



City of Henderson
Education Analysis



Preliminary Draft Document- Intended for Discussion Purposes Only



Nevada’s public education system has taken strides in recent years to improve educational outcomes that have long put the state near the bottom of nearly every national ranking, but there is still much work to be done to close the gap with much of the country. Within the City of Henderson (Henderson), however, educational outcomes are significantly better in many respects compared to the rest of the state and stand in stark contrast with the results of the Clark County School District (CCSD) as a whole, of which the city’s schools are currently a part. This report outlines the performance of schools within Henderson compared to their counterparts in other parts of the CCSD, the state of Nevada and the nation.

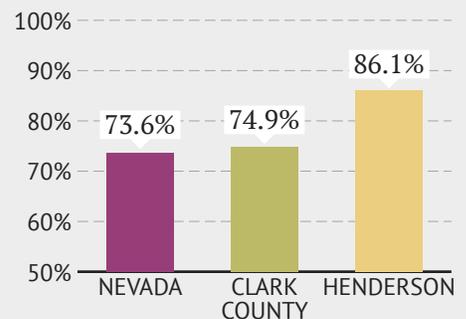
Henderson Summary

For this comparison, the 38 public schools located within Henderson’s city limits were identified and their individual data was combined to calculate totals for the city. While this is not a perfect representation of all students in Henderson given how school zones within CCSD overlap with municipal boundaries, the use of these schools allows for a reasonably comprehensive and accurate analysis of the state of education in Henderson.

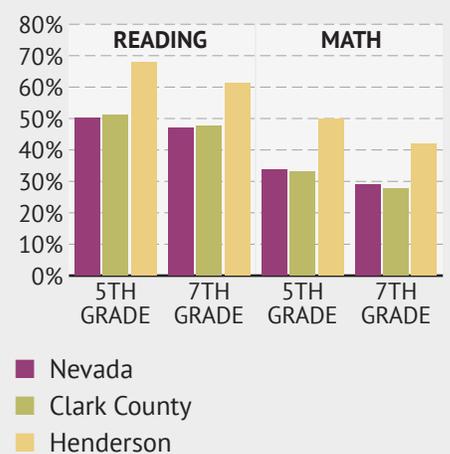
The 38 schools located within Henderson had a total enrollment in the 2016-2017 school year of nearly 42,000 students, which would make it the third-largest school district in the state if it were a separate entity, behind only the Clark County and Washoe County school districts. Overall, high schools in Henderson graduated just over 86 percent of students in the 2015-2016 school year, compared to just under 75 percent across CCSD. Henderson elementary schools report a 49.9 percent math proficiency rate and 68.0 percent reading proficiency rate among fifth graders, compared to 33.1 percent and 51.0 percent among all CCSD fifth graders. Henderson middle schools perform similarly well compared to their counterparts throughout Clark County, with 41.8 percent of seventh graders proficient in math and 61.2 percent proficient in reading. District wide, 27.7 percent are proficient in math and 47.6 percent in reading. On average, Henderson schools also have a higher star rating than CCSD as a whole. The 2013-2014 version of the ratings was the last to include all grade levels, and Henderson schools had an average rating of 4.0 stars, well above the CCSD average of 3.15 for that year.

While students in Henderson outperform their peers in other parts of the county and state, Henderson students faces fewer obstacles outside of the school system than many other places. For example, median household income, which is often highly correlated with school performance, is \$64,000 per year in Henderson compared to \$53,000 for all of Clark County. The number of families with children below the poverty line is also significantly different in Henderson. While 17.3 percent of such families

Graduation Rate



Proficiency Rates





in Clark County and 17.2 percent statewide are below the poverty line, only 9.9 percent in Henderson fall below that threshold. This translates to fewer Henderson students participating in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program, which reduces the administrative burden on schools in the city. Henderson also faces a much smaller challenge in teaching English-Language Learner (ELL) students than the rest of the state. While 18.3 percent of CCSD students and 15.9 percent of all Nevada students are enrolled in the ELL program, only 5.6 percent of students in Henderson schools require supplemental English instruction. In addition, residents of Henderson tend to be more educated than those in other parts of Nevada. While 22.8 percent of Clark County adults over 25 years old and 23.2 percent of Nevada adults have a bachelor's degree or higher, 31.1 percent of adult residents in Henderson have at least a four-year degree.

