

TO: ALL REGISTERED VOTERS

NOTICE OF ELECTION TO INCREASE TAXES

Boulder Valley School District RE-2

Boulder, Broomfield and Gilpin Counties, Colorado

Election Date: Tuesday, November 1, 2005
Election Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Local Election Office Address and Telephone Number:

6500 Arapahoe
Boulder, Colorado 80303
Telephone: (303) 447-5114

Ballot Title and Text of Question 3A:

“SHALL BOULDER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-2’S TAXES BE INCREASED \$7,300,000 ANNUALLY OR SUCH LESSER AMOUNT AS IS NECESSARY TO PAY THE DISTRICT’S EXCESS TRANSPORTATION COSTS UNDER SECTION 22-40-102(1.7), C.R.S., AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME, FOR THE 2005-2006 BUDGET YEAR AND EACH BUDGET YEAR THEREAFTER, SO THAT DISTRICT MONEYS CURRENTLY BEING USED FOR SUCH EXCESS TRANSPORTATION COSTS CAN BE EXPENDED TO REPLACE CLASSROOM COMPUTERS AND FOR OTHER EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES; SHALL THE MILL LEVY BE INCREASED WITHOUT LIMITATION OF RATE OR AMOUNT, IF NECESSARY, TO RAISE SUCH DOLLAR AMOUNT ANNUALLY; AND SHALL THE REVENUES FROM SUCH TAXES AND ANY EARNINGS FROM THE INVESTMENT OF SUCH REVENUES BE COLLECTED AND SPENT AS VOTER APPROVED REVENUE AND SPENDING CHANGES WITHOUT LIMITATION BY THE REVENUE AND SPENDING LIMITS OF, AND WITHOUT AFFECTING THE DISTRICT’S ABILITY TO COLLECT AND SPEND OTHER REVENUES OR FUNDS UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION OR ANY OTHER LAW?”

Total District Fiscal Year Spending

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Fiscal Year Spending*</u>
2005-06 (Current Year Estimated)	\$194,394,755
2004-05 (Actual Unaudited)	\$192,194,959
2003-04 (Actual)	\$194,026,447
2002-03 (Actual)	\$184,675,520
2001-02 (Actual)	\$165,393,411
Overall percentage change from 2001-02 to 2005-06*	17.53%
Overall dollar change from 2001-02 to 2005-06*	\$29,001,344

Proposed Tax Increase

District Estimate of the Maximum Dollar Amount of the Proposed Tax Increase For the First Full Fiscal Year of the Proposed Tax Increase: \$ 7,300,000

District Estimate of Fiscal Year Spending For the First Full Fiscal Year Without Proposed Tax Increase*: \$194,394,755

*Fiscal year spending does not include payments on bonded debt of \$13,609,990 in 2005-06 (Current Year Estimated); \$13,582,057 in 2004-05 (Actual Unaudited); \$13,569,222 in 2003-04; \$13,367,241 in 2002-03 (Actual); and \$13,966,108 in 2001-02 (Actual).

Summary of Written Comments Regarding Ballot Issue 3A Filed with Election Officer:

Summary of Written Comments FOR Ballot Issue 3A:

The following summaries were prepared from comments filed by persons **FOR** the proposal:

Boulder Valley is one of Colorado’s premier communities. One of the reasons businesses want to locate here and people want to live here is because we have good schools, as evidenced in our students’ higher than average test scores. That is why increasing educational excellence is critical to the future prosperity of our community and our quality of life.

But these are challenging times for public education in Colorado as a result of chronic underinvestment and current State budget constraints.

Referendum 3A is one of the few ways that Boulder Valley residents can exercise local control to improve our schools. It will enhance educational quality by generating revenues needed to replace old, outdated computers with the new technology our students need and deserve.

The Problem: Outdated Technology in BVSD

Classrooms in the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) are hampered by old, slow computers inadequate for today’s educational requirements. For example:

BVSD’s average classroom computer is 8 years old, with two-thirds of all computers 6-20 years old.

At current funding levels, it will take until 2022 to replace computers purchased today.

Cutting-edge educational software works poorly on older computers.

