



MENSTRUAL EQUITY FOR ALL ACT:

An Updated Toolkit for
CA K-12 Students

April 2024



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California Association of Student Councils (CASC)
Free The Period
PERIOD.
The Pad Project
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Thanks to the following contributors for their help editing, updating, and designing the handbook:

Brit Chung (ACLU SoCal & WLALA)
Elizabeth Monroe (ACLU SoCal)
Jenna Pittaway (ACLU SoCal)
Jihoo Yoon (CASC)
Lesly Tejada (ACLU SoCal)
Madyson Chung Lee (CASC)

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ABOUT THE MENSTRUAL EQUITY FOR ALL ACT RESOURCE SERIES:

This toolkit is part of a series of *color-coded* resources created for a variety of audiences by the CA Menstrual Equity for All Coalition (CAMECO) to support implementation of the Menstrual Equity for All Act.

We welcome you to explore these resources and use them however is most helpful to you!

Menstrual Equity for All Act:

An Updated Toolkit for CA K-12 Students

(Organizing strategies for students and community advocates)

Menstrual Equity for All Act:

An Updated Handbook for CA Public School Districts

(Implementation technical assistance for educators, administrators, and advocates)

Menstrual Equity for All Act:

A Handbook for Cal State Universities & Community Colleges

(Implementation guide for higher education student advocates and school administrators)

Want to get involved?

Connect with the CA Menstrual Equity Coalition (CAMECO) at
bit.ly/CA-menstrual-equity-coalition

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I. WELCOME



I. WELCOME

Dear Reader:

Providing accessible menstrual health resources and products has always been at the forefront of my mind, so it's especially exciting to share my experiences for this toolkit. As someone who began menstruating a bit earlier than my peers, and who struggles with severe cramps, it felt isolating not having these resources readily available, especially for free.

To be a student with a period means that sometimes, you have to neglect one need over the other — whether that be missing school due to physical and mental stress from your period, or maybe forgetting to bring a pad or tampon to school because of that test you were cramming for. I have made sacrifices and choices on priorities even if I shouldn't have had to. I remember how the people around me and in my grade would ask in secret if anyone had a pad or a tampon. Most of the time, we had to settle for going to the health office or scavenging through our bags for quarters, only to find an empty machine with no menstrual products.

I know that the Menstrual Equity for All Act (AB 367 of 2021, A) will prevent future student-menstruators from encountering this experience, which is truly profound. This law reinforces and supports the fact that nobody chooses to menstruate; menstruating is a basic bodily function that no student can control on their own. Therefore, it should not be students' burden to address, at least while at school, which can take up to half of a student's day. I hope that anyone reading or using this handbook knows that they are not alone and that they can truly make an impact in their communities for the better, one menstrual product at a time.

Sincerely,
Madyson Chung-Lee, 12th Grade
CA Association of Student Councils
(CASC)



II. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: THE MENSTRUAL EQUITY FOR ALL ACT



II. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: THE MENSTRUAL EQUITY FOR ALL ACT

Do I have the right to access free menstrual products at school?

YES. Thanks to student-led advocacy, the **Menstrual Equity for All Act (California Education Code section 35292.6)**, requires all California public schools serving any grade between 3-12 to provide free menstrual products—including both tampons and pads—in all women’s restrooms, all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men’s restroom.

California public schools include schools operated by a school district or county office of education, and charter schools.

By when does my school have to comply with the Menstrual Equity for All Act?

NOW. As of the start of the **2022-23 school year**, schools serving any grade between 6-12 were required to comply with all provisions of The Menstrual Equity for All Act. Schools serving grades 3-5 have until the start of the 2024-25 school year to comply with all provisions of the Menstrual Equity for All Act.

See below for more on what you can do if your school is not complying with the law.

Do I have a right to know about the Menstrual Equity for All Act?

YES. The Menstrual Equity for All Act requires schools to post a notice telling students about their right to access free menstrual products in every restroom where menstrual products must be provided. This notice must include the contact information, including both an email address and telephone number, for whoever is responsible for maintaining the supply of menstrual products in that restroom so you can contact them to report if there are no products or other issues.

2 AB 230 (Asm. Reyes), became law in 2023 and expanded the Menstrual Equity for All Act to include schools teaching any grade 3-5 beginning with the 2024-25 school year. See https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB230. This expansion effort was championed by the Inland Empire Girl Scouts, Troop 76 advocating for the need for menstrual supplies for younger students who menstruate.

Do I have to ask for free menstrual products at my school to get them?

9

NO. If your school serves any grade 3-12, menstrual products must be made free and available in all women’s restrooms, all-gender restrooms, and at least one men’s restroom and you should not have to ask for free menstrual products each time you need them. For example, you should not have to go to the nurse’s office to ask for a pad or tampon when you need it. Learn more below on what you can do if this is happening at your school.

In which restrooms can I find free menstrual products at my school?

A MIX. Schools teaching any grades 3-12 must make menstrual products available in all restrooms and all-gender restrooms and at least one men’s restroom.

As of 2017, California’s Equal Restroom Access Act requires “single user” restrooms to be marked as “all gender” restrooms, so all “single-user” restrooms should also be stocked with free menstrual products.

Is there something I can do if my school is supposed to provide free menstrual products, but isn’t?

Start the Conversation. First, you can contact your principal, vice principal or other school administrator and let them know that California Education Code Section 35292.6 requires your school to make pads and tampons available for free in school restrooms and ask when they will implement the law.

Share written information. If your school wants more information, or just refuses to implement the law, then you can send a letter with more information more formally asking them to implement the law. **See Resources B. Sample Advocacy Letter** for an example to get you started. If your school still does not provide menstrual products, you can also contact the superintendent of your school district and send them a copy of your letter.

You can also share our **district handbook** with your school, which is a guide written specifically for school districts on how to implement the law.

Advocate. If your school still refuses or fails to help, you can file a written Uniform Complaint Procedure (“UCP”) complaint and/or Williams complaint. Always make sure you

keep a dated copy of your complaint for your records. **See F. Filing A School Complaint in Part VI. Resources for more.** You can also advocate to your school board to adopt a strong policy and processes for implementing the Menstrual Equity for All Act.

Also remember you're not alone! Through all these steps, you should work with your fellow students and school community to organize and advocate for your school to follow the law and have a strong menstrual products program. For more organizing and advocacy support on how to make sure your school is doing all it can to implement the Menstrual Equity for All Act, check out **Part V. Advocacy Guide** for more!

What if students are being bullied or harassed for accessing period products at school?

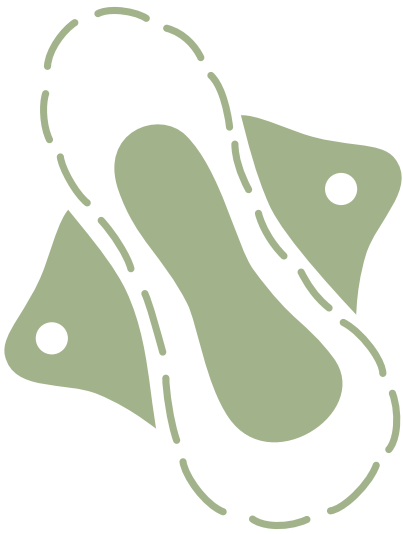
California students have the right to feel safe and welcome at school. This means you have a right to an inclusive and affirming learning environment free from discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation and bullying based on your actual or perceived gender, gender identity, and/or gender expression, among other identities. You also have a right to report, and should report, bullying or harassment at school. The law requires school staff to intervene immediately if they see student harassment, discrimination, intimidation, or bullying happening and it is safe for them to do so.

