

Students offered assistance for proficiency exam

By *Lés Pierres Streater*
Sentinel-Voice

Clark County School District held a news conference recently at Rancho High School to introduce what developers say is "an innovative Web-based online remediation program" aimed at helping high school students prepare for the math portion of a mandatory proficiency exam called the NHSPE, required for graduation.

Overcoming any math skills deficiency in students at risk of not passing the upcoming NHSPE (Nevada High School Proficiency Exam) is a primary goal, school representatives said. CCSD School Superinten-

dent Dr. Carlos Garcia, addressing the audience gave answers to: Why is it so important for students to pass the NHSPE? and "What's the Most Important Day in April?"

"The Most Important Day — April 5," said Garcia. It's the day the NHSPE test will be given for students who want to graduate, said Garcia. He emphasizes the date and encourages parents and friends of high school students and community members to get those students who must take the state proficiency test to school without fail on that Tuesday.

The district announced the Important Day themed campaign as a companion effort



Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice photo by *Lés Pierres Streater*
Students at Rancho High School give the new online remediation program a try.

but not the proficiency test, and is often regarded as insufficient to meet some organization's minimum prerequisites.

"We need everyone telling kids how important it is to be in school on test day, and that no one can skip. Parents need to make sure their kids get up in time to eat a good breakfast. Businesses need to know when it is test day and encourage kids to get to school... [Get the message out] to the community that April 5 is an important day for our high school students!" Garcia encouraged.

The NHSPE will test students in general subjects and for their math proficiency in areas including: number sense (fractions, decimal, basic addition and subtraction); algebra (functions, polynomials and word problems and); geometry and measurement (area, perimeter and volume) and data analysis, such as statistics and probabilities, and critical thinking.

Math Test was initiated by teachers and staff from the CCSD Curriculum and Professional Development Division to effectively assist students to pass the NHSPE. The advantages are many and its use as a tool for students needing remedial or test preparation study help will aid in reducing the numbers of students who fail to receive a diploma, the school district's early results indicate.

"Our long term goal is that
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CAAN

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then forwarded to the CAAN's executive board for a final determination on whether or not its organization would endorse a particular candidate or choose to not make any recommendation for a particular office. Though CAAN is non-partisan, it does, on behalf of its own organization body, assess and then publicly endorse candidates for appointed or elected positions who it feels will effectively and responsibly serve the community it represents, according to its history and mission statement.

Beginning with the Henderson mayoral race, three candidates, Mayor James B. Gibson (incumbent), Susan Gillean-Bedell and Laurie Robinson, had confirmed that they would be in attendance at the event, according to Stokes. However, only candidate Robinson appeared, along with the Henderson mayor's son, Matthew Gibson, who stated that a scheduling conflict prevented his father from attending the event.

During their presentations, Gibson apologized to the audience about not being able to specifically address the issues presented to them, but went on to articulate the virtues of his father and stated that the mayor would entertain another opportunity to address these issues.

Robinson, running for office for the first time, focused her remarks on her family's personal experiences living in Henderson, and she indicated that the city government needed a change of leadership.

She also criticized the mayor for wanting to build

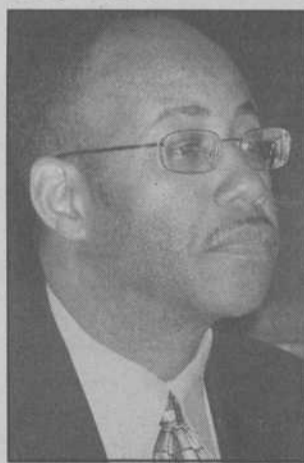
more housing on 2,200 acres of land that had been polluted by industrial waste which she compared to the Love Canal incident in New York, subjecting families to untold health and medical risks.

The North Las Vegas mayoral race featured the incumbent Mayor Michael Montandon and challenger Andres Ramirez. Both candidates were given the opportunity to explain what he or she would do for the African-American community if elected. In addition, they replied to a series of questions, including what he or she would do to promote diversity in the awarding of contracts to W/MBE'S (women/minority business enterprises).

According to Montandon: "We are restricted by the lowest [bid response] and [responsible] bidder. We aren't required to use a certain percentage of DBE's in anything. Simply causing that to be the requirement would be a simple solution. I'll tell you that private industry isn't hampered by that restriction. When Steve Wynn goes to build a casino, and one person that he just flat knows is a better contractor in an area, or any other reason he or [any other] private company feels like using [a minority-owned company], they're welcome to — even if it's not the lowest bid."

Candidate Ramirez responded to the question: "I think this issue is about sincerity and leadership. You're talking about government rules and regulations that are set by the government. This is something that the government should change, and can change. This is about how we are perceived as a people and

how clear we are about ensuring that minorities and underrepresented communities have a fair opportunity to be represented in the bidding process. I've worked at the national level for several years working on DBE compliance and enforcement. Many of the times, we don't have minority bidders who meet the low bidder requirements, but we have several subcontractors that do, and it can be encouraged that these major low-bidders [be required] to contract with these subcontractors that are minority-owned."



BYRON GOYNES

In the Las Vegas City Council Ward 6 race, only six of the 11 candidates running appeared at the forum. One of the questions asked of all of the candidates was to identify how much time and money each of them has spent in that community while shaking hands and campaigning for support. Only one candidate, Byron Goynes, admitted that he had spent time and money over the past 12 years in his present position, supporting this community.

Another question posed to the candidates queried them that "if they were beached on a deserted island with a bottle of gin with Las Vegas City

Mayor Oscar Goodman, what piece of legislation would they recommend be passed once they were rescued off the island?" (in reference to recent controversial comments about gin made by the mayor).

Many of the answers were humorous and supportive of the mayor, but only three of the candidates, Crisman, Goynes and Sansone, addressed the question with some sincerity and a resolution.

The six candidates who did appear at the forum included: Debbie Kitterman Burgos, Jeff Crisman, Byron Goynes, Marlene Rogoff, Anthony M. Salas and Steve Sansone. A seventh candidate, Steve Ross, was represented by one of his campaign staff members, Ben Contire.

In the North Las Vegas City Council Ward 3 Race, candidates Stephanie Smith and Jean Withers appeared at the forum.

On Tuesday, following the community forum, the Executive Board of CAAN met to discuss the process of ratifying or not ratifying the non-binding vote of the public who attended the forum.

Their recommendations were as follows: in the Henderson race, no recommendation was made for any of the candidates; in the North Las Vegas Mayoral Race, the board ratified the public's support of candidate Andres Ramirez; in the Las Vegas City Council Ward 6 Race, the board ratified the public's support of candidate Byron Goynes; and in the North Las Vegas City Council Ward 3 Race, the board ratified the public support of candidate Stephanie Smith.

to its announcement that "Math Test," the Web-based remedial help program, is now open to all sophomores and juniors, in addition to seniors. Initially, senior-level was the only grade from which CCSD selected its 2004 pilot program participants.

The answer to "why" passing the proficiency test is so important: NHSPE is a requirement for any student in Clark County to graduate from high school with a diploma rather than a certificate of attendance. A diploma is often a requirement for certain types of better paying, skilled jobs and for entrance to some colleges and universities.

A certificate of attendance, shows that the student has completed all required classes

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