

**Ministry of Education**

Deputy Minister

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Toronto ON M7A 2A5**Ministère de l'Éducation**

Sous-ministre

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2024:B12

**Date:** July 31, 2024**Memorandum to:** Directors of Education  
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities  
Senior Business Officials**From:** Kate Manson-Smith  
Deputy Minister**Subject:** Menstrual Equity Initiative:  
Continuing to Enhance Student Access to Free Menstrual Products in  
Ontario Schools

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Today, I am writing to inform you about the Ministry of Education's continued commitment to promoting menstrual equity in Ontario schools. The Menstrual Equity Initiative started three years ago. We have heard from school boards and student trustees about the positive impact of this initiative on students. Access to free menstrual products in schools can help students overcome barriers and support their participation in school, social and emotional well-being.

**A. CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR MENSTRUAL EQUITY**

The Ministry of Education will continue to provide all school boards, school authorities and Consortium Centre Jules-Léger, with access to menstrual products to be provided to students, at no cost.

The ministry has accepted a donation from Shoppers Drug Mart Incorporated to provide 23 million menstrual products (pads and tampons), over the next three-years, beginning with the 2024-25 school year. Additionally, 1,380 product dispensers will be provided in the first year, to facilitate the distribution of the menstrual products in schools. Each school board, school authority and Consortium Centre Jules-Léger, will be provided an allocation of menstrual products for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27, and a one-time allocation of product dispensers in 2024-25 only, as a reference when placing orders on the Supply Ontario PPE Supply Portal.

Board allocations of menstrual products are based on 2022-23 student enrolment data taken from the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS). Allocations of product dispensers are calculated using the number of secondary schools (2022-23) by board as a proxy for distributing the 1,380 dispensers across all boards. Many school boards across Ontario have initiated their own menstrual equity programs and we commend the important and necessary efforts made by students and staff. Should some boards opt out of receiving their allocation, additional products may be available for distribution to participating boards. We note that the ministry's Menstrual

Equity Initiative is not intended to fully replace existing supplies of menstrual products in schools. The ministry encourages boards to continue addressing period poverty by supplementing this supply where possible.

## **B. PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

At the beginning of the school year (September 2024), the ministry will release an agreement to all boards via the Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON) system. School boards interested in receiving a donation of menstrual products must execute this agreement to indicate their willingness to participate in the initiative. Boards will be notified via the TPON system once the agreements are available for execution.

Participating boards will have the ability to order menstrual products each school year and dispensers in the first year using the Supply Ontario PPE Supply Portal. You may order your allocation to be delivered in one or more shipments.

## **C. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

Each school board, school authority and Consortium Centre Jules-Léger have the discretion to identify the most appropriate approach to distribute these free menstrual products to their students. The following factors should be considered in implementation:

- School boards have the discretion and knowledge of local needs, to best identify the priority secondary schools (and possibly elementary and middle schools) to receive free menstrual products through this initiative.
- The ministry encourages school boards to incorporate student voice, particularly with respect to student interests and perspectives, in the distribution of menstrual products.
- The ministry encourages school boards to ensure barrier-free access for students accessing menstrual products, and to consider student privacy in the provision and disposal of menstrual products.

## **D. EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

- To support the implementation of this initiative, boards may consider providing educational materials on period poverty for students and teachers which may include posters, student campaigns, age-appropriate presentations, or workshops.
- The Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum for Grades 1-8 includes mandatory learning on menstruation. School boards, school authorities, and Consortium Centre Jules-Léger, are encouraged to propose that teaching staff include menstrual health and menstrual equity discussions as part of these and other lessons, as appropriate.

## E. PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

### Menstrual Products

Through this initiative, school boards will receive cases of retail-grade menstrual pads and tampons that meet the requirements of class II medical devices as determined by Health Canada, manufactured by either Kimberly Clark or Proctor & Gamble.