You can learn more about your right to be protected from bullying and harassment and what to do if you are experiencing bullying and harassment at:

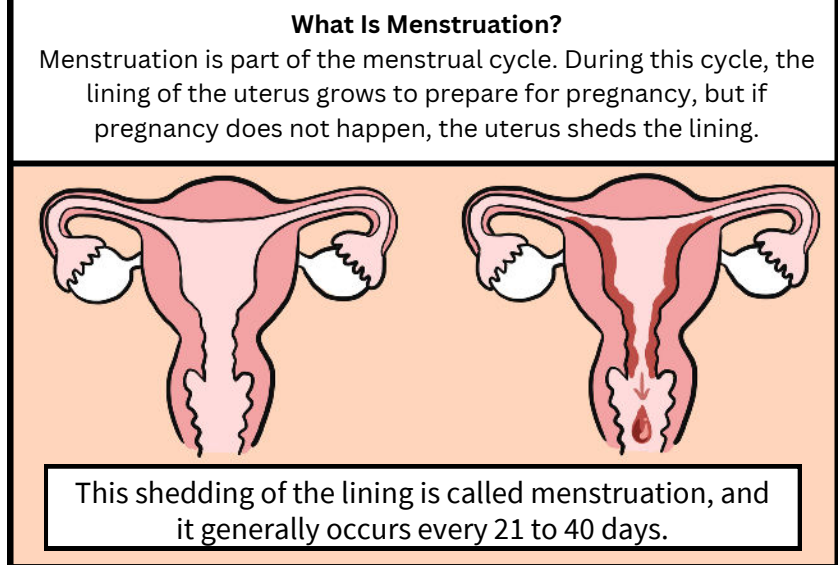
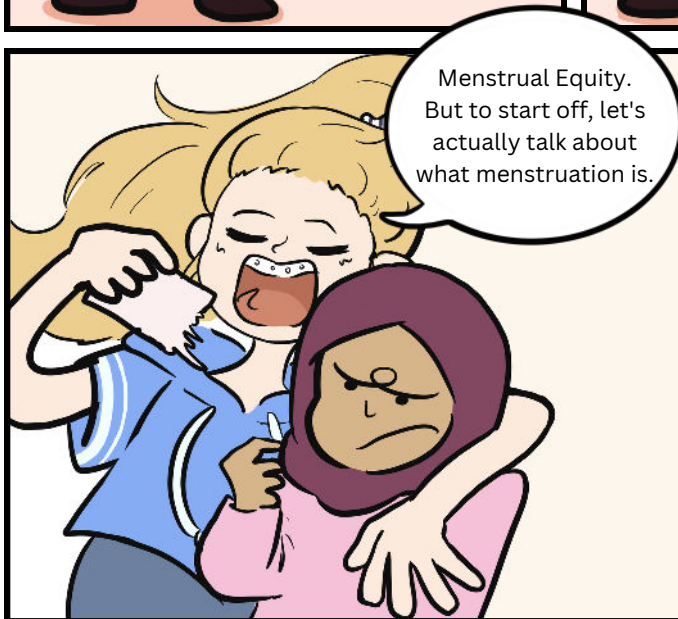
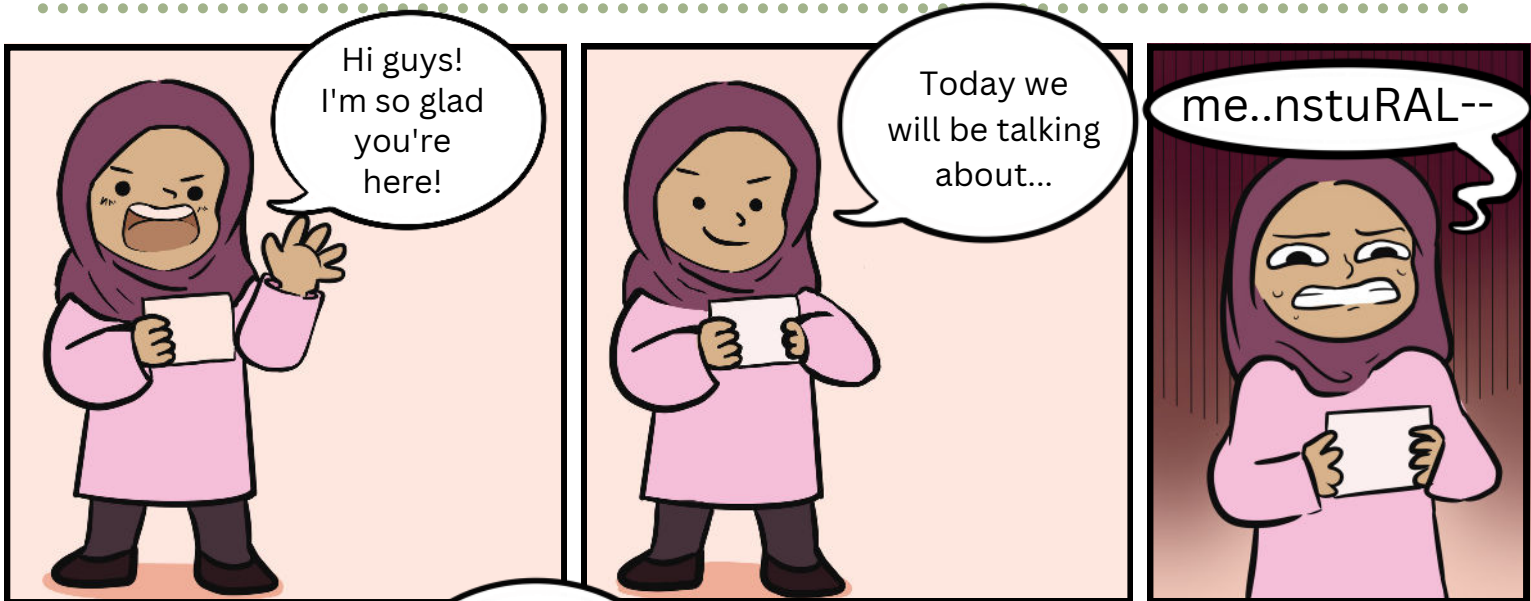
<https://www.myschoolmyrights.com/rights/harassment-bullying/>.

Additionally, the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA) (Education Code 51930-51939), which became law in 2016, requires that all California public schools, including charter schools, teach comprehensive sex ed and HIV prevention education, which includes information about menstruation, to students at least once in middle school and once in high school. Ensuring strong menstruation education as part of comprehensive sex ed allows all students to learn about menstruation and can help reduce stigma and shaming around menstruation.

