

When asked to consider possible benefits of a co-educational school:

- “I think it would make it more diverse like as in with how you learn, like classroom discussions, all that sort of thing and just make it equal and inclusive for girls because I do believe they deserve this opportunity we have.”

4.1.3 Other high school students

High school student leadership workshop themes

Student leadership representatives from nearby high schools participated in a workshop.

There was strong agreement that there should be an equal number of boarding places for girls as boys in New South Wales. Some students said that the current unequal quotas are tantamount to discrimination.

Those who supported the proposal to enrol girls at Farrer MAHS talked about co-educational settings being more reflective of the real world and that changing to co-ed would set students up for greater success later in life in university, the workplace and in relationships.

Student leaders who shared concerns about the proposal cited the fact it already takes away potential students from other public high schools in Tamworth and that this trend would likely increase if the school were to start enrolling girls.

4.2 Parents

4.2.1 Early childhood and primary parents and carers

Due to the small size of the Early Childhood Parents and Carers cohort, their survey results have been combined with the Primary Parents and Carers cohort. Both cohorts are part of a potential high school community of the future.

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **boarding** places were available for female students, there were **628** responses from early childhood and primary school parents and carers:

- Yes: **34.4%**
- No: **49%**
- Unsure: **16.6%**

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **day** places were available for female students, there were **628** responses from early childhood and primary school parents and carers:

- Yes: **59.4%**
- No: **31.2%**
- Unsure: **9.4%**

When asked if the department should consider options to increase the number of **boarding** places for girls, there were **749** responses from early childhood and primary school parents and carers:

- Yes: **56.1%**
- No: **35.6%**
- Unsure: **8.4%**

When asked if they support the introduction of female **selective** students at Farrer MAHS, there were **749** responses from early childhood and primary school parents and carers:

- Yes: **51%**
- No: **44.2%**
- Unsure: **4.8%**

If boarding facilities were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

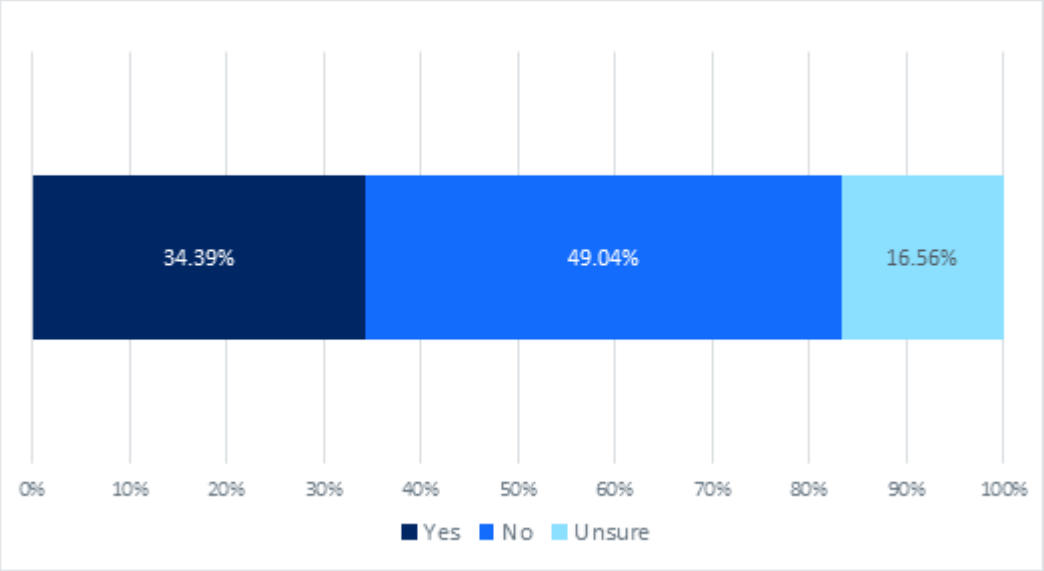


Chart 5 - Parents and Carers of primary and early childhood students

If selective stream day places were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

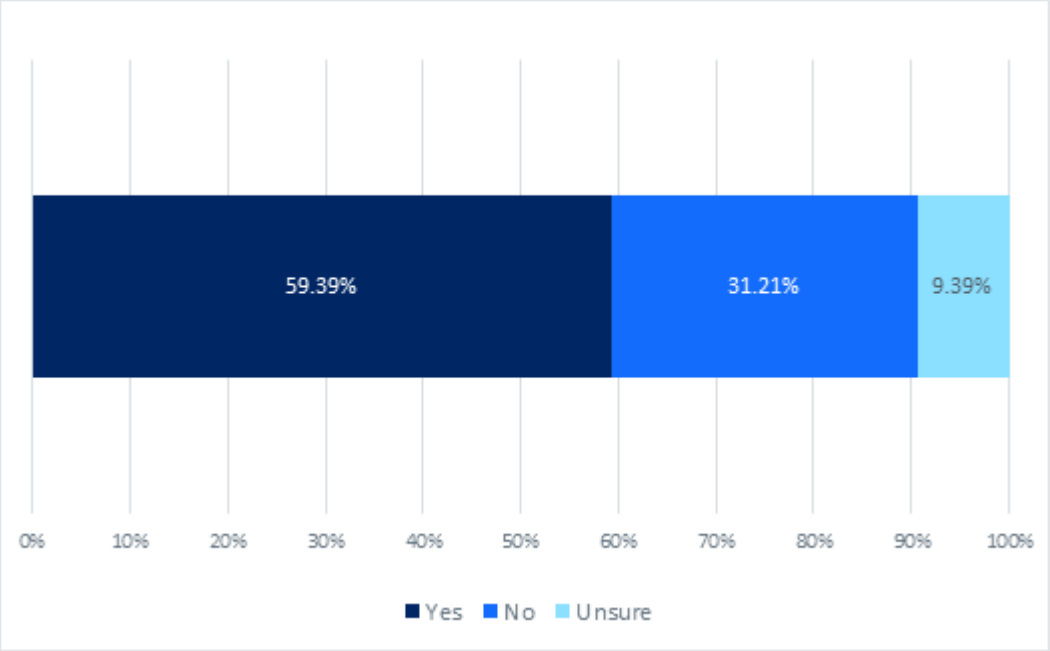


Chart 6 - Parents and Carers of primary and early childhood students

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

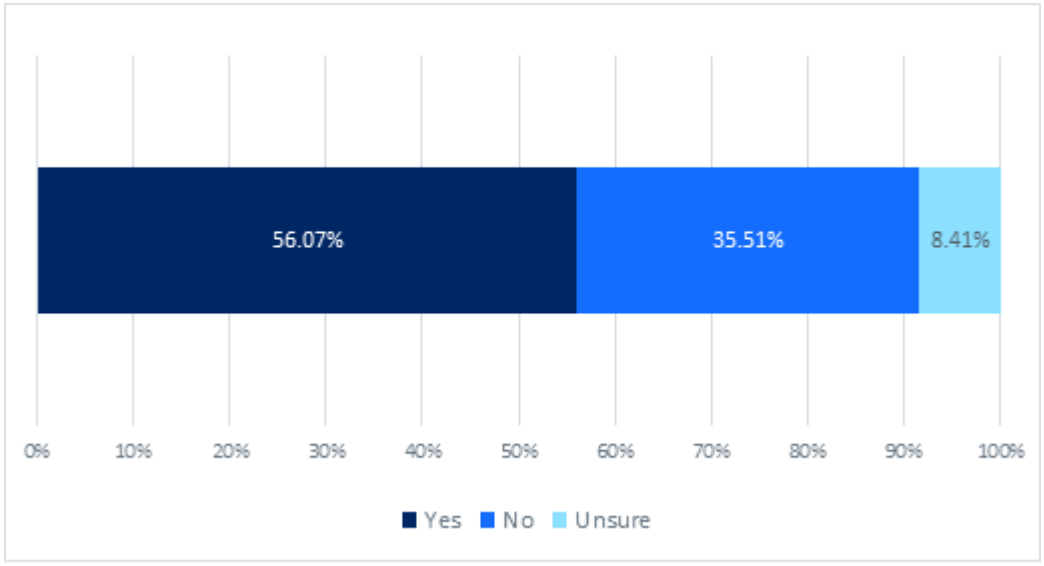


Chart 7 - Parents and Carers of primary and early childhood students

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

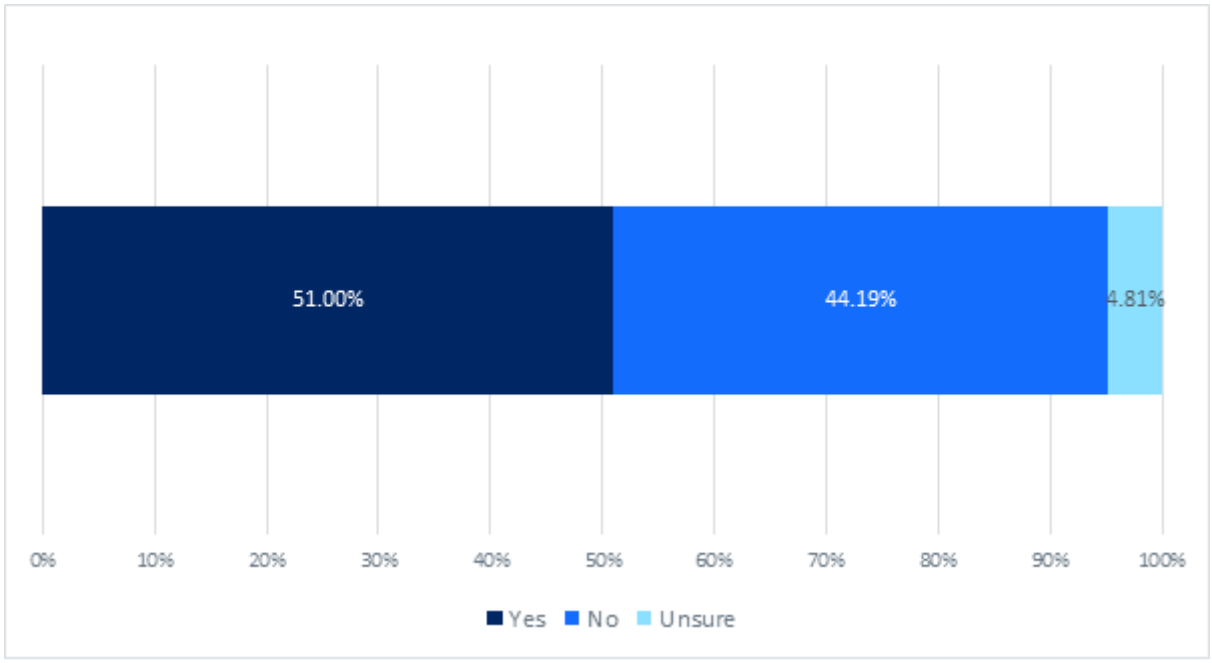


Chart 8 - Parents and carers of primary and early childhood students

If Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School were to accept female students in addition to male students, what considerations would need to be factored into this change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, an increase in female bathrooms	88.24%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	67.65%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	64.71%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	50.00%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	73.53%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	58.82%

Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	64.71%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	67.65%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	64.71%
A wellbeing team/school counsellor for all students and staff	55.88%
Other	17.65

Out of these considerations which one do you think is the most important to be factored into this type of change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, bathrooms for girls	35.29%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	5.88%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	11.76%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	0.00%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	5.88%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	8.82%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	14.71%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	2.94%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	2.94%
Other (please specify) (100 characters)	11.76%

Workshop conversations and email correspondence highlighted the following:

Participants within the early childhood and primary parents/carers workshop were generally supportive of the opportunity for female students to attend an agricultural selective high school. Overall, slightly more participants supported the acceptance of female students to Farrer MAHS than not. Some parents highlighted the inequality and disadvantage to girls, particularly girls with interest in agriculture, apparent by not having the opportunity to attend Farrer MAHS.

On the benefits of the current single-sex model several participants attributed the success of the school to its single-sex environment:

- “from a community and a parent perspective, why Farrer is doing so well is the fact that it is single sex… I think the targeted educational strategies, the targeted behavioural strategies and the output that you see when boys are finished at Farrer would completely change if girls were introduced to that environment.”
- “I think what has made Farrer so good is also the teaching that goes on there, the ability to turn those young men into adults.”
- Concerns were also raised on the potential reduction in the number of places available for male students if places for female students were introduced.

When discussing what considerations should be factored if Farrer MAHS were to accept female students, feedback from the participants included maintaining the staffing quality that exists at Farrer MAHS, inclusion of single-sex classes within the co-educational model, considering the integration strategies of comparative co-educational models and ensuring there was a sizeable initial intake of girls.

Alternative solutions raised during the workshop included:

- Introducing a coeducational agricultural programme and boarding option in an existing public school in Tamworth.

- Introduction of a new single-sex agricultural selective school for girls.
- Increasing the number of places for girls at existing agricultural selective high schools.

4.2.2 Parents of primary school girls: Tamworth (prospective day students)

If selective stream day places were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

