

Texas Polls Keep Missing the Truth — Because They Keep Missing Texans

By Thomas Wyatt | EIC, The Villager

(VILLAGER) - Texans have learned the hard way that national narratives rarely fit the realities on the ground here. That's why the latest warnings about unreliable polling heading into the 2026 midterms should matter more in Texas than almost anywhere else. The article by W. Joseph Campbell lays out a simple truth: polling has stumbled in election after election, and the industry is entering this cycle weakened, fragmented, and less accountable than ever. For a state as politically complex and rapidly shifting as Texas, that instability carries real consequences.

Texas is already one of the hardest states in the country to poll accurately. Low response rates among Black, Latino, and rural voters, combined with explosive suburban growth and unpredictable turnout patterns, mean that even the best designed surveys struggle to capture the electorate's true shape. When national outlets treat Texas as a foregone conclusion — usually leaning on the same polling models the article warns are unreliable — they flatten the state's political diversity and miss the volatility that defines modern Texas politics.

The stakes are high. Polling errors don't just distort pundit chatter; they shape turnout. When surveys project comfortable Republican leads, Democratic enthusiasm drops. When polls suggest Democrats are competitive, Republican turnout surges. In a state where elections are decided by who shows up, not by sweeping ideological shifts, bad polling becomes a self fulfilling prophecy. It can



depress civic participation, misdirect campaign resources, and leave entire communities believing their voices don't matter.

The article also highlights the collapse of major polling institutions — from FiveThirtyEight's shutdown to Monmouth University's polling center closure — and the retirement of respected pollsters after high profile misses. What replaces them is a patchwork of mixed method pollsters experi-

menting with text based outreach, online panels, and hybrid sampling. Texas will be one of the primary testing grounds for these new methods, not because the industry is innovating for our benefit, but because traditional phone based polling simply doesn't reach enough Texans to be reliable.

This turbulence matters because Texas is not the static political monolith national commentators imagine. Migration continues to reshape the suburbs. Latino voting blocs remain diverse and dynamic. Rural turnout swings dramatically from cycle to cycle. And urban centers — from Houston to Austin to Dallas — are growing younger, more diverse, and more civically engaged. Polling that fails to capture these shifts doesn't just miss the mark; it misinforms the public about who we are.

As the article notes, polling remains the primary lens through which journalists and the public interpret the "ebb and flow" of campaigns. That's precisely why Texans should approach this year's numbers with skepticism. Polls can offer snapshots, but they cannot substitute for on the ground organizing, community engagement, or the lived experiences of voters who rarely pick up the phone for a survey.

Texas deserves better than narratives built on shaky data. We deserve coverage that reflects the complexity of our electorate, not recycled assumptions from national desks. And we deserve political analysis that recognizes what every Texan already knows: this state is changing, and no poll — especially in a year marked by industry turmoil — can fully capture that transformation.

The 2026 midterms will be shaped not by projections, but by participation. Texans should treat every poll as a rough estimate, not a verdict. The real story of this election will be written by the people who show up, not the numbers that try to predict them.

Top Ladies of Distinction Celebrates 59 Years of Service, Sisterhood, and Leadership



(AUSTIN, TX) - Capital City Chapter Honors Legacy of Founders While Celebrating Generations of Women Making a Difference

The Capital City Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. celebrated its Founders Day and 59th Charter Day with an elegant and memorable evening on Sunday, February 22, 2026, at Balcones Country Club in Austin, Texas.

Top Ladies of Distinction — Capital City Chapter was founded on February 24, 1967, and for nearly six decades the chapter has proudly served the Central Texas community through leadership, mentorship, and impactful service initiatives.

The celebration brought together a full house of Top Ladies, Top Teens of America, Lords, community partners, and distinguished guests for an evening honoring the chapter's rich legacy of service, leadership, and sisterhood.

Guests were welcomed into a beautifully decorated setting where they enjoyed an elegant sit-down dinner surrounded by fellowship and celebration. The evening was filled with grace and sophistication as the Top Ladies arrived elegantly dressed in shades of pink and white, proudly representing the spirit and unity of the Capital City Chapter.

Adding to the ambiance of the evening, a talented saxophonist provided smooth and soulful melodies during dinner, creating a warm and sophisticated atmosphere that guests thoroughly enjoyed.

One of the most meaningful highlights of the evening was the special recognition of the chapter's five past Presidents, whose leadership and dedication helped shape the legacy and continued success of the Capital City Chapter. Their contributions were acknowledged with heartfelt appreciation by current Chapter President Sheri A. Marshall and Founders Day Co-Chair Lady Sharon Hudspeth-Holmes.

In addition to honoring the past Presidents, the chapter also paid special tribute to three of its beloved Orchids—members over ninety years of age who continue to represent the legacy and strength of the organization. Lady Peti, Lady Lee Hall, and Lady Beulah Jones were recognized for their years of dedication, wisdom, and service to Top Ladies of

Distinction. The chapter also acknowledged members who have maintained over twenty-five years of membership in Top Ladies of Distinction.

Guests also had the opportunity to enjoy a lively vendor marketplace, where attendees indulged in a little retail therapy while supporting local businesses. A festive Photo Booth added another memorable touch, allowing members and guests to capture special moments from this milestone celebration.

For nearly six decades, the Capital City Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction has remained steadfast in its commitment to service, leadership, and community impact. The chapter continues to make a meaningful difference through initiatives that include developing and mentoring young leaders through Top Teens of America, fostering strong community partnerships, supporting community beautification projects, enriching the lives of senior citizens, and advancing the Status of Women through the impactful projects and programs of Top Ladies of Distinction.

Through these ongoing efforts, the chapter proudly continues its mission of uplifting families and strengthening the community. Surely, the organization's eight visionary founders would be proud to see the lasting legacy of excellence and service that continues to thrive today.

"As we celebrated 59 years of service and sisterhood, we were reminded of the powerful legacy our founders established," said Sheri A. Marshall, President of the Capital City Chapter. "Our commitment remains strong as we continue to mentor youth, serve our community, and empower women to lead with purpose, passion, and excellence."

As the evening concluded, members and guests reflected with pride on 59 years of leadership, service, and sisterhood, while looking ahead with excitement toward the chapter's 60th Charter Day milestone in 2027.

What began in 1967 with a vision to uplift women, youth, and communities continues today through generations of dedicated Top Ladies who proudly carry that mission forward—ensuring that the legacy of leadership, service, and excellence will continue to shine for years to come.

AISD 2025–2026 School Year Calendar

Austin ISD serves a large portion of students in the Austin area. For the 2025–2026 school year, the AISD calendar includes the following highlights:

- First Day of School: **August 19, 2025** (Tuesday)
- Fall Break / Thanksgiving Week: **November 24–28, 2025**
- Winter Break: **December 22, 2025 – January 2, 2026**
- Spring Break: March 16–20, 2026
- Last Day of School (Students): **May 28, 2026** (Thursday)

For the full calendar and official updates, visit the AISD Academic Calendar.

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