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Date: Wed Jun 22, 2005 10:04:39 PM America/Denver
Subject:

State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson

Governor
For immediate release
June 22, 2005

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News Report Wrong – Air Service for Blind Children will continue

SANTA FE – The Governor’s Office today released the following statement from New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Superintendent Dianna Jennings and General Services Secretary Edward J. Lopez, Jr., who jointly assure parents that state aircraft will continue to transport the school’s students.

“Today’s Albuquerque Journal’s report that ‘the General Services Department can no longer commit state aircraft for student travel’ is simply untrue,” said Jennings. “We understand that circumstances beyond our control, such as bad weather and mechanical issues, might prevent state aircraft from flying. But General Services has a solid ten year record for being a reliable aviation services provider to the school,” she said.

Lopez also refuted the report’s accuracy. “The suggestion that we would single out a state agency and ban it from flying state aircraft is absurd,” said Lopez. “The recent sale of the old 1966 airplane and the addition of a new jet aircraft to help transport the students and other state agencies positions my department to provide better and more reliable service than before.”

The children from the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired will fly on the new state jet. As we have stated, the jet will service all the state agencies, including this long-standing responsibility to fly the children from this school home on the weekends.

Lopez also took issue with the Journal’s report that New Mexico State University had not verbally committed to buy a 1978 aircraft. He noted that the director of NMSU’s Aviation program, Jeff Miller, clearly expressed that he had been given authority in May from NMSU’s president to verbally negotiate the purchase 1978 aircraft, subject to executive approval.

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