



# State of New Mexico

## Office of the Governor

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

For Immediate Release  
December 5, 2005

Contact: Gilbert Gallegos  
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2217

## Governor Bill Richardson Unveils Plans to Partner with Parents to Make Schools Work

*Initiative is part of Governor's "Year of the Child" agenda for 2006 legislative session*

ALBUQUERQUE -- Governor Bill Richardson today outlined a plan to partner with parents, including investing in innovative parental involvement programs, as part of his effort to make schools work.

"Today, I am announcing several specific initiatives designed to get more parents involved with schools and providing opportunities to be part of their child's success," Governor Richardson said, noting that New Mexico received a grade of C+ for parental involvement on a recent statewide education report card. "That grade is unacceptable and I'm here today to say that I'm prepared to make investments to help parents be more involved with schools. But in return, I'm asking parents to be accountable. I'm tired of excuses about why our achievement is not where it should be."

Governor Richardson outlined the following initiatives during a news conference today at Rio Grande High School, which has the only funded parent coordinator in the state:

1. **\$1.5 million for Parental Involvement and Training** This will include innovative training and outreach for parents and identifying best practices that already taking place in our schools, like the parent center here at Rio Grande High School
2. **Time off from work for parenting activities** The Governor will work with parents and the business community to come up with legislation requiring employers to give parents a reasonable amount of time off without pay to help their children succeed in school.
3. **\$250,000 for community revitalization and rural education**, which would have a strong emphasis on involving parents in school-led efforts to tie job creation to school curriculum.
4. **\$2.4 million to further increase the number of New Mexico families who are eligible for childcare assistance.** Governor Richardson inherited a childcare assistance program that had been drastically cut. The Richardson Administration has increased the eligibility level back to 150 – and now 160-percent of the federal poverty level.

5. **\$200,000 for programs assisting grandparents raising grandchildren.** The funding assists grandparents with guardianship and legal issues including informal and formal custody issues.

#30#