

FUTURE OPTIONS FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN ROLLESTON

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SEPTEMBER 2020



PREPARED FOR: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
PREPARED BY: D & G CONSULTING

The Rolleston area is currently projected to have significant growth in the coming years, and the current Rolleston College does not have the capacity to meet this ongoing demand. The community were engaged with, and a survey was conducted to assess the community's opinions of different secondary school options to alleviate the pressure created by rapid population growth.

- Option 1: A brand new secondary school
- Option 2: A second campus of Rolleston College

308 survey responses were included in the sample. Qualitative responses were analysed using thematic analysis and the themes are briefly discussed below in order from most number of references to the least number of references.

When asked which of the two options was their favourite, approximately 55% indicated option 1 and 45% option 2. This was a reasonably close split. Further investigation of the levels of support (measured on a 10-point scale), however, showed that option 1 had higher levels of community support compared to option 2 which had more people opposed or neutral. Approximately 63% of participants gave scores which were in favour of a new secondary school compared to 43% for a second campus of Rolleston College. Participants could express preference for both options, hence the favourable scores exceed 100%.

Participants were asked about the positives and negatives of a new independent state secondary school in Rolleston, and the responses were thematically analysed. The themes for the positives (in order of most referenced to least referenced) were:

- *Growth* – A new school necessary to accommodate the growing population and subsequent roll sizes.
- *Choice* – Many believe a new school could offer more choice to the community in which school to send children, dependent on zoning.
- *Teaching and learning* – A new school could offer new models of teaching and learning and may better meet the needs of some students. This could include bilingual pathways.
- *Opportunities* – This could offer new opportunities including inter-school events and competitions.
- *School identity* – A new, refreshed identity for a school in the community with different governance team.
- *Change in community* – This could be an opportunity for healthy change in the community in general.
- *Convenience and location* – The location could be beneficial for those who would like a secondary school closer to them with less travel.
- *Keeps kids together* – Some people would prefer students to not be separated at a certain age (e.g. in a junior / senior model).
- *Community* – Comments were made on a new school being beneficial to the community and being built with input from the community to facilitate greater community use.

The themes for the negatives of a new independent state secondary school were:

- *Community* – This would affect the Rolleston community by creating a split community and greater negative competition.

- *Zoning* – Zoning is a frequent concern as a new secondary zone would result in a zone which would affect the community.
- *Cost and resources* – Some believe a new school would be too expensive, duplicate resources, and take too long.
- *Change in the community* – This could result in teething issues to get started and get students settled into a new learning model. Others felt that a new school could be too similar to Rolleston and not be enough change.
- *Inconvenience* – Placement could result in inconvenience such as added traffic congestion.
- *No identity* – This was an identified risk as a new school would take time to develop identity in the form of tradition and history.

For a second campus of Rolleston college, three options were presented:

1. Campuses arranged based on geography, i.e. where they live determines which campus they attend
2. Campuses arranged by year level, i.e. a junior and a senior campus
3. Campuses arranged by other criteria, such as the specialist facilities

The preferred configuration was campuses arranged by year level with approximately 66% of participants favouring this option. The reasons given by participants for why this was their preferred option fit into the following themes:

- *Age group specialisation* – This model could allow campuses to be equipped to meet the different demands of different age groups, including specialising in NCEA and offering age-appropriate opportunities.
- *Age group separation* – Many believe that keeping junior and senior students is beneficial in terms of behaviour and leadership.
- *Sense of community* – Some believe this could support a sense of community and connectedness, maintaining cohorts of age groups.
- *Facilities and resources* – A second campus could offer facilities and resources which are more suited to the age groups accessing them.
- *Transitions* – This model could assist young students ease into secondary school.
- *Growth* – This would alleviate pressure on Rolleston College given the projected population.
- *Convenience* – This could reduce traffic and congestion around schools as this would be split between campuses, and staggered start times may be more convenient for families.
- *Zoning* – This would mean that Rolleston would retain a single zone rather than be split with two zones.

The themes for the negatives of having a second campus of Rolleston College separated by age were:

- *Age group separation* – This could result in loss of peer networks, separation of siblings and lost leadership opportunities (tuakana / teina).
- *Transitions* – This arrangement would mean students need to transition again during secondary school.

- *Inconvenience* – Having children at two sites could be inconvenient for some families.
- *Age group specialisation* – Some felt it could be difficult to cater to exceptional needs (e.g. advanced students) and could be logistically difficult.
- *Staff* – Some were concerned about staff needing to specialise as well as talented staff travel between campuses.
- *Community* – Some felt there could be a loss of connectedness.
- *Facilities and resources* – A second campus would involve the duplication of resources.

Participants were asked what could change their preferences for the options. Essentially, these reflected some of the concerns above. The community wanted to know where a new school or a new campus would be located and what the zoning implications would be. They also would like to know whether a second campus of Rolleston would be arranged by geography, age, or something else. Finally, if Rolleston were to have a second campus, they indicated that they need to know how teaching and learning would occur.

While the results of this community engagement indicate that a new independent state secondary school is the preferred option, more concrete information about a new secondary school or new campus of Rolleston College could substantially change the preferences of the community. Because of this, a second round of engagement with these questions answered is a necessary interim step before a final decision is made. The community must be made aware of where a new site could be located, what a new school zone could look like, and how Rolleston College would split their campuses and how they would operate in a two campus model.