



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## Community & Reopening Update 8-28-2020

SHELLEY B. MAYER August 28, 2020

| ISSUE: **SCHOOL FUNDING, VOTING, BACK TO SCHOOL, WOMEN OF DISTINCTION, OPWDD**

**COMMUNITY &  
REOPENING  
UPDATE  
8-28-2020**



Dear Friends:

I hope you are able to enjoy some of the waning days of summer. If you live in the 37th Senate District, your household should have received a copy of my districtwide print newsletter this week. After receiving the [print newsletter](#), many of you wrote to me to be added to my email list to receive regular community updates through my e-newsletters. Always feel free to reach out to me or my office about an issue impacting you, your business

or the community, or an event you would like me to attend. You can email me at [smayer@nysenate.gov](mailto:smayer@nysenate.gov) or call my office at (914) 934-5250.

## **NEW CHANGES FOR VOTING IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS, INCLUDING VILLAGE ELECTIONS**

Last week, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed a bill I supported providing that the current pandemic is a basis for requesting an absentee ballot in the upcoming elections thus allowing all registered voters to vote by mail. In addition, he issued a new Executive Order, [EO 202.58](#), that modifies the voting laws for the November elections.

For residents in Bronxville, Tuckahoe, and Larchmont who have Village Elections on September 15th, absentee ballots are available to vote by mail if you are concerned about contracting the coronavirus.

- **Bronxville and Tuckahoe** residents can find the absentee ballot application [here](#). In section 1, check the box for “temporary illness or physical disability” and in section 2, check the box for “March Village Election”. Mail your application to the Westchester County Board of Elections, 25 Quarropas Street, White Plains, NY 10601. If you have any questions, please call the Board of Elections at (914) 995-5285.
- **Larchmont** residents can find the absentee ballot application [here](#). In section 1, check the box for “temporary illness or physical disability” and in section 2, check the box for “General Election”. Mail your application to the Village Clerk’s Office, 120 Larchmont Avenue, Larchmont, New York 10538. If you have any questions, please call the Village Clerk at (914) 834-6230.

For the **November General Election**, registered voters will have three ways to cast their ballot:

- Vote on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3rd;

- Vote early at an Early Voting Polling site beginning on Saturday, October 24th (Early Voting polling sites to be announced soon); or
- Vote by Mail.

To Vote by Mail, you must request an absentee ballot ([you can print one here](#)). If you are voting by mail due to risk of contracting the coronavirus, check "temporary illness or physical disability" for the first question. You can return your absentee ballot application by:

- Sending an email request to [BOE-WestAbsentee@westchestergov.com](mailto:BOE-WestAbsentee@westchestergov.com);
- Sending a fax request to (914) 995-7753 or (914) 995-3190; or
- Dropping it off in person or mailing it to the Westchester County Board of Elections, 25 Quarropas Street, White Plains, NY 10601.

After your application is received and processed, ballots will begin to be mailed out after September 18th.

## **FEDERAL FUNDING FOR NEW YORK SCHOOLS**

On August 13th, it was announced that the State Director of the Office of the Budget is withholding 20% of committed state funds to school districts throughout the state due to the fiscal impact of the coronavirus pandemic on state revenues. We need additional federal funding to protect students from devastating cuts to education. This week, I spearheaded [a letter](#) to New York's Congressional Delegation urging them to secure additional federal funding for New York schools. The letter was co-signed by Senator John Liu, Chair of the NYC Education Committee, as well as 35 other State Senate colleagues.

The [letter](#) states:

*"We are deeply troubled about further erosion of education programs and services for all children particularly in districts heavily reliant on the State for school funding. These are high need districts*

*educating students living in poverty and communities without the resources to provide additional support. These districts will not be able to absorb State aid reductions without reductions in programs, services and staff.*

...

*You have consistently fought for our children and our schools, and we know you continue to do so as you negotiate the next bill. But we write to give you the “on the ground” perspective that we see throughout our districts. We are deeply worried. We need additional designated school funding in the next bill. We appeal to all of our Congressional colleagues to continue to fight for our children.”*

[Click here](#) to read the full letter. We need New York's Congressional Delegation to do all it can to deliver for New York school students. We cannot expect our children to absorb anymore of the devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

## **CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH CONVERSATION:**

### ***Building Civil Society One Conversation at a Time***

On Thursday, September 3rd, I look forward to joining Ira Bedzow, Director of the Biomedical Ethics & Humanities Program at New York Medical College (NYMC), for a conversation on creating community. Topics for discussion:

- The Future of K-12 Education,
- State government & national politics, and
- The importance of respectful and inclusive language in laws and life.

[Click here](#) to register for the Zoom webinar. We will also livestream the conversation on my Facebook page: [facebook.com/ShelleyMayerSD37](https://www.facebook.com/ShelleyMayerSD37).

## **WOMEN OF DISTINCTION NOMINEE: RHIANNON NAVIN**

Wednesday, August 26th marked Women's Equality Day, and this week, I would like to recognize my 2020 Women of Distinction nominee, Rhiannon Navin. As part of a team at

WestCOP, Ms. Navin has worked tirelessly to feed families in need during the pandemic. Ms. Navin helped shop for and assemble nearly 60,000 lunches in the first month alone. The team also assembled pantry bags containing more than 320,000 pounds of groceries and distributed approximately 1,200 school lunches per day. [Click here](#) to read more about her.

### **FORUM TO DISCUSS THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

This week, I participated in an important virtual roundtable hosted by Senator David Carlucci regarding the challenges posed by COVID-19 on the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), individuals with disabilities, their families, and organizations that provide essential services. I continue to be a strong advocate for our neighbors with developmental & intellectual disabilities, and for the dedicated, yet inadequately paid, staff that provides direct care. You can watch our conversation [here](#).

### **BACKPACKS TO SCHOOL ORGANIZED BY THE SHARING SHELF**

Each summer, the [Sharing Shelf](#) organizes its Backpacks to School initiative to purchase new backpacks for low-income children in Westchester County and fill them with grade-appropriate supplies. The Backpacks to School initiative has grown to be the primary source of backpacks for children receiving services from Westchester County's Department of Social Services. [Click here](#) to learn more about this important initiative and how you can help.

### **PLUNGING STATE REVENUES**

The fiscal impact of the coronavirus pandemic has decimated state revenues. New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli's [August 2020](#) report has state tax receipts for the first four

months of New York's fiscal year (April, May, June, & July) down by \$3 billion, or 10.2%, from the previous year. Sales tax receipts are down by \$1.2 billion, or 23.1%, in the same period.

[Click here](#) to read more from Comptroller DiNapoli's report on the current status of state revenues. The impact on schools, local governments, nonprofits, and county & state services will be severe and long lasting if we do not receive additional funding from the federal government to replace the lost revenue.

### **FREE HAND SANITIZER FOR COMMUNITY NONPROFITS**

My office continues to deliver hand sanitizer to religious institutions, senior buildings, public housing and community groups throughout the 37th district who have requested it. Please [fill out the form here](#) to request a 1 gallon bottle of hand sanitizer for your community nonprofit, senior building, or other community group.

As always, feel free to contact my office at (914) 934-5250 or [smayer@nysenate.gov](mailto:smayer@nysenate.gov) if there is an issue with which we can offer assistance or if you have questions about reopening for yourself or your business.

Kind regards,

Shelley B. Mayer

State Senator

37th District