Product Type	Brand and Product Name	Case Details
Tampons	TAMPAX PEARL REGULAR TAMPONS	50 Count Case Height: 14.6cm Case Width: 15.6cm Case Depth: 9.8cm
Tampons	TAMPAX PEARL MULTI LITE/REG TAMPONS	34 Count Case Height: 14.4cm Case Width: 15.7cm Case Depth: 7.4cm
Menstrual Pads	ALWAYS ULTRA THIN MAXI PADS REGULAR ABSORBENCY WITH WINGS	46 Count Case Height: 18.8cm Case Width: 14.9cm Case Depth: 9cm
Menstrual Pads	ALWAYS REGULAR MAXI FLEXWINGS	36 Count Case Height: 22cm Case Width: 18.6cm Case Depth: 8.5cm

*Note: This table presents the product range available for the 2024-25 school year only; products and/or manufacturers may differ in 2025-26 and 2026-27.*

### Product Dispensers

Through this initiative, menstrual pad dispensers and tampon dispensers are being provided. Further specifications for the product dispensers include:

- Stainless steel construction (approximate dimensions: 16" high x 4 ½" deep x 5" wide)
- Gravity-fed product release
- Holds approximately 50 pads and 50 tampons when filled
- Hinged on the bottom to allow container to swing out from wall to refill
- Includes viewing slot to monitor re-stocking needs
- Locking lid
- Hardware Provided (per dispenser): 6 wall plugs, 6 screws and 2 keys for the locking lid.



Each school board will manage the costs associated with the installation of these product dispensers. Upon installation, product dispensers will become the property of the board and boards will be responsible for maintenance, replacement, and/or repair of product dispensers in schools. This initiative will not prevent school boards from continuing to use menstrual product dispensers acquired outside of this program.

## **F. PRODUCT DELIVERY**

Supply Ontario (CSCO) will fulfill all school board orders for menstrual products and dispensers placed through the PPE Supply Portal and can determine if deliveries should be made in one or more shipments, in the same way that PPE is ordered. Should you have questions about your order, please contact [sco.cse@supplyontario.ca](mailto:sco.cse@supplyontario.ca).

## **G. ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING CONSIDERATIONS**

Donations of product dispensers and menstrual products should be treated as “Responsive Education Programs (REP) In Kind” (i.e., no cash transaction) where all accounting rules of regular REP grants will apply. Detailed instructions on reporting requirements will be shared with school boards, school authorities, and Consortium Centre Jules-Léger, through the 2024-25 Revised Estimates instructions in Fall 2024. In Spring 2025, the ministry will seek feedback from school boards regarding the implementation of this initiative. Staff are asked to note the number of schools receiving free menstrual products, the approach to distribution within schools, trends in demand, product selection/quantity, and any feedback regarding fulfilled/unmet student needs to inform future discussion.

## **H. NEXT STEPS**

The Ministry of Education will provide information for the execution of transfer payment agreements shortly. School boards will be contacted regarding delivery of dispensers and menstrual products in the coming weeks. Should you require additional information, please contact Gianoula Korinis, A/Manager, Safe and Healthy Schools Branch at: [Gianoula.Korinis@ontario.ca](mailto:Gianoula.Korinis@ontario.ca)

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to supporting menstrual equity in Ontario schools.

Sincerely,

Kate Manson-Smith  
Deputy Minister

Attachment: Appendix A – Product Allocations for school boards, school authorities, and Consortium Centre Jules-Léger.

C: Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)

Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)  
Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)  
Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)  
Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)  
Secretary, Conseil ontarien des directions de l'éducation de langue française (CODELF)  
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)  
General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)  
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)  
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)  
Co-ordinator, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)  
Executive Director, Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)  
Executive Director, Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO)  
Executive Director, Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)  
Coordinator, Regroupement des élèves conseillers francophones de l'Ontario (RECFO)  
Director, Stockpile and Warehouse Operations, Supply Ontario