Is Switch to November Elections Working for Bds. of Ed., Public?

Two years ago, the State of New Jersey gave school districts a choice to either continue to hold elections in April and have the public vote at the polls on school budgets — the largest percentage of the property tax bill — or switch to Novem-

ber elections for selecting officials and have no public vote on school spending plans provided they stay within the 2 percent cap on taxes.

When Governor Chris Christie signed the law in January 2012, all Union County public school boards moved their elections to November and no public vote on budgets was required and not conducted. A report this week in The West-

field Leader finds that only 26 school districts were to hold elections this week for the first time in 20 years, as of April 15.

Is this change working locally for Westfield, Scotch Plains-Fanwood, Cranford, Garwood and Mountainside Board of Education? Is it working for the public? Or, with lackluster participation in voting for school board seats and voter apathy at the polls, is this the time when school districts should consider an

apportioned board system? School boards will have a decision to make after the 2012 elections on whether to stay with elections in November or switch to April.

Summit has found success over the years with an apportioned board where members of the community apply for board vacancies and are appointed by the mayor. The mayor receives input from community leaders and the common council before making the decision.

It is true that the state’s decision to move the filing deadline from June until the last Tuesday in July actually increased the number of candidates running for school boards in suburban New Jersey, most of the interest seems to be in urban communities like Eliza-

town, Plainfield, Roselle, Newark and Irvington.

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Musing On Traffic Saky

As the media ring begins to fade on Bridgegate, the political fallout from a New Jersey governor's move to delay and then cancel the New York to Newark轻轨 project continues to take a toll on business and political figures in New Jersey.

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One thing that has been learned is that if one is to avoid being caught in the middle of a political scandal or a legal dilemma,Stay within the 2 percent cap on tax levies. 

up or down on school budgets — the largest school districts a choice to either continue to have a budget or not, the debate over the budget is a forum for local issues and the community to discuss what they want to happen. 

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