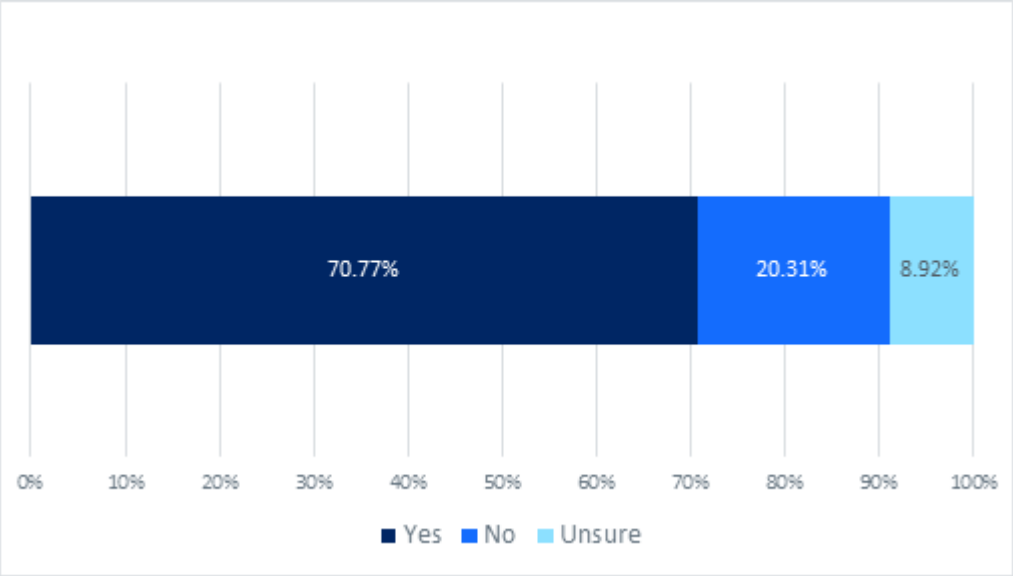


Chart 10 - Parents and Carers of female primary school students

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

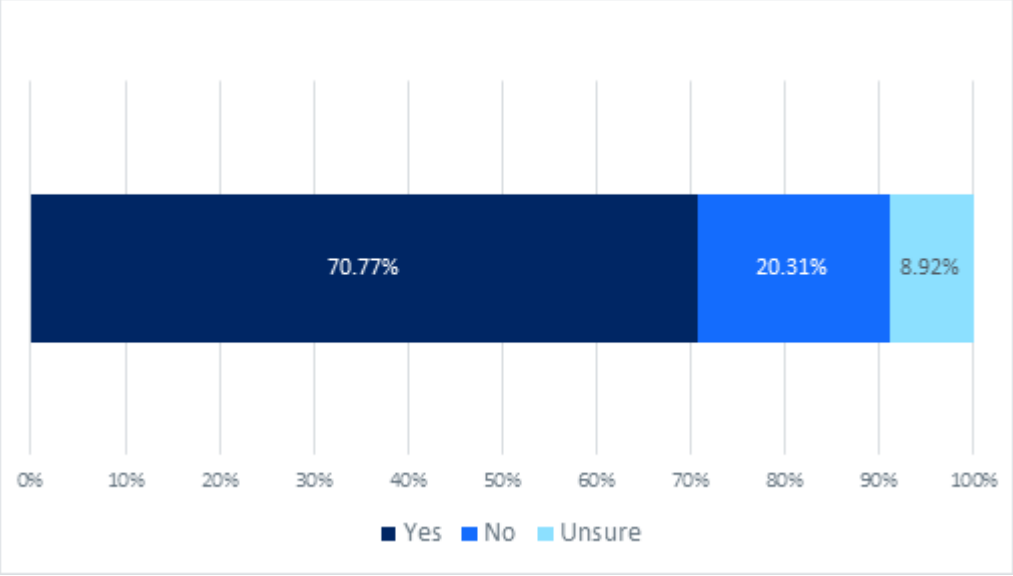


Chart 11 - Parents and Carers of female primary school students

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

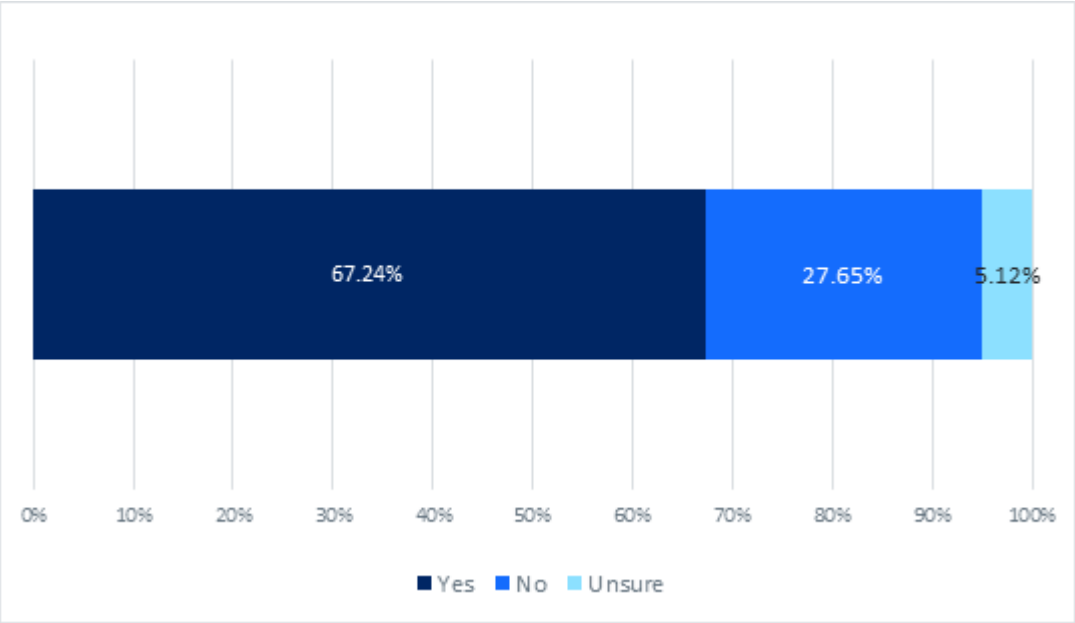


Chart 12 - Parents and Carers of female primary school students

4.2.3 Parents of primary school girls: Beyond Tamworth (prospective boarding students)

If boarding facilities were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

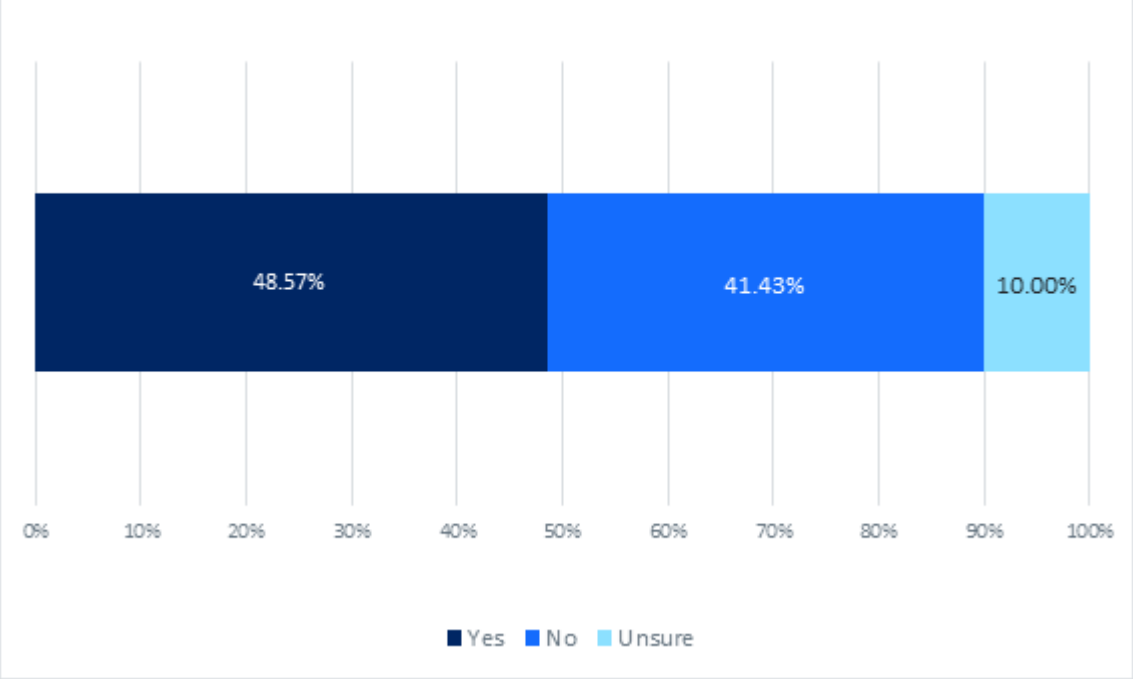


Chart 13 - Parents and Carers of female primary school students

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

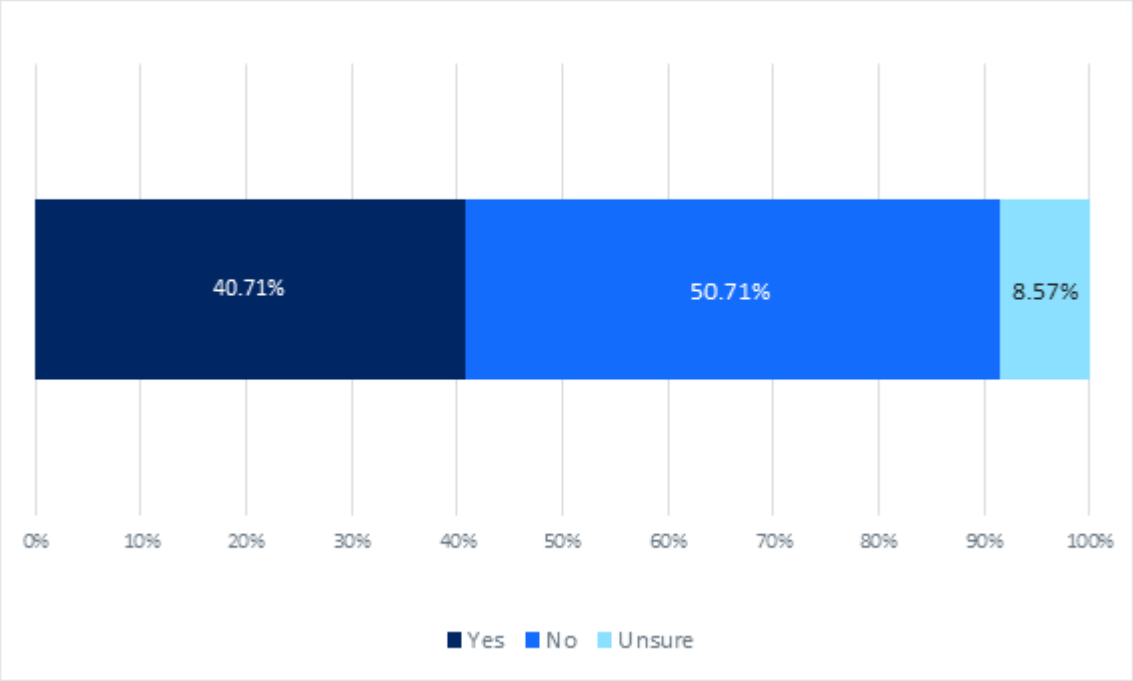


Chart 14 - Parents and Carers of female primary school students thoughts about increasing boarding places for girls

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

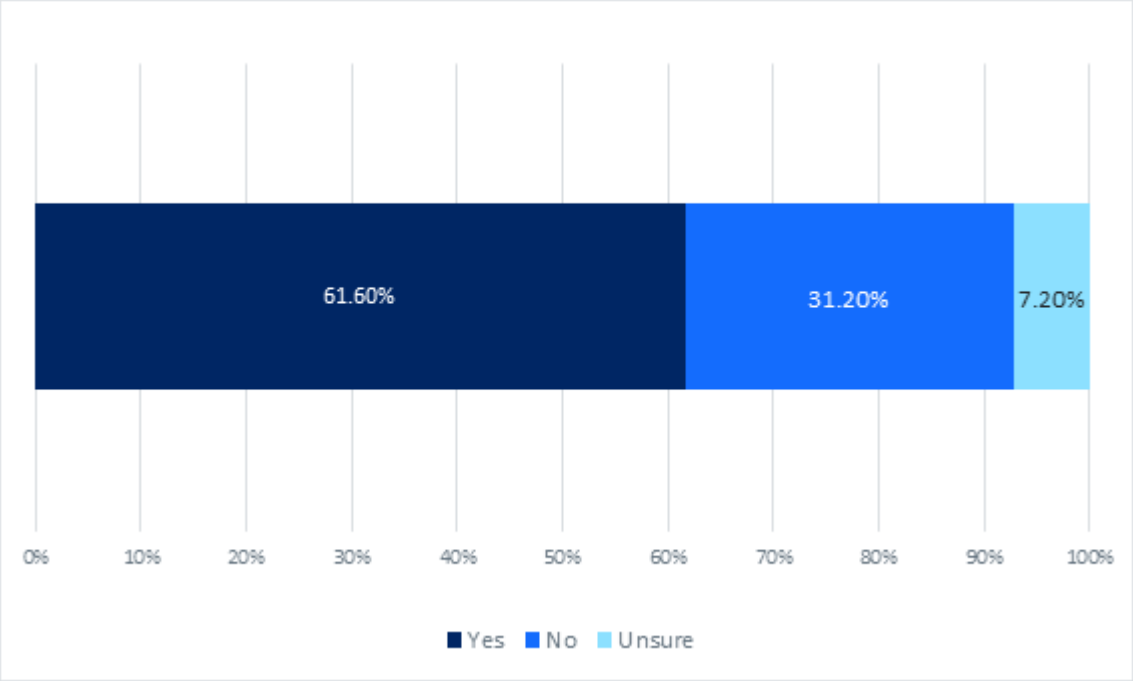


Chart 15 - Parents and Carers of female primary school students thoughts about increasing places for girls at Farrer MAHS

4.2.4 Farrer MAHS parents and carers

Survey respondents consisted of the parents and carers of students currently attending Farrer MAHS.

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **boarding** places were available for female students, there were **211** responses from parents and carers of current Farrer MAHS students:

- Yes: **23.2%**
- No: **68.3%**
- Unsure: **8.5%**

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **day** places were available for female students, there were **211** responses from parents and carers of current Farrer MAHS students:

- Yes: **38.4%**
- No: **53.1%**
- Unsure: **8.5%**

When asked if the department should consider options to increase the number of **boarding** places for girls, there were **438** responses from parents and carers of current Farrer MAHS students:

- Yes: **37.9%**
- No: **49.1%**
- Unsure: **13%**

When asked if they support the introduction of female **selective** students at Farrer MAHS, there were **438** responses from parents and carers of current Farrer MAHS students:

- Yes: **21.5%**
- No: **71.5%**
- Unsure: **7.1%**

If boarding facilities were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

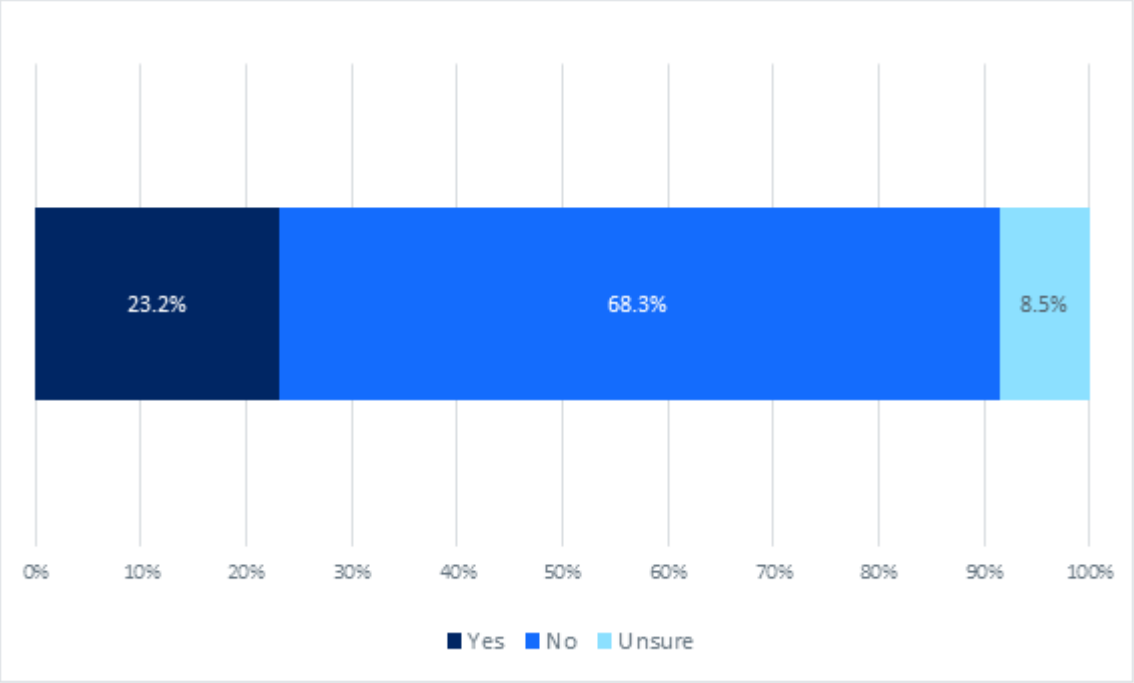


Chart 16 - Parents and Carers of current Farrer MAHS students

If selective stream day places were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