III. MENSTRUAL EQUITY 101



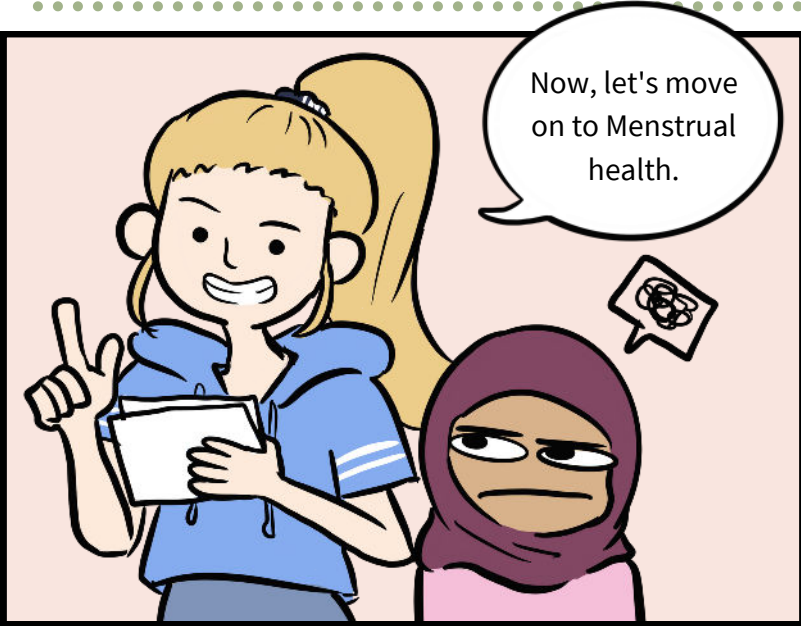
MENSTRUAL EQUITY 101



Anyone with a uterus who is of reproductive age can menstruate. This means that cisgender women, transgender men, nonbinary people, and others can menstruate, generally between the ages of 10 and 50.



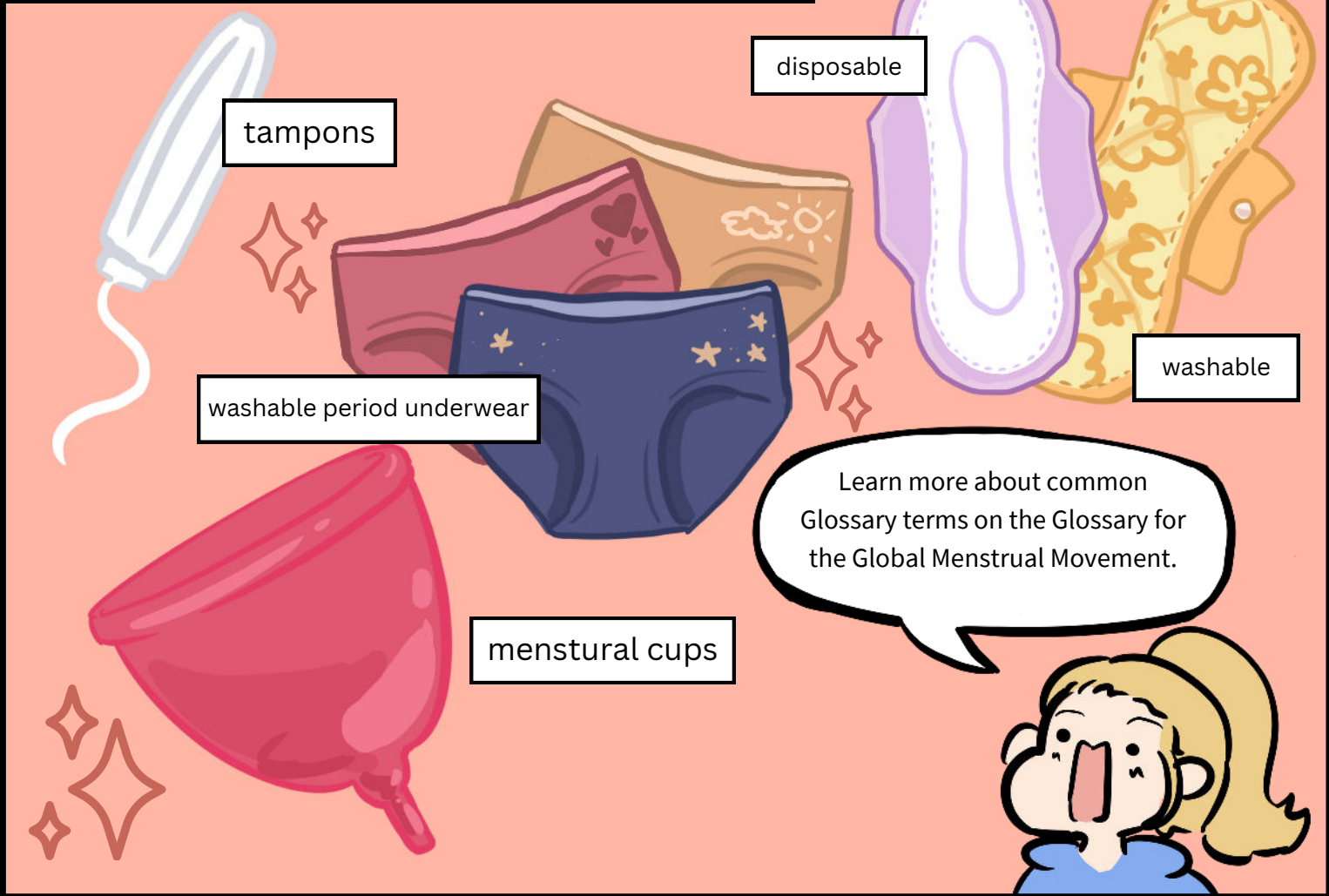
MENSTRUAL EQUITY 101



According to Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters, menstrual health requires “complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in relation to the menstrual cycle.”



How Is Menstruation Managed?
 Everyone who menstruates needs access to products to manage their menstruation. These products include but are not limited to:



MENSTRUAL EQUITY 101

What is Menstrual Equity?

Unfortunately, many people in the U.S. struggle to afford menstrual products. According to author and menstrual equity activist Jennifer Weiss-Wolf, “In order to have a fully equitable and participatory society, we must have laws and policies that ensure menstrual products are safe and affordable and available for those who need them.”

Why advocate for Menstrual Equity?

Dedicating funds and resources to providing free menstrual products in schools is critically important for supporting students and making sure they can focus on learning at school. Here are just a few reasons why:

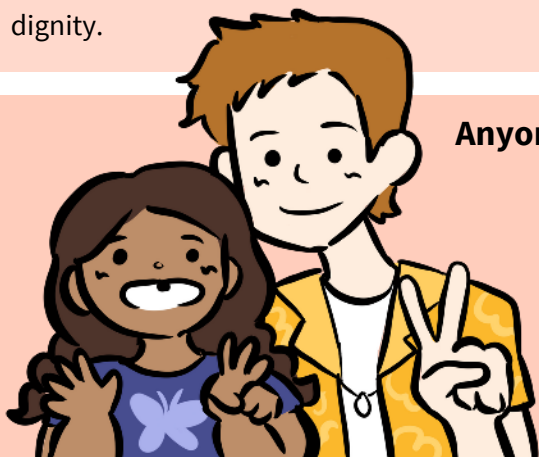
Menstrual products are essential health products.

Just like toilet paper, pads and tampons are necessary to protect people’s health. Access to clean, safe menstrual products is a right, not a privilege. Providing free menstrual products helps create a welcoming and inclusive environment for student learning and preserves students’ health and dignity.



