



**DATE:** June 22, 2021

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Kathy Muhlethaler, Assistant Superintendent, Operational and Learning Supports

**SUBJECT:** Implementation Strategy and Costs for the Division to Provide Free Menstrual Products

**ORIGINATOR:** Nancy Petersen, Managing Director, Strategic Division Supports

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## ISSUE

At the April 27, 2021, Board meeting Board Chair Estabrooks brought forward the following motion:

Given that menstrual products are a basic need and that access to these products can be a barrier for students, the Board of Trustees moves that administration explore ways to provide free menstrual products in Division schools, including pursuing partnerships, to provide what should be essential products in Edmonton Public School washrooms.

## BACKGROUND

Not having access to proper menstrual products is a health risk and a barrier to an individual participating fully in their daily life, including school. One way to help address the impact of period poverty is to have menstrual products readily available barrier-free in schools.

To better understand the work involved to see the provision of menstrual products in Division washrooms, administration has taken the following steps:

- Connecting with Red Deer to learn more about their pilot.
- Connecting with potential community partners.
- Exploring infrastructure and procurement logistics.

## CURRENT SITUATION

Since the April 27 Board meeting administration has learned:

- The pilot in Red Deer is a partnership between the school division, The United Way and the Central Alberta Chapter of Soroptimist International.
- Red Deer's pilot will see barrier-free access to menstrual products in four schools: Lindsay Thurber Comprehensive High School; Eastview Middle School; Normandeau School (Pre-K - Grade 8); and G.H. Dawe School (Kindergarten - Grade 8).
- May 28, 2021, a [provincial announcement](#) saw the commitment of \$260,000 towards Alberta's United Way's Period Promise campaign; the provincial funding is in support of a two-year pilot.
  - The province anticipates that the first year of the pilot will see menstrual products available barrier-free in approximately 100 schools for the 2021-2022 school year.
- In collaboration with the province, the Edmonton United Way is embarking upon a local Period Promise campaign with seed money from the provincial pilot.
  - The Division has been in conversation with the United Way to explore how best to partner together on this initiative.



- The United Way has prioritized schools in the Edmonton area serving high socially vulnerable communities. As such, the Division is working with the United Way to identify a group of schools from the Division's High Social Vulnerability List as a starting point for the pilot.
- Both organizations are also exploring who other stakeholders in the Edmonton community may be, with the intention to establish a group of community organizations who will work together on a long-term strategy to support this initiative.
- Division administration has further explored the costs associated with product dispensers, installation of dispensers and product procurement.
  - The Division's 2021-2022 operating budget reflects the designation of committed funding to support this initiative.
- Having the pilot schools in the 2021-2022 school year will help to inform:
  - The expansion of the initiative across Division schools.
  - Long-term implications for installation, maintenance and procurement.
  - How best to support the needs of students.

**KEY POINTS**

- Administration is working with the United Way to pilot access to barrier-free menstrual products in a group of schools from the Division's High Social Vulnerability list for the 2021-2022 school year.
- The provincial government has provided \$260,000 to local United Ways to support a two-year pilot; year one of the pilot will involve 100 schools from across the province.
- The Division is working in partnership with the United Way and other community stakeholders.
- The work to support the pilot will inform a long-term implementation strategy for the Division.

KM:np