Demographic Overview

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income	Family Poverty Rate	Adults with Bachelor's Degree	Free and Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility	English Language Learners	Individualized Education Plan Students
United States	\$55,322	17.4%	30.3%	51.8%*	9.5%*	N/A
Nevada	\$53,094	17.2%	23.2%	60.7%	15.9%	12.2%
Clark County	\$52,629	17.3%	22.8%	69.7%	18.3%	12.0%
Henderson	\$64,277	9.9%	31.1%	44.8%	5.6%	11.8%

* U.S. FRL and ELL data from 2014-15 school year, most recent available on national scale

While none of these demographic measures shows up directly in academic performance data, they are nonetheless important to understanding the distinctly different outcomes recorded by Henderson schools compared to Clark County and the state. Each student's life outside of the classroom invariably impacts their performance within it, and Henderson students on average have fewer traditional obstacles to educational success. Whether additional family income allows for tutors or more after school activities, or more educated parents are more involved with their children's education, demographics can help explain the variation observed between Henderson schools and the rest of the Nevada public education system.

National Comparison

In nearly every school performance category tracked by the state of Nevada, Henderson outperforms most school districts in the state. A national comparison is required to complete the picture of the effectiveness of Henderson schools. Given Nevada's long-term struggles with public education, comparing Henderson to the state or the CCSD may not provide the most accurate gauge of success. For most national comparisons, data was compiled from school districts around the country with at least 25,000 students across all grade levels. There are 304 such districts throughout the United States, out of a total of more than 16,000. Members of this group are referred to as "large school districts" throughout this report. With roughly 42,000 students, the city of Henderson would be among this group as an independent district and would rank in the 99th percentile nationwide for size as the 131st largest district by enrollment in the country. Henderson also compares favorably among this group in various performance indicators such as graduation rates and elementary school reading and math proficiency, including a ranking of 7th in 5th grade reading proficiency.

Enrollment
131ST
 Largest School District in the United States

Graduation Rate
86.1%
 National Average: 84.1%

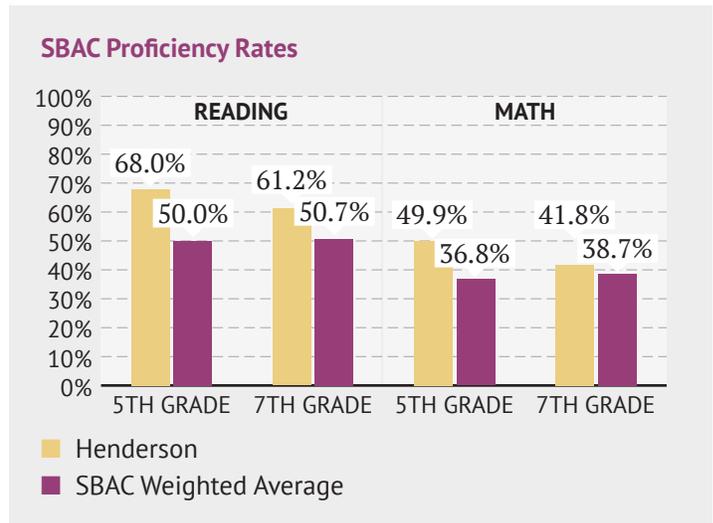
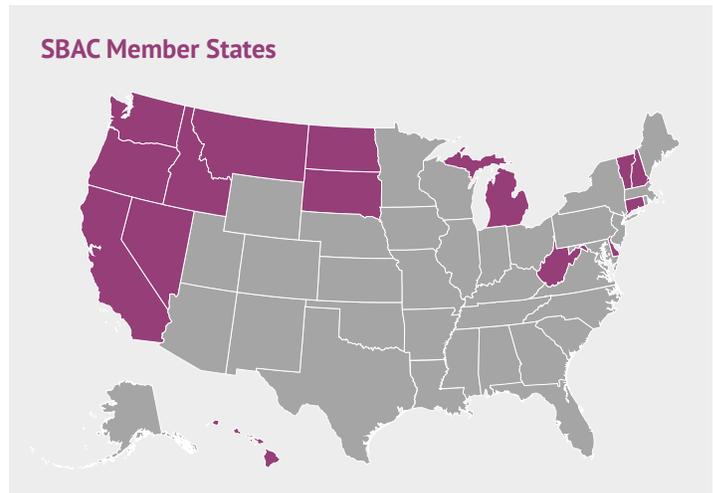
Reading Proficiency
5th Grade
7TH
 Among Large School Districts in SBAC States



Among large school districts, Henderson’s graduation rate in the 2015-2016 school year would be near the middle of the pack, ranking 138th out of 302. While there are 304 large school districts, two of those districts do not have high schools and therefore have no graduation rate to report.¹ Henderson’s 86.1 percent graduation rate would be slightly higher than the national average of 84.1 percent and would be higher than the average rate in 29 states and the District of Columbia. Overall, Henderson performs slightly better than the national average in terms of graduation rate.

