



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Announces Camp Sierra Blanca will Remain Open

RUIDOSO - Governor Bill Richardson today announced during a town hall meeting that he is directing Children, Youth & Families Secretary Mary Dale Bolson to keep Camp Sierra Blanca open. Governor Richardson said he wants Secretary Bolson to identify the best options for the facility so that it best serves New Mexico's kids in the future.

Governor Richardson delivered the following remarks:

First, I want to thank you all for coming this afternoon, and thank you for your continued support for New Mexico's children. During the last seven years, the community of Ruidoso has strongly supported Camp Sierra Blanca. And I have to say that I'm impressed with the results.

Even though New Mexico, like many other states, is moving toward community-based treatment for juvenile offenders, there will always be a need for places such as Camp Sierra Blanca.

I want to stress that I've listened carefully to everyone from this community who wants to keep Camp Sierra Blanca open. I've met personally with supporters. I've talked on the phone. I've read letters. Most importantly, I've seen the statistics. Nine out of ten residents who leave the Camp do not commit more crimes, and become productive members of our communities.

My primary concern is that any decision to close any facility must be in the long-term best interests of New Mexico's kids. That's why, after careful study and my discussions with community leaders and Secretary Bolson, I've decided to keep Camp Sierra Blanca open.

There's no doubt that Camp Sierra Blanca has seen a great amount of success in treating low-risk juvenile offenders. I not only want that trend to continue ... I want to make it *better*. My administration will work with the community of Ruidoso and throughout Southern New Mexico to identify the *best* options for the facility.

But first, I want to turn it over to Secretary Bolson. I know she's been having discussions with some people here in Ruidoso, about the best options for keeping Camp Sierra Blanca going in the future.

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