Opportunity class
Information for Principals

AURORA COLLEGE

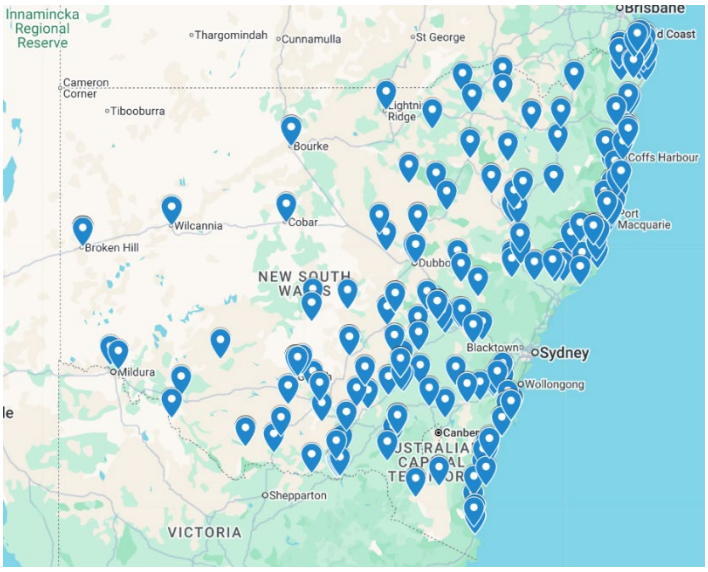
Aurora College – Igniting new ways of learning

- Aurora College, the NSW Department of Education's virtual school, commenced classes on Monday 2 February 2015. The school was a key deliverable of the Rural and Remote Education – a Blueprint for Action. It is a gazetted 'stand-alone' school.

- Aurora is providing innovative, flexible learning in a whole new context, by allowing students to connect locally and learn globally. To be eligible for enrolment in Aurora College in Stages 3, 4 and 5, students must also be enrolled in a NSW Government school which is classified as a rural and remote.

- Aurora College's virtual Opportunity Class operates as a partial enrolment in a selective school. Students learn in small classes of like-minded peers, working through a highly personalised program that has been specifically designed to respond to the needs of High Potential and Gifted students. Lessons are significantly differentiated by pace, depth, complexity, challenge and learning environment. Students develop high level technical skills as they engage in a myriad of innovative and interactive online platforms that allow for synchronous monitoring, collaboration and feedback.

- In Years 7 – 10, Aurora delivers selective classes in English, mathematics and science to high potential students from rural and remote areas across NSW. Students are chosen in the same way as students in all other selective positions in NSW government schools. Year 11 and 12 government high school students may apply to study one or more subjects with Aurora College, this is a non-selective provision.



- In 2026, Aurora College shared students (blue markers) with more than 240 rural and remote schools
- All Aurora College teachers and executive staff have completed the GERRIC mini-Certificate in Gifted Education course, as a base qualification, and continue their professional learning in ICT, HPGE and pedagogy while with Aurora College.
- Aurora's coordinating office is located at Lindfield College and is staffed with a Principal, Deputy Principal, and a small number of teachers and administration and technology support staff.

How are students selected for the virtual Opportunity Class?

- Students are chosen in the same way as students in all other opportunity classes in NSW government schools. Parents and staff should visit the Department's website https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5 for further details.

- To be eligible for enrolment, students must also be enrolled in a NSW Government school which is classified as rural and remote. Students at schools with opportunity class provisions, or at schools within the drawing areas of existing opportunity class provisions, are not eligible to apply for entry into the virtual opportunity class. The list

of authorised host schools can be viewed at: https://aurora.schools.nsw.gov.au/partner-schools/resources .

- Each year we have an intake of approximately 100 Year 5 students. Students remain with the program through Year 6. There are no Year 6 entries to the Aurora College virtual Opportunity Class.

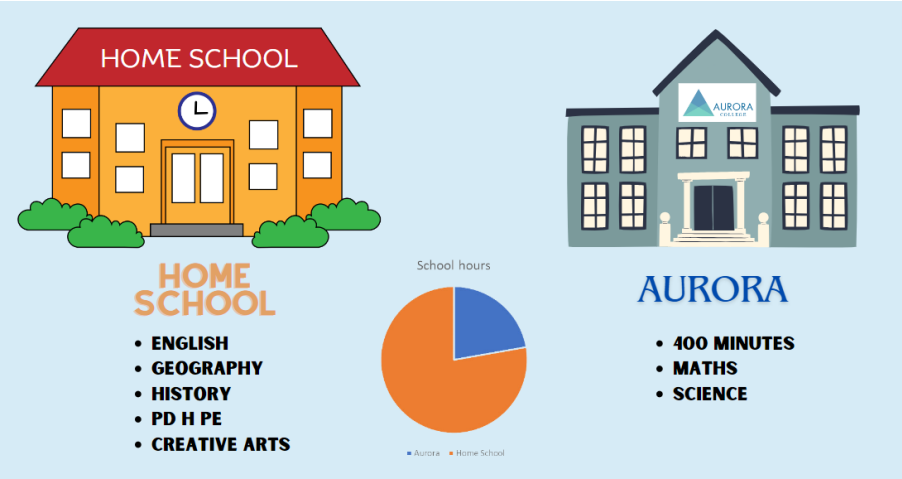
How will Aurora and the home (partner) school work together? What will students study?

- When a student enrols in Aurora College, they become a shared enrolment between Aurora and their home school. In this educational partnership, both schools must plan for and support the curriculum of each student.

- The virtual Opportunity Class curriculum has a STEM focus, with a mixture of explicit teaching and inquiry learning. Students study the content of the Mathematics and Science and Technology syllabuses. Aurora College has sole responsibility for teaching, assessing and reporting in these areas of the curriculum. The home school delivers the remainder of the curriculum.

- The operational model of Aurora College is based on **face-to-face, real-time lessons**. This model requires each partner school to build part of their timetable from the common timetable template.

- The Opportunity Class placement process does not require parents to have the approval of the home school principal when applying for or accepting a place in an Opportunity Class.



- A Residential School each year gives students the opportunity to meet and work with their peers and teachers. Aurora College provides supervised bus transport to and from the residential school. The program includes lessons, tutorials, master classes, mentoring sessions and excursions. Transport and accommodation costs are heavily subsidised by Aurora College.

- Aurora College offers students expanded career options through innovative partnerships with business and with scientific, cultural and tertiary education institutions. Masterclasses are key features of both the online and residential school programs, giving students access to people who are leaders and innovators in their chosen field.

- In each partner school, Aurora College funds the release of a suitable teacher to fill the role of Aurora College Coordinator (ACC). The ACC adds an important layer of support for the educational, social and emotional needs of our high potential and gifted students. The ACC is an important advocate of Aurora College in the partner school and in the local community.

- Further information on partnering with Aurora College in Stage 3 is provided in a suite of support documents on the partner school page of the Aurora College website, or visit our Facebook or Instagram pages.

- Please contact Chris Robertson (Principal) or Beth Hodson (Deputy Principal Middle School) via telephone on 1300 287 629 or email at auroracoll-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au.