

Red Wave doesn't hit the midterm shore

Democrats hold on to the Senate, despite the nation-wide predictions of a big right shift

AISD bond passed and board members elected

New trustees take office

Carey Wooley
Editor-in-Chief

As voters waited in anticipation it was officially announced that the historic 2.44 billion dollar Austin Independent School District (AISD) bond was passed. This money will help update and renew schools across the district as well as add to teacher hirings and raises.

On Tuesday, Nov. 8, voters passed the AISD bond as well as choosing multiple new AISD school board officials. There were five officials elected, four whom are new to the board and one was reelected.

"I think it was a tremendous win for the students in Austin ISD," Principal Mark Robinson said. "What the bond is going to do is allocate money that is protected from recapture, which means that every dollar will stay in Austin ISD to go to improving facilities and in some cases, completely modernizing existing facilities."

AISD is one of several districts that is part of the recapture or more commonly known as the "Robin Hood" program. This program takes the AISD tax dollars and redistributes them amongst "property-poor" districts. When a bond is approved this money goes straight to assisting that specific district and is exempt from redistribution.

"In the six years that I've been in Austin ISD I know that there have been times when we have had facility emergencies at Bowie that we've had to repair and those repairs have had to be paid for out of our maintenance and operations budget, which is the same budget that we pay our staff," Robinson said. "So the bond has dedicated funds for those repairs so they can be planned so that it doesn't have to come out of the money that we pay teachers with."

In the plans outlined by AISD, the bond would go towards security improvements, full renovations, technology upgrades, athletic improvements, and new buses. According to austinisnd.org, the bond changes across AISD campuses will begin during the summer of 2023 with safety upgrades to keep students and teachers safe.

"The nature of the improvements that need to be made now are things that will be scheduled when students aren't on campus," Robinson said. "What we've gone through

READ MORE "Voters elect AISD board reps. and pass Bond" pg. 3

Mazzy Warren
Managing Editor

After months of speculation and long, tense hours of waiting, the results are in. Almost. Congressional control is at a standstill, and Americans are left holding their breath, waiting to see the stalled results of a congressional majority.

Democrats have seemingly defied expectations regarding their voter turnout. Days before voters were to express their opinions at the polls, outlets nation-wide predicted a "Red Wave," in which Democrats would lose all control over Congress. That Red Wave never crashed on the shore, as the rumor failed to become reality.

"Honestly, I'm a little surprised," AP Government teacher Dalton Pool said. "Usually, midterm elections are difficult for the president's party; the Democrats broke a lot of people's expectations. Republicans will still win the House, but only pick up seven or eight seats, which is historically impressive. That Democrats hold the Senate majority, and might grow it if they win the runoff in Georgia, is a big deal."

So far, Democrats hold 48 of the 100 seats in the Senate, with Republicans holding 49. Two of those remaining seats are under the Independent party, who caucused with the Democratic party, meaning the Senate majority is in the left's hands, 50 to 49. As Republicans don't hold 2/3s of the Senate, they can't overrule Biden's veto, placing the nation in a potential stalemate.

"I'm happy about the results, but I'm also surprised with them as well," senior Drue Donus said. "In the past, the opposite party usually takes the Senate, but somehow the

Republicans didn't manage it."

The results of one race still remain to be seen, however, as Georgia's Senate election has reached a standstill. The decision between Trump-backed Republican Herschel Walker and Democratic Senator Raphael Warnock ended in Warnock's favor. With 49.4% of the vote, however, Warnock didn't have the 50% required by Georgia law to continue serving as senator. The runoff will be held December 6. No matter where Georgia lands, the senate will be blue; If Georgia does go red, splitting the Senate 50/50, Vice President Kamala Harris acts as a tiebreaker, swinging the majority back to the left.

"What makes the Constitution unique is that it gives each state the power to run their own elections," Pool said. "In some states, like Georgia, you need a majority, or else there's an automatic runoff. I'm not surprised that it's gone to a runoff, Georgia has been super close the last couple of elections. What is surprising is that the other races in Georgia went red; this was the one where the Democrats had a lot of success, which has to do with Walker's polarizing controversy."

Although Americans know the Senate belongs to the Democrats, the battle for the House of Representatives is ongoing. At deadline for publication, the Democrats held 206 seats, while the Republicans were just one seat away from the 218 required for control, with 12 races undecided. After cinching the Senate, many Democrats have turned their eyes to the House, where they hope they have a chance of retaining the lower chamber.

"Democrats probably won't take the House," senior Shash

Karthikeyan said. "One of the reasons Republicans are winning is the economy. Because it's bad right now, Republicans will probably get more votes."

In voting for the Speaker of the House, all House members vote for which representative they want to lead their chamber; House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy secured that position Tuesday night; Republican leadership of the Senate is expected to be Mitch McConnell.

"McCarthy struggled getting support from the far right-wing of the party," Pool said. "To appease some of the far right representatives, they need somebody that's more aligned with them. That McCarthy struggled to get everybody on board shows the party's inner turmoil."