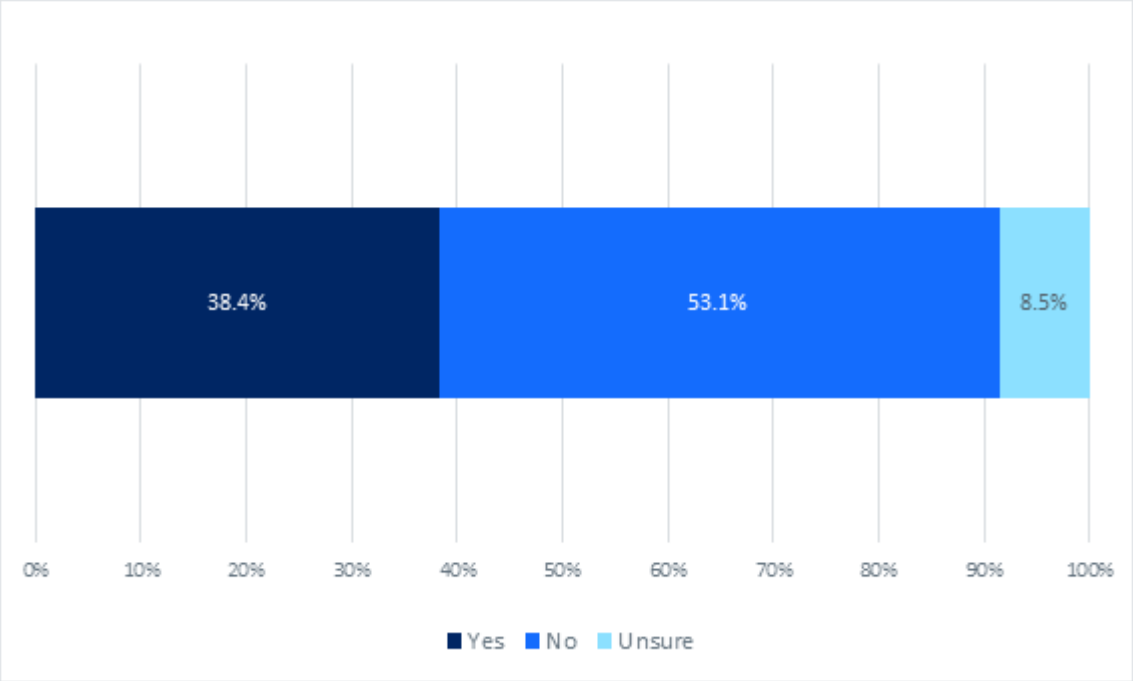


Chart 17 - Parents and Carers of current Farrer MAHS students

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

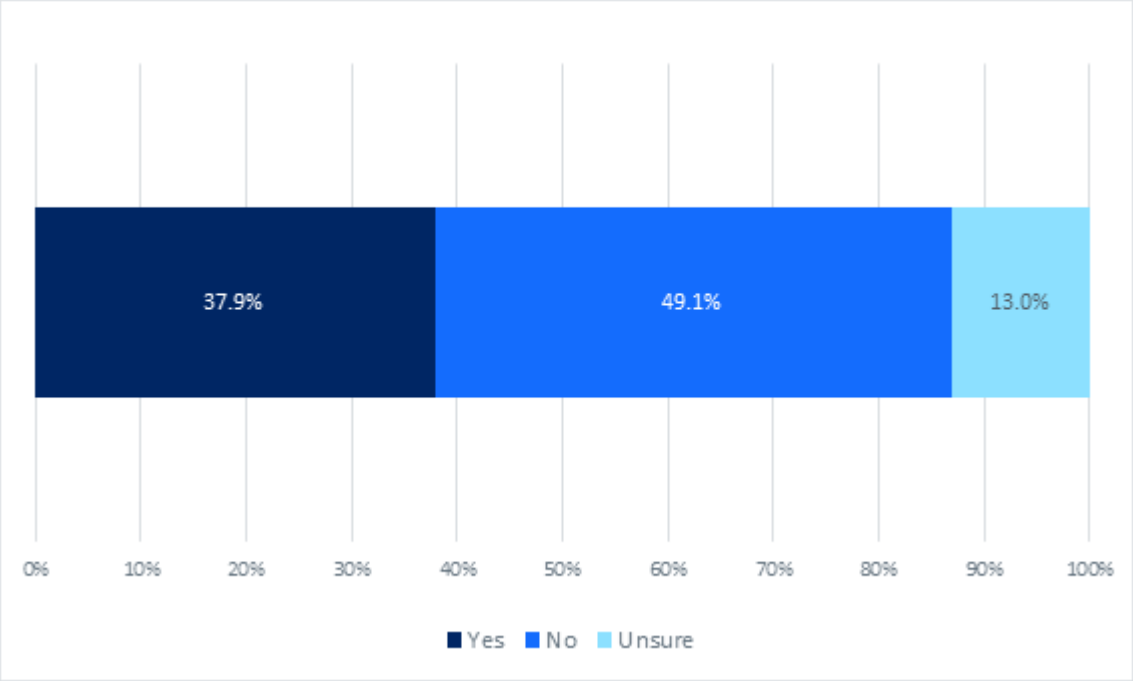


Chart 18 - Parents and Carers of current Farrer MAHS students

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

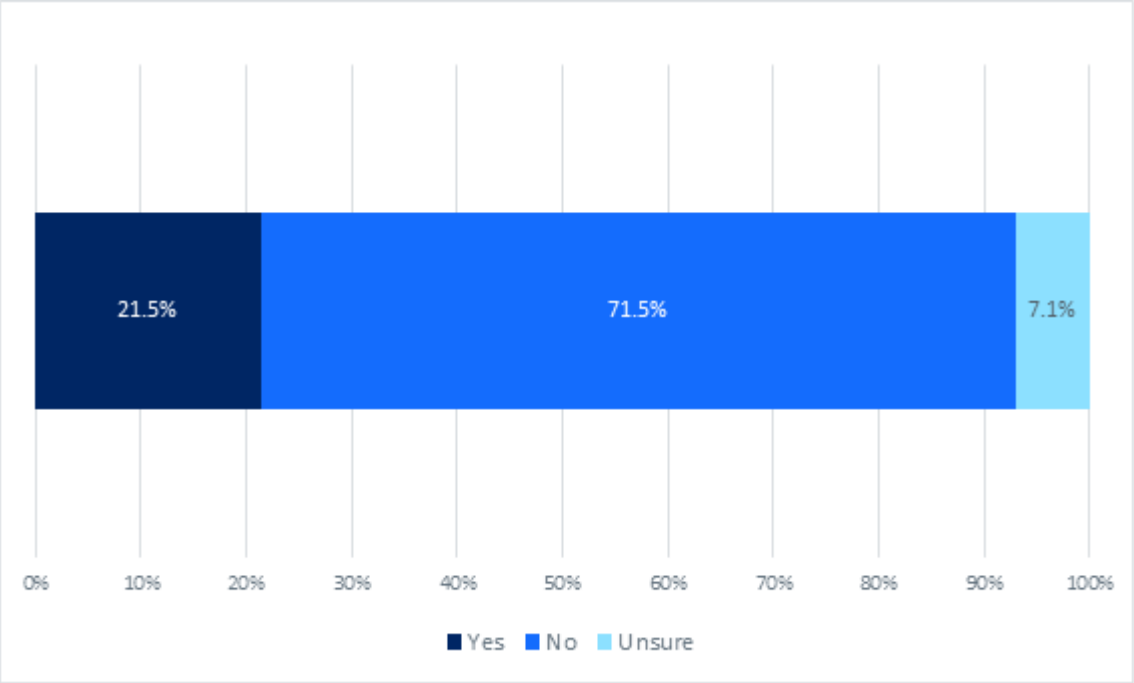


Chart 19 - Parents and carers of current Farrer MAHS students

If Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School were to accept female students in addition to male students, what considerations would need to be factored into this change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, an increase in female bathrooms	89.18%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	72.24%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	71.06%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	70.82%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	68.00%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	67.29%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	66.35%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	65.88%
A wellbeing team/school counsellor for all students and staff	62.35%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	61.41%
Other (please specify) (100 characters)	30.12%

Out of these considerations which one do you think is the most important to be factored into this type of change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, bathrooms for girls	53.22%

Other (please specify) (100 characters)	20.76%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	7.16%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	4.06%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	3.58%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	3.10%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	2.15%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	2.15%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	1.91%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	1.43%

Workshop conversations and email correspondence highlighted the following:

The majority of participants in the workshop held for parents and carers of students attending Farrer MAHS were not supportive of the introduction of female students to Farrer MAHS.

When discussing if the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls, the general consensus of the participants was that there was a need for increased boarding places for female students. However, participants maintained their preference for Farrer MAHS to remain a single-sex environment.

The rationale for the opposition to the introduction of places for female students at Farrer MAHS included:

- Consensus that the creation of more places for girls should not come at the expense of places for boys. There was concern that given the existing limited places for boys to attend Farrer MAHS, introducing female students would have a detrimental impact on the opportunities available for boys.
- Several participants with boys enrolled at Farrer MAHS said they would not consider sending their sons or their daughters to a co-educational boarding school as they would not want their child living on the same campus as other students of the opposite sex. Participants also expressed a desire for the existing model at Farrer MAHS to remain the same as it was already working well, “The size of the school works well and creates a strong culture and sense of community. There are concerns that if it was to increase it would risk losing that,” and “the way that Farrer educates boys into men is very unique…why fix something if it’s not broken, they do it so well”.

Alternative solutions raised during the workshop centred around the provision of a single-sex equivalent of Farrer MAHS for girls. Many participants agreed that the equitable solution to increasing the number of boarding places available for girls was not removing the existing single-sex model for boys but introducing an equivalent single-sex model for girls. Location suggestions for a single-sex girls school included the old TAFE campus at Quirindi, Dubbo, the former Duval High School in Armidale or a new school in the same precinct as Farrer MAHS.

Why/further comments:

"I'm a mother of four, three sons, 2 currently at Farrer as boarders and one who's finished and a daughter who didn't have that same opportunity to attend. So, she had to go through the private system to board and agriculture was her favourite subject."

