

May 21

RESIDENTS WILL VOTE ON SCHOOL BUDGETS AND SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES ACROSS THE AREA TODAY. THE ANNUAL TRIP TO THE POLLS ISN'T BEING DRIVEN BY MUCH CONTROVERSY THIS YEAR. THE STATE CAP ON PROPERTY TAX INCREASES MEANS ONLY MINOR HIKES FOR MOST SCHOOL BUDGETS. AND SOME ARE ACTUALLY SEEING SMALL DECREASES IN THE TAX LEVY. POLLS WILL BE OPEN FROM NOON TO NINE TONIGHT. CHECK YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT'S WEBSITE FOR VOTING LOCATIONS.

July 26

IS STUDENT PERFORMANCE IMPROVING? ANSWERING THAT QUESTION IS GETTING HARDER BECAUSE OF HIGH OPT OUT RATES FOR THE STATE'S ACADEMIC TESTING. LOCAL AND STATE LEADERS SAY BACKLASH AGAINST TESTING STANDARDS IS MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO ACTUALLY JUDGE HOW EFFECTIVE THOSE STANDARDS ARE. SOME DISTRICTS ARE SEEING IMPROVEMENTS IN TEST SCORES, BUT THOSE FIGURES AREN'T RELIABLE BECAUSE THEY RELY ON SMALLER TESTING POOLS. IN SOME DISTRICTS, LESS THAN HALF OF THE STUDENTS TOOK PART IN MATH AND ENGLISH EXAMS.