

## NM GRADS Program Goals

Through Title IX, GRADS students are insured a safe supported class with a highly qualified teacher, a case manager and a fatherhood mentor to help students reach goals in education, family planning and parenting, as well as healthy relationships. Also integrated in the goals of the program are, instruction in financial literacy, physical, mental and reproductive health care, along with inter-personal skill building and balancing multi-generational roles. The students are supported with safe on-site CYFD licensed Child Development Centers to further assist the pursuit of their education, positive parenting and economic stability objectives.



## NM GRADS COMPONENTS:

### INTERVENTION

NM GRADS provides training, technical assistance, assessment, and resources for all NM GRADS programs. Each site focuses on the ten NM GRADS competencies, including reducing repeat pregnancies. NM GRADS key elements are user friendly for district and school Educational Plans for Student Success that target at-risk youth and teen parents. NM GRADS Competencies are aligned with NM Performance Standards and Benchmarks in Health Education and the National Family And Consumer Sciences.

### CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Our CYFD licensed Child Development Centers (at 15 sites) model effective parenting in an educationally stimulating setting with highly qualified staff. GRADS CDC's promote healthy best practices including breast feeding, nutrition, developing secure relationships and work with parents to encourage and educate positive life-style choices.

### FATHERHOOD

Young fathers are supported both in the classroom and through additional case management support by fatherhood mentors to meet their unique needs. Through relationship building, father-child focused activities and the 24/7 Dads Curriculum GRADS fathers are supported in their parenting and personal journeys.

### COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

NM GRADS focuses on both short and long term goal setting with young families to support high school graduation. Through dual-credit, advanced placement and alternative educational opportunities, GRADS students receive comprehensive support in College and Career Readiness and develop a Career Plan and Portfolio including letters of recommendation, resumes and certificates.



**Jalyssa Gutierrez,**  
Independence HS  
(Rio Rancho) Pictured on right

I am 18 years old and I have two little girls; Amara (3) and Aviana (1). My sophomore year of high school I dropped out due to having Amara. My GRADS teacher (Mrs. Guzie) never stopped contacting me, trying to help me, and encouraging me to go to Independence HS. GRADS was one of the most fun, most helpful programs I've been a part of. I met so many girls my age, in my same situation. I entered the program due to the encouragement from Mrs. Guzie and what I heard from other girls there. In the GRADS program, we had times where we baked, did activities, and most importantly had group talks about being a mom, teenager, and student all in one. We were able to talk to each other and Mrs. Guzie herself without judgment. Whether we had other people at home to talk to or not the GRADS teachers and students were always there. With help from the GRADS program, I was able to complete 2 1/2 years of school within a year. Personally, I've seen my attitude and mindset completely change. I've learned ways to become a better mother and woman. I would not be where I am today if it were not for Mrs. Guzie. Without her constant reassurance, encouragement, and smiling face I would not be a 2022 graduate.

Dion Johnson and son from Career Prep HS (Shiprock) pictured above



**Ceraldina Pettigrew,** Career Prep HS  
(Shiprock) Pictured on left

When I found out I was pregnant, I thought about the road I was going down and I didn't want that for my son, because I felt he deserved more. My son has been my motivation to finish School. GRADS has helped me with parenting skills as well as helping me understand that my mental health is important and GRADS allows me a safe place to talk.

Joining the GRADS program has helped me become a better mom. GRADS has also helped me by providing childcare for my child while I am in school. Being in the childcare, my son has been given the opportunity to make friends and become more independent.



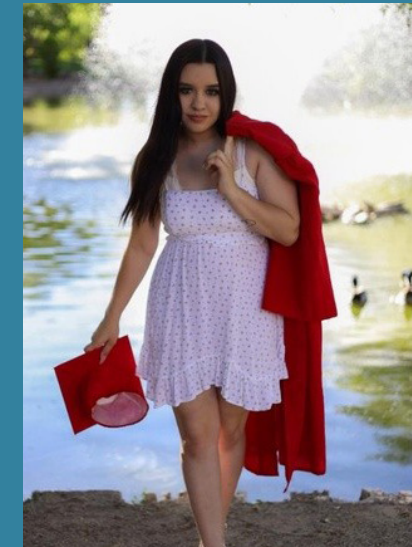
**Jazmin Rodriguez,**  
La Academia de Esperanza - Albuquerque

Jazmin Rodriguez is an 18 year old GRADS student at LADE. She graduated in May of 2022. Jazmin attended LADE from her freshman year 2018-19 and ended up transferring to another school her sophomore year. She returned to LADE her Junior year 2020-2021. Jazmin has come a long way in all aspects of her life. When Jazmin returned from winter break in January of 2022, she found out she was pregnant. During this time, Jazmin verbalized feeling increasingly anxious about how her future would look with having a baby. Jazmin decided to keep the baby and joined the GRADS program. Jazmine set a goal to not only to graduate for herself but to graduate for her baby. Jazmin was an excellent leader in the classroom and was always willing to ask questions other students were afraid to ask. Jazmin also showed a lot of empathy towards her fellow peers in the classroom which motivated her to stay positive during difficult times. Jazmin did an outstanding job of taking the material she learned in GRADS and applying it outside the classroom. Her favorite quote is "never give up on life no matter how hard life gets".

