



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

For immediate release  
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2/18/04  
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### **Governor Bill Richardson looks forward to signing Truancy legislation**

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson said he fully supports a tough truancy bill as part of his overall package to improve public schools. The bill, passed today by the Senate, cracks down on truancy in New Mexico communities.

“This innovative approach puts real teeth into our efforts to keep kids in school and off the streets,” Governor Bill Richardson said. “It’s about time that we beef up our weak, outdated laws and enact real consequences for skipping school. This bill holds both parents and students accountable.”

House Bill 106 makes several changes to state law, including:

- Define a truant student as a student who misses class five times unexcused during a 20-day period.
- Define “habitual truant” as a student who misses class 10 or more times unexcused.
- “Habitual truants” will lose their driving privileges for as many as 90 days if they have 10 unexcused absences in a semester.
- Require school districts to provide early identification of students with unexcused absences, truants and habitual truants.
- Require school districts to develop intervention plans to keep students in school
- Require school districts to inform parents when their child is truant and discuss possible intervention approaches.

- Parents could be fined \$25 to \$100 or community service the first conviction for violating the act. The fine increases to \$500 or imprisonment of up to six months for subsequent convictions.

The Senate passed House Bill 106 on a 35-3 vote today. The bill now heads back to the House for approval of a minor amendment. After that, the bill will head to the Governor for his signature.

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