



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Announces New Mexico Receives Highest Grade for Education Reform

Fordham Foundation report lauds New Mexico for enacting "bold reforms"

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson today learned that New Mexico is one of three states to receive the highest grade (B-) for educational reforms over the past 15 years that boost the percentage of poor or minority students who are proficient in reading, math or science. New Mexico has “embraced reforms to raise standards and offer more choices for parents, and is making greater achievement gains for these groups of students,” according to *The Fordham Report 2006: How Well Are States Educating Our Neediest Children?*, released Tuesday.

“More states should follow New Mexico’s lead and enact the bold reforms most likely to change” the reality of closing “America’s vexing achievement gaps and help all children prepare for life in the 21st Century,” said Chester E. Finn, Jr., Fordham Foundation’s president.

"I am pleased to see that New Mexico is being recognized nationally as a leader in school reform," Governor Bill Richardson said. "We are doing the hard work to improve our schools and prepare our students to succeed."

“Under Governor Richardson’s leadership, we have created an aligned system of rigorous academic standards and accountability,” said Education Secretary Dr. Veronica C. García. We’ve worked hard to increase teacher quality and accountability through our three tiered licensure system. We have strongly supported charter schools because parents need choice and choice creates a healthy competition that improves quality educational opportunities for New Mexico’s students. Our current challenge is to complete the work on aligning high school exit and college entry.”

Arizona, New Mexico and California lead the nation in reform, measured by nine indicators in three categories: curricular content, standards-based reform, and school choice. The national average for states for their school reform efforts is a C-minus, with half the states receiving D’s or F’s.

The report is embargoed until 12 a.m. on Tuesday morning, October 24. The report may be found at:
<http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/publication/publication.cfm?id=363>

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