Anyone can menstruate, regardless of age, background, or gender.

People of all genders may need access to menstrual products. For example, trans, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming students may also menstruate. People of many ages may also menstruate—menstruation can start in children as young as age 8. These students often face the most difficulties in obtaining menstrual products, making it more important to provide products through their schools.



Lack of access to menstrual products can have serious consequences.

Many students are not guaranteed access to menstrual products, especially those from marginalized communities. Without access to these products, students may experience shame, stigma, and sometimes life-threatening health complications due to infection. Further, these students suffer a disparate loss of educational opportunities. 1 in 4 students in the U.S. has missed class because they didn’t have access to menstrual products (State of the Period 2019). No one should miss out on the chance to learn and grow because they have inadequate access to products for managing menstruation.



IV. BEYOND THE BILL: ASSESSING YOUR SCHOOLS' NEEDS



IV. BEYOND THE BILL: ASSESSING YOUR SCHOOLS' NEEDS

The Menstrual Equity for All Act requires that public schools teaching any grade 3-12 provide free pads and tampons in all women's restrooms, all all-gender restrooms, and at least one men's restroom. As a student advocate, you can use this law as a jumping-off point to ensure your school adopts a robust menstrual product program.

A. Assess Your School District

Ask yourself how your school is doing in implementing the Menstrual Equity for All Act:

- Do all schools serving any grade 3-12 in your district provide free menstrual products?
- Does it provide products in all women's and all-gender restrooms and at least one men's restroom?
- Does it provide both pads AND tampons?
- Are there notices posted in the restrooms telling you about your right to access free menstrual products?

B. Determine your Priorities

What is your school doing well? What could it do better? In addition to providing products free of charge, what else would you like your school to do in order to actually meet the needs of the student community? For example:

You can ask your school to provide a wide range of menstrual products including:

- A broad range of tampon and pad sizes to accommodate a variety of flows.
- A higher quality brand of products that students regularly use and are accustomed to.
- Reusable products like reusable pads, menstrual cups, or period underwear. These products are reusable and can be a better choice for the environment and students struggling to access menstrual products at home.
- Make menstrual pain relief items like warm tea, a warm compress, or pain reliever available.

You can also advocate for increased accessibility of menstrual products including:

- Products in every restroom on campus, including all men's restrooms, to accommodate all students who menstruate, regardless of their gender.
- Products at the nurse's office, in classrooms, at free vending machines around campus, in gym locker rooms, and other high-traffic locations.
- Ensuring the products are accessible and reachable by all students, regardless of ability.
- Ensuring products are available to everyone who menstruates, including staff and administrators.

You can also advocate for school policies and facility accommodations that promote menstrual equity including:

- Increased support for students experiencing serious menstrual pain, including support around class absences or participation limitations, such as in P.E.
- Consistent trash buckets within school restrooms and in each restroom stall for students to dispose of menstrual products and wrappers.
- Education on menstruation and menstrual products. You may request separate classes focused on this topic or the incorporation of menstrual education into classes that already exist, such as sex education or health class.
- Messaging in restrooms that destigmatizes menstrual health and provides instructional information for usage of products as well as resources for students.
- Student engagement opportunities. You may create a club that is centered around menstrual equity, and a social media page that shares your priorities.

Finally, you can ask your school to provide additional supports related to students' sexual and reproductive health including:

- Spare clothes for students who may stain their clothes.
- Ensuring strong menstruation education as part of comprehensive sexual health education
- Support student clubs to spread peer awareness about the importance of access to menstrual products and destigmatizing menstruation
- Other sexual health products like condoms, emergency contraception, and other barrier forms of birth control.

Once you have assessed how your school district is doing and what your priorities are, you are ready to advocate for a strong menstrual product program!

C. District Assessment Roadmap

Use the interactive roadmap below to help guide you in assessing your school's current menstrual health support systems and identifying your priorities!

START:

Has your school district implemented the Menstrual Equity for All Act?

YES

Great! What more can your school do to support menstrual equity?

Are students fully aware of their rights?

Share information! If students feel like the informational notices provided by their school are not sufficient to inform students, you can contact your school administrator. You can share with them the notice requirements of the Menstrual Equity for All Act and how the signage can be improved. You can also spread the word to your peers.

Are there other ways to support students?

Consider advocating for other ways your school can support students by having a robust menstrual products program! (*See above in Part IV. Beyond The Bill*)

Has your school board adopted a local policy on student access to menstrual products?

Adopting a policy that outlines your school district's menstrual products program can help expand it to fit your district's unique needs, and also ensure students will easily know how to assert their rights.

See our [District Handbook](#) for a sample policy.

What does implementation look like?

- Schools serving grades 3-12 *must* provide free, readily accessible *pads and tampons* in *all* women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and *at least one* men's restroom. Schools must also post notices in *all* applicable restrooms about this law.
- The law took effect at the start of the 2022-2023 school year, so your district may still be implementing the law, but it must at least be working on it. Ask school staff what your school is doing.
- See **Part IV. Beyond The Bill** above for more on implementing a robust program!

NO

If your school is not following the Menstrual Equity for All Act, advocate!

If your school serves any grades 3-12, your school is legally obligated to follow the Menstrual Equity for All Act and there are lots of steps you can take to advocate for your right to free menstrual products!

See [Part V. Advocacy Guide](#) for more

V. ADVOCACY GUIDE



V. ADVOCACY GUIDE

Advocating for Menstrual Health

Advocacy means taking action to create change. It helps people stand up for the rights, needs, and beliefs of themselves and others. Advocacy can take place at multiple levels of government. This guide focuses on your school district and your school.

In the education system, students like you can be advocates for fellow youth by expressing your needs and requesting a solution from your school system. This is a guide designed by California youth and a statewide coalition of organizations to help you advocate for menstrual health support in your school.



A. Organize

Once you have assessed your school district's menstrual products program and have begun determining your priorities you want to advocate for, you are ready to organize! (If you haven't done these steps, *see Part IV. Beyond the Bill.*) While self-advocacy can be powerful on its own, advocacy work is often easier to manage and more impactful when it is shared across a coalition.

What is a coalition? A coalition is a group of like-minded people and/or groups who share a common concern and have agreed to work together on a common goal. A coalition can be as formal or informal as the people in the coalition decide, but it is important to define your shared concern. It is helpful to have members with a variety of different skills, abilities, and levels of influence. For example, your coalition can include students, parents/guardians, teachers and other school staff, and community partners.

B. Identify Your Goal

One of the most important steps in forming a coalition is identifying a clear mission or goal. That means identifying what the purpose of the coalition is and what it is you are working toward. As part of this, you should identify what solutions you would like to see and what actions you want to see your school leaders take. Focus on one or two issues, and set measurable and achievable goals.

What should our coalition's goal be? It's up to you and your group! For example, your goal can be securing menstrual products in all school restrooms on campus in your school before the start of the next school year. Another example is ensuring comprehensive menstruation education as part of your sexual health education classes by the end of the school year. Alternatively, your group's goal can be getting your school district to improve the quality of the menstrual products already being provided in school bathrooms by asking them to instead begin purchasing another brand by a certain time. It is oftentimes helpful to create space in your coalition for listening and understanding all the voices and opinions in your group to make sure you come up with a shared goal!

