



Dr. Veronica C. García
Secretary of Education

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: March 6, 2007

New Mexico Named “State of the Month” by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future

Santa Fe, NM -- Education Secretary Veronica C. García today learned that New Mexico is the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future’s (NCTAF) “State of the Month.” The March recognition focuses specifically on New Mexico’s strategies for teacher quality. According to the report, “New Mexico’s efforts show what can be done at the state level. But New Mexico’s experiences can also help inform NCTAF’s agenda for the future.”

“Every child deserves high quality teachers. Governor Richardson and I have increased teacher scholarships, expanded alternative pathways into teaching, supported professional development, and implemented the three-tier licensure system,” said Secretary García. “New Mexico’s successful teacher programs are now a national model.”

The NCTAF credits Governor Richardson’s three-tier licensure system for increasing salaries, addressing the teacher shortage, and pushing professional development. Additionally, the NCTAF points to three of New Mexico’s key strategies as a model for other states including 1) creating strong learning communities for teachers, 2) selecting, preparing, and retaining good leadership, and 3) significant policy with significant financial resources.

“Governor Richardson and I will continue to support our education professionals. Support for teachers is support for New Mexico’s children. Continued investment will be key to maintaining and strengthening programs for teacher quality in New Mexico.”

Governor Richardson has proposed the following legislation in 2007 to support teacher quality in New Mexico:

- A 7.40% salary increase for public school employees
- Teacher tax credits for up to 4,300 teachers who choose to work in high needs schools with concentrated areas of poverty. Teachers with three years at Level II would qualify for a credit— not a deduction— of \$1,500 against state income taxes. Level III teachers would be eligible for a \$2,000 tax credit
- Loan forgiveness for up to 80 teachers just out of school. Teachers could trade two years of service in targeted areas for \$5,000 a year on their student loans

Other incentives before the 2007 legislature to retain and attract teachers include:

- Expansion of Summer Math and Science Institutes coordinated by the newly formed Math and Science Bureau of the Public Education Department
- Science teacher resources as part of a statewide e-learning program
- Systematic framework for professional development, especially to teachers in Schools in Need of Improvement
- Creation of apprenticeship training programs to promote economic development
- Beginning teacher mentorship with an experienced teacher
- Expansion of the Teach For America program in the state

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