



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Includes 6 percent pay increase for Teachers on Year of the Child Agenda

ALBUQUERQUE - Governor Bill Richardson today announced a \$109 million salary package that includes 6 percent pay raises for all New Mexico teachers. The investment, coming on top of nearly \$200 million invested in teacher salaries and benefits during the Governor's first three years in office, is designed to help schools continue to recruit and retain high-quality teachers in the classroom.

"We've made a lot of progress toward making our schools work and preparing our children for the future," Governor Bill Richardson said during a news conference today at John Adams Middle School on Albuquerque's West Side. "But we have more work to do – especially when it comes to getting quality teachers in the classroom."

Governor Richardson, who was joined by Secretary of Education Veronica Garcia, noted that the average returning teacher salary is now nearly \$42,000. New Mexico has moved from 48th to 41st in the nation in average teacher salaries – the highest ranking in 15 years.

"We're making progress and we have to continue the momentum," Governor Richardson said.

Governor Richardson will propose a \$109 million salary package as part of his budget plan when the Legislature meets for a 30-day session in January 2006. Teachers and all certified educators, including principals, nurses, counselors and teaching assistants, would get 6 percent increases, under the Governor's proposal. All other school district personnel would get 4 percent raises. The salary package includes:

- Teachers moving to level III - \$18.9 million
- All other teachers - \$55.7 million
- Other instructional staff (12 groups including nurses and counselors) - \$11.6 million
- Educational assistants - \$4.5 million
- Principals - \$5 million
- All other school staff - \$11.9 million
- Transportation staff - \$1.7 million

"While it is important to continue to move up in the salary rankings, I am focused on the ultimate goal of our effort to make schools work – improving learning in the classroom, ensuring that all kids graduate and

preparing New Mexico's kids for college and work in a high-wage economy," Governor Richardson said. "This long-term investment – which should rise to nearly \$300 million in just four years – is helping us to retain and recruit quality teachers in the classroom."

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