Understanding the law can also be helpful to goal setting so you know what is required and what may take more advocacy to get done. For more on what the Menstrual Equity for All Act requires *See Part II. Know Your Rights.* Remember, even if your school is not subject to the Menstrual Equity for All Act, that does not mean you can't still advocate for menstrual health support alongside a collective of student advocates!

C. Advocate

Make an advocacy plan and take action! There are several strategies you can use to advocate for better access to menstrual products and to improve students' menstrual health. You should decide which actions feel doable, align with your goals, and would be most effective.

Selecting your advocacy strategies also depends on your targets. You should pick strategies that target those holding the power to create the change you want to see. Identifying the right power-holding targets early will help you achieve your goals faster. For example, if your goal is to have your school district adopt a strong board policy, you should focus on convincing your school board to adopt the policy. If your goal is better quality products, you should focus on figuring out who is in charge of selecting the products and approving the budget for them and target those decisionmakers. Your school staff, including your principal, administrators, and teachers may be great allies in helping you figure out who can help make the change you want to see.

To learn more about the leadership of your school district, **see A. Overview of CA School Leadership/Government Structure in Part VI. Resources.**

D. Examples of Advocacy Strategies

- **Start the conversation.** Contact your principal, vice principal or other school administrator and let them know that California Education Code Section 35292.6 requires your school to make pads and tampons available for free in school restrooms and ask when they will implement the law. If no notices are posted in restrooms, ask who is responsible for implementing the Menstrual Equity for All Act.
- **Send a letter and our implementation guide.** You can send a letter with information about the law and ask your school district to implement the law. **See B. Sample Advocacy Letter in Part VI. Resources** for an example to get you started. You can also share our district handbook with your school, which is a guide written specifically for school districts on how to implement the law.
- **Advocate to your school board.** You can also advocate to your school board to adopt a strong policy and processes for implementing the Menstrual Equity for All Act or to take other actions to support students who menstruate. **See C. Sample Public Comments and D. Sample Board Policy in Part VI. Resources.**

- **Start a social media campaign.** You can build support for your goal by starting a campaign on social media. Use social media to gather petition signatures, find supporters, and increase turnout to school board meetings or other important meetings where you want to show a lot of people care about your issue. **See E. Sample Social Media Posts in Part VI. Resources for examples.**
- **File a complaint.** If your school still refuses or fails to help, you and others can file written Uniform Complaint Procedure (“UCP”) complaints. Always make sure you keep a dated copy of your complaints for your records. **See F. Filing A School Complaint in Part VI. Resources for more.**
- **Start a menstrual equity club.** You and your fellow students can start a menstrual equity club to advocate for more robust implementation of the Menstrual Equity for All Act and destigmatize periods. You can also advocate for supplemental education around menstruation as part of sexual health education.
- **Advocate for a strong implementation committee and feedback opportunities.** You can also ask for a workgroup or committee of students, parents, custodial staff, and health education teachers and other staff to develop recommendations for implementing the Menstrual Equity for All Act. You can also ask the committee to come up with ways to get feedback from students and staff in charge of maintaining the menstrual product program to keep improving.
- **Other ideas.** Check out the comics in the next few pages for more ideas. You should choose whichever strategies work best for you.

Need More Resources?

For examples of advocacy letters, sample messaging, and more
see Part VI. Resources of this Student Toolkit

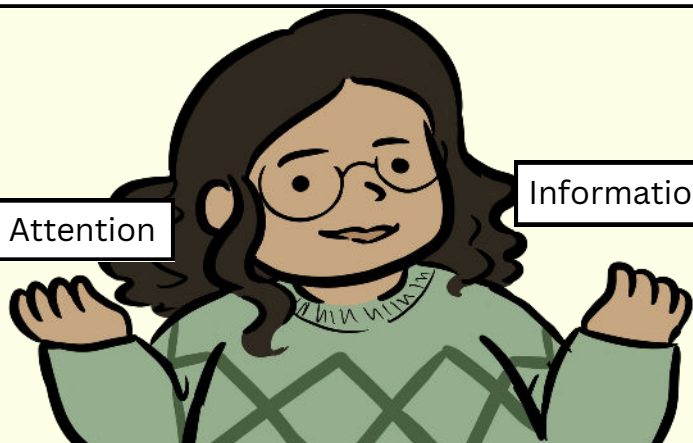
For more information for school administrators implementing the law, including a factsheet, district implementation roadmap, sample notice, feedback survey and more, **see our District Handbook**

E. MORE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

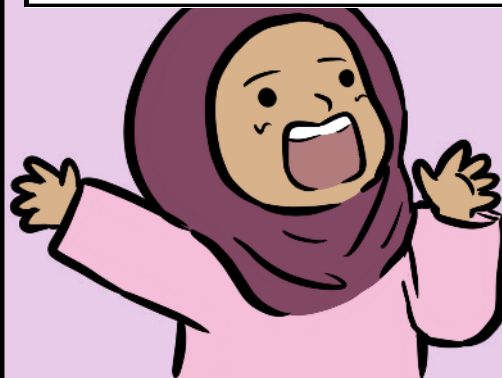
After identifying your ask, create a strong message that draws attention and is informative.

Attention

Information



Try different drafts of your message. Present the drafts to multiple sets of eyes, including your teachers, for example.



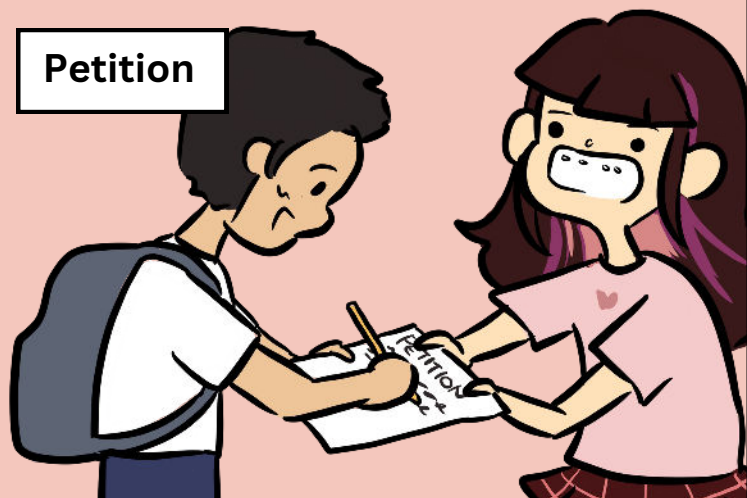
Creating Surveys

You can find out what is most important to your peers. Surveys help you identify overlapping goals while pooling a large sample of who you represent.



Be sure to collect contact information like phone numbers or emails so you can stay in touch as you organize. Petitions don't just have to be a simple yes/no, they can gather stories as well.

Petition



Town Hall Meeting

In order to have an effective town hall meeting, students should find a time that most students are available during, like lunch. Invite people to ask questions and engage in dialogue about your ask.



