



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Announces Actions to Make New Mexico Schools Safer

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson today announced several efforts designed to make New Mexico schools safer. These actions follow several tragic school shootings across the country as well as recent issues at schools in Santa Fe and Bloomfield. The Governor made this announcement this morning at Carlos Gilbert Elementary School in Santa Fe.

“As we saw at Santa Fe High School and on a school bus in Bloomfield recently, acts of violence are real threats to student safety that we must not ignore,” said Governor Richardson. “While I want to be careful not to overreact to this violence, I also know that parents expect us to do everything possible to protect their kids while they are in our schools and on our school buses.”

The Governor’s plan includes:

The First Statewide School Safety Crime Stoppers Program: Modeled after the very successful national Crime Stoppers program, which started in New Mexico 30 years ago, the New Mexico will structure a program where students or community members can anonymously report crimes or the intention to commit a crime. And Governor Richardson will seek \$250,000 a year for rewards and to keep the program running.

“We need to ensure that all school communities whether they can afford it or not can have the protection of a crime stoppers program,” said Governor Richardson.

\$2 Million Investment in Improved School Security: The Governor will seek funding to purchase as many as 4,000 security cameras for New Mexico schools – starting with those schools with the highest level of need based on their school safety reporting. Governor Richardson’s plan also includes the purchase of metal detectors that can be moved from school to school based on specific threats.

\$2.6 Million Investment in GPS Tracking Technology for All New Mexico School Busses: Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking in all New Mexico’s 3,200 school busses will help pin point actual locations of our busses, provide 2-way communication, disable the bus if the bus is hijacked, provide real time video, and include a panic button where the bus driver can call for help in the case of emergency.

Reintroduce the School Ethics Bill that the Legislature failed to pass last session: This bill will require school districts and charter schools to report the names of licensed staff who resign or leave their employment under allegations of ethical misconduct. That information would be reported to the Education Department, and school districts would be banned from offering confidentiality agreements that hide these offenses. This will help put an end to the status quo practice of allowing problem employees to move from one school district to another without an investigation.

Mandatory Assemblies in All Schools to Emphasize Safety Plans: These assemblies will encourage frank discussions about how schools react to emergencies.

Notification of Juvenile Sex Offenders in Schools: Governor Richardson will support a plan that requires notification to school officials of juvenile sex offenders attending their schools, including a process to notify schools when current students are charged with serious crimes.

In addition the Governor will continue to support New Mexico's School Safety Program, which includes Emergency Response Training, and the School Bus Driver Training Program, designed with the help of the Department of Homeland Security, which has received national recognition.

"This is a comprehensive approach to making our schools safe and protecting our kids," said Governor Richardson. "I look forward to working with the Legislature to making it a reality. "

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