



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson

Governor

For Immediate Release
February 12, 2007

Contact: Allan Oliver
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2208

Governor Bill Richardson Grants Las Cruces Boys and Girls Club \$15,000 to Keep Doors Open

Governor Richardson Also Visits La Mesa Pre K Program

LAS CRUCES - Governor Bill Richardson today announced that he has authorized a bridge grant of \$15,000 to allow the Boys and Girls Club of Las Cruces to continue operating. These monies come from Federal Fiscal Relief Funds that can be drawn upon at the Governor's discretion.

"The First Lady and I have been strong supporters of Boys and Girls Clubs of New Mexico. I'm concerned that we are about to lose an ally in our effort to give every child an opportunity to learn, in the classroom, and after class," said Governor Richardson. "Today, the young men and women of the Boys and Girls club of Las Cruces are getting a second chance, the services for kids will continue, while the Boys and Girls club continues to regain their financial certification."

The Boys and Girls Club of Las Cruces had been about to close their doors, with a debt of \$90,000 and an immediate need of \$15,000. This bridge grant will allow the Boys and Girls club to remain open.

"But to get the Boys and Girls Club to fiscal stability, it will need to meet the rigorous accountability standards of the United Way of Las Cruces over the next year," said Governor Richardson. "I also ask the business community to do its part."

The state expects to have grant agreement in place this week and will transfer money to the City of Las Cruces. Governor Richardson has also asked the City of Las Cruces to help determine how that money will be spent by the Boys and Girls Club.

Governor Richardson also visited a successful Pre K program in the Southern Dona Ana County Community of La Mesa to meet with students and parents.

This is the first year that La Mesa has received funds through Governor Richardson's Pre K initiative and 82 students are currently enrolled, but there is a need to extend classes to up to 176 students.

"It's my hope that someday we no longer have to turn children away, and that every Pre K program has enough funding and enough space to meet the needs of all New Mexican four-year olds," said Governor Richardson. "That is why this year my legislative package includes expanding our Pre Kindergarten program from 2,200 kids to 5,000 kids statewide, as well as providing funds for course materials, transportation and technical assistance."

#30#