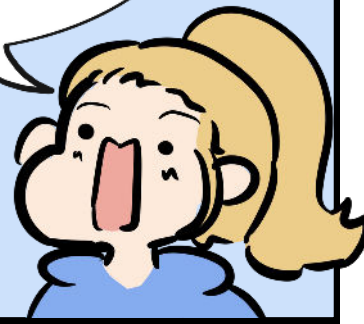
E. MORE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

To pitch an idea directly to district decisionmakers, anyone (including students!) can participate in a school board meeting and give a ~3 minute spoken comment. Board meetings are a space where locally elected board members make key decisions for their district.

Public Comment:



Your district's public comment guidelines as well as board meeting dates are accessible on their website.



Creating a social media campaign account or branded posts at a central location is effective for keeping supporters in the loop and asking students to join for key action moments.

Social Media



Whenever you speak with decision-makers, be sure to clarify next steps and deadlines for those actions.

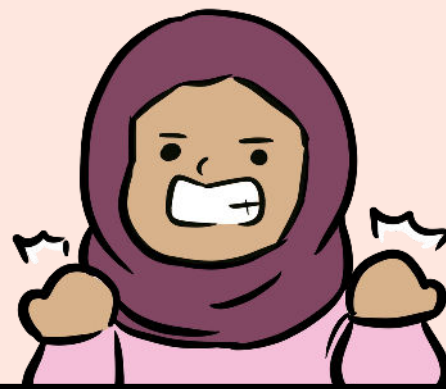
This helps keep everyone accountable and helps students set expectations.



If you have more questions, be sure to ask them until you achieve your goals!



For More information, see Overview of California School Government/ Leadership in Part VI. Resources / Appendix

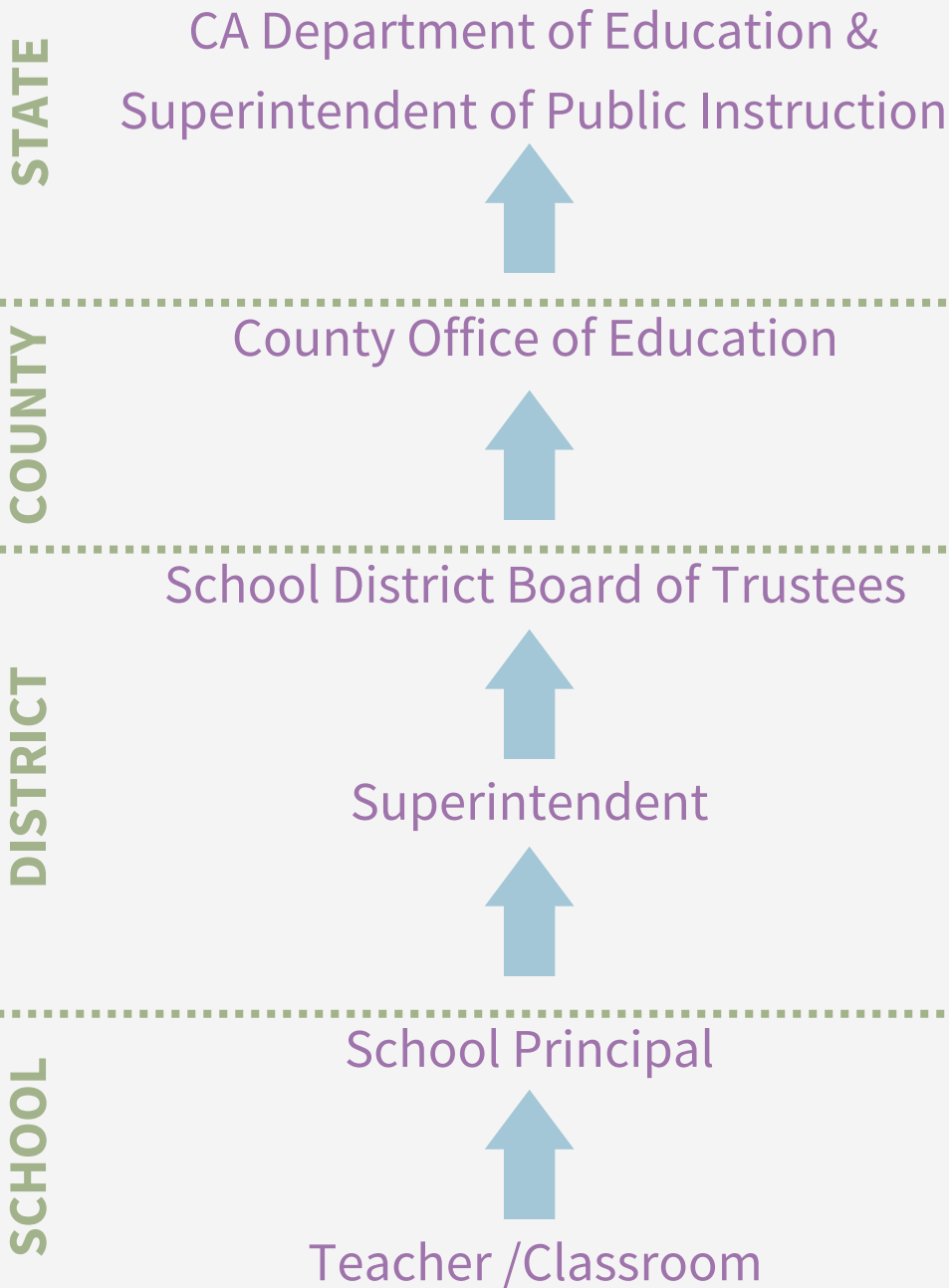


VI. RESOURCES



A. OVERVIEW OF CA SCHOOL GOVERNMENT/LEADERSHIP

Understanding School Leadership



A. OVERVIEW OF CA SCHOOL GOVERNMENT/LEADERSHIP

School-Site Level

School sites are run by a principal, school staff, and teachers. More on each below:

- **Teacher/Classroom.** Your teacher oversees your classroom and class. They can be great first allies for helping you figure out next steps in your advocacy.
- **School Principal.** Your school principal oversees the day-to-day running of an individual school site. They work alongside other **school staff**, including the vice principal and administrators. They are responsible for fostering supportive school climates for students and staff, developing and managing school budgets, and ensuring that district policies and processes are implemented at your individual school site.

School District Level

School districts oversee the running of multiple schools and are led by a school superintendent and a school board and supported by many school district staff and administrators. Some boards also have a student representative. More on each below:

- **Superintendent.** The superintendent is hired by and reports to the school board and is in charge of overseeing the day-to-day implementation of the board's vision.
 - **Contacting your superintendent:** You can contact your superintendent through their email and contact information listed on your school website. In addition to pitching your request through email, you can also set up a meeting with your Superintendent and district staff to discuss your ask.
- **School Board.** The members of the school board (sometimes called "trustees") are elected officials and are responsible for providing leadership, structure, and accountability for a school district. While district staff and administrators are responsible for much of the day-to-day work of running a school district and making recommendations to the school board, the school board is ultimately responsible if the district or its schools are not complying with the law. School board members have final approval of a school district's policies, processes, and budgets.