Henderson compares favorably against other districts and states in mathematics and reading proficiency as well. Proficiency standards differ somewhat from state to state, and different states use entirely different tests to determine proficiency. The federal Department of Education administers annual tests that allow for comparisons between states, but these tests are only given to a sample of schools each year, making it impossible to compare individual school districts, or groups of school such as those in the City of Henderson. To ensure the most accurate evaluation of Henderson’s school performance, our comparison is limited to the 15 states that are a part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), which includes Nevada and states encompassing roughly one quarter of the United States’ overall population. These states administer the same tests to their students in grades three through eight, which allows for direct comparisons of proficiency rates across the states.

Of the 304 large school districts previously identified, 58 were in SBAC states and had qualifying scores for 5th grade reading and math proficiency (several school districts did not include any elementary schools and therefore had no scores for 5th grade students). Among those 58 school districts, Henderson’s combined 5th grade reading proficiency rate of 68 percent ranked 7th overall. In math, Henderson’s performance of 49.9 percent proficiency ranked 12th among those districts.



¹ Bakersfield City School District and Chula Vista Elementary School District, both in California

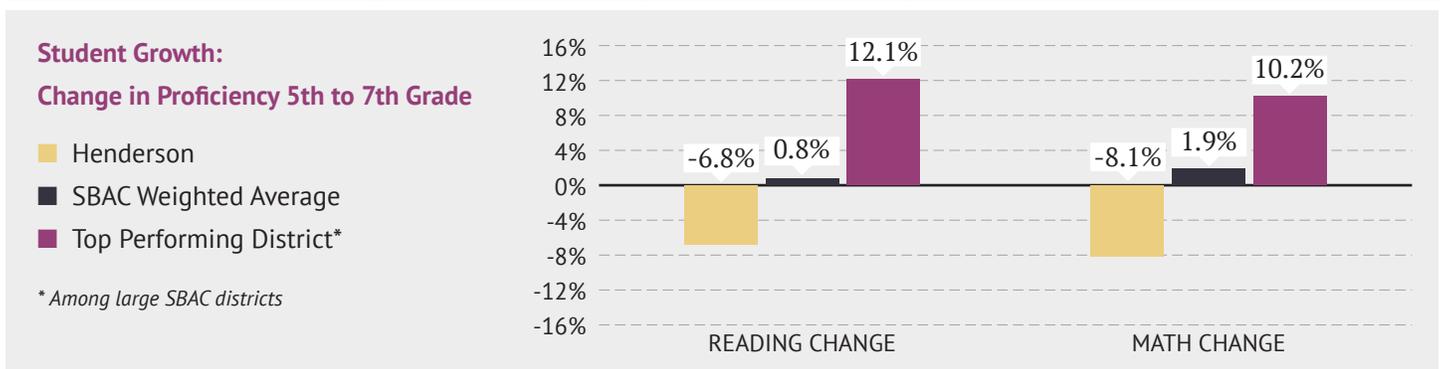


For 7th grade, 60 large school districts from SBAC states had qualifying scores. With a 7th grade reading proficiency rate of 61.2 percent, Henderson would rank 17th among this group. Henderson’s performance for 7th grade math would place it toward the middle of the pack, ranking 29th out of 60 with a proficiency rate of 41.8 percent.

Since only eight of the 15 SBAC states have large school districts represented in the sample for the previous comparison, a second analysis was conducted to measure Henderson’s performance against each state’s weighted average proficiency scores. In this broader comparison against each of the 15 states, Henderson’s proficiency scores were significantly above average, with the exception of 7th grade math, where the difference is more modest. In fact, Henderson’s performance in 5th grade reading, 5th grade math, and 7th grade reading would rank 1st among all SBAC states, with higher proficiency rates than each of the 15 individual state averages in these categories.

Performance Indicator Comparisons

School Performance Indicator	Nevada	Clark County	Henderson	National/SBAC Average
5th Grade Reading (SBAC only)	50.2%	51.0%	68.0%	50.0%
5th Grade Math (SBAC Only)	33.8%	33.1%	49.9%	36.8%
7th Grade Reading (SBAC Only)	46.9%	47.6%	61.2%	50.7%
7th Grade Math (SBAC Only)	29.1%	27.7%	41.8%	38.7%
ACT Composite Score (1 to 36)	17.8	17.3	18.7	21.0
High School Graduation Rate	73.6%	74.9%	86.1%	84.1%

