



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Senator Shelley B. Mayer Welcomes Port Chester High School Newspaper Staff to Albany

SENATOR SHELLEY B. MAYER May 24, 2023



(Albany, NY) – New York State Senator Shelley B. Mayer welcomed the staff of the Port Chester High School Newspaper, *The Port Light*, to Albany. After more than 10 years without a student newspaper, Port Chester High School students now have access to an online version of *The Port Light*, thanks to the remarkable efforts of current Editor-in-Chief Shirley Guzman and her staff, who recognized the need for a student voice on issues both local and global.

The new *The Port Light* serves as the voice of the school community, but in addition to topics of immediate interest to Port Chester High School, the all-student staff covers national politics, world news, professional sports, and arts and entertainment. Faculty advisors Justin Thomas and Aaron Glazer give full credit to this group of highly motivated and engaged students for bringing *The Port Light* back to life after such a long hiatus. Their achievement demonstrates that young people are attuned to the world around them, and share a love of reading, writing and communicating. This feat is also a testament to what students are capable of doing when there is a school and faculty that encourage students to think beyond what is in front of them.

Students met with State legislators including State Senator Shelley B. Mayer, Assemblyman Steve Otis, and State Senator Brian Kavanagh, who sponsors bill S. 647. This legislation would extend and protect freedom of speech and the press in school-sponsored newspapers.

Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "I am very happy the staff of *The Port Light* was able to visit Albany today. At a time when we are losing so many local news sources, these students prove there is both a need and future for strong, independent journalism. The staff of *The Port Light* is a remarkable group of students who have worked hard to resurrect their paper after a decade. These students are a tremendous example of what students can accomplish when given the opportunity and when they are supported by faculty that encourage creativity and individualism. Robust high school programs, particularly student newspapers, encourage confidence and leadership. I am impressed with the immense dedication and determination the Port Chester students have shown."

Shirley Guzman, Editor-in-Chief of *The Port Light*, said, "As editor in chief and founder of *The Port Light*, I am very proud to see how far we have come as a group to have this opportunity. I know I speak for everyone when I say that being part of the newspaper this year has been extremely rewarding as we see how our hard work is impacting our community in a positive

way. We are looking forward to seeing how The Port Light continues to grow and create change."

Faculty Advisor of *The Port Light*, Justin Thomas, said, "We are incredibly excited to have the opportunity for our students to meet our state legislators and to have this wonderful experience. These students are truly something special, and it is my honor and privilege to be their advisor. But this day and all of the accolades are about them and the amazing work that they have done with *The Port Light*. These students are so special and their voices are so impactful and important. It's incredible to see how far their voices can reach and the good their voices can do. This, at the end of the day, is really the importance of student journalism. Our students are so knowledgeable and so passionate about issues both local and far-reaching, and they deserve to have their voices and opinions be heard and to share this new generation of passion with any and everyone. We would like to thank Senator Mayer and her entire office for inviting us and for seeing the same promise in our students that Mr. Glazer and I see every day."

Dr. Henriquez, Superintendent of the Port Chester-Rye U.F.S.D., said, "I am incredibly proud of our students who have revitalized the spirit of *The Port Light*. Through this new vehicle of communication, they are paying tribute to the history of our shared community, but they are also creating meaningful and relevant stories, driven by the interest of today's students and tomorrow's leaders. I am thankful to Shelley Mayer for recognizing these talented youth and for her continued support of the Port Chester's students and community."