



For Immediate Release  
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## **Governor Bill Richardson Applauds New Study Showing Continued Success of New Mexico's Pre Kindergarten**

SANTA FE-Governor Bill Richardson today applauded a new study that shows students participating in New Mexico's Pre K program continue to show considerable academic gains. The study found that, during its second year, the Pre K program had substantial impact on vocabulary, math and early literacy skills. These positive impacts are likely to lead to increased school success.

"This is proof that this investment we've made in our children is paying off and that we are fulfilling our commitment to give all New Mexico kids the opportunities to succeed," Governor Bill Richardson said. "We must continue to build on this success by fully funding Pre K so that we can make the program available for every New Mexico family who wants it."

This is the second consecutive year the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University studied the effectiveness of New Mexico's Pre K program. In both years, researchers found the impact of Pre K on children's learning was both substantive and meaningful when they entered kindergarten.

"I'm gratified to see the gains we anticipated are happening. That's good news for children who might otherwise fall behind." Lt. Governor Diane Denish said. "It's also important that we've established a way to track these students and measure their performance. That's the strongest argument for providing Pre K to even more children."

The NIEER showed that New Mexico's Pre K program during the 2006-2007 school year found:

- Increased receptive vocabulary scores of nearly 6 raw points, a statistically significant increase over children who did not participate in the state Pre K program. This measure is predictive of becoming a successful reader.
- Increased math scores of more than 2 raw points, a statistically significant increase over children who did not participate. Early math skills assessed include

simple addition and subtraction, basic number concepts, telling time and counting money.

- A statistically significant increase in early literacy knowledge for children attending over those who did not. Items tested included letters, letter-sound associations and word and book concepts.

Governor Richardson worked with the state Legislature in 2005 to create the Pre K program and enrollment has grown each year. During the 2005-2006 school year, about 1,500 4-year olds had access to the state funded Pre K. The program expanded to about 2,200 children during the 2006-2007 school year and to more than 3,500 during the 2007-2008 school year. This year the Governor requested, and the 2008 Legislature approved, \$19.3 million for Pre-K programs for the 2008-2009 school year which will expand participation to more than 4,800 4-year olds.