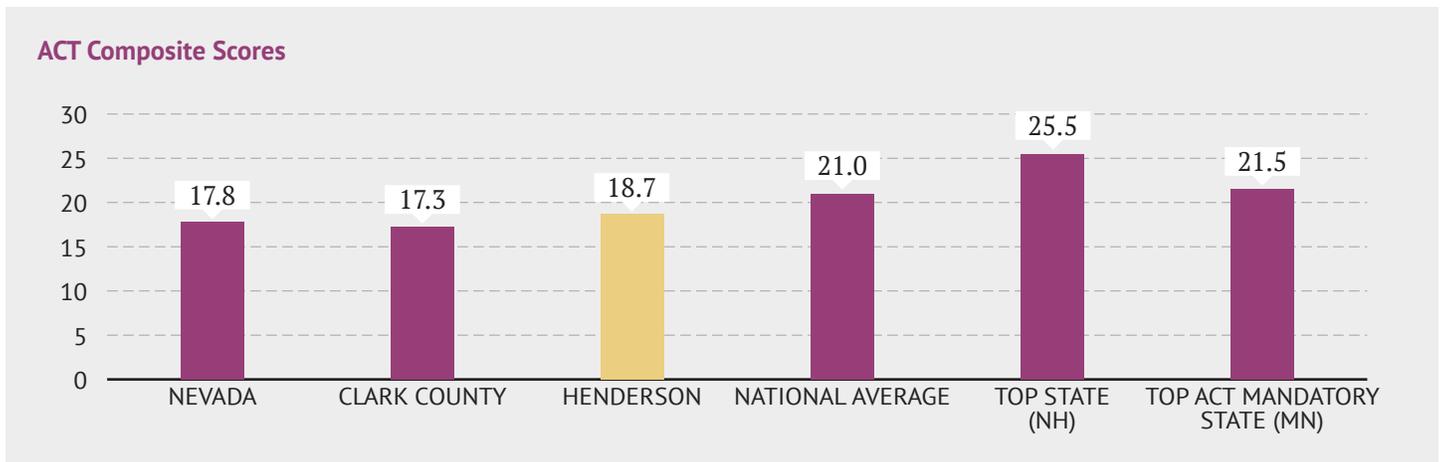


While in each category above Henderson is at worst slightly above average and at best is exemplary, those rankings mask a potential issue among Henderson students, who seem to perform less favorably as they transition out of elementary school and into middle school. Sixty-eight percent (68.0 percent) of 5th graders in the 2016-2017 school year were proficient in reading; but, by 7th grade, that rate falls to 61.2 percent, a difference of 6.8 percentage points. Among the 57 large SBAC school districts that had scores for both 5th and 7th grade, this decrease is the second worst. The drop-off in math is even more significant, with the proficiency rate declining by 8.1 percentage points from 5th to 7th grade, also second worst among comparable districts. For additional context, the CCSD showed declines of 3.4 percentage points in reading and 5.4 percentage points in math from 5th to 7th grade, while Washoe County as a whole actually improved proficiency from 5th to 7th grade in reading by 1.2 percentage points and recorded a decline of just 0.1 percentage points in math. On average, school districts in the sample improved their proficiency rate in reading by 1.7 percentage points between 5th and 7th grades and improved by 2 percentage points in math. Across all SBAC states, the average growth is 0.8 percentage points for reading and 1.9 for math.



Scores on the ACT, an exam that measures how prepared high school students are for college-level coursework, are another area where Henderson stands out within Nevada but lags behind much of the nation. Starting with the 2015-2016 school year, Nevada joined a group of 17 states that require ACT participation of all high school juniors. This caused a significant drop in Nevada’s average score, which fell from 21.0 in 2015 to 17.7 the following year (on a score scale of 1 to 36). This was not unexpected, as states where the exam is mandatory tend to have lower average scores because the selection bias associated with students who choose to take the test is eliminated. While the overall national average ACT composite score was 21.0 in 2017, the 17 states with mandatory participation averaged 19.7 compared to 22.4 in states where ACT participation is left to student choice. Nevada’s performance was the worst of any state regardless of the level of participation, nearly a full point behind the second-worst performing state, Mississippi.

By comparison, Henderson’s high schools averaged an 18.7 composite score on the ACT, higher than the CCSD average of 17.3, Nevada’s average of 17.8, and Washoe County’s average of 18.0. However, even if all of Nevada performed at Henderson’s level, a statewide average score of 18.7 would only be good enough to pass one other state, putting Nevada in a tie for second-worst both among states where the ACT is mandatory and throughout the country as a whole. As time goes on and both students and teachers within Nevada and Henderson adjust to the addition of this mandatory exam, scores can be expected to increase.



Conclusion

Educational outcomes within the city of Henderson are superior to those in Clark County and throughout the state of Nevada. When compared nationally, however, Henderson’s student performance metrics are more mixed. While a theoretical Henderson school district does stack up well in some areas, such as high school graduation rates and elementary reading and math proficiency, there are others where it notably lags national average, particularly as student progress into higher grades. Part of Henderson’s success is certainly due to fewer socioeconomic challenges, particularly when compared against CCSD and other large urban school districts. Like in many other areas, in education, success tends to beget success and failure tends to beget failure. Henderson’s ability to leverage its strengths and mitigate its shortcomings will likely attract better teachers and better students, further increasing school performance.