4.2.5 Other high school parents and carers

384 parents or carers of students currently attending a high school other than Farrer MAHS participated in the survey.

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **boarding** places were available for female students, there were **228** responses from parents and carers of students who attend a high school other than Farrer MAHS:

- Yes: **24.6%**
- No: **61.8%**
- Unsure: **13.6%**

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **day** places were available for female students, there were **228** responses from parents and carers of students who attend a high school other than Farrer MAHS:

- Yes: **46%**
- No: **44.3%**
- Unsure: **9.7%**

When asked if the department should consider options to increase the number of **boarding** places for girls, there were **327** responses from parents and carers of students who attend a high school other than Farrer MAHS:

- Yes: **52.9%**
- No: **34.9%**
- Unsure: **12.2%**

When asked if they support the introduction of female **selective** students at Farrer MAHS, there were **327** responses from parents and carers of students who attend a high school other than Farrer MAHS:

- Yes: **40.4%**
- No: **53.2%**
- Unsure: **6.4%**

If boarding facilities were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

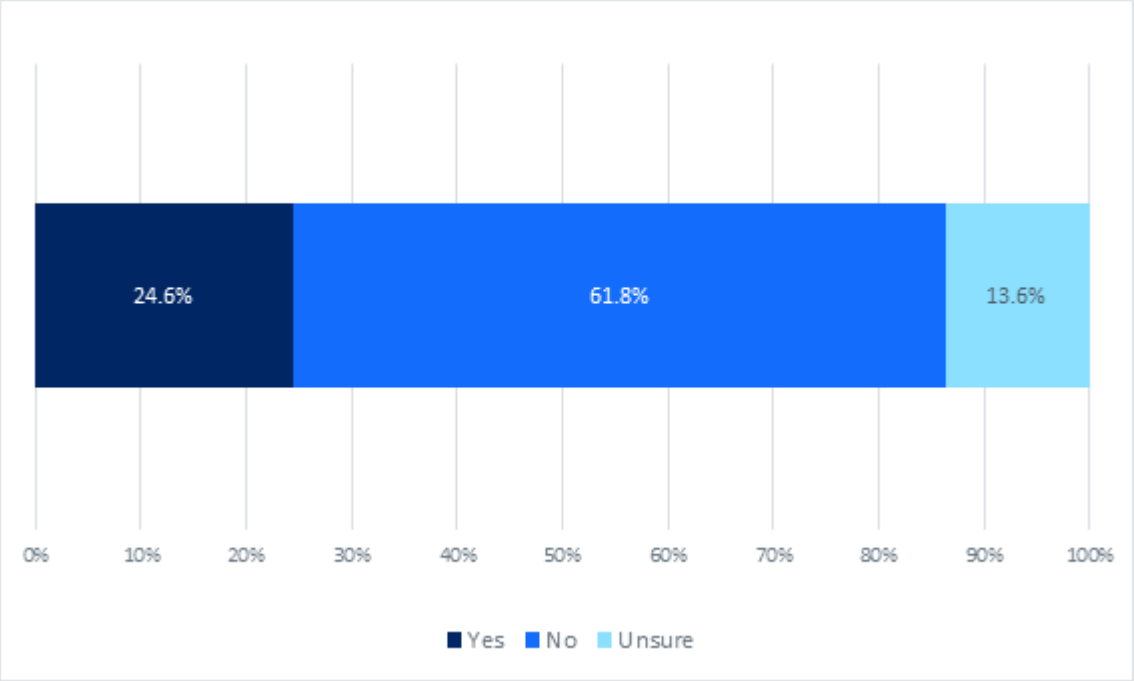


Chart 20 - Parents and carers of high school students who do not attend Farrer MAHS

If selective stream day places were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

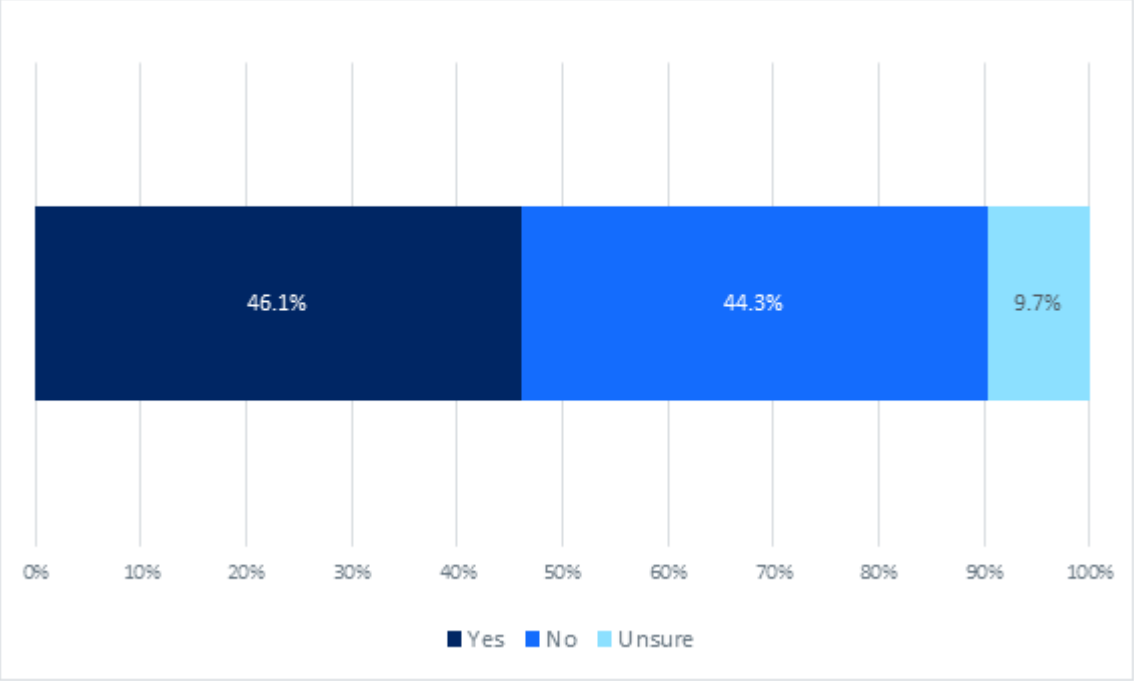


Chart 21 - Parents and carers of high school students who do not attend Farrer MAHS

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

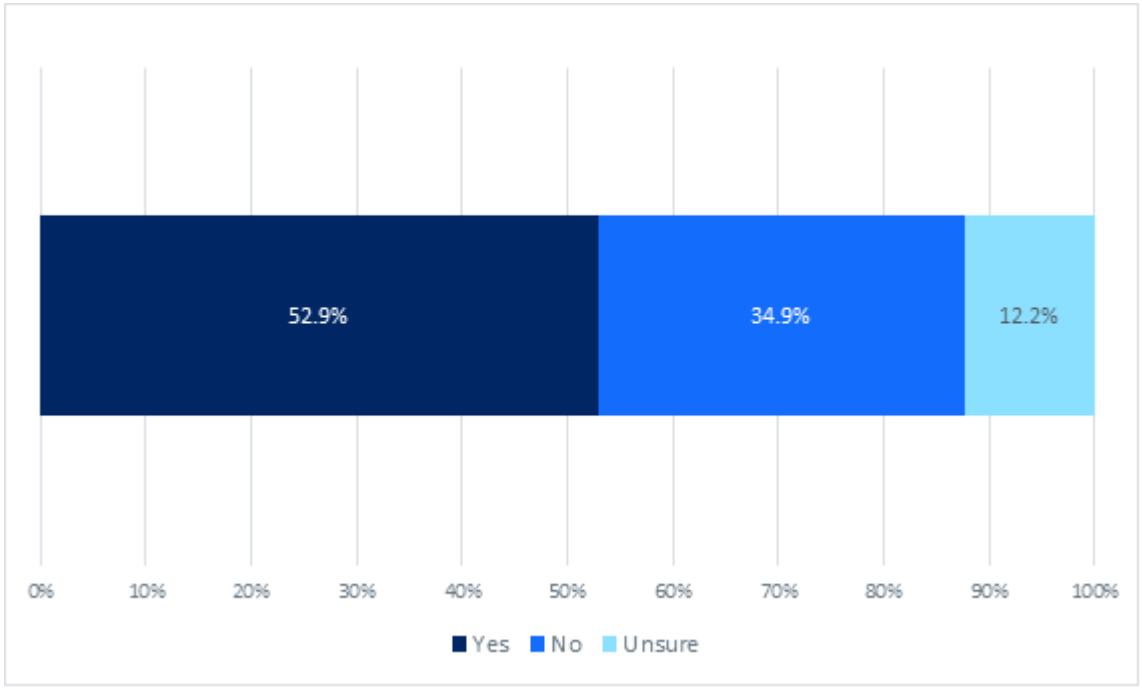


Chart 22 - Parents and carers of high school students who do not attend Farrer MAHS

