



CITY OF HENDERSON
240 Water Street
P.O. Box 95050
Henderson, NV 89009

June 27, 2019

Ms. Rebecca Feiden
State Public Charter School Authority
2080 East Flamingo Road Suite 230
Las Vegas, NV 89119

Subject: Implementation of AB 462

Dear Ms. Feiden:

Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with my staff on June 17, 2019, about the implementation of AB 462.

Residents of the City of Henderson place the quality of a public-school education as a top priority. In the City's recently updated Strategic Plan, Quality Education is a new priority. The City created a Community Education Advisory Board (CEAB) in 2017 to engage community stakeholders in the development of programs to improve student outcomes. The City has funded 63 school projects with a value of more than \$3.5 million in the last two years to implement a targeted set of initiatives to improve student achievement, reduce chronic absenteeism, and/or reduce income or racial/ethnic achievement gaps.

During the 2018-2019 school year, 80% (21 of 26) of Henderson elementary schools were over 100% capacity and 34% (or 9 of the 26) were 125% over capacity¹. The addition of a handful of Charter schools throughout Henderson has helped to alleviate severe overcrowding by enrolling more than 7,500 students in Henderson last fall². Charter schools in Henderson emphasize a variety of specialties, including STEAM curriculum, a commitment to lower student/teacher ratios and research-based instructional practices, offering families choices in the delivery of education to their children.

¹ Clark County School District. 2018 Elementary School Enrollment Percent of 2018 Program Capacity http://dzc.ccsd.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/ES_Hotspots_2018.pdf

² City of Henderson Community Development and Services analysis of the Nevada Department of Education's Nevada Annual Reports of Accountability

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When my staff met with you, it was explained that the implementation of AB 462 includes:

- Site evaluations of existing schools;
- Regular communication with local school districts and the Nevada Department of Education;
- A Needs Assessment that focuses on demographic analysis and academic achievement;
- An analysis of populations at risk of dropping out of school; and
- A resulting 5-year Growth Management Plan for charter schools.

I am writing today to express concern regarding the Needs Assessment. Henderson schools face some of the worst overcrowding within the entire Clark County School District. Overlooking overcrowding as a criterion for the definition of 'need' poses a serious issue for the City in terms of delivering a quality public school education conducive to learning, safety, and sense of belonging for students.

As mentioned, charter schools in Henderson offer families a choice in the delivery of education to their children. Henderson strongly values the partnerships it has formed with both public and charter schools as we collectively seek to improve educational outcomes for all students.

The City of Henderson recommends that the issue of overcrowding be included in the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment as one of the key criterion considered in approving new charter schools.

Additionally, we would also request the following process enhancements in the future:

- The ability for local governments to have input in future charter application reviews and the Growth Plan process, similar to provisions for local school districts; and
- Collaboration to obtain broad community feedback during each stage of the implementation of the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SPCSA's 2019 Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment. The City of Henderson looks forward to working together with you to strengthen educational opportunities in Nevada.

Sincerely,



Debra March
Mayor

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cc: Jason Guinasso, SPCSA Chair
Melissa Mackedon, SPCSA Vice Chair
Stavan Corbett, SPCSA Member
Jeff Hinton, SPCSA Member
Randy Kirner, SPCSA Member
Nora Luna, SPCSA Member
Sheila Moulton, SPCSA Member