

Mayor Andy Hafen

**Comments to the Nevada State Board of Education on the Adoption of
Proposed Regulation R142-16 to Chapter 388G of the Nevada
Administrative Code**

9/1/16

Good afternoon Members of the State Board of Education. For the record, I am Andy Hafen, Mayor of Henderson. I could not attend today's meeting in person due to an existing travel commitment, but I appreciate the opportunity to share my comments on adoption of proposed regulation R142-16 to Chapter 388G of the Nevada Administrative Code.

These proposed regulations stem from AB 394, the law enacted in 2015 that requires the Clark County School District to be reorganized into precincts. I have been honored to serve as a member of the AB 394 Technical Advisory Committee, known as the TAC, since the fall of last year.

What I can confirm for you today is that the community of Henderson places a high value on education. In multiple surveys, residents have identified education as their number one priority. Henderson residents are also highly engaged and want to play an active role in guiding decisions about education and schools in our community.

As part of the AB 394 information gathering process initiated by the TAC, Henderson hosted an open house, convened focus groups and conducted two online surveys, one in January of this year and one in March, where more than 1800 respondents answered questions and provided valuable feedback.

The top two concerns expressed by these participants were 1) quality of instruction and 2) student achievement. The bottom line for these parents and community members is that they want to see positive results from our

public schools and that's the expectation they have for what the reorganization of the Clark County School District will achieve.

Henderson residents also said they don't just want good schools for students to attend in our city, they want good schools for every student in Clark County, regardless of where they live. And they want to see Henderson's two and three star schools become four and five star schools.

Those responding to our surveys also favored the City of Henderson playing an active role when it comes to supporting schools and education. They see the City as having a clear mandate to serve its citizens, including when it comes to education.

More than 90% said that the City should be part of plans to reorganize the CCSD. In addition, they expressed a strong desire to see the City of Henderson taking the lead on strengthening relationships between schools and community partners and in efforts to help attract additional outside funding to enhance schools and provide more programs for students

We also learned that respondents overwhelmingly do not feel the CCSD Board of Trustees represents their views and concerns. In addition, they do not believe they have access to the CCSD Board of Trustees or can directly influence decisions by the Board and its members.

Two-thirds of those asked from Henderson said that the best way for parents to be formally represented in decision making at their child's school was by participating in a group that provides direction to the school on key decisions. But Henderson residents also said there should be a role for members of the community who are not parents to help in finding ways to ensure educational success.

I share these details with you so that you can better understand what Henderson residents desired to see included in the reorganization plan being

discussed here today and how what's been proposed will allow our community to play a greater role in fostering educational success

We are excited about the AB 394 plan and believe that it will be good for Henderson students and schools. This plan empowers principals by giving 80% of funding directly to schools and by increasing their decision making ability.

It also gives parents a greater role to play through councils at each school that will bring them together with principals, teachers and staff to make important decisions on school budgets and other issues that directly impact learning and the school environment.

For Henderson, it will help preserve our community identity and give our residents a greater voice when it comes to education.

We are extremely pleased with the inclusion of several provisions that I believe will greatly benefit not only the community I was elected to represent but others in Clark County who also choose to pursue these options.

Cities or other elected bodies will now have the ability to participate in the interview process for the Assistant Superintendents that will be assigned to oversee up to 25 schools within the greater Clark County School District.

These Assistant Superintendents will also be required to report four times per year to the City Council or other elected body that chooses to exercise this right and to have the opportunity to hear from these individuals about what is happening in their local schools. These sessions will also present the opportunity to ask important questions and to provide feedback on behalf of the community.

While this is not in the regulations, we are also hopeful that we can encourage the placement of Assistant Superintendents in ways that allow them to oversee schools in a community so there are, for example, only a limited number over all the schools in Henderson or North Las Vegas. We

believe that this will foster engagement and strengthen the relationship they have with the areas where these schools are located.

Henderson also thanks the lawmakers who crafted the AB 394 plan for including language that will allow our city to create its own Community Education Advisory Board or CEAB.

These have proven successful in other parts of Southern Nevada and we see a tremendous benefit in enabling our community and others to have the ability to start our own CEABs.

We envision the key areas of focus for our CEAB could include:

- 1) Measuring school performance indicators and engaging in on-going assessments of the needs of local students and schools.
- 2) Serving as a sounding board for community input and feedback, above and beyond what is given at the individual precinct level.
- 3) Fundraising on behalf of schools in Henderson.
- 4) Providing supplemental training, including to parents serving on school councils.
- 5) Working with the CCSD Assistant Superintendents who oversee the Henderson precincts.
- 6) Facilitating coordination between elementary, middle and High Schools, so that all are working together to ensure that Henderson students are prepared for success as they transition through grade levels and the feeder school system.
- 7) The ability to coordinate and enhance educational wrap-around services provided by the City of Henderson with the Clark County School District.

We look forward to establishing the Henderson CEAB and to sharing what we learn through this process and to studying the best practices of others so

that we can make this an effective tool for community involvement, input and collaboration.

In conclusion, I want to thank Senator Michael Roberson, Senator Aaron Ford and all of the other state lawmakers who served on the AB 394 Advisory Committee. I also want to thank my fellow TAC Committee members who all gave generously of their time and provided diverse opinions that helped to shape the reorganization plan that we are discussing here today.

The adoption of the regulations before you is not the conclusion of this process, it is the next step along the path to meaningful change. This path will require the participation of parents, teachers, principals, students, support staff, administrators and all our Southern Nevada communities to ensure that this reorganization is a success.

Working together, we can provide our children and our grandchildren with what they all deserve, a learning environment and a quality public education that gives each of them the keys to a future filled with opportunity.