

# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
*Governor*

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### **GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON LAYS OUT 10 PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION REFORM**

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson today reaffirmed his desire to get all education-reform bills to his desk by the middle of next week. The governor said it is important that the Legislature pass all of the reform bills, not just one component.

“Just as passage of my tax-cut was critical to making New Mexico more competitive, passage of my education-reform package is critical to keeping us competitive and establishing New Mexico as a national leader,” Governor Bill Richardson said. “For too long, bickering and gridlock have prevented reform. I’ve pledged to end gridlock and move our state forward. Nothing should stand in the way of bold educational reform legislation. The people want it. I want it. The children deserve it. And the future of our state depends on it. The time is now.”

Governor Bill Richardson outlined 10 principles for education reform that must be included in the overall strategy to improve school performance.

“Frankly, I’m disappointed that some legislators and interest groups are losing sight of the big picture – fundamentally reforming public education,” Governor Bill Richardson said. “We can’t reform just one aspect of the process. We must be bold. And we must address all the educational issues, from full-day kindergarten to reducing the amount of administration costs.”

Governor Bill Richardson’s 10 education-reform principles include:

- **Salaries.** We are raising teacher salaries by 6 percent. That substantial investment will raise New Mexico teacher salaries from 46th to 29th in the country. Increase other educational employees salaries by 3 percent.
- **Performance pay.** We should offer cash incentives to teachers that are tied to performance. Teachers deserve extra compensation – and the public expects teachers to be held accountable for their students’ performance.
- **Classroom spending.** We are requiring school districts to cut administrative costs and shift spending to the classroom. We will require schools to meet the national average of spending 62 cents out of every dollar in the classroom within two years.

- **Early education.** We'll provide access for every New Mexico child to free, full-day kindergarten.
- **Accountability.** In exchange for better salaries, we must demand more accountability. Every student must be able to read by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Every dollar spent in every school will be tracked and accounted for – and we'll be asking why we run our schools the way we do. I want to praise the work of Senator Cynthia Nava and Representatives Rick Miera and Mimi Stewart. I read their op-ed piece in today's Journal, and I agree with their ideas for accountability. School reform must result in a system of public education that gives every child the opportunity to succeed academically.
- **Governance.** We must create a Secretary of Education who reports directly to the Governor. I still prefer to abolish the state Board of Education. Without a strong Secretary – answerable to the Governor – accountability is not possible. I cannot support a proposal that allows for a policy-making school board. I was elected, as were legislators, to improve education. Give me a governance structure that holds us accountable.
- **Hold school districts accountable.** Too many bureaucrats are getting raises while too many teachers are leaving the state. The days of hundred-thousand-dollar buy-outs, million-dollar roofs and tens-of-millions of dollars sitting in savings accounts, while teachers are spending money out of their pockets to buy chalk, must end.
- **Student testing.** I want student testing to mean something. In order to hold students accountable, we need to use test results to figure out where we're doing things right, and where we are failing.
- **Graduation rates.** I want our schools to be judged by how many students they graduate. Just getting students to show up to school doesn't mean we're preparing them for the real world.
- **Smaller schools.** Smaller classrooms. As we build new schools, let's make them smaller. And we should consider smaller academies within existing schools. We want a lower teacher-to-student ratio so every child has an opportunity to learn, and gets the attention they deserve.