## NM GRADS 2021-22 Results



**300**  
Young parents  
were served during  
the 2021-22  
school year



**19,250**  
Young parents  
served since  
1989



**Graduated**

**84%**

of teen mothers  
enrolled in GRADS,  
compared to only  
about 53% of teen  
mothers nationwide

Data Point; Child Trends 2018



**2.4%**

Repeat Pregnancy  
Rate (vs 14%  
statewide)  
\* Kids Count 2022



**3.7%**

Low Birth Weight  
Rate (vs 8.9%  
statewide)  
\* Kids Count 2022



**40**  
Dropouts recruited  
back to school



Generated approximately **\$194,520**  
for school districts (a total of \$12,038,580 for  
over 4,375 GRADS students recruited back to  
school since NM GRADS began in 1989).

# NM GRADS



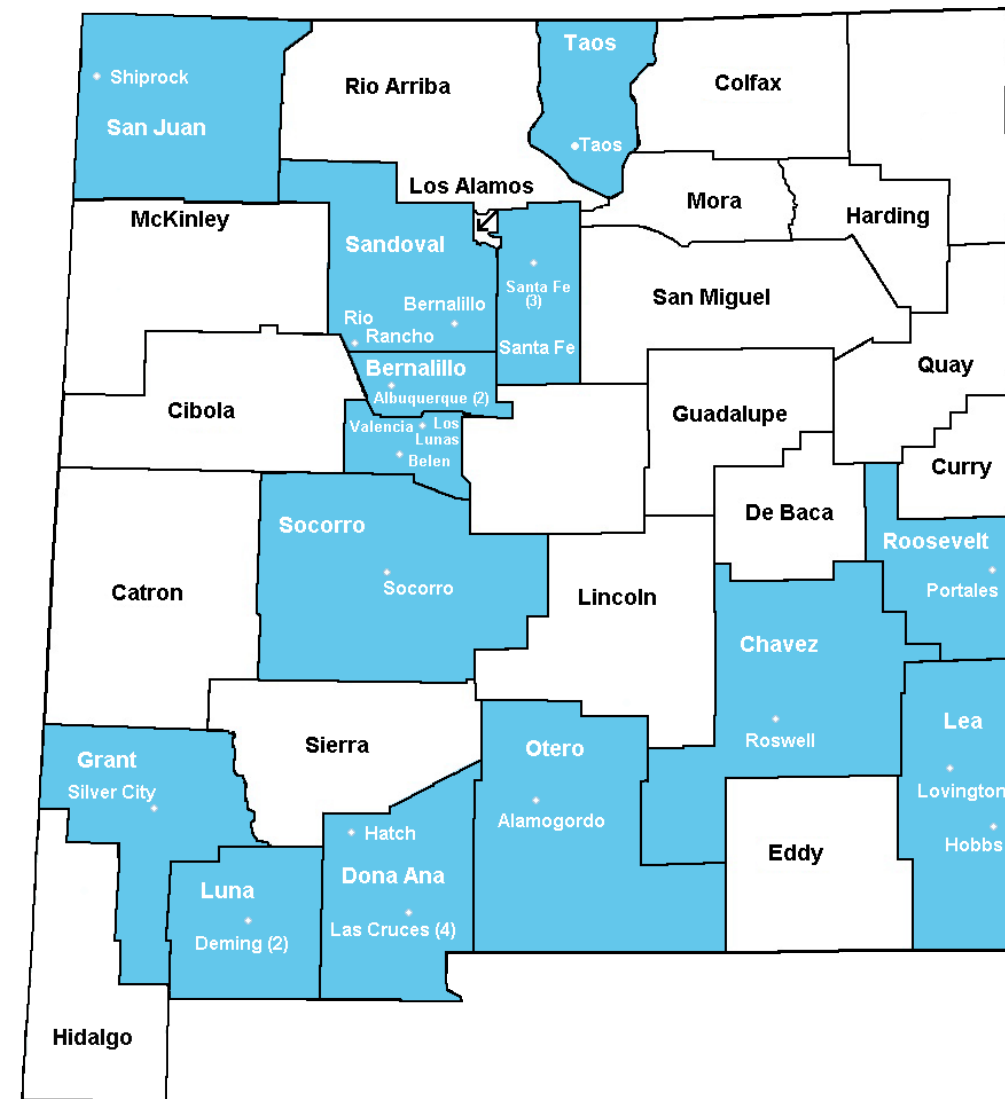
## What is NM GRADS?

New Mexico GRADS is a state-wide program that began as an in-school program for expectant and parenting teens and has since added on-site Child Development Centers, Career Readiness, Youth Leadership, and Fatherhood. GRADS stands for Graduation, Reality And Dual-role Skills.

NM GRADS is a multi-generational case management model which helps students:

- \* identify and remove barriers contributing to success for themselves and their children,
- \* overcome the cycle of poverty by achieving a high school education, and employability skills,
- \* develop positive parenting and healthy relationship skills.

## Counties with GRADS Sites



The NM GRADS Program facilitates graduation and the pursuit of higher education and/or employment, ensures appropriate case management for healthy babies and families, promotes healthy multi-generational parenting skills, fosters leadership, self-sufficiency and good citizenship as contributing members of society, and educates students on ways to reduce risk-taking behaviors for their entire family. GRADS works to remove barriers to ensure successful students become successful parents.

The NM GRADS program is funded by the NM Legislature and administered and overseen by the NM Public Education Department.

GRADS Student pictured above: Chantal Barraza, Hatch HS  
GRADS Student pictured on front cover: Leslie with Axel, Taos HS

**NM GRADS**  
Graduation Reality And Dual-role Skills

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# 2023

**NM GRADS is in 25 sites and serves students  
in 33 High Schools across the state.**