A. OVERVIEW OF CA SCHOOL GOVERNMENT/LEADERSHIP

School District Level (continued)

- **School Boards (continued).** In many school districts, school board members are elected by, and so represent, specific geographic regions within their community.
 - **Contacting your school board:** You can reach your school board by giving public comment at a board meeting or emailing them through the contacts listed on your school board website. In many school districts, the superintendent and board president can add items on board meeting agendas such as the addition of a districtwide menstrual equity policy or increasing funding to programs.
 - **A Note on School District Board Policies v. Administrative Regulations:**
 - **School board policies** are statements that lay out a district’s intent and general approach to a specific issue or program. School board policies are often drafted by district staff, but must be formally adopted by a school board to be final.
 - **Administrative regulations** lay out in more detail how a policy will be implemented. These are also drafted by district staff, and do not require board approval. Board policies and administrative regulations should be updated regularly to ensure that they reflect any changes to the law or best practices, but how frequently they are updated is up to each district to decide.
- **Student School Board Representative.** Some school districts will also have a student school board representative elected by the student body to represent student voices. Student board members have similar but slightly more limited responsibilities than their board member counterparts. The student board member can act as a direct link between students and district leadership. If you don’t have a student board representative, you can always advocate for your board to create a position for one!
 - **For more information about student board members:** See California School Boards Association (CSBA)’s **Student School Board Members in California: Student Voice and Democratic Action.**

A. OVERVIEW OF CA SCHOOL GOVERNMENT/LEADERSHIP

School District Level (continued)

- **School District Staff and Administrators.** Staff and administrators are responsible for carrying out directives from the school board and superintendent. Typically, district staff are organized into departments or divisions that are overseen by an administrator.
 - *Contacting your school district staff and administrators.* By exploring your district website or calling your district, you can reach out to a staff member who knows exactly what's up regarding menstrual health.

County Level

- **County Office of Education.** Each of the 58 counties in California has a county office of education. County offices of education provide local school districts with services and resources necessary for their operations and helps support local school districts in their budget planning. You can learn more about your local county office of education at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/schooldirectory/county-offices-of-education>.

State Level

- **California Department of Education (CDE).** The CDE is a state agency that oversees the state's public school system. The CDE and the **State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI)** are responsible for enforcing education law and regulations; and for continuing to reform and improve public education. You can learn more about the CDE at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/>.

B. SAMPLE ADVOCACY LETTER

INSTRUCTIONS: Copy the letter below and fill out the sections in purple. You can send the letter to your school principal and/or your school district superintendent if your school or school district is not providing free menstrual products or fully following the law. Always keep a dated copy for your records!

SAMPLE LETTER:

[DATE]

[School Administrator - E.g., Principal, Vice Principal, and/or District Superintendent]

[Address]

[City, State, Zip Code]

[email]

Dear [School Administrator],

I am a [student/parent/guardian] attending [school name] in [name of school district]. I am writing to ask that you ensure the Menstrual Equity for All Act (Education Code 35292.6), a law that requires schools to provide free menstrual products, is fully implemented at our school. The unexpectedness of periods means they can happen anywhere, at any time, and, for students, having to find menstrual products during school hours can take away from class time, cost money, and cause serious anxiety and embarrassment. Menstrual products are basic necessities, just like toilet paper and soap. When they are readily and consistently accessible in schools, students can stay focused on learning instead of worrying about how to manage their periods.

The Menstrual Equity for All Act has two main requirements. First, as of the start of the 2022-2023 school year, California public schools serving any grade 6-12 must provide free and accessible menstrual products, including both pads and tampons, in all women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom. Schools serving any grade 3-5 must do the same by the start of the 2024-2025 school year.

Second, the law requires that schools inform students about this right by posting clear notices in every restroom required to stock such products. The notice must include the text of the law and contact information, including an email address and telephone number, for the staff member responsible for ensuring compliance.

Our district has not yet fully implemented this law because **[explain what is happening at your school]**. I am requesting that you investigate this issue and respond in writing within two weeks with the steps our district plans to take to follow the Menstrual Equity for All Act and ensure students can access the menstrual products they need. I also urge you to make sure that students have a chance to share their thoughts on how to create a strong menstrual product program and would like to meet with you to talk further about how to do that.

For more information on implementing the law, including logistics, funding, and school engagement, please see: ***The Menstrual Equity for All Act: An Updated Handbook for CA K-12 California Public School Districts*** (also available on the CA Health Education website). Thank you for your leadership on this incredibly important issue!

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Student/Parent] at [school name]

[contact information such as phone or email]

C. SAMPLE PUBLIC COMMENT

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a sample public comment you can edit and share at your local school board meeting. Fill in the purple sections. Your comment should take under 3 minutes to read.

SAMPLE PUBLIC COMMENT:

Good evening board and community. My name is **[name]** and I am a student attending **[school]**. I am here to speak on the importance of menstrual equity and the steps our district must take to ensure that everyone has access to essential health products as required by California law. As of the start of the 2022-23 school year, The Menstrual Equity for All Act mandates public schools serving any grade 3-12 to provide free menstrual products in every women's restroom and all-gender restroom, and at least one men's restroom. The law also requires that students be notified of this right.

[Share your personal experience, why this is important to you, etc.].

Studies show 1 in 4 U.S. students have missed class because they did not have access to menstrual products. Such a lack of menstrual health support spans all genders and ages, and if neglected, can lead to serious health issues and even impact student's academic career and social well-being.

[Your ask. Example: We ask the Board to adopt a policy implementing this law and ensure free menstrual products are made available to students. We also ask that the board provide opportunities for students to provide input and feedback as we implement this law.]

All students deserve a safe, healthy, and welcoming school environment, please help take action to make essential menstrual products accessible for all students. Thank you.

D. SAMPLE BOARD POLICY

Menstrual Products

California law requires that any public school serving any of grades 3-12, inclusive, provide free menstrual products in all women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom.

The District recognizes that access to menstrual products is vital to ensuring the health, dignity, and full participation of all students and staff. The District also recognizes that people of different gender identities menstruate, including cisgender girls, transgender boys and men, nonbinary people, and gender-nonconforming people. The District has an interest in promoting gender equity and creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment. By providing free menstrual products as required by state law, the District seeks to further de-stigmatize menstruation and advance equitable educational access.

School sites are strongly encouraged to stock menstrual products in all restrooms on campus, including all men's restrooms. At a minimum, any site serving any combination of classes from grades 3-12, inclusive, shall stock all women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom with an adequate supply of menstrual products. The menstrual products shall be accessible and available at no cost, and the restrooms should be accessible during operating hours or whenever students are present. Menstrual products provided shall include, but are not limited to pads and tampons.

Any school site maintaining any combination of classes from grades 3-12, inclusive, shall also post a notice in a prominent and conspicuous location in every restroom required to stock menstrual products pursuant to this policy. The notice shall include the text of Education Code 35292.6 and contact information, including, but not limited to, both an email address and telephone number, of the designated individual responsible for maintaining the requisite supply of menstrual products on campus.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure an administrator is assigned at each school site within the District serving any grade 3-12, inclusive, to ensure menstrual products are stocked and notices are posted in accordance with this policy.

California law further requires that all single-user toilet facilities in any business establishment, place of public accommodation, or state or local government agency shall be identified as all-gender toilet facilities pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 118600. Accordingly, all single-user toilet facilities within the District's campuses and buildings shall be designated all-gender toilet facilities and stocked with menstrual products in accordance with this policy.

