

County Commission Votes To Add Early Voting Site On Miami-Dade College North Campus

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MIAMI (CBSMiami) – The debate over adding early voting sites at campuses at Miami-Dade College hijacked the county’s budget hearing on Thursday night and, late in the evening, commissioners voted 12-1 to open an early voting site at Miami Dade College’s North [Campus](#) .

It was a victory for students who stood before the board and requested the additional sites. The students said that with [school](#) , work and a lack of transportation it’s tough for students to vote.

“Because of all these different responsibilities, it’s so difficult for them to access voting,” said Rebecca Díaz, Miami-Dade [College student](#) . “To be able to have a voting site so close to you it not only feeds on the fact students enjoy early voting it also makes our voices heard more readily.

The request comes a day after Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez added an early voting site at Florida International University. The decision comes after a court ruling opening up early voting on college campuses. Several on the commission said they want to see additional campus locations added.

“Voting on campus is not just for students, it’s for the thousands of employees who work there,” said Commissioner Eileen Higgins.

“When young people say they want to participate and be a part of something, I think we need to figure out additional ways to give them a way to participate,” said Commissioner Dennis Moss.

Chairman Esteban Bovo fought back on charges that the county is trying to suppress voting.

He says they're not.

"This board along with this administration has bent over backwards to make it easier for people to vote," Bovo said.

He also questioned why certain groups need special early voting sites and others don't.

"I don't understand this narrative that you have to literally put it in their lap in order for them to get something done," he said. "I don't think that's right to be honest with you."

The move will create more work for Miami-Dade Elections Supervisor Christina White, including making sure that all early voting sites will have a ballot-on-demand printer, enabling elections workers to print whichever ballot a voter needs.

"If we are really talking about adding that many early voting sites, I'm going to have reallocate those printers," White told the Board.

At the end of the night, after spirited [debate](#) , Commissioners approved the additional site.

"It's very complicated for us to vote and having one of those voting sites on our own campus would just facilitate that process," said student Amel Hermida.

Mayor Carlos Giménez also said that he will look into adding an early voting site at Miami Dade College's South Campus as well.