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

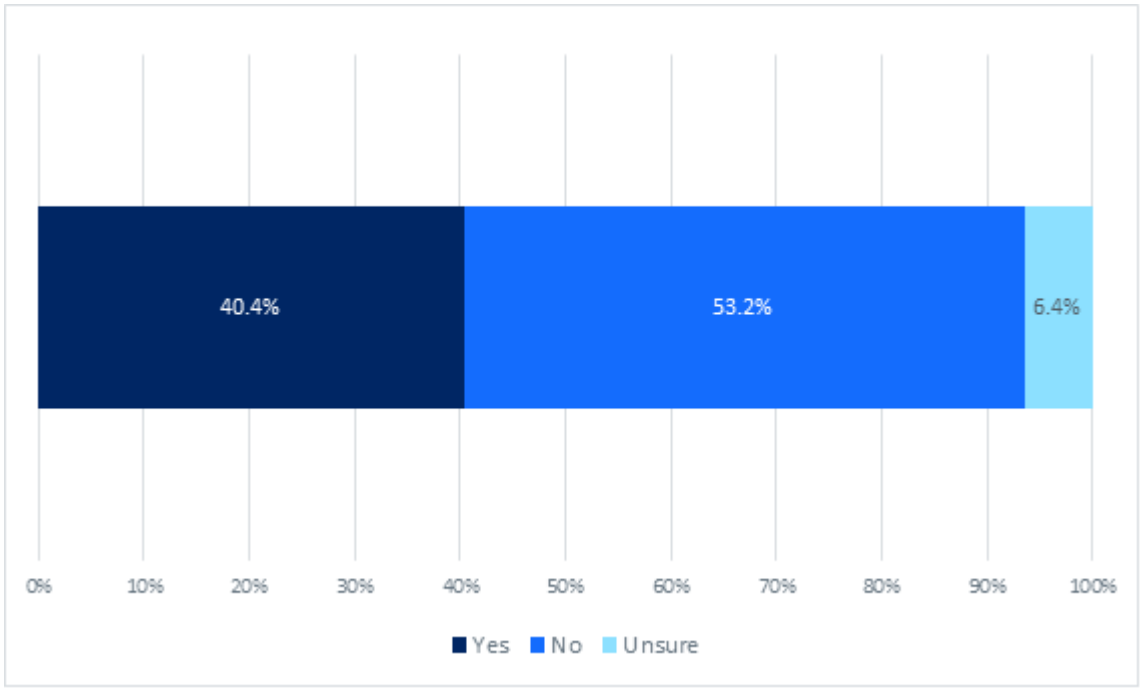


Chart 23 - Parents and carers of high school students who do not attend Farrer thoughts about increasing places for girls at Farrer MAHS

If Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School were to accept female students in addition to male students, what considerations would need to be factored into this change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, an increase in female bathrooms	91.51%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	76.10%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	74.53%

Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	72.33%
A wellbeing team/school counsellor for all students and staff	69.81%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	69.50%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	68.24%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	67.30%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	66.04%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	63.52%
Other (please specify) (100 characters)	20.75%

Out of these considerations which one do you think is the most important to be factored into this type of change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, bathrooms for girls	47.13%
Other (please specify) (100 characters)	15.61%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	7.01%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	5.73%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	4.78%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	4.78%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	4.46%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	3.50%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	3.50%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	2.55%

4.3 Staff

4.3.1 Primary feeder school staff

Workshop conversations and email correspondence highlighted the following:

Primary feeder school staff shared the perspectives of their students and their families. Some primary feeder staff were also parents of children who were currently enrolled at schools in the area

or had recently completed high school. There were many comments on the inequity of the current arrangements:

- "Our girls quite often bring it up because the boys are starting to get excited with the pending results of Farrer for next year. And every year the girls say, well, what about us? Why can't we go and study agriculture and like the boys and we can be farmers too."
- "I find it really sad that I have to send my daughter away to boarding school. As someone that moved out of home at 12 who went to boarding school, I find it really sad that I have to look for an option that is boarding whereas my son can stay at home."
- "A lot of parents I speak to say I would love to send my daughter to Farrer, you know, for the agriculture basically because you know, in this particular area, they're wanting agricultural careers."
- "I was just blown away by Farrer. Just thinking what a wonderful opportunity. And as much as I love public education and I'm a little bit embarrassed that my 13 year old daughter is now at [private school]. And I would have loved to stay in the public education system and Farrer would have been a perfect fit for her because she did want to study agriculture."

On maintaining the single sex environment:

- “Parents do quite like the fact that they feel there's less drama and that's a very honest opinion from a parent. They feel there's less drama without the mixing of girls and boys."

On maintaining or increasing the number of places available for boys:

- “There are a significant number of boys who apply for Farrer that miss out. These boys are then going off to other local high schools or going to independent schools."
- "I think that we should still maintain the same number of boys, if not increase because there are so many boys that are missing out."

On the need to consider other high schools in Tamworth:

- "We stress with our parents of our female students that Peel High School is an agricultural school, has the agricultural aspect. Not as big as Farrer, but Peel High selective also has a selective class. So we do get a number of our girls applying for that selective class at Peel.

4.3.2 Farrer MAHS staff

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **boarding** places were available for female students, there were **9** responses from staff members of Farrer MAHS:

- Yes: **22.2%**
- No: **77.8%**
- Unsure: -

When asked if they would consider enrolling their child at Farrer MAHS if **day** places were available for female students, there were **9** responses from staff members of Farrer MAHS:

- Yes: **22.2%**
- No: **44.4%**
- Unsure: **33.3%**

When asked if the department should consider options to increase the number of **boarding** places for girls, there were **43** responses from early childhood and primary school parents and carers:

- Yes: **62.8%**
- No: **25.6%**
- Unsure: **11.6%**

When asked if they support the introduction of female **selective** students at Farrer MAHS, there were **43** responses from early childhood and primary school parents and carers:

- Yes: **30.2%**
- No: **65.1%**
- Unsure: **4.7%**

If boarding facilities were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

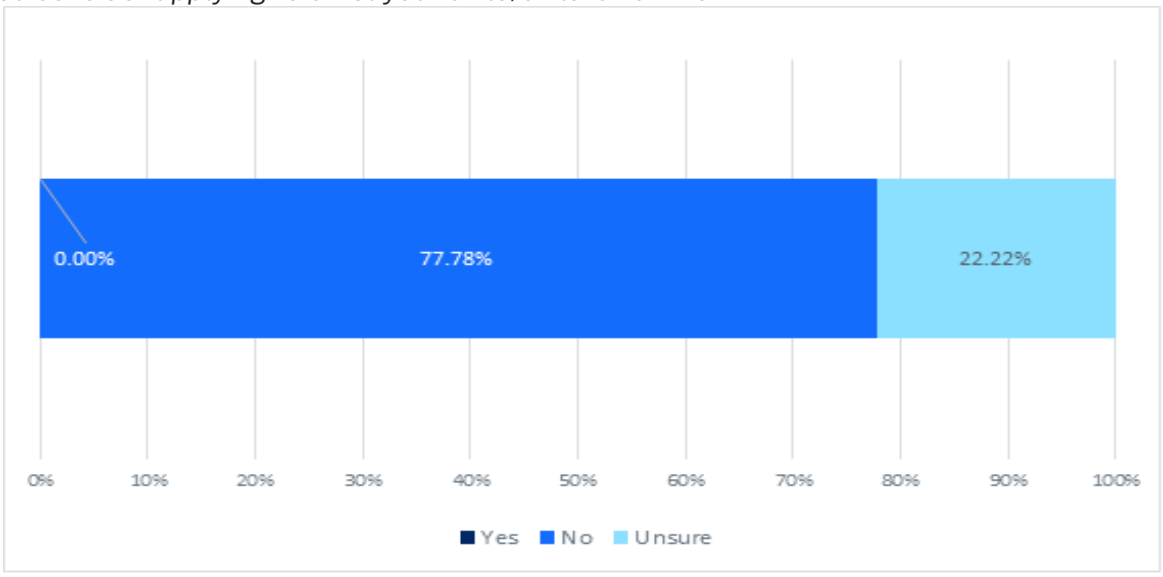


Chart 24 – Farrer MAHS Staff Members.

If selective stream day places were available for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, would you consider applying to enrol your child/children at the school?

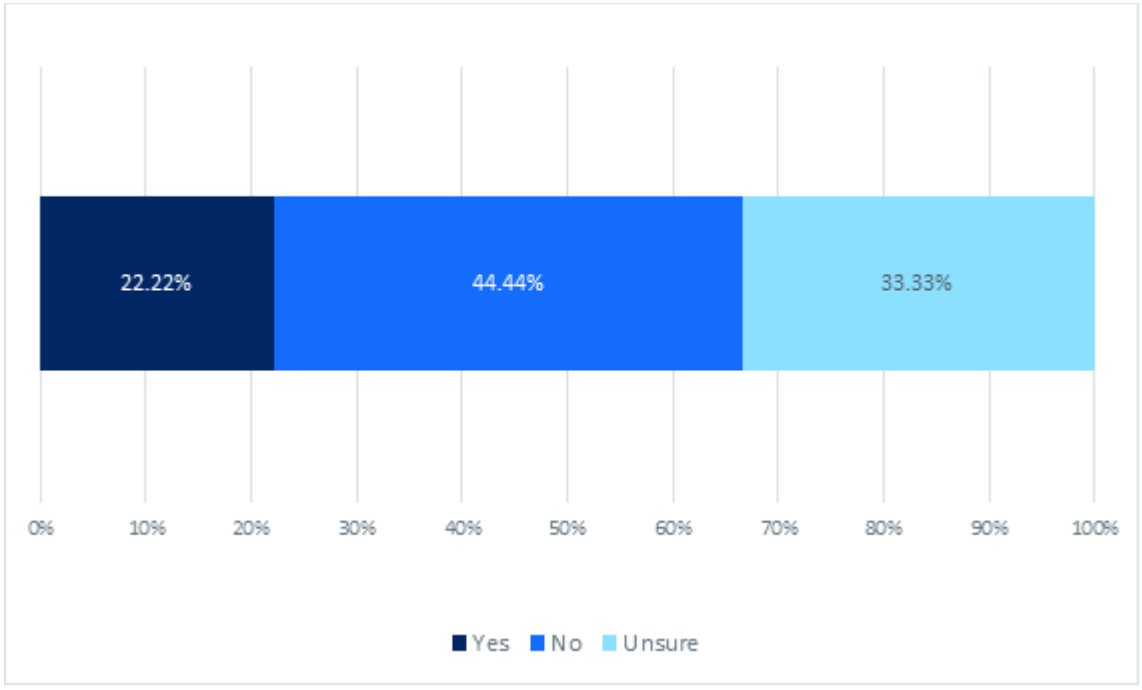


Chart 25 - Farrer MAHS Staff Members.

