

Ms. Luisa Santos, Board Member

SUBJECT: MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: SAFE, HEALTHY, & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

During the 2023 Florida Legislative Session, the House of Representatives presented House Bill 389 (HB389), Menstrual Hygiene Products in Public Schools¹. This bill allows school districts to make menstrual hygiene products available in each school within the district, at no charge. The menstrual hygiene products may be located in the school nurse's office, other physical school facilities for health services, and in school restrooms, including wheelchair accessible restrooms. Schools are required to provide students with appropriate notice as to the availability and location of the menstrual hygiene products. HB389 was unanimously passed in the Florida House and the Florida Senate, was approved by Governor Ron DeSantis on May 17, 2023, and went into effect July 1, 2023.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools prioritizes students' health and well-being understanding that these are necessary priorities to realize our academic achievement goals. Research on the accessibility of menstrual hygiene products reveals barriers students face. A study by Professor Christopher A. Cotropia found that students who did not have access to menstrual hygiene products were more likely to have left school early, have arrived late to school, or missed school altogether². In 2021, over a thousand students across the nation were surveyed about access menstrual hygiene products³. Three in five students said they rarely found free menstrual hygiene products in their schools' bathrooms, with 84% of students having missed class time or knowing someone who missed class time because they did not have access to period products. Just as students have access to toilet paper and paper towels inside our school bathrooms, they should have access to menstrual hygiene products.

¹ Florida House of Representatives, <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/389/ByCategory>

² Cotropia, C. A. (2019). Menstruation management in United States schools and implications for attendance, academic performance, and health. *Women's Reproductive Health*, 6(4), 289-305.

³ The widespread impact of period poverty on US students, <https://period.org/uploads/State-of-the-Period-2021.pdf>

This item has been reviewed and approved as to form and legal sufficiency by the Office of General Counsel.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. LUISA SANTOS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. Explore the feasibility of developing and implementing a plan in accordance with HB389, that includes:
 - a. requiring all schools to make menstrual hygiene products available to its students;
 - b. ensuring that all students are provided appropriate notice as to the availability and location of the menstrual hygiene products; and
 - c. partnering with nonprofit organizations, nongovernmental organizations, businesses, and other organizations to assist in supplying and maintaining the menstrual hygiene products for our schools; and
2. report back to the board by September 30, 2023.