

AJUSD M&O Budget Override Defeated by 249 votes

After all of the provisional and uncounted early ballots were tallied last week, the Apache Junction Unified School District Maintenance and Operation Budget Override question that had gone to district voters was declared defeated by 249 votes, 3,368 “No” to 3,617 “Yes.” Percentage breakdowns were 51.8 percent “No votes” vs. 48.2 percent “Yes” votes.

The voter turnout of 6,985 was the highest ever seen in an off-year school election and represented a 22% voter turnout of 32,193 registered voters.

The big deciding factor in the voting result according to school district officials, was the large percentage of “No” votes among the mail in Early Ballots. The number of voters using the Early Balloting process jumped to 4,454, with nearly 60 percent of those ballots being “No” votes.

Wins at nearly every polling place serving walk-in voters could not overcome that deficit of approval expressed by Early Voters.

“While we are disappointed in the election results,” said Dr. Chad Wilson AJUSD Superintendent, “we will move forward to meet the significant financial challenges created by the reductions in state funding, our declining student population, and the final phase out of the Override. We will also continue our efforts to reach our goal of being Arizona’s First Choice, Every Student with Diploma in Hand and Prepared to Contribute to the World.

Several parents spoke during the AJUSD Governing Board meeting of November 10, Call to the Public expressing disappointment that the Override was not approved, and they urged the Governing Board to seriously consider putting the Override question on the ballot for voters again in November, 2010. That according to Wilson will be a Board decision.