

# RIOS/

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Local support for these programs is critical, Rios said, because "the state doesn't care how many students are concert violinists — their focus is on language and math."

But part of the reason students are leaving is because Gonzales has grown so quickly that its schools are actually overcrowded, Rios said.

At Fairview and La Gloria schools, the addition of portable buildings has eaten up the green playground area, and enrollment at La Gloria is on the rise, she said.

"We need to work with city officials to provide new school facilities for students," she said. "We passed a bond about nine years ago, but we have not built a new school."

Rios envisions shrinking Fairview and La Gloria schools by creating a new middle school.

When she's not working or volunteering, Rios likes to spend time with her family, and enjoys gardening and cooking.

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