Recently, the Republican party seems to be splitting in two, as they struggle to decide whether to follow the traditional direction of the party, or to follow the modern, Trump-based party. This split is strengthened by Trump's announcement to run for president in 2024. On the other side of the coin, the results of these midterms promise an eventful future for the Biden Administration. As the Red Wave didn't manifest, President Biden's agenda, his plans to run for re-election, and his legacy are strengthened by his party's representative power.

"This will definitely be positive for the Biden Administration," Karthikeyan said. "Biden is leaning left, and with the Democrats' win in the Senate, I feel they'll be working more towards affordable economic policies, focusing on oil."

Although many students aren't interested in politics, Pool believes it's important to recognize the power the government has in every American's day-to-day life. He believes young people should be the most invested in elections, as the decisions made today, and the consequences of those decisions, will affect them for the rest of their lives.

"If there's one thing I want students to take away from this election, it's to vote," Pool said. "Young people suck at voting. Right now, the country is being shaped by older generations, but come future elections, if young people vote in significant numbers, they have the power to shape the country however they see fit." ■

ART BY Asher Hagan

Austin Police Department brings officers to defend campus

Donna Kim
Dispatch Reporter

For Officers Gregorio Guilbe and Christopher Mendoza, safety and security are their top priorities while being stationed at Bowie campus.

Recently however, many students have been noticing an increase of Austin Police Department presence on campus, whom students easily mistake the School Resource Officers (SROs) for. While the SRO officers Guilbe and Mendoza do work for the AISD Police Department and Austin Police Department (APD), officers that are dispatched to Bowie are separate APD entities.

Whenever there are incidents at Bowie, such as pipe leaks and gas leaks, APD officers are dispatched to Bowie to investigate the situation, and make sure there are no safety issues that would affect the health of faculty and students. The SROs tend to work alongside the APD whenever incidents like these emerge.

"AISD Police Department works closely with APD in numerous ways. Some examples included traffic control and enforcement around AISD schools, vehicle accidents, providing resources for individuals in crisis, campus familiarization and layouts, community outreach, and response to critical incidents at AISD properties," Mendoza said.

Assistant principal Paulette Walls explains how the SROs stationed at

Bowie are different from APD officers that are dispatched to Bowie for certain situations.

"As assistant principal I do work directly with [Officers Guilbe and Mendoza] on situational things. Austin Police Department is totally something separate, you're generally not going to see them both unless it warrants that. If there was an accident outside campus, you might see Austin Police Department officers, and you might see the SRO campus officers respond, but they are both two totally separate entities," Walls said. "One takes care of things outside of school, while our SROs on campus are fully licensed, certified officers, so they manage everything on campus."

Regarding students' notice of an increased presence of APD officers on Bowie campus, Walls explains how it might have to do with security checks around campus.

"We are required by the Texas Education Agency to do security checks of the campus, and so in those checks, [APD officers] check the doors and make sure the perimeters and spaces are secure," Walls said. "Outside of that, if we've had situations that occur related to safety and security for students individually needing help and support, we will outsource out to the police."

Guilbe explains how a notice of increased presence by students of the

Q&A WITH OFFICER GREGORIO GUILBE

1. In what ways do SRO officers work with APD?
As SRO we hold state and federal laws and abide by them. Our biggest goal is to see our students succeed without worrying about potential dangers on campus.

2. Do you enjoy working at Bowie?
Every student I've encountered has a unique personality I love the campus that I'm assigned to and hope to return to next year

PHOTO BY Donna Kim GRAPHIC BY Isabella del Nido

APD may have to do with the recent uprisings of school shootings, and especially because of the recent shooting at Uvalde.

"I haven't observed much APD presence that I'm aware of but do recall that after the Uvalde incident, APD and Travis County Sheriff's office were going to be making random check-ins at various campuses to provide more security," Guilbe said. "AISD PD does assist other agencies with traffic accidents, search and rescue, and community outreach."

Despite Bowie having many resources and connections to the Austin Police Department regarding health/

ilities are foot and vehicle patrol of the property, monitoring surveillance cameras throughout the day, presentations/community engagements at schools, investigate offenses/threats to the campus, enforce state/local laws, provide mental health resources to anyone in crisis, work closely with administration/ counselors, and maintaining a positive role to our students, staff and Bowie parents," Mendoza said.

For pipe or gas leaks, the SROs follow certain safety protocols to ensure the safety of everyone on campus. The SROs have connections with other safety departments as well.

"For pipe leaks, we would get in contact with Head Maintenance and maybe the city. If there is a gas leak, we get in contact with Austin Fire Department (AFD) but we would also follow our protocols," Guilbe said.

While maintaining safety and security on campus, the SROs also make sure to bring positive interactions to students and staff members. They make sure to bring about a positive environment for students during school hours.

"I really enjoy working at Bowie. We have a really involved staff, parents, students, and community," Mendoza said. "I love to interact with students at school during passing periods and lunch breaks. If you ever see us around, come give us a first bump and chat." ■