

## Senator For A Day

# Students experience legislative process



Quakertown students, from left, Niyi Onanuga, Sara Vahdatshoar and Nicole Gromadzki talk over the legislation they'll be debating while Alexandra Brandis, below, shares her thoughts with the roomful of Senators.

By Gary Weckselblatt

**E**leven Quakertown Community High School students were among more than 100 students from 10 districts to take part in Friday's Senator For A Day seminar, sponsored by state Sen. Bob Mensch.

The QCHS representatives spent the day at Perkiomen School in Pennsburg role playing as State Senators in a mock legislative session. Students selected a committee based on their area of interest and debated and discussed the mock legislation that had been presented to them.

Lobbyists and legislative staff were on hand to guide the students through the committee process and assist them as needed. After the students discussed the legislation in their committees, they took part

in a general session and voted on all of the legislation that was put forward by the committees.

"This is a great opportunity for our students to interact with Sen. Mensch and his staff," said Andrew Boquist, the Advanced Placement Government teacher who spent the day watching his students as Senators. "It's important for them to see that one person does not run the government. It's a team of people who really get things done."

The Quakertown students included Shannon Ball, Alexandra Brandis, Shelby Daugherty, Nicole Gromadzki, Cybil Krout, Juliet Marvelli, Ben MacMullen, Niyi Onanuga, Sophia Shaiman, Maddie Staudenmeier and Sara Vahdatshoar.

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Several Quakertown students ready for their day as Senators, including, from left, Sophia Shaiman, Alexandra Brandis, Sara Vahdatshoar, Ben MacMullen, Niyi Onanuga, Juliet Marvelli and Cybil Krout.

## SENATORS

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"I'm very appreciative of Mr. Boquist and Sen. Mensch for giving us this opportunity," Alexandra said. "Sen. Mensch said to us that we're going to be the leaders one day, and that's true. So to get a look at how we pass bills, or don't, it's really important for us to understand this process. I appreciated hearing the different points of view from other students, and working with them to see if we could get a bill passed or not."

Cybil said she the experience helped "learn a lot about how things actually work. It's really very interesting to be part of."

Maddie told Mr. Boquist of "all the little details that go into it" and how the "lobbyists explained the nuances of the law."

"Every year I am impressed with students' enthusiasm to participate in this event," said Mensch. "This educational experience gives students a unique hands-on experience with the legislative process and the many components associated with passing a bill. The feed-

back from the teachers is always positive and students often continue their discussion about the event at home and in their classes."

Mr. Boquist said that would like happen in January when his AP Government class focuses on the legislative process. "I'm excited for them to be able to explain what the experience was like for them at the practical level," he said.

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Shannon Ball, Maddie Staudenmeier and Shelby Daugherty are prepared for their Senator For A Day work.



Quakertown Community High School's Cybil Krout, center, takes part in Education Committee discussion.