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

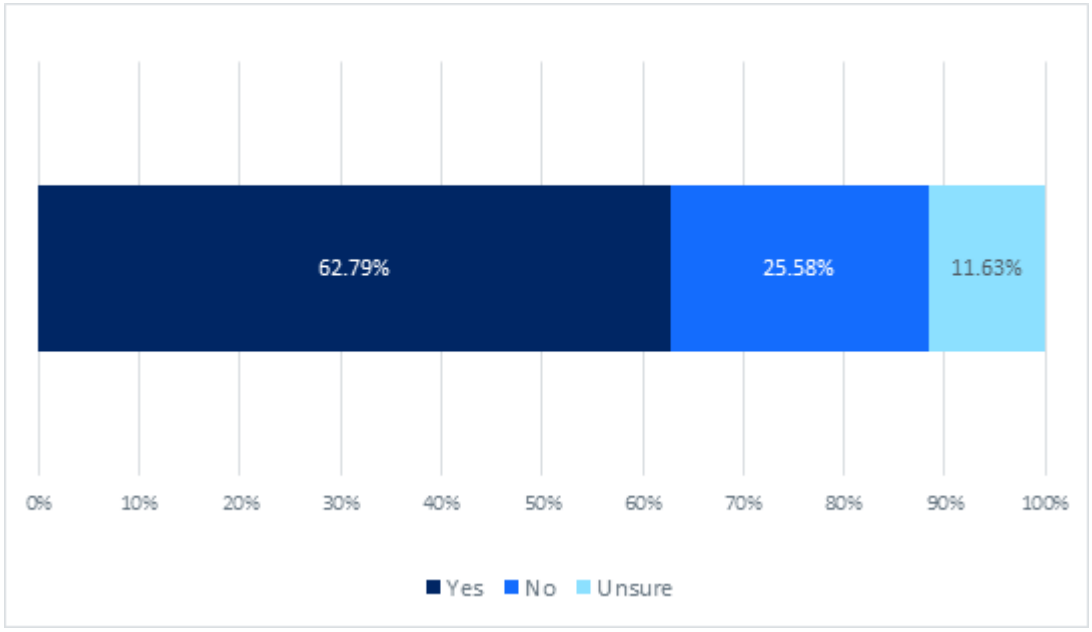


Chart 26 - Farrer MAHS Staff Members.

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

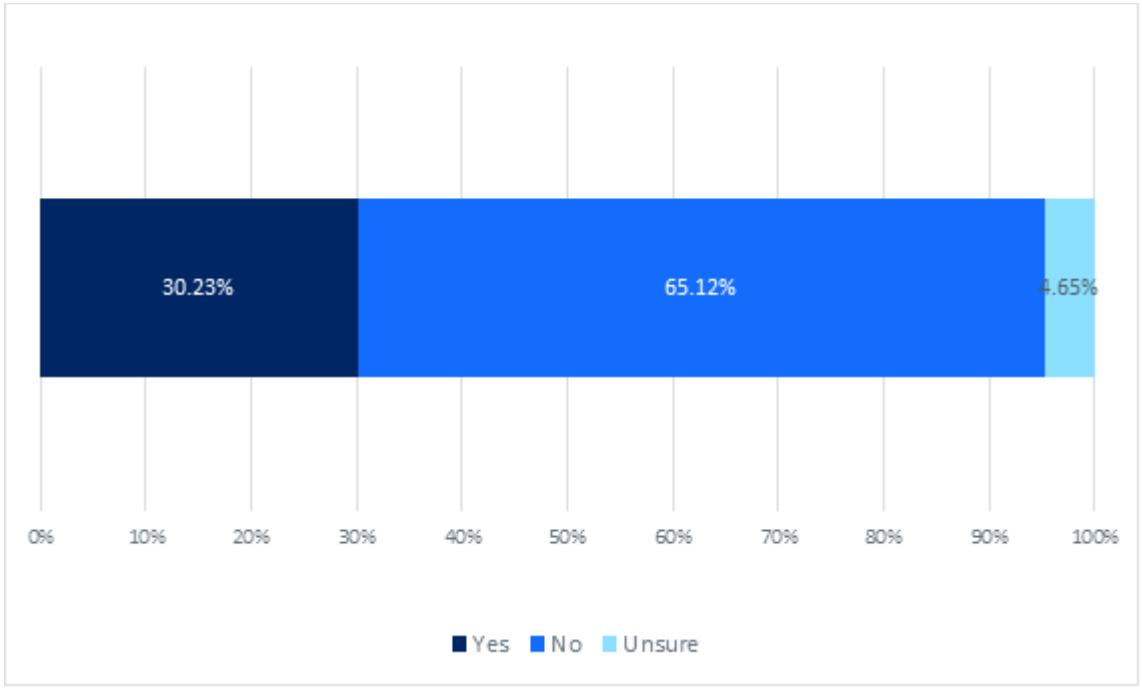


Chart 27 - Farrer MAHS Staff Members.

If Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School were to accept female students in addition to male students, what considerations would need to be factored into this change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, an increase in female bathrooms	88.37%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	72.09%
Training for the teaching staff on how to effectively facilitate a transition from a single sex school to a co-educational school	67.44%
Training for the teaching staff on how to address any differences that may present in the classroom, adapting teaching methods where needed	60.47%
Ensuring the extracurricular activities are gender equitable and diverse to meet a range of interests	65.12%
Facilitated opportunities for both male and female students to develop social skills in interacting with the opposite gender outside the classroom	60.47%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	62.79%
Established rules and expectation of the students and school staff during the transition period	72.09%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	74.42%
A wellbeing team/school counsellor for all students and staff	62.79%

Out of these considerations which one do you think is the most important to be factored into this type of change?

School facilities/infrastructure, e.g. separate boarding facilities for boys and girls, bathrooms for girls	51.22%
A transitional timeframe, e.g. yr 7 and yr 8 female students start in the first year of co-educational operations	2.44%
Implementation of programs/activities to address any gender stereotypes, to foster a more inclusive school environment	2.44%
Established school values and culture, that is reinforced during the transitional period	7.32%

Workshop conversations and email correspondence highlighted the following:

Farrer MAHS is the only boys boarding school between Sydney and Queensland. If Farrer MAHS became co-educational it would lose its unique offering as there are already co-educational private schools in the north of the state. Private schools that have become co-educational may have seen an increase in day enrolments, but their boarding enrolments have not increased.

Co-educational public agricultural boarding schools Yanco and Hurlstone have not experienced the same level of demand as Farrer MAHS.

Farrer MAHS has the highest percentage of aboriginal students of any selective school in New South Wales.

The themes of tradition, sense of community and respect amongst the wider outside community, were often spoken about:

- "I guess we talk at the school a lot about respect and we place a lot of importance on things like marching on Anzac Day and things like that. And yeah, that's what comes to mind when we think about the culture and the sense of community."
- "Being a boarding school, we live on site, we live together with 300 of our students. So there is that real strong sense of community that we have at the school as well."
- "We've spent an awful lot of time and effort building the culture of the school as staff, as members of the school community. And by staff I don't just mean the teaching staff. The leadership in the school has been very good at holding the line when students and parents are wanting to be watering down some of our expectations and desire for that."
- "One of the most telling things is that the kids here are more likely to express gratitude and appreciation for things that are done for them than I saw in my previous school. So it's not about necessarily the boarding. It's about the fact that we have worked a long time to maintain what a lot of people consider to be old fashioned virtues."

4.3.3 Staff from other high schools

There was consensus in the workshop that there should be more places for girls, equal to that as boys because:

- Yanco Agricultural High School is too far to travel –it's not fair for families living in the northern half of the state, if they have a girl she needs to travel much farther than a boy.
- Some teachers said their students have been investigating the sex discrimination act and are concerned the current situation of unequal places may be discriminatory.
- The facilities at Farrer are second to none, the other public boarding schools are co-educational, why not Farrer.
- The rural workforce are made up of women yet this school that specialises in this field are not admitting female students.
- Demand for agricultural subjects and opportunities amongst girls at other high schools is high.

Some participants were supportive of Farrer MAHS enrolling girls agreeing that it is a desirable government school that should have equity and be available to both genders for both day and boarding places.

Those not in support of Farrer MAHS enrolling girls were concerned about other high schools in Tamworth losing their high performing female students. There is already talk that there are too few students for the other three schools.

If Farrer MAHS is to enrol girls, it would need to be carefully planned with a focus on their wellbeing as they will be a minority.

Another consideration should be the provision of support classes and that if the discussion is about equity, the department should also be considering support boarding places.

There was a lot of support for an idea to add to the facilities at other schools that offer agricultural subjects to bring them up to par with Farrer MAHS.

An alternative option put forward was to discontinue the selective streams at Farrer MAHS and give the school an intake area to take some local students while boosting the HPGE (High Potential and Gifted Education) offerings at all Tamworth schools.

4.4 Special interest groups

4.4.1 Farrer School Council and Farrer Foundation

A representative from each of these two groups participated in a workshop on 10 June 2025. The Farrer Council then met on 27 June to agree on a more formal position.

The Farrer School Council made a formal submission following a meeting on 27 June 2025. Their unanimously agreed position is that Farrer MAHS should remain single-sex and should not be expanded.

The Farrer School Council also agreed on four key points:

- There should be equitable access to residential, agricultural high schools for both boys and girls, along with single gender choices.
- Farrer has successfully developed a unique specialised boarding and day school model which is now in high demand for boys, in fact 3 times the applications for day and over twice the demand for boarding in recent years. Council firmly stands not to diminish the opportunity that currently exists for boys at Farrer.
- The population of Farrer students is a unique total of 600, this being half day and half boarding. This number has proven a sweet spot figure that continues to increase in academic growth, sporting success statewide, cultural and personal development programs and also feeds an enormous community and social impact in not only Tamworth but the townships represented by the school and boarders. Farrer has an excellent reputation and is obviously in high demand by families.
- The School Council believes that an additional residential agricultural high school campus with associated boarding facilities should be developed at another location separated, perhaps adjacent to Farrer upon current NSW land in the form of the department of Primary industries.

At the more informal workshop, the representatives from each group agreed that there should be equal opportunity for girls but this could be provided at Yanco & and Hurlstone agricultural high schools by increasing enrolment places for girls there.

Farrer works so well because it is a single sex school and at 600, it's the right size. It works well with statewide sporting competitions and aligns well with work that students do with the wider community in Tamworth and their smaller hometowns. It helps teachers to know all students and develop strong professional relationships with students. A school of 1200 students is too large to foster a strong sense of community.

A better option would be to duplicate the school - something that offers the same for girls across the road with land that belongs to DPO (twin schools). Both schools would have the same model for single sex. There could be benefits realised in sharing facilities and curriculum offerings between the two schools.

For whatever reason, there are a significant number of families who want single sex schools for boarding. There should be options for boys and girls to choose either single sex or co-educational.

