

KKCO NBC Channel 11

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Colorado Voters To Make November Higher Education Funding Decision 5/25/05

As college funds shrink in Colorado, in the November election voters will decide whether to allow the state to keep excess tax revenue, and devote that money to higher education. Supporters say it is just what colleges across the state need to continue offering high quality education.

Over the years Mesa State College has endured severe budget cuts that limit its ability to serve the Western Slope. Governor Owens and the Colorado General Assembly have come up with a plan to help Mesa State get the resources it needs to fulfill its mission.

Wednesday night, Mesa State and the Bell Policy Center of Denver, held a public discussion to give voters more information on Referendums C and D. The referendums, if passed, would keep \$3.3 billion dollars in surplus tax money that would otherwise be refunded to taxpayers over the next five years.

Both referendums appear on the November, 2005, ballot. Supporters, such as Governor Owens and Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff, say the referendums are crucial for colleges, like Mesa State, to get the funding it needs.

Normally, the excess revenues would be returned to the taxpayers, but if voters pass these referendums the excess revenue generated over the next five years will be kept for capital projects. After five years those excess revenues will then be returned to taxpayers.