Policy**Adopted:** _____**Revised:** _____**[DISTRICT]****[LOCATION]****Legal Reference:****EDUCATION CODE****200 ET SEQ****35292.6 (AB 367 of 2021)****HEALTH & SAFETY CODE****118600 (AB 1732 of 2016)**

E. SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

TikTok: *You can follow recent trends to spread the word about The Menstrual Equity for All Act, including its impact on all students who menstruate, the range of products that should be available to students, and the need for notice about students' rights to menstruation products. You may also want to consider highlighting some student advocacy on this issue if your school is not yet complying with the law.*

TIP: You may also consider creating a menstrual product club Instagram or Tiktok to promote the physical locations of the products, highlight the Menstrual Equity for All Act, and show students how to use the dispensers and/or products!



E. SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Instagram: Keep your text short and sweet, and consider infographics around income disparities and access to menstrual products. You can also consider infographics describing menstrual products as a human right and health imperative.

Examples:

Access to clean, safe menstrual products is a RIGHT, not a PRIVILEGE. Ensure your school complies with the #MenstrualEquityForAllAct by providing free and accessible menstrual products to students in school restrooms.

Menstrual equity improves equitable educational opportunities!

1 in 4 students in the U.S. has missed class because they didn't have access to menstrual products. Without access to menstrual products, low-income students are at an educational disadvantage. To create a safe environment for student learning, schools must support students' health and dignity. Ensure your school implements the #MenstrualEquityForAllAct !



E. SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

For Twitter or other social media platforms:

- ***Posts Highlighting the Importance:***

- Studies shows that 1 in 4 students reported not being able to afford menstrual products. Thanks to #TheMenstrualEquityForAllAct, students have the right to FREE menstrual products in schools.
- Everyone should have access to FREE menstrual products. Our period will now not get in the way of our education thanks to the #MenstrualEquityForAllAct
- Studies shows that 1 in 4 students have missed class due to lack of access to menstrual products. Thanks to the #MenstrualEquityForAllAct, students now will have access to free menstrual products, which will help them stay engaged in the classroom.
- #MenstrualEquityForAllAct mandates that California public schools teaching 3-12 grade provide free tampons and pads in restrooms. All students deserve to learn without worrying about their periods.

- ***Posts that Draw Attention:***

- Do you believe that students in schools, community colleges, and public universities should have access to free pads and tampons? Well, now they will!
#MenstrualEquityForAllAct
- Do you believe that students in grades 3rd -12th, community colleges, and public universities should have access to free pads and tampons? Well, now they will!
#MenstrualEquityForAllAct
- Skip the nurse's offices and go straight to the restroom — schools now provide free pads and tampons in all women's restrooms, all-gender restrooms, and at least one men's restroom! #MenstrualEquityForAllAct
- Just like toilet paper, period products in schools are now a right!
#MenstrualEquityForAllAct

E. SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



- **Posts that are Informative:**

- *You can now find free pads and tampons in all women’s restrooms, all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men’s restroom on a school campus near you, thanks to the #MenstrualEquityForAllAct*
- *Thanks to the #MenstrualEquityForAllAct, public schools teaching 3rd-12th grade, community colleges, and California State Universities must provide free menstrual products regardless of one's gender or economic status. #MenstrualEquityForAllAct*
- *Student activists want you to know that menstrual health is a right, not a privilege! Thanks to their resilience you now have access to FREE menstrual products in schools! #MenstrualEquityForAllAct*

E. SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

○ ***Menstrual Education Thread:***

- [#MenstrualEquityForAllAct](#) is a step in the right direction to ensure all students receive menstrual health support. This thread details why it matters, who it affects, and how it helps students:
- Anyone with a uterus who is of reproductive age can menstruate. This means that cisgender women, transgender men, and nonbinary people can menstruate, generally between the ages of 10 and 50.
- Just like everyone needs access to toilet paper and hand soap, everyone who menstruates needs access to menstrual products to manage their periods. These products could include: disposable pads, tampons, washable pads, menstrual cups, and washable period underwear.
- Unfortunately, many people in the U.S. struggle to afford menstrual products. 1 in 4 students in the U.S. has missed class because they didn't have access to menstrual products. Without access to menstrual products, low-income students are at an educational disadvantage.
- The [#MenstrualEquityForAllAct](#) mandates that California public schools provide free tampons and pads in women's restrooms, all-gender restrooms, and at least one men's restroom. The bill also mandates that schools provide notice to student about their right to free menstrual products.
- The [#MenstrualEquityForAllAct](#) ensures that all students receive the essential health products they need. In order to create a safe environment for student learning, schools have a duty to preserve students' health and human dignity. Check that your California public school complies with [#MenstrualEquityForAllAct](#) today!
- When schools go above and beyond to implement the [#MenstrualEquityForAllAct](#), they are not only ensuring a smooth and successful menstrual product program for their students. They are also actively reducing period stigma and shame. [#MenstrualEquityForAllAct](#) today!

F. FILING A SCHOOL COMPLAINT

File a Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP) Complaint with Your School

INSTRUCTIONS: If your school is not implementing the Menstrual Equity for All Act, you can file a complaint. There are two types of complaints you can file: A general UCP complaint or a Williams Complaint. Make sure you keep a dated copy.

General UCP Complaint

UCP Complaints cover any form of “discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying” based on any protected class including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, and more.

For this type of complaint, you can use either your school’s complaint form or you can use the *Uniform Complaint Procedure form* created by the CA Department of Education. Your school must accept either.

Williams Complaint

Williams Complaints are another type of UCP complaint for issues related to inadequate school conditions or poor quality education materials. For example, lack of or illegible textbooks or other instructional materials, unsafe or unhealthy school classrooms or facilities, poorly maintained or unstocked restrooms, and teacher vacancy issues. You can file a Williams complaint anonymously.

If you’re filing a Williams Complaint, based on inadequately stocked restroom facilities, you may use a school-specific complaint form, a general form, or simply put a complaint in writing to the principal stating that you intend your complaint to be a Williams Complaint.

F. FILING A SCHOOL COMPLAINT

Which type of complaint should I file?

It depends. If your school is not complying with the Menstrual Equity for All Act at all you may want to file a Williams Complaint due to failure to stock menstrual products.

However, if a school is only partially compliant, but, for example, doesn't place products in at least one men's restroom, doesn't make products ADA accessible, or doesn't post adequate notice, a general UCP complaint may be more appropriate.

How do I file my complaint?

To learn more about how to file a complaint, you can ask your school for its UCP complaint policies and procedures. You can also visit <https://www.myschoolmyrights.com/rights/file-a-complaint-with-your-school/>. Many local education agencies also post their policies and procedures on their websites. In general, you should be able to put your complaint in writing, include that you intend it to be a UCP complaint or Williams complaint, and give it to your local school administrator. UCP complaints can be appealed to the California Department of Education if you do not agree with the outcome of the investigation. You can also learn more at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc/>.

More writing tips:

Complaints should be as detailed as possible. The more information that you give in the report, the stronger the complaint is. Give details about how the school is violating the Menstrual Equity for All Act, which restrooms the school has not supplied, and/or how the notice is inadequate specifically. If you have any documents, photos, or other evidence that support the complaint, attach them to the form. The form can be filled out by any student, a parent, or interested third party or organization.

Always request a dated copy of your completed complaint form when you submit it!