

TCHS Homecoming Elections September 24, 2015

We recently partnered with the local high school to provide student voting for their Homecoming Elections. Your Supervisor of Elections office was excited to be able to program voting equipment for the students to use. This education opportunity provided us a chance to show just how important each and every vote can be. Your elections office looks forward to many more hands on learning experiences between this office and the students of our school district.

Homecoming elections totally 'legit'

Taylor County High School (TCHS) will celebrate its annual Homecoming Sept. 21-25, culminating with the big game Friday night at Dorsett Stadium.

This year, Homecoming elections were held in partnership with the Supervisor of Elections office.

"On Friday, Sept. 4, each student voted on paper from a list of all students within their grade for their top 10 boys and top 10 girls. We then hand-counted all of the ballots cast by the students in the school—an undertaking which took a day and a half to complete," Supervisor of Elections Dana Southerland said.

"Once we narrowed each grade down to the top 10 boys and the top 10 girls who had received the most votes, we placed those names on the final ballot. We programmed our touch screen voting equipment with the boys' and girls' names by grade and were able to take two machines per grade to the school on Friday, Sept. 11, for the students to vote for their homecoming court.

"We were set up and ready by 8 a.m. that morning and stayed until each and every student in the school cast their ballot. We were then able to tabulate and total all votes cast, and gave the administration the names of the students who had

the most votes and would represent the school during homecoming. We even had a tie and had to discuss how to handle that scenario (they opted to keep both students) but it gave us a chance to reiterate how important just one vote can be," she said.

"The students were so impressed that they were getting to use real election equipment. It was also an opportunity to show students how serious the election could actually be by providing them the chance to cast a ballot without any peer pressure, casting it privately. We heard the term 'Wow man this is legit' several times throughout the day."

Southerland extended special thanks to Homecoming Sponsor Missy Gray for reaching out to the elections office to coordinate the voting.

"She also coordinated with the school to allow student council students the opportunity to serve as poll workers. They worked the grade registers throughout the day and signed each student in and gave them their voting pass which they then had to turn into the machine operators in order to be able to vote," Southerland said.

"I believe this homecoming election opened a door between us and the school for future opportunities. We look forward to continuing to

educate the students on how important voting is and how each vote does make a difference."

Homecoming festivities kick off Monday, Sept. 21, with a week of "dress up" days. The Pep Rally will

be held Thursday night at Dorsett Stadium following the middle school football game.



Desmond Rivers, left, hands Rebecca Barber her "I voted" sticker. TCHS partnered with the Supervisor of Elections office for this year's voting.



(Top) LiWillie Elder, left, and Fazarian Johnson, right, receive instructions from election officials June Evans (far left) and Ellie Grubbs (far right) on how to use the touch screen voting system. (Left) "Poll workers" for the election were: (back row, l to r) Bethany Snodgrass, Kendall Smith and Desmond Rivers; (front, l to r) Catherine Weed and Kaydee Keen. The 2015 TCHS Homecoming celebration kicks off Monday and culminates with the "big game" Friday night at Dorsett Stadium.