Old computers create huge inefficiencies:

Typically, 350 to 375 computers are “down” each school day;

Teacher, student and classroom time is wasted trying to make old computers function.

The Solution: Referendum 3A, which will:

Generate funds needed to replace computers every four years so that students and teachers have access to functional technology in the classroom.
Have a tremendous impact and yet cost BVSD households about \$25 a year on the average \$300,000 home.
Benefit students in every single BVSD school.

How 3A Works

In fiscal 2004, BVSD spent \$7.1 million to transport students safely to and from school. Under State law, the district is only reimbursed for \$1.8 million, or 25% of actual costs; the remainder comes from the District General Fund at the expense of core educational programs.

3A will provide money to offset some non-reimbursed transportation costs in 2005 and succeeding years.

In 2005, this will free up \$4.2 million to invest in education throughout BVSD.

\$2.5 million will fund ongoing computer replacement.

\$1.7 million will be available in 2005 for other needs, such as addressing class sizes, closing the achievement gap, and advancing fine arts and talented/gifted programs.

Why 3A is Needed

Education is vital in a competitive global economy, but budget pressures have curtailed state investment in education.

Budget constraints require BVSD to find new revenues to support educational excellence.

Colorado is 49th in the percent of per capita income invested in public education and in the lowest 20% on most measures of educational investment.

Thanks to past support from local voters, math, reading and literacy are improving in BVSD.

We must give our children the computers they need to learn.

Summary of Written Comments AGAINST Ballot Issue 3A:

The following summaries were prepared from comments filed by persons **AGAINST** the proposal:

Where will the money go? They say to replace computers and “other educational purposes.” What other purposes?

To lower class sizes?

In 2002, voters raised taxes to decrease class sizes. But average size is virtually unchanged: 21.8 in '04-'05 from 21.9 in '02-'03.

Student-teacher ratio INCREASED to 16.1 from 15.5.

To pay for transportation?

BVSD spent \$90,000 annually to bus 20-25 students to Community Montessori. This is approximately two-thirds of the money that the State gives to educate them, or \$4,000 per student!

Because of closures, some mountain students now bus to assigned schools *east* of Foothills, half a county away. This is expensive and a hardship on children.

To pay for classroom space?

After closing schools, BVSD constructed temporaries at three schools to put displaced students.

They also started a series of expensive and disruptive moves with no plan. One school was moved three times within 15 months!

These costly and poorly-conceived actions diverted precious cash from teachers and students.

To replace lost revenue?

Because of closures and other actions, enrollment has declined as parents seek more stability in charters, private schools, home schooling and other districts.

BVSD loses \$6,022 in State funding for each student leaving.

To increase teacher salaries?

Despite a 2002 tax for teacher salaries, teachers got meager wage increases only after a “No Confidence” vote and walk-outs.

Despite lack of accountability, BVSD relentlessly asks for more!

This is BVSD’s sixth request to increase tax rates in eight years.

These very large combined increases contribute to the high cost of housing.

If State Referenda C and D pass, public schools will see an additional \$147,000,000.

Why haven’t school closure savings helped?

In 2003, BVSD closed three schools claiming the savings would improve the budget. They have never publicly accounted for these savings.

Increased transportation costs from closures were to be covered by these savings. Now BVSD wants to raise taxes to pay for transportation excesses. It doesn’t make sense.

We want better schools and are willing to pay, but tax money needs to be spent as promised, not for mistakes and waste.

Buried in the language is a request for a BLANK CHECK. FOREVER.

The ballot language is unclear.

It asks to increase the mill levy “without limitation of rate or amount” and without future voter approval. You will never be able to reign in outrageous tax increases.

It's a massive grab for your tax dollars. No limitations ever again.

More taxes will allow the district to avoid the never-ending need for better solutions and lower costs.

Any enterprise with guaranteed income is bound by human nature and internal politics to keep present personnel and methods, eliminating the need for experimentation and improvements.

A tax reduction puts pressure on schools to adopt and improve on the best new solutions discovered by private and public alternatives and their occasional successes. Education has barely taken advantage of accelerating high tech possibilities and economies that should reduce costs while increasing diversity and quality.

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