



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Praises Education Report – Shows Improvement in New Mexico Schools

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson today praised a national report that highlighted New Mexico's efforts to make schools work – by improving teacher quality, adopting high standards and accountability, and increasing spending in every classroom.

The Quality Counts 2006 report, an Education Week/Pew Charitable Trusts report on education in all 50 states, pointed out that New Mexico scored better than the national average on three of four measures of education reform policies.

- New Mexico received an A for **standards, assessments and accountability** tying with Florida and West Virginia for 6th in the nation and was one of only 8 States in the nation to earn an A in this area. Average state score was a B-.
- New Mexico was one of only 6 states in the country to be recognized for its efforts to improve **teacher quality**. New Mexico received a B versus the national average score of C+.
- New Mexico ranked as the third highest state in the nation for **resource equity**, following only Nevada and Iowa, with a score of 88 and a B+. Wealthier and poorer districts have similar per-pupil funding levels. Between 1993 and 2003 New Mexico was one of only 3 States in the nation that increased per pupil spending by more than 50%.

“Today, I’m proud to report that we’re starting to see positive results from our ambitious efforts to make our schools work, hold students and teachers to higher standards and pay

our teachers professional salaries,” Governor Bill Richardson said during a news conference today.

Governor Richardson also highlighted several initiatives as part of his Year of the Child agenda during the upcoming legislative session that will help bolster those rankings, as well as other areas in the report where New Mexico still needs to improve.

- \$1.5-million dollars for Parental Involvement and Training – and another \$2 million dollars for Parent Involvement Innovation Awards.
- \$5 million to pay for Pre K classrooms throughout the state
- \$6.6 million for additional assessment and test development.
- \$10 million in innovative School Improvement efforts – like longer school days and longer school years – at low-performing schools.
- \$1 million for truancy initiatives
- \$2 million to manage our innovative teacher training program
- \$2.5 million for a Student and Teacher Accountability Reporting System
- \$3 million to buy laptop computers, and target them to students in high-need schools
- \$2.5 million for math standards-based education technology.
- \$2 million for Charter School Capital Outlay.
- \$290 million dollars for new schools in high-growth communities
- \$163 million dollars in additional money to pay for school construction and maintenance throughout the state.

“I’m pleased to see that New Mexico ranked above other average state scores,” said Secretary of Education Dr. Veronica C. García. “Our A in standards and accountability is indicative of the strong foundation and high expectations we’ve set for New Mexico students. Our efforts to improve teacher quality have been recognized with an overall grade of a B. It is my goal to continue to move New Mexico to excellence. The area in need of improvement is school climate which is consistent in what I’ve heard in my community conversations. I am confident that with the hard work of school leaders, teachers and the community this too will improve. This report card forecasts a bright future for public education in New Mexico.”