Additional alternative options put forward included:

- “Build a school in Dubbo for girls, and offer the agricultural classes there is support for that idea from the ICPA (Isolated Children's Parents Association)”
- “Look at private schools that are struggling with numbers, to buy the schools and making it a single sex for girls.”

4.4.2 Peel High School Parents and Citizens Association (P&C)

The Peel High School P&C made a formal submission by email following their June monthly meeting. The submission stated that any change to the current ‘boys only’ enrolment status of Farrer MAHS may have a significant impact on Peel High School’s selective enrolment.

Peel High School has a selective stream that requires students to sit the same statewide test for admission as the day students at Farrer MAHS. It also has a well-established agricultural program.

The P&C expressed concern that if Farrer MAHS becomes co-educational, many high potential for Gifted and Talented female students who have an interest in agriculture will by-pass Peel High School to attend Farrer MAHS, which has ‘Agriculture’ in its name.

4.4.3 AECG (Aboriginal Education Consultative Group)

The local AECG representatives are strongly opposed to a co-educational model at Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School. In their workshop, they stressed the importance of cultural programs, kinship rules, traditions and staff stability - stating that Farrer’s single-sex model should remain.

They expressed concern for the potential negative impact on Peel High School should Farrer MAHS become co-educational, noting the benefits realised through the introduction of its selective stream. If new additional selective day places for girls are created at Farrer MAHS, it will certainly draw high performing girls away from Peel High School, undoing much of the recent success achieved at this school.

The AECG representatives brought up the concept of the shame factor amongst aboriginal students. The shame factor negatively impacts students’ learning and tends to be more prevalent in co-educational classes. When Peel High School trialled single-sex classes in 2024, many aboriginal students were reported to be thriving and the AECG representatives attributed this success to the reduction of the shame factor in this type of classroom setting. Therefore, it is in the best interests of aboriginal students in regional and remote parts of New South Wales to retain opportunities to learn in single sex environments. Farrer MAHS is the only public single-sex boarding school opportunity in NSW and many aboriginal students are unable to access this model of schooling in the private sector.

Although strongly opposed to the school becoming co-educational, the AECG emphasised that if change is to occur, it needs to be done right to avoid mistakes made at other schools such as Armidale Secondary College. Some non-negotiables would be that no boys places should be removed and that classes should be single sex. However, this would double the size of the school, making it too big which would negatively impact on what the school can offer students – a further reason why this is not their preferred option.

Instead of turning Farrer MAHS co-educational, the AECG representatives strongly advocated for a separate single-sex girls’ agricultural boarding school. Preferably a standalone girls’ school in Tamworth. Some girls come from unsafe home environments and a girls’ boarding school would be great for these students.

If a standalone girls’ school is not a viable option, then the next best alternative would be to build a girls' boarding house addition to Peel High School or another comprehensive high school.

The AECG representatives summarised their position with statements such as “poor kids should not be locked out of boarding”; “traditions are important”; and “replicate the Farrer MAHS model for girls”.

4.4.4 Farrer MAHS Old Boys Association

The Old Boys Association highlighted Farrer's strong male role models, brotherhood, and traditions, arguing that equity for girls should not come at the expense of boys; they opposed co-education at Farrer, emphasising that Farrer's identity as a boys-only school provides unique benefits, that could be diluted by introducing co-education, and preferred expanding opportunities at other schools like Peel High School.

Participants expressed support for increasing the number of boarding places available for girls in NSW, particularly in agricultural schools. Recognising that in addressing girls access to boarding schools, a broader portfolio of schools should be considered, with potential to convert or expand existing facilities.

The Old Boys Association noted that existing facilities at Farrer are primarily designed for boys. If girls were to be introduced at Farrer significant investment to upgrade existing facilities or build new suitable accommodations. There was a clear preference that any introduction of girls should involve expanding the boarding capacity to accommodate 60 boys and 60 girls, rather than reallocating 30 places from boys to girls.

4.4.5 Other special interest groups

A combined workshop for several special interest groups was held on 16 June 2025 that was attended by representatives from:

- NSW Teachers Federation
- NSW Secondary Principals Council
- NSW Primary Principals Association

There was a consensus that the department should do more for girls and provide an equal number of boarding places for female students. Women make up a large proportion of the rural workforce and therefore we need more opportunities for them to study agriculture at high school.

When asked about supporting the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer MAHS re was mixed feedback. Some representatives thought it was an equitable way to address the current imbalance, but noted implementation must be considered carefully so as not to damage the strong performance of the school.

This group said if the change were to occur at Farrer MAHS, to place the welfare of the first cohorts of girls at the centre of decision-making. Enrolling day students in older grades before enrolling boarders and younger students, would be advised.

The group said careful consideration should also be given to other public high schools in Tamworth as additional selective places at Farrer MAHS would take high-performing students away from them.

4.5 General public community

397 members from the general public community participated in the survey.

A significant proportion of the general public community were former students of Farrer MAHS or were parents of former students of Farrer MAHS.

When asked if the department should consider options to increase the number of **boarding** places for girls, there were **318** responses from the public community:

- Yes: **45.9%**
- No: **47.5%**
- Unsure: **6.6%**

When asked if they support the introduction of female **selective** students at Farrer MAHS, there were **318** responses from the public community:

- Yes: **32.4%**
- No: **62.9%**
- Unsure: **4.7%**

Do you think the department should consider options to increase the number of boarding places for girls?

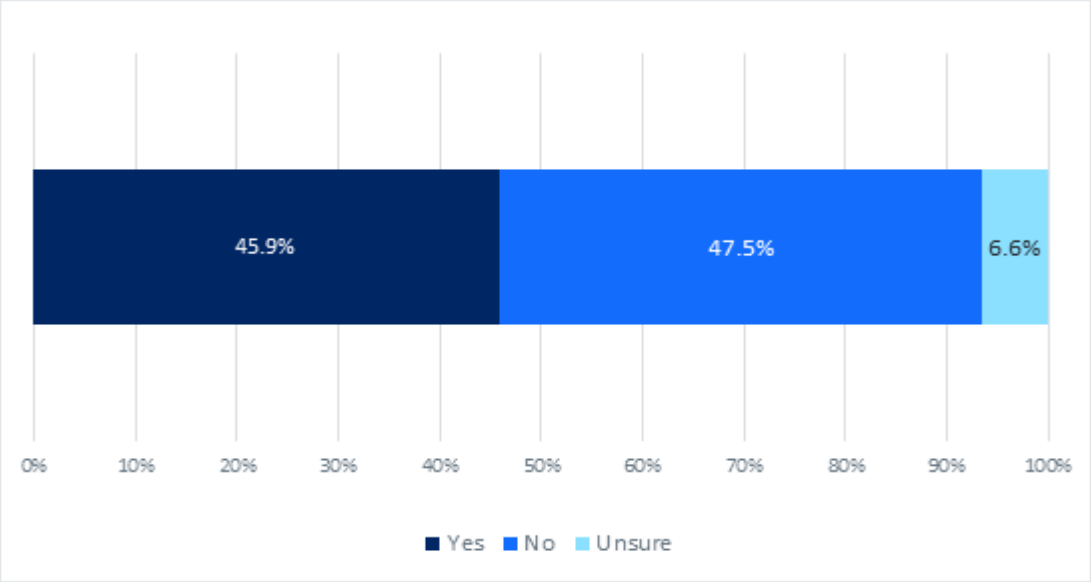


Chart 28 – General Public Community

Do you support the introduction of selective places for female students at Farrer Memorial Agricultural School?

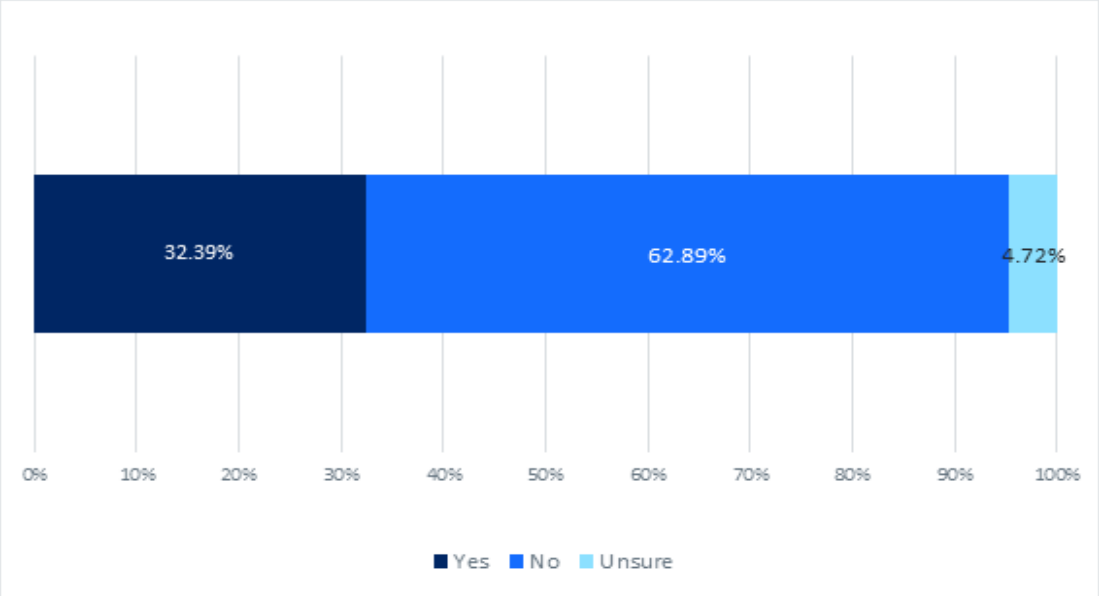


Chart 29 - General Public Community

Workshop conversations and email correspondence highlighted the following:

The main theme from the General Public workshop was around equality with one participant stating that the unequal number of boarding places for girls is discriminatory.

This group shared different perspectives on the best way to address this inequality.

If it were to happen at Farrer MAHS, there should be no reduction in the places available for boys. Adding girls would double the school and so that would need to be considered very carefully to protect what is good about the school. Some recommended a new school for girls either in Tamworth or another regional centre in the northwest.

NSW Department of Education

105 Phillip Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

GPO Box 33
Sydney NSW 2001

Office hours:
Monday to Friday
9:00am to 5:00pm

Head office 1300 679 332

education.nsw.gov.au

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